



DFI Announces Narrative Feature and Documentary Juries for DTFF Arab Film Competition

Unveils Special Screenings and Musical Performances for Third Annual DTFF

Doha, October 11, 2011 - Acclaimed Syrian director Mohammed Malas will be joined by internationally renowned filmmakers and actors to form the Arab Film Competition Jury for Narrative Films at the third annual Doha Tribeca Film Festival (DTFF). The news came as the Doha Film Institute (DFI) announced the jury for the inaugural DTFF Arab Documentary Film Competition, which will be led by pioneering and award-winning British documentary filmmaker Nick Broomfield (*Kurt & Courtney, Battle for Haditha, Biggie & Tupac*).

The varied Narrative jury will include luminaries such as Robin Wright (*Moneyball, The Princess Bride, Forrest Gump*), award-winning Lebanese actress Carmen Lebbos (*Whatever Lola Wants, Zozo, West Beyrouth*), internationally acclaimed and Palme d'Or nominated Singaporean filmmaker Eric Khoo (*Tatsumi, My Magic, Mee pok man*), and Golden Bear-winning filmmaker Jasmila Zbanic (*On the Path, Grbavica: Land of My Dreams*).

In addition to Broomfield, the Documentary jury will comprise acclaimed Moroccan filmmaker Hakim Belabbes (*In Pieces, Threads*), and Istanbul Film Festival Director, Azize Tan.

Speaking on his appointment Broomfield commented: "I'm really honoured to be selected as president of the Documentary Jury for DTFF this year. The Arab Documentary Competition lineup features some very strong contenders from filmmakers throughout the Arab region including Egypt, Tunisia, Syria, Lebanon and UAE and I'm looking forward to discovering some new talent and aiding these films to find exposure around the world."

DFI also announced the Special Screenings Programme for the Festival – a lineup comprising a diverse range of documentary features and shorts from around the world, and covering a rich variety of themes including sports, dance and politics.

Selected titles include David Fine's *Salaam Dunk*, an innovative documentary that looks at the sport of basketball through the eyes of next generation Iraqi women; Asif Kapadia's critically-

acclaimed documentary *Senna*, which provides a touching insight into the world of Formula One racing through the epic true story of legendary Brazilian race car driver Ayrton Senna; Gareth Huw Evans' action flick *The Raid*, which recently won the People's Choice Midnight Madness Award at the 36th Toronto International Film Festival; and Nick Broomfield's *Sarah Palin - You Betcha!*, a documentary feature exploring the life and politics of Republican politician and ex-hockey mum Sarah Palin, which also recently premiered at the 2011 Toronto International Film Festival.

Bollywood will come alive before Festival audiences in Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra and Jeff Zimbalist's spectacular music and dance-filled documentary *Bollywood - The Greatest Love Story Ever Told*, which features archival clips and interviews with many of Bollywood's most prolific movie stars including Amitabh Bachchan, Madhuri Dixit, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, and the late Shammi Kapoor.

Also expected to be one of the key highlights of DTFF's fun filled activities at Family Day (October 28th) will be a 3D screening of the highly anticipated animated feature *Cat in Boots (Puss in Boots)*, starring the voice talents of Antonio Banderas, Salma Hayek and Zach Galifianakis. In a swashbuckling series of adventures, the suave and feline hero teams with fellow criminal masterminds to steal the Goose that lays the Golden Eggs. In addition to *Cat in Boots (Puss in Boots)*, the Family Day program will include a special screening of the critically acclaimed children's flick *Spy Kids*, in celebration of the film's ten-year anniversary.

As part of a cinematic tribute to the late Syrian director, Omar Amiralay, DTFF will hold a special screening of Amiralay's acclaimed socio-political documentary, *Everyday Life in a Syrian Village* – a film that, to this day, continues to exemplify Amiralay as a courageous and innovative force in non-fiction Arab Cinema. Included in this year's lineup will also be a dedicated section of short films from Japan. DFI will present the special package in partnership with Japan's Short Shorts Film Festival and Asia, featuring the best new talent and award winners from their recent festivals in Tokyo. The touring program of seven bite-sized Japanese delights will showcase the freshest films from a new generation of Japanese filmmakers.

