



3rd GFF's 'Cinema in Concert' Watch the Melodies...

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The program of Cinema in Concert was divided into two segments

Last night, on the Marina Theater stage, the third GFF audience enjoyed the special music event, 'Cinema in Concert', which was dedicated to paying homage to the timeless works of music that accompanied some of the most memorable films.

The concert was held in a collaboration between the U.S. Embassy in Egypt and GFF, and was conducted by Maestro Ahmed El Saedi, the main founder and chairman of

the Egyptian Philharmonic Society, with the performance of soloists Janet Sung on violin; Federico Mondelci on saxophone; Victoria Kapralova on violoncello; and the vocal performance of Amina Khairat.

Bushra Rozza, COO of GFF, welcomed Maestro Ahmed El Saedi saying that every year, the Festival carries a new surprise, and this year, it is an important music event. "Music is very important for our minds and

souls; it is also a fundamental element in cinema," she said, referring to the myriad of Egyptian and world films where music was influential and unforgettable.

The program of Cinema in Concert was divided into two segments. The first segment was entitled 'Hits of Hollywood', and the second was 'Homage à Nino Rota', which celebrated the composer's works for Federico Fellini and Luchino Visconti films.

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✦ **Don't Miss**

Today... Two Films on Their Way to the 2020 Oscars



Two of today's program's films have been selected to represent their respective countries in the Best International Feature Film category at the 2020 Academy Awards. The two films are 'Papicha' (Algeria) by Mounia Meddour, which will be screened at 3:00 p.m. in Audimax (TU Berlin), and 'Parasite' (South Korea) by Bong Joon-ho, which will be screened at 3:30 p.m. in Grand Cinemas Hurghada.

The Oscars list includes three other films presented at the third GFF's competitions: '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' became the first film directed by a woman to be selected by Morocco to represent the country. All three female directors' films, Touzani, Meddour and Fingscheidt, mark their debut feature films.

✦ **Meet the filmmaker today**

12:00
BACURAU
Guest(s) attending:
Juliano Dornelles
(Director)

12:15
SORRY WE MISSED YOU
Guest(s) attending:
Ziad Cortbawi

15:00
PAPICHA
Guest(s) attending:
Amira Hilda

15:00
TALKING ABOUT TREES
Guest(s) attending:
Suhaib Gasmelbari
(Director)

15:00
ALTAYEB MAHADI
IBRAHIM SHADDAD
MANAR ALHELW
SULIMAN IBRAHIM
MARIE BALDUCCHI
(Producer)

15:15
ANOTHER REALITY
Guest(s) attending:
Noel Dernesch
(Director)
Ahmad Srais (Actor)

17:15
IN OUR SYNAGOGUE
Guest(s) attending:
Ivan Orlenko (Director)

17:15
IN BETWEEN
Guest(s) attending:
Ben Vandenaale
(Producer)

17:15
JETSKI
Guest(s) attending:
Sharif Abdel Mawla
(Director)

18:00
THE TRUTH
Guest(s) attending:
Ziad Cortbawi

18:45
NOURA'S DREAM
Guest(s) attending:
Hinde Boujema
(Director)
Imed Marzouk
(Producer)
Hakim Boumsaoudi
(Cast)

20:00
YOU ARE YOUNG YOU ARE PRETTY
Guest(s) attending:
Gerard Darmon
Franchin Don

21:00
MIDNIGHT FAMILY
Guest(s) attending:
Luke Lorentzen
(Director)
Kellen Quinn (Producer)

21:00
THEY SAY NOTHING STAYS THE SAME
Guest(s) attending:
Joe Odagiri

21:00
THE WEEPING WOMAN
Guest(s) attending:
Melissa Rosales
(Producer)
Maria Mercedes Coroy
(Actress)

