

A.B. Shawky
the director of
Yomeddine

I want Rady to
hold his head
high

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Dora
Bouchoucha
Meet the Arab
GFF Career
Achievement
Award recipient

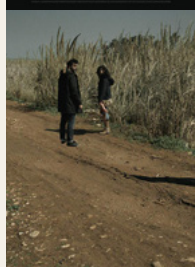
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Dear Son Of
misery and hell

p.5



Don't Miss



“Yomeddine”.. full house



Exhibiting Chahine & Bergman

In its second day the GFF witness the opening of two exhibitions showcase the film posters of both the acclaimed film directors Youssef Chahine, and Ingmar Bergman. This year GFF pays tribute to three renowned filmmakers: Youssef Chahine, marking 10 years since his death; Ingmar Bergman, marking his 100th anniversary; and Federico Fellini, whose 100th anniversary will take place in 2020.

The GFF screening program has 5 films for the celebrated directors, The Emigrant (1994) by Chahine, Fellini's Roma (1972) and 8½ (1963). And Wild Strawberries (1957) and Persona (1966) by Bergman. This is plus a short montage of Chahine scenes by filmmaker Amir Ramsis (also artistic director of GFF) to accompany a live performance of Chahine film scores recomposed by the celebrated composer-conductor Hisham Gabr



5 CineGouna SpringBoard screenings

Five film projects in Post-Production will be screened Sunday, September 23 in two Pitch Sessions in the frame of the CineGouna SpringBoard. The projects are Fataria by Walid Tayaa from Tunisia, 1982 by Oualid Mouaness from Lebanon, Off Sides Khartoum by Marwa Zein from Sudan, Underdown by Sara Kaskas from Lebanon, and The Waiting Bench by Suhaib Gasmelbari from Sudan. All selected projects of The CineGouna SpringBoard (12 in development and 6 in post-production) from six Arab countries will compete for CineGouna SpringBoard awards with a total of US\$150,000. One project in development and one film in post-production will receive a CineGouna Platform Certificate and a cash prize of US \$15,000 each. Additional awards and cash prizes between \$5 and \$15,000 are presented through partnerships with the local and regional institution. The event attendance is by invitation only

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Chat with JÉRÔME PAILLARD

The CineGouna platform opens its Chat with the Expert series with the session entitled Understanding the Market which takes place Sunday, September 23, at 6 PM in the G-Space. In the session the participants will chat with the French renowned producer Jérôme Paillard on the challenges face the world film market. Paillard has produced around a dozen movies with numerous prominent filmmakers. In 1996, he was named Delegate Director of the Cannes Film Market, the biggest and most important of its kind in the world. Under his management, the Film Market has grown with new installations at the Palais Riviera, while its number of participants has risen dramatically. He is also a Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters.



Mapping Egypt's Cinema Audience

"Mapping Cinema Audience" is a CineGouna Platform presentation session takes place Sunday, September 23, 4:30 pm in TU BERLIN (G 30). Mapping Cinema Audience: Egypt, is a research project that ran between June 2016 and early 2018 by Nour El Safoury and published by the Network of Arab Alternative Screens (NAAS) in collaboration with Al-Film magazine. The research approaches cinema as a social and cultural institution and explores the habits and motivations for collective film viewing. It also draws attention to the relationship cinema organizations have to their audiences as well as to broader concerns in contemporary cinema culture.

NAAS is a network of non-governmental cinema spaces in the Arabic-speaking region aims to broaden the scope of films available to the Arab public and to encourage dialogue around cinema and its history with the hope of tapping into the potential presented by the collective experience of watching film in a public setting.



"Yomeddine"

Stars & Crew walk the GFF red Carpet

Nahed Nasr

The stars of "Yomeddine" by A.B. Shawky walked the red carpet of the 2nd El Gouna Film Festival shortly before its Middle East premiere screening. The film director alongside with its actors Rady Gamal (Beshay) and Ahmed Abdelhaziz (Obama) and producers Dina Emam, and Mohamed Hefzy.

In the almost full house open air Marina Theater, "Yomeddine" the Egypt's Oscar Entry grabbed the attention of tens on El Gouna Film Festival guests who were keen to celebrate the film crew and stars where the audience enthusiastically applauded afterwards.

The screening which witnessed the attendance of most of the 2nd El Gouna Film Festival celebrity guests was ended with a Q and A session for the film crew, moderated by Intishal Al Timimi the festival director. Appeared on the stage also Naguib Sawiris, and Amro Mansy the festival co-founders.

Al Timimi invited the film crew to the stage saying that the obvious interest of the GFF audience in "Yomeddine" is another proof of why it deserved to represent Egypt in the Oscars. From his part said A.B Shawky the director of the film that such a big success could not be done without the efforts of all the film crew and of his family "It would never be the same without you all" he said while inviting all the team members to show up on the stage.

