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PRESS BRIEFING

EL GOUNA FILM FESTIVAL PRESS CONFERENCE
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Greetings!

We are happy to welcome you to the Press Conference of El Gouna Film Festival (GFF 2019).

In the following pages you will find the program of our forthcoming 3rd edition that looks even more exciting than last year's.

Additional titles from the latest films that will premiere at the Fall Festival will be added within the next few days and we will be happy to also update you on the latest activities that will round up our rich industry program. Please stay connected with us through our website and/or our social media accounts!

We take this opportunity to thank all media representatives for their presence, and their interest in this press conference. We are looking forward to seeing you in El Gouna, where an exciting lineup of films and industry activities awaits you.

About El Gouna Film Festival

El Gouna Film Festival, one of the leading festivals in the MENA region, aims to showcase a wide variety of films for a passionate and knowledgeable audience; while fostering better communication between cultures through the art of filmmaking. Its goal is to connect filmmakers from the region with their international counterparts in the spirit of cooperation and cultural exchange. The festival is committed to the discovery of new voices and strives to be a catalyst for the development of cinema in the Arab world, particularly through its industry segment, **CineGouna Platform**. The 3rd edition of GFF will present a selection of the newest films from around the globe.

The festival's program consists of the three official competitions (Feature Narrative Competition, Feature Documentary Competition and Short Film Competition), the Official Selection Out Of Competition and Special Presentations. A total of about 80 films will screen at the festival, which will proudly be awarding US \$224,000, along with certificates and trophies, to the winners of the competitive sections. Feature-length films with a humanitarian theme across any section will be eligible for GFF's special **Cinema for Humanity Audience Award**. In the context of the Special Presentations, iconic films from the past that continue to be cherished by film-loving audiences will be screened.

The festival will also be presenting the 3rd edition of the **CineGouna Platform**, an industry-oriented event created to support and empower Arab filmmakers, helping them find artistic and financial support among Arab and international professionals.

The **CineGouna Platform** presents program initiatives such as the **CineGouna SpringBoard** and the **CineGouna Bridge** that not only provide several financial awards, but also learning opportunities through filmmaking workshops, panel discussions, roundtables and master classes with experts in the field of cinema.

CineGouna Platform is expected to award a total of US \$175,000 to the winning projects in development and films in post-production. The prizes are funded by El Gouna Film Festival along with its sponsors and partners.

With the exciting film screenings and activities planned for the 3rd edition, El Gouna Film Festival is certain to maintain its unique function as the meeting point for filmmakers, critics and audiences who will gather to celebrate the art, craft and business of cinema.

About El Gouna

GFF's selection of El Gouna as its venue allows the festival to conveniently host and welcome guests and participants from all over the world. Just a four-hour flight from Europe's major capitals, a four-hour drive from Cairo and a 30-minute drive from Hurghada International Airport, El Gouna is a place to savor rest and recreation, as well as colorful nightlife, with its year-round sunshine and picturesque views. It is a fully integrated, self-sufficient town, adhering to the highest global standards while offering a uniquely charming coastal experience. Covering 10 km of pristine shoreline on the beautiful Red Sea coast and accommodating 19 reputable hotels, two championship golf courses, three world-class marinas, co-working facilities, an airport, schools, universities, and an international hospital, the town has been thoughtfully designed to cater to everybody's needs. In addition to the influx of visitors from around the world, over 15,000 Egyptians and international residents call El Gouna their home and allow the festival to have a core audience. El Gouna's gracious seaside living supported by the convenience and exclusivity of a self-contained community, in addition to its commitment to operational efficiency made the town well versed in the art of hospitality.



Festival Founder

El Gouna Founder

Naguib Sawiris

Samih Sawiris

OUR TEAM

CEO and Co-Founder of El Gouna Film Festival **Amr Mansi**

COO and Co-Founder of El Gouna Film Festival **Bushra Abdallah Rozza**

CFO and Co-Founder of El Gouna Film Festival **Kamal Zadeh**

Festival Director
Intishal Al Timimi

Artistic Director

Amir Ramses

Programmers
Nicole Guillemet
Teresa Cavina
Mohamed Atef

Festival Consultant
Raman Chawla

Interview with Festival Director

Intishal Al Timimi: "It is very important to represent the region with quality films, as film selection should not depend on geographical concerns."

With the 3rd round of El Gouna Film Festival (GFF), what are the new ventures we can expect?

We have accomplished a breakthrough in terms of organization, and managed to achieve seamless harmony for all the festival operations, human resources, database management and activities, through a digital system that orchestrates our processes and minimizes human error. This is a difference we expect our audiences to feel in the flow of everything.

On the other hand, the GFF international network is experiencing significant expansion. As part of the Festival activities, we have arranged for a number of influential initiatives that promise to further support the film industry. For instance, we have finalized cooperation plans with Film Independent, as well as other international film production entities. Furthermore, a number of international delegations have been invited to observe and evaluate our activities as a prelude to potential cooperation.

Now, regarding the film selection, we continue to keep our promise of showcasing some of the best international and Arab works of the year. Our complete program will comprise about 80 of the best feature narrative, feature documentary and short films—either award-winning films or those that have had their international premieres in prestigious film festivals. Some of the selected films this year have been supported by GFF in its previous editions, and now they are proudly taking part in major film festivals around the world.

Do you think three years are enough for a festival to secure a notable position on the global film festival map?

I do believe that this rings true for GFF, as we feel it is reflected in our everyday work, preparing for the 3rd edition. A notable observation is that leading international distributors have been more than ready to facilitate our access to their film screenings, in order to make our selection prior to their world premieres at major film festivals. This year, GFF's collaboration with the European Film Promotion puts El Gouna on the top of its agenda alongside Cairo and other 20 worldwide destinations. This, for sure, indicates the growing weight of the festival on a global scale, and that of El Gouna itself. I can, indeed, claim that we have a notable position on the global film festival map.

Supporting projects in development and films in post-production both financially and technically was an initiative that started with the 1st edition of GFF. This was a rather unusual step for any film festival in its launch phase. How do you evaluate the CineGouna Platform in the 3rd edition?

CineGouna SpringBoard is the segment of the CineGouna Platform that serves as a project development and co-production lab for Arab filmmakers. A true evidence of its success is represented by the many film projects it had supported, which are now taking part in the top film festivals in the world. This year, three films—*Certified Mail* by Egyptian director Hisham Saqr, 1982 by Lebanese director Oualid Mouaness, and *Noura's Dream* by Tunisian director Hinde Boujemaa—that received CineGouna SpringBoard support were selected for the Discovery section of the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). *Noura's Dream* will also participate in the New Directors section of San Sebastián International Film Festival, and it will be part of our Feature Narrative Competition alongside 1982. Two other documentary films supported by GFF—*Khartoum Offside* by Sudanese director Marwa Zein, and *Talking About Trees* by Sudanese director Suhaib Gasmelbari—also participated in the Berlin Film Festival. The latter will compete in the Feature Documentary Competition of GFF this year.



What are your remarks regarding this year's submissions?

This year, we have received almost the same number of submissions, with a slight increase in the number of films in post-production. This is quite promising, considering all the production difficulties the region is now facing. The program is attracting numerous high-quality projects, which actually poses quite the challenge to choose from such an impressive collection—at the end of the day, our selection is only limited to 18 projects; 12 in development, and 6 in post-production.

Are there plans for GFF to increase the number of accepted projects in the future?

We wish to concentrate on the quality of the projects, rather than the quantity. Even though the amount of funds granted to the CineGouna SpringBoard—either from GFF or from its partners—is quite substantial, we believe that by not expanding the number, we can support each project better and help them achieve a more meaningful impact. That being said, there are growing efforts for GFF to broaden its scale in supporting Arab filmmakers in other film festivals and initiatives, such as the Beirut Cinema Platform, the Final Cut in Venice, the Arabian Sights Film Festival, and the MAFF Market Forum. In addition to financial support, the selected projects have the opportunity to take part in the CineGouna SpringBoard as a guest project. This year, we are hosting two guest projects that GFF had supported in the Beirut Cinema Platform and the Final Cut in Venice.

What about the Arab and Egyptian films in the various screening sections at GFF this year?

While GFF is an international film festival, we see it as a bridge between Arab filmmakers and world cinema. It is very important to represent the region with quality films, as film selection should not depend on geographical concerns. This year, we have five Arab films in the Feature Narrative Competition; four of which come from African Arab countries, and one from the Asian part of the Arab region. We have films from Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan, Morocco, and Lebanon. In the Feature Documentary Competition, we have two films from Algeria and Sudan. As you can see, it is not at all about a geographical quota, and this does not mean that we did not receive good films from other countries. We were presented with truly beautiful works from Iraq, Palestine, and Saudi Arabia, as well as Lebanon, Tunisia, and Morocco, yet we are committed to selecting the absolute best of the best. All of the Arab films in the three main competitions represent debuts for their filmmakers, and as I mentioned, some of them were supported by GFF in the two previous editions, such as 1982 and Noura's Dream.

Furthermore, we have two Egyptian feature films that will be screened out of competition; *The Knight and the Princess*—the first Egyptian animated feature film—by acclaimed screenwriter and director Bashir El Deek, as well as *When We Are Born* by Tamer Ezzat, both of which will have their international premieres. As for the Short Film Competition, I have to say that GFF has become a hub for Arab filmmakers in terms of presenting the world's best short films. Anyone who is looking for the best selection of Arab films every year will truly consider the Festival, for we include 25 great short films in every edition, half of which are international or world premieres. While we do prioritize world premieres, we do not compromise on quality. We aim to show the best films in the world, so we select the top shorts from Toronto, Venice, and Locarno. in addition to our selection of world and international premieres.

