

WEXNER CENTER MEDIA ALERT

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IRANIAN FILMMAKER KIAROSTAMI CANCELS VISIT TO WEXNER CENTER DUE TO VISA DIFFICULTIES

Acclaimed Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami's appearance at the Wexner Center for the Arts on October 3 has been canceled, due to the U.S. government's refusal to provide him with an entry visa.

Widely regarded as one of the greatest directors in the world, Kiarostami had been scheduled for a three-city U.S. tour to introduce his latest film, *Ten*, scheduled for its American premiere at the New York Film Festival, followed by presentations at the Wexner Center (October 3) and at Harvard University. The film will be presented at the Wexner Center as scheduled, but without Kiarostami's personal introduction.

In a faxed letter dated September 18 sent to the Film Society of Lincoln Center and copied to the Wexner Center and Harvard University, Kiarostami wrote, "I was refused an entry visa to the United States of America, despite the exceptional circumstances and your kind attention as well as the protection and help of many friends." Kiarostami had applied for a visa in Paris early in September.

Named "Director of the Decade" by a poll of international and American critics in 1999, Kiarostami is acclaimed for his lyrical, meditative style of filmmaking that uses simple stories to comment on universal human conditions. *Ten*, screening October 3, is an enlightening look at the condition of women in present-day Teheran. *ABC Africa*—commissioned by UNESCO last year and to be screened at the Wexner Center October 10—movingly portrays the plight of Ugandan children orphaned by AIDS crises and civil war. A third Kiarostami film, *Through the Olive Trees*, will be screened October 11 at the Wexner Center.

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