

The Swedish
Ambassador Jan
Thesleff

GFF is a major
stop on the
regional and
international
film circuit

p.5

Cold War
Preview

Love in the Time
of Cold War

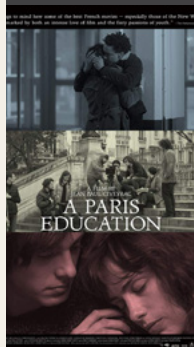
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Kaouther Ben
Hania Two
watermelons in
one hand

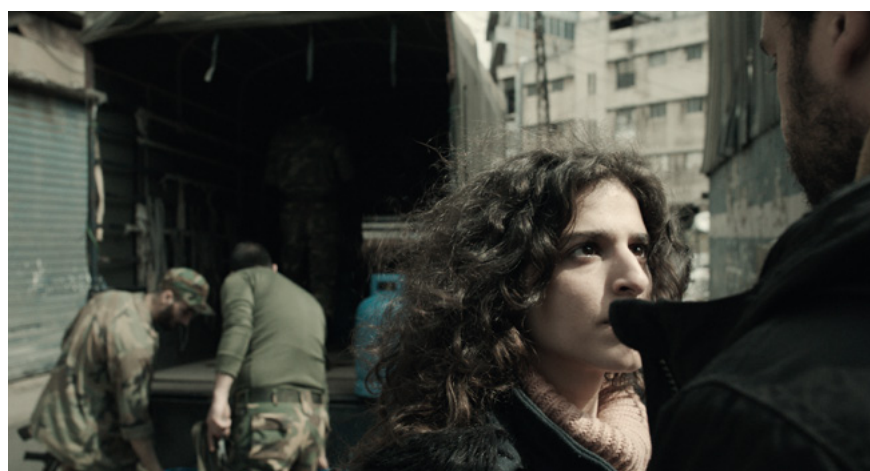
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Don't Miss



Nostalgia Chahine/Bergman



A message from Soudade Kaadan

The Arab premiere screening of "The Day I Lost My Shadow" at El Gouna Film Festival witnessed the absence of its Syrian director Soudade Kaadan, and the film crew members as a result of not obtaining a visa to Egypt. Instead, the Tunisian director Kaouther Ben Hania delivered a written message from Kaadan which she read to the GFF audience. The message says that «Since none of the film team members was able to obtain a visa to represent the film in its Arab premiere screening at El Gouna Film Festival I asked my friend Kaouther Ben Hania to represent the film on my behalf.» she adds that "

Before, the question was how a Syrian could live a normal life under the war. But now the question is how a normal Syrian could simply visit an Arab country" .

Regarding the screening of her film the message writes "I hope that this film will touch you. I hope the journey of the film raises questions afterwards. Questions that we can share and discuss together" Soudade Kaadan concluded her message saying that "Today our absence is a statement" .

"The Day I Lost My Shadow", the first feature film by Kaadan, was well received at the

Venice Film Festival, where it was awarded the Lion of the Future – "Luigi De Laurentiis" Award for a Debut Film. Before its screening at El Gouna Film Festival the film was screened at the Toronto Film Festival, and in parallel to the Festival Scope in Los Angeles. Soudade Kaadan is a Syrian director born in France. Her films have screened at several venues nationally and internationally, including the Rotterdam International Film Festival, Documenta Madrid, Film fra Sor and Dubai International Film Festival, among others. Her documentary Obscure premiered at the 2017 CPH:DOX Festival.

★ Screen

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5 Short Film Screenings

The Short Films Competition screenings start on Sunday, September 23 at 6:15. 5 short films that will screen are Abdullah and Leilah by Ashtar Al Khirsan (Iraq, UK), Judgement by Raymund Ribay Gutierrez (Philippines), Sheikh's Watermelons by Kaouther Ben Hania (Tunisia, France), Fork & Knife by Adam Abd El Ghaffar (Egypt), and Strange Planet Theory by Marco Antônio Pereira (Brazil). The film screenings will take place in the “Sea Cinema 3” theater.

The Short Film Competition section of the GFF presents 21 short narrative films, directed by emerging or established international filmmakers. The head of the Short Film Competition jury is the award-winning Palestinian actor, director and writer Kamel El Basha. He is a winner of the Volpi Cup for Best Actor at the 74th Venice International Film Festival for his role in The Insult (2017, GFF) by Ziad Doueiri.

