



Ameen Nayfeh Wins the EDA Award

“

This award is a surprise for me. I would like to thank GFF and Mena Massoud

Habiba Osama,

Award-winning Palestinian film director Ameen Nayfeh was announced as the winner of the EDA Foundation International Artist in Motion Award. The award is an annual event that takes place in El Gouna Film Festival by EDA foundation, a non profit organization. It was founded by the Egyptian Canadian film star Mena Massoud with the aim to support artists from different nationalities.

The announcement took place before the MENA premiere screening of Ameen Nayfeh's *200 Meters*. Nayfeh was invited to the stage by GFF Artistic Director Amir Rames, to be joined by producer May Odeh and editor Kamal El Mallakh. Due to his absence from the festival this year, Mena Massoud announced the winner of the EDA foundation award through a recorded video.

In his short speech, Nayfeh thanked GFF for inviting him and his film to be part of the 4th edition, saying: "This award is a surprise for me. I would like to thank GFF and Mena Massoud. *200 Meters* was only an idea when I was here, in this festival, for the first time... and now, it is a film in the same festival's Official Competition."

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★ Today

Red Carpet



Cast and Crew of MICA, by the renowned French-Moroccan film director Ismaël Ferroukhi will walk the red carpet

of the Festival Plaza today night as part of the MENA premiere of his film which participates at the GFF Narrative Feature Competition, and follows ten-year-old Said who starts as a bag seller in souks, before he moves to a totally different life and a changed destiny. Mica participated in the 3rd edition of CineGouna SpringBoard as a film in post-production, and was the winner of GFF's prize at the 7th Final Cut in Venice workshop.

★ Meet the filmmaker

Notturmo

Doc.Competition

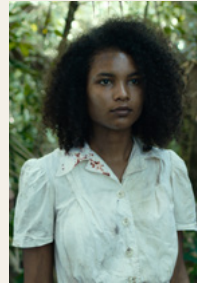
Guest (s) are attending

Producer:

Mohamed Al Daradji

Sea Cinema 2

6:45 p.m.



Tragic Jungle

Out of Competition

Guest (s) are attending

Actress:

Indira Rubie Andrewin

TUB

3:15 p.m.

In Between Dying

Narr. Competition

Guest (s) are attending

Director:

Hilal Baydarov

Sea Cinema 1

3:30 p.m.



Oasis

Narr. Competition

Guest (s) are attending

Director: Ivan Ikic

Arena

9:30 p.m.

200 Meters

Narr. Competition

Guest (s) are attending

Director:

Ameen Nayfeh

Producer:

May Odeh

Editor:

Kamal El Mallakh

6:00 p.m.

Shorts Program 2

Tomorrow marks the screening of the second group of GFF 4th edition's short films (Shorts Program 2) which carries 5 film screenings.

The program includes the world premiere of The Other Cheek, the debut from Egyptian film director Sandro Canaan. The program also showcases two films by Arab film directors: the world premiere of The Bath by Tunisian actress, producer, and director Anissa Daoud; and Roadblock by Lebanese director Dahlia Nemlich. Two films that premiered at prestigious international film festivals are also on tomorrow's screening list: Moly Kane's Sër Bi, which was selected in the Short Cuts Programme of the 45th Toronto International Film Festival; and Georgi Unkovski's Sticker, which was screened in the Shorts Program of the 36th Sundance Film Festival. This is in addition to Blue Frontier by Serbian director Ivan Milosavljević.

Tomorrow's short film screenings will take place at Sea Cinema 1 at 2:30 p.m.



★ Schedule

TRUE MOTHERS Sea Cinema 2 12:15 PM	TRAGIC JUNGLE Audimax (TU Berlin) 3:15 PM	200 METERS Grand Cinemas Hurghada 6:00 PM	AND TOMORROW THE ENTIRE WORLD Tik Tok Arena 6:30 PM	THE FURNACE Audimax (TU Berlin) 9:15 PM	Short film program 1 SHAKWA - 14 min INFLUENCER - 18 min MARE NOSTRUM - 16 min I AM AFRAID TO FORGET YOUR FACE - 15 min PEEL - 15 min PLAY SCHENGEN - 15 min
WIFE OF A SPY Sea Cinema 1 12:30 PM	IN BETWEEN DYING Sea Cinema 1 3:30 PM	MICA Festival Plaza 6:30 PM	NOTTURNO Sea Cinema 2 6:45 PM	200 METERS Sea Cinema 1 9:15	
DAYS OF CANNIBALISM Sea Cinema 3 2:45 PM	SHORT FILM PROGRAM 1 Sea Cinema 2 3:45 PM	OASIS Audimax (TU Berlin) 6:30 PM	IBRAHIM Sea Cinema 3 9:00 PM	THE TRUFFLE HUNTERS Sea Cinema 2 9:30 PM	
NEVER GONNA SNOW AGAIN Grand Cinemas Hurghada 3:00 PM	33 WORDS ABOUT DESIGN Sea Cinema 3 5:45 PM	THE YEAR OF FURY Sea Cinema 1 6:30 PM	IBRAHIM Grand Cinemas Hurghada 9:00 PM	THE BIG HIT Tik Tok Arena 9:30 PM	

