

۲۰۲۵ یونیو ۲۰ – ۲۰ JUNE 20-29 2025



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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE



Cinema Studies Institute

WORKMAN ARTS

Toronto Arab Film (TAF) is a non-profit organization bringing films from and about the Arab world to Toronto audiences. TAF are the organizers of the annual Toronto Arab Film Festival (TAFF).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Land Acknowledgment	2
TAF Board // Team // Screeners	3
Artistic Director Welcome	4
Board of Directors Welcome	5
Jury & Awards	6
"How to Festival": Tickets, Venues, Online Screenings	; 7
2025 Festival Schedule	8
IN PERSON Features & Shorts	10
VIRTUAL Features & Shorts	24
Shabaka	28
Ways to Support & Contact	29

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Toronto Arab Film Festival acknowledges that we live and work on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and that it is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

We are forever grateful to be able to live and work on this land. We invite you to reflect more on this by evaluating your relationship with and contribution to the land we are on today and its peoples.

Learn more on the land you are on by visiting native-land.ca

2025 TAF BOARD

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2025 TAF TEAM

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KAREN HABIB MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

ALIAH SALIH SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR

2025 FESTIVAL SCREENERS

FATEMA NIAZY Ghalia Saheb Mona Maarabani NOOR GAITH HUSSAIN DAWWAS PAULA SAHYOUN Youmna Abdelkawy Youssef Mutawe Mona Awwad Nassim Abu Sarari

A MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to the 6th annual Toronto Arab Film Festival (TAFF).

More than 50 filmmakers in this year's Festival invite you to share in their search for love, for meaning and for place. Across time and space, these films confront the most challenging themes, subjects and conversations, with wit, humour, and introspection. We're led through these films by protagonists who are not simply familiar and reactionary but marvellous and heroic. Each year, I am awestruck by the films' originality and range and this year is no exception.

In an era increasingly shaped by AI, it is becoming increasingly pertinent to gather communally to share and affirm our experiences in safe and celebratory spaces. Despite threats of silencing and censorship, in addition to the threatened film going experience, cinema perseveres. This resilience is a testament to the passion, courage, determination, and vision of filmmakers who continue to create with purpose and pride.

The Toronto Arab Film Festival is a celebration created by and for our community. It is essential that we continue to claim our agency in building, sustaining, and nurturing spaces like this one.

We are profoundly honoured and elated to provide this platform for Arab artists and this space for all audiences and allies. Whether you are attending alone or with loved ones, join us in savouring the warm embrace of cinema. We look forward to celebrating with you at the Festival.

ROLL'A TAHIR Co-founder & Artistic Director

A MESSAGE FROM TAF BOARD

On behalf of the Board of Directors, welcome to the 6th annual Toronto Arab Film Festival!

As a proud member of the board, it is an honour to witness how the Festival continues to grow. At a time when Arab narratives are often simplified, our mission to spearhead a significant, positive shift in the image of the Arab world feels more urgent than ever.

Across dozens of films and events, this year's program spans geographies, dialects, and genres and is an intentional celebration of the many ways of being Arab. These stories remind us that our cultures are not monolithic, but expansive and complex.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the staff, volunteers, sponsors, and supporters whose efforts and dedication make this festival possible. And to you, our audience: thank you. Whether you are joining us for the first time or returning as a long-time supporter, we are grateful you have chosen to be part of our mission. Together, you are helping us build not only our Festival but a bridge between the Arab and non-Arab community.

ANTHONY YOUSSEF Member of the Board



JURY MEMBERS

KINANA ISSA LITERARY AND SCREENWRITER, ARTIST, & MINDFULNESS COACH. LADAN M. SIAD PRODUCER MAISSA HOURI ACTOR & FILMMAKER MARWA SIAM-ABDOU NATIONAL OUTREACH MANAGER, DIRECTORS GUILD AISHA EVELYNA ACTOR & FILMMAKER DANA SALAMA DESIGNER & RESEARCHER

AWARDS

Awards are presented with a cash prize and a trophy designed by Toronto-based contemporary ceramic artist Habiba El Sayed.

NAKHEEL JURY AWARD FOR BEST FEATURE FILM JUTHOUR JURY AWARD FOR BEST SHORT FILM QAYQUB JURY AWARD FOR BEST CANADIAN SHORT FILM YAMAMA AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD FOR BEST SHORT FILM

HOW TO FESTIVAL

Please visit **arabfilm.ca** for tickets, and the most up-to-date festival info.