★ Meet the filmmaker today

2:30 pm
Sea Cinema 2
Of Fathers and Sons
Guest(s) Attending:
Talal Derki
Director, Producer

2:45 pm
Sea Cinema 1
A Paris Education
Guest(s) Attending:
Corentin Fila
Cast

3:15 pm
Sea Cinema 3
Dogman
Guest(s) Attending:
Marcello Fonte
Cast

3:30 pm
TUB Audi Max
U –JULY 22
Guest(s) Attending :
Andrea Berntzen
Cast

5:00 pm
Sea Cinema 2
Samouni Road
Guest(s) Attending :
Stefano Savona
Director
Penelope Bortoluzzi
Producer

6:00 pm
Sea Cinema 1
Divine Wind
Guest(s) Attending :
Merzak Allouache
Director
Mohamed Oughlis,
Macène Benzerari
Cast

6:00 pm
TUB Audi Max
The Harvesters
Guest(s) Attending :
Benré Labuschagne,
Alex Van Dyk, Brent
Vermeulen
Cast

6:15 pm
Sea Cinema 3
Short Film Program 1

Abdullah and Leilah
Guest(s) Attending :
Ashtar AlKhirsan
Director

Strange Planet Theory
Guest(s) Attending :
Marco Antônio Pereira
Director, Writer

Spring
Guest(s) Attending :
Nathalia Konchalovsky
Director

Judgement
Guest(s) Attending :
Raymund Gutierrez
Director

Sheikh's Watermelons
Guest(s) Attending :
Kaouther Ben Hania
Director

Fork & Knife
Guest(s) Attending :
Adam Abd ElGhaffar
Director

8:00 pm
Sea Cinema 2
Ghost Fleet
Guest(s) Attending :
Shannon Service
Director

8:30 pm
Sea Cinema 1
The Man Who
Surprised Everyone
Guest(s) Attending :
Katia Filippova
Producer

9:00 pm
Sea Cinema 3
America
Guest(s) Attending :
Claus Drexel
Director

Chahine/ Bergman Exhibition

Nahed Nasr
Photographer: Mohamed Hamed

Yesterday was the opening of the “Chahine/Bergman” exhibition in the frame of El Gouna Film Festival paying tribute to three renowned filmmakers this year: Youssef Chahine, marking the 10th year of his passing; Ingmar Bergman, marking his 100th anniversary; and Federico Fellini, whose 100th anniversary will take place in 2020. The exhibition, which runs until September 29, showcases the life and career of two of the renowned directors through the posters of their films.

The exhibition is organized in cooperation with the Swedish Film Institute, The Swedish Embassy in Cairo, and Misr International Film Company.

The opening of the exhibition witnessed the presence of GFF director Intishal Al Timimi, the Swedish Ambassador Jan Thesleff; film producer and director Marianne Khoury, the co-director of Misr International Films; Gabi Khoury, the co-director of Misr International Films; Lebleba the film star, and the renowned Egyptian film directors Daoud Abdel Sayed and Yousry Nasrallah.

Al Timimi stated that this exhibition is GFF's way of proving that a film festival is not only a film screening platform. “By documenting the works of Chahine and Bergman with pictures and music in addition to screening their films, we highlight what role should be played by a film festival,” he said. The GFF director added that while celebrating Chahine in such a moment when he is being celebrated by many institutions and festivals, it was necessary to think out of the box; “nothing would have been the same without the cooperation of Misr International Films that supported us in every step to make it happen.” He added that at 1st edition of GFF, Chaîne's Cairo Station (1958) was screened, and this year the choice was to screen The Emigrant (1944). “Both are restored versions of the films provided by Misr International Films,” he declared. He also highlighted the cooperation with the Swedish Film Institute and the Swedish Embassy by saying, “they supported us in every aspect.” Al Timimi announced that exhibiting a filmmaker's works is a constant tradition of the GFF since its first round, and that “it will continue in the future.”

The Swedish Ambassador Jan Thesleff expressed his honor to take part in



celebrating “two of the great personalities of the world cinema: Chahine and Bergman. I appreciate very much the efforts of the El Gouna Film Festival.”

In this occasion the ambassador gave festival director Intishal Al Timimi, the Bergman Archive - “the only fully complete work of his films” as a present.

The ambassador explained that the exhibition does not only highlight Bergman's films but also the fashion that is inspired by his works.