Cinema in Concert: A Salute to Charlie Chaplin



The Festival plaza stage is going to welcome the 3rd edition of the GFF annual event, Cinema in Concert, which pays homage to the timeless works of music that accompanied some of the most memorable films. 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 film, The Kid (1921). The screening will be accompanied by a live orchestra led by famous Egyptian maestro, Ahmed El Saidi, playing the film's score suite live during the show. The film was the

first feature-length by Charlie Chaplin, and was recently restored by the Charlie Chaplin Foundation. Considered as one of the best-known cinematic masterpieces of all time, The Kid will be screened on its 100th anniversary.

The concert will be performed tomorrow from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the Festival Plaza stage.

★ Meet the filmmaker

A Long Breath

Doc.Competition

Guest (s) are attending

Director:

Remi Itani

Sea Cin 3

3pm



Acasa, My Home

Doc. Competition

Guest (s) are attending

Director:

Radu Ciorniciuc

Screenwriter:

Lina Vdovii

Sea Cinema 2

7pm

My Tender Matador

Out of Competition

Guest (s) are attending

Rodrigo Sepulveda

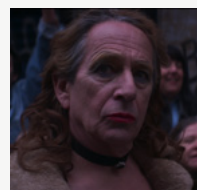
Urzua

Actor:

Leonardo Ortizgris

Sea Cinema2

9:30pm



Hopper/Welles

Special Presentation

Guest (s) are attending

Producer:

Filip Jan Rymsza

Sea Cinema 3

7:45pm



In Between Dying

Narr. Competition

Guest (s) are attending

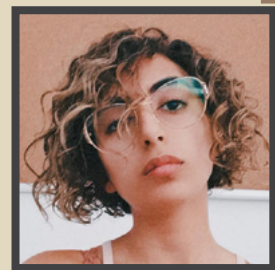
Director :

Hilal Baydarov

TUB

6:00 p.m.

★ Bullet Points



Sondos Tarek
SpringBoard Senior Coordinator

- What was the most challenging part for me this year as we prepared for the 4th edition of GFF? Not knowing whether or not our guests would come this year; trying to understand and find out the safest and most efficient way to get our guests to El Gouna; and dealing with Covid-19 updates everyday, and finding ways around it to reassure our guests that we will get them here no matter how challenging the procedures might be.
- What is the key word that describes how we tackled this challenge? "Patience."
- What do I think now that the 4th edition is upon us? Excited to experience this edition, as it's very different from any other. All of our events this year are very low key and outdoors; we offer some virtual meetings and activities; and many online guests are attending through our virtual app... so, let's see how it goes!
- What would I like to say to GFF audiences and guests? Thank you for being a part of this. Without you, there wouldn't be a platform as special, fruitful and productive as CineGouna Platform.





Mohamed Taymour, producer of I Am Afraid to Forget Your Face Sameh Alaa Tells Our Story

Nahed Nasr

I Am Afraid to Forget Your Face found its way to Cannes, and so did Fifteen (2017), Alaa's previous film, as it went to TIFF. What grants Sameh Alaa's works such international recognition?

Sameh is a great, minimalistic storyteller who tends to tell a very basic story in an incredibly charming way. His treatments are captivating, yet simple and humble. He carries a clear vision and takes decisive actions that save time, energy and money, yet he is also flexible and open to the suggestions and contemplations of others.

What was the most challenging part in the production journey?

We luckily wrapped up in February 2020, so we didn't get affected by the pandemic, except perhaps for the screening dates in Cannes. The most challenging part was the financing, because we were not fully aware of where exactly the budget would be coming from. However, with the help of our dedicated crew members--and other alternative ways of financing--we finally managed to secure the budget within a short time frame.

This is actor Seif Hemeda's first film, and he was incredibly expressive in his performance. How did you help develop his skills for the role?

