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US ELECTION WATCH 08

**THE UNITED STATES
STUDIES CENTRE**
at the University of Sydney

E-news

27 November 2008

And the winner is . . .

We're pleased to announce the winners of our Inauguration competitions. Our winners and their guests will be accompanied by USSC staff member Todd St Vrain, a former Washingtonian and veteran of four of the last five Inaugurations. They'll join an estimated 3 - 4 million people in DC for the historic event.



Pick the President

Thousands of people cast their predictions, but only Maria Ftanou of Melbourne had the winning combination. Maria's prediction of 365 Electoral College Votes for Barack Obama exactly matched the outcome. On the question of popular votes, her entry of 66,250,000 was within 650,000 votes of the actual result. Impressive!

Maria says, "The USSC Election Watch website became a favourite during the campaign, and thankfully the voting patterns and electoral maps were a great help in trying to predict the results. The honour of being involved in this great moment in history is overwhelming. Eternal thanks to the US Studies Centre and *The Monthly* for giving us this priceless opportunity." She plans to take her partner Alexei, whose educated guess she tweaked to make even better!

Campaign Mash Up

Bob the Builder. A call for an Australian republic. Catchy songs. Aussie battlers and punters. The video responses to the question, "What's your take on the US election?" have it all. But Chris Ryan's "Political Junkie" was deemed the best. In 60 seconds, this Sydneysider used a clever rhyme and images to relate his obsession with the election campaign. ([Watch Political Junkie](#)).

The trip will serve as a second honeymoon for Chris and his wife Fiona. "We got married in September and got only as far as Bellingen on the New South Wales North Coast for a honeymoon. Thanks to USSC for an amazing opportunity to experience this historic occasion," states Chris.

Election Videos

Watch [Political Junkie](#) and sample some of the other [Mash Ups](#)!

Relive the excitement of Election Day with a [video](#) the University's Media Office has put together on Election Day Spectacular.

In case you missed the public forum, watch [Obama: What Can We Expect](#) on Slow TV.

It's only a flash, but the US Studies Centre's Election Day event is in the video "[It's a New Day](#)" by Will.i.am (formerly of the Black Eyed Peas). Keep your eyes posted just before the minute and half mark!

Frost/Nixon

As the US Studies Centre wrapped up a real life election watch, we turned our attention to the silver screen to watch another historic moment in the US presidency 30 years ago. Guests of the US Studies Centre and our partner Sydney Film Festival were treated to an advanced screening of [Frost/Nixon](#).

Ron Howard's new film covers the epic interviews TV personality David Frost conducted with Richard Nixon after his resignation. Frost/Nixon is due for general release on Boxing Day and already has Oscar buzz. Sydney is featured in the film - see how accurate the 1970s depiction of Circular Quay is!

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**The
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Many thanks to Universal Pictures for thinking of the US Studies Centre to host the screening. The Centre hopes to offer more advance screenings of quality films about the US in the coming year.

Happy Thanksgiving

Thursday is Thanksgiving in the United States when Americans gather to reflect and celebrate the good things in life with a feast shared among family and friends. The holiday dates back to 1621 when the Pilgrims gave thanks for their first harvest with a meal with the local indigenous community. George Washington proclaimed the first Thanksgiving and Abraham Lincoln declared a national day of Thanksgiving. Since 1863 Americans have celebrated Thanksgiving annually.

Although there are religious undertones, it is a secular, non-commercial holiday celebrated by all Americans. While many in the US are increasingly facing unprecedented hardships, the country will still find things to be grateful for.

The US Studies Centre is thankful for a very successful Election Watch 08 and for everyone connected to the Centre. We look forward to sharing our many activities planned for 2009. And we highly recommend pumpkin pie!

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Visit the United States Studies Centre website: www.sydney.edu.au/us-studies