He mentioned that Bergman always found a close connection between the art of cinema and the art of music. “Both music and films speak not to the intellects but directly to the senses. The sequence of pictures in the cinema screen goes directly to your soul and that's why cinema and music are so related. This connection describes the films of Bergman, as well as Chahine,” he added.

Marian Khoury, for her part, expressed that she feels honored to celebrate Chahine alongside Bergman, by screening and exhibiting their films. She also mentioned the short montage of Chahine scenes by filmmaker Amir Ramses (also the artistic director of GFF), which will accompany a live performance of Chahine's film scores recomposed by the celebrated composer-conductor Hisham Gabr. “It was a dream for a long time to celebrate the music of Chahine. It took only a short talk with Naguib Sawiris, the Co-founder of the GFF to make it happen. Thank you El Gouna Film Festival.”



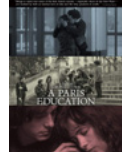
★ Schedule



Mug
Sea Cinema 1
12:00 PM



Of Fathers and Sons
Sea Cinema 2
2:30 PM



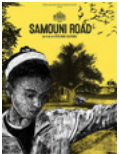
A Paris Education
Sea Cinema 1
2:45 PM



Dogman
Sea Cinema 3
3:15 PM



U - July 22
Audimax (TU Berlin)
3:30 PM



Samouni Road
Sea Cinema 2
5:00 PM



The Harvesters
Audimax (TU Berlin)
6:00 PM



Divine Wind
Sea Cinema 1
6:00 PM



Short Film Program 1
Sea Cinema 3
6:15 PM



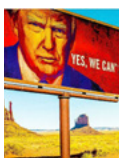
Ghost Fleet
Sea Cinema 2
8:00 PM



With the Wind
Audimax (TU Berlin)
8:30 PM



The Man Who Surprised Everyone
Sea Cinema 1
8:30 PM



America
Sea Cinema 3
9:00 PM



Youssef Chahine Concert
Marina Theater
10:00 PM

Short film program 1
Abdullah and Leilah - 20 min
Strange Planet Theory - 14 min
Spring - 23 min
Judgement - 15 min
Sheikh's Watermelons - 23 min
Fork & Knife - 15 min



A. B. Shawky Receives Variety's MENA Talent Award

Egyptian-Austrian director A. B. Shawky, whose movie Yomeddine had its Middle East premiere screening at GFF, received Variety's MENA Talent of the Year Award. The award ceremony was held at the open air Marina Theater on

September 22, with the presence of GFF organizers and celebrity guests, and the film stars and crew. Yomeddine is Egypt's official submission for the Best Foreign Language Film category of this year's Academy Awards.

