

Local Features and Films That Tackle Gender, Family, and Politics in Middle East and Beyond - VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL WOMEN IN FILM FESTIVAL

February 2, 2017 (Vancouver, BC) - Women in Film and Television is pleased to present two local features, and four films reflecting diversity in the Muslim World that will premiere at the Vancouver International Women in Film Festival.

The Opening Night feature on International Women's Day is a Canadian Premiere from Iran. *Breath* follows the young and joyful girl Bahar, against the backdrop of the Iranian revolution before the devastation of the Iran-Iraq war. Directed by Narges Abyar, *Breath* weaves exquisite live action performances with animation, to reveal a child's complex experience of family, school, friendship, and social ambition.

Unveiled: The Kohistan Video Scandal (BC/Pakistan), directed by Vancouver filmmaker Brishkay Ahmed, tells the story of the state execution of four young girls after a "shameful" video surfaces of them singing and clapping in a remote village in the Kohistan region of Pakistan. The video becomes an important step towards addressing the conflict in favour of the rights and freedoms of women and youth.

A Revolution in Four Seasons (USA/Tunisia), tells the extraordinary story of two women working on opposite sides of the political spectrum to realize their visions of post-revolution Tunisia. Directed by Jessie Deeter, this penetrating documentary helps explain how Tunisia became the only country to emerge from the Arab uprisings as a functioning democracy.

Trip Along Exodus (Palestine), Uses poetry, animation, archival footage, interviews, and multimedia, tells the story of Palestine's struggle for liberation through the experience of Director Hind Shoufani's father, Dr. Elias Shoufani, who, for more than a generation, was the Arab world's leading analyst of Israeli affairs. Canadian Premiere

In Rachel Talalay's (Sherlock) local film, *On the Farm*, Elle-Maija Tailfeathers delivers a no-holds-barred performance as her character struggles to leave a cycle of addiction and sex-work to re-unite with her son. Concerned by the disappearance of friends and co-workers in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, she plays a crucial role when a social worker and police officer finally begin to investigate the disappearances eventually attributed (in part) to Robert Pickton.

The Stingray Sisters (Australia), is the story of the magnetic Eather sisters who, with stubborn humour, resist the fracking of indigenous territories in Australia. Katrina Channells' documentary explores what it means to live in a mixed family, and also how to unite communities despite youth who lose hope and elderly who pass away, redefining what it means to truly lead. North American Premiere

Anishoara (Germany/Moldova), directed by Ana-Felicia Scutelnicu. is named for a 15 year old girl living in a small village among the rolling hills of Moldova. The film follows her as she struggles to manage her desires amidst the unwanted attention of others. This coming of age story is sure to haunt viewers with its understated, compelling sensibility. North American Premiere

Lutine follows director Isabelle Broué (France) as she films a documentary on polyamory –while she tries it out herself. Blurring the boundaries of documentary and fiction, Broué’s self reflections offer a quirky, sometimes moving, backdrop to larger themes of desire, social norms and gender roles that play out in her film and life.

Where To, Miss? (Germany/India), directed by Manuela Bastian tells the story of Devki, a courageous young woman struggling to become a taxi driver in India. As Devki balances her roles as daughter, wife, mother, and person, she is waging a battle against sexism, and defending her aspirations of financial independence. North American Premiere

Opening on International Women’s Day on March 8, the 12th annual Vancouver International Women in Film Festival celebrates the best of cinema created by women. Other Festival events include: film panels, master classes, guest filmmakers, artist talks, pitch sessions, receptions, and an award gala.

The VIWFF is presented in partnership with the VIFF Vancity Theatre. WIFTV is grateful for the support of the BC Arts Council, The Province of BC, City of Vancouver, Heritage Canada, Creative BC, Telefilm Canada, Clearline, Telus, CMPA – BC Producer’s Branch, IATSE 891, UBCP, Casting Workbook, SIM Digital, IATSE 669, Pacific Backlot, CCE, Side Street Post, DGC, Finale and 24 Frames.

For more information, go to: www.womeninfilm.ca, or contact info@womeninfilm.ca