Commenting on this year's Jury and Special Screenings lineup, Executive Director of DFI, Amanda Palmer, said: "The Arab Film Competition is an important regional and international platform for powerful and meaningful cinema. We know that amongst our international jury is an unparalleled wealth of movie-watching experience and insight, and their combined efforts will help support the next generation of Arab filmmaking talent

She added, "The Special Screenings at this year's Festival have something for all sensibilities, for audiences who love drama and horror to others who might want to experience stories of politics, dance or sports. Our programming team has put together an incredible selection of global films that will provide a diverse set of perspectives and cinematic experiences for local and international audiences."

In addition to Festival screenings and events, DTF 2011 will host a culturally diverse range of musical performances, bringing a fresh set of sounds and voices to the region that have never been performed in Qatar before. The all-women lineup reflects a strong theme of female empowerment that runs throughout this year's Festival, and includes: Grammy award-winning African music icon, Angélique Kidjo, Moroccan, contemporary world music singer, OUM; acclaimed independent jazz-soul diva, Somi; and three-time Grammy nominated singer-songwriter, Leona Lewis, who will close the five-day Festival with a rousing live performance in the spectacular Katara Open Air Cinema (KOAT).

SPECIAL SCREENINGS: FILM PROGRAMME

An Egyptian Citizen (Al MuwatanMasri) (Salah Abo- Seif) - Narrative (EGYPT) 1991

A feudal mayor manages by a court verdict to restore his lands. When his spoiled son is summoned for military service he asks his guard to send his own son, Masri, to serve in his place in return for a portion of his land. When Masri dies in the war after confessing everything, the mayor and the guard desperately try to gain control of the situation.

A Flood in the Baath Country (Tawafan Fi Bilad Al Baath) - (Omar Amiralay) – Documentary (SYRIA, FRANCE) 2004

In 1970, Omar Amiralay made a film to celebrate the great strides his nation was taking toward modernization. The opening 15 minute segment of this earlier film shows men and machines building a dam. Thirty-five years later, he returns to the site to make "Flood in The Baath Country" and atone for his 'error of youth'. The dam has now collapsed and Amiralay questions what has become of the dream of Arab socialism.

Black Gold (Jean-Jacques Annaud) – Narrative (FRANCE, ITALY) 2011

WORLD PREMIERE, OPENING NIGHT FILM

A sweeping historical epic set against the dramatic backdrop of the Arabian Peninsula in the 1930s, "Black Gold" is the tale of two rival Emirs, the oil that came between them, and the young, dynamic leader who rose to unite the desert tribes. An adaptation of Hans Reusch's classic novel, "Black Gold" was jointly shot in Tunisia and Qatar and is one of the largest cinematic projects ever undertaken in the Arab world.

Bollywood: The Greatest Love Story Ever Told (Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra, Jeff Zimbalist) - Documentary (INDIA) 2011

MENA PREMIERE

A film celebrating the spectacular world of Hindi cinema, featuring archival clips and interviews with Indian superstars including Anil Kapoor, Amitabh Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai. It is a tribute to a genre that established Mumbai as an international filmmaking hub and has significantly shaped the global perception of one of the largest and youngest democracies in the world.

Cat In Boots (Puss in Boots)(Chris Miller) - Narrative (USA) 2011

MENA PREMIERE

Long before Puss ever met Shrek, our suave and furry feline hero goes on a swashbuckling ride, as he teams up with mastermind Humpty Dumpty and the street-savvy Kitty Softpaws to steal the famed Goose that lays the Golden Eggs. It's the adventure of nine lifetimes!

***Everyday Life in a Syrian Village* (Omar Amiralay) - Documentary (SYRIA, FRANCE) 1974**

Still banned in Syria to this day, this was the first documentary to criticize the effects of Syrian agricultural reforms in the 1970s. Through interviews with farmers, welfare workers and police officers, Amiralay explores how the search for truth is an important weapon against dictatorship. This film exemplifies Amiralay as a courageous and innovative force in non-fiction auteur cinema in the Arab world.

***The Help* (Tate Taylor) - Narrative (USA) 2011**

MENA PREMIERE

1960s Mississippi: Southern society girl, Skeeter, returns from college determined to become a writer and turns her friends' lives upside down when she decides to interview the black women who have spent their lives taking care of prominent Southern families. Friendships are forged and a new sisterhood emerges as everyone in town becomes unwittingly – and unwillingly – caught up in the changing times.

