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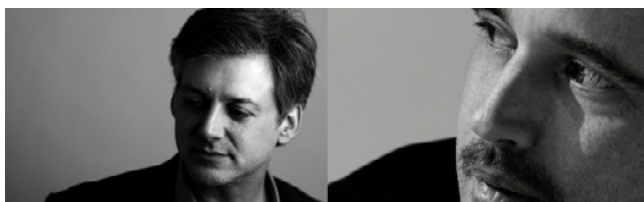
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Don't Miss



Dream Away... Our Open-Ended Dreams



A Reception Celebrating the Partnership between the GFF and the U.S. Embassy

The American Embassy in Cairo, in partnership with the 2nd round of El Gouna Film Festival, hosted a reception last night at El Gouna to celebrate the cooperation.

The event was attended by Naguib Sawiris, the founder of El Gouna Film Festival; Samih Sawiris, the founder of El Gouna; Amr Mansi, co-founder & CEO; Bushra Rozza, co-founder & COO; Intishal Al Timimi the festival director, and Amir Ramses the art director.

The reception was also attended by the U.S. Embassy's Press Attaché Samuel Werberg, who thanked El Gouna Film Festival organizers and expressed his pleasure at the partnership between the U.S. Embassy in Cairo and El Gouna Film Festival, through the American film diplomacy program, American Film Showcase.

In the second edition of El Gouna Film Festival, CineGouna Platform hosts a masterclass with two prominent American filmmakers, Keith Fulton and Lou Pepe.

American Film Showcase (AFS) is the premier film diplomacy program of the U.S. Department of State, in cooperation with The University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts. AFS promotes people-to-people engagement, offers contemporary insights into American society, and fosters understanding across cultures.



Today: CineGouna Platform Awards Ceremony

The closing ceremony of the CineGouna Platform will be held tomorrow at the open air Marina Theater, where selected projects of the CineGouna SpringBoard will be announced. All selected projects of the CineGouna SpringBoard (12 in development and 6 in post-production) from six Arab countries compete for CineGouna SpringBoard awards with a total of US \$150,000.



Today: A Duet with Fellini in Films and Dreams

A conversation with Gianfranco Angelucci set to take place today at 12:30 PM, TU Berlin.

Gianfranco Angelucci worked alongside Fellini in various capacities, but mostly as a screenwriter. In 1987 he authored the screenplay for Fellini's 'Intervista', recipient of a special prize at the Cannes Film Festival and the First Prize at the Moscow Film Festival.



Tomorrow: A Conversation with Owen Wilson

The acclaimed Hollywood star Owen Wilson will be the guest of a CineGouna masterclass tomorrow at 12:30 PM, TU Berlin (Audimax). The event will be moderated by actress Bushra Rozza, the co-founder & COO of GFF.

Wilson will be exploring the art of acting on various levels. He will be offering us some precious insight into his own success story, the methods he uses and the current situation of the film industry from an insider's point of view.

★ Masterclass

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Today: It's All «Based on a True Story» Masterclass

A masterclass by film directors Keith Fulton and Lou Pepe, entitled “It’s All Based on a True Story; Storytelling in Documentary and Fiction” is organized today in cooperation with AFS and The U.S. Embassy in Cairo, at 10:00 AM, TU Berlin (Audimax).

Using examples from their own filmography and clips from films that have inspired them, Lou Pepe and Keith Fulton, directors who have made both documentary and fiction films together for over 20 years, will discuss storytelling techniques for both forms.

Fulton and Pepe’s documentary feature Lost in La Mancha stands as the first and only verité chronicle of the collapse of a major motion picture. It won many prestigious awards at several international events, just as their fiction film debut Brothers of the Head and their most recent documentary release The Bad Kids did. The team is currently working on He Dreams of Giants, a documentary in post-production that continues the saga of Terry Gilliam’s 30-year quest to bring Don Quixote to the screen.

The event will be moderated by rising Egyptian film director Karim El Shenawy.