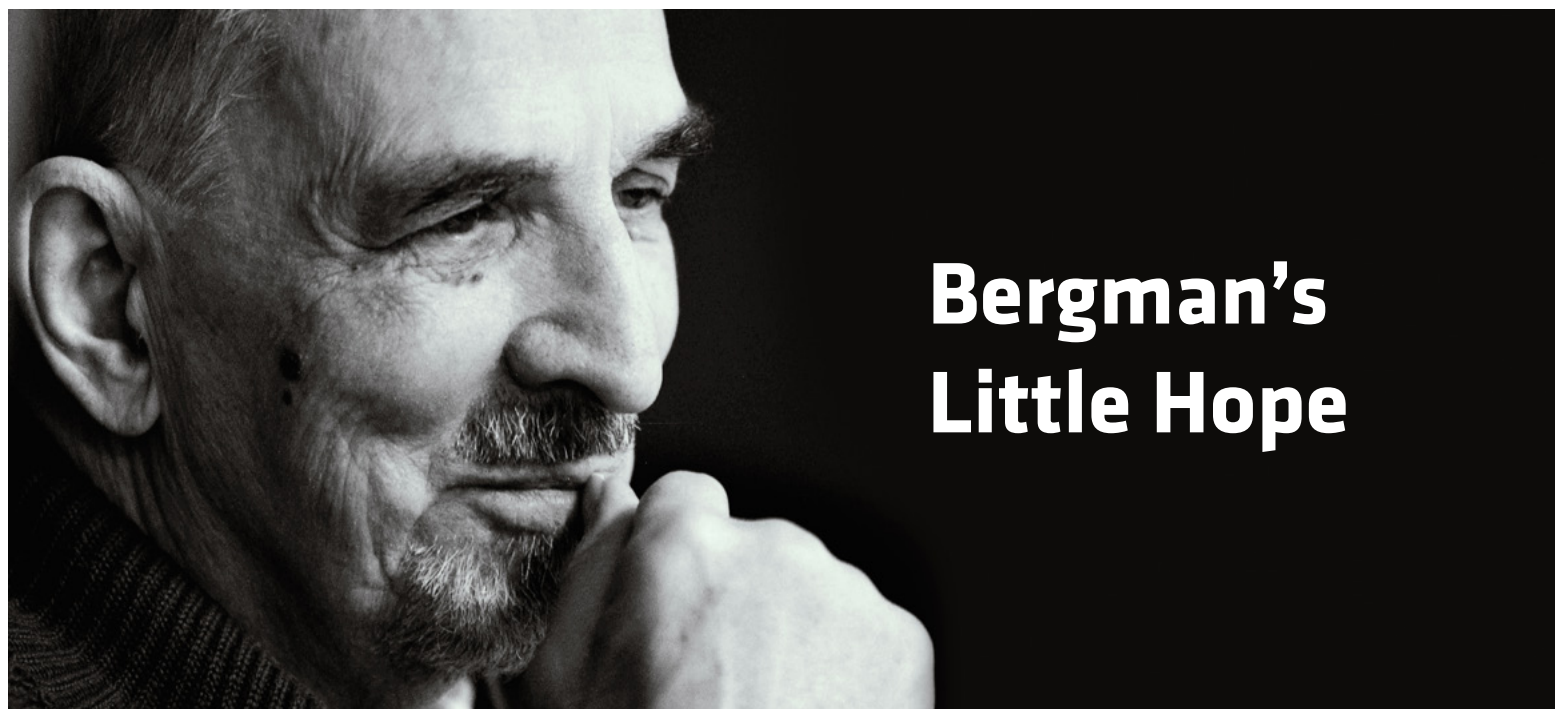


PERSONA

In Persona, Liv Ullmann plays Elisabet Vogler, a renowned stage actress who has suffered a psychological breakdown. She relapses into silence during a production of Electra and is now in a psychiatric facility. The doctor supervising her has a bold and generous idea: she will lend Elisabet her summer beach house for the duration of her recovery, and Alma, a trained nurse, will go and live with her. Far from being coaxed out of her silence, Elisabet remains utterly mute, and it is Alma who begins

to speak, at first clumsily, trying to make Elisabet talk, but then she finds that it is her own necessary personal catharsis. Alma intercepts a letter Elisabet wrote to the doctor, finding out that she is rather dismissive and amused by Alma's personal revelations, and it hints to a possible crush Alma has on her. Alma then has her own nervous breakdown, eloquently shown by the celluloid of the film melting, and the relationship between the two women takes unexpected turns. Persona is indeed

a special project; since 1966 every film director, film critic, writer and philosopher found their own interpretation of the film: from social-political engagement (a metaphor of the disintegration of the capitalist system) to Jungian theories (every human being has a mask). Perhaps Elisabet and Alma are the same person. The word "persona," which derives from the Latin word meaning "mask," conjures up Carl Jung's notion of an external, artificial personality used to hide the real self. In Elisabet, Liv Ullmann plays the mask that all of a sudden refuses to perform her social role and stops talking. Bibi Andersson is the soul (alma from "alima," dissimulation of the Latin word "anima", soul) in open conflict with the "persona" Elisabet decided to be: cold, heartless, arid and egoistic with a son she hates (and it is not by accident she stops talking during Electra), the son/ Bergman that at the beginning of the film tries to touch the huge out-of-focus face of his mother (Ullmann turning into Andersson turning into Ullmann). But any interpretation exists in its own right. "You can interpret it in any way you like. As with any poem, images mean different things to different people," says Bergman. What is very exciting indeed is that after fifty-two years, Persona keeps all its mysterious charm, like the Gioconda of cinema.