International and Arab classics have become a constant part of GFF screenings. What is this year's theme for the Special Presentations section?

This year, we will host retrospective screenings of some newly restored film classics, such as *Stolen Kisses* (1968) by legendary French auteur François Truffaut and *Caméra d'Afrique* (1983) by acclaimed Tunisian director Férid Boughedir. Additionally, we have the Egyptian classic *The Well of Deprivation* (1969) by Kamal El Sheikh, to celebrate the centennial of the birth of renowned Egyptian screenwriter, journalist and novelist Ihsan Abdel Quddous. An important part of GFF's role is to serve as a window for the younger generation on the world's film legacy—a crucial role played by many international film festivals.

It is interesting to have the young Egyptian-Canadian star Mena Massoud as a guest in the 3rd edition of GFF. How did it go?

GFF is an international festival that is based in the Arab region; its identity heavily depends on the balance between its international, Arab, and Egyptian aspects. The international success of an Arab filmmaker is an opportunity to celebrate Arab filmmakers everywhere. Thus, we have invited North American-Egyptian stars Rami Malek and Mena Massoud. So far, Massoud's schedule is flexible enough to allow him to attend the Festival. We are awaiting confirmation of the attendance of Malek, since he is currently working on his new role in *No Time to Die*.

What about the honored artists and celebrities in the 3rd edition of GFF?

At the moment, we have confirmations for the Arab recipients of the Career Achievement Award: Palestinian director and producer Mai Masri, and Egyptian actor Mohamed Henedy. Both of them are representatives of great achievements in Arab cinema. Masri is a talented filmmaker who worked for 30 years under extremely difficult circumstances. Among her achievements are many documentary films and a narrative feature film. She worked both independently, as well as with her late husband, distinguished film director Jean Chamoun. We will be celebrating Mai Masri for all of these important aspects of her career and life. As for Mohamed Henedy, he represents a new and young generation that made a dramatic change in the Egyptian cinema in the early 1990s. There are always numerous figures out there who deserve to be celebrated, and we try to select those who have the biggest influence on the industry; those whose achievements have a value that goes beyond their personal limits.

In the previous edition of GFF, the budget shrunk in comparison to the inaugural edition, yet this did not have any notable impact on its activities. What about this year?

Budget sustainability is one of GFF's main objectives. In spite of the expansion of the Festival activities and programs, we are not looking forward to have a bigger budget that turns into a burden. In the first edition, up to 85% of the budget was secured by the founders, the Sawiris family. In the second edition, however, they contributed 55% of the budget. This year, they are contributing around 45 to 50%. The rest of the budget is secured by the growing number of companies and entities that are very enthusiastic to be part of the event.

There is also a growing interest from the Egyptian Ministry of Culture, as well as other governmental entities in the Festival's activities, and they contribute with logistic support. In this edition, we receive support from Orascom Development, Beltone Financial, O West, Orange, Euronews, Carrier, Makadi Heights, This is Egypt, Mercedes-Benz, SIXT, dstore, Concrete, Pepsi and Egypt Air. Generally speaking, there is a growing interest in supporting the festival by many new organizations.



It is now two years since the last edition of the Dubai International Film Festival. How do you see the Arab film festival scene after Dubai, especially with the first edition of the Red Sea Film Festival coming soon?

I used to say that the number of film festivals in the Arab region is below what is needed, and this could be an unpopular opinion. But now we have five main festivals in the region: Carthage; Cairo; Marrakech; El Gouna; and the Red Sea, which is full of potential. Every festival has its own unique selling proposition and its own points of attraction. Carthage, for instance, has the biggest audience. The Marrakech International Film Festival is based in such a marvelous city, with close connections to Europe, with the patronage of the King, and a big budget which allows it to have a fine selection of jury members and guests. As for the Cairo International Film Festival, it has a grand legacy and a long history, as well as the very influential Egyptian cinema, and the magic of Cairo itself. On the other hand, GFF is a new festival with a fresh vision. In addition to the beauty of El Gouna as a town, the Festival was able, in a short period of time, to present the most important films of world cinema. The Red Sea Film Festival promises to have a significant capacity, and will attract international interest from countries like Saudi Arabia, which is currently experiencing a radical change, making it a potential market for international cinema. There is an emerging promise in Saudi cinema, especially with the growing number of young Saudi filmmakers. And while each festival has its special feature of attractiveness, I still believe the number is not enough.

How much of your ambition did you achieve as the director of GFF for the 3rd edition?

In just three years, GFF became an industry success model; a festival in a town that I myself—like many others—did not know existed, grew to have a notable position on the international cinema map. This could not have been achieved without a number of main factors; the mindset of Eng. Naguib Sawiris, who knows instinctively how and when to start a project; and Eng. Samih Sawiris, who established a fantastic town from scratch, and who had planned for this festival 26 years ago. He is now contemplating an even bigger endeavor—the establishment of a cultural hall in El Gouna.

On the other hand, another notable factor behind the Festival's success is the harmony between its team members: Amr Mansi, CEO and Co-founder; Bushra Rozza, COO and Co-founder; Amir Ramses, Artistic Director; and the rest of our dynamic team. What has been achieved in three short years is beyond imagination, and I think I have personally learned a lot through my experience with GFF, as I continue to gain more confidence in my work with the 3rd edition.

And while we're on the matter of ambitions, I have to admit that sometimes there are limits to what could be done. In many cases, money alone is not enough. For example, we cannot create a film market in a region that contributes less than 1% of the global cinema industry. This fact limits what we can reach with an international festival based in the Arab region. Aside from that, though, I am extremely enthusiastic and optimistic about the 3rd edition of GFF. This comes especially at a time when all the team members have reached a maturity of ownership; the success of El Gouna Film Festival represents the success of each and every one of us.

Feature Narrative Competition

The Awards

El Gouna Golden Star for Narrative Film

El Gouna Silver Star for Narrative Film

El Gouna Bronze Star for Narrative Film

El Gouna Star for the Best Arab Narrative Film

Trophy, Certificate and US \$25,000

Trophy, Certificate and US \$15,000

Trophy, Certificate and US \$20,000

El Gouna Star for the Best Actor Trophy and Certificate
El Gouna Star for the Best Actress Trophy and Certificate

The cash award will be shared equally between the director and the main producer of the winning film.

1982

Oualid Mouaness | Lebanon, United States, Norway | 2019 | Arabic, English | 100 min

In June 1982, at a school tucked safely in the mountains overlooking Beirut, final exams are underway. Eleven-year-old Wissam decides to tell his classmate Joanna that he loves her. As Wissam yearns to express himself, the day is interrupted when an air invasion reaches Beirut, and the school has to shut down. Nobody knows what the future will bring, so Wissam gets even more determined to declare his love. This story of first love set against the backdrop of war portrays a day full of emotions to be remembered.

ADAM

Maryam Touzani | Morocco, France | 2019 | Arabic | 98 min

Abla lives with her eight-year-old daughter, Warda, and runs a modest bakery from her home in Casablanca. One day, a knock on the door brings Samia, a pregnant young woman looking for a job and a place to stay. Initially reluctant to allow a stranger into her home, Abla has a change of heart and takes her in. Adam tackles taboo subjects in the Arab world through a poignant portrait of two women, which touches the heart due in large measure to the superb performances of Lubna Azabal (Abla) and Nisrin Erradi (Samia) working with the promising first-time director Maryam Touzani.

CORPUS CHRISTI | Boże Ciało

Jan Komasa | Poland, France | 2019 | Polish | 116 min

Living in a youth detention facility, 20-year-old Daniel encounters a spiritual transformation, but his desire to become a priest is challenged by his criminal record, which makes it impossible. When he is sent to a small town to work at a carpenter's workshop, he dresses up as a priest, which leads to him accidentally taking over the local parish. Having just experienced a traumatic tragedy, the local community desperately seeks healing, and sees the arrival of the young preacher as a golden opportunity to find peace.



THE FATHER | Bashtata

Kristina Grozeva, Petar Valchanov | Bulgaria, Greece | 2019 | Bulgarian | 87 min

After the loss of his wife, Vasil is made aware of his neighbor's claims that his late wife is calling her on the phone. Being a believer in the supernatural, Vasil decides to seek out the help of a professional psychic medium in order to contact his wife. In spite of his estranged son's attempts to change his mind, Vasil stands by his decision. *The Father,* winner of the Crystal Globe at the 54th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, is an intimate family drama tackling the challenges of connecting with those closest to us in life.

THE GIRL WITH A BRACELET | La fille au bracelet

Stéphane Demoustier | France, Belgium | 2019 | French | 95 min

Sixteen-year-old Lise is accused of the murder of her best friend, an incident that took place two years prior to the current events. Her parents support her fiercely, but once in court, her secret life begins to unfold. In an attempt to portray the mystery that the younger generation represents for the uninitiated, *The Girl with a Bracelet* touches on the thorny issue of generational differences through a thrilling courtroom drama. The film poses the terrifying question: Do we really know the ones we love?

