



## GFF Closing Ceremony: Cheer and Applause!

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Festival Director Intishal Al Timimi said: «We have already started to prepare for the next edition, from this moment on.”

Last night, El Gouna was swamped with international and Arab celebrities who have all flocked to the Marina Open Air Theater to celebrate the closing of the third edition of GFF, which was hosted by Nardine Farag, actress and host of MBC's 'The Voice'.

Nardine started her speech by saying that the audience of the 3rd edition exceeded all expectations.

She also welcomed a special guest who came to El Gouna exclusively for the closing ceremony, the renowned American actor, producer and screenwriter, Steven Seagal. Samih Sawiris, the founder of El Gouna, pointed out that three years have passed since the inauguration of the festival, and 30 years since the founding of El Gouna: «Years passed very fast. I had

never imagined that El Gouna would be as beautiful as it is now,» he said.

«This festival is like a baby that grows every year, and develops an independent personality every year with its team. Greetings for the GFF team,» he added, stating that next year, the festival will be held in the new cultural center that is being established in El Gouna, where a music festival will also be organized.

Bushra Rozza, the COO and co-founder of GFF, said that the closing ceremony feels like an opening, because of all the positive vibes in the place.

On the other hand, Naguib Sawiris, the founder of GFF, expressed his pleasure to call film star Mohamed Henedy to the stage, who is the Egyptian recipient of this year's

Career Achievement Award. He said that comedy is a very important film genre, albeit underrated.

Henedy expressed his gratitude for the love and appreciation of the audience, and his honor in receiving the GFF award.

Egyptian star Laila Elwi, on her part, said that the main importance of film festivals lies in the support they offer to the film industry. «What El Gouna Film Festival is doing—presenting over US \$250,000 to filmmakers for their projects in development and films in post-production at CineGouna Platform—is of crucial importance,» she commented, while presenting El Gouna Golden Star for Short Film to its recipient.

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Intishal Al Timimi

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## A List of GFF Award Winners: Celebrations on the Marina Theater Stage

You Will Die at Twenty, Talking About Trees and Exam Win El Gouna Film Festival's Golden Stars, and 'Cinema for Humanity' Award Goes to Ladj Ly's Les Misérables

El Gouna Film Festival concluded its third edition today with a closing ceremony held at the Marina Theater, where the award-winning films were announced, with total award value at US \$224,000. The winners were as follows:

### Feature Narrative Competition

El Gouna Golden Star for Narrative Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$50,000)

**You Will Die at Twenty by Amjad Abu Alala**

El Gouna Silver Star for Narrative Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$25,000)

**Corpus Christi by Jan Komasa**

El Gouna Bronze Star for Narrative Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$15,000)

**Adam by Maryam Touzani**

El Gouna Star for the Best Arab Narrative Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$20,000)

**Papicha by Mounia Meddour**

El Gouna Star for the Best Actor (Trophy, certificate)

**Bartosz Bielenia, Corpus Christi**

El Gouna Star for the Best Actress (Trophy, certificate)

**Hend Sabry, Noura's Dream**

### Feature Documentary Competition

El Gouna Golden Star for Documentary Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$30,000)

**Talking About Trees by Suhaib Gasmelbari**

El Gouna Silver Star for Documentary Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$15,000)

**143 Sahara Street by Hassen Ferhani**

El Gouna Bronze Star for Documentary Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$7,500)

**Kabul, City in the Wind by Aboozar Amini**

El Gouna Star for the Best Arab Documentary Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$10,000)

**Ibrahim: A Fate to Define by Lina Alabed**

### Short Film Competition

El Gouna Golden Star for Short Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$15,000)

**Exam by Sonia K. Haddad**

El Gouna Silver Star for Short Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$7,500)

**Ome by Wassim Geagea**

El Gouna Bronze Star for Short Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$4,000)

**Flesh by Camila Kater**

El Gouna Star for the Best Arab Short Film (Trophy, certificate, and US \$5,000)

**Give Up the Ghost by Zain Duraie**

Special Jury Mention

**16 December by Álvaro Gago Díaz**

### Cinema for Humanity Audience Award

The Festival's Audience Award for a film exemplifying humanitarian themes (Trophy, certificate, and US \$20,000)

**Les Misérables by Ladj Ly**

### NETPAC Award for Best Asian Film

**Kabul, City in the Wind by Aboozar Amini**

### FIPRESCI Award

**1982 by Oualid Mouaness**

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El Gouna Star for the Best Actress (Trophy, certificate):  
Hend Sabry,  
Noura's Dream



## Mohamed Henedy: Laughter Against All Odds

Hani Mustafa

Before the end of the 20th century, Egypt witnessed drastic changes. On the domestic level, the 1990s faced a vicious wave of terrorist attacks, peaking with the tourist massacre of Luxor in 1997. On the regional level, there was the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein, and the eruption of the second war in the Gulf, led by the US and UK coalition. These two major events had a huge impact on cutting down both Egyptian and Gulf investments in the Egyptian film industry throughout the whole decade, and until the beginning of the 21st century. This led to a drastic decrease in the number of Egyptian films produced during this era, for it was common to see the production of only three films per year. Additionally, the number of moviegoers similarly dropped over these years, as most people resorted to watching films on video tapes, CDs and DVDs in the comfort of their private homes.