SINGLE TICKETS: \$15 early bird // \$20 regular

PASSES INFO: taf25.eventive.org/passes/buy

Orouba: All Festival Pass \$100 Mezze: 5-Film Pass \$60 Sukkar: Virtual All-Access Pass \$45

This year our audiences can:

O ATTEND IN PERSON

VENUES: Please refer to your ticket for your screening or event's date, time, and location.

FILM SCREENINGS – FRIDAY JUNE 20 – SUN JUNE 29

INNIS TOWN HALL (ITH) 2 SUSSEX AVE. CINECYCLE (CC) 129 SPADINA AVE. The Revue cinema 400 roncesvalles ave.

OPENING NIGHT SOCIAL - FRI JUNE 20 (9 PM) >> ROYAL LOUNGE 720 SPADINA AVE.

WORKSHOPS – SAT JUNE 21 (11 AM – GRANT WRITING), SUN JUNE 22 (11 AM – BUDGETING) & (12:30 PM – MEET & GREET) >> CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION (CSI) 720 BATHURST ST.

CLOSING NIGHT SOCIAL – SUN JUNE 20, 9 PM >> DARNA 413 RONCESVALLES AVE.

WATCH ONLINE

FILMS ARE AVAILABLE ON DEMAND FROM: Thursday, June 19 6PM Until Sunday, June 29 11:59 PM

Due to **geoblocking**, virtual films are only made available in Canada. Before purchasing tickets for virtual screenings, please check the location restrictions for the film you would like to see.

Royal Lounge 720 Spadina Ave

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION (CSI 720 BATHURST ST.

CINECYCLE (CC) 129 SPADINA AVE

THE REVUE CINEMA 400 RONCESVALLES AVE

DARNA 413 RONCESVALLES AVE

TAFF 2025 FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

FRIDAY JUNE 20

7 PM - BACK TO ALEXANDRIA - *Tamer Ruggli* (ITH) 9 PM - OPENING NIGHT SOCIAL (ROYAL)

SATURDAY JUNE 21

11 AM - GRANT WRITING FOR ARTS COUNCILS WORKSHOP (CSI)

4 PM – LA FIN D'AMOUR? (ITH) A WEDDING DAY – Achraf Ajraoui

A WEUDING DAY - Achraf Ajraoui EBB & FLOW - Nay Tabbara A CITY WITHOUT LOVE - Mostafa Gerbeii UMM SALAMA THE MATCHMAKER - Mariam Alawadhi CATSAROS - Muhammad El Hadidi STITCHES - Deena Alsaweer

7PM - AZRÉ - Mira Shaib (ITH)

SUNDAY JUNE 22

11 AM - CRAFTING YOUR BUDGET WORKSHOP (CSI)

12:30 PM - INDUSTRY MEET & GREET (CSI)

- 2 PM GUERILLA GRIEVING (ITH) MANGO – Randa Ali EID – Rame Ibrahim MAWTINI – Fateema Al-Hamaydeh Miller I LAY FOR YOU TO SLEEP – Ali Al Hajri
- 4 PM PERFUMED WITH MINT Muhammad Hamdy (ITH)
- 7 PM SEEKING HAVEN FOR MR. RAMBO Khaled Mansour (ITH) SOFT COOS OF FORGOTTEN NEIGHBORS – Mariam Atallah ARE YOU A RABBIT? – Hatem Emam

MONDAY JUNE 23

7 PM - WHERE THE WIND COMES FROM - Amel Guellaty - (ITH)

WEDNESDAY JUNE 25

7 PM – RESURRECTION (CC) IHALA – Mohamed Al Mubarak ELEFSINA NOTRE AMOUR – Mehdi Fleifel ABGAD HAWAZ – Robin Riad APOLEON – Amir Youssef SISTER MOTHER LOVER CHILD – Nadia Shihab

8 PM - COMMUNITY GATHERING - (ROYAL)



7 PM - AÏCHA - Mehdi Barsaoui (ITH)

SATURDAY JUNE 28

2 PM - PLACE(UN)MAKING (ITH)

I'LL GET BACK TO YOU - Uday Jubeh BAQ'A THE OPEN VALLEY - Youssef Mutawe DOUBLE TROUBLE - Ahmed Essam soliman CINEMA AL-AMAL - Rana Abushkhaidem THE TREE OF HELL - Raed Zeno DAWN EVERY DAY - Amir Youssef WHO LOVES THE SUN - Arshia Shakiba

