

Toronto Palestine Film Festival

September 26-October 2, 2009
102A-1075 Bay St., Ste 148
Toronto, ON M5S 2B2



September 8, 2009

Press Release: For Immediate Release

TPFF Supports Palestinian Filmmakers

Toronto – Established in 2008 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the *Nakba*, the Toronto Palestine Film Festival (TPFF) is a cultural organization dedicated to showcasing the work of talented and emerging Palestinian filmmakers and artists, and bringing the historical, cultural and personal narratives of Palestinians to Toronto audiences through their work. We view our role as particularly important in relation to supporting filmmakers and artists residing in the Occupied Palestinian Territory who face great obstacles in producing, showing and distributing their works.

TPFF is dedicated to lifting the siege on Palestinian cultural production. Palestinian filmmakers such as Annemarie Jacir, member of the TPFF advisory board whose acclaimed film *Salt of this Sea* opened the inaugural TPFF, have to overcome unimaginable barriers to make their films in Palestine. For instance, Jacir, her actors and production crew were regularly denied the necessary travel permits to move to different locations. Also refused permission to film certain locations, Jacir was forced to shoot some scenes in Europe. The Israeli police regularly came onto the set and harassed her lead actor, and the Israeli Army blew up the Nazareth Restaurant half an hour after the set designer had been there. As a final insult, Jacir was denied entry into Ramallah to attend the world premiere of her film because she was deemed a security risk. Palestinian filmmakers also struggle to obtain financing for their projects that will not compromise their vision or undermine the Palestinian narrative of their film.

TPFF will continue to support Palestinian filmmakers in their ongoing struggle to produce and share their work. TPFF welcomes the discussion on the role of art in raising awareness on human rights violations that has been generated by the protest of the Tel Aviv City-to-City spotlight at the Toronto International Film Festival. We hope those weighing in on the protest will remember the extreme hardships Palestinian filmmakers and artists continue to endure in making and showcasing their work as a result of the occupation of their land.

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Resources:

- Annemarie Jacir's 'Salt of the Sea' Lauded Overseas, Not Seen in Palestine <http://www.palestine-pmc.com/details.asp?cat=3&id=1487>
- Annemarie Jacir: Denied Entry <http://bit.ly/HrxqX>
- Gaza Rappers Safe But Not Sound <http://www.tpff.ca/docs/tpff-backgrounder-gaza-rappers.pdf>
- TPFF: Toronto's Other September Film Festival (see panel "Cinema Politica: Film and the Art of Resistance" Sept 30, 3:30-5:30pm <http://www.tpff.ca/docs/tpff-press-release-08-24-2009.pdf>
- Academy under pressure over 'Paradise Now' <http://www.cbc.ca/arts/story/2006/02/13/paradise-now.html>
- Palestinian Film Looks at Suicide Bombers <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/06/movies/06para.html>

For more information or to arrange interviews with Palestinian filmmakers contact:

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