

Ontario applauds Mann, Officer

by: AMY HAGGAR AND SEAN DAVIDSON

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Filmmakers Ron Mann and Charles Officer took home two awards and \$50,000 between them at the recent Premier's Awards for Excellence in the Arts in Toronto. Mann (*Grass, Comic Book Confidential*) won the province's prize for best individual artist, which comes with \$35,000. He was most excited, however, that it also let him nominate the recipient for emerging artist, which along with the remaining \$15,000 went to Officer.

"He's a real force and will be recognized as a new generation of filmmaking in Canada," Mann says of Officer, whose first feature *Nurse.Fighter.Boy* premiered at TIFF in 2008. Officer is currently working on a doc for the National Film Board about the late Canadian sprinter Harry Jerome.

Beyond his artistic merits, Mann is also pushing the boundaries of technology. He's marking the DVD release of his *Know Your Mushrooms* by skipping the DVD part, and says he will instead distribute a special edition of his documentary on a 4-gigabyte flash drive.

"We fight piracy every day. So we figured, why not cut out the middle man [DVDs] and give the media pirates exactly what they want?" said the filmmaker in a release.

"DVD and Blu-ray are just optical disc storage. So why not use a flash drive?" says Mann, noting that the "mushroom-themed" drive can be erased and re-used. The doc is due in stores in August through his boutique distribution company *filmswelike*. A standard DVD edition will also be released.