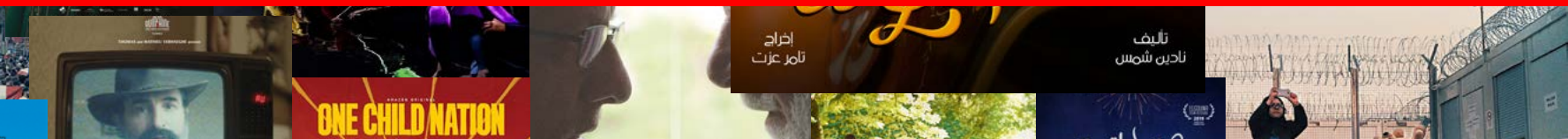




New Edition.. Special Atmosphere



Festival Director

Intishal Al Timimi

Editor in Chief

Mohamed Kandil

Art Director

Ahmed Atef Megahed

Editorial Manager

Nahed Nasr

Editors

Hani Mustafa

Mohamed Fahmy

Ali El Kashoty

Eman Kamal

Copy Editing and Translation

Amy Quotb

Head of Press Office

Ola El Shafey

Graphic

Al Haitham Nagdy

Nermien El Bana



Aladdin is Here!

«Hey! My name is Mena Massoud, and I just wanted to confirm my participation in El Gouna Film Festival this year, in September of 2019. I'm going to be there, and I think it's going to be a fantastic festival. So, can't wait!» Those were the words on a Facebook post by the Egyptian-Canadian film actor. Massoud is known for his leading role in Aladdin (2019) by Guy Ritchie, starring Will Smith. Massoud will be the guest of the third edition of GFF.

Intishal Al Timimi, Festival Director, states: "GFF is an international festival that is based in the Arab region; its identity heavily depends on the balance between its international, Arab, and Egyptian aspects. Thus, the international success of an Arab filmmaker is an opportunity to celebrate Arab filmmakers everywhere." He explained, saying that the festival also has invited North American-Egyptian stars Rami Malek. So far, Massoud's schedule is flexible enough to allow him to attend the Festival. For Malek, he might be currently busy working on his new role in No Time to Die.

Visit Ihsan Abdel Quddous' Home

Those who are familiar with the works of the late prominent Egyptian short story writer, novelist, and journalist Ihsan Abdel Quddous –either by reading his books or watching many films based on his work– will discover a different and interesting part of his life at the third edition of GFF.

On the 20th of September, an exhibition will be held at the TU Berlin as part of the festival's celebration of Abdel Quddous' 100th birth anniversary. The exhibition will showcase many of the personal items that belonged to the writer, borrowed from the house where lived most of his life.

The exhibited items includes the wooden desk where he used to write his literature, and portraits drawn for him by many of the most talented Egyptian artists, which were hanged at his house in Zamalak. The exhibition also showcases originals of the first editions of his books, and original posters of his films.

Many more secrets and surprises will be revealed in time. Ahmed Abdel Quddous, the younger son of the late writer, stated that it is the first time that his father's items are to be showcased in a museum-like exhibition. He commented: "I hope that this exhibit at El Gouna Film Festival highlights the importance of preserving our great artists' legacy and I am proud of this step."

Throughout our preparation journey for this exhibition, we discovered a treasure trove of Abdel Quddous' personal belongings, such as exquisite furniture, magnificent paintings, the author's prestigious certificates of appreciation, handwritten documents from his collection of fiction and journalistic works, rare photographs, and many more. This discovery promises to create a rich collection for an exceptional exhibition, which will take place from September 21 to 27, 2019, at the TU Berlin El Gouna Campus.



“The exhibited items includes the wooden desk where he used to write his literature, and portraits drawn for him by many of the most talented Egyptian artists





Experts' Chat

CineGouna Bridge is meeting point and a forum for dialogue between different cinematic voices, which serves as a link between filmmakers from the Arab world and their international counterparts. In this year's edition, the CineGouna Bridge topics tackle dozens of current and controversial issues in cinema through its series of roundtables.