Seif was the bliss of this film; he approached us through a casting agency and it was obvious that he was a very promising talent. Sameh intensively worked with him on the role, and he has proven to be very flexible. We sort of gambled on his performance, but apparently... we won.

How rewarding was your cooperation with Fig Leaf as an established film production house in the independent scene in Egypt?

Fig Leaf provided all the services they have. Mark Lotfy, the founder, is an extremely flexible and cooperative professional. He believed in Sameh and in the film. The name of Fig Leaf was also very helpful during the phase of seeking financing opportunities for the film.

Would you tell us more about your background as a producer, and how you choose the films that you produce?

I've been working as a professional film producer for almost two years now. Before that, I was an independent film director and produced my own films. I come from an engineering background, which I believe has a lot in common with film production. Having been a film director myself, it is challenging to work on other people's films, but the important thing is how you--as a producer--will develop those works without imposing a director's input onto them. With that said, I will also keep directing my own movies. As for choosing a film to produce, I know that I need to become emotionally invested. The way the story is being told, the storyteller, and the film director are all just as important to me as the essence of the tale itself.

Sameh Alaa is obsessed with the teenage years and the young Egyptian generation. Do you think that, in a way, he is trying to represent your generation?

To me personally, teenagers in Sameh's films are one of the most appealing elements. I do see myself in his characters, and I feel as though Sameh is telling our story. His films are laden with questions and ways of exploring opportunities. Working with him is an adventure of explorations, and yes, for sure, his films do reflect me personally in a sense.

In terms of distribution, marketing and production, how do you view the position of short films in the Egyptian film industry?

The short film market--and not only in Egypt--is not really getting its due justice compared to feature-length films. Shorts need rich distribution opportunities which can definitely help filmmakers make at least a small profit. Finding interested distributors in the region who are willing to take on this responsibility certainly is a vital aspect.

How challenging is it to finance films in Egypt? Also how difficult is it to deal with foreign partners/producers?

It's very challenging! Especially that the field of international funds is extremely competitive. It is not easy to land an international producer or partner and have them on board. And although foreign partners are important to widen your chances of achieving international funding, I can't claim that it's not a risky endeavor in its own right.

What are your next steps as a producer and film director?

I intend to continue producing short films in 2021. In addition, I am currently working with Sameh Alaa on his feature I Can Hear Your Voice, which I am also producing with Mark Lotfy. As a director, I am currently working on my second short fiction.

How do you evaluate having the MENA premiere of I Am Afraid to Forget Your Face at El Gouna Film Festival?

It's a great pleasure to be part of GFF. It's such a powerful, beautiful festival with great worldwide exposure. We were truly happy with the news, and beyond excited to finally premiere the film in Egypt.

Farah Shaer, Director of Shakwa I Would Never Accept Self- Censorship

Ranya Yousif

The story of the movie appears real, like it actually happened...

It is inspired by several poignant true stories that took place in Lebanon, which I then weaved together so as to create Hoda's story. Hoda is a fictional character, but in her journey, we can find the stories and plight of many women. Marital rape and domestic violence are one of many daily issues that women in Lebanon have to face in their struggle towards reclaiming their own bodies from society's ownership through prejudice and unjust laws.

Compared to the lady, the policeman was almost faceless most of the time. What was your intention with this?

The choice of not showing the policemen is a way to keep our focus in place, fully immersing ourselves in Hoda's psyche and inner journey. This choice stresses, in a hyperreal and absurd way, the injustices reflected in the laws and bureaucratic institutions, represented by this "faceless policeman". The laws that are supposedly there to protect and create equality and justice, become tools of inequality and injustice, and a major enabler to Lebanon's patriarchal society.

Women have always been the focus of your films, since the release of your debut short as a director. From I Offered You Pleasure (2011), to the award-winning Obedience (2017) and Faces in the Sun (2019), all the way to Soukoon (2019), and the most recent Shakwa. What are you trying to accomplish?

There are so many untold, yet painful stories that can resonate universally, and that come directly from the struggles of women's daily lives. Although everyone in Lebanon is generally oppressed by the corrupt regime in place, women are even more vulnerable to this regime, due to the fact that they are underrepresented in power, and their voice is subdued by laws that discriminate against their basic human rights and their freedom of choice. From patriarchal custody laws, to withholding their right to pass on citizenship to their children, to legalized marital rape; women are in a constant struggle against this unfavorable social contract. In addition to laws, society puts a lot of pressure on women to conform to



traditions and conservative ideals that are filled with prejudice and inequality, pushing them to lose control over their own bodies and their lives. These pressures are very apparent and the end result is: an overwhelming majority of women don't start off on an equal standing with their male counterparts. Women in Lebanon--and in the Arab world in general--are treated differently than men from the day they are born.