4 PM – DYSFUNCTIONAL DESTINIES (ITH)

BLOOD TIES - Hakim Atoui THE HEARSE - Ahmed Alnasser RETRO - Rami Jarboui IF THE SUN DROWNED INTO AN OCEAN OF CLOUDS - Wissam Charaf MÖBIUS LOOP - Lee Peterkin

7 PM – BARZAKH / THE DYING OF THE LIGHT – Kays Mejri (ITH) 🚚

SUNDAY JUNE 29

4 PM - DIS/ENCHANTMENT (REVUE)

WARDAH - Rahmeh Alshmmas MILK BROTHERS - Kenza Tazi THE CHANT - May Ghouti FARIHA - Badr Yousef MALIKA - Maram Taibah BOUGAINVILLAEA - Yasir Faiz

7 PM - CO-EXISTENCE, MY ASS - Amber Fares (REVUE)

9 PM - CLOSING NIGHT SOCIAL (DARNA)

WATCH ONLINE: Available June 20–29 anywhere in Canada

VIRTUAL FEATURES

MY MEMORY IS FULL OF GHOSTS - Anas Zawahri

THIS JUNGO LIFE - David Fedele

THE RESILIENCE OF THE POPPY - Mona Hammoud

MONUMENTING - Anahi Alviso-Marino (CO-PRESENTER: IMAGES FILM FESTIVAL)

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING - Oday Rasheed

VIRTUAL SHORTS

NINE TWELVE - Hussein Hammouda

A POSTERIORI SHORTS

I LOVE YOU MORE - Nour Alkheder ON THE EDGE OF LIFE, I SAW A FILM - Razan Hassan MY REASON FOR BEING - Julie Kebbi BLOOD LIKE WATER - Dima Hamdan

INCONCEIVABLE SHORTS

YA HANOUNI - Lyna Tadount, Sofian Chouaib THE NIGHT OF ABED - Anis Djaad TALISMAN - Karar Hayder

OPENING FEATURE



BACK TO ALEXANDRIA - Tamer Ruggli

Switzerland, Egypt, France, Qatar (90 minutes) Drama // Arabic + French

Swiss-based psychotherapist, who returns to Egypt after a 20-year estrangement from her aristocratic mother, Fairouz (Fanny Ardant), now on her deathbed. Embarking on a journey from Cairo to Alexandria, Sue confronts haunting memories and unresolved trauma, navigating a landscape filled with both literal and metaphorical ghosts. This introspective odyssey allows her to reconcile with her past, leading to a profound personal transformation.

CO-PRESENTED BY MAPLE ARTS



JOIN US AFTER THE SCREENING FOR OUR OPENING NIGHT SOCIAL FRI JUNE 20 (9 PM) - ROYAL LOUNGE: 720 SPADINA AVE.



AZRÉ - Mira Shaib Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Egypt (93 minutes) Comedy-Drama // Arabic

Arzé, a struggling single mother in Beirut, supports her family by selling homemade pies with help from her teenage son who delivers them on foot. When she pawns her sister's bracelet to buy a delivery scooter that's soon stolen, Arzé and Kinan embark on a wild journey through the turbulent but vibrant, multiethnic Levantine capital in pursuit of the pilfered moped.



PERFUMED WITH MINT - *Muhammad Hamdy* Egypt, Qatar, Tunisia, France (111 minutes) Drama // Arabic

Bahaa, a 30-year-old doctor, encounters his old friend Mahdy, who suffers from a peculiar condition—mint leaves sprout from his body during moments of fear or anxiety. As the mint's aroma attracts danger, the two friends find themselves pursued through the decaying streets of their unnamed Egyptian city. Their journey leads them to confront haunting memories and estranged companions, all marked by the pervasive scent of mint.



SEEKING HAVEN FOR MR.RAMBO - Khaled Mansour

Egypt (102 minutes) Drama // Arabic

The story of Hassan and his dog, Rambo, as they go on a quest to save Rambo from Hassan's vengeful landlord, whom the dog attacked. On his journey through Cairo to find a safe haven for Rambo, Hassan is forced to confront the fears of his past and rediscovers himself.

THIS FILM WILL BE SCREENED ALONGSIDE THE SHORTS:



SOFT COOS OF FORGOTTEN NEIGHBORS - Mariam Atallah Egypt, (10 mins) Drama

In the suburbs of Cairo, Ahmed, a former groundskeeper,

hides in the second-floor pigeon loft of his unaware employer. As they both care for the pigeons, an inevitable confrontation reveals deep class tensions and Ahmed's yearning for dignity and recognition.



