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Ten New Films Awarded Funds by the Global Film Initiative

Grant recipients include Li Ruijun's pastoral chronicle of an estranged Uyghur family in China, and projects by veteran auteurs George Ovashvili and Adolfo Borinaga Alix Jr.

San Francisco, CA – April 4, 2012 – The Global Film Initiative announced today that ten film projects have been selected to receive production funding as part of the Initiative's Winter 2012 granting cycle.

“As we enter our tenth year, not only are the caliber of projects increasing with each cycle, we’re seeing a more regionally-balanced group of submissions than ever before,” says Susan Weeks Coulter, Board Chair of the Global Film Initiative. “This is a validating mark of achievement and progress—the playing fields are being leveled, allowing fresh talents to get the recognition and exposure they deserve.”

The Winter 2012 grant recipients were selected from a diverse group of applicants representing forty-three nations, and include Albanian director Iris Elezi’s debut feature, *WORLD (Berlinale Talent Campus, Hubert Bals Fund/Script Development)*; Filipino filmmaker Adolfo Borinaga Alix Jr.’s twentieth feature, *WILDLIFE (IFFR CineMart, Hubert Bals Fund/Script Development)*; and Joel Karekezi’s story of retribution and reconciliation following the Rwandan genocide, *THE PARDON (Maisha Film Lab, Berlinale Talent Campus, IFFR CineMart/Rotterdam Lab)*.

The Winter 2012 production grant recipients are:

- **THE BRIDGE (OBRANA I ZAŠTITA)**, dir. Bobo Jelčić, Bosnia & Herzegovina/Croatia
In the ethnically segregated city of Mostar, a Croatian-Catholic puts his reputation and family relations to test when he attends an old friend’s funeral in the Bosnian-Muslim side of town.
- ***CHICAMA**, dir. Omar Forero Alva, Peru
Cesar dreams of living in cosmopolitan Trujillo, but a lack of available teaching posts there takes him to a bucolic Andean village, where he unwittingly falls for his charming students and a captivating colleague.
- ***CORN ISLAND**, dir. George Ovashvili, Georgia
As a storm threatens to destroy his crops, an elderly corn farmer living on the shore of an Abkhazian river island struggles to protect his granddaughter from the influence, and allure, of a runaway soldier.
- **A FOLD IN MY BLANKET (CHEMI SABNIS NAKETSI)**, dir. Zaza Rusadze, Georgia
Dmitrij daydreams about rock climbing and other adventures to escape the monotony of his office job, but when he invents an alibi for a friend accused of murder, his once-harmless fantasy world assumes a dangerous new meaning for his life.

- **THE PARDON (IMBABAZI)**, dir. Joel Karekezi, Rwanda
After being imprisoned for the killing of ethnic Tutsis during the Rwandan genocide, Mansi must face the emotional and psychological consequences of his most personal crime: the murder of his best friend's family.
- ***THE RETURN (EL REGRESO)**, dir. Patricia Ortega, Venezuela
A young Wayuu girl narrowly escapes the massacre of her beach-dwelling community at Bahia Portete and then attempts to rebuild her life in urban Maracaibo, where she befriends a Castilian girl and learns to overcome differences in language and culture.
- ***SHIPS (FERAHFEZA)**, dir. Elif Refig, Turkey
Ali, a restless romantic, and Eda, a graffiti writer, embark on a quixotic search through Turkey's industrial port-cities, hoping to escape the suffocating routine of their daily lives by finding the ship that Ali sees only in his dreams.
- **WHERE IS MY HOME (JIA ZAI SHUI CAO FENG MAO DE DI FANG)**, dir. Li Ruijun, China
Two estranged brothers from a rural Uyghur community reluctantly come together to search for their father, who unexpectedly left home after facing the reality of dwindling grasslands and a bleak economic future for his family.
- ***WILDLIFE (KALAYAAN)**, dir. Adolfo Borinaga Alix Jr., Philippines
Julian, a young soldier stationed on the Spratly Islands during a coup d'etat in Manila, fights to maintain his grip on reality following a traumatic experience with a former comrade—and a fleeting encounter with a mermaid.
- **WORLD (BOTA)**, dir. Iris Elezi, Albania
In a remote Albanian village, employees of a small café uncover secrets about each other, and their community's murderous political past, as one of their colleagues discovers the truth behind the mysterious disappearance of her family.

**Denotes honorable mention*

The Granting Program awards fifteen to twenty grants per year, of up to \$10,000 each, to filmmakers whose work exhibits artistic excellence, accomplished storytelling and cultural perspective on daily life. Funds received from grants are used to subsidize post-production costs such as laboratory and sound mixing fees, and access to advanced editing systems.

Since the Initiative's founding in 2002, the Granting Program has awarded 122 grants to deserving film projects from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central & Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Oceania. These grants have supported the works of both new and established directors, and have made a significant impact on the growth of emerging film industries.

Recent news about previous grantees:

- **BEAUTY (SKOONHEID)**, dir. Oliver Hermanus, South Africa
Awarded Best Director and Best Actor at the 2012 South African Film and Television Awards; Official Selection of the 2012 International Film Festival Rotterdam; South Africa's official submission to the Best Foreign Language Film category of the 84th Academy Awards (Oscars). GFI grant awarded in 2010.
- **THE BODA BODA THIEVES**, dir. Donald Mugisha, Uganda
Received the VFF Talent Highlight Pitch Award at the 2012 Berlin International Film Festival. GFI grant awarded in 2011.
- **THE MIRROR NEVER LIES**, dir. Kamila Andini, Indonesia
Official Selection of the 2012 Berlin International Film Festival, 2011 Pusan International Film Festival (world premiere) and 2011 Vancouver International Film Festival. GFI honorable mention awarded in 2011.
- **MOTHER'S SOUL (TAM HON ME)**, dir. Nhuê Giang Phạm, Vietnam
Best Picture nominee at the Vietnam Cinema Association's 2012 Golden Kite Awards; Best Actress in a Muhr AsiaAfrica Feature at the 2011 Dubai International Film Festival. GFI grant awarded in 2010.
- **RED PRINCESSES (PRINCESAS ROJAS)**, dir. Laura Astorga, Costa Rica
Selected for the Films in Progress section of the 2012 Guadalajara International Film Festival. Grant awarded in 2010.
- **VOICE OF MY FATHER (BABAMIN SESI)**, dir. Özgür Doğan and Orhan Eskiköy, Turkey
Official Selection of the 2012 International Film Festival Rotterdam (world premiere). GFI grant awarded in 2011.

The Global Film Initiative's next granting cycle is Summer 2012. Applications may be submitted from May 31, 2012 until the **submission deadline on July 16, 2012**. For more information on applications, eligibility and guidelines, please visit the Global Film Initiative's website: www.globalfilm.org/programs.htm.

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About the Global Film Initiative

The **Global Film Initiative** is a U.S.-based international arts organization specializing in cultural diplomacy, education and literacy through film. Established in 2002, it has awarded numerous grants to filmmakers in emerging nations around the world, and promoted community arts and education through distribution and exhibition of its signature world cinema series, Global Lens. All proceeds from Global Lens directly support filmmakers and are reinvested in the Granting Program and other philanthropic programs of the Initiative. For more information, please visit: <http://www.globalfilm.org>.

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