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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

What: The Boston Palestine Film Festival

Date: **Oct 16-Nov 1, 2009**

Where: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Kendall Square Cinema, Harvard University, and Boston College

*The Boston Palestine Film Festival* returns to the MFA for its third year with documentaries, dramatic features, and short films by emerging artists that bring authentic Palestinian perspectives, experiences, and culture to the MFA Film Program. A new wave of talented filmmakers are gaining critical attention and offer an intriguing mix of Arabic subject matter merged with influences from both Hollywood and Europe. “While these young filmmakers have different cinematic styles, they all share a boldness in tackling the perceived ills in their society” (*Variety*). The MFA is proud to present a number of high profile Palestinian releases.

-In Najwa Najjar’s *Pomegranates and Myrrh* (Oct 17, 7 pm), the Israeli occupation takes a back seat to the tale of a budding, forbidden romance between a young Palestinian newlywed, whose husband is being detained by Israeli authorities, and her dance teacher. Director present. (Screener and images available)

-Rashid Masharawi’s latest comedy *Laila’s Birthday* (Nov 1, 5 pm) creates a portrait of Palestinian life through the eyes of a cab driver as he rushes around trying to pick up a birthday cake for his daughter. Director present. (Screener and images available)

-*The Trials of Norman Finkelstein* (Oct 23, 8:30 pm) by David Ridgen and Nicolas Rossier offers a critical look at Norman Finkelstein’s controversial book *The Holocaust Industry*, and his views on identity, freedom, and nationhood. Director present. (Images available)

-*The Dupes* (Oct 25, 3pm) by Tawfik Saleh, a classic Arabic film and one of the first to address the Palestinian issues of nationhood and identity. (Images available)

- *Fatenah* (Oct 24, 4:30 pm) by Ahmad Habash and Saed Andoni is the first-ever Palestinian 3-D animated feature film, and inspired by the true story of Fatenah, a Palestinian woman who is battling breast cancer in Gaza.

In addition to the MFA, the Boston Palestine Film Festival will also be taking place at Kendall Square Cinema, Harvard University, and Boston College. Kendall Square Cinema highlights include:

**-Rachel** (Oct 28, 9 pm) by Simone Bitton chronicles the death of the American activist Rachel Corrie under an Israeli bulldozer as she defended a home from demolition.

-In **Intifadah NYC** (Oct 31, 1.30 pm) by David Teague examines the United States' first Arabic language public school and the subsequent firestorm of allegations that the school would teach radical Islam or even produce terrorists.

**-Ticket to Jerusalem** (Oct 31, 3 pm) by Rashid Masharawi is a drama about one man's obsession to drive his old truck carrying equipment for screening films across the West Bank and Jerusalem despite obstacles and checkpoints.

-The **Gaza in Focus** (Oct 28, 7 pm) program presents shorts about the Gaza Siege.

Please join us for the **Opening Reception** (Oct 16, 7-11 pm) featuring Palestinian Comedian Maysoon Zayid (<http://maysoon.com/>) and the Palestinian poet and writer Remi Kanazi (<http://poeticinjustice.net/v2.0.1/>) with food, live music, and an art exhibit. The reception takes place at Arts at the Armory on 191 Highland Avenue in Somerville. (<http://www.artsatthearmory.org/>)

**For a complete schedule, please review the attachment. Screeners of all the films are available.**

Tickets: MFA members, seniors, and students \$8; general admission \$10. Discount matinee prices (weekday until 5 pm; weekends until 12:30 pm) are \$6, \$7. To purchase please call the box office at 617-369-3306 or online at <http://www.mfa.org/film>. The same prices apply to the Kendall Square Cinema. To purchase Tickets please call the box office at (617) 499-1996 or online: <http://www.landmarktheatres.com/Market/Boston/KendallSquareCinema.htm>

University screenings are free.

Now, in its third year, the Boston Palestine Film Festival is committed to showcasing the Palestinian narrative through the medium of cinema to audiences in the New England area. BPF is committed to present the extraordinary narrative of a dispossessed people living in exile, under military occupation and siege, and within Israel. Palestinian cinema represents a powerful means of interpreting the collective identity, historic struggle, and surreal life circumstances and challenges that Palestinians presently face.

The Boston Palestine Film Festival is co-presented by the Museum of Fine Arts Film Department. It is funded privately and through a grant from the Genevieve McMillan – Reba Stewart Foundation, the Center for Arab-American Philanthropy, the Cambridge Arts Council, and the Jerusalem Fund for education and community development.

The media sponsor is *The Boston Phoenix*.