

Abu Dhabi, UAE - December 08, 2010

Abu Dhabi Film Festival Announces Final Facts & Figures for 2010, and Dates for 2011

The Abu Dhabi Film Festival announced today that its next edition will take place October 13 to 22, 2011. The Festival management also took the opportunity to look back at this year's edition, which presented ten days of exceptional cinema from October, 14 to 23. Featuring a vibrant selection of 170 films and a wide-ranging program of exciting events, ADFF welcomed more than 30,000 attendees at festival venues that included the Emirates Palace hotel and the Abu Dhabi Theater, two of the city's most iconic landmarks. The Festival's fourth edition saw a 31% increase in ticket sales, marking ADFF as one of the UAE's most anticipated events.

The local community and guests from all over the world greeted the Festival's diverse program of screenings, master classes, celebrity encounters and special events with great enthusiasm. More than 100 Q&A sessions offered audiences the opportunity to engage in conversations with international filmmakers, while master classes provided invaluable insights into such topics as DIY-filmmaking and the dynamics of drama. Special programs were dedicated to experimentation in Arab cinema, restored classics and environmental issues.

The Festival welcomed Khaled Abol Naga, Yehia el Fakharany, Lebleba and Yosra, as well as Adrien Brody, Julianne Moore, Clive Owen and Uma Thurman, all of whom engaged in illuminating encounters with the audience, offering insights into their work. Other notable guests in attendance represented a vast array of countries and film industries and included Daoud Abdel Sayed, Basma, Tarak Ben Ammar, Faouzi Bensaïdi, Ozwald Boateng, Nouri Bouzid, Gérard Depardieu, Aleksei Fedorchenko, Sulaf Fawakherji, Patricio Guzmán, Mahmoud Hemada, Rula Jebreal, Julia Kassar, Irrfan Khan, Abbas Kiarostami, Bassam Kousa, Carmen Lebbos, Doug Liman, Kim Longinotto, Mohamed Malas, Yasmine

Al Massri, Younes Migri, Shirin Neshat, D.A Pennebaker, Freida Pinto, Laura Poitras, Om Puri, Jonathan Rhys-Meyers, Julian Schnabel, George Sluizer, Elia Suleiman, Danis Tanović, Wang Bing and Asser Yassin. The guest list also included more than 370 film professionals and more than 570 members of the press.

“It was extremely gratifying to see that both our viewers from here in Abu Dhabi and our international guests embrace ADFF as one of the key places to discover outstanding films from all over the world. At this year’s edition there was a tangible eagerness to engage – whether evidenced by the many lengthy and vibrant Q&A sessions after screenings or in the meetings and encounters that took place around the inaugural SANAD

Lab’s projects, which are the next harvest of Arab cinema,” said Peter Scarlet, Executive Director of the Abu Dhabi Film Festival.

He added: “It has been a tremendous year for the Festival, in which our hard-working team of programmers assembled a selection of films that we were very proud to present under the banner of our new name and brand. Expanding our mission to support for Arab cinema through the launch of SANAD, our fund for Arab filmmakers from the Arab world, marked another major development for ADFF, and judging from the number and the high quality of the projects submitted for consideration, there is much to look forward to over the next years.”

The Festival’s fourth edition presented a selection of 70 features and 100 shorts from 43 countries, half of which hailed from the Middle East and 33 of which were made by women filmmakers. Five of the films in the line-up received post-production support from the SANAD, ADFF’s fund to support Arab filmmakers. The Festival celebrated 33 world premieres, 26 international premieres, 43 Middle East premieres and 47 Gulf premieres.

This year, the Festival received over 2,000 submissions, marking a 100% increase from 2009. Filmmakers from 103 countries submitted work, with more than 600 entries from the Middle East, including over 70 from the United Arab Emirates.

SANAD, the Festival's development and post-production fund for filmmakers from the Arab world, announced its first round of grantees in the run-up to the Festival. Twenty-seven feature-length projects were selected out of 150 submissions from 12 Arabic-speaking countries. A total of \$500,000 in grants was awarded to 17 development and 10 post-production projects.

"We welcome these encouraging figures and the many positive responses we received from our guests as a reflection of the wider cultural surge currently taking place in our region. We also welcome them as a sign that the ADF's broad range of initiatives to foster filmmaking and cinema appreciation in Abu Dhabi and beyond are beginning to bear fruit, especially with the inclusion of the Emirates Competition as a section in the festival and with the launch of SANAD. Our work is complemented by groundbreaking local initiatives in other fields of the arts here in Abu Dhabi. Events such as Abu Dhabi Art, the Abu Dhabi Festival, Abu Dhabi Classics, WOMAD and the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, along with the ongoing developments on Saadiyat Island, where the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, Louvre Abu Dhabi and Zayed National Museum are set to open in 2014, all form part of the emirate's evolving cultural fabric," said Eissa Saif Al Mazrouei, the Festival's project director.

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

The Abu Dhabi Film Festival (formerly the Middle East International Film Festival) was established in 2007, with the aim of helping to create a vibrant film culture throughout the region. The event, presented each October by the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH) under the patronage of its

chairman H.E. Sheikh Sultan Bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan, is committed to curating exceptional programs to engage and educate the local community, inspire filmmakers and nurture the growth of the regional film industry.

As the only festival in the region where works by Arab filmmakers are represented equally in competition with those by major talents of world cinema, the Festival offers Abu Dhabi's diverse and enthusiastic audiences a means of engaging with their own and others' cultures through the art of cinema. At the same time, a strong focus on the bold new voices of Arab cinema connects with Abu Dhabi's role as a burgeoning cultural capital in the region and marks the Festival as a place for the world to discover and gauge the pulse of recent Arab film.

ADFF 2010 was made possible in part through the generous support of its sponsors: L'Oréal (Official Beauty Partner); Emirates Palace and InterContinental Hotels (Hospitality Partners); Abu Dhabi Airports Company and Abu Dhabi Media Company (Contributing Sponsors); Robert WAN and CineStar (Official Suppliers); Zee Network, Zee Television, MUBI, Radio 1 and Radio 2 (Media Partners).

The Press Office is at your disposal for any questions and further information. Email press@adff.ae or call +971 2 556 4000 to find out more.

General press materials including pictures, biographies and press kits are available on:

<http://www.abudhabifilmfestival.ae/en/press/press-center/>

Password: pressadff2010

Pictures taken at the 2010 edition of the Abu Film Festival can be downloaded from our FTP server.

Site: <ftp.abudhabifilmfestival.ae>

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