For Immediate Release

16th Annual Boston Palestine Film Festival
October 14-23, 2022

Cambridge, Mass., [September 5, 2022] - The Boston Palestine Film Festival (BPFF) returns with its 16th annual lineup of the very best films made by and about Palestinians from across the globe. The festival is excited to offer a hybrid format this season, presenting both live and streaming options. BPFF is especially excited about our return to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston for multiple screenings including opening night, after a two-year hiatus due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The festival continues the precedent set in 2020 by making its program available virtually, for audiences to stream from New England, the USA and worldwide.

The festival opens with Farha, the directorial feature debut film from Jordanian director Darin J Sallam. This award-winning film is based on a true story that happened at the onset of the Palestinian Nakba in 1948. The closing film is The Stranger, also a directorial debut by the Syrian filmmaker Ameer Fakher Eldin. Set in the Golan Heights, the film was selected as Palestine’s entry for the Best International Feature Film at the 94th Academy Awards. Both films will only be available via a one time live screening. The festival also features a wide selection of feature and short films, including the award-winning film Salma’s Home, by the Boston-based filmmaker Hanadi Elyan (in attendance for Q&A), Boycott by Julia Bacha (with Q&A), Little Palestine: Diary of a Siege by Abdallah Al-Khatib, The Devil’s Drivers by Mohammed Abugeth and Daniel Carsenty, and Huda’s Salon by Hany Abu Assad.

The festival includes 4 US premieres. All films being presented via online streaming will be available to view continuously throughout the festival period (geographic restrictions apply). For full program,
Opening Film: *Farha* (Darin J. Sallam, Narrative Feature, 2021): A 14-year-old girl in 1948 Palestine watches from a locked pantry as catastrophe consumes her home. Farha, impressively played by newcomer Karam Taher, dreams of going to school in the city, like her best friend Farida. When she finally succeeds in convincing her father, the war reaches their village. To protect her, her father locks her in a cellar, promising to return shortly, but he never does. Farha is left to witness the horrors that befall her village from the cracks in the walls of the cellar. Based on a true story, this remarkable film offers a new and chilling perspective on the Palestinian Nakba (Catastrophe).

- Winner: *Special Mention* prize at the Red Sea International Film Festival's inaugural Yusr Awards.
- Winner: *Best Euro-Mediterranean Film dealing with Women Issues-EU Award, Best Director, and Best Actress* - Karam Taher at the Aswan International Women’s Film Festival 2022
- Winner: *Jury Award* at the Malmö Arab Film Festival 2022

“The Battle of Algiers Meets The Diary of Anne Frank. An unflinching, gut-wrenching look at displacement and war in 1948 Palestine, Farha is a stunning feature film debut from Jordanian director Darin J. Sallam. Sallam has infused her first feature with heart, longing and beauty all while tracing the history of Nakba, the mass displacement of Palestinians after the Second World War.” The Globe and Mail

Screens 10/14 at 7 pm at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston MA

Closing Film: *The Stranger* (Ameer Fakher Eldin, Narrative Feature, 2021): In a small village in the occupied Golan Heights, Adnan, a desperate unlicensed doctor, played by Ashraf Barhom, experiences an existential crisis. Disinherited by his father for failing medical school in Moscow, Adnan’s life takes another unlucky turn when he encounters a man wounded in the war in Syria. This encounter shakes the doctor to his core, giving him a sense of purpose.

- Palestine’s entry for the *Best International Feature Film* at the 94th Academy Awards
- Winner: *The Edipo Re Award for Best Film* at the 78th Venice International Film Festival (Giornate Degli Autori)

Screens 10/23 at 3 pm at the Coolidge Corner Theater, Brookline MA

Afterparty follows at Hops N Scotch, Brookline MA

Feature Film: *Little Palestine (Diary of a Siege)* (Abdallah al-Khatib, Documentary Feature, 2021): In his award-winning directorial debut, Abdallah Al-Khatib offers a glimpse into the life of the residents of Yarmouk (Syria), one of the largest Palestinian refugee camps in the world. In 2015, the camp was seized by ISIS and al-Nousra Front prompting indiscriminate bombing by the Syrian government. Gradually deprived of food and electricity, the camp was cut off from the rest of the world. The siege and the shelling led to the loss of countless civilian lives as well as the destruction of the camp. In this cinematic diary, Al-Khatib records the daily deprivations of refugee life in the years that preceded the
siege but also the resistance and dignity of the camp’s residents throughout the war in Syria.

*Screens 10/15 at 11 am at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and available for streaming throughout the festival*

**Feature Film: Boycott** (Julia Bacha, Documentary Feature, 2021). Premiering in Massachusetts at the BPFF, this legal thriller traces the impact of state legislation designed to penalize individuals and companies that choose to boycott Israel. The film follows the legal battles of a news publisher in Arkansas, an attorney in Arizona, and a speech therapist in Texas. The careers of these three individuals were threatened merely for choosing to act on their political beliefs. Award-winning director Julia Bacha exposes these attacks on freedom of speech, as well as the implications of anti-boycott legislation on the lives of everyday Americans.

*Screens 10/16 at 11 am at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston with TBD guest in attendance for Q&A, and available for streaming throughout the festival*

**Featured Shorts Series: Palestine Narrative Shorts: The Dynamics of Parent and Child:** The dynamics between parents and their children take center stage in these gripping and emotional short films, that focus on a broad range of topics including pregnancy and abortion (*Hush* by Samar Qupty), eating disorder/body image (*Be Good* by Jessica Damouni), homosexuality (*Borekas* by Saleh Saadi), and independence (*Me and You* by Alexandra Muhawi-Ho).

**Distinguished Guests at our screenings include:**

Hanadi Elyan (director: *Salma’s Home*)

Hanadi Elyan is a Jordanian-Palestinian filmmaker and an assistant professor at Emerson College whose work focuses on the social issues facing women and marginalized communities. She received her MFA in Film Production/Directing from UCLA. Her film career started in Jordan where she wrote/directed the award-winning short film *Mariam’s Chance* (2013) before working as a producer of short commercial online content. In 2012, she moved to Dubai to establish her production company Reel Arab Productions. Her independent film work has focused on breaking stereotypes, particularly ones associated with Arab women, and has earned her numerous awards, including a spot in the World Economic Forum’s Global Shapers community, recognition from The Producers Guild of America, Special Jury award at the Tangiers Film Festival, the George Burns and Gracie Allen Scholarship Fellowship, among others. Her directorial debut *Salma’s Home* won Best Feature Film Global Vision at Cinequest 2022.

*Attends the free screening of Salma’s Home screens 10/20 at 7pm at the Paramount Center of Emerson College*

**About BPFF:**

Since 2007, the Boston Palestine Film Festival has been introducing Palestine-related cinema, narratives, and culture to New England audiences and beyond. The festival has featured over 500 compelling and thought-provoking films, including documentaries, dramatic features, animated films, rare early works, video art pieces, and new films by emerging artists and youth. These works from directors around the world have offered refreshingly honest, self-described, and independent views of
Palestine and its history, culture, and geographically dispersed society. The festival News page features original interviews with filmmakers and related content.

The festival has also presented other events throughout the years, including concerts, exhibits, film screenings, live storytelling events in partnership with Palestinians Podcast (2015-2020), and Arab Film Week.

The BPFF Executive Committee works year-round on an all-volunteer basis to sustain the festival.