***The Lady* (Luc Besson) - Narrative (FRANCE, UK) 2011**

MENA PREMIERE, CLOSING NIGHT FILM

The true story of Aung San Suu Kyi, the woman at the core of Burma's democracy movement, and her husband, Michael Aris. An epic love story about how an extraordinary couple and family sacrifice their happiness at great human cost for a higher cause, "The Lady" is a story of devotion and human understanding set against a background of political turmoil which continues even today.

New Generation of Japanese Short Films

DFI presents a special package of short films in partnership with Japan's Short Shorts Film Festival. Featuring the best new talent and award winners from their recent festival in Tokyo, this touring program of 8 bite-sized Japanese delights showcases the freshest new films from a new generation of Japanese filmmakers. From a story of lost love to a goat on the loose, a solar eclipse, travels across Japan and a young Korean girl as a Tokyo tour guide, this carefully selected program is a delightful snapshot of the depth and strength of Japanese shorts.

Films include *The Eclipse's Shadow* by Shiro Tokiwa; *Frog In The Well* by Ken Ochiai; *Goat-Walking* by Ryugo Nakamura; *Mister Rococo* by Naoto Hidaka; *Sauna* by Junya Nishioka; *Smile Bus* by Sang-joon Park and *Sushi Japan* by Kenji Tanaka.

***The Raid* (Gareth Huw Evans) - Narrative (INDONESIA) 2011**

MENA PREMIERE

An elite SWAT team is tasked with raiding a derelict apartment building inhabited by gangsters in the heart of Jakarta's slums. Their mission is to take down a notorious drug lord. When a

chance encounter with a spotter blows their cover, the power is cut off and all exits are blocked. Stranded on the 6th floor, the unit must fight their way through the city's worst criminals to survive their mission.

Salaam Dunk (David Fine) - Documentary (IRAQ, USA) 2011

INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

Set in Northern Iraq, "Salaam Dunk" is a documentary about basketball, the next generation of young Iraqi women, and the pain of losing those we love. For these young players, basketball is not just about winning; it represents a powerful source of pride and hopeful proof that Iraq will one day be known as more than a war zone.

Sarah Palin - You Betcha! (Nick Broomfield Joan Churchill) - Documentary (UK) 2011

MENA PREMIERE

Nick Broomfield's quest for the real Sarah Palin involves battling the icy snows of Alaska in mid-winter as he interviews the friends, family, and Republican colleagues who gave their heart, soul and belief, to the charismatic ex-hockey mum-turned-American politician. But it's not all clear sailing. People are frightened to talk in the devout evangelical community of Wasilla, which is strangely also the crystal meth capital of Alaska.

Senna (Asif Kapadia) - Documentary (UK) 2010

MENA PREMIERE

The epic true story of Ayrton Senna, perhaps the greatest race car driver who ever lived. He exploded onto the scene of Formula One racing in the mid 1980's – a Brazilian in a predominantly European sport, a purist in a world polluted with backroom deals, a man of faith in an arena filled with cynicism – and in the process became a global icon.

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About Doha Film Institute (DFI):

The Doha Film Institute (DFI) is an independent cultural organisation established in 2010 to incorporate Qatar's film initiatives under one banner.

Located at Qatar's new cultural hub, Katara, DFI's many initiatives include film and television funding for MENA and international films, year-round education programs, film screenings, and the annual Doha Tribeca Film Festival (DTFF).

In addition, DFI has established a number of strategic cultural partnerships with leading local and international organisations including Katara Cultural Village Foundation, Tribeca Enterprises, World Cinema Foundation, Maisha Film Labs and Giffoni Film Festival.

DFI was founded by H.E. Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani. Along with Her Excellency, DFI leadership comprises DFI Board Vice-Chair and Festival Board Chair, H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Fahad Al-Thani; DFI Board Member and Festival Board Vice-Chair, H.E. Dr. Hassan Al-Nimah; DFI Board

Member, Mr. Mansoor Ibrahim Al-Mahmoud; Festival Board Member, H.E. Sheikh Jabor Bin Yousuf Al Thani; and DFI Executive Director, Amanda Palmer.

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