LARA

Jan-Ole Gerster | Germany | 2019 | German | 96 min

On the evening of Lara's 60th birthday, her son Viktor, who is a professional pianist, is giving a very important concert. Lara is an incredibly demanding mother who has mapped out her son's entire musical career, but Viktor has been unreachable for weeks and nothing indicates that his mother will be welcome at his debut performance. Unexpected events unfold, and Lara has to face the fact that with this concert, Viktor might finally break free from her grip. The film received multiple awards, including the Special Jury Prize at the 54th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival.

NOURA'S DREAM | Le rêve de Noura

Hinde Boujemaa | Tunisia, France, Belgium | 2019 | Arabic, French | 90 min

As her husband Sofiane serves time in jail, Noura, a mother of three, works at a laundry shop to make ends meet. She meets Lassaad, the person who soon becomes the love of her life, and the world is seen in a different light. While Noura waits for her divorce request to be granted, and just a few days away from finalization, her dream of starting a new life with Lassaad is jeopardized by Sofiane's imminent release. The plot thickens as the new lovers decide to flee.

OUR LADY OF THE NILE

Atiq Rahimi | France, Belgium, Rwanda | 2019 | French, Kinyarwanda | 93 min

This adaptation of the award-winning novel by Scholastique Mukasonga tells of events that unfold in a Catholic boarding school in 1973 in Rwanda. The prestigious and secluded educational institution hosts an ethnic mix of girls, the majority of whom are Hutus, with only 10 percent Tutsis. While they are all groomed to become Rwandan elite, the deep-seated antagonism between the groups begins to surface both at the school, and nationwide. The film will open the 44th Toronto International Film Festival.

PAPICHA

Mounia Meddour | Algeria, France, Belgium | 2019 | Arabic, French | 105 min

In 1990s Algeria, Nedjma is an outgoing 18-year-old with a passion for fashion design. She refuses to let the tragic events of the Algerian Civil War keep her from experiencing a normal teenage life, and continues to enjoy her nights by going out with her friend Wassila. While the social climate grows more conservative, Nedjma rejects the new bans set by radicals, and decides to fight for her independence by planning a fashion show.

SONG WITHOUT A NAME | Canción sin nombre

Melina León | Peru, Spain, United States | 2019 | Quechua, Spanish | 97 min

Painting a melancholic yet gripping picture of Peruvian child trafficking, this portrayal of a true story follows young musician Georgina on her frantic journey to find her newborn daughter, who was stolen from a fake delivery clinic in Lima. Her desperate search leads her to the headquarters of a major newspaper, where she meets Pedro Campos, a lonely journalist who takes on the investigation.

THE WEEPING WOMAN | La Llorona

Jayro Bustamante | Guatemala, France | 2019 | Spanish, Mayan-Caqchickel, Mayan-Ixil | 97 min

Enrique, a retired general who oversaw the genocide in Guatemala 30 years ago, is now presented with a mysterious criminal case. He believes that the spirit of La Llorona (The Weeping Woman) is unleashed to wander the world like a lost soul amongst the living. At night, he hears her wailing, but his wife and daughter believe that he is experiencing attacks of Alzheimer's-related dementia. The film, based on a classic Latin American fable, will premiere at the 16th edition of the Giornate degli Autori (Venice Days).

YOU WILL DIE AT TWENTY | Satamout fi aleshrin

Amjad Abu Alala | Sudan, Egypt, France, Germany, Norway | 2018 | Arabic | 103 min

In a Sudanese village, Muzamel is born readily cursed by a Dervish prophecy, stating that he will die at the age of 20. Muzamel grows up amongst looks of sympathy that make him feel dead before his time, until Suliman—a cinematographer who was working in the city—returns to the village. Suliman's old cinema projector offers Muzamel a window overlooking a whole new world. When his 20th birthday arrives, he is faced with a choice between accepting impending death and a bus to the world he is eager to experience.



Feature Documentary Competition

The Awards

El Gouna Golden Star for Documentary Film

El Gouna Silver Star for Documentary Film

El Gouna Bronze Star for Documentary Film

El Gouna Star for the Best Arab Documentary Film

Trophy, Certificate and US \$15,000

Trophy, Certificate and US \$7,500

Trophy, Certificate and US \$10,000

The cash award will be shared equally between the director and the main producer of the winning film.

143 SAHARA STREET | 143 rue du désert

Hassen Ferhani | Algeria, France | 2019 | Arabic, French, English | 100 min

In the tranquil solitude of the desert, Malika runs a small restaurant that offers omelets along with coffee and tea. She serves truckers, wanderers and drifters who pass through like fleeting apparitions. This oasis, though seemingly irrelevant to the outside world, tells of a country and its spirit. The winds of sand and silence speak volumes of the dramas and dreams of those who stop for a smoke, a beverage, or a conversation. Malika holds a treasure of stories that have become as much a part of her as she is of them.

ANOTHER REALITY

Noël Dernesch, Olli Waldhauer | Germany, Switzerland | 2019 | German, Arabic, Farsi | 98 min

In the big cities of Germany, members of families that live outside of the law exist in a parallel world. In this documentary film, young men with well-kept beards, pumped muscles and big cars allow the viewers into their homes, sharing their dreams with the world. To the rhythms of gangsta rap and a new kind of integration, life here may be stranger than fiction. *Another Reality* tells the story of young people who question themselves and their reality of life.

CUNNINGHAM

Alla Kovgan | Germany, France, United States | 2019 | English | 93 min

The year 2019 marks the centennial of the birth of legendary American dancer and choreographer Merce Cunningham. This poetic 3D documentary film profiles Cunningham's artistic evolution over three decades of risk and discovery, from his early years as a struggling dancer in post-war New York to his emergence as one of the most visionary and influential choreographers worldwide. The film weaves together the choreographer's philosophies and stories, through recreations of his landmark works and archival footage of Cunningham, in addition to interviews with the members of the original Merce Cunningham Dance Company. *Cunningham* will have its world premiere at the 44th Toronto International Film Festival.

KABUL, CITY IN THE WIND

Aboozar Amini | Afghanistan, Netherlands, Japan, Germany | 2018 | Farsi | 88 min

A sobering, intimate and warm account of daily life in Kabul during the silent intervals between suicide bombings, which define life for the film's characters: Abas, a fearless bus driver who is always on the lookout for his passengers; and two boys—teenager Afshin and his younger brother Benjamin—who were separated from their father, a police officer, due to murder threats. This absorbing film skillfully captures the heaviness of coexisting with constant fear, and an unending imposed threat of bloodshed.

KONGO

Hadrien La Vapeur, Corto Vaclav | France | 2019 | Lari, French | 70 min

In Brazzaville, the capital of the Republic of Congo, an invisible world governs the visible world. The apostle Medard, who claims to have healing powers that can protect people from evil spirits, struggles to heal the sick victims of bad spells. Every morning, alleged victims of sorcery line up to have the witch doctor perform rites of exorcism, but his life changes when he gets publicly accused of practicing black magic. The film was screened in the ACID Programme that was presented on the sidelines of the 72nd Cannes Film Festival.

MIDNIGHT FAMILY

Luke Lorentzen | Mexico, United States | 2018 | Spanish, English | 81 min

In Mexico City, where the government permits only 30 ambulances for a population of over nine million, the Ochoa family runs a private ambulance, competing with other for-profit EMTs for patients in need of urgent help. The crucial—albeit illicit—underground lifeline is riddled with bribery and conflicts. As the Ochoas try to make a living in this fraught industry, they struggle to keep their dire finances from compromising the people in their care. The documentary film won multiple awards at prestigious international film festivals such as the 35th Sundance Film Festival and the 16th Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival.

ONE CHILD NATION

Nanfu Wang, Jialing Zhang | China, United States | 2019 | English, Mandarin Chinese | 85 min

This documentary uncovers, with chilling honesty, the untold history of China's one-child policy and the generations who were forever shaped by this social experiment. Through revelations shared by journalists, officials, parents and activists, *One Child Nation* sheds light on the widespread enforcement of sterilization, child abandonment, and state-sponsored kidnappings. The film, which was awarded the U.S. Documentary Grand Jury Prize at the 35th Sundance Film Festival, carries interviews with both victims and instigators, disrupting decades of silence on a practice that destroyed countless lives through propaganda, brainwash and terrorization.

TALKING ABOUT TREES | Hadeeth aan al ashgar

Suhaib Gasmelbari | Sudan, France, Germany, Chad | 2019 | Arabic, English, Russian | 93 min

Four idealist and intensely humane filmmakers who have been lifetime friends reunite after long years of distance and exile, in order to bring their old dream back to life: making cinema a reality in Sudan. They are determined to leave a trace of their passage, and revive an everlasting relationship with the big screen. These are the chronicles of film passion, hoping to reignite a country's love of cinema. The film won the Glashütte Original Documentary Award and the Panorama Dokumente Audience Award at the 69th Berlinale.





UNTOUCHABLE

Ursula Macfarlane | United Kingdom | 2019 | English | 98 min

The inside story of the meteoric rise and monstrous fall of movie titan Harvey Weinstein, *Untouchable* reveals how Weinstein acquired and deployed his formidable power over the course of decades. Former staffers, college friends, and reporters acknowledge the visionary qualities and brilliance of the Hollywood mogul, while reflecting upon his ruthless attempts to preserve his power as scandal threatened to engulf him. As the criminal case against him continues, the film exhumes both the method and the collateral damage of Weinstein's alleged abuse, while questioning whether meaningful change in the justice system—and in the film industry—is really possible.