These crises pushed some of the cinema workers – especially technicians – out of the industry to pursue other careers. In 1997, a comedy film was released in the movie theatres, and was met with long queues at the ticket offices, reviving Egypt's cinema theater industry once again. That film was *Ismailia Rayeh Gai* (Round Trip to Ismailia) directed by Karim Diah Eddin, and starring Mohamed Henedy (recipient of the GFF Achievement Award at the 3rd edition of the Festival) with Mohamed Fouad, Khaled El-Nabawy and Hanan Turk. And while it wasn't Henedy's first film, it was the first major role in his career. Although Henedy was the supporting actor in the film, his talent in portraying the role paved the way to creating a new wave of Egyptian comedy.

Later on, film stars like Henedy, Mohamed Saad, Ahmed Helmi, and the late Alaa Wali El Din, kicked off – with their films – what was soon dubbed “The New Egyptian Comedy” by film critics.



In 1998, Henedy established his career as a comedian by starring in *Saeidi Fil Gamaa Al-Americaia* (Upper Egyptian in the American University) directed by Saeed Hamed. The film structure was reminiscent of that of 60s youth films, rich with light situational comedy within a university campus, and was a major box office hit. The film not only helped Henedy create his comedy signature, but reinforced his role in *The New Egyptian Comedy* as well.

Henedy then followed by his 1999 role in *Hamam Fi Amsterdam* (Hamam in Amsterdam) directed by Saeed Hamed, asserting his own method of verbal comedy once again. For the second time in a row, the film was also a great success in the box office.

Fans and audiences waited year in and year out, in anticipation of Henedy's new films as they came, enjoying his gags, jokes and witty comments. Not only that, for he also represented hope: he always portrayed what appeared to start out as a tiny character in a film, who later overcomes all the obstacles, becoming victorious with super powers of kindness, humor, and joie de vivre.

Henedy, without a doubt, managed to a brilliant career against all odds, at a time when the Egyptian cinema industry was struggling to stay afloat. Once a young man who had studied film production at the Higher Institute of Cinema, and graduated in 1991, he became a superstar after struggling for a few years in a very harsh atmosphere. For years, Henedy has been giving cinephiles the most precious gift of all: the gift of hope.

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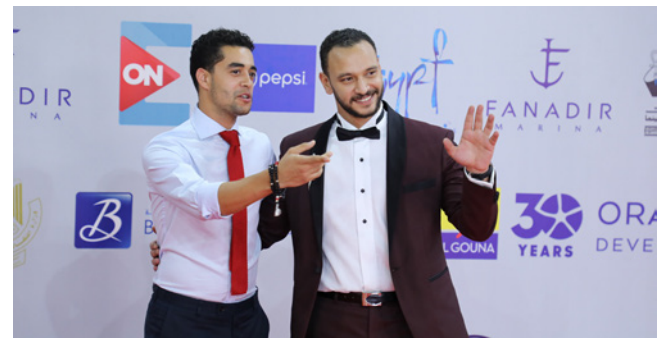
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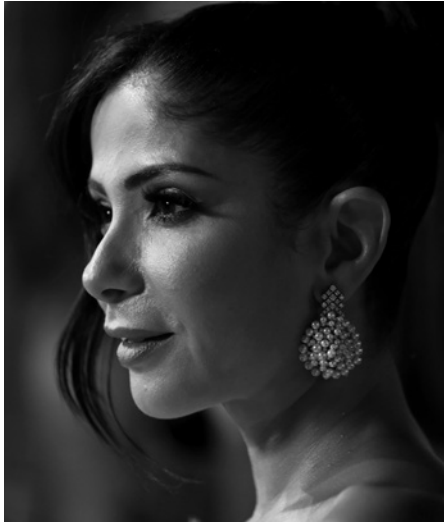
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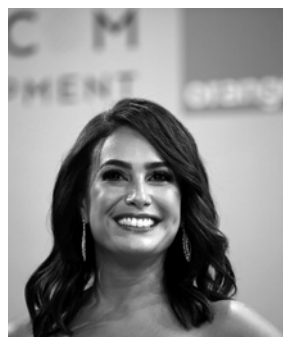
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CELEBRATING  
EL GOUNA  
**30**  
YEARS

AN INTERNATIONALLY DIVERSE  
COMMUNITY 30 YEARS IN THE MAKING



ORASCUM  
DEVELOPMENT