Bergman's Little Hope

By Gautaman Bhaskaran

Once, the legendary movie critic, Derek Malcolm, rued that cinematic giants like Ingmar Bergman, Charlie Chaplin and Jean-Luc Godard attracted nearly empty auditoriums. While Chaplin's films were funny, they were also incisive social and political commentaries, an aspect which perhaps many could not comprehend. Godard's work could be highly abstract as we have seen especially in his latest outing at Cannes 2018, Image Book. As far as Bergman is concerned, his movies have been considered gloomy, a typical Swede tag. Be that as it may, Bergman's Wild Strawberries

(1957) may not be witty or light, but it is one of his least pessimistic films. Bergman's study of social behavior – sometimes most brilliantly through closeups – is deep and overpowering. Wild Strawberries opens with a dream sequence that shows us how a professor finds himself in a jail-like house in Stockholm and is shaken to find a coffin popping out. The corpse inside of it tries to pull the professor in. The professor is the 76-year-old Isak Borg, who is a famous medical scientist. Along with his daughter-in-law Marianne, he is travelling by road to Stockholm to receive an honorary doctorate. Prodded by Marianne, he opens up to reveal

his unfulfilled life. The girl he loved married his brother, and Borg's own marriage had been a disaster. Memories of his childhood by the seaside, his romance with Sara and their moments of sheer pleasure gathering wild strawberries are punctuated by loneliness and dejection. He finds these traits in his old mother (whom he meets on his road trip) and in his middle-aged physician son. Finally, when Borg goes to bed at his son's home, a strange sort of peace and tranquility descends on the old man. In a later interview, Bergman said that Borg's character was written in an attempt to justify himself to his parents.



The Swedish Ambassador Jan Thesleff

GFF is a major stop on the regional and international film circuit

Nahed Nasr

On the occasion of legendary Swedish Filmmaker Ingmar Bergman's 100th anniversary #Bergman100, celebrated all over the world, the 2nd Edition of El Gouna Film Festival (2028- September 2018) pays tribute to Bergman with a special program, which includes a photo exhibition, a ceremony, and a screening of two of his renowned films, Wild Strawberries (1957) and Persona (1966). The Ambassador of Sweden Jan Thesleff will attend this events.

With the GFF special program of Ingmar Bergman, Egypt joins the world celebrations of his 100th anniversary. What is your impression about the occasion?

Film speaks a universal language. Ingmar Bergman is one of the giants of 20th century film and theatre, having influenced artists worldwide, including in Egypt. It is symptomatic that the GFF honors Bergman together with two of his peers, Youssef Chahine and Federico Fellini. The GFF is a major stop on the regional and international film circuit and Egypt is at the core of Middle Eastern cinema. I appreciate the serious approach of the GFF. It is an exclusive platform for film and film professionals, like the Sundace Film Festival in the United States. I am very proud that Sweden can be part of this important milestone event. Just as the GFF is a highlight for Egyptian and international film, Malmö Arab Film Festival (to be held on Malmö/Sweden, 59- Oct 2018) is the biggest Arab film festival outside the Arab World. I was proud to hold a launch event for the Malmö Arab Film Festival in Cairo last week. It is my hope that our joint passion for films will also encourage co-production and co-financing between our countries.

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I grew up with the films of Bergman. Our most famous actors and actresses worked with him



What is your own personal experience with the cinema of Bergman?

I grew up with the films of Bergman. Our most famous actors and actresses worked with him. He is a precursor in so many ways and very modern in his cinematic language. Bergman influence cannot be overestimated. He brought a new language to the screen. There is a distinctive Bergman signature to all he created. From camera angles and movements, to psychological plots and even to fashion. I personally love Wild Strawberries (1957), that will be screened in El Gouna.

In your opinion how a country could preserve the legacy of its great artists and to make this legacy available for generations?

The way in which Bergman's legacy has continued to be celebrated is really a model for how to preserve the legacy of such a remarkable artist. Unique artistry is timeless and withstands changing trends. Bergman is part of the classic Directors of the last century but his influence in modern cinema remains tangible. There is a Bergman Week celebrated every year in Sweden on Bergman's Fårö Island. It's a unique celebration because it's not a red-carpet event. Instead, it allows guests to celebrate Bergman through his life, by seeing his home and the places where he filmed a lot of his most famous films.

Are you familiar with the Egyptian and Arab cinema? You may mention a favorite Egyptian film?

I like many Egyptian movies, but one that remains an all time favorite is Marwan Hamed's The Yacoubian Building (2006).



Do you find time to watch movies in your full schedule and do you like to watch movies in cinema or in your laptop?

Who doesn't enjoy watching movies? Films should – in my view – be watched in a cinema, surrounded by people and on a big screen. Cairo is blessed with classic cinema buildings. I hope they will be restored and preserved as they are really part of Egypt's modern cultural heritage. Of course, I do not always have the possibility to go to a movie theatre and I often enjoy watching movies at home or even on an air plane. Modern technology brings cinematic art closer to people, where they are. New ways of distributing films also gives us the opportunity to reach new audiences.