Short Film Competition

The Awards

El Gouna Golden Star for Short Film
El Gouna Silver Star for Short Film
El Gouna Bronze Star for Short Film
El Gouna Star for the Best Arab Short Film

Trophy, Certificate and US \$15,000 Trophy, Certificate and US \$7,500 Trophy, Certificate and US \$4,000 Trophy, Certificate and US \$5,000

All prizes will be awarded to the director of the winning film.

16 DECEMBER | 16 de Decembro

Álvaro Gago Díaz | Spain | 2019 | Galician, Spanish | 14 min

On a Saturday at nightfall, 18-year-old Lucía leaves handball training and sets off to pick up her brother in a city she thinks she knows. A cry for support to build an institutional and social framework in which all women feel safe and secure, 16 December reflects the case of "La Manada," when a group of five men raped a girl in Pamplona, Spain, and recorded it all on a mobile phone. The film premiered at the 72nd Locarno Film Festival.

ALL INCLUSIVE

Teemu Nikki | Finland | 2019 | Finnish | 15 min

Kalervo is a bullied, downtrodden white-collar man who spent his whole life feeling powerless. While he knows that nobody takes him seriously, things take an unexpected turn when he suddenly receives a gift from Annukka, a woman who loves him. Kalervo soon realizes that this gift just might have the power to change his entire life. A film about power, love and change, *All Inclusive* was screened in the Short Film Competition of the 72nd Cannes Film Festival.

BOTTLENECK

Måns Berthas | Sweden | 2019 | Swedish | 8 min

Three women get together for a violent act of vengeance. They spin a bottle to determine who should perform the planned deed. Even though it seems that their plan has worked, they soon realize they have made a crucial mistake. A crushing feeling of guilt ensues, and they find themselves facing an unexpected threat.





COLOR BLIND | Amma alwan

Menna Ekram | Egypt, United Kingdom | 2019 | Arabic | 11 min

Color Blind depicts an encounter between two Egyptians in a Victorian cemetery in Bristol. He is a husband and father who is working abroad to support his family, while she is on a two-week vacation that turned into two months. As they begin to learn more about one another, they discover that even though they come from the same country, they have almost nothing in common. The film examines gender and class through the perspectives of its two protagonists.

DELIVERY SERVICE

Vladimir Koptsev, Elena Koptseva | Russia | 2019 | Russian | 14 min

While the normal job of a delivery messenger is to deliver orders to people, this film follows quite an unusual delivery service specialist, and a rather overwhelming undertaking. The protagonist delivers sheer emotions at the request of the senders. His packages are composed of intangibles that aim to bring joy, love, or fond memories and flashbacks to their addressees. This short trip to a sea of sentiments poses a sobering question: Are we doing enough for the ones we love?

FLESH | Carne

Camila Kater | Brazil, Spain | 2019 | Portuguese | 12 min

From rare meat representing childhood to well done meat representing old age, five women share their experiences in relation to their bodies, through different perspectives. In this striking debut, filmmaker and animator Camila Kater captures honest and intimate discussions of usually taboo subjects about the changes that the female body endures.

FREEKEH

Bassel Ghandour | Jordan | 2019 | Arabic | 17 min

Ramy is a peaceful teenager who enjoys his skates, playing cards, and a few cigarettes with his friends. He lives in a humble neighborhood where manhood and violence go hand-in-hand. One day, as he jokes around with his friends out on the street, his words are mistaken for an insult by the local gangster. Events escalate when tit-for-tat violence ensues. The Amman district's compacted hills, streets, and alleys tell the story of how fragile safety and stability can be in the shadows of anger and revenge.

GIVE UP THE GHOST

Zain Duraie | Jordan, Sweden, Germany | 2019 | Arabic | 15 min

Salam is a young housewife who dreams of motherhood. She quietly suffers within the codified Middle Eastern society, while trying to help her husband Ammar overcome his reproductive condition. One day, her mother-in-law informs her that the family has decided that Ammar should find a second wife, assuming that she's infertile, and telling her that she has no right in depriving their son of fatherhood. Ammar helplessly stirs Salam into a different direction, leading her to fight the battle in her own way. Give Up the Ghost will premiere in the Orizzonti section of the 76th Venice Film Festival.

IN OUR SYNAGOGUE

Ivan Orlenko | Ukraine, France | 2019 | Yiddish | 20 min

During the first half of the 20th century, in Eastern Europe, a mysterious small animal appears from time to time, in a ragged old synagogue where a small Jewish community has prayed for generations. The majority of the community has stopped taking notice of this strange occurrence, except for a young Jewish boy who is obsessed with finding out the truth about these sightings. As he embarks on his quest, he loses sight of what is happening around him. The film is based on an unfinished story of the same name, written by Franz Kafka.

IN VITRO

Larissa Sansour, Søren Lind | Denmark, United Kingdom, Palestine | 2019 | Arabic | 30 min

In a converted nuclear reactor under the biblical city of Bethlehem in Palestine, Dunia, the dying founder of a high-tech orchard designed to reverse the effects of an eco-apocalypse, passes on instructions to her successor Alia. The aim is to cultivate a replica ecosystem and replant the healing soil above. The film is an emotional tale of memory, politics and loss, as well as a story of two women forging a friendship on the brink of extinction.

JETSKI

Sharif Abdel Mawla | Netherlands | 2019 | Dutch, Arabic | 11 min

Jetski is a coming-of-age film about anonymity, migration, and the relationship between father and son. The film gives us a glimpse into the lives of two men who are tucked away in the desolate suburbs of Amsterdam. In this bittersweet story we follow Mido, a young kid with a big responsibility: taking care of his sick father. When he finds out his father was once the jet ski champion of the Red Sea, he does everything in his power to give him a last, proper goodbye.

THE MAN WHO DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE HOME | L'uomo che non voleva uscire di casa

Savino Genovese | Italy | 2019 | Italian | 17 min

During a playful date with his loved one in a secluded area of the mountains, a man was led by his girlfriend through an elaborate scavenger hunt to find a special object. That very same man has locked himself up in his home for an unknown period of time, but thanks to the memory of that day, he might finally find something much more vital: his identity.

MONSTER GOD | Monstruo Dios

Agustina San Martin | Argentina | 2019 | Spanish | 10 min

Monster God is about a place where God is a power plant. The film reflects an exploration of the ramifications of divinity. Set on a misty night, the film builds atmosphere by its association of disparate scenes of cows, electric towers, and a dark-culture girl in a gothic house. It follows the story of a girl attempting to rescue a much younger girl from the grips of a religious cult. Monster God was screened in the Short Films Competition at the 72nd Cannes Film Festival, where it won the Short Film Special Distinction.





NIGHTCRAWLERS | Noctámbulos

Arturo Baltazar | Mexico | 2019 | Spanish | 21 min

Six lonely insomniacs wander the streets of a melancholic city at night in search of affection, meaning, identity and a pug dog: an overwhelmed office employee misses the last bus home, an apathetic girl goes partying in search of affection, a lonely young man gets obsessed with his neighbor, an insecure pregnant teenager leaves her boyfriend, a man with insomnia loses his pet, and a homeless man walks the streets of downtown with no apparent direction.

THE NUTCATCHER | Lo schiacciapensieri

Domenico Modafferi | Italy | 2019 | Italian | 14 min

Giuseppe is a good-looking young man who is missing a hand. He is somewhat socially awkward, but extremely sweet and polite. One day, he meets the beautiful Viola, an outgoing young woman who strikes up a conversation with him and asks for his help hanging a message on the message board. Giuseppe decides to hide his condition, and takes it up a notch by pretending to be a pianist. *The Nutcatcher* will premiere in the 4th edition of the I Love Gai competition, which takes place during the 76th edition of the Venice Film Festival.

OME

Wassim Geagea | Lebanon | 2019 | Arabic | 17 min

Following the unexpected death of his young mother, nine-year-old Elias, who is an active churchgoer and a choir singer, defies his faith as he decides to bring her back from Jesus' heaven. In his desperate and naïve attempts to get his mother back, Elias repeatedly goes to extreme lengths as he questions the fairness of what happened, for he is still just a little boy who genuinely needs his mother.

SFI FIF 7FIN

Amira Diab | Palestine | 2018 | Arabic, English, Hebrew | 11 min

Zein is a young woman from Bethlehem, determined to pray at the Al-Aqsa mosque after Trump's announcement recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. While her 8.8-kilometer trip may seem short, her journey is disruptive, laden with obstacles. Challenges like the separation wall, security checkpoints, and the very nature of trying to live as a free woman in these circumstances stand between her and her goal. With just one change of clothes, Zein's strength inspires her to get creative with her appearance in an attempt to overcome the many hurdles that lie ahead, and defeat her oppressors.

SHE RUNS | Nan fang shao nv

Yang Qiu | China, France | 2019 | Wu Chinese, Mandarin Chinese | 20 min

In an ordinary Chinese winter, a small city junior high student, Yu, tries to quit her school aerobic dancing team. She Runs was part of the international competition at the 68th Melbourne International Film Festival, and won the Leitz Cine Discovery Prize for Best Short Film at the 58th Critics' Week that took place during the 72nd Cannes Film Festival.

THE TEARS THING | Le coup des larmes

Clémence Poésy | France | 2019 | French | 20 min

Florence, a dedicated actress, is preparing for a new and exciting role. Since not all roles are created equal, this specific job poses challenges that the ambitious professional could never have seen coming. Having to deal with an initiation into real bullets, how far is the young woman willing to go to perfect her performance for this job? *The Tears Thing* was selected for the Orizzonti Short Films Competition of the 76th Venice Film Festival

THINK POSITIVE! | Dumaj pozitivno!