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In the almost full house open air Marina Theater, "Yomeddine" the Egypt's Oscar Entry grabbed the attention

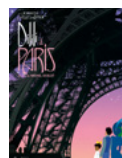


Naguib Sawiris from his part praised the film as the best example of the Cinema for Humanity, the slogan of El Gouna Film Festival. "It brought tears to my eyes the first time I watched it at the Cannes Film Festival. I watch it now for the second time and it did the same to me. This film reflects humanity better than anything else. It is the model of Cinema For Humanity"

Amr Mansy the co-founder of El Gouna Film Festival in his short comment said that El Gouna Film Festival is proud to have the Middle East premiere screening of the film "congratulations. We are more than proud" Yomeddine is the first feature length film

for the Egyptian-Austrian filmmaker A.B. Shawky. It tells the story of Beshay - a man cured of leprosy - who has never left the leper colony in the Egyptian desert where he has lived since childhood. Following the death of his wife, he finally decides to go in search of his roots. Quickly joined by Obama, the Nubian orphan he has taken under his wing, Beshay will cross Egypt and confront the world with all its sorrows, its hardships and moments of grace, in his quest for a family, a place to belong, a little humanity.

Schedule



Dilili in Paris
Sea Cinema 1
12:30 PM



At War
Sea Cinema 2
3:00 PM



The Guilty
Sea Cinema 3
3:15 PM



Cold War
Audimax (TU Berlin)
3:30 PM



Dear Son
Sea Cinema 1
3:45 PM



Persona
Sea Cinema 3
5:45 PM



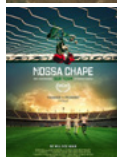
Of Fathers and Sons
Sea Cinema 2
6:00 PM



The Harvesters
Sea Cinema 1
6:15 PM



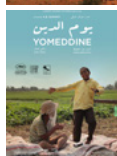
The Day I Lost My Shadow
Audimax (TU Berlin)
6:30 PM



