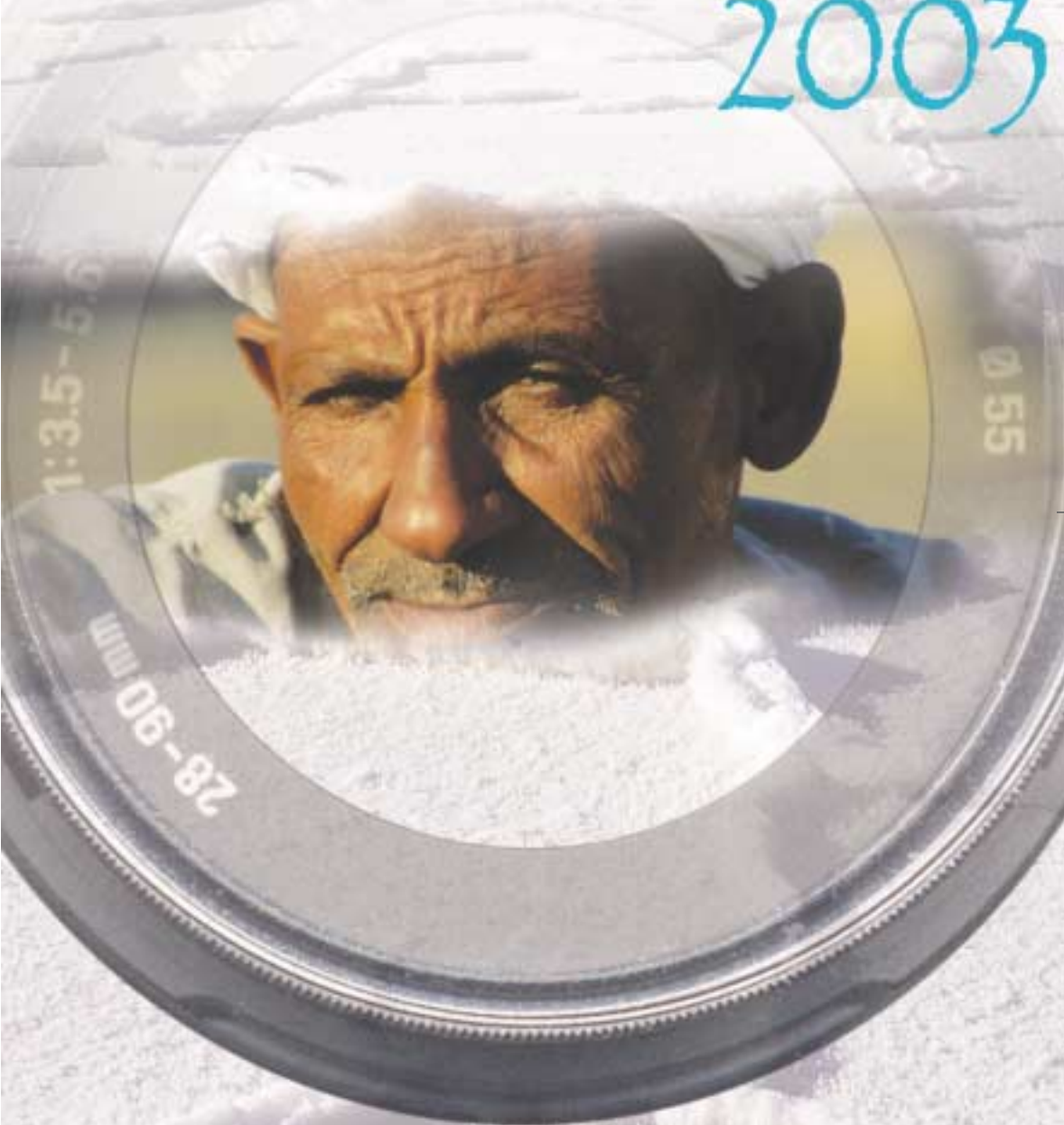


# arabian sights 2003



contemporary arab cinema  
october 3 -12, 2003

contemporary arab cinema | october 3 -12

# arabian sights 2003

presented by The Washington, DC International Film Festival

The Eighth Annual *Arabian Sights* film series presents some of the newest and most engaging cinema from the Arab world. By popular demand, *Arabian Shorts* is back this year featuring short films from some of the area's most talented young directors. All films are screened with English subtitles.

## Admission

Admission is \$9.00 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 8 tickets for all films is available for \$60.00 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 \$2.00 with a validated parking ticket.

