



# Arabian Sights



Contemporary Arab Cinema  
October 6–17, 2002

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# Arabian Sights 2002

Presented by The Washington, DC International Film Festival

The Seventh Annual *Arabian Sights* film series presents some of the newest and most engaging cinema from today's Arab world. This year's series represents a wealth of exceptional titles from the region with an unprecedented number of American premieres. All films are screened with English subtitles.

## Admission

Admission is \$8.50 per person for each screening.

Tickets for any film in the series may be purchased at the theater starting one hour before the first show.

## Festival Pass

A special package of 9 tickets for all films is available for \$65.00 at the start of the series only. Passes may be reserved by calling 202-724-5613.

## Location

All films will be shown at the Loews Cineplex Wisconsin Avenue Cinemas, 4000 Wisconsin Ave., NW. Take Metro Red Line to Tenleytown.

## Parking

Available in the theatre building along Upton Street for \$1.00 with a validated parking ticket.

## For More Information

For more information on this series call 202-724-5613 or log on to [www.filmfestdc.org](http://www.filmfestdc.org)

## Sponsors

The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities

Center for the Global South,  
American University

Center for Contemporary Arab Studies,  
Georgetown University

The Jerusalem Fund

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*Arabian Sights is programmed and coordinated by Shirin Ghareeb,  
Assistant Director of the Washington, DC International Film Festival.*

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# Opening Night Film



**Palestine**

## **Rana's Wedding**

*In Person: Director Hany Abu-Assad*

**Sunday, October 6th at 6:00 pm**  
**Tuesday, October 8th at 8:30 pm**

Rana wakes up one morning to an ultimatum delivered by her father: She must either choose a husband from a pre-selected list of eligible men, or she must accompany her father abroad. *Rana's Wedding* is a romantic drama about a Palestinian girl who wants to get married to the man of her own choice. With only ten hours to find her boyfriend in occupied Jerusalem, Rana sneaks out of her father's house at daybreak to find her forbidden love, Khalil. Facing barriers and occupation which have become an everyday reality, Rana overcomes her fears and doubts, deciding not to let anyone control her life. By the director of *Nazareth 2000*

(*Arabian Sights 2001*), *Rana's Wedding* was shot entirely on location in East-Jerusalem and Ramallah, and had its world premiere during International Critics' Week in Cannes 2002.

(*Directed by Hany Abu-Assad, 2002, 90 minutes*)

### **Opening Night Reception**

**Please join us for a reception with guest Director Hany Abu-Assad immediately following October 6th screening of *Rana's Wedding*. Reception will take place at Café Olé and is sponsored by The Jerusalem Fund.**



## Tunisia

### A Thousand and One Voices: The Music of Islam

**Sunday, October 6th at 8:30 pm**

A fascinating glimpse into the heart of the mystical universe of Sufi Islam which has developed a most sophisticated musical expression. Director Mahmoud Ben Mahmoud takes us on a remarkable journey to explore the diversity of musical forms and Muslim holy sites in his native Tunisia, the ancient and honored Koranic schools of Cairo, a festival dedicated to India's greatest Muslim holy man, the fabled whirling dervishes of Turkey and the bustling celebrations of Dakar, Senegal.

*(Directed by Mahmoud Ben Mahmoud, 2001, 90 minutes)*



## Egypt

### A Girl's Secret

*In Person: Director Magdy Ahmed Ali*

**Tuesday, October 8th at 6:30 pm**  
**Thursday, October 10th at 8:30 pm**

Magdy Ahmed Ali's third feature is a provocative milestone in Egyptian cinema. It graphically portrays an urban society's struggle to balance tradition, modernity, religion and science, through the story of sixteen-year-old Yasmeen whose out-of-wedlock pregnancy sparks a whole new set of consequences. Breaking unspoken taboos, *A Girl's Secret* raises many questions: Should women abide by the traditional Islamic dress code and cover themselves? Should schools teach sex education? Should teenage boys and girls socialize? Inspired by real incidents, director Magdy Ahmed Ali poignantly portrays Yasmeen's experiences, while delivering a harsh critique of Egyptian middle-class values. *A Girl's Secret* is the winner of numerous international awards.