✦ **Schedule**

SATURDAY FICTION Sea Cinema 1 11:45 AM	PAPICHA Audimax (TU Berlin) 3:00 PM	PARASITE Grand Cinemas Hurghada 3:30 PM	HEIGHT OF THE WAVE Sea Cinema 1 6:30 PM	THEY SAY NOTHING STAYS THE SAME Audimax (TU Berlin) 9:00 PM	Short film program 4 NIMIC ALL INCLUSIVE IN BETWEEN IN OUR SYNAGOGUE THE TEARS THING JETSKI
BACURAU Sea Cinema 2 12:00 PM	TALKING ABOUT TREES Sea Cinema 3 3:00 PM	SHORT FILM PROGRAM 4 Sea Cinema 3 5:15 PM	NOURA'S DREAM Grand Cinemas Hurghada 6:45 PM	MIDNIGHT FAMILY Sea Cinema 2 9:00 PM	
SORRY WE MISSED YOU Sea Cinema 3 12:15 PM	ANOTHER REALITY Sea Cinema 2 3:15 PM	TINY SOULS Sea Cinema 2 6:00 PM	YOU ARE YOUNG YOU ARE PRETTY Sea Cinema 3 8:00 PM	THE WEEPING WOMAN Grand Cinemas Hurghada 9:00 PM	
WHITE ON WHITE Grand Cinemas Hurghada 1:00 PM	PIRANHAS Sea Cinema 1 3:30 PM	THE TRUTH Audimax (TU Berlin) 6:00 PM	PAIN AND GLORY Sea Cinema 1 8:45 PM	THE SPIDER'S STRATEGEM Sea Cinema 3 10:30 PM	

Film Independent Joins GFF with a Scriptwriting Workshop



The U.S. Embassy in Egypt is once again partnering with El Gouna Film Festival, joined this year by Film Independent, to strengthen the collaboration between the Egyptian and American film industries.

On the 24th of September, the sixth day of the festival, a three-day feature film scriptwriting workshop led by American experts kicked off, with the participation of twelve Egyptian filmmakers. The event is funded by the US Embassy in Cairo.

"The U.S. Embassy has been honored to partner with El Gouna Film Festival since 2017," said U.S. Embassy Cairo's Deputy Chief of Mission, Dorothy Shea. "These festivals provide an incredible platform for artists to explore new ideas, promote dialogue, and foster valuable business connections. This year's event will build on those successes, and highlight Arab cinema's creativity and growing global reach," Shea said.

The U.S. support for the Festival, taking place September 19 - 27, includes an industry panel discussion with leading American film executives and producers. The U.S. Embassy also sponsors the Cairo Symphony Orchestra's "Hits of Hollywood" performance at the "Cinema in Concert" event on Wednesday, September 25.

The U.S. Embassy and Los Angeles-based Film Independent will also grant two awards valued at \$15,000 each for CineGouna Platform's Springboard competition: A Spirit Awards Residency in Los Angeles for an Egyptian screenwriter; and a Film Independent Forum Residency in Los Angeles for an Egyptian creative producer. Film Independent President, Josh Welsh, will serve as a jury member for the competition.

Film Independent is a nonprofit arts organization that champions creative independence in visual storytelling, and supports a community of artists who embody diversity, innovation and uniqueness of vision.

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Experts' Chat

Presentation:

'The Production of Hulu Series The Handmaid's Tale'

Lindsay Sloane, Senior Executive Vice President and Head of Scripted TV Development at MGM Studios, delivered a special presentation yesterday about 'The Production of Hulu Series The Handmaid's Tale'. The event was conducted as part of the CineGouna Bridge program.

In this presentation, Lindsay Sloane talked about the creative development process of Hulu series 'The Handmaid's Tale'. She shared with the audience her personal experiences during the planning and production stages of the show, enriched with inside stories, fun facts and trivia.

The presentation covered the entire history of the series, starting from its development with MGM rights, all the way to its outstanding success at the 69th Emmy Awards. It touched on the 1990 film based on the novel by Margaret Atwood, as well as the involvement of producers Danny Wilson and Fran Sears.

Sloane explained the social and political impact of the series on audiences, saying that although it is based on a 30-year-old book, "it empowered people in many social campaigns to have a voice." She showcased images of female protestors in 'The Handmaid's Tale's' costumes, raising slogans that call for women's rights in the streets.

Sloane also mentioned that although the original book by Margaret Atwood was turned into several works, including movies, the writer did not pose any specific conditions on how it should be told in a TV series, "however, we wanted her to be part of the show," she said.

The presentation also shed light on the costume designers of the show, explaining that passion was part of their story. "Everyone who worked on this series was motivated by passion, great passion actually, and not money. And their passion was evident in every detail of the show," Sloane remarked. According to Sloane, the costumes of 'The Handmaid's Tale' are showcased in the Smithsonian Museum; "it is such a rare thing to happen, it is the first time to happen in the Smithsonian," she explained.

Sloane also highlighted the social impact of the show, and how it expanded to become global. "This series was distributed in 200 countries and 50 languages, which makes it as influential as it was in its original country," she elaborated.



