

IVCA: Muslim Heritage Film wins international movie awards

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A short film about the scientific heritage of Muslim civilisation has won a series of international awards. 1001 Inventions and The Library of Secrets, starring Oscar-winning screen legend Sir Ben Kingsley, won four awards at the International Visual Communications Association (IVCA) ceremony held in London on the 26th March 2010.

Judges commended the short film saying it was "in a league of its own" awarding it four prestigious awards:

Gold Award for Best Education Film

Gold Award for Best Photography

Silver Award for Best Drama

Silver Award for Best Original Music

The movie was produced by the Foundation for Science Technology and Civilisation (FSTC) and The Edge Picture Company as an introductory film for the 1001 Inventions exhibition that was launched at London's Science Museum in January 2010. Described by critics as London's most successful new exhibition, it received more than 100,000 visitors in its opening weeks.

The landmark exhibition, sponsored by the Jameel Foundation, has proved so popular with visitors that its residency at the Museum has been extended by two months until the summer and the Museum's Director, Prof. Chris Rapley, has described their latest attraction as a "blockbuster".

In the movie a group of young school children take a field trip to a dusty old library after their teacher challenges them to research the era known as the "Dark Ages" civilisation, a chore they resent until they meet a mysterious librarian (Kingsley) who takes them on a journey to the past to uncover the thousand years of scientific and cultural excellence that took place outside Western Europe between the 7th and 17th century.

The movie also stars three rising young actors: Courtney George, Rhiann Connor and James Holly. "I play quite a sarcastic character called Luke," explained Rhiann, "who doesn't really want to study the Dark Ages because it sounds boring. And when Sir Ben first meets him they obviously don't get on. So there's a bit of a spark there. A little bit of tension. And that made the acting experience really fun and interesting."

The film's Executive Producer, Prof. Salim Al-Hassani, commented: "We were fortunate to get such an amazing cast of actors for the film, and it is now hard to imagine anyone else could have played those roles. The chemistry between the actors was exceptional. They looked like they were really enjoying themselves bringing to life 1000 years of under-appreciated history. And the popularity of the 1001 Inventions exhibition is down, in no small part, to the exceptional acting and production talent involved in the Library of Secrets film. The Edge Picture Company, which produced the film for us, has achieved something quite amazing as a result."

The film 1001 Inventions and The Library of Secrets can be seen as part of the 1001 Inventions exhibition at London's Science Museum, and can be viewed online at www.1001inventions.com. The exhibition is free to the public, seven days a week, and runs from the 21st January to 30th June 2010.

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