East Coast Premiere

Around the Pink House

Auteur de la maison rose

Saturday, September 23rd, 9:15 pm
Saturday, September 24th, 6:30 pm

(1999, Lebanon/France/Canada; Joana Hadjithomas, Khalid Jorige, 92 min.) The war is over in Lebanon, and in the midst of an economic boom, refugees from war in Beirut become refugees from reconstruction in this poignantly comic parable. In the fictional quartier of Matha’s stands an old mansion – the “Pink House” – once elegant, now shell-scared ruin. The Nevada and Adamî families found refuge during the war. When a real estate developer announces his plans to get the house and turn it into a commercial center, keeping the façade as a token remnant – neighborhood citizens start to show as clearly as the cracks in the walls. A TV reporter quietly encourages squeezing fractions to stage their conflicts for the camera. Portraits, petitions, militias and money all prove inadequate substitutes for memories and irrefutable defenses against change.

American Premiere

Les siestes grenadine

Friday, September 29th, 6:30 pm
Sunday, October 1st, 8:30 pm

(1999, Tunisia/France/Belgium; Mahnoud Ben Mahmoud, 92 min.) Tunisian by nationality but raised in Paris and Dakar, re-enchanting Souffia feels half-European and half-African. Souffia arrives in Tunis steeped in her African heritage... much to the annoyance of her father, Wahid Haydar, who wants her to be “Tunisian born and bred” through and through. But the country has changed considerably during their absence, and Wahid soon finds himself caught up against shady encounters and treason. His daughter, meanwhile, finds herself caged in and undertakes a difficult but determined battle to impose her individuality in a Tunisia society. An engrossing story punctuated by soaring African music and dance sequences.

Washington, DC Premiere

The City

El Medina

With Special Guest Director Noury Nasrallah

Friday, September 22nd, 8:30 pm
Saturday, September 23rd, 6:30 pm

(1999, Egypt/France; Noury Nasrallah, 105 min.) An entertaining and elegant story of Ali, a hand- some, aspiring young actor convalescing with his family and friends in Cairo. Co-written by Claire Denis, the celebrated French filmmaker, El Medina is the classic narrative of someone who wants to break out of a narrow world, even if his home is in the colorful, hostile-and-beautiful Cairo. Moving to Paris, Ali joins the twilight community of illegal Arab immigrants. With a debt owed to his mentor, internationally acclaimed filmmaker Youssef Chahine, Nasrallah has his characters break into exuberant song and dance numbers, reminiscent of American musicals.

Discuss immediately follows both screenings with the film’s directors, Noury Nasrallah. * Reception ($25.00 per person) with Director Noury Nasrallah prior to September 22nd screening. Sponsored by Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP). Call 202-223-3677 for reception tickets.

Living in Paradise

Vivre au paradis

Friday, September 22nd, 6:30 pm
Sunday, September 24th, 8:30 pm

(1999, Algeria/France/Belgium/Norway; Bourlenn Guendouiz, 105 min.) Set in a shantytown near Paris in the early 1960s, the Algerian War was creating tensions among the Arab community in France. The story centers on a husband, Ladjal, who works himself to the bone to buy an apartment for his family while his wife turns to political activism. As the ironic title suggests, this life is far from paradise; high winds blow the roofs off the houses, while racists and unsympathetic police make life difficult for these immigrant workers.

Date Wine

Arak El-Balab

Friday, September 29th, 8:30 pm
Saturday, September 30th, 6:30 pm

(1998, Egypt, Rabwa El-Kashof, 110 min.) This rich parable is filled with life, music and myth. In a small oasis surrounded by palm trees in an upper Egyptian village, a bearded caravanserai ghéez and here all the old men away in search of wealth. Ahmed, on the threshold of adolescence, insists on staying behind to fulfill his own dream to climb the highest palm tree in his oasis village and use its dates to make a wine that could restore the health of his grandfather. The women gradually start to regard Ahmed as the man of the village, and although reluctant at first, Ahmed grows into this role. When the men finally return, they realize that everything has changed in their absence.

Women’s Wiles

Keid Elais

Saturday, September 30th, 9:00 pm
Sunday, October 1st, 6:30 pm

(1999, Morocco, Farida Benyazid, 50 min.) In this delightful tale originally from Andalusia, Lalla Yacha, the daughter of a rich merchant, one day encounters the King’s son while on her terrace. This encounter launches a verbal sparring match, which in time is followed by a number of incredible acts the likes of which can only be matched in Arabian Nights. Lalla Yacha makes the Prince jump through hoops of emotion, stirring his interest and ultimately earning his respect. This is a tale about the battle of the sexes, full of poignancy, imagination and intelligence.
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<th>Admission</th>
<th>Special thanks to:</th>
<th>For more information on</th>
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<tr>
<td>$8.00 per person for each screening.</td>
<td>LOEWS CINEPLEX ENTERTAINMENT</td>
<td>Arabian Sights 2000</td>
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<td>Tickets for any film in the series may be</td>
<td>UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY</td>
<td>call</td>
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<tr>
<td>purchased at the theater starting one hour</td>
<td>WAMU 88.5 FM</td>
<td>202-724-5613</td>
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<td>before the first show.</td>
<td>AMERICAN UNIVERSITY RADIO</td>
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<td>The Official Radio Station of Filmfest DC</td>
<td><a href="http://www.filmfestdc.org">www.filmfestdc.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>Festival Pass</strong></td>
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<td>Tickets for the six films will be available</td>
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**Location**

All films will be shown at the Loews Cineplex Foundry Theaters, 1055 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW (Georgetown, off M Street between 30th and 31st Streets)

Paid parking is available in the building along 30th Street and the parking lot across from the theatre.

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**Contemporary Arab Cinema**

September 22 – October 1, 2000