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Ten New Films Awarded Funds by the Global Film Initiative

Grantees Include First Narrative Feature from East Timor and Ensemble Production by Eight New Mexican Directors

San Francisco, CA – October 11, 2011 – The Global Film Initiative announced today that ten film projects have been awarded production funding during the Initiative’s Summer 2011 granting cycle.

"The diversity of talent we’re seeing is wonderful," says Susan Weeks Coulter, Board Chair of the Global Film Initiative. "Ten years ago, we hoped for this kind of creative growth in the industry and ten years later, in the middle of a global recession, it’s here."

Among the granted projects are:

- Mexican director Ernesto Contreras’s *I DREAM IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE* (recipient of the Sundance Institute/Mahindra Global Filmmaking Award)
- First-time director Bety Reis’s turbulent portrait of life in contemporary East Timor
- Donald Mugisha’s Ugandan adaptation of the 1940s neorealist classic, *Bicycle Thieves*

The Summer 2011 production grant recipients are:

- **ARAL**, dir. Ella Vakkasova, Uzbekistan
An inexperienced 16-year-old boy leaves the familiarity of the family farm to sell produce at the city bazaar, where he must learn how to look after himself and his goods, or risk disappointing his family.
- **BEATRIZ’S WAR (A GUERRA DA BEATRIZ)**, dir. Bety Reis, East Timor
Following Indonesia’s invasion of East Timor, a stranger presents himself in a local village, claiming to be a woman’s missing husband despite her uneasy belief that the man may not be her lost spouse.
- **THE BODA BODA THIEVES**, dir. Donald Mugisha, Uganda
Abel is robbed of his motorbike on his first day as a *boda boda* driver, sending him on a frantic search to find the stolen bike before the theft is discovered by his boss in this homage to Italian director Vittorio De Sica’s 1948 masterpiece, *Bicycle Thieves*.
- **FAITH (FE)**, dir. Alejo Crisóstomo, Guatemala/Chile
An evangelical pastor in a small, rural town tests the limits of faith by giving refuge to a violent ex-convict against objections by his church and community.
- **THE ROOM (LA HABITACIÓN)**, dir. Jorge Pérez Solano, Iyati Wertta, Carlos Bolado, Patricia Arriaga, Alfonso Pineda Ulloa, Alejandro Valle, Iván Ávila Dueñas, Celso R. García, Mexico
The past one hundred years of Mexican history—spanning revolutions, romance and cultural renaissance—are recounted through the lens of eight intertwining stories that occur within the confines of a single room in Mexico City.

The Summer 2011 Honorable Mention grant recipients are:

- **HERE AND NOW (INGIRUNTHU)**, dir. Sumathy Sivamohan, Sri Lanka
On a vibrant Sri Lankan tea plantation, a deaf-mute, a poverty-stricken mother and a researcher from Colombo are drawn into the social conflicts that eventually lead to the violent Bindunuwewa riot of 2000.
- **I DREAM IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE (SUEÑO EN OTRO IDIOMA)**, dir. Ernesto Contreras, Mexico
An ambitious linguist attempts to reunite the last two living speakers of a dying, indigenous language, but must first resolve a bitter feud between the two, and uncover the truth behind the fifty-year-old secret they share.
- **MOTHER'S MILK (LECHE MATERNA)**, dir. Sebastián Silva, Chile
After a young and wildly imaginative girl becomes inexplicably pregnant—despite remaining a virgin—her befuddled family, friends and neighbors decide to announce the event as an "act of God," and treat the pregnancy as a divine miracle.
- **SAINTS (EVLIYA)**, dir. Seyfi Teoman, Turkey
At the height of a mysterious epidemic in Turkey, a quarantined clinic managed by the jaded Dr. Faruk is threatened with closure when the facility is suspected of being a stronghold for anti-state propagandist activity.
- **WHEN I SAW YOU**, dir. Annemarie Jacir, Palestine/Jordan
An intelligent but socially awkward boy, hoping to return home to Palestine, runs away from his refugee camp in Jordan and develops an unlikely friendship with a paramilitary group along the way.

During each granting cycle, five filmmakers are awarded production grants of \$10,000 each, and five filmmakers are awarded the distinction of Honorable Mention, which includes a cash-grant of \$1,000 each. The Summer 2011 cycle's awarded projects were selected from a group of 98 applications, representing 44 nations.

Grant recipients are chosen for their artistic excellence, accomplished storytelling and cultural perspective on daily life. Funds received from grants are used to subsidize post-production costs such as laboratory and sound mixing fees, and access to advanced editing systems.

Since its founding in 2002, the Initiative has awarded more than 100 grants to filmmakers from Africa, Asia, Central & Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. These grants have supported the works of both emerging and established directors, and have made a significant impact on the growth of emerging film industries.

Recent success of previous grantees:

- **OCTOBER (OCTUBRE), dir. Daniel Vega Vidal and Diego Vega Vidal, Peru**
Peru's official submission to the Best Foreign Language Film category of the 84th Academy Awards (Oscars). GFI grant awarded in 2008.
- **ON THE PLANK (SUR LA PLANCHE), dir. Leïla Kilani, Morocco**
Zabaltegi-Specials program at the 59th San Sebastián Film Festival; world premiere at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival (Directors' Fortnight). GFI grant awarded in 2011.
- **SKOONHEID, dir. Oliver Hermanus, South Africa**
South Africa's official submission to the Best Foreign Language Film category of the 84th Academy Awards (Oscars); awarded Best South African Feature Film at the 32nd Durban International Film Festival and Queer Palm at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival. GFI grant awarded in 2010.

The Initiative also congratulates:

- Indian director Leena Manimekalai on receiving clearance from India's Central Board of Film Certification for **THE DEAD SEA** (GFI grant awarded in 2010) and for the film's subsequent world premiere at the 32nd Durban International Film Festival
- Indonesian director Kamila Andini for a successful world premiere of **THE MIRROR NEVER LIES** (GFI grant awarded in 2011) at the 16th Busan International Film Festival (New Currents) and its screening at the Vancouver International Film Festival.

The Global Film Initiative will accept applications for its Winter 2012 granting cycle from October 30, 2011 until the submission deadline on January 15, 2012 (applications must be postmarked by this date to be eligible for consideration). For information on applications and guidelines, please visit the Global Film Initiative's website: <http://www.globalfilm.org/programs.htm>.

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About the Global Film Initiative

The Global Film Initiative is a U.S.-based, not-for-profit organization specializing in the support of independent film from Africa, Asia, Central & Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. Founded in 2002 to promote cross-cultural understanding through the language of cinema, the Initiative awards numerous grants to deserving filmmakers from around the world each year, and supports a touring film series entitled Global Lens. For more information about the Global Lens film series and Global Film Initiative programs, please visit our [website](#) or contact us at gfi-info@globalfilm.org.

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