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January 11 to February 15, 1996

# ARABIAN SIGHTS

Contemporary Arab Cinema

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The Washington, DC International Film Festival  
P.O. Box 21396  
Washington, DC 20009

# ARABIAN SIGHTS

## Contemporary Arab Cinema

Major Sponsors

Center for the Study of the Global South, The American University  
Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University

presented by

The Washington, DC  
International Film Festival

**S**ome of the most evocative and exciting cinema in the world today is emanating from the Arab World. The rich historical, cultural, social and political dynamics in this region are reflected in a unique tradition of widely acknowledged filmmaking.

*Arabian Sights* brings together fine examples of recent Arab cinema. While there is no single form or style of cinema from this region, underlying unity does exist. This series provides insight into cultures where filmmaking requires efforts of almost heroic proportions. Yet somehow, with all the difficulties, there are new films, good films, turning up all the time. Arab cinema is a progressive and continuously evolving art form, with each new film expressing distinct dimensions of Arab reality and creativity.

Admission is \$5.00 per person for each screening (opening night \$10 per person).

**Location:** All films will be shown at the Cineplex Odeon Foundry Theatres, 1055 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW (Georgetown, off M Street between 30th and 31st Streets)

**For more information on this series call 202/274-6810**

This series is also sponsored by: The League of Arab States, Embassy of Algeria, National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce, Arab American Cultural Foundation, Arab Film Distribution, Cineplex Odeon Theatres and The Carey Winston Company.

Support was provided by the Humanities Council of Washington, DC, a private, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The Official Radio Station of Filmfest DC

**WAMU 88.5**

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

Algeria

### Bab El-Oued City

Thursday, January 11th 6:30 pm  
Cineplex Odeon Foundry Theatre



An Opening Night reception hosted by the Embassy of Algeria will immediately follow the screening in the theatre atrium (\$10 ticket). RSVP at 202-274-6810 by January 5th.

(1994, Merzak Allouache, 93 minutes) One of the most noted recent productions from the Arab World and winner of the international critics' prize at Cannes, this film takes place in Algiers, 1988, not long after the October riots. Young Boualem works nights in a bakery and sleeps during the day. While he sleeps, the message of Said's Islamic fundamentalist movement resounds from fifteen loudspeakers throughout the working-class district.

One night Boualem can no longer bear the noise and he tears one of the loudspeakers from the roof and throws it into the sea. This leads Said to take reprisals.

**Special guest speaker: Osman Bencherif, Ambassador of Algeria**

Morocco

### A Door to the Sky

Thursday, January 18th 6:30 pm  
Cineplex Odeon Foundry Theatre

(1988, Farida Ben Lyazid, 107 minutes) Like a modern-day mystical tale, this film traces the enlightenment of a young westernized Moroccan woman caught between alien modernity and patriarchal tradition. Returning from France after the death of her father, Nadia encounters a woman Sufi who introduces her to the mystical path. After a bitter inheritance struggle with her brother, Nadia turns the family home into a Sufi hospice for women. Through the return to this "other" Islam, she finds community, identity and love.

**Guest speaker: Mohammed Cherkaoui, Voice of America, ANA Television**

Egypt

### The Emigrant

Thursday, January 25th 6:30 pm  
Cineplex Odeon Foundry Theatre

(1994, Youssef Chahine, 129 minutes) Youssef Chahine is one of Egypt's most famous and accomplished filmmakers. His latest work is set three thousand years ago. Ram, son of an impoverished tribe living in an arid land, dreams of changing his way of life. He had long understood that the precarious day-to-day existence of his tribe had to change. Ram felt sure that the answer lay in Pharaonic Egypt, then the center of civilization. He manages to reach Egypt, where his real test begins.

**Guest speaker: Ambassador Clovis Maksoud, Director of the Center for the Study of the Global South, The American University**



Lebanon

### Time Has Come

Thursday, February 1st 6:30 pm  
Cineplex Odeon Foundry Theatre

(1994, Jean-Claude Codsì, 85 minutes) Two Lebanese who had fled their homeland during the war, now decide to return. He's a failed musician and she's a bourgeoisie who's found her place in Paris society. They meet on the boat to Lebanon. The film chronicles their rediscovery of their country and their reconciliation with the past.

**Guest speaker: Ambassador Clovis Maksoud, Director of the Center for the Study of the Global South, The American University**



Syria

### The Extras

Thursday, February 8th 6:30 pm  
Cineplex Odeon Foundry Theatre

(1993, Nabil Maleh, 105 minutes) Salem and Nada are lovers but life and their

work has kept them apart or reduced to furtive encounters. Now, after eight months of an affair conducted in stealth and under decidedly unromantic conditions, the lovers are about to have the use of Salem's friend's private apartment. Salem and Nada look forward to their next meeting, but the outside world is not so easily kept outside and the privacy proves less conducive to love than they had imagined. The rendez-vous alters their relationship in ways they hardly anticipated. Noted Syrian filmmaker, Nabil Maleh, has over 30 feature films to his credit.

**Guest speaker: Dr. Halim Barakat, Research Professor, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University**

Tunisia

### The Magic

Thursday, February 15th 6:30 pm  
Cineplex Odeon Foundry Theatre

(1994, Azdine Fazai, 90 minutes) A ten-year-old boy is left at home in his village while his parents go to France in search of work. Until they send for him, he finds himself free to do as he pleases. That is until the day he makes a magic box he considers to be his cinema.

Shown with:

Sudan

### Insan

(1994, Ibrahim Shaddad, 26 minutes) The story of a shepherd from the south of Sudan who leaves his village to escape poverty and boredom and settles in a nearby town. Ironically, the desire to escape the town comes upon him very soon, but it is difficult for him to do so...

**Guest speakers: Barbara Stowasser, Director, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University and Zohra Ben Hamida, Tunisian Information Office**