If not a diplomat have you ever thought that you would like to be an artist or a filmmaker?

I must admit, that when I was younger I nurtured a dream of leading an artistic career, but by becoming a diplomat, I have actually had the great possibility of promoting art and artists from my country, even if I am not part of the art scene myself. Art and diplomacy belong together. Through art we make ourselves, our societies, our culture and values visible. Culture builds bridges, just like diplomacy.

Cold War Preview

Love in the Time of Cold War

Mohamed Sayed Abdel Rehim

Cold War is a 2018 Polish drama film directed by renowned Polish director Paweł Pawlikowski. It is starred by Joanna Kulig as Zuzanna «Zula» Lichon and Tomasz Kot as Wiktor Warski and written by Janusz Głowacki and Paweł Pawlikowski.

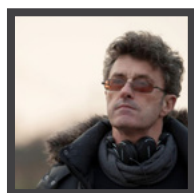
The film is about the passionate love story between two artists, Wiktor and Zula, in the times of cold war between the eastern and western camps in the 1950s. The Wiktor-Zula relationship is a tense one that reflects the tension that was hanging on the European societies in the 1950s due to the US-USSR conflict that tore the old continent, and not only Germany, into two miserable worlds.

The film competed for the Palme d'Or at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival. At Cannes, Pawlikowski won the award for Best Director. The film is loosely inspired by Pawlikowski's parents' lives.

Wiktor is a pianist and folklore researcher while Zula is a folklore singer. They fall in

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The film competed for the Palme d'Or at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival



love but the changing currents of politics in Europe press them to change their ideas about life and love. They exert great efforts to be whole again but the political tension and the Soviet propaganda uses them and makes their relationship unstable.

The lovers' tale gets under your skin and makes you think about love and its links with everything starting from arts to politics as well as history, psychology and social mobility.

Pawlikowski's black and white film reflects how Europe in this era was colorless. The choice of black and white says a lot about how the Soviet Union and its socialist ideology turned its peoples into lifeless machines. Human beings in this film, especially during the lovers' relation in Poland, are portrayed as machines in which they walk, talk and even make love like a

machine and not like human beings.

The film shows us a portrait of these two lovers who can be taken as an example for millions of people around the world who live in the shadows of tyranny and injustice. And that is one of the main roles of art. Pawlikowski's characters are inspired by the pre-Soviet vision of art in which art was more humanitarian than nowadays. His characters are like the characters that can be found in the novels of Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Anton Chekhov and Leo Tolstoy. Pawlikowski, like those writers, explores with a microscope the lives of certain individuals to showcase the greatness of humanity.

Cold War, with its pre-Soviet characters who struggle to be true and sincere, makes us believe in a better future for humanity and for ourselves.

Kaouthar Ben Hania Two watermelons in one hand

Hani Mustafa

Kaouthar Ben Hania is a young Tunisian filmmaker who is known for her widely debated Beauty and the Dogs (Aala Kaf Ifrit) 2017, which was premiered at the Cannes Film Festival's Un Certain Regard section last year. The film was based on a true story of a girl who was raped by a policeman. Ben Hania portrayed the drama of that brutal incident not by shooting the rape but by showing how her protagonist was struggling to sue the rapists. She was only interested in getting into the main issue which is if the criminals were executive officials how can a victim gets his right?

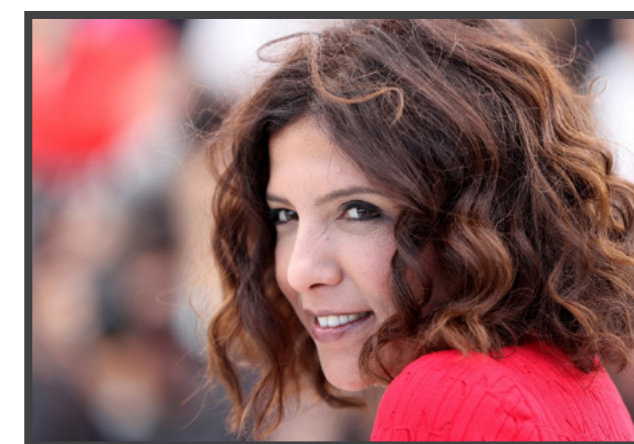
Ben Hania is also well-known to those interested in art house Arab cinema; in her feature-length documentary Zaineb Hates the Snow (Zaineb takrahou ethelj), she followed the life of a Tunisian girl over six whole years. Starting when the girl was nine years old, with exemplary simplicity and delicacy and realism Ben Hania shows how Zaineb makes sense of life after she loses her father in a car accident and her mother decides to marry another and emigrates with him to Canada.

