

PRESS RELEASE

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PREMIERES AT THE MOVIES THAT MATTER FESTIVAL

A number of films have their first screening at the Movies that Matter Festival, including *SHOUT* by Dutch directors Ester Gould and Sabine Lubbe Bakker, and *Redlight* by Guy Jacobson. These filmmakers will be present at the festival, which will take place from 25 up to and including 31 March in 'Filmhuis Den Haag' and 'Theater aan het Spui' in the Hague. A selection of the festival's programme can be seen in Filmtheater Kriterion in Amsterdam and arthouse LUX in Nijmegen. The full programme will be available as of 1 March on www.moviesthatmatterfestival.nl.

World première

The documentary *SHOUT* follows soul mates Ezat and Bayan, who were born on the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. They have lived near the closed border with their home country Syria all their life. When they turn eighteen, they can finally go and study in the Syrian capital Damascus. Finally, their dreams will come true. But even in Damascus life proves to be far from perfect. What started out as an adventure turns into a dilemma that forces them to make an important decision. Is the grass greener on the other side? *SHOUT* is about being young and having dreams, desires and ambitions in a forgotten part of the Middle East.

Sabine Lubbe Bakker (1978) went to Syria while and after studying political science and learned Arab there. She is a professional filmmaker and writer.

Ester Gould (1975) came to the Netherlands when she was ten years old. Apart from her work in the film industry, she did research, wrote scenarios, made news items and directed a few short documentaries. *SHOUT* is both directors' first long documentary.

DOX BOX, the documentary film festival in Damascus, has selected the short TV version of *SHOUT* as its opening film on 3 March. The makers submitted a shortened version to protect one of the protagonists, who still lives in Syria. All scenes featuring this character, including those in which he gives information about the secret service, have been removed from this short version. Furthermore, the DOX BOX festival's commission was forced to censor a few film fragments.

The makers: *"We had to pull off a few James Bond-like tricks to shoot in Syria and unfortunately, all national and international films have to be approved by the regime before being screened. Yet we find it more important to be able to present the absurd and poignant issue of the Golan Heights than to focus on the few fragments that were banned."*

On Sunday 28 March at 5 p.m., the Movies that Matter Festival will present an uncensored version of the film in Theater aan het Spui.

European première

According to estimates, one million children end up in the sex industry every year. The documentary *Redlight* by Guy Jacobson tells the personal stories of two young Cambodian victims and two brave women that fight this form of child abuse: Nobel prize nominee Somaly Mam and Mu Sochua.

Author and activist Somaly Mam (1970) grew up in the slums of Cambodia and was sold to a brothel when she was twelve years old. After having been raped and abused for ten years she managed to escape with the help of a development-aid worker. Somaly has never forgotten the girls

that were left behind and until today, she defends the interests of children working in the sex industry. *Redlight* will have its premiere in 'Filmtheater Kriterion' in Amsterdam on Saturday at 2.30 p.m.

Movies that Matter Festival

The Movies that Matter Festival, previously known as the Amnesty International Film Festival, is a yearly film and debate festival about human rights and human dignity. This year's festival will take place from Thursday 25 March up to and including Wednesday 31 March in Filmhuis Den Haag and Theater aan het Spui, both in the Hague. The festival's main partners are Amnesty International, Stichting DOEN, Hivos-NCDO Cultuurfonds, the city of the Hague and the Dutch ministry of Justice. VARA and *Trouw* newspaper act as media sponsors.

END OF PRESS RELEASE

The names highlighted in bold will be present at the Movies that Matter Festival. For more information concerning the festival or requests for interviews, please contact Yvette Hoogerwerf at y.hoogerwerf@amnesty.nl, or call +31 (0)6-49423703.