## For More Information

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

## Sponsors

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

*Cover images: Photodisc, montage by Caesar Chaves, Ampersand Graphic Design, Inc.*

## opening film



### The Bookstore El Kotbia

*In Person: Director Nawfel Saheb-Ettaba*

**Friday, October 3rd at 6:30 pm**  
**Saturday, October 4th at 9:00 pm**

A beautifully scored and warmly told portrait of a group of people living and working in a small backstreet bookstore. Jamil (Ahmed El Haffiene) returns to Tunis after traveling abroad and accepts a position as assistant librarian to Tarek (Yadh Beji), a man belonging to the old Tunisian bourgeoisie who has inherited the family bookstore. Tarek lives in the same building as the bookstore with his beautiful live-wire wife, Leila (Hend Sabri), who would like to pursue her interest as a classical singer, and his mother, Aicha (Martine Gafsi), who mourns her late husband. The family dynamic becomes strained with Jamil's addition.

*(Tunisia, Directed by Nawfel Saheb-Ettaba, 2002, 103 minutes)*

### Under Another Sky Les chemins de l'oued

**Friday, October 3rd at 9:00 pm**  
**Saturday, October 4th at 7:00 pm**

A superb, psychological thriller with a powerful, talented cast. Samy (Nicolas Cazalé) is like any other young, fast-living French man — until he becomes the perpetrator of a hit-and-run car accident. His life changes drastically. Consumed by guilt and fear, Samy is hurriedly packed off to Algeria, his mother's homeland. He quickly discovers he is a fish out of water, an Algerian who thinks of himself as French and doesn't understand the rules of family and friendship, language or customs. With a galvanizing opening and strong, contemplative photography, this is a portrait of North African culture through the eyes of a hero who is both insider and outsider. *Under Another Sky* provides an exceptionally humane glimpse into the heart of a nation torn apart, and is a powerful contribution to the growing repertoire of cinematic dialogues between France and North Africa.

*(Algeria, Directed by Gaël Morel, 2002, 78 minutes)*



Featured Films

Featured Films

## The Magic Box Sandouk Ajab

**Sunday, October 5th at 6:00 pm**  
**Sunday, October 12th at 6:00 pm**

When a European television network commissions 40-something Tunisian filmmaker Raouf (Abdelatif Kechiche) to make a film about his childhood relationship with cinema, it sparks a self-examination into his past and present. Raouf's youth in the small town of Kairouan was marked by a culture clash between the strict Islamic moralism of his father and the daringly Western attitudes of his dashing uncle, Mansour (Hichem Rostom), a traveling projectionist. Spiced through with delectable North African melodies, this beautifully shot memory piece provides a window into the complexities of life in the Maghreb.

Compared by some critics to *Cinema Paradiso*, *The Magic Box* was Tunisia's submission to the Academy Awards for Best Foreign Film.

*(Tunisia, Directed by Ridha Behi, 2002, 88 minutes)*



## Bedwin Hacker

**Sunday, October 5th at 8:00 pm**

In spite of its high tech theme, *Bedwin Hacker* is a film about friendship and portrays North African women as strong, intelligent, confident and self-aware. From an oasis in the southern Tunisian mountain region, computer genius Kalt (Sonia Hamza) manages to hijack the frequencies of foreign television channels to broadcast messages in Arabic, signed by a moving cartoon character — a camel named “Bedwin Hacker”. The counter-hacking department in Paris is under alert. Although the incident is explained away as a technical problem to the public, French agent Julia (Muriel Solvay) recognizes the signature of Kalt. She uses her friend Chems (Tomer Sisley), a journalist, to gather information on Kalt while he is on assignment in Tunisia. Chems unknowingly becomes a catalyst in the cat and mouse game between the two women.

*(Tunisia, Directed by Nadia El Fani, 2002, 103 minutes)*



## Arabian Shorts

A selection of new short films from the Arab world

*(Total running time 105 minutes)*

**Thursday, October 9th at 6:30 pm**

**Friday, October 10th at 9:00 pm**

### Prêt-à-porter Imm Ali

Imm Ali sells ready to wear women's clothing from her house. She purchases a neon sign for the front of her home, the first sign of its kind in her village. Shortly after it is installed it mysteriously shuts off and Imm Ali suspects sabotage.

*(Lebanon, Directed by Dima El-Horr, 2002, 27 minutes)*

### The Bread

In rural France, a couple and their son are about to have lunch, but find there is no bread left.