ARE YOU A RABBIT? – Hatem Emam Egypt (9 mins) Experimental

When an art teacher is abruptly dismissed, a quiet trip to buy rabbits for dinner, after a heartfelt exchange with his son, unravels into a haunting meditation on survival.

CO-PRESENTED BY CANADIAN ARAB INSTITUTE



CANADIAN ARAB INSTITUTE | INSTITUT CANADO-ARABE



WHERE THE WIND COMES FROM - Amel Guellaty Tunisia, Qatar, France (99 minutes) Comedy-Drama // Tunisian Arabic

A comedic tribute to Tunisia's youth, the film follows 19-year-old rebel Alyssa and her introverted friend Mehdi as they use imagination to escape their bleak reality. When a contest offers a real chance to break free, they set off on a daring road trip through southern Tunisia, chasing hope against all odds.



BARZAKH / THE DYING OF THE LIGHT - Kays Mejri

Tunisia (84 minutes) Drama, Mystery, Horror // Arabic Content warning: violence, gore, disturbing imagery

The film follows Farah, a young woman who travels to her family's rural farm to care for her ailing uncle, Rachid, the last of her surviving relatives. Upon her arrival, Farah begins experiencing unsettling psychic visions and encounters a series of mysterious events that challenge her understanding of reality. As she delves deeper into the enigma surrounding her uncle's illness, Farah is compelled to confront her own destiny and the dark forces at play.

CO-PRESENTED BY BLOOD IN THE SNOW





AÏCHA - Mehdi Barsaoui

Tunisia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, France, Italy (123 minutes) Drama, Thriller // Arabic

Aya, a young woman from southern Tunisia fakes her death after a bus accident to start a new life in Tunis. Her newfound freedom is jeopardized when she witnesses police misconduct, forcing her to navigate a dangerous path in search of justice and identity.

CO-PRESENTED BY WIFT+



CLOSING FEATURE



CO-EXISTENCE, MY ASS - *Amber Fares* USA, France, (95 mins) Documentary

A bold documentary following Israeli activist-comedian Noam Shuster Eliassi as she builds a comedy show by the same name. Shot over five tumultuous years, the film traces Noam's journey in tandem with the region's steady deterioration.

Raised in a bilingual Israeli-Palestinian village—the only intentionally integrated community in the country—Noam grows disillusioned with traditional peace activism. She pivots to stand-up and quickly attracts attention across the Middle East. But as her star rises, everything around her falls apart. With biting, warm satire, Noam pushes her audiences to face difficult truths—and offers an inspiring model for the future.

CO-PRESENTED BY DOCUMENTARY ORGANIZATION OF CANADA

LA FIN D'AMOUR? SHORTS





A WEDDING DAY - Achraf Ajraoui France (23 mins) - FR

Jamel's summer is turned upside down when this beach Don Juan learns that his ex is getting married...

EBB & FLOW - Nay Tabbara

Lebanon (18 mins) Drama, Coming of Age - ARA Determined to have her first kiss, Loulwa defies her tumultuous world in search of normalcy. As she braves the streets of Beirut in pursuit of her sexual awakening, she finds herself taking an instant leap into adulthood when her world erupts into a redefined "normal".



UMM SALAMA THE MATCHMAKER - Mariam Alawadhi UAE (11 mins) - ARA

As Umm Salama finally persuades her stubborn daughter Salama to consider marriage, she embarks on a journey to find the perfect suitor for her daughter. However, as Salama starts considering potential suitors, Umm Salama's conflicting emotions cloud her judgment, leading to unexpected outcomes.



CATSAROS - *Muhammad El Hadidi* Egypt (22 mins) Drama, Fantasy - ARA

A lonely young man, haunted by a sense of displacement in the modern world, discovers a mysterious connection to a woman from the 1940's through an old telephone in an antique shop, leading him on a journey through time and emotions that redefines his understanding of love and belonging.



STITCHES - Deena Alsaweer Canada (12 mins) - ENG

A joyful dressmaker and his feisty niece defy a wedding dress ban by smuggling them as shisha (hookah) packing paper, but the harsh realities of war disrupt their plans.

displacement in a mysterious con the 1940's throu

GUERILLA GRIEVING SHORTS



MANGO - Randa Ali

Egypt (23 mins) Drama, Fiction - ARA/ENG During a hot August in Cairo, Nadia struggles to mourn her estranged father and his mango tree.