★ Meet the Filmmaker Today

3:15 PM

Sea Cinema 2
Graves Without a Name
Guest(s) Attending:
Rithy Panh
Director
Catherine Dussart
Producer

3:30 PM

Sea Cinema 3
Dream Away
Guest(s) Attending:
Marouan Omara
Director, writer
Johanna Domke
Director
Mark Lotfy
producer

3:30 PM

TUB Audi Max
Screwdriver
Guest(s) Attending:
Bassam Jarbawi
Director
Yasmine Qaddumi
Cast

6:00 PM

TUB Audi Max
The Heiresses
Guest(s) Attending:
Marcelo Martinessi
Director
Ana Brun
Margarita Irun
Cast

6:00 PM

Sea Cinema 2
What Comes Around
Guest(s) Attending:
Reem Saleh
Director
Alaa Mosbah
producer
Om Ghareeb
Cast

6:30 PM

Sea Cinema 3
Hi I Need To Be Loved
Guest(s) Attending:
Marnie Ellen Hertzler
Director

6:30 PM

Sea Cinema 3
The Night of Cesare
Guest(s) Attending:
Sergio Scavio
Director
Mauli Singh My Best Freind's Shoes
Producer

6:30 PM

Sea Cinema 3
EyeBrows
Guest(s) Attending:
Tamer Ashry
Director
Mariam ElKhosht
Cast

6:30 PM

Sea Cinema 3
Tomatic
Guest(s) Attending:
Christophe M. Saber
Director

6:30 PM

Sea Cinema 2
My Best Friend's Shoes
Guest(s) Attending:
Ajitpal Singh
Director

6:30 PM

Sea Cinema 3
All Inclusive
Guest(s) Attending:
Corina Schwingruber Illić
Director

6:30 PM

Sea Cinema 2
The Price of Free
Guest(s) Attending:
Derek Doneen
Director

9:15 PM

Sea Cinema 2
The Swing
Guest(s) Attending:
Cyril Aris
Director

Daoud Abdel Sayed: Filmmakers Can Change the Preferences of the Audience

Farah El Araby

During a masterclass entitled “A Journey Through My Career: Past, Present, and Future” that took place yesterday in the frame of the CineGouna Platform, renowned Egyptian director Daoud Abdel Sayed declared that Yomeddine by A.B. Shawky is a fine example of the Egyptian cinematic identity. Regarding the relationship between the artist and the audience, he said that the writers and directors should have the courage to impose their ideas and preferences on the audience, and not the other way around; “that is how films become works of art, and not commercial products.” He announced: “I believe that the filmmakers and writers are able to change the preferences of the audience.” Moreover, he said that the writers and directors have a big responsibility towards the audience: “we should create valuable content with a strong core message.” He added that the audience is the power behind the continuity of movie making: “when I write a script, I think about the audience’s perception of the story, the characters, and every other aspect.”

Answering a question about the number of his produced films, he said that although he is not a lazy person, he does not consider himself as an incredibly talented artist. He added that sometimes



he works on several scripts at the same time, but they do not always end up being produced.

He said that sometimes there is a gap between the imagination and the film: “I believe that artistic productions do not always meet your imagination.”

Abdel Sayed is considered one of the pioneers of the Neo-Realism movement in Egypt. He has been awarded several prizes throughout his film career, such as the Silver Pyramid for Best Screenplay and Best

Arabic Film Award at Cairo International Film Festival (1999). Asser Yassin won the Best Actor Award for his role in Messages from the Sea at the Carthage Film Festival (2010). The film also received awards for Best Actor, Best Actor in Secondary Role and Best Director at the Egyptian National Film Festival (2013). The same year, Dubai International Film Festival announced Daoud Abdel Sayed’s Kit Kat, Land of Fear, and Messages from the Sea among the best 100 Arab films.