Our Team
Sea Cinema 3
8:30 PM



America
Sea Cinema 2
8:45 PM



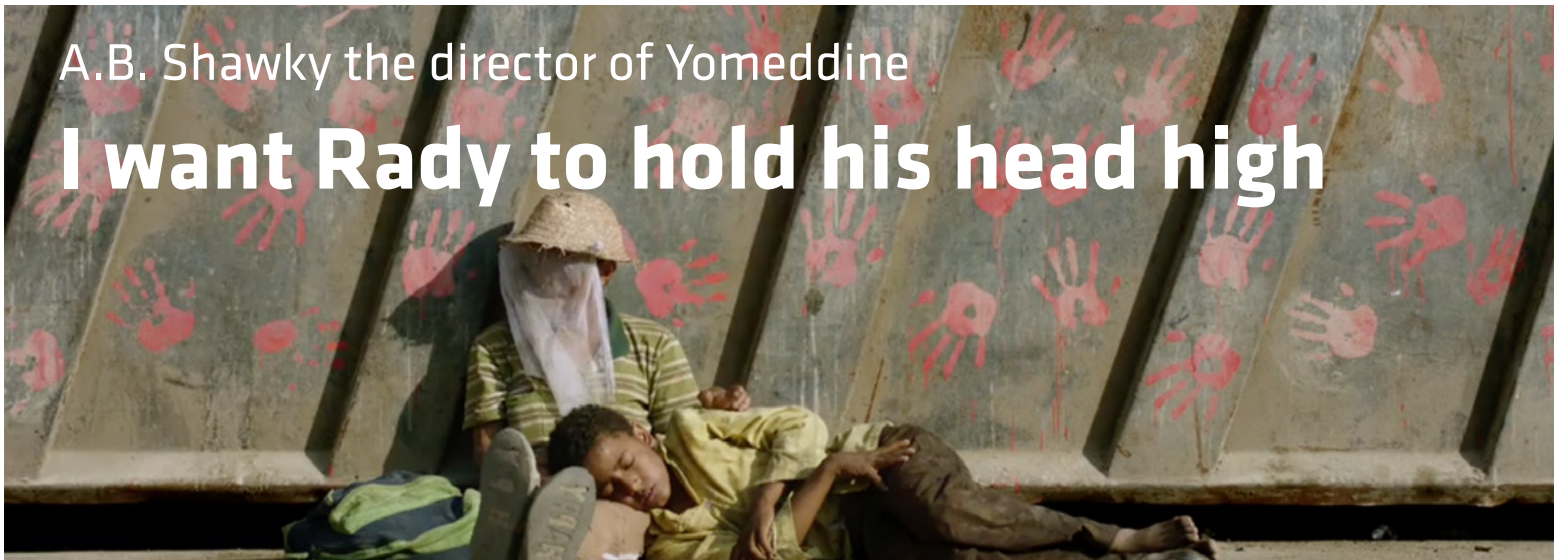
Yomeddine
Sea Cinema 1
9:00 PM



Dogman
Audimax (TU Berlin)
9:15 PM

A.B. Shawky the director of Yomeddine

I want Rady to hold his head high



Mohamed Fahmy

Although Yomeddine's (The Day of Judgment) main storyline does not revolve around 'religion,' it still serves as the core of all human beliefs. On the Day of Judgment all people are treated equally. It is a message to all minorities and outcasts who look forward to this day, when they will finally witness justice and equality. Yomeddine grabbed attention during its world premiere at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival; it is one of the most remarkable films that will screen at the 2nd edition of GFF, and it was officially selected as Egypt's submission for the 91st Academy Awards. We spoke with the director A.B. Shawky, and this is what he told us...

Tell us about your journey before Yomeddine.

I'm 32, my father is Egyptian and my mother is Austrian. She's a film buff and she helped me discover cinema. I studied film in Egypt, and was later accepted into the N.Y.U. Tisch School of the Arts in New York to continue my studies.

When did you start working on the film?

I started to write this film while I was at the NYU; the story was my graduation thesis. I'd had the idea ever since I made a short documentary film ten years earlier about the Abu Zaabal Leper Colony, two hours north of Cairo. The film was a 15-minute sequence of portraits of the people living there.

The movie was part of the 2018 Cannes Film Festival's Official Competition; it is Egypt's submission to the 91st Academy Awards, and is part of the Feature Narrative Competition of the 2nd round of GFF. Did you expect all of this to happen?

When we were working on the film we didn't intend to submit it to any festivals. Our main goal was to finish the film and release it because we totally believed in its message. At the end of the day, the story of Yomeddine is one of a kind and has not been presented before. I believe that a good film will always find the right place to be screened.

Today Arab filmmakers occupy a huge place in most international festivals. What's your take on this?

This can only be guaranteed as long as Arab filmmakers continue to make good, high-quality films; while also increasing cinematic, cultural and artistic awareness. Filmmakers need to have the liberty

of submitting their works without any hesitations in mind. They should only focus on the story and the script because those are the core of the film's success. I am happy with what's happening and I hope it continues, because there is a huge generation of talented filmmakers that need to be given similar chances.

What are the criteria you based your team selection on?

I worked with a great team, on artistic and professional levels, whom I can always rely on. There are a lot of details in this film; without believing in the movie and its message, they wouldn't have helped me so much, especially since they didn't generate significant income.

The film presents a harmonious state of co-existence, which was also reflected on the scenes and the details. How did you manage to achieve it?

The story of the film helped a lot in this. Especially since the main two characters were not played by professional actors, if the story didn't pull its weight, achieving this harmonious state would have been very difficult.

What is the story of the film?

The movie tells the story of Beshay - a man cured of leprosy - who has never left the leper colony in the Egyptian desert where he has lived since childhood. Following the death of his wife, he finally decides to go in search of his roots. With his meager possessions strapped to a donkey cart, he sets out. Quickly joined by Obama, the Nubian orphan he has taken under his wing, Beshay will cross Egypt and confront the world with all its sorrows, its hardships and moments of grace, in his quest for a family, a place to belong, and a little humanity.

How did you manage to deal with the kid in the film?

I consider myself lucky that I met Ahmed, after spending several weeks looking for someone who can play Obama. He was trained for seven months to act in front of the camera until he was set and ready to shoot.

What about Rady?

The challenge was to turn him into an actor. We spent four months together. It was a slow process; I wanted him to meet the rest of the crew, so he wouldn't be shocked or overwhelmed. He came to my house in Cairo several times, we talked about our lives and childhoods. Then I read him the script (because he can't read). Little by little I had him do some acting exercises.

Rady is someone who never feels sorry for himself, and I wanted the film to be the same. I didn't want a heavy film; I wanted a "feel-good movie". The process was pretty similar with the kid who plays Obama, Ahmed Abdelhafiz, who, of course, isn't a professional actor either. I was concerned it might not work between him and Rady, and I didn't want them to meet too soon either, I wanted the chemistry to develop slowly. They got to know each other, and it went very well. Perhaps that's also because Rady has never had children. He developed a real father-son relationship with Ahmed.

How do you expect people to receive the film?

The film will have its MENA premiere during the 2nd edition of El Gouna Film Festival. And then on the 23rd of the same month it will be screened for the first time in Minya, because it is the birthplace of Rady. I want Rady to hold his head high; he faced lots of difficulties because of leprosy, people used to make fun of him because he is not a professional actor. But he made it with me to Cannes and here we are together at El Gouna Film Festival.