EID - Rame Ibrahim Canada, Palestine (12 mins) - ARA

A Palestinian grandmother turns grief into ritual when her grandson is buried in exile, and border restrictions persist even in death.



MAWTINI -Fateema Al-Hamaydeh Miller Canada (19 mins) Drama - ARA/ENG

Together Nawal, a young Palestinian woman, and Tanya, an older Indigenous woman, start a guerrilla garden on the lawn of their apartment building and battle middle management to make it to harvest.



I LAY FOR YOU TO SLEEP - Ali Al Hajri Qatar (14 mins)

Two immigrant parents meet at their son's Ahmed school to discuss his misbehaviour with the principal just to find out that they are inviting them to talk about their journey from their home countries.

CO-PRESENTED BY REELWORLD



RESURRECTION SHORTS





IHALA - Mohamed Al Mubarak Bahrain (16 mins) Experimental - ARA

A mystic vessel conjures echoes of its past, embodying the spiritual, sonic, and ancestral weight of a fading tradition.

ELEFSINA NOTRE AMOUR - *Mehdi Fleifel Greece (9 mins) Experimental*

Rusted shipwrecks and industrial ruins off Elefsina's coast become timeless monuments, echoing forgotten pasts and questioning what memory we choose to preserve.



ABGAD HAWAZ - Robin Riad Canada (1:30 mins) Experimental Learn how to pronounce the Arabic alphabet in 28 easy steps!



APOLEON - Amir Youssef Egypt (14 mins) Experimental - ARA A group of figurines from the Musée de l'Armée in Paris join Napoleon during his expedition in Egypt. The film explores political issues related to militarism and colonization, challenging traditional historical narratives.



SISTER MOTHER LOVER CHILD - Nadia Shihab

Canada, ISA (12 mins) Experimental - ARA A house of women adjusts to life in the aftermath of an event unnamed.

CO PRESENTED BY AL MARKAZ & CANADIAN FILMMAKERS DISTRIBUTION CENTRE





JOIN US AFTER THE SCREENING FOR A COMMUNITY GATHERING Wed June 25 (8 PM) - Royal Lounge: 720 Spadina AVE.

PLACE(UN)MAKING SHORTS









I'LL GET BACK TO YOU - Uday Jubeh Palestine (8 mins) Adventure, Comedy - ARA An exile returns to Palestine to settle his family's past but is drawn into a deeper quest for a lost gem.

BAQ'A THE OPEN VALLEY - Youssef Mutawe

Canada (13 mins) Documentary - ARA/ENG Inspired by his uncle's stories of the Naksa (Six-Day War), Abood's chance encounter with a stranger in Amman sparks a journey through identity, heritage, and belonging.

DOUBLE TROUBLE - Ahmed Essam soliman Egypt (7 mins) Drama, Comedy - ARA In a neighborhood, various residents go about their lives. Through the interwoven events and relationships among them, we witness how their actions spiral into a state of madness.

CINEMA AL-AMAL - Rana Abushkhaidem Palestine (11 mins) Documentary - ARA

A nostalgic journey of reflection and rediscovery, where Mufeed revisits the abandoned cinema that was once full of life when he worked there forty years ago, reflecting on a lifetime spent bringing movies back to life.



THE TREE OF HELL - Raed Zeno

Lebanon (20 mins) Documentary - ARA Raed discovers by chance that the beautiful tree growing in front of his house is one of the invasive trees that threatens the environmental diversity

CO-PRESENTED BY REGENT PARK FILM FESTIVAL

in the Lebanese forest.







DAWN EVERY DAY - Amir Youssef Egypt (20 mins) - ARA

Set in 1956, 8 year old Nabil navigates through new social norms he cannot fathom that impact his next door best friend in post nationalized Egypt. Inspired by true events.

WHO LOVES THE SUN - Arshia Shakiba Canada (20 mins) - ARA

In war-torn northern Syria, Who Loves the Sun delves into the world of makeshift oil refineries and the stark realities of life within

this post-apocalyptic landscape. Mohammad is a prominent figure in these operations, navigating harsh working conditions and complex local dynamics.

DYSFUNCTIONAL DESTINIES SHORTS



BLOOD TIES - Hakim Atoui

France (19 mins) - FR

A brother and a sister unable to confess a secret. A mother who blames them for their ingratitude and absence. A dysfunctional medical-assistance robot. Lunch is served, bon appétit!



