



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

C: Ben Fowlie, 617.817.5376

February 20, 2012

THE DOCYARD PRESENTS **ALMA HAR'EL'S BOMBAY BEACH** AT THE BRATTLE THEATRE, MARCH 5

**Best Documentary at Tribeca Film Festival Captures Life on the  
Salton Sea with a Poetic, Dreamlike Portrait of Rural America**

CAMBRIDGE, MA — The DocYard, Boston's premiere showcase for documentary film, is proud to present ***Bombay Beach (2011)***, the first feature-length film by renowned video artist and music video/commercial director Alma Har'el. ***Bombay Beach*** is a documentary-drama with dreamlike musical dance elements describing a small community near the Salton Sea in California. A visual portrait of the people living on the fringes of the lost American dream, this award-winning film festival favorite is a creative tribute to the dreamers who populate its surreal landscape. The event is co-presented by Harvard's Sensory Ethnography Lab and Film Studies Center and will screen March 5 at 8pm at the historic Brattle Theatre followed by an exclusive, in-person Q&A with Alma Har'el.

The rusting relic of a failed 1950s development boom, the Salton Sea is a barren Californian landscape often seen as a symbol of the failure of the American Dream. *Bombay Beach*, a small community on the eastern shore, was once a busy resort town whose vestiges remain as a shanty ghost town that is home to 100 people who still reside there.

True to her roots as a photographer, video artist, and music video director, Alma Har'el crafts an adamantly atypical and artistically innovative film telling the story of three protagonists: Benny Parrish, a young boy diagnosed with bipolar disorder whose troubled soul and vivid imagination create both suffering and joy for him and his complex and loving family; CeeJay Thompson, a black teenager and aspiring football player who has taken refuge in *Bombay Beach* hoping to avoid the same fate of his cousin who was murdered by a gang of youths in Los Angeles; and that of Red, an ancient survivor, once an oil field worker, living on the fumes of whiskey, cigarettes and an irrepressible love of life.

***Bombay Beach*** is a dreamlike poem that sets these personal stories to a stylized melding of observational documentary and choreographed dance, to music specially composed for the film by **Zach Condon** of the band ***Beirut***, and songs by **Bob Dylan**. The result is a moving and madly inventive documentary experience—an evocative, symbolic portrait of rural America and its inhabitants.

80 min. Watch the trailer at <http://vimeo.com/19572656>.

**Best Documentary Feature, Tribeca Film Festival**  
**Emerging Cinematic Vision, Camden International Film Festival**  
**Special Jury Mention, Sheffield Doc Fest**

“Hybrid doc knockout!” -- **The Village Voice**

“A beautiful, quirky, and ultimately very moving film about the American Dream as it teeters on the edge of a desert sea.” -- **Terry Gilliam**

“A documentary that is as much MTV as PBS, An awesomely fresh piece of cinema!” -- **IndieWire, Spout**

“The movie constantly upends all the usual nonfiction tropes!” -- **Time Out NY**

“**[Bombay Beach]** will remain valuable as a piece of art, and as a recording of an important American story; but in its very production it was a valuable community service to the people of Bombay Beach. It is a bizarre amalgam of Busby Berkeley, Michel Gondry, and Harmony Korine.... purists might prefer a more distanced and clinical approach to the subject matter, but Har'el has created a new way of dealing with a documentary subject.”

-- **Nicholas Deigman, Berlinale Talant Campus Critic Circle**

The DocYard's 2012 Winter season screens at the Brattle Theatre every other Monday from January 23 to April 16. The series continues to offer an incredible array of nonfiction and documentary works, with stories about fights against bureaucracy, racism and personal demons. All screenings begin at 8pm, followed by a Q&A moderated by Boston-based filmmaker Chico Colvard, and an after-party at the Crimson Lounge in Harvard Square.

Individual tickets for each film are \$10 and can be purchased online at [www.brattletheatre.org](http://www.brattletheatre.org) or prior to show time at the Brattle Theatre box office.

For more information on the DocYard and its 2012 Winter Season, visit [www.thedocyard.com](http://www.thedocyard.com).

## **UPCOMING SCREENINGS AT THE DOCYARD'S 2012 WINTER PROGRAM**

**March 19**

***BATTLE FOR BROOKLYN (2010)***

**Q&A with director Michael Galinsky and Suki Hawley**

*BATTLE FOR BROOKLYN* follows the story of reluctant activist Daniel Goldstein as he struggles to save his home and community from being demolished to make way for a professional basketball arena and the densest real estate development in U.S. history.

**April 2**

***SCENES OF A CRIME (2011)***

**Q&A with director Grover Babcock**

*SCENES OF A CRIME* explores a nearly 10-hour interrogation that culminates in a disputed confession and an intense, high-profile murder trial in New York state in which detectives, prosecutors, witnesses, jurors and the suspect himself offer conflicting accounts of exactly what happened in this mysterious and disturbing true-crime documentary.

**Closing Night Film – April 16**

***MARATHON BOY (2010)***

**Skype Q&A with director Gemma Atwal**

*MARATHON BOY* is the story of a four-year-old boy who is plucked from the slums of India by his coach and trained to become India's greatest runner, but what starts in hope turns into the stuff of film noir: a tale of greed, envy and broken dreams.

**THE DOCYARD**

Created in 2010 by Sara Archambault, Sean Flynn and Ben Fowlie, the DocYard has quickly become one of Boston's most respected cinematic events, screening a combination of new works from emerging filmmakers and classics from some of the region's most distinguished filmmakers like Frederick Wiseman and Ross McElwee. The series was recently recognized with a special commendation from the Boston Society of Film Critics for "presenting a vibrant forum for the Boston documentary community to see important new non-fiction works and to have meaningful discussions with the filmmakers."

The DocYard is presented by the LEF Foundation and the Camden International Film Festival with generous support from the Center for Independent Documentary, Irving House at Harvard, Modulus Studios, Nesson Media Boston, Rule / Boston Camera, Tommy Doyle's Crimson Lounge and the Cambridge Arts Council/Massachusetts Cultural Council.

For more information on the DocYard and its 2012 Winter Season, visit [www.thedocyard.com](http://www.thedocyard.com)

###