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Global Lens 2007 Film Series Announced

9 Films and 7 Shorts from the Developing World to Tour US Cities

New York City, NY – September 29, 2006 – The Global Film Initiative announces its fourth annual Global Lens touring film series, nine feature films and a collection of seven short films from emerging countries. “This year’s films are inventive and challenging,” notes Global Film Initiative Chair Susan Weeks Coulter. “We’re pleased to present these superb feature films, from Algeria, Argentina, Chile, China, Croatia, Indonesia, Kurdistan, and Mozambique. Their characters and stories remind us again of how much we share in our common humanity, despite the differences that makes each culture unique.”

Global Lens 2007 will premiere in January, at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Through partnerships with major cultural institutions, the series will appear in cities across America next year. As always, the films selected for the Global Lens series have received international acclaim, winning awards at film festivals around the world.

The films acquired for Global Lens 2007 are:

****Another Man’s Garden*** (Mozambique)

Director Sol de Carvalho

For a young girl who wants to study medicine in Mozambique, the obstacles extend far beyond the distractions of her boyfriend and her family. A moment of weakness or an error in judgment can cost her a place at the university, an irretrievable loss in a country with so few opportunities for women. Sol de Carvalho dedicates this film to the courage of young women who continue to strive against the odds, proving that educating a girl is not a waste of time in a land where it is perceived that “sending a girl to school is like watering another man’s garden.”

A Wonderful Night in Split (Croatia)

Director Arsen Anton Ostojic

The setting is a ghetto in the medieval city of Split, where several stories unfold between ten o’clock and midnight on New Year’s Eve. While crowds gather in the old square to listen to a rock concert, three American sailors wander the streets and alleys looking for a prostitute and a drug pusher double-crosses his dealer. A widow and her grieving child and an addict desperate for a fix are pulled into a scheme to ship heroin to Munich, and a young couple plots a rendezvous before midnight. Lives are unraveled on this “wonderful night,” amid fireworks and the countdown to midnight.

Dam Street (China)

Director Li Yu

A young woman’s indiscretion causes tremendous suffering for herself and her family. Years later, when she is still ostracized in the small, riverside town in China where her family lives, she resigns herself to singing with a shabby local song-and-dance troupe. With her family relationships strained and her personal life in disarray, the young woman forms a friendship with a fiercely protective ten-year-old boy who lives across the dam. When her prospects for the future finally begin to improve, her relationship with the boy is tested, and she must come to terms with her unresolved past.

Enough! (Algeria / France)

Director Djamila Sahraoui

Set in war-torn Algeria in the 1990s, *Barakat! (Enough!)* follows two women on the dangerous search for the younger woman's husband, a journalist whose writings resulted in his disappearance. Both women represent anachronisms in Islamist Algeria: the younger woman is a doctor, the older a nurse with vivid memories of Algeria's fight for independence. Ignoring curfews and the constant threat of ambush by armed militias, the two women challenge the men they encounter to accept them and help them with their search. Their journey leads them across the picturesque landscapes of Algeria, to a deeper understanding of how their lives were shaped by their country's history.

Fine Dead Girls (Croatia)

Director Dalibor Matanić

A report of a kidnapped child triggers an investigation that uncovers nightmarish conditions in a seedy apartment building in Zagreb. None of the residents are as they seem; when they learn the truth about each other, the pervasive climate of mistrust in the building explodes into violence. The hostility and misery of the characters' lives project vivid echoes of Croatia's recent past, as the country slowly emerges from years of ethnic violence during the Balkan war.

Kilometre Zero (Kurdistan / France)

Director Hiner Saleem

A story of ethnic conflict between Kurds and Iraqis in the context of the war between Iraq and Iran in the 1980s. The central story of the film is set at a time when Kurds were conscripted to serve in the Iraqi army, where they were brutally abused, as a despised minority in Saddam Hussein's military. *Kilometre Zero* pairs a Kurdish soldier, under orders to return the body of a dead soldier to his family, with an Iraqi taxi driver who will drive them cross-country to the dead soldier's home. Scenes between the men, in the close quarters of their truck, are interwoven with scenes of often comic incompetence of Iraqi soldiers and officers.

* **On Each Side** (Argentina)

Director Hugo Grosso

"There are moments when I feel like stepping into each of their stories," says the photographer hired to document construction of a bridge that will connect Victoria with Rosario – two towns on either side of a river. "But that is a different movie," sighs the photographer, unaware that his own story will be changed by the lives he touches with his camera. Building the bridge takes years, transforming lives on both sides of the river. It brings engineers and construction workers, even creates its own legend – "it is said that until they finish, it is not going to rain." Two carefree boys grow into teenagers on the river, as the bridge takes shape; a mysterious engineer touches the lives of the elderly sisters who rent him a room. The photographer's pictures document the process of change, but even he is unprepared for the transformation that only begins when the bridge is complete.

Of Love and Eggs (Indonesia)

Director Garin Nugroho

In frustration, a young woman calls out to her father, who stands no more than twenty feet away from her in a crowded mosque, *speak to me! I can't hear you!* The teacher hands the anguished father a microphone, whispering: *use this. She'll hear you when you use this.* To the cheers of the crowd, the father speaks into the microphone, telling his daughter how much he loves her. The film brings this gentle humor to complex relationships between parents and children, and to social and religious issues of life in and around a Jakarta mosque, through the eyes and voices of children, and the powerful imagery of a prayer rug, young love – and eggs.

The Sacred Family (Chile)

Director Sebastián Campos

"Sometimes we're so asleep we don't know what we're up to," Marco's mother says, explaining why she must rush to Santiago to see a friend who was hurt in a car accident. Family is family, she says, but for a friend you have a commitment, even on Good Friday, when her son's friends will be houseguests for Easter. Using improvised dialogue and hand-held camera work, the film captures the disintegration of the family's polite appearances at the hands of Marco's sensual and outspoken girlfriend. Adding to this potent mixture are Marco's friends – two university students facing exams, and a mysterious young woman with a vow of silence, guests for a weekend on the beach that will change all their lives.

* *Awarded post-production funding by The Global Film Initiative*

Seven short films have been compiled under the title Global Shorts, to be screened in lieu of a full-length feature film. These films are: ***The Perfect Day***, directed by Bernardo Loyola (Mexico); ***A Little Bit Higher***, directed by Mehdi Jafari (Iran); ***Your Dark Hair Ihsan***, directed by Tala Hadid (Morocco); ***Riding with Sugar***, directed by Sunu Gonera (South Africa); ***Broad Day***, directed by Rajeev Ahuja (India); ***Absent***, directed by Lucia Cedron (Argentina); and ***Girl of Faith***, directed by Luciana Bezerra (Brazil).

The Global Film Initiative

The Global Film Initiative is a non-traditional distributor specializing in independent films from the developing world. The Global Film Initiative was created to promote cross-cultural understanding through the universal language of cinema during a time of great change throughout the world. The Global Film Initiative offers grants each year to filmmakers and brings outstanding films to U.S. audiences through a 16-18 city theatrical release entitled *Global Lens*. *Global Lens* is supported by an educational outreach program to high school students. The Global Film Initiative is a 501(c)3 organization based in New York City. See www.globalfilm.org for more information.

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