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**The Global Film Initiative Announces Global Lens 2012 Lineup**

*Oscar-contender, first narrative feature by Rwandan filmmaker and top picks from Pusan, Morelia and FESPACO open ninth season of series*

**San Francisco, CA – December 6, 2011** - The Global Film Initiative announced today ten award-winning narrative feature films from Albania, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Iran, Iraq, Morocco, Rwanda and Turkey—including the series' first rotoscope production—that will headline the Global Lens 2012 film series.

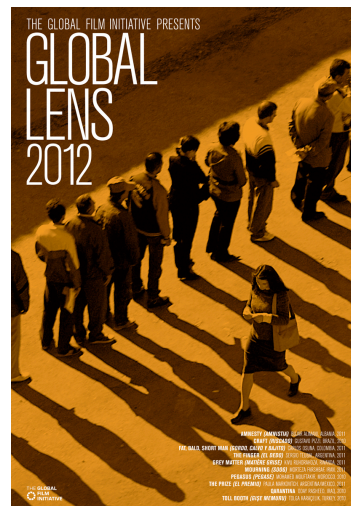
“The lineup this year is really going to surprise audiences,” says Susan Weeks Coulter, Board Chair of the Global Film Initiative. “The cinematics are strong, the tone is fresh and the stories are thought-provoking and unlike anything we’ve seen before.”

Global Lens 2012 is led by festival heavyweights that include Iranian newcomer Morteza Farshbaf's darkly comic road trip, **MOURNING** (*FIPRESCI Prize and New Currents Award, 2011 Pusan IFF*), Paula Markovitch's picturesque and beautifully acted Argentine political drama, **THE PRIZE** (*Silver Bear, 2011 Berlin IFF and Best Film, 2011 Morelia IFF*), and **PEGASUS** (*Golden Stallion, 2011 FESPACO and Best Cinematographer, 2010 Dubai IFF*)—Mohamed Mouftakir's atmospheric psychological thriller about tribes and tradition in present-day Morocco.

The series also features four critically acclaimed films by first-time directors, including Gustavo Pizzi's colorful rendering of artistic angst and ego in Rio de Janeiro, **CRAFT** (*Best Actress, 2010 Rio de Janeiro IFF*), Carlos Osuna's charming Colombian rotoscope, **FAT, BALD, SHORT MAN** (*Official Selection, 2011 Chicago IFF*), Tolga Karaçelik's acclaimed Turkish “everyman” story, **TOLL BOOTH** (*Best First Film and Best Actor, 2010 International Antalya Golden Orange Film FF*), and **GREY MATTER** (*Best Actor and Special Jury Mention, 2011 Tribeca FF*), the first feature-length narrative film from Rwanda to be directed by a native Rwandan (dir. Kivu Ruhorahoza).

The 2012 lineup is rounded out by Bujar Alimani's sensitive chronicle of life and love in the Albanian prison system, **AMNESTY** (*Official Albania Submission, 84<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards; FIPRESCI Prize and Cineuropa Prize, 2011 Festival del Cinema Europeo*), Oday Rasheed's moody Baghdad portrait of an assassin and his relationship with a troubled family, **QARANTINA** (*Official Selection, 2010 Abu Dhabi FF*), and Sergio Teubal's offbeat yet true-to-life fable of small town politics and finger-pointing, **THE FINGER** (*Best First Feature Film, 2011 Guadalajara IFF*).

Global Lens, now in its ninth season, will premiere January 12-28, 2012 at the Museum of Modern Art before embarking on a yearlong tour that includes full series screenings and festival presentations in more than fifty cities across the United States and Canada. The series will simultaneously be released throughout the year on Virgin America airlines, and is available for online preview by industry professionals via a newly established partnership with Festival Scope (<https://www.festivalscope.com>).



Global Lens 2012 films:

**AMNESTY (AMNISTIA), dir. Bujar Alimani, Albania, 2011\*\***

A new law allowing conjugal visits in Albanian prisons presents the opportunity for a sympathetic affair between a man and woman visiting their incarcerated spouses—until a prisoner amnesty threatens their fragile new bond.

**CRAFT (RISCADO), dir. Gustavo Pizzi, Brazil, 2010**

A struggling actress and celebrity impersonator lands an audition and what may be her “big break” after an inspired director recasts his film around her socially marginalized life as an underrated artist in Rio.

**FAT, BALD, SHORT MAN (GORDO, CALVO Y BAJITO), dir. Carlos Osuna, Colombia, 2011**

The prospects for a lonely middle-aged notary unexpectedly change after he joins a self-improvement group and his charismatic new boss—and strangely affable doppelgänger—takes an interest in his life.

**THE FINGER (EL DEDO), dir. Sergio Teubal, Argentina, 2011**

In the face of electoral fraud and intimidation, the severed finger of a respected local leader points the way forward for independent-minded citizens and their town’s quest for democracy after dictatorship.

**GREY MATTER (MATIÈRE GRISE), dir. Kivu Ruhorahoza, Rwanda, 2011**

After government officials decline to support his project, a determined filmmaker enlists the support of a loan shark to finance his trenchant drama about the aftermath and impact of genocide on a brother and sister.

**MOURNING (SOOG), dir. Morteza Farshbaf, Iran, 2011\***

In the wake of his parents’ disappearance, a young boy is placed in the care of his deaf aunt and uncle who, during a road trip to Tehran, engage in a silent but apparently not-so-secret debate about the child’s future.

**PEGASUS (PEGASE), dir. Mohamed Mouftakir, Morocco, 2010**

A young woman, traumatized by her dictatorial father’s insistence she be raised as a boy, finds herself the unwitting patient of a psychiatrist intent on learning the truth behind the girl’s story.

**THE PRIZE (EL PREMIO), dir. Paula Markovitch, Argentina/Mexico, 2011**

A political activist’s life-in-hiding on an isolated stretch of Argentina’s coastline is jeopardized after her seven-year-old daughter is selected to participate in a local school’s patriotic essay contest.

**QARANTINA, dir. Oday Rasheed, Iraq, 2010**

A sullen assassin, living above a dysfunctional family in Baghdad, captures the attention of the household’s unhappy mother, setting a dangerous stage for confrontation with the family’s lecherous father.

**TOLL BOOTH (GIŞE MEMURU), dir. Tolga Karaçelik, Turkey, 2010\***

An aging toll booth attendant, straining under the weight of a domineering father and suffocating work routine, finally begins to crack when faced with the emotional pressure of an unexpected romance.

Global Lens 2012 will also present the award-winning coming-of-age narrative, **STOLEN LIFE** (dir. Li Shaohong, China) as part of the Initiative's retrospective program, *Chairman's Choice*, which was established in 2009 to reintroduce exceptional films from the Global Lens Collection for theatrical exhibition. **STOLEN LIFE** originally appeared in Global Lens 2006.

\* indicates U.S. premiere

\*\* indicates U.S. premiere and official submission to Foreign Language category of 84th Academy Awards

***About the Global Film Initiative***

The Global Film Initiative is a U.S.-based international arts organization specializing in the support of independent film from Africa, Asia, Central & Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. Founded in 2002 to promote cross-cultural understanding through the language of cinema, the Initiative awards numerous grants to deserving filmmakers from around the world each year, and supports a touring film series entitled Global Lens. For more information about the Global Lens film series and Global Film Initiative programs, please visit: <http://www.globalfilm.org>.

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