Irina Khodyush | Russia | 2019 | Russian | 15 min

Taxes have been set up on pet holders in Russia. The defaulters are wanted by animal inspectors. Raya is a professional with a huge passion for her job, which happens to warp her personality and negatively affect her relationships. Psychoanalysis, hypnosis and breathing exercises can't solve the problem. Raya attempts to improve her personal life, but the fact that she is the best in her job may deprive her hopes of a relationship with a man.

THIS IS MY NIGHT | Hazehi lailaty

Yusuf Noaman | Egypt | 2019 | Arabic | 15 min

Azza decides to enjoy an outing with her son who has Down syndrome. From the suburbs where she lives, she heads to classy Cairo neighborhoods to enjoy the day and have some ice-cream. As she is faced with a great struggle amidst a beautiful setting of celebrations, circuses and clowns, she insists on holding on to a happy moment nevertheless, both for herself and her son.

VIOLENT EQUATION

Antonis Doussias | Greece | 2019 | No Dialogue | 5 min

In a totalitarian world ruled by monarchy, ignorance and envy, people live in constant fear of individualism, and an insatiable desire for validation by those in control. In desperate attempts to succeed, a person's weak mentality engages in a destructive competition over power, where envy brings violence as the need to excel at any cost takes over. Inspired by Costis Georgiou's art, the film delivers its message in a gripping psychedelic atmosphere.



Official Selection Out Of Competition

37 SECONDS

Hikari | Japan | 2019 | Japanese | 115 min

After not breathing for 37 seconds at birth, 23-year-old comic book artist Yuma lives with cerebral palsy and an overprotective mother. In her quest to explore her sexuality and the true meaning of love and forgiveness—in spite of the fearful objections of her mother—the ambitious Yuma throws herself into the Tokyo night. The film won the CICAE Art Cinema Award, in addition to the Audience Award for Best Feature Film in the Panorama section of the 69th Berlin International Film Festival.

BACURAU

Kleber Mendonça Filho, Juliano Dornelles | Brazil, France | 2018 | Portuguese, English | 132 min

The people of a small town in the Brazilian sertão gather to mourn the loss of its matriarch, Carmelita, who lived to be 94. Days later, its inhabitants notice some strange things: their town and community are disappearing from most maps... Set a few years into the future, *Bacurau* is a portrait of the Brazilian community as it struggles to defend itself from the dangers of uncontrolled modernization. The film premiered at the 72nd Cannes Film Festival, where it was the joint winner of the Jury Prize.

BEYOND THE RAGING SEA

Marco Orsini | United States, Egypt, France | 2018 | English | 70 min

The film follows Omar Samra and Omar Nour—the 'Team O2' duo—as they embark on the world's toughest rowing race: an unsupported 3,000-nautical-mile adventure across the Atlantic Ocean. The aim of their journey is to highlight the terrifying dangers faced by thousands of migrants who set to sea every year. When disaster strikes, Team O2 has only hours to live. In *Beyond the Raging Sea*, the two Omars recount, in their own voice, the gripping tale of their struggle to survive and their ultimate rescue by a Greek vessel.

DEERSKIN | Le daim

Quentin Dupieux | France | 2018 | French | 77 min

Georges is a 44-year-old man who has an incurable obsession with a certain designer deerskin jacket. His fixation leads him on a bizarre journey where he faces the risk of losing his entire life's savings, engaging in criminal behavior, as well as committing crime. Thinking that he has the perfect plan, the clueless, failed filmmaker does not seem to mind going to great lengths to become the sole person who wears a jacket, no matter the price. Quentin Dupieux's *Deerskin* opened the 2019 Directors' Fortnight.

THE INVISIBLE LIFE OF EURÍDICE GUSMÃO | A vida invisível de Eurídice Gusmão

Karim Aïnouz | Brazil, Germany | 2019 | Portuguese | 139 min

Set in Rio de Janeiro in 1950, this ravishing period drama follows the story of Eurídice and Guida, two inseparable young sisters living at home with their conservative parents. Even though the local traditional lifestyle has the upper hand, each sister nourishes a precious dream: Eurídice of becoming a renowned pianist, and Guida of finding true love. Due to familial shame and deceit, the sisters are separated and forced to live apart. And while they take control of their separate destinies, they never give up hope of reuniting.

THE KNIGHT AND THE PRINCESS | Alfaris wal amira

Bashir El Deek, Ibrahim Mousa | Egypt, Saudi Arabia | 2019 | Arabic | 96 min

Inspired by a 7th century Arab warrior, the plot follows young adventurer Mohammed Bin Alkassim with a fictional twist. At the age of 15, he believed that anything was possible, and he took it upon himself to save women and children abducted by pirates in the Indian sea. As he turned 17, he was ready to take on the tyrant king Daher. He left his hometown Basra, Iraq with his lifelong friend Zaid, and his mentor, Abu Alaswad, in an exciting adventure to free Sind.

LES MISÉRABLES

Ladj Ly | France | 2019 | French | 102 min

Ladj Ly's explosive first feature follows Stéphane as he joins the Anti-Crime Brigade in Montfermeil of the Parisian suburbs. Alongside his new colleagues Chris and Gwada—both experienced members—his mind begins to quickly identify and analyze the escalating tensions between neighborhood gangs. During an arrest, the group finds itself overrun, as a drone hovers above, documenting their every movement and action. The film competed in the 72nd Cannes Film Festival, and was the joint winner of the Jury Prize.

MIDNIGHT TRAVELER

Hassan Fazili | United States, United Kingdom, Canada | 2018 | Persian | 87 min

When the Taliban puts out a call for his death, Afghan director Hassan Fazili has no choice but to flee with his wife and two young daughters. It is an urgent documentary about a family's exodus from Afghanistan, giving a human face to the global refugee crisis. As told first-hand by the refugees themselves, *Midnight Traveler* captures the frightening state of limbo in which asylum seekers live, as Fazili depicts the danger and desperation of a multi-year odyssey filled with tremendous love, intimacy and fear.

NIMIC

Yorgos Lanthimos | Germany, United Kingdom, United States | 2019 | English | 12 min

A professional cellist has an encounter with a stranger on the subway which has unexpected and farreaching ramifications on his life. Interwoven with the theme of music and rhythm, this multilayered short film is a mind-bending representation of the cinematic vision of renowned Greek auteur Lanthimos. *Nimic* offers few answers to the many questions about identity and belonging that it posits. The film premiered at the 72nd Locarno Film Festival.





OH LES FILLES! | Haut les filles!

François Armanet | France | 2019 | French | 79 min

As it tells the story of French female rock stars, this documentary poses the question: what if French Rock was born with Edith Piaf? In an era-spanning capsule, the film showcases everything from sweet sixties pop to the current gender-indifferent anthems, from feminist rebels of the seventies to fashion icons of the social media age, and voices from Françoise Hardy to Vanessa Paradis, Charlotte Gainsbourg and more. Narrated by Elisabeth Quin, *Oh Les Filles!* carries some rare interviews and iconic footage, as well as radical perspectives that promise to give the patriarchy a piece of women's minds.

ONCE IN TRUBCHEVSK | Odnazhdy v Trubchevske

Larisa Sadilova | Russia | 2019 | Russian | 80 min

In a small countryside town, there are rarely any secrets at all, and affairs are no exception. No matter how hard people try to conceal them, family and loved ones are eventually bound to learn the truth. A choice has to be made: to let go of the past and start a new family together, or to confess, hope for forgiveness, and try to restore normality to life.

PAIN AND GLORY | Dolor y gloria

Pedro Almodóvar | Spain | 2019 | Spanish | 112 min

Salvador Mallo, a film director in his physical decline—played by Antonio Banderas—begins to question his life decisions. His mind delves back into his 1960s childhood; his first love, the anguish of heartbreak, the catharsis of writing, his early discovery of the silver screen, and the infinite void that now renders him unable to continue making films. As he re-examines his past, Salvador is swept by an urgent need to recount it, seeking salvation. Banderas was awarded Best Actor at the 72nd Cannes Film Festival.

PARASITE | Gisaengchung

Bong Joon Ho | South Korea | 2019 | Korean | 131 min

Ki-taek's close family consists of four completely unemployed members facing an uncertain future. Ki-woo, the son, is recommended by a friend to fill a well-paying tutoring position, raising hopes of a stable income. With high expectations to fulfill, Ki-woo visits the luxurious Park family home for the interview. *Parasite*, described by the director as "a comedy without clowns, a tragedy without villains," brings together two contrasting families in a relationship of employment and dependence, which leads to unpredictable circumstances. The film won the Palme d'Or at the 72nd edition of the Cannes Film Festival.

PIRANHAS | La paranza dei bambini

Claudio Giovannesi | Italy | 2019 | Italian | 110 min

This big screen adaptation of Roberto Saviano's bestseller *The Piranhas* revolves around the ferocious world of budding teenage crime bosses in Naples, known as the *paranza*, as they jockey for power. The film follows six fearless boys as they race on their scooters, deal drugs, and use the city's rooftops for assault rifle practice. Little by little, they gain control of larger areas, fighting against other *paranze* and forging alliances with old, declining bosses. The film won the Silver Bear for Best Screenplay at the 69th Berlinale.