Among the topics is 'Refugee Voices in the Film Industry', a roundtable sponsored by IEFTA. It will be moderated by award-winning filmmaker and communications expert Ragnhild Ek. The participant panelists are Daniela Cichella, senior manager at UNHCR; award-winning filmmaker Amin Dora; humanitarian and social work specialist Thuraya Ismail; human dignity and women's empowerment advocate Shaden Khallaf; acclaimed Jordanian actress and producer Saba Mubarak; renowned Syrian actor Qays Sheikh Najib; and Egyptian film director and screenwriter Amr Salama.

Another panel discussion is entitled 'The Role and Impact of Film Festivals', and will be moderated by film critic Melanie Goodfellow. The panelist list includes Sitora Alieva, director of the Sochi International Film Festival; renowned film critic Cameron Bailey; award-winning journalist and film critic Nashen Moodley; editor and publisher of Cinema Scope magazine, Mark Peranson; and associate programmer of film and television, Shayna Weingast.

'African Cinema: Past, Present and Future' is another round table, moderated by Loïc

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The last round table is entitled 'Nature of the Boundaries Between Documentary and Fictional Filmmaking'



Magneron, president of WIDE. The panelists are French-Moroccan director, producer and screenwriter Nabil Ayouch; acclaimed Moroccan film producer Sarim Fassi Fihri; award-winning film producer Elias Ribeiro; and head of marketing and advertising at

the European Film Market, Jana Wolff. In addition, 'The State of Film Distribution' round table will be conducted in partnership with Film Independent and the U.S. Embassy in Egypt, and will be moderated by Lebanese producer Myriam Sassine. The panelists are the director of development at Adult Swim, Missy Laney; the director of distribution at ITVS, Jordana Meade; and the accomplished film executive and consultant Rebecca Sosa.

'The Art and Science of Financing' will be moderated by Leo Barraclough, the international features editor at Variety. The panelists are Jordanian-Canadian producer Rula Al Nasser; Egyptian-American film producer Dina Emam; narrative film and documentary producer Wendy Ettinger; deputy director of European Film Promotion (EFP) Jo Mühlberger; and the director of the Hot Docs Industry Programs, Elizabeth Radshaw.

The last round table is entitled 'Nature of the Boundaries Between Documentary and Fictional Filmmaking'. It will be moderated by Alessandra Speciale, a consultant for African and Arab countries at the Venice International Film Festival. The panelists are the Oscar nominee and member of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Talal Derki; renowned writer, journalist and director Caroline Fourest; audio-visual archive researcher and award-winning film director Suhaib Gasmelbari; Egyptian film director Marouan Omara; as well as film director Mohamed Siam.

Listen to Fellini



Paying homage to the timeless works of music that accompanied some of the most memorable films GFF in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy in Egypt, will host Cinema in Concert on Wednesday, September 25, 2019. The program of the 3rd edition's Cinema in Concert is divided into two segments. The first segment is entitled 'Hits of Hollywood', and the second comes under the title 'Homage à Nino Rota', and celebrates the composer's works for films by Federico Fellini and Luchino Visconti.

The concert will be conducted by Maestro Ahmed El Saedi, the main founder and chairman of the Egyptian Philharmonic Society. According to El Saedi, Rota's segment will be presented for the first time in the world "It is especially composed for El Gouna Film Festival" he said. Through Cinema in Concert, El Gouna Film Festival honors the exceptional talents of musicians in film, and celebrates the music; the integral element that has a unique and powerful influence on cinematic production.



GFF2019 Lineup Aspiring and Inspiring

Nahed Nasr

The 3rd edition of GFF continues to screen a number of acclaimed and awarded feature films that were recognized at prestigious international festivals such as the Cannes Film Festival, the Berlinale, the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival and the Sundance Film Festival. The festival is also continuing its role which was started from the first round to discover international and Arab aspiring filmmakers in its three main competitions. Intishal Al Timimi, Festival Director, says "We continue to keep our promise of showcasing some of the best international and Arab works of the year. Our complete program will comprise about 84 of the best feature narratives, feature documentaries and short films—whether award-winning films or those that have had their international premieres in prestigious film festivals. Some of the selected films this year have been supported by GFF in its previous editions, and now they are proudly taking part in major film festivals around the world."

