

PRESS BRIEFING

EL GOUNA FILM FESTIVAL
PRESS CONFERENCE

8 Oct 2020

ELGOUNA
FILM FESTIVAL
مهرجان الجونة السينمائي



Gouna Conference
and Culture Center

23 - 31 OCT 2020

4TH EDITION #GFF20

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Contents

Greetings	2
About El Gouna Film Festival	2
About El Gouna	3
Our Team	4
Interview with Festival Director Intishal Al Timimi	5
Feature Narrative Competition	10
Feature Documentary Competition	14
Short Film Competition	17
Official Selection out of Competition	21
Special Presentations	25
Cinema for Humanity Audience Award	25
Cinema in Concert: A Salute to Charlie Chaplin	25
Career Achievement Award	26
Retrospective Exhibition of the Work of Iconic Production Designer Onsi Abou Seif	27
International Advisory Board	28
CineGouna Platform	29
CineGouna SpringBoard	29
CineGouna Bridge	33
El Gouna Film Festival Supports Arab Cinema at International Festivals	35
Press Accreditation	36
Safety and Security Standards for the Coronavirus (Covid-19)	37
Outdoor Spaces and Social Distancing	39
Facts & Figures	40

Greetings!

El Gouna Film Festival (GFF) is pleased to welcome you to this press conference. In the following pages you will find the program of our upcoming **4th edition**, which promises an outstanding artistic selection.

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** for a productive, creative, and exciting festival.

About El Gouna Film Festival

El Gouna Film Festival has secured its position as one of the leading film festivals in the MENA region, showcasing a wide variety of films and talents to a passionate audience and experienced industry professionals. With the aim of fostering better communication between cultures through the art of filmmaking, the past editions have succeeded in highlighting the people, films, and projects shaping the film industry in the Middle East and beyond. The spirit of cooperation and cultural exchange is the core value of **GFF**. 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 **4th 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 more than 80 films screen yearly at the festival. **GFF** bestows awards of more than US \$224,000, along with trophies to the winners of the competitive sections.

Feature-length films with a humanitarian theme across any section are eligible for **GFF's** special Cinema for Humanity Audience Award. In its Special Presentations section, the festival showcases iconic films from the past that continue to be cherished by film-loving audiences.

The festival will also be presenting the **4th edition** of **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.

CineGouna Platform presents the **CineGouna SpringBoard** and **CineGouna Bridge** programs that provide opportunities for sharing and learning.

CineGouna Platform is expected to award an estimate of US \$250,000 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 **4th 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 is privileged to welcome its guests and participants from all over the world in the prestigious resort of **El Gouna**. Just a 4-hour flight from Europe's major capitals, a 4-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 18 luxurious hotels, 2 championship golf courses, 2 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 make the town well-versed in the art of hospitality.

Festival Founder
Naguib Sawiris

El Gouna Founder
Samih Sawiris

Festival Team

Festival Director
Intishal Al Timimi

Co-founder and Chief Operations
and Foreign Relations Officer
Bushra Rozza

Artistic Director
Amir Ramses

Programmers
Nicole Guillemet
Teresa Cavina
Mohamed Atef
Raman Chawla

Festival Consultants
Mark Adams
Philip Cheah

Orascom Development Team

General Coordinator
Amal El Masri

Co-founder and Executive Advisor
Amr Mansi

Co-founder and Financial Advisor
Kamal Zadeh

Interview with Festival Director

Intishal Al Timimi:

El Gouna Film Festival Director: The 4th Edition Represents the Victory of Dreams

*“In light of the stressful conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, preparing for the 4th edition of **El Gouna Film Festival** this year is like a hurdle race”*—this is how Festival Director Intishal Al Timimi describes it. He believes that the completion of **El Gouna Film Festival** with security—by holding it this year while putting the personal safety and health of the festival's guests and participants at the top of the priorities—is considered an achievement in and of itself. It will not only represent the success of the powerful institution that **El Gouna Film Festival** has become from one edition to the next, but also a model for the artistic and cultural events that are scheduled to be held in the region, including film festivals. *“**The Culture of Dreams**”* is the slogan of the 4th edition of **El Gouna Film Festival**, which represents the ability to achieve dreams with persistence, regardless of the difficulties.

How was the journey to reach the announcement of the launch of the 4th edition, despite all the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic?

When we announced in early June that the festival's launch date would be postponed for a month, the decision was largely dependent on a set of factors; most notably the strong desire to hold the edition—both from the festival's management itself, and El Gouna administration. For a young festival, it was not desirable to stop while the means could be found. All global indicators in June revealed that the world needed and started to get gradually back on track, in part due to the economic situation. We explored the possibility of holding the edition at later dates. The main factors in reaching the decision were indeed the nature and location of the festival. The evening performances and the opening and closing ceremonies take place at open-air venues. We thus figured the end of October was the ideal proposed period. The next step was to draw up a plan to hold the edition in a safe environment that would ensure its success in all aspects under the current circumstances. This required a strong film program, a rigorous review and selection of **CineGouna Platform** projects, the presence of key industry professionals, as well as international, regional and national celebrities, and media professionals. At the same time, we wanted to focus on ensuring the safety and security of the festival's guests and participants.

What are the main facets of the plan for securing the festival's 4th edition?

Our plan to address the challenge of Covid-19 was based on our careful observation of the protocols followed at international artistic and sporting events that were organized in the present circumstances, most notably the Venice International Film Festival, which was a pioneer in convening on-ground, after many other festivals decided to postpone or operate virtually. Although the edition was scaled down to 50 percent of its regular size, it received wide and positive media coverage, even from platforms not necessarily concerned with art and cinema. The Venice International Film Festival paved the way not only for us but also for other international festivals to follow in its footsteps. The Toronto International Film Festival and the San Sebastian International Film Festival have since taken place, and the Busan International Film Festival is coming up soon.

We normally expect full-houses, but the situation being what it is, a maximum of 50 percent occupancy will be allowed in the indoor as well as outdoor festival venues. Also, there will be a sufficient gap between consecutive events at the same venue to allow time for complete sanitization after each use. As a result,

and in order to accommodate all the films we normally screen, we will have more screening venues than we usually have. This also requires various measures in the schedule of shows, preparing the venues, and adding new ones. The one-on-one meetings with filmmakers participating in **CineGouna SpringBoard** will take place on the lawns of the hotels. The opening and closing ceremonies of the festival, as well as the outdoor performances, will be moved to the new **Gouna Conference and Culture Center**, with spaces twice as big as we had in the Marina Theater. Our objective is to maintain social distancing, while simultaneously preserving the usual number of guests. Over the next two years, we expect that all festival activities will be transferred to **Gouna Conference and Culture Center** after the completion of all its halls, including the Music Building and the Conference Center. I also believe that the very nature of El Gouna, due to its vastness and local population, will contribute to the success of the edition, which was secured by our valued cooperation with the Ministry of Health, as well as the Ministries of Tourism and Culture.

Part of the challenges faced by El Gouna Film Festival lies in the attraction of a vast audience of visitors to the town, both from the region and abroad. Have the numbers been affected by travel restrictions and isolation measures in the world?

This aspect will most certainly be tested throughout the course of this edition, but all indications so far are pointing towards things following the same framework as the previous years. For instance, I have received news that there are already significant numbers of tourists in town, which is evidenced by the 50 percent increase in rental prices compared to last year—this is a sign of high demand. Of course, we may face some obstacles posed by the circumstances of travel restrictions in many countries, but so far, our valued festival invitees have shown a deep interest in attending the festival.

What about the use of virtual platforms to confront the challenges of mobility restrictions?

For years, we have been keen on making virtual platforms a part of the festival's activity design, and this will continue in the coming years, whether or not these circumstances continue. During the previous editions, we have granted our guests an additional opportunity to watch films through the video library, as well as on "Festival Scope" and "Cinando" platforms. Accredited guests always had the chance to catch up on some of the films they missed within a month after the closing of the festival. This year, we are in negotiations with both platforms in the hope of being able to offer the same services to our guests. In addition, a large part of the **CineGouna Platform** activities, including presentations, project discussions, panels, and master classes will be made available virtually to filmmakers, distributors, and producers. Instead of the opportunity to connect 150 people, this year, there will be 500 people available for discussion via virtual interaction. This will enhance the attendance at seminars.

How has the limited production or availability of films this year affected the quality of El Gouna Film Festival's options for the various competitions?

Since the inaugural edition of the festival, we have been functioning under a rigorous selection principle—and with that, I refer to the artistic section headed by Artistic Director Amir Ramses. This principle propels us to not compromise at all with regard to the quality of the films shown at every edition. We are keen on maintaining the integrity of the festival by treating each film as a unique piece of art, and never compromising on that. This year, there is a dearth not only of international production, but also of availability. Some filmmakers are postponing screenings until next year. However, we made sure that this was not reflected in our program in terms of quality, but rather quantitatively at times. The list of the films that have been announced is bright evidence of this commitment, which remains the strongest aspect of **El Gouna Film Festival**. Our festival is not just a program of film screenings, but rather a forum for filmmakers to interact with each other and with the public.

