

# Press Release

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## Scandar Copti and Yaron Shani win the FACE prize at the Istanbul Film Festival for "Ajami" – Jury Special Mention goes to Philippe Van Leeuw for "The Day God Walked Away"

Istanbul, 17.04.2010 – Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, presented the fourth Film Award of the Council of Europe (FACE) to Scandar Copti and Yaron Shani, during the closing ceremony of the 29<sup>th</sup> international film festival in Istanbul.

The decision of the Human Rights Jury was announced by its President Marco Bechis, winner of FACE in 2009 for "Birdwatchers", who described "Ajami" as an "original tale of a multilayered society where different religions, beliefs, traditions and interests have to co-exist". "The two directors have skilfully found the right cinematographic language to tell this powerful story," the jury said. "Ajami" takes its name from a multi-ethnic neighbourhood in Jaffa, Israel. The film starts with a revenge killing, a case of mistaken identity whose repercussions lead to tragic results.

Jury members, "*not to forget Rwanda*", found Philippe Van Leeuw worthy of a Special Mention for his film "The Day God Walked Away".

This year, 11 films were entered in the human rights section (\*).

The prize awarded to Scandar Copti and Yaron Shani consists of a bronze sculpture and a cash prize of 10 000 euros, partly financed by Eurimages, the Council of Europe's fund for the co-production, distribution and exhibition of European cinematographic works.

The decision to create the FACE award reflects the Council of Europe's commitment to both cinema and cultural diversity, and is recognition of the contribution that the world of cinema can make in developing human rights worldwide.

The FACE award is an annual collaboration between the Council of Europe and the International Istanbul Film Festival.

(\*) Further information is available at [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int) or [www.iksv.org/film](http://www.iksv.org/film)

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