
documentary film festivals Egyptian recycling community subject of Sunday's
New York Times cover piece and recent (cutting edge eco-friendly) DVD release: %
proceeds of Marina of the Zabbaleen DVD to benefit village in peril

Posted by Torch Films Press - 2009/09/30 12:12

Greetings: Pursuant to Sunday's New York Times article on Egyptian's pig slaughter and its troubled aftermath (http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/20/world/africa/20cairo.html?_r=1&em), I wanted to follow up with you on my emails about the film MARINA OF THE ZABBALEEN which focuses on the community that handled the pigs as part of the recycling system. The film's director, Engi Wassef, spent a great deal of time in this village and chose then 7-year-old Marina, and her family as the subject matter to show life as this village knew it. Now, with the pig slaughter, their livelihood is even more at stake. The film's distribution company has pledged to donate a % portion of its DVD sales to help the village. It has just been released DVD (using the latest in green DVD technology!) and is available through <http://www.torchfilms.com>. Thank you for your time. Please let me know if you'd like me to send along a copy of the film or would like to speak with the director or distributors. With regards. TORCH FILMS PRESENTS A BLUE NILE PRODUCTIONS PRODUCTION MARINA OF THE ZABBALEEN A FILM BY ENGI WASSEF ³Through Marina's magical eyes, you'll be led into the Muqqattam garbage recycling village in Cairo, Egypt. Marina spends her days riding flying elephants and dodging out of control butcher knives - she even confronts an evil witch. Despite common misconceptions, all this can happen in a documentary. Marina of the Zabbaleen transforms a squalid landfill village into a beautiful, dream-like portrait of family, childhood, and spirituality.² - Engi Wassef Marina of the Zabbaleen is a cinematic documentary feature that premiered at the 2008 Tribeca Film Festival to all sold-out screenings and impressive audience engagement. Director Engi Wassef, an alumna of the Tribeca All Access program, became the youngest female director ever with a feature in the festival. The festival's Artistic Director, Peter Scarlet, personally introduced Marina at several screenings and was quoted as calling it one of my favorite films of the festival. Among its other accolades, the film won a Muhr Award at the 2008 Dubai International Film Festival. In addition to the film's engaging story and Marina's big dreams (she aspires to be a doctor), the film portrays the resourceful Zabbaleen, a Coptic Christian community of recyclers whose entrepreneurial waste management system produces the highest rate of recycling in the world. Their model has inspired systems in Los Angeles and other major cities worldwide. The release of Marina is also timely. As reported in The New York Times, The Economist, The Wall Street Journal, the Financial Times, the Los Angeles Times, and elsewhere in May 2009, in reaction to the recent swine flu outbreak, the Egyptian government ordered the slaughter of all of the country's pigs - the vast majority of which were raised by the Coptic Christian Zabbaleen and used integrally in the first phase of the recycling process. For almost a century, the Zabbaleen had raised pigs to consume the thousands of tons of organic waste generated daily by Cairo's residents. The ramifications of the pig cull are far-reaching, both devastating the livelihood of this minority community and imperiling Cairo's entire system of waste management. Cairo is the largest producer of waste on the African continent. Yet, the reasons for the pig cull are based at least as much in Egypt's religious and political context, as on scientific reasoning. We will allocate 10% of gross retail sales revenues of the film to help the community survive its current dislocation and again reach sustainability. Our unique network of partners, which includes influential green organizations such as Net Impact, is collectively helping us in that effort. With inspiration from the Zabbaleen's thorough recycling system, distribution of the film will set the global standard for an environmentally and socially responsible independent motion picture release, serving as a benchmark for green film distribution. Mindful that Marina comes from a family of paper sorters, the film's marketing campaign has been completely paperless, to date. Digital marketing and distribution processes are integral to the release. Theatrical distribution will utilize vanguard digital cinema technology, and innovative DVD distribution will reduce the carbon footprint of the process by more than 50%, on a per unit basis, from that of standard industry practice. Torch Films is utilizing the greenest DVD technology available, the Flex DVD created by CD Digital Card, which uses 50% less polycarbonate plastic material than traditional DVDs, emits 50% less CO2 in manufacturing, and eliminates the necessity of non-biodegradable bonder. Marina of the Zabbaleen is the first feature film to utilize this DVD technology. 100% soy-based inks will be used for all printing, and DVD packaging will be constructed from 95% recycled and 100% recyclable materials. Torch Films is a global feature film financing, production, and distribution company founded in 2008. Torch is one of the few companies, and the only film company, selected for Mayor Bloomberg's new entrepreneurship incubator initiative for New York City. Press Contacts Josie Diels and Marina Garcia-Vasquez Josie: +1.917.514.0485 Marina: +1.415.317.0825 E-mail: pr

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