*(Palestine, Directed by Hiam Abbas, 2000, 18 minutes)*

### 200 Dirhams

A young shepherd boy grazes his flock near a busy highway that carves through the countryside. One day he finds a 200 dirham note and dreams that he could use it to start a new life in the city.

*(Morocco, Directed by Laila Marrakchi, 2002, 15 minutes)*



### like twenty impossibles

**In Person: Director Annemarie Jacir**

In a landscape now interrupted by military checkpoints, a group of Palestinian artists navigate both emotional and political boundaries as they attempt to reach Jerusalem.

*(Palestine, Directed by Annemarie Jacir, 2003, 17 minutes)*



### Hawa Beirut

Khalil enters his bathroom one day to take a shower before going to a business meeting. A powerful gust of wind slams the door shut and traps him inside. Getting back out proves to be harder than expected.

*(Lebanon, Directed by Fouad Alaywan, 2002, 18 minutes)*

### Jean Fares

Driss should be celebrating the birth of his son. But he is stuck on the phone, arguing with his parents in Algiers and his in-laws in Versailles about the child's name.

*(Algeria, Directed by Lyes Salem, 2001, 10 minutes)*

Arabian Shorts



## Ford Transit

**Thursday, October 9th at 8:30 pm**  
**Friday, October 10th at 7:00 pm**

Director Hany Abu-Assad follows cab driver Rajai as he detours around road-blocks and maneuvers through short cuts between East Jerusalem and Ramallah. Meanwhile, Rajai's passengers converse about the situation in Palestine, George Bush and suicide bombers, expressing divergent opinions with humor and sincerity. Interwoven throughout the documentary, we get to know Rajai and his life, dreams, family and his sideline pursuit of smuggling illegal CDs. *Ford Transit* is the latest award-winning film and from the director of *Nazareth 2000* (*Arabian Sights 2001*) and *Rana's Wedding* (*Arabian Sights 2002*).

(Palestine, Directed by Hany Abu-Assad, 2002, 80 minutes)

## A Thousand Months Mille Mois

**Saturday, October 11th at 6:30 pm**  
**Sunday, October 12th at 8:00 pm**

Set in 1981, *A Thousand Months* tells the tale of seven-year-old boy Mehdi (Fouad Labied), who lives in a small village situated in Morocco's picturesque Atlas Mountains with his young mother, Amina (Nezha Rahil), and dignified grandfather (Mohammed Majd). His father has been thrown into prison for inciting a strike, but young Mehdi has been led to believe that he is working in France. Mehdi has been assigned the task of guarding his teacher's chair, the only thing of value in the poor village schoolroom. He carries the wooden chair around on his head when school is not in session. Its symbolic value grows as a series of events that involve the whole village are set in motion and lead to an unexpectedly dramatic finale.

Presented at the Cannes Film Festival this year, *A Thousand Months* won Le Premier Regard award. This debut film is distinguished by natural performances, stunning scenery and a gradual building of tension that leads to an unexpected finale.

(Morocco, Directed by Faouzi Bensaidi, 2003, 124 minutes)





## Red Satin

### Satin Rouge

**Saturday, October 11th at 9:00 pm**

While investigating a suspected liaison between her headstrong teenaged daughter and a cabaret musician, young widow Lilia becomes drawn to an exotic nightclub of belly dancers. She strikes up a friendship with one of the dancers, then eventually takes the stage herself – quickly becoming the favorite of both cabaret patrons and the club’s hot-blooded drummer. As she gradually sheds her shapeless, matronly house-dresses for the flamboyantly sequined dancing garb, she also begins to emerge from her cocoon of melancholy and loneliness.

*(Tunisia, Directed by Raja Amari, 2002, 89 minutes)*

## Film Schedule

**Friday, October 3**

6:30 pm **The Bookstore**  
9:00 pm **Under Another Sky**

**Saturday, October 4**

7:00 pm **Under Another Sky**  
9:00 pm **The Bookstore**

**Sunday, October 5**

6:00 pm **The Magic Box**  
8:00 pm **Bedwin Hacker**

**Thursday, October 9**

6:30 pm **Arabian Shorts**  
8:30 pm **Ford Transit**

**Friday, October 10**

7:00 pm **Ford Transit**  
9:00 pm **Arabian Shorts**

**Saturday, October 11**

6:30 pm **A Thousand Months**  
9:00 pm **Red Satin**

**Sunday, October 13**

6:00 pm **The Magic Box**  
8:00 pm **A Thousand Months**

Schedule



The Washington, DC  
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P.O. Box 21396  
Washington, DC 20009

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