Producers’ Panel Discussion: Small Drops Create an Ocean



Farah El Araby

A panel discussion entitled “Getting Creative About Getting Money” took place yesterday at the Audimax theater, moderated by film producer Hassan Mahfouz. The session was attended by Tarek Ben Ammar, international film producer; Ashraf Ghazaly, chief executive officer and managing director of NI Capital; Alban de Ménonville, co-founder of Bassita; Bianca Taal, festival programmer, and Said Hanafi, partner at MHR & Partners in association with White & Case.

Tarek Ben Ammar said that although there is money in the Arab world, finding a sponsor for first and second-time filmmakers is considered to be the hardest part of the whole story. Alban de Ménonville, for his part, focused on the role of social media as a powerful tool for supporting film projects: “I believe in the power of social media. It creates free visibility; posts with good content can go viral easily. Moreover, it’s a way of sharing your thoughts, political or social opinions.” On the other hand, Ashraf Ghazaly said that one of the biggest challenges that we face is the lack of data: “media organizations should gather information about young filmmakers and connect people in the film industry together, in order to cooperate and produce creative films.”

Bianca Taal stated that even in Europe the production phase has become very challenging, despite opportunities like public funding. “Film festivals will not survive without the creative content of the young generation. That’s why they should focus on exploring new, emerging talents,” she commented.

The panelists agreed that this discussion might be just a drop of water in the ocean, but that every great change starts with tiny actions. Those drops of water can come together to form rivers and seas, until they eventually reach the ocean.

Reem Saleh: My Mother Is an Egyptian from Rod El-Farag



Nahed Nasr

Lebanese film director Reem Saleh said yesterday that her mother is an Egyptian from Rod El-Farag, the area where her film What Comes Around takes place. During the Q & A of her documentary film’s premiere screening, Saleh added that she did not have difficulty convincing the characters of her film to take part in it: “they are like a family. The filmmaking process was not easy, but everyone in Rod El-Farag was cooperative.” She also expressed her gratitude about taking part in El Gouna Film Festival: “I thank the entire audience for being here to watch the film. It was a very hard and painful journey to make this film, so thank you El Gouna Film Festival for having the film in your program.”

Saleh was invited to the stage after the screening, along with Umm Ghareeb and Dunia, two main characters in her film. During the Q & A session of the film - which took 6 years to complete - one of the main characters, Dunia, a young girl who left school to help her mother, declared that her life has changed for the better: “I am pleased to announce that I am back to school and that my father came back to the family. When I told him that I want to be an actress, he told me that I should get an education first.” The audience reacted to her announcement with cheering and applause.

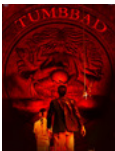
Umm Ghareeb, on the other hand, said that the film only represented a part of the difficulties they face in their life: “our tough life requires a lot of patience. Everything that appeared in this film is real, we did not make anything up.”

vDirector Reem Saleh was nominated for the Glasshütte Original Documentary Award at Berlin International Film Festival 2018 for her film, which had its MENA region premiere at the 2nd round of El Gouna Film Festival.

★ Schedule



Real Love
Sea Cinema 1
12:00 PM



Tumbbad
Sea Cinema 1
2:45 PM



Graves Without a Name
Sea Cinema 2
3:15 PM



Screwdriver
Audimax (TU Berlin)
3:30 PM



Dream Away
Sea Cinema 3
3:30 PM



The Wild Pear Tree
Sea Cinema 1
5:30 PM



The Heiresses
Audimax (TU Berlin)
6:00 PM



What Comes Around
Sea Cinema 2
6:00 PM



Short Film Program 4
Sea Cinema 3
6:30 PM



The Price of Free
Sea Cinema 2
8:30 PM



Peterloo
Audimax (TU Berlin)
8:45 PM



The Swing
Sea Cinema 3
9:15 PM



Too Late to Die Young
Sea Cinema 1
9:45 PM

Shoplifters... Familyhood Regained

Mohamed Sayed Abdel Rehim

Shoplifters is a Japanese drama that reflects how the values of family were lost in the past 60 years and how a bunch of unrelated people can belong to each other even more than family members. The film is about a family, who rely on shoplifting to cope with a life of poverty, deciding to let a girl join their family despite their poverty. The film is using Ozu-style cinematography to show a tale of a modern Japanese family. Renowned Japanese filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu (1903-1963-) made dozens of drama films about Japanese families especially in the 1940s.



