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**For Immediate Release**

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**THREE LOCAL DOCUMENTARIES ABOUT IRAQ  
TO PREMIERE DECEMBER 7 AT MACALESTER COLLEGE**

*The latest videos in the Iraqi Voices series present  
a beyond-the-headlines look at Iraq in 2015.*

St. Paul - The Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project (IARP) will premiere three new short documentaries on December 7, 2015, 7:30 p.m., in the Ruth Stricker Dayton Campus Center at Macalester College. The three new documentaries, written and directed by Twin Cities-based Iraqi refugees, are the latest installment of IARP's ongoing Iraqi Voices initiative.

Free and open to the public, the screening will be followed by a discussion with Iraqi-American film directors Adnan Shati and Jamal Ali and moderated by *Iraqi Voices* producer Nathan Fisher. An Iraqi tea and sweets reception will follow.

*Iraqi Voices* is an ongoing collaborative video initiative that helps Iraqis in Minnesota transform their stories into short documentaries. Since 2012, *Iraqi Voices* has produced thirteen short documentaries bravely directed by recent

Iraqi immigrants to Minnesota. The six films produced in 2014 collectively won the Audience Award at the 9th Mizna Twin Cities Arab Film Festival.

This year, the films focus on events occurring back home in Iraq. The films highlight the anti-corruption protests and demands for basic services occurring weekly in cities across Iraq, along with the dangers that middle-class Iraqi professionals continue to face as they attempt to rebuild their shattered country. Iraqi-Americans report on recent travels to Iraq and narrate these beyond-the-headlines stories of current events inside Iraq with frankness and emotion.

"As Iraqi refugees, we have been through so much and film is a great outlet for us to express ourselves and gives us a cultural platform on which to reach a mainstream American audience," said Jamal Ali, the director of one of the films. "Through art, we can break down stereotypes and directly tell other Americans who we are and why we as new Americans are here."

Based in Minneapolis, the Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project (IARP) facilitates artistic and cultural dialogue between Iraqis and Americans. IARP presents authentic Iraqi and American voices to counter negative stereotypes, build mutual understanding and respect, and provide a platform for dialogue. The organization seeks to move individuals from a focus on war and violence to a focus on dialogue, commonalities, and shared hopes for the future.

*Produced by the Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project and Northern Monday Films, Iraqi Voices is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.*

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## PROMOTING RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES AND IRAQ.

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