A Sci-Fi Thriller Opening

The 3rd edition of GFF opens with James Gray's latest 'Ad Astra', a 2019 American science fiction adventure film which had its world premiere at the Venice Film Festival on August 29, 2019. The film is starring Brad Pitt, Tommy Lee Jones, Ruth Negga, Liv Tyler, and Donald Sutherland. The film critic David Ehrlich of IndieWire gave the film an «A», saying that «Ad Astra is one of the most ruminative, withdrawn, and curiously optimistic space epics this side of Solaris. It's also one of the best.»

The Way to the Oscars

Five films in the GFF 3rd edition lineup have been selected to be their country's representatives for the Best International Feature Film category at the Oscars 2020. 'Papicha' (Algeria) by Mounia Meddour;

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This edition will also witness the screening of 'The Knight and The Princess',

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1982', the feature debut of the Lebanese director Oualid Mouaness, just won NETPAC Award at Toronto International Film Festival

'Parasite' (South Korea) by Bong Joon-ho; 'System Crasher' (Germany) by Nora Fingscheidt; 'The Invisible Life of Euridice Gusmao' (Brazil) by Karim Ainouz; and 'Adam' (Morocco) by Maryam Touzani. Touzani's Adam becomes the first film directed by a woman to be selected by Morocco to represent the country. Moreover, all three female directors' films, Touzani, Meddour and Fingscheidt, mark their debut feature films.

Yorgos Lanthimos' Nimic

Following his streak of critically-acclaimed hits, such as 'The Lobster', 'The Killing of the Sacred Deer' and 'The Favorite', famed Greek director Yorgos Lanthimos is back with another compellingly surreal story, 'Nimic', a short film that remains distinct to Lanthimos' visual and narrative style. 'Nimic' will be screened in the Official Selection Out of Competition section.

Two Egyptian World Premieres

This edition will also witness the screening of 'The Knight and The Princess', and 'When We Are Born', two Egyptian world premieres at the Official Selection Out of Competition.

'The Knight and The Princess', is Egypt's first animated feature film, written and directed by prominent director and screenwriter Bashir El Deek. It features voices from a fine cast that includes Mohamed Henedy, Donia Samir Ghanem, Medhat Saleh, Maged El Kedwany, Lekaa Elkhamsi; along with acting legends like Abla Kamel, Abdel Rahman Abou Zahra, the late Amina Rizk and the late Saeed Saleh. The character designs were created by the late Mustafa Hussein.

'When We Are Born', by Tamer Ezzat, it is a feature narrative starring two widely admired stars; Amir Eid, the lead singer of Cairokee band, and Amr Abed who is well known for his debut 2006 film 'Awqat Faragh' (Idle Times). In an interview, the film director said that he is looking forward to approach the wider audience with his feature, which belongs to the independent scene.

Heart-Winning Films

An assortment of award and heart winning films are on the GFF2019 lineup in its different screening programs. Some of those films were already winners of the GFF grants either of the CineGouna SpringBoard, which serves as a project development and co-production lab for Arab filmmakers, or at the other film festivals and initiatives supported by GFF such as the Beirut Cinema Platform, the Final Cut in Venice, the Arabian Sights Film Festival, and the MAFF Market Forum. They include '1982' by Oualid Mouaness, and 'Talking About Trees' by Sudanese director Suhaib Gasmelbari.

In the Feature Narrative Competition, the award-winning film list includes 'The Father' by Bulgarian writer-director duo Kristina Grozeva and Petar Valchanov, which won the Grand Prix Crystal Globe at the Karlovy Vary Film Festival this year. It also includes 'You Will Die at Twenty', the feature debut by Sudanese director Amjad Abu Alala which received the Lion of the Future (Luigi de Laurentiis) Award for Best Debut Feature at the 76th Venice International Film Festival on 7 September 2019, becoming the first Sudanese film to win an award at the Italian film festival.

On the other hand, there is 'Lara' by the German writer-director Jan-Ole Gerster, who returns after a seven-year hiatus. The film won the Special Jury Prize at the 54th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival.