Shoplifters' director Hirokazu Kore-eda is also keen on revealing how much the Japanese family has changed since Ozu's time and films. Kore-eda's family showcases how the Japanese society itself has changed from a society whose core is loving families (a nuclear family that consists of grandpas, grandmas, fathers, mothers and grandchildren) to families that treat their children poorly and lead them to hate their own relatives and even run away from them. The film surpasses the usual criticism of society in which films reveal how the world has turned out to be a cruel one; to showcase that «the family» is not a sacred



concept as the 19th century sociologists always said, and that sometimes a bunch of unrelated people can create a family more loving and caring than most modern families around the world, especially since newspapers are filled with news about domestic crimes. Shoplifters raises a very important question that critiques the concept of family: would human beings be happier if they could choose their own families? It is an existential question that ignores genetics and traditions to rather praise the free will of mankind. Kore-eda has crafted his masterpiece, in a

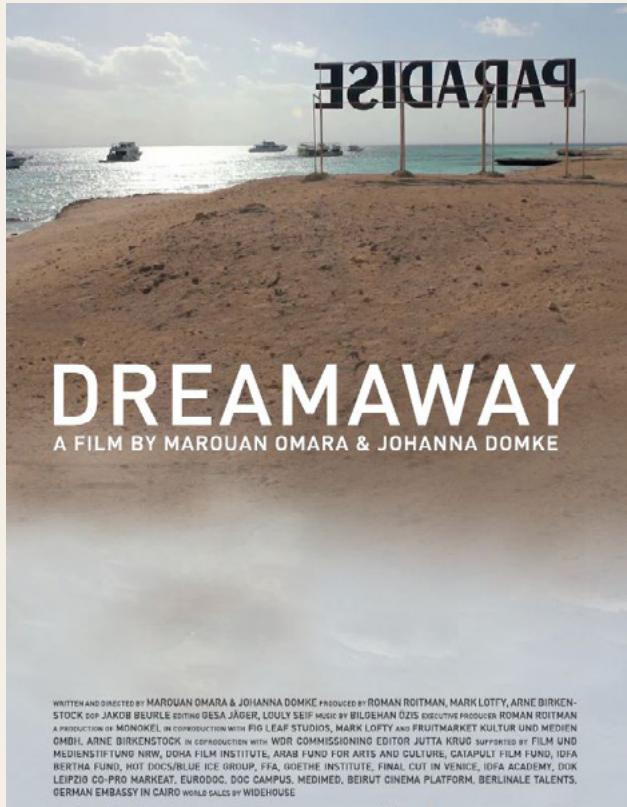
naturalistic style, to make the audience love life and family, through very poor people who are not even related, but who live with each other as a united family. The film's scenes make us laugh and cry, feel angry and loved, and lost and found at the same time. Shoplifters is directed, written and edited by Hirokazu Kore-eda. Lily Franky and Sakura Ando star in it. The film premiered at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival, where it went on to win the Palme d'Or. It was also selected as the Japanese entry for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 91st Academy Awards.