What are the main features of the film selection, as well as the CGP this year, in terms of quantity and quality?

We have made no compromises in the quality of any part of the program. We will only screen fewer films than in previous editions due to the measures of social distancing and the availability of our theaters. As for projects and works in progress, there was some concern of not having the desired number—especially in the post-production stage—but the exact opposite happened; we received so many good projects that it was difficult to choose the final selection of 6 films. I believe that the selection of projects chosen for **CineGouna SpringBoard** in this edition may be the best ever. This year's selection process reflects the fruits of our experience over the past 3 years in the festival, which, in fact, was the first to insist on hosting a platform to support projects in its first edition. This year, there was a greater opportunity for fairness and rigor in studying the projects and making decisions. We opened submission a month and a half sooner than the previous editions, which provided greater opportunities for participants to present their projects, and for the review committees to watch them. There was also an agreement that each project should pass by at least 4 evaluators before a decision was made. I can say that the degree of our confidence in choosing the projects this year is greater, thanks to the rigorous work of our team.

Many CineGouna Platform projects from previous editions found their way towards the most important international festivals. For example, this year, 2 films supported by CineGouna Platform witnessed brilliant participation at the Venice International Film Festival, and one at the Cannes Film Festival. Some even returned to be screened as part of the festival program.

That is correct, and we are often asked about the selection of **El Gouna Film Festival** when it comes to films that are shown in major festivals. But the truth is that many of these films—and I specifically refer to Arab films here—have received the support of **El Gouna Film Festival** in terms of their discovery from the beginning. For instance, this year, the films *The Man Who Sold His Skin* by Kaouther Ben Hania and *200 Meters* by Ameen Nayfeh—both of which won awards at the Venice International Film Festival and were celebrated by critics and the media—will also take part in the Feature Narrative Competition at **El Gouna Film Festival**. They were among the projects that received support from **CineGouna Platform** in previous editions. The film *Souad* by Ayten Amin was also supported earlier by **CineGouna Platform** and was chosen this year in the official selection of the Cannes Film Festival, before it was postponed to next year. These are films that have received international acclaim from the most important international platforms, and we are proud to say that our **CineGouna Platform** program was there to support them from the start. **El Gouna Film Festival** and those in charge of it, including myself, Amir Ramses, and Mohamed Atef, have partnered to support many Arab films since their inception. This festival thinks about the future of Arab film and the way major international platforms are being made available to it. In that realm, we are all about discovering talents and projects through **CineGouna Platform**, which is unmatched internationally in terms of stability in the global reach of its selected films.

Did the pandemic conditions pose difficulties this year in terms of reaching supporters for projects within CineGouna Platform?

During the search for supporters, we did expect this year to be exceptionally difficult, and that some may not renew their support due to the economic situation. However, we currently believe that we will be able to reach our goals, thanks to the loyalty and continued vote of confidence of the supporters of **CineGouna Platform**. In the first year, we started out with US \$60,000, and in the 2nd edition, we reached US \$175,000. Last year, we garnered US \$240,000 for supporting the platform's projects. I believe that this year, we may actually reach a figure close to last year's, since we are still in discussion with some potential partners. So, in that aspect, we seem to be doing well.

The previous editions were characterized by the connection of cinema and music through a special event. What about this year?

This is true, and we always try to search for a musical project in which the screen is an essential part of the composition. This was accomplished in the 2nd edition with music from Youssef Chahine's films, and last year with celebrated pieces from world cinema. In this edition, we will present a film on screen accompanied by an orchestra led by Maestro Ahmed El Saidi. The film is Charlie Chaplin's *The Kid* (1921), newly restored by the Charlie Chaplin Foundation.

And what about the art exhibition, which has also become an essential part of the festival's activities since its inaugural edition?

This year, since we were waiting for the cabinet's decision to confirm the date of the festival, it was hard to plan and prepare an international art exhibition in time for the festival. Therefore, we agreed to hold a photo exhibition related to the festival's slogan this year, which is "***The Culture of Dreams.***"

What were the circumstances of choosing "*The Culture of Dreams*" as the slogan for this year's edition?

The idea started mainly from the fact that the establishment of a conference center in the city of El Gouna has been like a dream over the past years—a significant portion of which has already been realized on-ground this year. But it also refers to the human ability to hope, dream, and to achieve such dreams under the most difficult circumstances.

The Special Presentations section of the festival program has represented a link between the present and the past of Arab and international cinema. Could you tell us about this year's Special Presentations program?

In this edition, we had to reduce the number of films to about 65 films across our 3 main sections; Feature Narrative, Feature Documentary, and Short Film competitions, in addition to our Official Selection out of Competition. Unfortunately, we had to reduce our Special Presentations section to 2 films. We will be screening the restored version of Charlie Chaplin's *The Kid* (1921), one of the best-known cinematic masterpieces of all time, in celebration of its 100th anniversary. We will also screen *Hopper/Welles* (1970), a very special film featuring an exclusive conversation between two iconic directors, Dennis Hopper and Orson Welles.

And what about the honorees of this year?

From Egypt, actor Khaled El Sawy and renowned production designer Onsi Abou Seif were chosen to receive the Career Achievement Award this year. They are true models of cinematic and artistic passion, and their participation in any artistic work remains distinctive and influential. The festival's philosophy in choosing the honorees does not reflect the idea of honoring a filmmaker at the end of their artistic career, but rather honoring their ability to contribute to the Egyptian, Arab, and international cinematic scene. Soon, we will announce the selected Arab and international honorees.

Finally, in your opinion, what is the most important decision you had to take this year?

I believe that the most important decision we made this year was to go ahead with the festival. Whoever observed the difficulties we faced—and still are facing as a team—would notice that preparing for this edition in such challenging circumstances is like a hurdle race; whenever you think that you’ve overcome an obstacle, another one appears on the course. What I mean is that there are many surprises and obstacles that compel us to be alert to all circumstances at all times. This is in addition to social distancing measures that impose greater costs in terms of renting hotels that operate with only 50 percent of the workforce. So, generally speaking, there are a lot of complicated matters that make holding the **4th edition of El Gouna Film Festival** a very significant victory in itself.

Feature Narrative Competition

The Awards

El Gouna Golden Star for Narrative Film	Trophy, Certificate and US \$50,000
El Gouna Silver Star for Narrative Film	Trophy, Certificate and US \$25,000
El Gouna Bronze Star for Narrative Film	Trophy, Certificate and US \$15,000
El Gouna Star for Best Arab Narrative Film	Trophy, Certificate and US \$20,000
El Gouna Star for Best Actor	Trophy and Certificate
El Gouna Star for Best Actress	Trophy and Certificate

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

200 METERS

Ameen Nayfeh | Palestine, Jordan, Italy, Sweden | 2020 | Arabic, English, Hebrew | 90 min

Mustafa and his wife come from two Palestinian villages that are only 200 meters apart, but separated by the wall. While their unusual living situation poses a challenge to their marriage, they do what they can to make it work. When their son is hospitalized, Mustafa rushes to the checkpoint but is denied entry. This is when his once 200-meter journey becomes an odyssey. The film was among **CineGouna SpringBoard**'s winning projects in development at the inaugural edition of **GFF**, and it won the BNL People's Choice Award at the 17th Venice Days.

BAD TALES | Favolacce

Damiano and Fabio D'Innocenzo | Italy, Switzerland | 2020 | Italian | 98 min

A dark tale set in a small community somewhere in the world. A seemingly normal world silently festering with the sadism of fathers and the anger of diligent, desperate children. There is a mysterious sense of unease that can explode at any moment. An unreliable narrator guides us, sweetly and sarcastically, through this dark fairy tale; a story about women and men who see their hopes and dreams falling by the wayside all too soon. The movie had its world premiere at the 70th Berlinale, where it won the Silver Bear for Best Screenplay.

THE FURNACE

Roderick MacKay | Australia | 2020 | English, Badimaya, Pashto, Punjabi, Cantonese | 116 min

1897, Western Australia. To escape a harsh existence and return home, a young Afghan cameleer partners with a mysterious bushman on the run with two 400-oz Crown-marked gold bars. Together, the unlikely pair must outwit a zealous police sergeant and his troopers in a race to reach a secret furnace—the one place where they can safely reset the bars by removing the mark of the Crown. The film premiered at the 77th Venice Film Festival.

IN BETWEEN DYING | Sepelenmis Ölüm Arasında

Hilal Baydarov | Azerbaijan, Mexico, United States | 2020 | Azerbaijani | 88 min

Davud is a misunderstood, restless young man in search of his 'true' family, those who he feels certain will bring meaning and love to his life. Over the course of one day, he experiences an unexpected series of encounters, each one leading to the death of the protagonist. Invisible memories, narratives, and concerns rise to the surface. The film was screened in the Official Competition of the 77th Venice Film Festival.

