

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Documentary Explores Coming of Age as a Syrian Immigrant in the US

Wingate, N.C. – October 2, 2017 - The Batte Center at Wingate University and Union County Community Arts Council present a screening of the film *Dalya's Other Country* as part of The Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Films and Filmmakers series at The Batte Center's McGee Theater on Wednesday, October 11, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.. Filmmakers Julia Meltzer and Mustafa Rony Zeno will lead a discussion about their film and work with the audience after the film screening.

Dalya's Other Country follows Syrian refugees Dalya and her mother Rudayna as they rebuild their lives in Los Angeles. Shot over three years, the documentary captures Dalya's growth into a young adult as the only Muslim student at Holy Family Catholic High School for Girls. As a newly-single parent, Rudayna must learn how to nurture her daughter and embark on finding a way to earn a living. Together, they deal with quintessentially American moments such as basketball games, talent shows, proms, college applications as well as the existential dread of terrorist attacks at home in the United States and around the world.

"Dalya and Rudayna's move to Los Angeles is not the typical Syrian refugee story," explained director Julia Meltzer. "They are a middle class family with American citizenship; they were not suffering life in a refugee camp or trying to cross the Mediterranean in a raft; but they were nonetheless struggling to adjust to a new culture and the loss of their home. Their story offers a lens into how a traditional Sunni woman and young girl try to hold onto their customs and traditions within the US."

Julia Meltzer, director and producer for *Dalya's Other Country*, is an award-winning filmmaker and the founder and director of Clockshop, an arts organization. Her previous film, *The Light in Her Eyes*, about a

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Qur'an school for girls in Damascus, was broadcast on PBS' *POV* in 2012 and toured with the Sundance Institute's Film Forward program. She is a recipient of grants from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation and was a senior Fulbright fellow in Damascus, Syria from 2005 to 2006.

Mustafa Zeno, co-producer for *Dalya's Other Country*, is a filmmaker and photographer who grew up in Aleppo, Syria and now lives in his birthplace, Los Angeles. His work focuses on hyphens and fringes within culture and religion. Most recently, Zeno was a producer on the interactive documentary *KTOWN92* that explores the 1992 Los Angeles riots through the stories of greater Koreatown, directed by Grace Lee. Zeno was formerly director of the Arab Film Festival in Los Angeles.

Tickets to the Southern Circuit films are free. Electronic tickets are available online at www.battecenter.org or carolinatix.org. Tickets are available at the Batte Center Box Office by calling 704-233-8300 or in person (403 N. Camden Rd, Wingate, NC, 28174) during regular box office hours: Tuesday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

The Southern Circuit is a program of South Arts with screening supported in part by a grant from South Arts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts. This is a collaborative project of The Batte Center and the Union County Community Arts Council with major support from the Wingate University Lyceum program.

Learn more: www.battecenter.org

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About The Batte Center

Opened in 1999, the George A. Batte, Jr. Fine Arts Center presents events in the Hannah Covington McGee Theatre, Plyer-Griffin Recital Hall and Austin Auditorium. A five-minute drive from Monroe and 29 miles southeast of Charlotte, The Batte is just off of Highway 74. Free parking is available and all three performance spaces offer full wheelchair accessibility.

About Wingate University

Wingate University serves more than 3,600 students on three campuses in North Carolina. Founded in 1896, the University offers 35 undergraduate majors as well as graduate and professional programs in the health sciences, business, education and sport management. Wingate provides students with the tools and support needed to be engaged global citizens and to have an extraordinary career and life.

To view current news, video and stories, go to www.wingate.edu.