One of the scenes she showcased during her presentation was of a mother weeping over her separation from her child. Sloane commented that the scene was very

influential, because coincidentally, it was screened during the Donald Trump debacle regarding the crisis of separating immigrant families from their children.

'Building Bridges:

Italian Incentives for International Co-production'

CineGouna Bridge also hosted a chat with the expert entitled 'Building Bridges: Italian Incentives for International Co-production' with Italian director, producer and festival programmer, Antonio Falduto.

The event revolved around Italy's heightened activity during the past few years in promoting co-productions, and how regional film commissions support –through local incentives– the principles of openness and cooperation with international audiovisual producers, which MIBAC (Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities) has significantly enhanced.

Falduto discussed the different ways an extensive network can be created between not just Italy and the Arab world, but on an international level as well. He next talked briefly about the current status of the Italian market, presenting interesting facts, one of which is the total workforce which is

173,000. Other data included information regarding the box office and economic value of the AV industry. This is all to show how valuable the Italian market is, and how it can be beneficial to filmmakers.

On the other hand, he mentioned a newly appointed law (in 2018) called the Italian Cinema Law, which helps shed light on new incentives and funds that one can apply to. This new law allows for investments of a minimum of 400 million euros, which is a considerable amount for AV content.

A co-production treaty grants access to Italian-European funds for a film to be produced, as well as special regional funds depending on the project. The treaty allows for a film to be shot in either both languages, or just one, and encourages diversity in the selection of cast and crew. More importantly, the contents of the film need to be relevant to both countries.





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Talking About Trees: The Screaming Screens of Sudan

The Sudanese documentary *Talking About Trees*, directed by Suhaib Gasmelbari, discusses the dreadful situation that the Sudanese cinema is suffering from since the 1989 Coup D'etat. Over the past 30 years, the deteriorating economy was not the only reason to shut down all the film theatres in Sudan, in fact, the political leadership with its Islamic fundamental background felt that this closure might be a vicious tool to suppress one of the most important channels of freedom of expression.

Talking About Trees won the Best Documentary and Panorama Audience awards in the Berlinale, and was nominated for the Best Feature Documentary Award at El Gouna Film Festival. The film revolves around the Sudan Film Group (SFG), an association formed by Sudanese senior filmmakers Ibrahim Shaddad, Al-Tayeb Mahdi, Suleiman Ibrahim and Manar Al Hilo in 1989, and shows their attempts to resume their community film screening activities.

The avant-titre was very telling of the economic situation in Sudan, as it shows Al Hilo sitting in the dark, probably at the SFG headquarters, complaining on the phone about the power failures in the last couple of days. The dialogue between him and the government employee seems absurd, and the scene ends with Shaddad stating that this situation was caused by the submissiveness of the people.

«You don't know how happy I am. Because of this film, we are going to do another film, and another film, and another... Yes, this is my life!» this was part of what Shaddad said in the first scene. The director completed the first scene with a game played by the four senior filmmakers to get their minds off of the power cuts. They were forming this imaginary shooting scene, with Shaddad wearing a veil representing a role of an actress talking to the camera in English – in an exaggerated theatrical way – about the greatness of cinema, while Ibrahim was closing his palms in the shape of a camera lens. The others were either playing the director's or the lighting technician's roles. It is as if the filmmaker wanted to tell the audience that cinema might be a way out towards survival in the harshest of times.

"The death of cinema was not natural at all," Shaddad said during an interview with him and Mahdi in a Sudanese radio channel. "It died suddenly... the sudden death of a hero is the work of a traitor. So, if you want to know how it happened, search for the traitor," he added. The scene also asserts on the bitterness of those who used to work in the film industry when it was thriving in the 70s and 80s.

At the beginning of the film, some of those four filmmakers' works are showcased, and their deep friendship is revealed. Later, director Suhaib Gasmelbari accompanies them as they plan to continue their activities, without any direct intervention from his end. Perhaps he chose this



very simple issue of entertaining the neighborhood by restoring their old movie theatre and starting its activities, as a way to fulfill one of the basic needs of people, to be able to enjoy their lives. They felt that if they started with just one screening, with Tarantino's *Django, Unchained*, it will see a great turnout from the neighborhood, and represent a great kick-off for their ambitious project. Unfortunately, it was very obvious that the government refused to give them permission to start the project, making

it clear that the only enemy here was Al-Bashir's government.