SATURDAY FICTION | Lan xin da ju yuan

Lou Ye | China | 2019 | Mandarin, English, Japanese, French | 126 min

In the year 1941, Jean Yu, an iconic Chinese actress, returns to Shanghai to star in a play. Her true objectives unknown, she embarks on a thrilling mission among friends and undercover enemies in the Japanese-occupied city. As everything spirals out of control, Jean Yu has to decide whether to reveal what she has discovered about the imminent Pearl Harbor attack. This compelling period drama was selected to compete in the 76th Venice International Film Festival.

SISTERS IN ARMS

Caroline Fourest | France | 2019 | English, Kurdish, French, Italian, Arabic | 112 min

In a land scorched by war, violence and hatred, this women's epic follows a young Yazidi woman who was sold as a sex slave. She escapes and decides to join the Kurdish guerrillas in their brigade consisting of international volunteers. During her journey, she not only discovers the strength of comradeship, but also the fear these female warriors trigger in fanatics, who are absolutely terrified by the thought of being killed by a woman. *Sisters in Arms* is inspired by the real stories of Kurdish fighters and survivors.

SORRY WE MISSED YOU

Ken Loach | United Kingdom, France, Belgium | 2018 | English | 100 min

In the wake of the 2008 financial crash, Ricky and his family continue to power through an uphill struggle against crushing debt. When an opportunity to wrestle back arises—in the form of a new van and the chance to run a franchise as a self-employed delivery driver—Ricky decides to give it a shot. It is hard work, and his wife's job as a care worker is no easier. The two cornerstones of a strong family unit are now being pulled in different directions, and something has got to give.

SYSTEM CRASHER | Systemsprenger

Nora Fingscheidt | Germany | 2019 | German | 118 min

Bouncing between foster homes that can't handle her outbursts of violent rage, Benni is a nine-year-old girl who represents what child protection services call a "system crasher." While the only constant in Benni's life has become change, the one thing she can't seem to change is her ways. In an attempt to help, Mrs. Bafané of child protection services hires Micha, an anger management trainer, to become Benni's school escort, bringing new hope to her life. The film won the Silver Bear Alfred Bauer Prize at the 69th Berlinale.



THE TRAITOR | II traditore

Marco Bellocchio | Italy, France, Germany, Brazil | 2019 | Italian, Portuguese | 145 min

Set in the early 1980s—as the war between the godfathers of the Sicilian mafia peaked—*The Traitor* tells the story of Tommaso Buscetta, a member of the Cosa Nostra who fled his country to hide in Brazil. While the Buscetta family members get murdered one by one back in Italy, Tommaso gets arrested and extradited by Brazilian officials. This twist of events drives him to make a decision that would alter the narrative of the mafia: to meet Judge Falcone, and betray the oath of silence.

THE TRUTH | La Vérité

Hirokazu Kore-eda | France, Japan | 2018 | French, English | 106 min

Fabienne is a French movie star who reigns amongst loving and admiring men. When she publishes her memoir, her daughter returns from New York to Paris with her husband and young child. The reunion between mother and daughter quickly turns into a confrontation: truths are told, accounts settled, feelings confessed. Director Hirokazu Kore-eda unites French screen legends Catherine Deneuve and Juliette Binoche for his first feature set outside Japan. Recounting a powerful and emotional story of family conflicts, the film will be screened in competition at the 76th Venice International Film Festival.

WHEN WE ARE BORN | Lama benetwelled

Tamer Ezzat | Egypt | 2019 | Arabic | 105 min

When we are born, we each have a life path, which is then influenced by how we are raised and the beliefs ingrained in us. The film interweaves the hopes and dreams of three characters at the center of the Egyptian lifestyle, accompanied by musical narration: a son who yearns to pursue a singing career against his father's will, a romantic Christian woman who is in love with a Muslim man, and a newly-wed personal trainer who must compromise his principles for a chance to own a gym. Will these characters make the best choices for themselves and the people they love?

Special Presentations

AFRICAN CINEMA: FILMING AGAINST ALL ODDS | Caméra d'Afrique

Férid Boughedir | Tunisia | 1983 | Arabic, French, English | 98 min

Filmed over a period of ten years, *Caméra d'Afrique* explores the early 20 years of "auteur films" from Sub-Saharan Africa. Made against all odds, these films portray Africa as seen by post-colonial African filmmakers. This striking 1983 documentary uses clips and rare archival footage in addition to interviews with filmmakers, illustrating the richness and diversity of African cinema and the wonders that were created despite a lack of means and infrastructure. It bears witness to the filmmakers' amazing thirst for self-expression. The film was screened in the Un Certain Regard section of the 36th Cannes Film Festival, and a restored version was presented in the Cannes Classics section of the 72nd Cannes Film Festival.

STOLEN KISSES | Baisers volés

François Truffaut | France | 1968 | French, English | 90 min

The third in a series of films featuring François Truffaut's alter-ego, Antoine Doinel, *Stolen Kisses* begins with Antoine being discharged from the army on disciplinary grounds. While resuming his on-again, offagain relationship with Christine, he takes on a series of jobs, including a position assisting a private detective. Things begin to get complicated when he finds himself falling for Mme Tabard, his employer's wife, as he has to decide about Christine and his future. *Stolen Kisses* was nominated for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 41st Academy Awards and the 26th Golden Globe Awards.

THE WELL OF DEPRIVATION | Beer al herman

Kamal El Sheikh | Egypt | 1969 | Arabic | 120 min

Nahed is a virtuous young woman by day, yet, by night, her flirtatious alter ego Mervat takes over. Suffering from dissociative identity disorder, Nahed doesn't remember any of her adventures the next morning. She is treated by a psychiatrist who is determined to address the root of her problems, buried deep in her childhood. Directed by celebrated filmmaker Kamal El Sheikh and based on a novel written by Ihsan Abdel Quddous, the film is among the well-known classics of Egyptian cinema.



Cinema for Humanity Audience Award

The Awards

Audience Award for a film that exemplifies a humanitarian theme

Trophy, Certificate and US \$20,000

The cash award will be shared equally between the director and the main producer of the winning film.

Feature-length films with a humanitarian theme across various sections, indicated with a star on the top corner of the image will be eligible for this award.

Career Achievement Award

El Gouna Film Festival is proud to announce the recipients of the El Gouna Film Festival Career Achievement Award, 2019. The award celebrates individuals whose work and commitment to cinema have left an indelible mark in the field of their work.

Mohamed Henedy

Throughout his career, acclaimed actor Mohamed Henedy achieved legendary success, confirming his talent and presence as a comedian. Henedy was born on February 1, 1965 in Giza, Egypt, and holds a bachelor's degree from the Higher Institute of Cinema. He took on small TV roles until director Youssef Chahine gave him a role in his film *Alexandria...* Why? (1979) and later in *Alexandria Again and Forever* (1990). Henedy continued his career working with other prominent directors like Khairy Beshara in *A Bitter Day and a Sweet Day* (1988) and Atef Al Tayeb in his adaptation of Naguib Mahfouz's masterpiece *Heart of the Night* (1989). Starring in films that reaped the highest box office revenues, some of his most famous roles include those in *Hamam in Amsterdam* (1999), *Breaking News* (2001), *Soldiers in the Camp* (2003), *The Great Beans of China* (2004), *The Face of Crime* (2006), *Ramadan Mabrouk Abul-Alamein Hamouda* (2008) and *The Prince of Seas* (2009). He also excelled with his vocal performances in the Egyptian versions of many animated series and films including *The Simpsons* and *Monsters Inc.*, as well as *The Lion King*.

Mai Masri

Mai Masri grew up in Lebanon, and studied film at San Francisco State University and UC Berkeley, USA. Masri has been known to produce powerful documentaries that focus on women and children in a humanistic and poetic approach, including Children of Fire (1990), A Woman for Her Time (1995), Children of Shatila (1998), Frontiers of Dreams and Fears (2001), Beirut Diaries (2006), and 33 Days (2007). Her films were screened in over 100 countries, receiving international applaud and over 90 awards, including a Trailblazer Award at the 13th edition of MIPDoc, Cannes; and the Luchino Visconti Award at the 2004 David di Donatello Awards. In 1995, she founded Nour Productions with her late husband. filmmaker Jean Chamoun, and together they wrote, directed and produced several films, including Under the Rubble (1983), Wild Flowers (1986), War Generation - Beirut (1988), and Suspended Dreams (1992). She also produced many striking documentaries, such as Hostage of Time (1994), In the Shadows of the City (2000), Women Beyond Borders (2004), and Lanterns of Memory (2009). She wrote and directed her widely acclaimed narrative feature debut 3000 Nights (2015), which had its world premiere at the 40th Toronto International Film Festival. The film received the Audience Award at the 33rd edition of the Annonay International Festival of First Films and the Bronze Tanit for the Best Feature Film at the 27th Carthage Film Festival, in addition to the Jury Award at the 8th edition of TheWIFTS Foundation International Visionary Awards.



International Advisory Board

El Gouna Film Festival is deeply honored that the stellar group of industry professionals listed below are members of our advisory board. These individuals represent the pinnacle of professionalism and artistic achievement. El Gouna Film Festival is humbled by the trust they placed in us. Their support continues to guide and inspire us as we strive to produce a unique festival experience of the highest quality.