In your point of view, who is to be blamed for violence against women? Do you think is it a religious, or a social phenomenon?

Religions, on a theological level, are not pro violence against women. However, most religions are patriarchal in their dogma and practices, and in many ways, remain as one of the reasons why women find themselves in this situation today. They render such violence somehow "normal" as a way to "discipline" women and "control" them. Unfortunately, most people fail to realize how deeply they have gotten themselves into the trap of the political-religious patriarchal establishment.

Your films tend to tackle what could be viewed as sensitive issues, especially in Lebanon where your stories take place. As a result, you sometimes have a hard time with censorship. What are your expectations regarding Shakwa?

My struggle with censorship started when my undergrad thesis film, *I Offered You Pleasure*, was banned in Lebanon, after premiering in the Clermont-Ferrand Film Festival and the Busan Film Festival. This ban changed my life, but instead of becoming an obstacle, it ironically encouraged me to further pursue using art as a form of cultural resistance. It also made me realize the crucial need of being the clear, untamed and loud voice representing many, especially women, who--like me--feel entrapped in this deeply patriarchal society.



“It is hard for both genders to be able to make films in the Middle East, but for sure social norms and constraints naturally make things harder for women

Shakwa is my fourth short film. However, and since the banning of the first, I refrained from submitting any of the three that followed for the screening permit in Lebanon. Unfortunately, I don't think this film would ever get a clearance to be played there, but I will surely try at some point. The regime wants us to write films that fit within certain norms, and by state censorship, they tame dissenting artistic voices into submission. In a way, they try to force artists into self-censorship, a very dangerous practice that slowly renders us strangers to our own creations. I would never accept self-censorship, and if the film were not to screen in Lebanon, I choose the ban over changing it. My film will still have a life outside of the borders of Lebanon.

What about your next step?

I am currently in the early development stages of writing my first feature narrative film.

Is it harder for a female filmmaker in the Middle East to make movies?

I think it is hard for both genders to be able to make films in the middle east, but for sure it is somehow harder for women. Social norms and constraints naturally make things harder for us, especially in the absence of anti-discrimination labor laws that can affect gender-related issues in the workplace.

How do you evaluate having the world premiere of Shakwa at GFF?

Since its inception four years ago, GFF has proven to be a key film festival in the MENA region, supporting regional talents, both locally and internationally. I'm looking forward to discussing the film with the festival's audience in Egypt, especially knowing the similarities shared by both the Egyptian and Lebanese cultures with regard to the topic of the film.

A Conversation with Ali Fazal

Menna Al-Wassal

On the third day of El Gouna Film Festival, a panel discussion was held to introduce international Indian actor, Ali Fazal. The session was chaired by Ali Fazal and moderated by Raman Chawla, Indian actor Festival Consultant, and Bushra Rozza, Co-founder and Chief Operations and Foreign Relations Officer at GFF.

At the discussion, Fazal emphasized the importance of women's role in any society, and his belief in empowering them and supporting their rights. He explained that it is a concept instilled in him by his mother who believed in women's power, as well as his friend Richa Chadda, who became one of the prominent female activists supporting women's rights.

On the other hand, Bushra expressed her great admiration for the actor's work and his support for women and their rights.

When asked about Egyptian cinema, Fazal admitted that although he doesn't master Arabic language, he is still a big fan of the international Egyptian actor Omar Sharif. He also expressed his happiness and gratitude to attend the El Gouna Film Festival, and his interest in participating in Egyptian films.

Offering an answer to another question, Fazal stated that acting is hard work, and

the more roles he plays in different movies, the more an actor faces challenges, and that only the truly passionate manage to succeed.

Ali Fazal was born in Mumbai in 1986, and earned his degree in economics from Xavier University. His artistic career began when he came across the works of Shakespeare, marking the start of his pursuit of an acting career. Fazal made his Bollywood debut with a special appearance in *3 Idiots* (2009) followed by *Fukrey* (2013) with his friend Richa Chadda, who co-starred in the films. Fazal also starred in the 10-episode series *King of Mirzapur*, which streams exclusively on Amazon Prime. The second season of the show was launched on October 23rd.

As for Hollywood, Fazal starred in the British-American film *Victoria & Abdul* (2017), which depicts the relationship between Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom and her Indian servant Abdul Karim.

