



Sights 2013

Contemporary Arab Cinema

October 25 – November 3

filmfestdc.org

ARABIAN

Contemporary Arab Cinema

October 25 – November 3

Presented by the Washington, DC International Film Festival

The Arabian Sights Film Festival returns for its eighteenth year! Select directors will be present. A panel discussion on the current post-revolution cinema in Egypt will also be held. An Audience Award for favorite film will be presented. All films will be screened with English subtitles. Visit filmfestdc.org for updates.

Admission

\$12.00 per person for each screening, unless otherwise noted.

Advance sales are subject to a convenience fee.

Tickets may be purchased at filmfestdc.org and at the theater starting one hour before the first show.

1-888-996-4774 **MISSIONTIX**

Festival Pass

A special package of 10 tickets is available online and at the theater for a discounted price of \$95. Advance sales subject to a convenience fee. This package does not include Opening Night.

Location

AMC Mazza Gallerie
5300 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20015

Sponsors



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Shirin Ghareeb, Arabian Sights Festival Director and Programmer, and Deputy Director of the Washington, DC International Film Festival.

Special thanks to **Alexandria Kelly** and **Kristin Van Meerbeke**, Coordinating Assistants; **Jared Traver**, Print Traffic Coordinator; **Regan Spurlock**, Film Notes; **Mary Pettigrew**, ampersand graphic design; **Tuan Tran**, Webmaster; and all Theater Managers, Assistants, and Volunteers.

Sights 2013

PANEL

Egyptian Cinema Today and Tomorrow

Sunday, November 3
2:30 pm

As a new Egypt is emerging in the wake of the revolutionary changes taking place in the country, a new cinema is also evolving – movies reflecting Egypt's old as well as new realities. In 2012 alone, thirty new movies were made in Egypt. Yet there is an ongoing debate about the future of the Egyptian film industry, not only because of recent political, but also because of social, economic, and artistic issues that have been brewing over years.

In the ongoing atmosphere of doubts and shouts, anxieties and concerns about what Egyptians want and are able to realize, young creative women and men are producing dynamic movies. They are talented, revolutionary dreamers, determined to make their voices heard and bring their visions to the screen.

Participants in this panel will discuss the current scenes of Egyptian cinema, analyzing the economic and political challenges facing the production of movies nowadays. They will also shed light on the religious and societal obstacles facing their film industry.

Please visit filmfestdc.org/arabiansights to view the list of participating panelists.

FREE

Festival Schedule

All screenings will take place at
AMC Mazza Gallerie

  **OPENING NIGHT**  

Friday, October 25
7:00 pm *Inheritance*
Followed by a Reception, \$20.00

Saturday, October 26

- 12:00 pm *The Lebanese Rocket Society*
2:00 pm *Zabana!*
4:15 pm *Casablanca Mon Amour*
7:00 pm *Bekas*
9:00 pm *A World Not Ours*

Sunday, October 27

- 12:30 pm *Casablanca Mon Amour*
3:00 pm *The Lebanese Rocket Society*
5:00 pm *Bekas*
7:00 pm *A World Not Ours*

Friday, November 1

- 6:30 pm *Asfour*
9:00 pm *Chaos, Disorder*

Saturday, November 2

- 1:00 pm *Asfour*
3:45 pm *Chaos, Disorder*
6:15 pm *Tanjaoui*
9:00 pm *A Common Enemy*

Sunday, November 3

- 12:00 pm *Jews of Egypt*
2:30 pm *Panel: Egyptian Cinema Today and Tomorrow*
4:30 pm *Tanjaoui*
7:15 pm *Zabana!*

For more
information & updates
Filmfestdc.org
202-234-FILM



OPENING NIGHT

Inheritance

Friday, October 25 at 7:00 pm
Followed by a Reception,
\$20.00

Inheritance follows a Palestinian family living in the north of Galilee as they prepare for the wedding of the patriarch's eldest granddaughter. But war raging between Lebanon and Israel as well as among the family members cuts short the festivities with air raid sirens and bruised spirits. The

conservative patriarch-grandfather is losing control over his family. As his health deteriorates, his five offspring and their adult children strive to uphold tradition, or their versions of it, against a variety of modern day challenges.

Veteran actor Hiam Abbass (*The Source*, *Arabian Sights* 2012) pours volumes of rich personal experience into her directorial debut. She triumphs in weaving together these delicate stories to create an unflinching and courageous portrait of a modern Palestinian family.