Youssra, Actress, Egypt

Yousry Nasrallah, Film Director, Egypt

Hend Sabry, Actress, Tunisia, Egypt

Tareq Ben Ammar, Producer, Distributor, Tunisia, France

Abderrahmane Sissako, Film Director, Producer, Mauritania

Forest Whitaker, Actor, USA

Hiam Abbass, Actress, Screenwriter, Film Director, Palestine

Margarethe Von Trotta, Actress, Screenwriter, Film Director, Germany

Mohamed Malas, Film Director, Syria

Atiq Rahimi, Author, Film Director, France, Afghanistan

CineGouna Platform

A creative hub for minds and markets, the CineGouna Platform is a film industry-oriented event created with the objective of nurturing and strengthening promising Egyptian and Arab cinema projects and filmmakers, helping them find artistic and financial support. The CineGouna Platform presents the CineGouna SpringBoard and the CineGouna Bridge programs that provide opportunities for sharing and learning.

CineGouna SpringBoard is a project development and co-production lab that helps Arab film directors and producers find creative and financial support. Applications of feature narrative and feature documentary projects in development, as well as films in post-production were received through an open submission. A panel of experts reviewed the submissions and made a selection of 12 projects in development and 6 films in post-production to compete in the 3rd edition of the CineGouna SpringBoard.

CineGouna Bridge is a meeting point and a forum for dialogue between different cinematic voices, where Arab filmmakers and their international counterparts engage in and share their perspectives on a wide range of subjects related to the social and business aspects of cinema. The 3rd edition of the CineGouna Bridge will present roundtable discussions, workshops, presentations and master classes with key industry professionals and experts; on topics ranging from the role of refugees in recent films to the impact of film festivals on the global cinematic landscape; from the past, present and future of African cinema to the restoration and preservation of independent films, and many more.

The programs and activities of the CineGouna Platform will take place at the TU Berlin, El Gouna Campus from September 21 to 26, 2019.

CineGouna SpringBoard

CineGouna SpringBoard is a project development and co-production lab that provides opportunities to find creative and financial support for Arab film directors and producers. Applications of feature narrative and feature documentary projects in development as well as films in post-production were received through an open submission. For its 3rd edition, CineGouna SpringBoard received 133 submissions (92 projects in development and 41 films in post-production) from all parts of the Arab world. A panel of experts reviewed the submissions and made a selection of 12 projects in development (7 narratives and 5 documentaries) and 6 films in post-production (2 narratives and 4 documentaries) on the basis of their content, artistic vision, and overall financial feasibility. The selection committee was deeply impressed by the high quality of the submitted projects.



The final list of selected projects and their directors, representing 8 Arab countries, is as follows:

Projects in Development:

- **1-Plum Season,** directed by Rim Mejdi, Morocco (Feature Narrative)
- **2-Severed Head,** directed by Lotfi Achour, Tunisia (Feature Narrative)
- **3-Straight to the Goal,** directed by Tamer Ashry, Egypt (Feature Narrative)
- **4-The Fountain of Bakhchisarai,** directed by Mohamed Taher, Egypt (Feature Documentary)
- **5-Those Who Remained,** directed by Lina Sinjab, Syria (Feature Documentary)
- **6-Tunis Djerba,** directed by Amel Guellaty, Tunisia (Feature Narrative)
- **7-Yalla, Baba!,** directed by Angie Obeid, Lebanon (Feature Documentary)
- **8-Harvest,** directed by Ely Dagher, Lebanon (Feature Narrative)
- **9-It's a Sad and Beautiful World,** directed by Cyril Aris, Lebanon (Feature Narrative)
- **10-Looking for Sa'adah,** directed by Areen Omari, Palestine (Feature Documentary)
- **11-Daughters of Abdul-Rahman,** directed by Zaid Abu Hamdan, Jordan (Feature Narrative)
- **12-Ethel,** directed by Mohamed Siam, Egypt (Feature Documentary)

Films in Post Production:

- **1-A Long Breath,** directed by Remi Itani, Lebanon (Feature Documentary)
- **2-Another Day in Baghdad,** directed by Maysoon Pachachi, Iraq (Feature Narrative)
- **3-Captains of Za'atari,** directed by Ali El-Arabi, Egypt (Feature Documentary)
- **4-Far From the Nile,** directed by Sherief Elkatsha, Egypt (Feature Documentary)
- **5-Mica,** directed by Ismael Ferroukhi, Morocco (Feature Narrative)
- **6-Our Dark 70s,** directed by Ali Essafi, Morocco (Feature Documentary)

The selected film directors and producers will present their projects and films to producers, funding agencies, distributors, sales agents and festival programmers to receive constructive feedback. In addition, private meetings are scheduled for the filmmakers with experts and mentors, to help them fine-tune their scripts or rough cuts with the aim of increasing their opportunities of regional and international cooperation.

All selected projects in development and films in post-production will compete for awards that will be decided by a jury of industry experts.

The best project in development and film in post-production will receive a CineGouna Platform Certificate and a cash prize of US \$15,000 each. Additional awards and cash prizes are presented through partnerships with the local and regional institutions listed below. A total prize money of more than US \$180,000 will be awarded during the CineGouna Platform Awards Ceremony to be held at the Marina Theatre on September 26, 2019.

- -US \$ 15,000 from **Drosos**
- -US \$10,000 from iProductions
- -\$10,000 from Arab Radio & Television Network (ART)
- -US \$10,000 from **Synergy Films**
- -US \$10,000 from Ergo Media Ventures
- -US \$10,000 from New Century Production
- -US \$ 10,000 from Lagoonie
- -US \$ 10,000 from **Rotana**
- -US \$ 10,000 from Magam Productions
- -US \$ 5,000 from Waraq powered by Magic Beans
- -US \$ 50,000 pre-sale from **OSN**
- -US \$15,000 value for the participation of a screenwriter in the Film Independent Spirit Awards Residency (7 days in LA) from **Film Independent**
- -US \$15,000 value for the participation of a creative producer in the Film Independent Forum Residency (7 days in LA) from **Film Independent**
- -US \$20,000 worth of post production services (edit and color grading) from **The Cell Post Production**
- -Participation of two filmmakers in IEFTA's Global Film Expression initiative, and sponsorship to attend a partnering festival lab or workshop from **IEFTA**
- -Unlimited location shooting service from Dakhli West El Balad







CineGouna Bridge

CineGouna Bridge, a meeting point and a forum for dialogue between different cinematic voices, is ready to welcome its guests to its 3rd edition. Arab filmmakers and their international counterparts will engage in and share their perspectives on a wide range of topics related to the social and business aspects of cinema.

This year, CineGouna Bridge will present roundtable discussions, workshops, presentations and master classes with key industry professionals and experts. The program will include:

Cinema for Humanity

Refugees Voices in Films Roundtable

Refugees and asylum seekers play major roles in some of the most compelling works of recent cinema. This roundtable brings together filmmakers and organizations that are pushing the boundaries in filmmaking, to discuss innovative and creative approaches when filming humanitarian crises.

Whereas some filmmakers are moving from observational into participatory filmmaking, this roundtable will explore how to redirect the focus onto refugees and migrants, some who are filmmakers themselves, as film audiences rather than subjects, and how this changes the aims of filmmaking and enables storytelling to empower and inform.

Panel Discussions

The Impact of Festivals

With so many film festivals in existence and more launching constantly, how do festivals look upon their role and identity now and in the future? What are the must-dos on how to apply to festivals, and to maximize the opportunity to network, promote your film, leverage the publicist and create future collaborations? Festivals have always played a de facto distribution role—is this statement still valid with the rise of VOD platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime and others?

About African Cinema

This panel discussion will address how African Cinema, from North Africa to South, has evolved over the years to become a creative force in today's international landscape. What is it that shaped it, what is the status of its industry today? And most importantly, what lies in its future?

Master Classes

Everything Old Is New Again! Liberate Your Film & Bring It to Fresh Audiences

Master class by Sandra Schulberg

President & Executive Director of IndieCollect, Founder of IFP

Independent voices are crucial to every democracy. Do you want your film to remain part of the lifeblood of your society? Then you must act. The work of many independent media makers is no longer accessible today and will certainly be lost to future generations unless we all work together to save our stories.

This master class will inform its audience about how to save and restore older films that were shot on celluloid, and how to save films created in a digital format, among many other topics on remastering and restoration.

Sandra Schulberg is the founder of IFP (Independent Filmmaker Project), America's largest association of independent filmmakers. She is also the founder and president of IndieCollect, a non-profit organization whose mission is to rescue, restore and reactivate American independent cinema. She has worked as a producer for more than 30 years on numerous acclaimed films, including *Waiting for the Moon* (1987), winner of a Sundance Grand Prize.

Sound Design for Action Films

Master class by Resul Pookutty

Award-winning Sound Technician

During this master class, Academy Award-winning sound technician Resul Pookutty will present tips and tricks on achieving the best sound design in film. He will be discussing his rich experience in the field, through examples from his work on the sci-fi action film 2.0 (2018) and Slumdog Millionare (2008), an Oscar-winning drama that presents the city of Mumbai through different approaches in sound design.

Resul Pookutty is an Indian sound designer, sound editor and audio mixer. He won the Academy Award for Best Sound Mixing for his work on *Slumdog Millionare* (2008).

Presentations

The Production of Hulu Series The Handmaid's Tale

Presented by Lindsay Sloane

Executive Vice President of Production & Development at MGM

In this presentation, Lindsay Sloane will talk about the creative development process of Hulu series *The Handmaid's Tale*, sharing with the audience her personal experiences during the planning and production stages of the show, enriched with inside stories, fun facts and trivia.





