



GLOBALLY ACCLAIMED BEST FICTIONAL SELLING NOVEL KHALIL GIBRAN'S *THE PROPHET* TO BE ADAPTED AS AN ANIMATED FEATURE

Salma Hayek, Doha Film Institute (DFI) and Participant Media align with Academy Award® nominated director Roger Allers (*The Lion King*) along with ten internationally celebrated directors to bring 89-Year Old Classic to the Screen

Feb 23, Doha, Qatar- Khalil Gibran's, best known fictional work *The Prophet* is being adapted for the big screen in a new production that will involve collaborations across many borders. In this exciting adaptation, each of the 89-year old classic's chapters will be directed by a different award-winning filmmaker, with Roger Allers (*The Lion King*) responsible for the connective through-line narrative.

Pre-production is scheduled to begin this month, with Salma Hayek producing along with Clark Peterson and Ron Senkowski. Doha Film Institute (DFI) is co-financing along with Participant Media, MyGroup Lebanon, FFA Private Bank, JRW Entertainment and Code Red Productions.

"*The Prophet* has been an incredible source of wisdom and inspiration for millions of people all over the world. Being of Lebanese descent, I'm particularly proud to be part of a project that will present this masterpiece to new generations, in a way never seen before," said Hayek.

Among the distinguished directors committed to the project are Marjane Satrapi (Oscar nominated for *Persepolis*), Chris Landreth (Oscar-winner for short *Ryan*), Tomm Moore (Oscar nominated for *The Secret of Kells*), Nina Paley (Berlin Film Festival winner for *Sita Sings the Blues*), Mohammed Saeed Harib (creator of hit series *Freej*), Michal Socha, Francesco Testa, Joan Gratz (Oscar winner for *Mona Lisa Descending a Staircase*) and Bill Plympton (Oscar-nominated for *Guard Dog* and *Your Face*).

"I am very excited to be bringing to the screen this inspirational book and eager to begin working with this incredible group of international artists," Allers said.

Mohammed Saeed Harib commented, "It's an immense honor to be able to translate the works of one of the Arab world's most cherished writers into the visual realm. I am thrilled to be amongst such esteemed animation directors assigned to bring *The Prophet* to the big screen and to the 21st century"

DFI's Executive Director Amanda Palmer commented, "Through cinema, we have a unique opportunity to also introduce a new generation to the profound works of Gibran in a way never experienced before. It's a passion project for everyone involved, led by Salma's determination to create a truly collaborative artistic approach to this universally loved novel".

Moore added, "This is the sort of very special and important project that comes along rarely but which has the potential to make a big impact on the cultural consciousness of very many people."

Jonathan King, Executive Vice President of Production for Participant Media said, "The filmmaking team represents such an impressive line-up of international talent. We're thrilled to be working with them to bridge cultures through entertainment and bring Gibran's classic with its inspirational themes to a new medium for audiences worldwide."

"*The Prophet* delivers a message of faith in life itself transcending all cultures and all religions. In addition to supporting Gibran's heritage and legacy, we are very proud to contribute to what might well become the most inspiring animated picture of all times," said Jean Riachi, CEO of FFA Private Bank in Beirut.

Nael and Haytham Nasr, Managing Partners of MyGroup, said that they are "extremely proud to be participating in the production of the animated movie, *The Prophet*. *The Prophet*'s enduring wisdom and enlightenment have comforted and inspired for nearly one hundred years. Now the movie of Khalil Gibran's most celebrated work will enrich his timeless words and uplift our hearts and minds, today and forever."

The film rights were obtained by a group led by Steve Hanson of digital agency Hanson, Inc., in an agreement with the Gibran National Committee in B'Sharre, Lebanon, the representative of Gibran's estate. Executive Producing along with Steve Hanson are William Nix, Jose Tamez, Jeff Skoll and Jonathan King. The financing deal was handled by Jeff Ivers and Bonnie Stylides for Participant; Joshua Grode of Liner for Doha Film Institute; Lisa Nitti of Greenberg Traurig for Julie Lebedev and Code Red Productions; Nael Nasr and Haytham Nasr for Mygroup; Julien Khabbaz for FFA Private Bank and Riad Bahsoun and Walid Moneimne for JRW.

The Prophet is one of the best-selling books of all time, having sold over 100 million copies since its original publication in 1923. The Lebanese-born Gibran is the third most-read poet in history, after Shakespeare and Lao-Tzu, and has been translated in to more than 40 languages.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editor:

The Prophet: ***The Prophet*** is a book of 26 poetic essays written in English by the [Lebanese](#) artist, philosopher and writer [Kahlil Gibran](#). The book is divided into chapters dealing with love, marriage, children, joy and sorrow, crime and punishment, freedom, friendship, good and evil, prayer, religion and death amongst others.

Doha Film Institute: Incorporated in May 2010, The Doha Film Institute (DFI) is Qatar's first independent cultural organization dedicated to enhancing the cultural impact of film, improving industry expertise and building a sustainable film industry in Qatar. Since its inception, DFI has led Qatar's national mandate to invest into the development of the

creative industries, and supports the country's 2030 vision for the development of a knowledge based economy. DFI's first major co-production included 'Black Gold', directed by Jean Jacques Annaud which was released in 2011 and 'The Reluctant Fundamentalist', directed by Mira Nair which is currently in post-production.

Participant Media (participantmedia.com) is an entertainment company that focuses on documentary and narrative feature films, television, publishing and digital content about the real issues that shape our lives. For each of its projects, Participant creates social action and advocacy programs to transform the impact of the media experience into individual and community action. Participant's online Social Action Network is TakePart (takepart.com). Founded by Chairman Jeff Skoll in 2004, Jim Berk serves as CEO. Participant's films include *The Kite Runner*, *Charlie Wilson's War*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Good Night, and Good Luck*, , *The Visitor*, *Food, Inc.*, *The Cove*, *The Crazies*, *Countdown to Zero*, *Waiting for "Superman,"* *Fair Game*, *PAGE ONE: Inside The New York Times*, *The Help* and *Contagion*.

FFA Private Bank is a leading Middle Eastern bank in the fields of Private Banking, Capital Markets, Asset Management and Investment Banking. Headquartered in Beirut with a fully owned subsidiary in the Dubai International Financial Center (DIFC), FFA Private Bank caters to affluent Private Investors, Family Offices, Corporations and Financial Institutions in the MENA region. Its Investment Banking platform is very active in structuring and proposing unique and diversified international Private Equity deals and has recently become involved as Executive Producer in the international film industry raising significant equity portions for movie productions.

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