It is also worthy of note that this film was made a few months before the eruption of the Sudanese revolution against Al-Bashir.

It seems that the issue of the Sudanese cinema industry and its history remains a matter of concern to filmmaker Gasmelbari, originally an audio-visual archive researcher. In 2017, he made *Sudan's Forgotten Films*, a short TV documentary about Sudanese cinema.

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The avant-titre was very telling of the economic situation in Sudan



Hani Mustafa



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At the beginning of the film, some of those four filmmakers' works are showcased



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Maestro Ahmad Al Saedi on 'Cinema in Concert' at the Third Edition of GFF A Bridge Between Classical Music and a Wider Audience

Nahed Nasr

• In a conversation with Maestro Ahmed El Saedi, the main founder and chairman of the Egyptian Philharmonic Society, he shared with us the following...

• One of my life career's missions and dreams is to deepen the relationship between the wider audience and classical music, and I initiated many activities in that regard. I believe that the orchestra symphony's art should not be limited to the opera house, but even approach children in schools.

• This concept exists worldwide but it is not familiar in Egypt. Since I became in charge of the The Cairo Symphony Orchestra, one of my initial projects was in cooperation with the EU, entitled 'The Orchestra as a Guest in Schools'. Through this initiative, we conducted a series of over 20 concerts in different kinds of schools, including public ones. I have also held other concerts inside the Cairo Opera House, where school students were invited. The idea is that we have to prepare the future audience. When kids familiarize themselves with this kind of music early in their childhood, they may grow into the future audience, and we have to invest in building our audience.

• It is a challenging task –all over the world, really– for this kind of music to reach the public audience, however, the efforts to do so are necessary. Classical music is the music of civilization; it is the greatest human achievement in history. It is also the world music, although every country has its own traditional music. To let people depend only on their local music would be a crime, in my opinion. We should not say it is not our music, because it is part of the human civilization. We cannot read or look at world art without tasting its music.

• I believe we should strengthen the role of civil society in promoting the culture of music, and the biggest challenge we always face in this regard is financing such initiatives. Most businessmen prefer to donate to hospitals or other charitable activities, but not for music education, although music is very important in building the future.

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It took months to prepare for this concert. The US Embassy contributed to its production, especially in obtaining a license to play the Hollywood part

• This concert at El Gouna Film Festival is a step forward in that direction. I conducted a few concerts at the Cairo Opera House where film music was played, but never in a film festival. My thoughts are that we need to remove the barriers between the audience and the orchestra symphony. Cinema is a good bridge between both.

• I approached Samih Sawiris, the founder of El Gouna, not only because he is an old friend, but because he is one of the regular supporters of the Egyptian Philharmonic Society's activities. When I proposed this concert idea to him, he welcomed it enthusiastically, and he put me in contact with Amr Mansi, CEO and co-founder of the festival, and Amir Ramses, the artistic director, and that is how it started.

• My Previous film music concerts have been conducted at the Cairo Opera House, where the regular audience of the orchestra symphony were the guests. The challenge at El Gouna Film Festival is that it will approach a different audience – the audience of cinema. I am excited to know how this will go.

• In this concert, a piece of work is being performed for the first time in the world, entitled 'Homage à Nino Rota', which celebrates the composer's works for Federico Fellini and Luchino Visconti films. This segment will be played in participation with the prominent Italian musician Federico Mondelci on saxophone. The other segment is entitled 'Hits of Hollywood' which includes Alan Silvestri's 'Back to the Future'; John Williams' 'Jurassic Park'; John Corigliano's 'The Red Violin Chaconne'; Maurice Jarre's 'Lawrence of Arabia'; Ennio Morricone's 'The Mission'; John Kander's 'Life is a Cabaret and Mein Herr from Cabaret'; and John Williams' 'Superman Theme'.

• The selection criteria of the film music depended on using a variety of instruments and tunes, so it could be interesting for the cinema audience. The quality of the films' music is very important, especially the pieces that are internationally influential. Personally, I love all Fellini's films, and they represent a part of my personal history.

• It took months to prepare for this concert. The US Embassy contributed to its production, especially in obtaining a license to play the Hollywood part.

• I hope this becomes a tradition, to be continued in El Gouna Film Festival, and that it comes with new ideas every year. I am very curious about the festival, and very pleased that it is a civil society initiative. I hope more of the likes of this concert get to take place in many other festivals, not just film festivals. Classical music has the power to change a person and a society, and my wish is for classical music to become a part of our everyday life.