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**CELEBRATE EARTH DAY WITH TWO ACCLAIMED DOCUMENTARIES
ON PBS'S INDEPENDENT LENS**

***Dirt! The Movie Reveals the Hidden World of Soil,
Earth's Most Valuable Source of Fertility;
Garbage Dreams Looks at a Community in Cairo Who are Far Ahead of Modern "Green" Initiatives***

(SAN FRANCISCO, CA) – The PBS series *Independent Lens*, hosted by Maggie Gyllenhaal, will celebrate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day with two compelling documentaries that will inspire viewers to reduce, reuse, and recycle this April. First up is the broadcast premiere of *Dirt! The Movie*, an insightful and timely film that tells the story of the glorious and unappreciated material beneath our feet, followed by the broadcast premiere of *Garbage Dreams*, which looks at a community outside of Cairo, Egypt that recycles 80 percent of the city's trash.

Premiering April 20, *Dirt! The Movie*, directed and produced by Bill Benenson and Gene Rosow, takes you inside the wonders of the soil. It tells the story of Earth's most valuable and underappreciated source of fertility, from its miraculous beginning to its crippling degradation. Just one teaspoon of dirt contains an amazing billion organisms, all working in remarkable balance to maintain and sustain a series of complex, thriving ecosystems that impact our daily lives. Inspired by *Dirt: The Ecstatic Skin of the Earth*, William Bryant Logan's acclaimed book, *Dirt! The Movie* deftly combines science and humor, digging into the history and current state of the living organic matter from which we come from, and where we will all one day return. Shot in over 20 locations, including Argentina, Brazil, France, India, Kenya, and several regions of the United States, the documentary features more than 25 renowned global visionaries offering new ideas for repairing this natural resource with practical, viable solutions.

Filmed over four years, director Mai Iskander's *Garbage Dreams* goes inside the world of Egypt's Zaballeen (Arabic for "garbage people") to reveal the lives of two teenage boys born into the trash trade. Premiering on April 27, the film reveals how, for generations, the residents of Cairo have depended on the Zaballeen to collect their trash, paying them only a minimal amount for their garbage collection services. These entrepreneurial garbage workers survive by recycling 80 percent of all the garbage they collect, creating what is arguably the world's most efficient waste disposal system. Recycling to lift themselves out of poverty, the Zaballeen have, through necessity, devised ingenious solutions to one of the world's most pressing problems.

The broadcast of *Garbage Dreams* is accompanied by the *Garbage Dreams* Game, in which players assume the role of the Zaballeen, Cairo's "garbage people." The game demonstrates that recycling is not just good for the environment; it's also sound economic practice.

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Players start with cash and expenses, one very hungry goat, one neighborhood, and one paper recycling factory. To grow their business and build efficiency, players can make investments in new equipment to recycle other materials, buy extra trucks, hire workers, or expand into wealthier neighborhoods.

Players sort through trash and recycle what can be recycled in Cairo — paper, organics, aluminum, tin, plastic, and glass — all against a ticking clock. Players challenge both eco-savvy and quick instincts to sort through trash piles with the speed, strategy, and efficiency required to match the 80 percent recycling rate of the Zaballeen within 12 rounds of play.

Corresponding lesson plans for grades 9-12 complement the game and the film, and further explore the issue of recycling and the globalized economy.

About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning documentary series airing Tuesday nights at 10 PM on PBS (check local listings). *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and PBS, and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen. Further information about the series is available at www.pbs.org/independentlens.

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