LISTEN

Ana Rocha de Sousa | United Kingdom, Portugal | 2020 | English, Portuguese, British Sign Language | 74 min

On the outskirts of London, a Portuguese couple and parents of three, Bela and Jota, struggle to make ends meet. When a misunderstanding arises with their deaf daughter at school, the British social services become concerned for the safety of their children. The film portrays the tireless battle of these immigrant parents against strict laws in attempts to keep their children at home and their family intact. *Listen* won the Lion of the Future Award for a Debut Film as well as the Special Orizzonti Jury Prize at the 77th Venice Film Festival.

THE MAN WHO SOLD HIS SKIN | L'Homme qui avait vendu sa peau

Kaouther Ben Hania | Tunisia, France, Germany, Belgium, Sweden, Saudi Arabia | 2020 | Arabic, English, French | 104 min (Opening Film)

Sam Ali, a young, sensitive and impulsive Syrian, fled to Lebanon to escape the Syrian war. Without legal status, he is unable to get a visa to go to Europe, where his beloved Abeer lives. While in Beirut, he meets Jeffrey Godefroi, a famous American artist with whom he concludes a strange deal that will forever change his life. *The Man Who Sold His Skin* was among the winning **CineGouna SpringBoard** projects in development at the 2nd edition of **GFF**. The film received the Edipo Re Inclusion Award, while actor Yahya Mahayni received the Orizzonti Award for Best Actor at the 77th Venice Film Festival.

MICA

Ismaël Ferroukhi | Morocco, France, Belgium | 2020 | Arabic, French | 90 min

Ten-year-old Saïd (Mica) sells grocery bags in souks, and lives with his parents in a slum near Meknes. One day, Hajj Kaddour, a handyman in a tennis club in Casablanca, comes to take Mica as his apprentice. This job would be an opportunity to help Mica's family, to which he would send his meagre salary. After going through humiliation and even physical abuse, Mica slowly starts to fully take in his situation, and does everything in his power to change it. *Mica* participated in **GFF's 3rd CineGouna SpringBoard** as a film in post-production, and was the winner of **GFF's** prize at the 7th Final Cut in Venice workshop.

NEVER GONNA SNOW AGAIN | Śniegu juz nigdy nie bedzie

Małgorzata Szumowska, Michał Englert | Poland, Germany | 2020 | Polish, Russian | 115 min

One foggy morning in a large Eastern European city, a mysterious person appears—a man carrying a bed. The visitor uses enigmatic, hypnotic techniques to acquire a residence permit, and starts working as a masseur in a suburban housing estate. The bland gated community, built for the rich in the middle of what used to be a cabbage field, is walled off from the 'worse' world around it. Despite their wealth, the residents long for the mysterious newcomer's healing hands, as his eyes seem to penetrate their souls. The film competed in the 77th Venice International Film Festival.

NOWHERE SPECIAL

Uberto Pasolini | Italy, Romania, United Kingdom | 2020 | English | 96 min

John, a 35-year-old window cleaner, has devoted his life to raising his 4-year-old son Michael, since the mother left them immediately after his birth. Their life is simple, portraying complete dedication and innocent love. When John discovers that he only has a few months to live, he decides to protect Michael from the terrible reality, and spend his remaining days in search of the perfect person to adopt his child. The film screened as part of the Orizzonti section of the 77th Venice International Film Festival.

OASIS | Korisnici

Ivan Ikić | Serbia, Slovenia, Netherlands, France, Bosnia and Herzegovina | 2020 | Serbian | 120 min

'The users' is a label given to children born with intellectual disabilities, abandoned by their families, and placed in specialized institutions (homes) where most of them spend their entire lives. The film tells the story of 3 teenage 'users' who form an unlikely bond—Robert, the melancholic teenager who often hurts himself; Dragana, his faithful and loving friend; and Marija, a new user with a rather aggressive demeanor. When Marija joins the home, she both falls in love with Robert, and instantly becomes best friends with Dragana, creating a potentially tragic love triangle. *Oasis* received the Europa Cinemas Label at the 17th Venice Days.

QUO VADIS, AIDA?

Jasmila Zbanic | Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria, Romania, Netherlands, Germany, Poland, France, Norway | 2020 | Bosnian, English, Dutch | 103 min

Bosnia, July 11, 1995. Aida works as a translator for the United Nations in the small town of Srebrenica. When the Serbian army takes over the town, her family is among the thousands of citizens seeking shelter in the UN camp. Aida tries to save her family and the tension mounts as one escape path after another is closed off to them. The film was selected in the official competition of the 77th Venice Film Festival.

THE TIES | Lacci

Daniele Luchetti | Italy | 2020 | Italian | 100 min

In early-1980s Naples, Aldo and Vanda's marriage faces a whirlwind when Aldo reveals an affair. He had fallen in love with the young Lidia. The couple goes through a separation, with their young children torn between their parents' resentment. However, the ties that keep people together—even without love—play their part, and 30 years later, Aldo and Vanda are still married. Their lives are tainted by betrayal, suffering, and a devastated home. *The Ties* was the opening film at the 77th Venice International Film Festival.

UNDER THE STARS OF PARIS | Sous les étoiles de Paris

Claus Drexel | France | 2020 | French | 93 min

Christine's life has not been easy lately. Her lonely routine is divided between free food bank distributions and wandering the streets of Paris. On a cold winter night, she finds Suli, an 8-year-old Burkinabé boy, sobbing in front of her shelter. Christine understands that he has been separated from his mother and is now lost. Bonded by their marginal condition, they embark together on an emotional journey full of tenderness to find Suli's mother in the underground world of the city.

THE WHALER BOY | Kitoboy

Philipp Yuryev | Russia, Poland, Belgium | 2020 | Russian, English, Chukchi | 90 min

Leshka lives in an isolated village on the Bering Strait, which is located between Chukotka and Alaska. The internet's recent arrival in Leshka's village means the predominantly male population now gathers in a shed every evening to watch gorgeous girls thousands of kilometers away on an erotic webcam chat site. For most of the guys, it's just a bit of fun, but Leshka takes it seriously. He falls in love with a beautiful girl on the chat and becomes determined to find her in the real world. A crazy journey awaits him.

WIFE OF A SPY | Spy no Tsuma

Kiyoshi Kurosawa | Japan | 2020 | Japanese | 115 min

On the night before the outbreak of World War II, Yusaku senses that things are headed in an unsettling direction. He leaves his wife Satoko behind, and travels to Manchuria with his nephew, Fumio. There, Yusaku coincidentally witnesses a barbarous act and is determined to bring it to light. Meanwhile, Satoko is called on by policeman Taiji, who tells her that a woman whom her husband brought back from Manchuria has died. Fuelled by jealousy, she confronts her husband, only to discover his true intentions. The film competed in the 77th Venice International Film Festival.

THE YEAR OF FURY | El año de la furia

Rafa Russo | Uruguay, Spain | 2020 | Spanish | 102 min

In 1972, Uruguay unavoidably fell into a terrible dictatorship. Diego and Leonardo, two writers of a well-known television comedy show, struggle to maintain their integrity under the pressure they receive to tone down their political satires against the military. On the side of the oppressors, Rojas, the lieutenant in charge of torturing subversive youth, finds emotional refuge in Susana, a prostitute. Slowly, the lives of all of them are deeply impacted by the yoke of the dictatorship looming over them.

Feature Documentary Competition

The Awards

El Gouna Golden Star for Documentary Film	Trophy, Certificate and US \$30,000
El Gouna Silver Star for Documentary Film	Trophy, Certificate and US \$15,000
El Gouna Bronze Star for Documentary Film	Trophy, Certificate and US \$7,500
El Gouna Star for Best Arab Documentary Film	Trophy, Certificate and US \$10,000

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

33 WORDS ABOUT DESIGN | 33 slova o dizaine

Natalya Klimchuk, Olga Morozova | Russia | 2020 | Russian | 98 min

It is commonly believed that there is no specific Russian approach to design. But what if people have been underestimating the influence of culture, history, and the surrounding reality on the style and aesthetic guidelines of those who create our visual environment? A company of 33 modern Russian designers came united to examine this theory, among whom are several famous names like Artemy Lebedev, Valery Golyzhenkov, Pokras Lampas, Anton Schneider, Denis Bashev, and Oleg Pashchenko.

ACASA, MY HOME

Radu Ciorniciuc | Romania, Germany, Finland | 2020 | Romanian | 86 min

For two decades, the Enache family—nine children and their parents—lived in a shack in the wilderness of Bucharest Delta: an abandoned water reservoir, one of the biggest urban natural reservations in the world, with lakes and hundreds of species of animals and rare plants. When authorities decide to claim back this rare urban ecosystem, the family is evicted and told to resettle in the city—a reality they know nothing about. The film screened in the World Cinema Documentary Competition of the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, winning the Special Jury Award for Cinematography.

