



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 5, 2003

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Verve Pipe's Brian Vander Ark to play Waterfront Film Festival Opening Night

SAUGATUCK, MICHIGAN – Brian Vander Ark, best known in West Michigan as the lead singer for the Verve Pipe, will be performing at the Waterfront Film Festival opening night event Thursday evening. Vander Ark who has lately been spending time developing his solo career will perform backed by local band "Miles to Mars" beginning shortly after 7pm on Water Street in downtown Saugatuck.

"We are so fired up about having Brian play opening night," said WFF co-founder Hopwood DePree. "It's exciting to have that kind of talent coming to the festival."

Vander Ark has also appeared in several independent films and in the movie "Rock Star" starring Mark Wahlberg and Jennifer Aniston.

DePree also said he is proud to note that several of the filmmakers and actors involved in the festival have Michigan roots. (*Local Boys* star Eric Christian Olsen attended Hope College, and several seminar panelists grew up in Michigan) "It's great to see all these Michigan artists coming together to make this a great event," he said.

Water Street will be transformed into an open-air festival with live music, stage entertainment, and the Midwest premiere of *Local Boys* starring Mark Harmon and Eric Christian Olsen. The event is free and open to all ages. New Holland Brewing Company's "Waterfront Film Festival" pale ale will be available for sale as will wine and other concessions. The public is encouraged to bring chairs or blankets.

Local Boys is about two brothers who chase waves off the beaches of Southern California in a story that captures the everyday hardships and thrilling freedom that comes along with growing up. Having lost their father a few years ago, Randy tries to fill his shoes for his younger brother while still maintaining his hard core surfer image. The younger Skeet vies for attention and acceptance from Randy and his surfer buddies, and is ultimately taken under the wings of surfing legend Jim Wesley (Mark Harmon) both as hot-dogging instructor and as boyfriend to the boys' mother. Family conflict, skirmishes with hoodlum surfers, and wild times with a cast of colorful friends make for an adventurous and unforgettable summer. Filmed on location along the beaches of Southern California, *Local Boys* is loaded with radical surfing footage, breathtaking moves, and thrilling feats.

FESTIVAL FOUNDERS

Dana DePree • Dori DePree • Hopwood DePree • Kori Eldean • Judy Smith

BRIAN VANDER ARK

Brian Vander Ark is the lead singer and principal songwriter for *The Verve Pipe*, whose platinum debut, Villains, on RCA Records, includes Vander Ark's 'The Freshmen' -- one of the most successful multi-format tracks of 1997 and winner of an ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors And Publishers) Pop Award. In 1999, they released their highly anticipated follow-up album The Verve Pipe to critical acclaim, with their first single achieving Top 15 at Modern Rock radio. Their most recent album, Underneath, produced by Adam Schlesinger, was released September 25, 2001; its first single, 'Never Let You Down,' was one of the Top 50 Most Played songs for both Adult Top 40 and Modern A/C radio in 2001.

In addition to their success on radio, sold-out concert dates throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe and Australia, features in Spin and Rolling Stone and videos on MTV and VH1, Brian and the band have made numerous television appearances, including "The Tonight Show," "Late Night With David Letterman," MTV's "Jenny McCarthy Show" and "120 Minutes," and VH1's "Hard Rock Live."

Brian has also written songs recorded by *The Verve Pipe* for the films/soundtracks Great Expectations and Clay Pigeons. He also co-wrote the song "Blow You Away" with Andy Partridge of XTC which appeared on The Avengers soundtrack. Most recently, Brian wrote and performed the song 'When I'm Gone' for the film Life Or Something Like It."

Brian first made the leap from musician to actor playing a country singer in the independent film Road Kill. Road Kill premiered at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival and took home the Audience Choice Award. He also appeared in Mergers and Acquisitions, an independent film shot in New York City, which also stars Lee Tergesen. In his first major film, Rock Star, a Warner Bros. release starring Mark Wahlberg and Jennifer Aniston, Brian portrayed the bass player in a band fronted by Wahlberg. In addition to his co-starring role, Brian wrote and performed the song 'Colorful' for the film and soundtrack. He also completed a run in the play The Collected Works Of Billy The Kid at the prestigious La Jolla Playhouse. The play, written by Michael Ondaatje (The English Patient), was directed by Des McAnuff (Quills).

Brian has just released his first solo album, Resurrection. He currently tours both as a solo artist and as the frontman for *The Verve Pipe*.

For additional information, contact DBMI at 818.752.8020.

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