

Arab Films and Docs to Be Showcased at Montpellier Film Festival's Industry Strand (EXCLUSIVE)

By Nick Vivarelli ▾



Courtesy Cinemed

The Montpellier Mediterranean Film Festival's Cinema industry section has announced the 10 film and doc projects from a wide range of Arab countries. These will soon be unveiled to prospective partners under the Cinemed and Aflamuna Professional Encounters initiative in tandem with Beirut-based cultural nonprofit Aflamuna.

The program, supported by France's National Film Board CNC, offers feature film professionals from Arab countries the opportunity to meet French and international professionals and decision-makers to stimulate co-productions and other forms of collaboration.

Emerging directors and producers from Egypt, Iraq, Sudan, Palestine, Lebanon, Yemen and Morocco will take part in the Cinemed Meetings Oct.22-23 in Montpellier, France.

“For this third edition of Cinemed and Aflamuna Professional Encounters, we are more than confident of the relevance of our collaboration with Aflamuna,” said Montpellier fest director Christophe Leparc in a statement. Leparc added that the initiative has been bearing fruit with at least three projects signed with a French co-producer they met during the Cinemed encounters.

Below, find the Cinemed and Aflamuna selected projects and synopses.

**“Al-Madeeneh,” 2008 by Yousef Assabahi, director –
Alaa Amer, producer (Yemen) – Fiction**

In the old town of Al-Madeeneh, Fuad, the last construction worker of a dying craft, faces debt and homelessness while townspeople chase hidden riches. Navigating hope and despair, Fuad confronts his town’s harsh realities.

**“Before Now, Later,” by Karim Kassem, director
(Lebanon) – Docu-fiction**

In Beirut, a father leaves his car outside a hospital he has been visiting and gets a parking ticket. As he attempts to pay it, he realizes there is no way to do so.

**“My Dream to Fly,” by Asmaa Gamal Gafrie, director
and producer – Rec & Roll (Egypt) – Documentary**

Mansour, a frail 14-year-old boy, dreams of flying by developing his talent from lifting small bikes to motorcycles, emulating and joining the young men in his neighborhood on the outskirts of Cairo, including 23-year-old Osama.

**“Noble,” by Leyna Amly, director – Youssra Raouf,
producer – Abel Aflam (Morocco) – Documentary**

After several failed attempts to reach Europe, Souleymane discovers permaculture in Morocco. Whilst he is realizing that he has everything he needs to achieve a successful life in Africa, his younger brother drowns trying to cross the Mediterranean.

**“Red Bus in Baghdad,” by Ali Mohammed Saeed,
director – Mohammed Alghadhban, producer – Rola
Productions (Iraq/KSA/USA) – Fiction**

After Muthanna, a 28-year-old bus driver, adopts five hours journey on the night of Saddam Hussein’s execution to rescue his brothers, he crosses into a perilous red zone finding himself caught in the sectarian conflicts between the militia Sunni leaders and Shiite, who forced him to choose between the lives of his kidnapped brothers of his father.

**“Rock, Paper, Sea,” by Randa Ali, director – Norah El
Khateeb, producer – Cats Films and Sifsafa (Egypt)
– Fiction/Animation**

When an 11-year-old's father doesn't come home for the summer, she embarks on a journey to uncover the mystery behind his absence as she believes it's all part of a surprise he prepared for her upcoming birthday.

**“Sabary,” by Ahmed Shams Nagm Eldin, director –
Alyaa Musa, producer (Sudan) – Fiction**

Oshaik is bullied and challenged to perform like the Beja warriors of the ancient east of Sudan. He follows Dawod, a retired Nuba wrestler, to the far Mountains of west Sudan uncovering the wisdom of the holistic traditions of Nuba wrestling.

**“Water Night,” by Mohanad Salahat, director –
Kassandra Smith, producer – Sunbird films
(Palestine/Sweden) – Documentary**

Water Nights is the story of a big Palestinian family, the directors family, living in a small countryside town called Talluza and their daily and never-ending struggle with the supply of water in the shadow of an escalating occupation and haunting climate change.

Read More About: Arab cinema, Montpellier Film Festival