BANKSY MOST WANTED

Aurélia Rouvier, Seamus Haley | France | 2020 | French, English | 82 min

This documentary draws an in-depth portrait of the masked Robin Hood, Banksy. Each investigation and interview reveals a facet of the artist; his commitment to environmental causes, his position regarding political refugees, his links with the music scene, as well as his entrepreneurial side. Testimonies by those who know him and have worked with him, those who exploit him, those hunting him down, and those trying to claim him, put us in the middle of the mysterious and intriguing world of Banksy. The film screened at the 19th Tribeca Film Festival.

DAYS OF CANNIBALISM

Teboho Edkins | France, South Africa, Netherlands | 2020 | Sesotho, Fujianese, Mandarin, English | 79 min

A contemporary documentary Western that takes place against the backdrop of a newly emerging China-Africa relationship. The film is set in a remote rural region in Southern Africa, a frontier space in which the laws of society are in a state of flux. The unbridled forces of capitalism are felt deep in these rural communities as a new order begins to evolve. As old structures begin to disintegrate, one rule asserts itself above all others: eat or be eaten. The film had its world premiere at the 70th Berlinale.

IRRADIATED | Irradiés

Rithy Panh | France, Cambodia | 2020 | French | 88 min

Meticulously, a man's hands assemble a model house in which he places a saved treasure as in a shrine: a family photo. The screen is split into a triptych, giving rhythm to the pictures. Each tragedy is unique, but in the repetition of the images there is that dull noise from which there is no escape. Rithy Panh maintains the role of the surviving witness who is living with irradiation and yet maintains a clear view of life. The movie had its world premiere at the 70th Berlinale, where it won the Berlinale Glashütte Original Documentary Prize.

A LONG BREATH | Nefess

Remi Itani | Lebanon | 2019 | Arabic | 67 min

Ibrahim is a resident of the violence-ridden neighborhood of Bab Al-Tabbaneh, where feuds associated with civil wars are tearing the community apart. The lack of job opportunities, especially for someone like Ibrahim, who has a criminal record, leaves him struggling to carve a peaceful life amidst the heavy shroud of sectarian violence, religious fanaticism, and smoke-filled gambling dens. Now his wife is pregnant, and he dreams of a devout Muslim life, work and a home of his own. But the pressure of his awaited responsibilities ruptures his newfound peace, and Ibrahim finds himself plunged back into the world he so desperately tried to escape.

NOTTURNO

Gianfranco Rosi | Italy, France, Germany | 2020 | Arabic, Kurdish | 100 min

How much pain and how much life make up the existence of people in the Middle East? In this film—shot over a 3-year period along the borders separating Syria, Iraq, Kurdistan, and Lebanon—Gianfranco Rosi gives voice to a human drama that transcends geographical divisions and calendar time, illuminating with encounters and images of the daily life that lies behind the continuous tragedy of civil wars, brutal dictatorships, foreign invasions and interference, and finally, the murderous apocalypse of ISIS. The film was selected in the main competition of the 77th Venice International Film Festival.

SOFTIE

Sam Soko | Kenya | 2020 | English | 96 min

Boniface 'Softie' Mwangi is a popular photojournalist, known for always being on the spot with his camera when there is turmoil in his native Kenya. He has long fought injustices in his country as a political activist, and now, he is taking it to the next level by running for office in a regional Kenyan election. But can running a clean campaign against corrupt opponents work with idealism alone? And could Softie be putting his family at risk? The film received the Special Jury Award at the 36th Sundance Film Festival.

THEIR ALGERIA | Leur Algérie

Lina Soualem | Algeria, France | 2020 | French, Arabic | 72 min

When Lina's grandparents, Aïcha and Mabrouk, decide to separate after 62 years together, she takes it as an opportunity to question their long journey of exile, as well as their several separations and alienating silence. Aïcha and Mabrouk had come together from Algeria to Thiers—a small medieval town in the middle of France—where they have experienced the chaotic existence of immigrant life. And now, it is time to look back at everything that had been.

THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS

Michael Dweck, Gregory Kershaw | Italy, United States, Greece | 2020 | Italian | 84 min

Deep in the secret forests of Northwest Italy, a handful of men hunt for the rare and expensive white Alba truffle, which has managed to successfully resist all of modern science's efforts at cultivation. Their blissful harmony with their cherished animals and their picture-perfect land is only disrupted by the high demand for white truffles, as the supply decreases. The film premiered at the 36th Sundance Film Festival and was later picked as an official selection at the 73rd Cannes Film Festival, 47th Telluride Film Festival, and the 45th Toronto Film Festival.

Short Film Competition

The Awards

El Gouna Golden Star for Short Film

Trophy, Certificate and US \$15,000

El Gouna Silver Star for Short Film

Trophy, Certificate and US \$7,500

El Gouna Bronze Star for Short Film

Trophy, Certificate and US \$4,000

El Gouna Star for Best Arab Short Film

Trophy, Certificate and US \$5,000

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

THE BATH

Anissa Daoud | Tunisia, France | 2020 | Arabic | 15 min

When his wife leaves on a business trip, Imed, on his own for the first time, must take care of their 5-year-old son, Hedi. While his wife has always taken care of their child's daily needs, Imed must now confront his deepest fear. Although he ends up enjoying this privileged time with his son, the experience unearths dark memories from Imed's past. The most trivial moments are a source of increasing anguish. Little by little, they lead to a paralyzing fear forcing him to an unceasing double struggle. He must calm his resurging worries and conceal his turmoil from everyone, especially little Hedi.

BEING MY MOM

Jasmine Trinca | Italy | 2020 | No Dialogue | 12 min

Rome seems to be deserted. The heat is scorching. Only a mother and her daughter keep the road company, dragging a large suitcase along. It certainly looks like they are seeking one another, or escaping each other all the same. They reverse their natural roles in continuation, and it may seem confusing at first. Until, with just a single gesture, the unexpected epiphany of the nature of their relationship is revealed before them. The film was selected in the Orizzonti section of the 77th Venice Film Festival.

BLUE FRONTIER | Plava Granica

Ivan Milosavljević | Serbia, Slovenia | 2020 | Serbian | 20 min

An old fisherman has spent his entire life searching for the biggest fish in the Danube. It is the only thing left that makes his life worth living; the powerful urge to catch it before he dies. Every sunrise sees the old fisherman attempting to lure the river giant by clapping on the river surface with a hand-carved piece of wood. Two protagonists—one on the surface of the water and the other concealed within the depths of the mighty river—are waiting to finally meet.

BULLMASTIFF

Anastasiia Bukovska | Ukraine | 2020 | Ukrainian, Russian, English | 25 min

Mitya is a war veteran who is trying to return to normal civilian life. He accidentally comes across a lost dog, a bullmastiff named Roy. Their relationship is complicated at first, but eventually, it is Roy who helps Mitya cope with his difficult past.

DEATH OF THE OFFICIAL | Smert' Chinovnika

Artem Gilemyanov | Russia | 2020 | Russian | 16 min

Cadastral official Albert Feliksovich visits his fortune-teller once again. This time, he learns that he will die soon, and a question poses itself: what should he do with all his money? The fortune-teller tells him that he can take it to the grave and use it in the afterlife, and with that, he goes off in search of burial grounds. As he endeavors to take his wife along, he is now adamant to be buried with his money and precious possessions—even his car. People, however, seem to struggle with the idea of letting him go through with it.

END OF SEPTEMBER | Giusto il tempo per una sigaretta

Valentina Casadei | Italy | 2020 | Italian | 16 min

Christian, a bricklayer by day, tries to keep his younger brother, Giulio, at school. With their mother being an alcoholic absentee, and their father figure being quite non-existent, it proves to be a challenging task. Ali, the owner of the grocery store in their building, grows to resemble a paternal reference for the brothers, thanks to his generosity and understanding of their needs. The struggling duo represent the common heroes of our time: the heroes of survival.

I AM AFRAID TO FORGET YOUR FACE | Setashar

Sameh Alaa | Egypt, France, Belgium | 2020 | Arabic | 15 min

This short film follows Adam, who—after being separated for 82 days—decides to venture a rough road to be reunited with the one he loves. The coming-of-age story tackles several social issues and the challenges faced by youth. It is the first Egyptian film to be selected for the Official Short Film Competition at the Cannes Film Festival in 50 years.

INFLUENCER

Rubén Barbosa | Spain | 2020 | Spanish | 18 min

Internet influencers make a living out of gathering a loyal following on their selected social media platforms. This is how they have the opportunity to voice their messages to thousands—and sometimes, millions—of people from all over the globe. But what if they suddenly lose their entire body of followers? This short film addresses the incident of one of the most popular influencers having her 4 million followers stolen.