Dream Away... Our Open-Ended Dreams

Nahed Nasr

The paths of a group of young Egyptian people cross in Sharm El Sheikh, where they work as summer resort employees. Although their journey is led by their dream of better opportunities, they discover how isolated and deserted their lives are, much like the city in the south of the Sinai Peninsula, which is no longer a touristic destination. As they are the only inhabitants of the ghost city, they start to reflect on their limited choices, disappointments, and their far-fetched dreams. In Dream Away (2018) by Marouan Omara and Johanna Domke, the challenging political and economic conditions after the Arab spring and the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the city that took place three years ago are not directly uttered in words; they are hinted at through the protagonists' actions and the smart use of

music and songs. Omara and Domke break the fourth wall so that the characters speak about their agony and desperation directly to the viewers. But they also apply a thin line between documentary and fiction in a docudrama-like film where the combination of imagination and reality emphasizes the dreamy state of mind of all the characters. Dream Away will leave you with dozens of questions: does the man in the monkey costume exist in reality or only in their imagination? Are they real people or actors and actresses? Do I really need an answer? Although the events occur far away from Cairo and other big cities of Egypt, it draws a picture of the dilemma faced by a generation. The film was screened in the Documentary Competition of the 2018 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival.



Marouan Omara on Dream Away

Breaking the Rules Is a Rule

Nahed Nasr

Dream Away is the first feature length documentary of the rising Egyptian filmmaker Marouan Omara. It premiered at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival 2018, before being officially selected for El Gouna Film Festival's Feature Documentary Competition. Omara speaks to El Gouna Star a few days before he starts another film festival tour that includes Bergen International Film Festival (BIFF) and London Film Festival (Official Competition).

Since Dream Away has two directors, you and Johanna Domke, how did you divide the roles?

Actually I always like to have a co-director in all my films. It makes me more comfortable to share the responsibility of building up the project, from its beginning, with a partner. So it is not about a division of roles, but more about interaction and leading the boat together to the shore. Johanna Domke was my co-director in Crop (2013), which participated in many international film festivals. For my first feature-length film Dream Away I thought she is the best choice, because she will be interested in the subject which is, in a way, about a city where Egyptians and Westerners culturally meet. This is exactly the case of me and Johanna.

Your film is a kind of docu-fiction. Why did you choose this technique?

It has something to do with the choice of Sharm El Sheikh itself, where the film takes place. The only inhabitants of this city are either the Egyptian employees who come from all over the country or the foreign tourists. Both parties meet for a few weeks where they are free to control what to hide and what to fake regarding their image. The city becomes a stage where acting is part of the everyday life and where the line between reality and imagination is very thin. The chosen style of the film is close to and very reflective of its characters' reality.

What is real and what comes out of a written script regarding the characters?

300 persons registered for our casting call. For sure their stories were an important factor of choice, but there was also their own ambition to act in a film. We thought about how passionate they are to appear on the screen. In a way, the technique we chose helped us keep their privacy and this was important to them as well as for our vision, as we wanted this film to be timeless and not limited to a certain geographic spot, although it deals with a certain place at a certain time. The technique has also something to do with how we see the art of filmmaking. We are experimenting and



rediscovering our cinematic language and this is not only the case for Dream Away. It started with Microphone (2010) by Ahmad Abdalla and continued with Poisonous Roses (2018) by Ahmed Fawzy Saleh, where documentary and fiction go together in one film. I am happy to join the group. I come from a background in photography and I am very much inspired by how photography allows you to work freely and to experiment in every aspect. I challenge my cinematic language in every film to break the rules and to try new techniques as long as it fits the subject.

Your film has also a German and an Egyptian producer. How was that experience?

The journey of this film started in 2013 directly after Crop; it took a long time to secure its big budget and also to find a producer. Mark Lotfy, the Egyptian producer, joined the team after Roman Roitman, the German producer. I worked with Lotfy on different projects and I believe he and his company in Alexandria has the most professional executive team for an Indie film. We were sitting together; two directors and two producers from Egypt and Germany, to discuss everything. The process of making this film was a part of the vision of the film itself.

What is the importance of screening your film at El Gouna Film Festival?

I consider myself part of the GFF team. This festival is becoming one of the most important film festivals in Egypt and the region, with great organization and high-standard film screenings. It is one of the few film festivals in the region that has a Feature Documentary Competition. El Gouna is also the closest point to Sharm, since both cities share many elements. I believe that when people watch the film in El Gouna, they will look around the city and think about the connection.