France/Israel, Directed by Hiam Abbass, 2012, 88 min.
In Hebrew, Arabic and English with English subtitles

Co-presented with



AMERICAN TASK
FORCE ON PALESTINE



Asfour

Friday, November 1 at 6:30 pm
Saturday, November 2 at 1:00 pm

In the Sanayeh district of Beirut, Abu Afif's building, erected in the 1920s, has survived Lebanon's Civil War. Guerilla groups, militias, displaced civilians and invaders have all passed through and have left messages on the walls. These words remind Abu Afif's grandson Karim of his childhood in Beirut and lure him back to the capital. However, after spending time outside of Lebanon, Karim returns to find a city rife with construction and he must try to make sense of a city he no longer recognizes. Spanning two decades, *Asfour* traces the stories of the building's religiously diverse inhabitants and the love story of Karim and Maya. – *Dubai International Film Festival*

Lebanon/UAE, Directed by Fouad Alaywan, 2013, 98 min. In Arabic, Armenian, and French with English subtitles

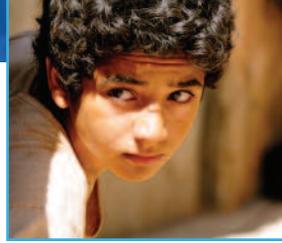
Bekas

Saturday, October 26 at 7:00 pm

Sunday, October 27 at 5:00 pm

It is the early 1990's in Kurdistan, northern Iraq. Saddam Hussein has a grip on the Kurdish population and life is not easy for the homeless brothers Zana and Dana in their Kurdish village. One day, the solution for all of Kurdistan's troubles appears through a hole in the wall, as the brothers peek in on a screening of *Superman* at the worn-out local cinema. Equipped with determination and a donkey named Michael Jackson, the duo set off to find the "big city where Superman lives" – America. Surely, an Iraqi dictator will be no match for a superhero. Through the innocent eyes of the two children, director Karzan Kader leads us to approach the heavy subjects of war and oppression with charm and wit, in a deceptively easygoing manner. – *Stockholm Film Festival*

Sweden/Finland/Iraq, Directed by Karzan Kader, 92 min. In Kurdish with English subtitles



Casablanca Mon Amour

Saturday, October 26 at 4:15 pm

Sunday, October 27 at 12:30 pm

Written and directed by American filmmaker John Slattery, this fiction/nonfiction hybrid presents two bright and humorous Moroccan college students, Hassan and Abdel, as they journey from

Casablanca over the Atlas mountains to the Sahara desert. Hassan, in the midst of creating a media project, uses the trip to investigate how Morocco has been depicted in popular culture and used in Hollywood staples such as *Casablanca* (of course), *The Jewel of the Nile* and a host of other works. The conceit allows us to see how the country has been figured in film, while also showing us the country itself and how Moroccans view their own nation through the lens of Hollywood. The film takes a human look at the effects Hollywood films have on people's imaginations and affords Moroccans an opportunity to talk back — which they do in intelligent, witty and ingenious ways. – *San Francisco Film Society*

USA/Morocco, Directed by John Slattery, 2012, 79 min. In French, Arabic and English with English subtitles

Chaos, Disorder

Friday, November 1 at 9:00 pm

Saturday, November 2 at 3:45 pm

In a dusty, poor but lively village, a football match and irregular deliveries are what hold the interest of the locals. Water, food and gas arrive intermittently by truck and are distributed to the residents, who gather to collect the goods impatiently and often in anger, with the best choices reserved for local shopkeeper Haj Sayed. His beautiful daughter, Manal, is in a tense relationship with Zaki, but rebel Mounir schemes to win Manal's affections from Zaki and cunningly pursues her, further fracturing the couple's already delicate relationship. Mounir is not above playing dirty to achieve his goal. Zaki and Mounir take their rivalry to the town's dirt soccer field to play for the ultimate prize, Manal's hand. The two men fight it out on a wildly chaotic soccer field to the comical comments of a laid-back announcer over a loud speaker, while the townsfolk cheer them on. – *Various sources*

Egypt, Directed by Nadine Khan, 2012, 76 min. In Arabic with English subtitles





A Common Enemy

Saturday, November 2 at 9:00 pm

A thrilling political documentary based on the first ever free elections in Tunisia after the Arab Spring told through the eyes of the protagonists of the Jasmine Revolution. Relying only on the Internet and other social media,

this uprising became the first Arab revolution against tyranny. Over a one-year period the film follows the emergence, development and the ensuing crisis of a newly born democracy, not only reflecting on the future of the Arab Spring but also on the future of contemporary democracy itself. – *Various Sources*

Tunisia/Spain, Directed by Jaime Otero Romani, 2013, 78 min. In Arabic and French with English subtitles