MARE NOSTRUM

Dimitris Anagnostou | Greece | 2020 | Greek, French | 26 min

On a vast and desolate beach around the middle of the 19th century, a group of Grand Tour voyagers seek Arcadia and its ancient ruins. More than a century later, the dead body of an unidentified man lies on the same coast. Motionless, almost paralyzed, an anonymous crowd stands numb and stares.

OBVIOUS OFFSIDE | Hors-jeu flagrant

Sami Tilili | Tunisia | 2020 | Arabic | 20 min

A winter night. A crucial match: two countries compete for the only qualifying ticket for the FIFA world cup. A man drives his car through deserted streets. Two policemen on patrol listen to the game on their car radio, until the transmission is interrupted.

THE OTHER CHEEK | Al Khad Al Akhar

Sandro Canaan | Egypt | 2020 | Arabic | 11 min

After Nashaat's daughter is viciously attacked by the neighbors' dog, he is pained to hear rumors that she provoked the attack. Reading the accusatory article aloud to his manipulative ex-wife only leads to a heated confrontation and the father's irritation grows. Seeing his daughter disfigured after the brutal incident, Nashaat has a hard time turning the other cheek. The hurt and angry father sees no other way but to take his frustrations out on the perpetrator, even if it means acting against his nature and beliefs.

PEEL | Ecorce

Samuel Patthey, Silvain Monney | Switzerland | 2020 | No Dialogue | 15 min

This animated documentary follows the daily routine at a retirement home in an isolated location. While time seems to stand still, the story unfolds as the residents come to life on paper. Some appear to be active, yet others follow a fixed schedule to be repeated each day: medication, meals, games, and a lot of resting. In the surroundings, machines don't stop flashing, caregivers are constantly busy, and the crucifixes hanging on the wall remind everyone of inevitable death. Time fades away, while in the distance, a vast forest stretches on.

PILAR

Yngwie Boley, J.J. Epping, Diana van Houten | Netherlands, Belgium | 2020 | No Dialogue | 10 min

A hand-painted animation film about a post-apocalyptic city where nature is slowly reclaiming the streets. It tells the story of a young woman called Pilar, who, with the help of a dangerous intruder, finds her inner 'wild animal' and decides to follow her heart, abandoning her only human friend to escape the post-apocalyptic village she lives in.

PLAY SCHENGEN

Gunhild Enger | Norway | 2020 | Norwegian, French, Slovak, English | 15 min

A gaming company is creating a video game for children about the European Union. The player's character is a national bird in need of breeding and nesting across borders. The catch is that it can only fly as allowed by their EU visa rights. The film follows two game designers as they transform the European Union into pixel graphics in an effort to make Schengen catchy. But the question here remains: Can they actually accomplish that?

ROADBLOCK

Dahlia Nemlich | Lebanon | 2020 | Arabic, French | 16 min

Beirut 2019, during the revolution. On her way back from a protest, Farah, a Lebanese activist, and her French-Lebanese boyfriend Anthony are stopped at a roadblock held by two armed militiamen who have a bone to pick with Farah.

SËR BI | Les tissus blancs

Moly Kane | France | 2020 | Wolof | 21 min

Tomorrow, Zuzana is getting married. As she desperately and courageously endeavors to erase her past, every minute counts to sharpen her story to become the woman we expect her to be. The movie was selected in the Short Cuts Programme of the 45th Toronto International Film Festival.

SHAKWA

Farah Shaer | Lebanon, Jordan | 2020 | Arabic | 14 min

In present-day Beirut, Hoda secretly goes to try to report a crime that her husband had committed. Ironically, she is faced with a taxing bureaucratic legal system.

STICKER

Georgi M. Unkovski | Republic of North Macedonia | 2020 | Macedonian | 19 min

After an unsuccessful attempt to renew his car registration, Dejan falls in a bureaucratic trap that tests his determination to be a responsible father. The film was screened in the Shorts Program of the 36th Sundance Film Festival.

Official Selection out of Competition

AND TOMORROW THE ENTIRE WORLD | Und morgen die ganze welt

Julia von Heinz | Germany, France | 2020 | German | 111 min

Wealthy law student Luisa joins a group of Antifa activists, drawn together by their will to fight for the cause and a disdain of conventions. In their mission to halt the continued rise of neo-Nazis across Germany, the group comes to a crossroad: Does combating hate justify violence? As Luisa struggles to understand whether her actions are motivated by personal allegiances or political convictions, she and the group must decide what to do when the ideological fight against fascism becomes concrete. The film was selected in the main competition of the 77th Venice International Film Festival.

ANOTHER ROUND | Druk

Thomas Vinterberg | Denmark | 2020 | Danish | 110 min

A Norwegian philosopher once argued that man is born with a blood alcohol level that is 0.5% too low. Taking that philosophy as their muse for an adventure, four friends, all high school teachers, decide to put the theory to the test. Since their mundane existence is an endless row of trivialities, they believe this project might be what they all need. If Churchill was said to win WW2 in a heavy daze of alcohol, imagine what they can do. At first, they grow braver, more musical, and their work at school becomes more interesting, until the unsettling consequences of their constant intoxication begin to surface.

BEGINNING | Naked Sky

Dea Kulumbegashvili | Georgia, France | 2020 | Georgian | 125 min

In a lazy Georgian village, a Jehovah Witness community is attacked by an extremist group. As conflict ensues, Yana, the young missionary and wife of the community leader, David, faces a slow and tormenting breakdown. While her husband manages to obtain CCTV footage of the attack, his search for justice triggers a chain of events that renders the family—with their young son—completely isolated and at the mercy of the hostile local police. The film was selected for the 73rd Cannes Film Festival, and won the Golden Shell at the 68th San Sebastian Film Festival.

BERLIN ALEXANDERPLATZ

Burhan Qurbani | Germany, France, Canada, Netherlands | 2020 | German, English | 183 min

Francis, 30, has survived his escape from West Africa. As he gets washed up at a beach in Southern Europe, he swears an oath to God: from now on, he wants to be a new, decent man. Soon after he winds up in Berlin, Francis realizes how hard it is to be righteous when you are an illegal refugee. When he receives an enticing offer from the charismatic yet neurotic, sex-addicted German, Reinhold, Francis initially resists the temptation, maintains his oath and stays away from Reinhold's shady dealings. Unfortunately, he is inevitably sucked into Berlin's underworld and his life spirals out of control.

THE BIG HIT | Un triomphe

Emmanuel Courcol | France | 2020 | French | 107 min

Etienne is an actor who is often out of work, despite his charms. He runs a theater workshop in a prison, where he brings together an unlikely ensemble of prisoners to stage Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. When he is allowed to take the convicts on a tour outside of jail, Etienne finally has the chance to truly shoot for the stars. Each date hits a new high, and a unique relationship begins to grow between the director and his impromptu group of actors. As their final performance in Paris approaches, their last night together promises to be the biggest hit of them all.

DELETE HISTORY | Effacer l'histoire

Benoît Delépine, Gustave Kervern | France | 2020 | French, English | 110 min

Three neighbors at a provincial suburb are overtaken by the life-altering capabilities of social media. A grown woman is struggling to keep the respect of her son after the emergence of a secret, a young woman falls victim to online bullying, and a third lady faces challenges with her Uber ratings. While seeking the assistance of small-time crooks and a genuine hacker, the neighbors decide to resist the mighty windmills of contemporary living—the Big Tech companies. While their battle may be destined to fail from the start, the trials and tribulations of their journey make for an interesting adventure.

FALLING

Viggo Mortensen Jr. | United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Denmark | 2020 | English, Spanish | 112 min

John lives with his partner, Eric, and their daughter, Monica, in California; far from the traditional rural life he had once abandoned. His father, Willis, a headstrong man from a conservative generation, lives alone on his isolated farm where John grew up. As Willis's mind struggles with memory loss, John invites him westward. He hopes that—with the help of his sister, Sarah—he can help his father find a nearby home. Despite their best intentions, Willis's angry refusal to change his ways poses a challenge to the peace and harmony they hoped for.

FATHER | Otac

**Srdan Golubović | Serbia, France, Germany, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina | 2020
Serbian | 120 min**

In a small town in Serbia, Nikola is forced to give up his two children to social services after poverty and desperation drive his wife to commit suicide. The assessment of Nikola's housing conditions prompts the social welfare office to decide that he is too poor to provide an adequate living environment. The reticent father then decides to lodge a complaint with the Ministry of Social Affairs in Belgrade, determined to cover the 300 kilometers to the capital on foot. It is the only way he knows how to show the authorities that he would do anything for his children.