Her short narrative film Batikh Al-Sheikh (The Sheikh's Watermelons) is screened

in GFF's Short Films Competition. She has also a narrative project in development entitled The Man Who Sold His Skin that will compete in the CineGouna SpringBoard, which has 12 awards with a total of US \$150,000.

Although Batikh Al-Sheikh deals with a very simple dramatic plot, Ben Hania digs deeper enough in this limited time of a short film to find something wider. The film asserts the relationship between traditional preaching and Islamic extremism.

In her previous films, Ben Hania was interested in indirectly portraying the lives of women; how they gain experience in life and how they fight for their simple rights. However, in Batikh Al-Sheikh the plot is completely revolving around a woman. The film is approaching the issue of religion and how it is involved in the life of a group of ordinary villagers. It opens with a small mosque in a Tunisian village where the Imam holds the prayer, two boys get into the mosque with their mother's coffin to do the funeral prayer, until a man shouts that the dead woman owes him some money. The Imam, after getting the assertion from the boys about the man's claim, asks everyone to contribute to pay the dead women's debt.



The filmmaker is tackling the issue hypothetically and ironically without getting into arguing the extreme doctrines or answering fundamental questions on how the extremists controlled the life of the ordinary people. She directly delves into a story trick; the Imam finds what lies inside the coffin is nothing but a few watermelons. He tries to get rid of the watermelons to cover his embarrassment or to avoid the doubts of the ordinary villagers that he might have been part of this set up when his extremist assistant takes advantage of the situation. Ben Hania addresses directly and maybe symbolically to a few straightforward ideas. The Imam was intrigued by two simple things; firstly, by the fake funeral and then by his assistant whose thoughts he knew before recruiting and protecting him. The drama of the film becomes very direct while explaining that the fake funeral was designed by the extremist assistant himself.

In Batikh Al-Sheikh Ben Hania is proving her consistent ability to tackle the most sensitive social issues in her artistic though entertaining films, which easily reach wider audiences.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH FILMS

What is the role of film in creating and reinforcing women's social roles? How can mass and social media best be used in support of the cause for gender equality and women's economic empowerment? Where do we go from here in light of the recent #TimesUp and #MeToo movements? These and other questions will form the basis for the presentation and discussion of the Women's Empowerment panel.

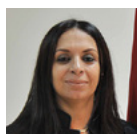


Moderated by
Dora Bouchoucha
Tunisian Producer

Sunday, September 23
12:30 PM, TU Berlin (Audimax)



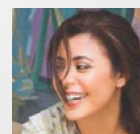
May Abdel Asim
Founder and MD of
What Women Want



Maya Morsy
President of the National
Council for Women in Egypt



Bina Paul
Artistic Director
Kerala Film Festival



Reem Saleh
Producer, Director
of "What Goes Around"



Ally Derks
Founder and
Director of IDFA

REFUGEES AND THEIR STORIES THROUGH FILMS

Film has tremendous power to create change. Why is it a surprise that we are all finding it difficult to connect with a situation outside of our experience, and how can we keep making people care? Over 65 million people around the world have been recently displaced to escape famine, climate change and war - can filmmakers, through their stories, ensure that we see those affected by exile as people rather than statistics? This discussion will look into the power of film and its impact on society for driving positive change on a global scale.

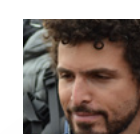


Moderated by
Jay Weissberg
Film Critic at Variety

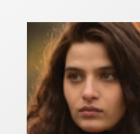
Monday, September 24
12:30 PM, TU Berlin (Audimax)



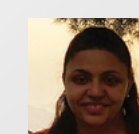
Kasim Abid
Award-winning
Iraqi Filmmaker



Omar Samra
Entrepreneur, Adventurer,
future Astronaut and
UN Goodwill Ambassador



Manal Issa
Award-winning
French-Lebanese Actress



Christine Beshay
UNHCR Assistant Public
Information and
Communications Officer