Jews of Egypt

Sunday, November 3 at 12:00 pm

This fascinating documentary brilliantly blends interviews and archival footage to recall times of tolerance and inclusiveness when the identity of Egyptian Jews was unquestioned by their Arab compatriots and they were viewed as partners in nation building. *Jews of Egypt* captures fragments of the lives of members of the Jewish community from the first half of the 20th Century until their departure from Egypt in the 1950s. It captures a time when the Egyptian community's identity and allegiance to the country of Egypt was unquestioned. This documentary explores how this community came to be viewed with suspicion after the escalating Arab-Israeli conflict and particularly after the attack on Egypt by Israel, Britain and France in 1956. – *Various Sources*



Egypt, Directed by Amir Ramses, 2012, 96 min. In Arabic and French with English subtitles



EAST COAST PREMIERE

The Lebanese Rocket Society

Saturday, October 26 at 12:00 pm

Sunday, October 27 at 3:00 pm

A forgotten episode in the great space race of the 1960s between the United States and the Soviet Union has been uncovered again in *The Lebanese Rocket Society*, a cheerful documentary that pieces together the story of

the yearning to plant a Lebanese flag on the moon and how that dream shattered. At the Haigazian University in Beirut in 1961 a group of Armenian-Lebanese mathematicians, physicists and engineers founded the company that gives this film its title. With the help of eager students, the group began to build rockets. Was the Lebanese rocket project a reflection of the new Arab world's modernity and independence or did it spring simply from a curiosity to conquer outer space? The film's directors, artist duo Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, constructed a sculpture in the shape of the first Lebanese rocket as a tribute to the cosmic dreams of their subjects.

– *Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival*

France/Lebanon/Qatar, Directed by Khalil Joreige and Joana Hadjithomas, 2012, 93 min. In Arabic, English and French with English subtitles

AMERICAN PREMIERE

Tanjaoui

Saturday, November 2 at 6:15 pm

Sunday, November 3 at 4:30 pm

Set in the 1960s during the early years of Moroccan independence. Larbi Salmi is the son of a Muslim theologian family in cosmopolitan Tangiers. Debating God's existence with his devout father, literature with a beautiful teacher from Paris, and national politics with his friends ("the proletariat is with us!"), Larbi slowly awakens to his own intellectual potential, but also to how such potential can be crushed. Like Goethe in *Sorrows of Young Werther*, Director Moumen Smihi eloquently captures the emotions of first love; here, the passions are also Hollywood stars, European writers, Islamic philosophers, and Moroccan politics, each swooned over or debated by Larbi and his colleagues amid the cool and delicate Maghrebi architecture of their greatest love of all, Tangier. – *Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive*

Morocco, Directed by Moumen Smihi, 2012, 99 min. In Arabic, French with English subtitles



A World Not Ours

Saturday, October 26 at 9:00 pm

Sunday, October 27 at 7:00pm

In *A World Not Ours*, director Mahdi Fleifel turns a personal and humorous camera on his friends and family who remain refugees in the Palestinian camp Ain el-Helweh ("Sweet Spring") in Lebanon. The

camp, hastily built in 1948, now houses 70,000 refugees in one square kilometer. Fleifel spent many of his formative years in the camp before his family settled in Denmark. He reflects fondly on his experience of watching World Cup games there and celebrating the excitement with his good friend Abu Eyad. Through Fleifel's lens, we listen in on conversations with the camp residents, we hear an unfiltered take on their lives, hopes and grievances. From tears to laughter, Fleifel gives us an intimate view into this unique community and strikes a wide range of emotional notes in the process.

United Kingdom/Lebanon/Denmark, Directed by Mahdi Fleifel, 2012, 93 min.

In Arabic and English with English subtitles

Zabana!

Saturday, October 26 at 2:00 pm

Sunday, November 3 at 7:15 pm

Zabana!, a biopic on Ahmad Zabana, sheds insight into the life of an Algerian activist and icon while also examining the French justice system in the 1950s. Beginning with his youth and early commitment to the National Movement, the film follows Zabana's time in the war for independence, the circumstances of his arrest, and his fast trial conducted by the colonial military government with Francois Mitterand as the minister of justice. Barely 30-years-old, his martyrdom sparked the Algerian War of Independence, which began six months after his execution. The film spans Zabana's life with brilliant historical accuracy, thoughtfully and meticulously researched by the filmmakers. This worthy account of Zabana's life and activism was Algeria's 2012 Oscar submission. – *Dubai International Film Festival*

Algeria, Directed by Said Ouid Khelifa, 2012, 107 min.

In Amazigh, Arabic, and French with English subtitles



With special thanks to the
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The Washington, DC
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