I NEVER CRY | Jak najdalej stąd

Piotr Domalewski | Poland, Ireland | 2020 | Polish, English | 100 min

Seventeen-year-old Ola must travel to Ireland to bring her father's body back to Poland after he died working on a construction site. But never mind her dad, Ola wants to know if he saved money for the car he had promised her. Dealing with foreign bureaucracy in her own street-smart way, Ola learns that her biggest dream wasn't a car, but really getting to know her father.

IBRAHIM

Samir Guesmi | France | 2020 | French | 80 min

An adolescent dreamer, Ibrahim, lives in a housing project on the outskirts of Paris with his father, Ahmed, with whom he has a difficult relationship. Involved by his best friend, Achille, in an ill-fated shoplifting scam, Ibrahim gets caught red-handed by security, landing his father with an unexpected—and rather sizable—debt, jeopardizing Ahmed's career plans. Faced by the heavy challenge, Ibrahim is prepared to do whatever it takes to make amends and gain his father's respect, once and for all.

JOSEP

Aurel | France, Spain, Belgium | 2020 | French, Spanish, English | 74 min

February 1939, the Spanish republicans are fleeing Franco's dictatorship to France. The French government has built a concentration camp, confining the refugees to a place where they barely have access to water, food, and basic hygiene. This moving animated film tells the saga of an unlikely friendship between a fictional French gendarme, and masterly draftsman Josep Bartoli, a Spanish Republican fighter, confined in one of these French concentration camps. *Josep* was among the official selection of the 73rd Cannes Film Festival.

MAINSTREAM

Gia Coppola | United States | 2020 | English | 95 min

Up in the hills above Hollywood Boulevard lives Frankie, a young woman trying to discover who she really is. She knows she wants to do something of meaning, but doesn't know what or how. Feeling stuck working as a bartender with her best friend and sometimes-lover Jake, Frankie questions what people today truly value. When she encounters the mysterious Link, she is inspired to film him and upload his anti-commerce rants online. With Jake on board, this unlikely trio of outsiders quickly rises to internet stardom. The film had its world premiere at the 77th Venice International Film Festival.

MY TENDER MATADOR | Tengo miedo torero

Rodrigo Sepulveda Urzua | Chile, Argentina, Mexico | 2020 | Spanish | 93 min

Based on a novel by celebrated Chilean writer Pedro Lemebel, *My Tender Matador* tells the story of a proud, aging crossdresser known as 'The Queen of the Corner.' Amid the political turmoil of the Pinochet dictatorship in 1980s Chile, The Queen falls in love with Carlos, a young guerrilla who asks her to hide dangerous secret documents of the revolution in her home. Through the tale of a risky clandestine operation and what people do for the sake of love, the film takes us on a journey back to the historical event that changed Chile forever.

SEPTET: THE STORY OF HONG KONG

Johnnie To, Tsui Hark, Ann Hui, Ringo Lam, Patrick Tam, Sammo Hung, Yuen Woo-Ping | Hong Kong SAR China, China | 2020 | Cantonese | 111 min

Seven of Hong Kong's most renowned directors explore the history of Hong Kong through their unique artistic visions. The film covers over 50 years of Hong Kong's history, from the 1950s to today. Each director is in charge of telling the story of a single time period, as they reflect on the achievements they have accomplished in the Hong Kong film industry. *Septet* represents a salute to the era that made the seven directors who they are today.

SPRING BLOSSOM | 16 Printemps

Suzanne Lindon | France | 2020 | French | 73 min

Sixteen-year-old Suzanne is rather bored with people her age. Every day, on her way to school, she walks by a theater. One day, she meets an older man there and becomes obsessed with him. Despite their age difference, they find in each other an answer to their ennui, and eventually fall in love. However, Suzanne is also afraid that she is missing out on life—the life of a regular 16-year-old, and the one she had struggled so much to enjoy in the same way as her peers. The film was selected for this year's special Cannes Film Festival.

TRAGIC JUNGLE | Selva tragica

Yulene Olaizola | Mexico, France | 2020 | Spanish, Maya, English, Creol | 96 min

In 1920, on the border between Mexico and Belize, deep in the Mayan jungle—a lawless territory where myths abound—a group of Mexican gum workers cross paths with Agnes, a mysterious young Belizean woman. Her presence incites tension among the men, arousing their fantasies and desires. Filled with new vigor, they face their destiny, without knowing that they have woken up Xtabay—a legendary being that lurks in the heart of the jungle. The film screened in the Orizzonti section of the 77th Venice International Film Festival.

TRUE MOTHERS | Asa ga Kuru

Naomi Kawase | Japan | 2020 | Japanese | 140 min

Based on a 2015 novel by Mizuki Tsujimura, the film revolves around Satoko, the middle-class adoptive mother of a child, who suddenly gets contacted by the child's birth mother; and Hikari, the desperate young biological mother who doesn't want to be erased from her child's life. The film was screened as part of the Special Presentations section of the 45th Toronto International Film Festival. It was also selected to be screened at this year's Cannes Film Festival.

Special Presentations

HOPPER/WELLES

Orson Welles | United States | 2020 | English | 131 min

A real, intimate, and revelatory 1970 conversation between film giants Dennis Hopper and Orson Welles over a long, boisterous dinner. Filmed during the guerrilla shooting of Welles's troubled, long-in-the-making *The Other Side of the Wind* (and Hopper's own difficult editing of *The Last Movie*), the discussion gracefully oscillates between questions like: "Is a director a creator or a magician? Will America survive its own violence?" The two address topics of liberation, radical chic, and political sincerity, making their old conversation more relevant than ever. The film was presented for the first time at the 77th Venice International Film Festival.

THE KID

Charlie Chaplin | United States | 1921 | No Dialogue | 60 min

A woman decides to abandon her baby in the backseat of an automobile with a handwritten note attached, beseeching the finder to care for and love the child. When the car is stolen by thieves, who discover the baby in the backseat, they subsequently leave him on the street. The child is found by the initially reluctant Tramp, who eventually softens and comes to love him as his own. As the child grows up, both he and The Tramp must learn to navigate through a life that spawns one adventure after another.

Cinema for Humanity Audience Award

Trophy, Certificate and US \$20,000

Feature-length films with a humanitarian theme across various sections will be eligible for this award.

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

Cinema in Concert: A Salute to Charlie Chaplin

As part of **El Gouna Film Festival's** mission to celebrate every aspect of cinema, the festival is proud to continue hosting **Cinema in Concert**, paying homage to the timeless works of music that accompanied some of the most memorable films. Cherishing and commemorating the unforgettable music of iconic national and international films is a yearly **GFF** tradition; 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.

This year, the festival introduces **Cinema in Concert** with a brand-new concept, perhaps the first of its kind in the Arab film festival scene, by showing Charlie Chaplin's *The Kid* (1921) accompanied by a live orchestra—led by famous Egyptian maestro Ahmed El Saidi—who will play the film's score suite live during the screening.

Career Achievement Award

El Gouna Film Festival is proud to announce the recipients of the 2020 Career Achievement Award. The award celebrates individuals whose commitment to cinema has left an indelible mark in the field of their work.

Khaled El Sawy

Khaled El Sawy is a renowned Egyptian actor born in Alexandria in 1964. He received a Bachelor of Laws degree from Cairo University in 1985, and then a BA in film directing from the Academy of Arts in 1993. El Sawy began his artistic career on the stage of the university theater, while he was studying law. He co-founded the Egyptian Foundation for Theater Enthusiasts, wrote and directed several theater works, and won the Timor Prize for Theatrical Creativity in 1991 and 1992. Throughout his career, El Sawy acted with different generations of Egyptian directors, such as Mohamed Khan in *Knight of the City* (1991), Khairy Beshara in *Hazelnut Shells* (1995), and Marwan Hamed in *The Yacoubian Building* (2006) and *The Originals* (2017). He also worked with director Sherif Arafa in *Al Jazeera* (2007), and with Tarek Al Eryan in *Sons of Rizk 2* (2019). El Sawy received many honors in the fields of cinema, theater, and poetry. Dubai Cultural Magazine honored him in the field of poetry, the Supreme Council of Culture granted him an award in theatrical composition, and he received the honor of the Tétouan International Mediterranean Film Festival in Morocco in its 23rd edition in 2017. Additionally, El Sawy received a prize for his role in the film *Keda Reda* (2007) at the Alexandria International Film Festival, as well as several Egyptian and Arab prizes for his role in *The Yacoubian Building* (2006).

Onsi Abou Seif

Egyptian production designer and art director Onsi Abou Seif graduated from the Higher Institute of Cinema in 1967, and worked in his early days on the movies *Diary of a Country Prosecutor* by celebrated director Tewfik Saleh, and *The Mummy* (1969) by Shadi Abdel Salam. Throughout his career, Abou Seif proved—time and time again—that set design is one of the most important and decisive elements of filmmaking. The first award granted to him under the auspices of the Egyptian Ministry of Culture was for the movie *Illusions of Love* (1970). He moved on to receive numerous awards from the Ministry for his work on *Alexandria: Again and Forever* (1989), *Kit Kat* (1991), and *The Thief of Joy* (1995), among others.