A Retrospective Exhibition Honoring The Late Legendary Writer Ihsan Abdel Quddous

El Gouna Film Festival is committed to celebrating everything related to the art of cinema, not only by supporting the industry and filmmakers themselves, but through highlighting those who have contributed to the seventh art, such as writers, journalists and critics.

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the birth of the late writer Ihsan Abdel Quddous, El Gouna Film Festival is organizing a special exhibition to commemorate the Egyptian legend, who worked as a writer, novelist, journalist and editor, and authored a large number of novels including *The Maker of Love, The Well of Deprivation,* and *Nothing Matters*. Forty-seven of his novels have been adapted into film—a record among Arab writers. Ihsan Abdel Quddous wrote more than 600 novels and stories; five of which were adapted into stage plays, nine into radio series, and ten into television series. Sixty-five of his novels were translated into English, French, German, Ukrainian and Chinese.

Throughout our preparation journey for this exhibition, we discovered a treasure trove of Abdel Quddous' personal belongings, such as exquisite furniture, magnificent paintings, the author's prestigious certificates of appreciation, handwritten documents from his collection of fiction and journalistic works, rare photographs, and many more. This discovery promises to create a rich collection for an exceptional exhibition, which will take place from September 21 to 27, 2019, at the TU Berlin El Gouna Campus.

U.S. Embassy Collaborations



In its 3rd edition, El Gouna Film Festival is collaborating with the U.S. Embassy in Egypt to launch several initiatives serving various social and cultural causes.

El Gouna Film Festival Hosts Cinema in Concert

As part of El Gouna Film Festival's mission to celebrate every aspect of cinema, the Festival is proud to announce a new event dedicated to paying homage to the timeless works of music that accompanied some of the most memorable films. In cooperation with the U.S. Embassy in Egypt, GFF will host **Cinema in Concert** on **Wednesday, September 25, 2019**.

During the 2nd edition of GFF, the Festival hosted a tribute concert to the acclaimed Egyptian director Youssef Chahine—one of the region's and the world's most talented directors, a true genius among Arab filmmakers. With the success of last year's career-spanning celebratory musical event, GFF is now making it a yearly tradition to cherish and commemorate the unforgettable music of iconic national and international films.

The program of the 3rd edition's **Cinema in Concert** is divided into two segments. The first segment is under the title **Hits of Hollywood**, and includes Alan Silvestri's *Back to the Future;* John Williams' *Jurassic Park;* John Corigliano's *The Red Violin Chaconne;* Maurice Jarre's *Lawrence of Arabia;* Ennio Morricone's *The Mission;* John Kander's *Life is a Cabaret* and *Mein Herr* from *Cabaret*; and John Williams' *Superman Theme.* The second segment is entitled **Homage à Nino Rota**, and celebrates the composer's works for Federico Fellini and Luchino Visconti films. The concert will be conducted by Maestro Ahmed El Saedi, the main founder and chairman of the Egyptian Philharmonic Society, with the performance of soloists Janet Sung on violin; Federico Mondelci on saxophone; Victoria Kapralova on violoncello; and the vocal performance of Amina Khairat. Through **Cinema in Concert**, El Gouna Film Festival not only honors the exceptional talents of musicians in film, but also celebrates an integral element that has a unique and powerful influence on cinematic production—the music that holds everything together.

Educational Activities and Special Awards for Independent Filmmakers in Collaboration with Film Independent



Film Independent—a Los Angeles-based non-profit arts organization that champions the independent filmmaker—and El Gouna Film Festival have entered a new partnership, aiming to provide independent filmmakers with insight and support. In the context of the partnership, a panel discussion entitled **"New Platforms of Distribution"** will be held, in order to shed light on the evolving distribution and monetization landscape of today, with the reign of the streaming platforms. The collaboration will also sponsor a three-day screenwriting workshop led by American experts. The organization's prizes, a **Spirit Awards Residency** in Los Angeles for a screenwriter and **a Film Independent Forum Residency** in Los Angeles for a creative producer will be granted by the jury, in cooperation with the **U.S. Embassy in Egypt**.



Filmmaking Education Forum: Supporting Film Students Through Education and Networking



In line with its mission to support cinema in all its aspects, GFF is pleased to announce that it will be hosting the Filmmaking Education Forum during its 3rd edition. The Forum will include a project development workshop for the 11th class of the Jesuit Film School in Cairo, a panel on short film monetization, and a roundtable discussion on the opportunities and challenges that await film students. It will also organize film screenings for students of the Higher Institute of Cinema; the British University in Egypt; and the German University in Cairo; and a masterclass by the brilliant film director Khairy Bichara. The Filmmaking Education Forum (FEF) is an independent initiative that aims to support the development of filmmaking through enhancing the skills of young film and media students. This project intends to create a sustainable and market-oriented network between local and international film schools and educational funds that can help film students find not only alternative solutions, but also inspiration, information and advice to improve their chances in accessing educational opportunities related to filmmaking. FEF is also focusing on the knowledge exchange between academics and professionals in the field of film education.

El Gouna Film Festival Supports Arab Cinema at International Festivals

Initiated by Eng. Naguib Sawiris, the 2nd edition of El Gouna Film Festival launched a series of collaborations with several festivals and film institutions around the world to promote Arab cinema.

In its 3rd edition, El Gouna Film Festival will continue to build on these collaborations in order to empower Arab filmmakers, especially outside the Arab world, and promote their projects and films at various stages in international cinema forums, thus enhancing their opportunities for co-production and distribution. This year's list of festivals includes:

- The 9th Malmo Arab Film Festival
- The 24th Annual Arabian Sights Film Festival
- Arab Film Festival, affiliated to the Arab Institute for Film and Information
- Beirut DC
- The 8th LatinArab International Film Festival
- The 76th Venice Film Festival

The festival grants an award at the Final Cut in Venice workshop for an Arab film project, as well as an invitation to attend the CineGouna Platform as a guest project. The Final Cut in Venice workshop provides an opportunity for six film projects in the production stage to facilitate the post-production process and strengthen partnerships between these projects and the film markets. The workshop takes place over three days of various events and activities, presenting projects to producers, buyers, distributors, post-production companies and festival programmers.

- A retrospective program for Arab cinema at the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival

El Gouna Film Festival is collaborating with the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival to organize a retrospective program for Arab cinema. GFF supports the program financially, and offers programming and selection services for 20 Arab films that have shaped the Arab cinematic scene over time. In addition, the festival invites important Arab film figures to attend the program.



PRESS ACCREDITATION

The Press Office of El Gouna Film Festival (GFF) will accept press accreditation requests from publishing journalists, photographers, TV reporters and crews, radio reporters and crews, online reporters and crews, news agency correspondents, as well as PR agents for the films being screened at the festival.

Submission of applications for press accreditation opened on **August 28, 2019** and will close on **September 10, 2019**.

The goal of the Press Office of El Gouna Film Festival is to facilitate the application process, and to make it as convenient and efficient as possible for accredited press and media personnel who will cover the festival screenings and events of the 3rd edition of GFF.

Please read the following guidelines before submitting an application for press accreditation.

GUIDELINES FOR PRESS ACCREDITATION

- 1. The following supporting documents are to be provided along with a duly completed application form:
- i. A letter from your editor/publisher on official company letterhead assigning to you the coverage of the Festival. The letter must provide the following information:
 - a) Details of the planned editorial coverage
 - b) The target audience of the publication you will be covering for
 - c) The dates when the coverage will be published or broadcast
- ii. At least 2 bylined articles published within the past 6 weeks, and a copy of the publication or a link to the story written and produced by the applicant along with date of publication or broadcast. PDFs and links are both acceptable.
- iii. A short CV
- iv. A headshot for your press badge

Only the applications that are received with the above-mentioned documents will be processed.

Once the request is approved, a confirmation will be sent to the email address you provided while submitting your request. The confirmation email will contain authorized accreditation and login information required to complete the online accreditation form.

The Press Office will then acknowledge the receipt of your application. If you do not hear from us within 10 days of the submission of your request, please contact our Press Office by email at pressoffice@elgounafilmfestival.com

- 2. There is no fee for press accreditation.
- 3. The festival reserves the right to deny accreditation. Applicants of unsuccessful requests will be duly informed.
- 4. Only one representative will be accepted from each media outlet.
- 5. Accreditation is non-transferrable.

Facts and Figures

Note: Facts and Figures mentioned below relate only to films confirmed as of August 24, 2019

Feature Films	
Selected Feature Films (all sections)	45
Narrative Features (all sections)	33
Animated Features	2
Documentary Features (all sections)	12
Narrative Features in Competition	12
Documentary Features in Competition	9
World Premieres	3
Countries Represented	32
Afghanistan, Algeria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chad, China, Egypt, F Guatemala, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Peru, F Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, Tunisia, United Kingdom, L	Poland, Russia, Rwanda,
Short Films	
Selected Short Films	24
Short Films in Competition	23
Short Film Out Of Competition	1
Animated Shorts	2
International Premieres	5
World Premieres	6
Countries Represented	21
Argentina, Brazil, China, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Jo Mexico, Netherlands, Palestine, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom	
Special Presentations	
Special Presentations	3
Countries Represented	3
Egypt, France, Tunisia	
Total of Countries Represented	40
Total of World and International Premieres	14