'1982', the feature debut of the Lebanese director Qualid Mouanes, just won NETPAC Award at Toronto International Film Festival (515- September 2019). The TIFF jury remarked that the film was chosen "for its adventurous, imaginative style, and subtle, confident filmmaking, bravely juxtaposing and framing the universal innocence and charm of youth within harrowing historical context.". The Feature Narrative Competition includes 'Our Lady of the Nile' by acclaimed director Atiq Rahimi. The film is based on the award-winning novel under the same name by Scholastique Mukasonga, and opened the 44th Toronto International Film Festival.

In the Feature Documentary Competition, there is 'Midnight Family' by skilled emerging director Luke Lorentzen. The film received many awards at several esteemed festivals, such as the 35th Sundance Film Festival and the 16th Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival. Another film is 'Talking About Trees', the debut of the Sudanese director Suhaib Gasmelbari, which won the Glasshütte Original Documentary Award, and the Panorama Audience Award of Berlin International Film Festival 2019.

The Official selection out of competition comprises a selection of award winning and critically acclaimed films.

The screening program includes 'Parasite', a bona fide masterpiece by the highly acclaimed South Korean director Bong Joon-ho. The film has become the first Korean film to win the Palme d'Or at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival.

Another gem in the GFF 2019 lineup is Nora Fingscheidt's 'System Crasher', winner of several awards, including the Silver Bear for Best Feature Film at the 69th edition of the Berlinale. The program also includes 'Bacurau', co-directed by Kleber Mendonça Filho and Juliano Dornelles. The film premiered at the 72nd Cannes Film Festival, where it was the joint winner of the Jury Prize.

There is also the Italian drama 'Piranhas', written and directed by Claudio Giovannesi, and winner of the Silver Bear Award for Best Screenplay at the Berlinale. 'Pain and Glory', directed by Academy Award-winning writer-director Pedro Almodóvar, and starring the immense talents of Antonio Banderas, winning him Best Actor at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival, and Penélope Cruz. The film also won Cannes Soundtrack Award went to Alberto Iglesias. Another film is Ladj Ly's 'Les Misérables' which was crowned with a slew of awards including the Jury Prize at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival.

Aspiring and Inspiring

Most of the competing short films are having their world premiere at the GFF as the debuts of their filmmakers, and they are proudly the discovery of the GFF. However, the competition also comprises some films which have already participated in prestigious international film festivals, some of which have won awards. The list includes 'Monster God' by Agustina San Martin, which was screened in the Short Films Competition at the 72nd Cannes Film Festival, where it won the Short Film Special Distinction. There is also 'She Runs' by Yang Qiu which was part of the international competition at the 68th Melbourne International Film Festival, and won the Leitz Cine Discovery Prize for Best Short Film at the 58th Critics' Week that took place during the 72nd Cannes Film Festival.

One the other hand, there are nine Arab aspiring filmmakers represented by their films in the 24 films competition: 'Color Blind' by Menna Ekram, 'Exam' by Sonia K. Hadad, 'Freekeh' by Bassel Ghandour, 'Give Up the Ghost' by Zain Duraie, 'In Between' by Samir Karahoda, 'Jetski' by Sharif Abdel Mawla, 'OME' by Wassim Geagea, 'This is My Night' by Yusuf Noaman, and 'Selfie Zein' by Amira Diab.



Old is Gold

This year, the special presentations program focuses on film restoration, which is also a topic of an open discussion during the festival. Five restored films will be screened in the program: 'Caméra d'Afrique' by Férid Boughedir, 'Stolen Kisses' by François Truffaut, 'Central Station' by Walter Salles, 'The Spider's Stratagem' by Bernardo Bertolucci, and 'The White Sheik' by Federico Fellini. This is in addition to the Egyptian film, 'The Well of Deprivation' by Kamal El Sheikh, on the occasion of celebrating the 100th anniversary of late legendary writer Ihsan Abdel Quddous.

Amir Ramses, the Artistic Director of the festival says "Restoration is a very important matter, and I believe it started to gain momentum again after the restoration of Youssef Chahine's films. But he was lucky with the co-production, and the attention paid by his family to his legacy. This is not the case with everyone. What will happen to the rest of the 3000 Egyptian films? It is part of our legacy; part of the human legacy. Who will take care of it? I believe it is very important to talk about that."

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