*(Directed by Magdy Ahmed Ali, 2001, 91 minutes)*

# Films



**Morocco**

## Beyond Gibraltar

**Thursday, October 10th at 6:30 pm**

Directors Barman and Boucif draw on their own experiences as immigrants and take us into the heart of the North African community in Brussels with emotion, compassion and sincerity in this tender love story. Karim was born in Morocco and at the age of four, he and his family moved to Belgium where he grew up and obtained an advanced academic degree. On the day Karim receives his diploma, his father loses his job. Karim's loyalty to his father, community and family traditions are put to the test when he falls in love with Sophie, a young Belgian girl. Accompanied by a beautiful musical score by Abdelli.

*(Directed by Taylan Barman & Mourad Boucif, 2001, 105 minutes)*



**Palestine**

## Ticket to Jerusalem

**Sunday, October 13th at 6:30 pm**

A Palestinian couple, Jabar and Sana, live in a refugee camp near Ramallah. Sana volunteers with the emergency service of the Red Crescent Society. Jabar is unemployed and with no job prospects in the immediate future. He immerses himself in his passion, running a mobile cinema for children throughout the West Bank. One day, an opportunity to organize a screening in the old city of Jerusalem is made available to him. Despite the numerous obstacles that face him, he is determined to keep his commitment.

*(Directed by Rashid Masharawi, 2002, 85 minutes)*



**Lebanon**

## When Maryam Spoke Out

**Sunday, October 13th at 8:30 pm**

Ziad and Maryam are very happily married. Although in their three years of marriage they remain childless, Ziad is a compassionate husband and reassures Maryam of his love for her. Reminiscent of a Greek tragedy, the story unfolds to expose the different pressures placed on the young couple. The plot will surprise the viewer as the film develops gracefully and forcefully in reverse order with the narration taking the classical form of a love letter from Maryam to her husband. *When Maryam Spoke Out* is sure to be a memorable experience and the film is already the winner of several Best Film Prizes internationally.

*(Directed by Assad Fouladkar, 2001, 98 minutes)*



**Syria**

## Two Moons and an Olive Tree

**Tuesday, October 15th at 6:30 pm**

The latest work from one of Syria's leading filmmakers, *Two Moons and an Olive Tree* offers a poetic and empathic description of a small group of teenagers who live under difficult economic conditions and have to endure a very rigid school system. The film takes place some time in the '60s in the beautiful mountains on Syria's Mediterranean coast, where the director himself grew up. There are autobiographic references in this subdued drama about the bonds of friendship and first love, with a single flashback to the '67 war.

*(Directed by Abdullatif Abdulhamid, 2001, 90 minutes)*



**Lebanon**

## Jalla! Jalla!

**Tuesday, October 15th at 8:30 pm**  
**Thursday, October 17th at 6:30 pm**

A major hit in Sweden, *Jalla! Jalla!* ("hurry up" in Arabic) is the raucous debut of young writer/director Josef Fares, who, like his character Roro, emigrated as a kid to Sweden from Lebanon. Feeling the pressure to marry, twentysomethings Roro and Yasmin try to appease their families by pretending they're planning to wed soon. Naturally, circumstances spin out of their control. Meanwhile, Roro's buddy and workmate, Mans, despairs over his faltering manhood, a problem that affects his relationship with his girlfriend. *Jalla! Jalla!* is an engaging and energetic tale of sexual crises and cultural clashes. It was one of the big hits of Filmfest DC 2002.

—Jason Anderson, *Eye Weekly*

*(Directed by Josef Fares, 2000, 88 minutes)*



**Morocco**

## Mona Saber

*In Person: Director Abdelhaï Laraki*

**Thursday, October 17th at 8:30 pm**

A young French woman, Mona, recently learns that her natural father is Moroccan. At first taken by surprise, Mona eventually becomes very curious and intrigued about her newly discovered heritage. Armed with only a name, a black and white photograph, and an old love letter penned by her father to her mother, Mona embarks on a journey from Paris, through Casablanca to Essaouira. She not only discovers exotic sights and sounds, but she also discovers her new identity in Morocco's recent turbulent history.

*(Directed by Abdelhaï Laraki, 2001, 92 minutes)*



The Washington, DC International  
Film Festival

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