



2 July 2009

## **JORDANIAN FEATURE FILM LAUNCHES 2009 ARAB FESTIVAL**

Minister Assisting the Premier on the Arts, Virginia Judge today officially launched the 2009 Arab Film Festival Australia – a showcase of films from diverse Arabic-speaking cultures.

Ms Judge said the collection of films at this year's festival included the first Jordanian feature film to be screened in Australia, *Captain Abu Raed*, which premieres on opening night.

"In five short years, the Festival's organisers have created a major event on Sydney's cultural calendar, drawing some of the world's top class films to our great city," Ms Judge said.

"I am proud that the Rees Government, through Arts NSW and Screen NSW has contributed more than \$1 million over the next three years to support the Information and Cultural Exchange, which runs the festival.

"We are committed to supporting our creative industries and continuing Australia's most vibrant film and screen culture here in NSW."

Ms Judge said this year's program displays home-grown film-making talent alongside films from countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

"The festival showcases a diversity of international flavours as well as a range of narratives that are equally diverse – from comedy and drama to documentaries and animation," Ms Judge said.

"This year's line-up includes Palestinian rappers, secret romance and an Arabic take on *The Lord of the Flies*, ensuring that there is something for everyone at the Festival."

Ms Judge also congratulated the Information and Cultural Exchange on their ongoing success, particularly in connecting Western Sydney's Arabic-speaking communities.

"The Arab Film Festival has been hugely successful and has screened more than 100 films to date," she said.

Ms Judge said the Festival will be touring nationally for the first time later this year with screenings in Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Canberra.

The 2009 Arab Film Festival Australia will run from July 2 until July 5 at the Riverside Theatres in Parramatta. For further details on the Festival visit [www.arabfilmfestival.com.au](http://www.arabfilmfestival.com.au)