The film will screen in Cairo and across Egypt starting the 26th of September. I really hope that everyone enjoys this film because it tells a different story that they have never seen before.

Any international plans for the film?

Yes, there are several screenings scheduled to take place at Hamburg Film Festival, Vancouver International Film Festival, BFI London Film Festival and the Mill Valley Film Festival in California, which will mark the film's U.S. premiere. It will be released at the UAE by the end of this month.

Dear Son Of misery and hell

Hani Mustafa

The history of cinema is filled with films that deals with problems or changes occur during adolescence. Biological and psychological changes of a teenager might be an interesting starting point of a film, however the Tunisian film Welidi (Dear Son) is not focusing on teenage concerns, it reflects a destructive and sudden radicle switch in a teenager that may cause these changes to be catastrophic. Tunisian filmmaker Mohamed Ben Attia wanted in his film Welidi to move from this particular point towards tackling the issue of ISIS recruitment of young Arabs, however he was not interested in describing the social, the financial or the political motives that drive a young person without any fundamentalist thoughts or background to join the Jihadist group. In fact, what was the main point of the drama in this film was the father's suffering as he doesn't have any control over the tragedy.

Ben Attia deals with this topic firstly by describing a monotonous calm traditional relationship that surrounds the day to day life of 3 members of a middle class Tunisian family; a father Riyadh (Mohamed Dhrif), a mother Nazli (Mouna Mejri) and their 19-year old son Sami (Zakaria Ben Ayyed). The director sought to isolate most of the well known causes of domestic disturbances that may lead to the radical changes in the teenager son, however this might not

be common to the ordinary audience who is used to film structure built on dramatic incidents and their causes.

Secondly, Ben Attia maneuvers when dealing with the beginning of the film as he drives the audience perception that the son suffers from a terminal a kind of medical condition. The first sequence shows the son vomiting at night in the toilet, while the two parents are trying to do whatever they can to help him. Later in the film, the family moves from one doctor to another, without knowing what causes the migraine attacks to the son or what might be the cure.

As the plot develops, it is clear to the audience that the filmmaker is not interested in illustrating the suffering of Sami. He wants more to portray the father's fears, while he was searching for an answer to his son's condition then his disappearance. however, the director may indicate symbolically that ISIS recruitment of young teens, even as harmful and devastating as being medically vulnerable or suffering from fatal kind of illness.

Ben Attia's film Welidi (Dear Son) tries not to dig into the circumstances behind the penetrations of the Jihadist's thoughts inside a teenager's head however, it seems that all the focus of the script is on the devastation that overrules a family's life according to the results of these radical changes.

Dora Bouchoucha

Meet the Arab GFF Career Achievement Award recipient



In its opening ceremony the 2nd round of the GFF awarded the Tunisian producer Dora Bouchoucha Fourati its Career Achievement Award. Bouchoucha is one the renowned female figures in the Arab cinema. As a teenager, she volunteered at the Carthage Film Festival and continued to do so for four years. She studied English Literature at the Sorbonne, and then returned to Tunis to finish her studies. As a student, she used to translate subtitles into English for her friends and for Channel 4 in England; this opened to her the door to cinema and scriptwriting. Bouchoucha has been involved in the field of cinema since she was a teenager. Her first feature film was The Silences of the Palace (1994), directed by Moufida Tlatli; where she worked on everything from costumes to production and location. Bouchoucha founded her production company Nomadis Images in 1995 and became the first female film producer in Tunisia. The company has since produced some of the best Tunisian films, which have been screened at Berlin, Cannes and Venice. Bouchoucha is famous for being involved in the scriptwriting and editing processes of her films; she always works hand-in-hand with the directors. She founded Sud Ecriture, a screenwriting workshop, and has since mentored over 200 filmmakers. Equally adept at handling film festivals, she headed the Carthage Film Festival in 2008, 2010 and 2014, and has been on the grand jury of the Berlinale. She was appointed president of CNC's Fonds Sud Cinéma in 2010, and president of the follow-up institution, Aide aux Cinémas du Monde, in 2014. In addition to Dear Son (2018) which is screened in the 2nd round of the GFF Bouchoucha produced over 16 films, among them are Leila's Blues (2018), Foreign Body (2016), Hedi (2016), It Was Better Tomorrow (2012), Anonymes (2009), Tobruk (2008), Seekers of Oblivion (2004), Le soleil assassiné (2003), Red Satin (2002), Avec tout mon amour (2001), One Evening in July (2001), The Season of Men (2000), Ghodoua Nahrek (2000), Africa Dreaming (1997), and Silence of the Palace (1994).



