



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contact:
Candace Burnham
CRBurnham@outlook.com
617-791-3710

6th FESTIVAL CINEMA INVISIBLE (FCI) ANNOUNCEMENT

- **The 6th annual Festival Cinema Invisible (FCI) International Film Festival will be held at Proctor's GE Theater in Schenectady, NY on Saturday, April 22nd and Sunday, April 23, 2017.**
- **The 6th edition brings 58 world, North American, US and regional film premiers from the Middle East and North Africa to the capital region.**
- **The 2017 program highlights animation, documentaries and dramas from and/or about the Middle East.**
- **Featured directors Anne Paq, Ala Qandil, Daby-Zainab Faidhi are scheduled to come to Schenectady to present their films "Gaza: A Gaping Wound" and "The Black Land".**

Schenectady, NY (March 22, 2017) – Festival Cinema Invisible, hosted at Proctor's GE Theater, today announced its official program selections for the 6th edition of Festival Cinema Invisible. FCI is the only film festival in upstate New York that showcases films from and about the Middle East and North Africa. FCI's annual celebration brings together cinema enthusiasts and filmmakers to discover the best "invisible cinema."

FCI 2017 will screen 58 feature-length and short films selected from over 1450 submissions representing nearly 100 countries. This year's festival features films representing Afghanistan, Belgium, Egypt, Germany, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Pakistan, Poland and the United States. The line-up includes films that include 7 world premiers as well as 9 North American premiers, 8 US premiers, 30 regional premiers and 4 festival premiers that have never been screened in the area.

The full program and screening schedule is available at <http://cinemainvisible.org/fci-2017-schedule/>

Films will screen Saturday, April 22 from 10 am – 9 pm and Sunday April 23, from 10 am – 7 pm with an open Q&A session at each screening. Directors Anne Paq and Ala Qandil are scheduled to be in attendance on Sunday at the noon screening of their film "Gaza: A Gaping Wound," and a Q&A with the directors will follow. Director Daby-Zainab Faidhi is also scheduled to be present on Sunday for the 5 pm screening of her animated film, "The Black Land".

Tickets are available at the Proctor's Theater Box Office and website. Full festival passes (which include all sessions on Saturday and Sunday) are \$40. Single-day passes are \$25, and individual session tickets are \$10.

"We are thrilled to present these moving, captivating and thought-provoking films in Schenectady," said Festival Cinema Invisible Artistic Director Scott Collins. "It's a really exciting, challenging and, ultimately, important time to bring this festival to Schenectady and we hope film enthusiasts will love our program of compelling MENA films. We hope our audience will come away with a greater understanding of the Middle East region, and that FCI can play a role in facilitating communication and understanding among nations, peoples and communities."

Women directed about half of the films in this year's festival – which is significant because women are typically underrepresented in film. For example, in 2015, only 32% of directors of films in the 10 top worldwide festivals were women.¹ Additionally, the majority of filmmakers represented at this year's Festival Cinema Invisible are under 40 years of age. They are new voices at the vanguard of millennial cinema.

Candace Burnham, Director of Public Affairs and Cultural Exchange, said, "Film is a unique medium in that it's accessible and can transcend borders and help break stereotypes. FCI 2017 features films that are based in historical and cultural traditions, but also unpack sensitive ideas of identity, childhood, exile, conflict, gender, immigration, political upheaval, censorship and oppression. We're particularly excited to screen 'Masoumeh,' by Sona Moghadam, a documentary about a single mother who survives an acid attack in Iran and then attempts to reclaim her life and help other survivors as well. It's a timely and important film that everyone must see."

About Festival Cinema Invisible

Festival Cinema Invisible (FCI) is an independent, not-for-profit venue dedicated to the celebration of Middle Eastern arts and cinema.

FCI believes there are several characteristics that can make a film "invisible"- hidden themes, being subjected to censorship in its country of origin and/or forgotten or ignored subject matter (among others).

During its previous five annual festivals and individual screenings, FCI Festivals featured over 150 Iranian and international films which were either world premiers, national premiers or regional premiers. As FCI President Mahmood Karimi-Hakak said, "What's unique about FCI is that most of the films that are screened are not only world or US premiers, but have also never been screened officially in their home countries."

More information about FCI and the 2017 Festival can be found on its website, <http://cinemainvisible.org/> or its Facebook page www.facebook.com/FestivalCinemaInvisible

Film stills, festival images, select film screeners and press passes available upon request.

For further information please contact:

Candace Burnham, 617-791-3710, CRBurnham@outlook.com

¹ <http://fortune.com/2015/10/06/women-directors-hollywood/>