Fazal's latest Hollywood film, *Death on the Nile*, will be screened in December 2020. Adapted from Agatha Christie's novel of the same name, the events of the film revolve around a mystery murder that takes place on board of a ship in the Nile River.



"Sisters in Film" Launches at the 4th Edition of GFF!

Rania Yousif

As part of GFF's mission to support the endeavors of empowering women--especially filmmakers--the TUP Garden, one of the festival's venues, witnessed today the announcement of the Women in Films (Rawiyat) initiative launching. The event took place in the presence of some of the initiative founding members: Algerian director Lina Soualem; Egyptian director Kawthar Younes; Palestinian-Jordanian director Dina Nasser; and Algerian-French filmmaker Dorothée-Myriam Kellou, in which they introduced the mission and goals of their initiative.

Director Dina Nasser said that it is very important that El Gouna Film Festival hosts the launching of "Sisters in Film", saying, "We are 9 film directors from the Arab world and diaspora, collaborating to produce films; hopefully, our 9 movies, in collaboration with each other."

Director Lina Soualem expressed her happiness to show her first film as part of the Feature Documentary Competition of El Gouna Film Festival, saying: "I was having problems communicating with festivals, or

choosing the best in terms of sending my films, as I lacked the experience in regards to communicating with other filmmakers in the Arab world. This is exactly what our platform is all about; communication and making information available in a one stop shop."

Egyptian filmmaker Kawthar Younis said that the "Rawiyat" initiative brings female filmmakers together from different countries of the Middle East and North Africa, with the aim of creating a new scene on a regional and global level. "We established our platform, and of course we want other women to join us."

Dorothée-Myriam Kellou concluded the conversation by saying: "Filmmakers need funding and strong support to join festivals and have their work featured. Currently, we have nothing but El Gouna Film Festival, which gives us a great start. However, we have to keep working on more partnerships and proving our presence in other festivals. We try to exist in our way to express ourselves."





A FILMMAKER'S JOURNEY FROM FILM LAB TO VOD

VIRTUAL PANEL DISCUSSION

OCTOBER 26, 16:00- 17:30 @ (ROOM G29)

MODERATED BY:
EMMA SMITH



ANGELICA CANTISANI



RIAYA ABOUL ELA



MERIAM DEGHEDI



MEIKE STATEMA



GARY PHILLIPS



DAVID ZANNONI





WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH FILM

MODERATED BY:
RAYA ABIRACHED



DOROTHEE
MYRIAM KELLOU



MENNA SHALABY



RICHA CHADHA



NAJWA NAJJAR



JIHAN EL TAHRI



OCTOBER 26: 13:00 - 14:30 @ TU BERLIN (AUDIMAX)



Children Matter

On its 3rd Day, CineGouna Discusses the Cause of Refugee Children

Nada Saad

The third day of the fourth edition of El Gouna Film Festival witnessed a panel that was moderated by the well-known media presenter Raya Abirached, with the participation of professor Karim Atassi, representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Egypt and the League of Arab States; ambassador Dr. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh Assistant Secretary General and Head of Social Affairs Sector of the League of Arab States; engineer Noura Selim, Executive Director of the Sawiris Foundation For Social Development; Syrian actress Kinda Alloush; in addition to the virtual participation of Lebanese director Nadine Labaki.

During the discussion, Dr. Abu Ghazaleh said that the League of Arab States is working hard to draw a comprehensive plan to assist refugee children, along with working on a children's parliament to train them on the diplomatic lifestyle.

