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PBS airs 'Darwin's' story

Scripted feature film to air October 6

By JON WEISMAN

PBS will air the first scripted feature film produced by National Geographic TV, "Darwin's Darkest Hour," Oct. 6 on "Nova."

Henry Ian Cusick ("Lost") stars alongside Frances O'Connor ("Mansfield Park") in the film, which depicts professional and personal traumas evolutionary scientist Charles Darwin faced in 1858, the year before his theory of natural selection was published in "On the Origin of Species."

John Bradshaw directed a script by John Goldsmith ("Victoria and Albert"). Norman Stephens and John Bredar are exec producers. Principal photography took place in Canada.

Though scripted, Goldsmith worked with Darwin and evolution scholars to achieve accuracy. NatGeo prexy Michael Rosenfeld said the two-hour feature aims to show Darwin's "vulnerabilities while also making his great insights understandable."

Cinema Management Group is distributing internationally. Plans are already set for "Darwin's" to air on Japanese pubcaster NHK via a co-production agreement attained by National Geographic Television Intl.

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