Onsi Abou Seif designed special scenes for the Hollywood movie *Malcolm X* (1992), and frequently collaborated with his friend Daoud Abdel Sayed, acclaimed Egyptian director. Abou Seif is known for designing hyper-realistic set décor, most significantly for the television series *Critical Moments* (2007), and the film *The Traveller* (2009). His most memorable works include *Love in Jail* (1983), *Kit Kat* (1991), *Land of Dreams* (1993), *The Other* (1999), *Land of Fear* (2000), *The Days of Sadat* (2001), *A Citizen, a Detective, and a Thief* (2001), *Halim* (2006), and *Messages from the Sea* (2010).

Retrospective Exhibition of the Work of Iconic Production Designer Onsi Abou Seif

Stemming from **El Gouna Film Festival's** commitment to celebrating everything related to the art of film—and to shedding light on all cinema artists—**GFF** is proud to announce an exhibition of the works of the famous production designer Onsi Abou Seif, the recipient of **GFF's Career Achievement Award** this year, whose contribution has enhanced the value of some of the most prominent Egyptian films.

During our quest to curate this exhibition, we discovered a treasure trove of set design sketches and layouts for films such as *The Mummy* by Shadi Abdel Salam, *Alexandria: Again and Forever* by Youssef Chahine, *Kit Kat* by Daoud Abdel Sayed, *Summer Thefts* by Yousry Nasrallah, and *Date Wine* by Radwan El-Kashef. This is in addition to *Dreams of Hind and Camelia* by Mohamed Khan, and *Sweet Day, Bitter Day* by Khairy Beshara.

The exhibition will include some of these designs and sketches, video clips from Abou Seif's films, movie posters, and awards he has received over the course of his career. Additionally, the exhibition will feature miniature models of some of the iconic pieces made by him. The exhibition is curated by acknowledged designer Karim Mekhtigian.

The Onsi Abou Seif retrospective exhibition will be presented throughout the course of the **4th edition** of **GFF**, to be held from **24 to 30 October, 2020**.

International Advisory Board

El Gouna Film Festival is deeply honored that the stellar group of industry professionals listed here are members of our advisory board. Their support continues to guide and inspire us as we strive to produce a unique festival experience of the highest quality.

Yousra, 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, **CineGouna Platform** is an industry-oriented event created to support and empower Egyptian and Arab filmmakers, helping them find artistic and financial support. **CineGouna Platform** presents the **CineGouna SpringBoard** and **CineGouna Bridge** programs that provide opportunities for sharing and learning. **CineGouna SpringBoard** is a project development and co-production lab that offers opportunities to find creative and financial support for Arab film directors and producers with **projects in development** or **films in post-production**. Applications of feature narrative and feature documentary **projects in development**, as well as **films in post-production**, are accepted for participation in the program from all parts of the Arab world.

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 **4th edition** of **CineGouna Bridge** will present workshops, panel discussions and master classes with key industry professionals and experts on several cinematic topics. Some of these activities will be held virtually. The programs and activities of **CineGouna Platform** will take place at the TU Berlin, El Gouna Campus from **October 25 to 29, 2020**.

CineGouna SpringBoard

For its **4th edition**, **CineGouna SpringBoard** received 99 submissions (65 projects in development and 34 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** (9 narratives and 3 documentaries) and **6 films in post-production** (5 narratives and 1 documentary) 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 the selected projects and their directors, representing **10 Arab countries**, is as follows:

Projects in Development:

Feature Narrative:

The Day of Arafah, directed by Ala'a Al Qaisi, Jordan

Goodbye Julia, directed by Mohamed Kordofani, Sudan

Hajj to Disney, directed by Maha Al-Saati, Saudi Arabia

Hamlet from the Slums, directed by Ahmed Fawzi-Saleh, Egypt

I Am Here but You Can't See Me, directed by Feyrouz Serhal, Lebanon

The Last Man, directed by Muhammad Salah, Egypt

Obliteration, directed by Karim Moussaoui, Algeria

Roqia, directed by Yanis Koussim, Algeria

Seeking Haven for Mr Rambo, directed by Khaled Mansour, Egypt

Feature Documentary:

Big Boys Don't Cry, directed by Muhammad Mustapha, Egypt

Bye Bye Tiberias, directed by Lina Soualem, Palestine

The Mother of All Lies, directed by Asmae El Moudir, Morocco

Films in Post-Production:

Feature Narrative:

Communion, directed by Nejib Belkadhi, Tunisia

Harvest, directed by Ely Dagher, Lebanon

Life Suits Me Well, directed by Al Hadi Ulad Mohand, Morocco

The Maiden's Pond, directed by Bassem Breche, Lebanon

Streams, directed by Mehdi Hmili, Tunisia

Feature Documentary:

Take Me to the Cinema, directed by Albaqer Jafeer, Iraq, Egypt

Guest Film in Post-Production:

Feature Documentary:

Blue Inmates, directed by Zeina Daccache, Lebanon

The directors and producers of the selected projects listed above will present their projects and works in progress 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 improving their chances of regional and international cooperation.

All selected projects in development and films in post-production will compete for awards to 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**.

- US \$20,000 from **Shahid**
- US \$10,000 from **iProductions**
- US \$10,000 from **Arab Radio & Television Network (ART)**
- US \$10,000 from **Synergy Films**
- US \$10,000 from **Weyyak**
- US \$10,000 from **New Century Production**
- US \$10,000 from **Lagoonie Film Production**
- US \$10,000 from **Rotana**
- US \$80,000 worth of production services from **Shahid**
- US \$50,000 pre-sale from **OSN**
- US \$30,000 as a minimum guarantee from **MAD Solutions & Ergo Media Ventures**
- US \$30,000 worth of VFX services from **Mercury Visual Solutions**
- US \$10,000 worth of a full DCP package from **The Cell Post Production**
- US \$10,000 worth of a full film promotions package from **The Cell Post Production**
- 2 Film Independent Virtual Residency awards including script consultation and project-based meetings with American screenwriters, producers and industry executives from **Film Independent** and **The U.S. Embassy**
- €2,000, full usage of editing suite for a period of 10 weeks, 4 hours of consultancy sessions and a membership in the DOX BOX Community from **DOX BOX**
- Selection of 2 filmmakers for IEFTA's Global Film Expression initiative - sponsorship to participate in one of IEFTA's partner development labs or workshops from **IEFTA**

CineGouna SpringBoard Sponsors



CineGouna Bridge

CineGouna Bridge, a meeting point and a forum for dialogue between different cinematic voices, is ready to welcome its guests to the **4th 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 workshops, panel discussions and master classes with key industry professionals and experts on several cinematic topics. Some of these activities will be held virtually. The program will include:

Panel Discussions:

1. Women's Empowerment in Film

In this panel, female filmmakers will discuss the role of women in the film industry from the perspectives of an actress, an activist, a director, a writer, and one of the founders of Rawiyat (Sisters in Film), an association of female filmmakers from the Middle East and North Africa.

2. Digital Media in the Wake of a Global Pandemic

The panel discussion will shed light on how Covid-19 disrupted traditional media. It will feature prominent digital media experts who will speak about how they have managed to maneuver a global pandemic.

3. Virtual Panel Discussion: The Role of Film Festivals in the Time of Covid-19

Festival heads from all over the world will come together to discuss the state of film festivals during the pandemic. We will learn about how each one adapted their program and their presentation to adjust to the new safety regulations, and how some festivals adopted a hybrid model combining elements of an in-person festival with elements of a virtual festival. They will also discuss how they view the future.

4. Virtual Panel Discussion: Filmmaker's Journey from Film Lab to VOD Platform presented by IEFTA

Meet with the top industry professionals from film labs to festivals, to aggregators and VOD platforms to get an overview of what to expect on your journey to complete your film.

Master Classes:

1. A Conversation with Indian Star Ali Fazal

Bollywood actor Ali Fazal is best-known internationally for the British-American film *Victoria & Abdul* (2017) he starred in, alongside Judi Dench. The film screened at the Venice Film Festival in 2017. Fazal is among the stellar cast of Kenneth Branagh's upcoming *Death on the Nile*, based on Agatha Christie's hit detective fiction novel.

2. Choosing How to Tell a Story Visually and Having the Flexibility to Adapt to Changing Conditions by DOP Ahmad Al Morsy

With a portfolio boasting iconic films such as *The Blue Elephant* trilogy (2014, 2019), *Diamond Dust* (2018), and *The Originals* (2017), Egyptian director of photography Ahmad Al Morsy will be sharing his secrets to working on award-winning motion pictures.