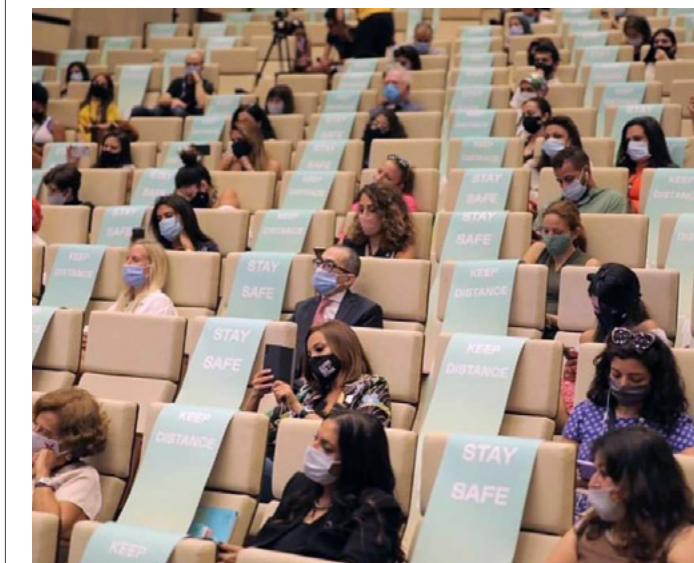
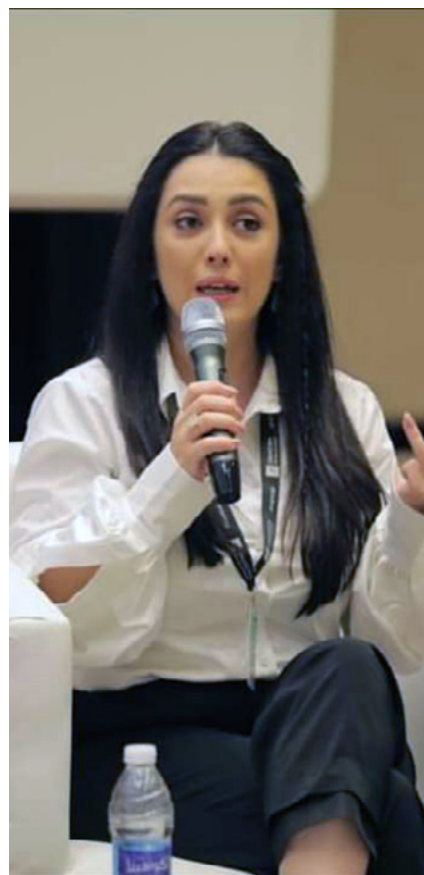
"The Arab Region contains the largest number of refugees, especially Egypt, which hosts more than 85,000 refugee children, 4,000 of which have arrived without their parents, rendering them the most difficult cases, for they have lost everything—the country and the family," explained professor Atassi.

Engineer Noura Selim stated that, "80% of married women face violence from their spouses," adding that violence against women is as important as violence against children, since it inevitably leads to familial dysfunction. She also added that the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development collaborates with several NGOs with aims to support children through the aid of specialized experts, calling for the child's right to play and feel safe.

Syrian actress Kinda Alloush highlighted the importance of using social media to raise awareness about the cause of refugee children, urging the UN to raise further awareness on the idea of volunteer work, especially amongst younger generations.

Director Nadine Labaki concluded the panel discussion by highlighting the importance of cinema as a tool to shed light on the issue of violence against women and children.

A protocol was signed between the UNHCR and GFF to raise awareness on the refugee cause, pledging to utilize all El Gouna Film Festival platforms to help engage high-profile supporters and goodwill ambassadors from all over the world.



On the Sidelines of the 4th Edition of El Gouna Film Festival:

iProductions Announces the Production of a Series of 5 Novels by Naguib Mahfouz

Rania Youssef

iProductions announced yesterday evening, on the sidelines of the El Gouna Film Festival, its cooperation with director Tamer Mohsen and screenwriter Maryam Naoum to produce a new series. The project merges five of Naguib Mahfouz's most famous novels into one series under the title «Cairo» to be ready for showing in 2022.

The series, which will be based on the novels of Cairo Modern; The Thief and the Dogs; The Road; Adrift on the Nile; and Karnak, consists of several seasons, with an average of 8 episodes per season, and will be aired on one of the prominent streaming platforms.

The meeting was attended by iProductions CEO, Ahmed Fahmy; engineer Naguib Sawiris; actress Bushra Rozza; screenwriter Mariam Naoum; director Tamer Mohsen; director Amr Salama; director of El Gouna Film Festival, Intishal Al Timimi; among other stars.



★ Bullet Points



Siza Zayed,
CineGouna Bridge Manager

- Wthe 4th edition of GFF? Trying to have a programmer who is not affected by the limitations of Covid-19.
- What is the key word that describes how we tackled this challenge? "Physical & Virtual."
- What do I think now that the 4th edition is upon us? I feel so proud that GFF happened, regardless of the challenges.
- What would I like to say to GFF audiences and guests? I would like to welcome all the guests and audiences of GFF, and encourage them to enjoy attending an interesting wide selection of CineGouna Bridge sessions, masterclasses and panels... and to definitely have a good time at GFF!

PITCH REALIZATION MASTER CLASS BY NETFLIX BY

CHRISTOPHER MACK

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.,
TU BERLIN (AUDIMAX) (VIRTUAL)