3. Virtual Master Class: Netflix's Master Class by Christopher Mack

Christopher Mack is the Director of Creative Talent Investment & Development at Netflix. He was a drama writer for 10 years. He worked on shows such as *ER*, *The Practice*, and *The New Twilight Zone*. He also ran the Television Workshop for Warner Bros. Television for 10 years and is a founding member of the WB Digital Network division. He now works with Netflix international originals, helping identify, support, and develop TV and film communities around the world.

Workshops:

1. U.S. Embassy and Film Independent: Short Film Screenwriting Workshop

The workshop is open to students currently developing their short films, and will provide filmmakers with the tools to hone their writing skills.

2. Acting: Beyond the Method with Gerald James

Gerald James is a lifetime member of The Actors Studio, Los Angeles. He is celebrated as one of the leading acting coaches in Los Angeles and Egypt.

El Gouna Film Festival

Supports Arab Cinema at International Festivals

Initiated by Eng. Naguib Sawiris, the 2nd and 3rd editions 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 **4th 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 at international cinema forums, thus enhancing their opportunities for co-production and distribution. This year's list of festivals includes:

The 10th Malmö Arab Film Festival

Malmö Arab Film Festival (MAFF) is the biggest film festival dedicated to Arab cinema in the Scandinavian region, and one of the largest of its kind outside the Arab world. **GFF** offers a US \$5,000 cash prize at the MAFF Market Forum, the sidebar of MAFF, for an Arab film project. In 2019, **GFF** awarded its US \$5,000 cash prize to *Before It's Too Late* by Tunisian director Majdi Lakhdar.

The 8th Final Cut in Venice

Since 2017, **GFF** has offered an award at the Final Cut in Venice workshop for an Arab film project, which includes a cash prize of US \$5,000 in addition to an invitation to attend **CineGouna Platform** as a guest project. The Final Cut in Venice workshop provides an opportunity for 6 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 3 days of events and activities, presenting projects to producers, buyers, distributors, post-production companies, and festival programmers.

Press Accreditation

The Press Office of **El Gouna Film Festival** is now accepting applications for 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 **October 1, 2020**.

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 **4th 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 short CV
- ii. A headshot for your press badge or business card.

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

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. Accreditation is non-transferrable.

Accreditation does not cover accommodation or transportation to the festival.

Safety and Security Standards for the Coronavirus (Covid-19)

In order to achieve safety, security and social distancing measures regarding the coronavirus epidemic (Covid-19), the festival will provide its guests with a guide containing the instructions listed below, in an online file.

Pre, During & Post-Festival:



Health & Safety Team:

- GFF is hiring a dedicated safety team to be fully responsible for monitoring and implementing the health and safety protocols pre-, during and post-festival.



On-Site Health & Safety Protocol in Collaboration with El Gouna Hospital:

- GFF, together with OHD and El Gouna Hospital, will ensure that sufficient facilities are in place at the disposal of everyone in El Gouna for all the measures considered necessary.
- The health & safety protocol will be applied to everyone involved in the festival across all phases (staff, workers, third parties & invitees).
- El Gouna Hospital laboratory, managed by NSA laboratories, is approved by the Ministry of Health to perform all ranges of Covid-19 testing: PCR, Antibody IgG IgM by Abod, Inflammatory Markers, Clotting Marker D-Dimer.



Swab Test/PCR:

- Swab Test/PCR will be required as per the government instructions by October.
- All foreign guests will be tested and granted a certificate of PCR upon departure, free of charge, if their country of origin requires it.



Compulsory Masks & Sanitizing Liquids:

- Sanitizing liquids/gels & masks will be provided by GFF to all workers.
- Masks will have to be used in all closed areas, when standing in queues, or when moving around in a congested area.
- Audiences are to wear their mandatory masks inside cinema halls throughout the entire duration of the film and/or post screening discussion.

During Festival:



Hotels:

- Orascom Hotels Management (OHM) hotels in El Gouna have been successfully audited by TÜV NORD Egypt, which certified that the hotels do meet the international standards of sanitation and hygiene.
- Occupancy restrictions will be amended as per the government's new instructions in October.



Venues and Events:

- On-site contactless thermometer check at entrances.
- Those with a temperature above 37.8°C / 100°F won't be admitted and will be transferred to the mobile clinic or El Gouna Hospital if they show other symptoms.
- An additional 90-minute gap is planned between events to properly disinfect and sanitize the venues.



Sanitization of All Venues:

- Only 50% of the venue capacities are to be used to achieve social distancing.
- All areas will be sanitized constantly, including cinema halls, service areas, transportation vehicles, etc.
- Deep cleaning and sanitization after every event.
- Sanitizing liquids and gels will be provided to the public in all areas.



Social Distancing & Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- Delegates will be offered a mask and hand sanitizer free of charge on entry.
- Masks will have to be used in all external/internal areas when distancing is not possible or is difficult.
- Delegates will be required to wear face masks, unless the event takes place outside and social distancing is applied.
- Delegates will keep a distance of at least 1m apart at all times where possible to be monitored by a member of staff.
- Seating will be reduced by implementing seat separation in all venues and theaters during opening/closing ceremonies.
- Workers who are in direct contact with delegates, or working on catering for delegates will be required to wear a fitted medical mask and surgical gloves.
- Speakers will be required to wear masks unless positioned a minimum of 2m away from attendees and other speakers when speaking.
- On the red carpet, photographers will be distanced inside the press pit; maximum capacity set at 1m social distancing.
- No public viewers will be allowed to gather outside the red carpet. But the red carpet ritual will be regularly broadcast live, through the media sponsor's TV channel and GFF's website/social media platforms.
- At photo calls, photographers will be reduced, distanced and put at a safe distance from the talent.



Box Office and Payments:

- All badge holders will be able to RSVP for the screenings through the festival's mobile app.
- Box Office will open for ticket sales for non-accredited guests, with safety measures put in place.
- Contactless payment available for any purchases.
- All seats must be pre-booked, and all seats are numbered.



Reduction of Printed Materials:

- Most of the information concerning GFF20 will be provided to the guests in electronic format, reducing the distribution of printed materials.



Communicating a Detailed Safety Measures Document:

- GFF will be sharing a detailed document that outlines all the safety measures and protocols with all celebs, delegates and invitees prior to the festival.



Food & Beverage:

- A food safety management system that includes existing food hygiene guidance processes is already followed by all outlets in El Gouna.

Outdoor Spaces and Social Distancing

One of the most anticipated events this year will be the inauguration of **Gouna Conference and Culture Center (GCCC)**, which will take place in conjunction with the opening of the **4th edition** of **El Gouna Film Festival**.

The construction of the center, a brainchild of **Samih Sawiris**, founder of **Orascom Development Holding** and **El Gouna**, started in 2019. The center will be the new home of the festival and will host the opening and closing ceremonies, the traditional “**Cinema in Concert**” event, in addition to the red carpet evenings, other premieres, and film-related events that were previously held at the **Marina Theater**.

The center, although ready for use now, will be complete in all aspects in 2021. It is situated in the vicinity of other festival venues, including the Technical University (TU Berlin) and the Sea Cinemas. It also includes an opera hall that can accommodate an orchestra of 120 musicians, as well as 600 seats for the audience. The opening and closing ceremonies as well as the Gala screenings of the **4th edition** of **GFF** will take place at the central square (The Plaza) that can accommodate up to 1,400 people.

Procedures in place to ensure safety, security and social distancing:

- The center yard is completely open (open-air theater).
- The number of opening and closing ceremony invitees has been reduced, following similar measures to the European countries that held their festivals this year.
- Social distancing measures were taken into consideration while designing and preparing the center for this year’s edition, which will be held in a space of 10,740 square meters. In contrast, previous editions were held in an area measuring 6,200 square meters. The festival center site plans are below.
- The red carpet area is increased to 30 meters.
- A distancing space of 1 meter is being maintained between seats.
- The theater has 4 entrances in order to avoid queues.
- Body temperature will be measured at all entrances.
- Individuals with body temperatures exceeding 37.8°C/100°F will not be allowed entry and immediately transferred to the mobile clinic or to El Gouna Hospital if they develop other symptoms.
- A 90-minute gap will be kept between events, during which the halls and spaces will be thoroughly disinfected and sterilized.
- Masks will have to be used in all external/internal areas when distancing is not possible or is difficult.

Facts and Figures

Note: Facts and Figures mentioned below relate only to films confirmed as of October 8, 2020

Feature Films	
Selected Feature Films (all sections)	45
Narrative Features (all sections)	33
Narrative Features in Competition	16
Animated Films	3
Documentary Features (all sections)	11
Documentary Features in Competition	10
World Premieres	1
Countries Represented	42
Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay	
Short Films	
Selected Short Films	18
Short Films in Competition	18
Animated Shorts	2
World Premieres	6
International Premieres	2
Countries Represented	18
Belgium, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Macedonia, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, Ukraine	
Special Presentations	
Special Presentations	2
Countries Represented	1
United States	
Total of Countries Represented	48
Total of World and International Premieres	10

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