THE HEARSE - Ahmed Alnasser

Saudi Arabia (38 mins) Drama, Fiction - ARA/ENG Destiny leads Musa to explore his unusual ability to communicate with the hidden world from everyone; therefore, he faces a personal and existential challenge during his work as the hearse driver.





RETRO - Rami Jarboui

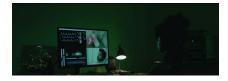
Tunisia (17 mins) Tragi-comedy - ARA

After a retired teacher experiences a peculiar encounter, his life takes an unexpected turn when he starts to walk only backwards as he finds himself navigating the challenges of economic decline in post-revolutionary Tunisia.

IF THE SUN DROWNED INTO AN OCEAN OF CLOUDS

Wissam Charaf France (20 mins) - ARA

On a Beirut waterfront construction site, security agent Raed must prevent passers by from accessing the seaside. As the horizon becomes more stifled by the construction, Raed makes peculiar encounters—mere dreams, or symbols of his desires?



MÖBIUS LOOP - Lee Peterkin USA (20 mins) - ENG

In a race against time, a scientist seeks to perfect a mind-jumping time-travel program. Upon finding a VHS tape that compels her to delve into her family's past, she uncovers the key to her research, but in doing so suffers deadly consequences.

CO-PRESENTED BY THE LIASON OF LIAISON OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS OF TORONTO

DIS/ENCHANTMENT SHORTS



WARDAH - Rahmeh Alshmmas

Jordan (14 mins) Documentary - ARA A short documentary that sheds the light on the harsh conditions of domestic workers in Jordan through the story of the Sri Lankan worker Asanka, who is trying to return to her homeland in various ways. and Sarah a Sri Lankan woman fighting to stay in Jordan to help migrant workers

through her work as a translator in court.



MILK BROTHERS - Kenza Tazi

Morocco (19 mins) Historical Drama, Comedy - ARA In the heart of Fez, a single mother nurtures both her son and a breastfed orphan, as her maternal instinct challenges a society that denies her worth as a single mom.



THE CHANT - May Ghouti

Jordan (21 mins) - ARA In Jordan, three neighbors encounter personal struggles that converge when an elderly woman's ancestral chant draws the community together.



FARIHA - Badr Yousef

Yemen (28 mins) Documentary, Music, Women - ARA Fariha (meaing joy), a 70-year-old woman from Yemen, stepped out of the limelight of a burgeoning singing career in the 80s after a series of set-backs within a male-dominated society and industry. When filmmaker Badr stumbles upon her singing in her kiosk in downtown Sana'a, he insists on following her with his camera to learn about her past and ultimately tries to convince her to return to her long-lost passion: performing on stage!



MALIKA - Maram Taibah

Saudi Arabia (15 mins) ARA

Punished for cutting her bangs, 8-year old Salma embarks on a quest that sees her uncovering a deeper truth about her grandmother's stolen crown.



BOUGAINVILLAEA - Yasir Faiz Sudan, Egypt (17 mins) ARA

Amidst Sudan's popular revolution in December 2018, a group of six women found themselves ensnared within the confines of oppression.Through their journey, a powerful narrative unfolds, revealing the transformative power of determination and the enduring hope that resides within the human spirit.

CO-PRESENTED BY BREAKTHROUGHS FILM FESTIVAL



Congratulations to artists and audiences at the Toronto Arab Film Festival in its 6th year!

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VIRTUAL FEATURES



MY MEMORY IS FULL OF GHOSTS - Anas Zawahri Syrian Arab Republic (75 mins) Documentary - ARA

A poignant documentary that delves into the scars left on the city of Homs, Syria, by the ravages of civil war. Through intimate portrayals of its residents and haunting visuals of the city's ruins, the film captures the enduring trauma and the resilient spirit of those striving to reclaim a semblance of normalcy amidst the devastation.



THIS JUNGO LIFE - David Fedele Morocco, Tunisia (78 mins) Documentary - ARA/ENG

This film takes us deep inside the hidden lives of young refugees and asylum seekers from Sudan and South Sudan, living and sleeping rough on the streets of Morocco; forced to flee violence and instability in Libya, and unable to return home due to ongoing war and conflict.

Filmed entirely using mobile phones, this film offers us, through unique and intimate access, a raw and unfiltered glimpse into the human spirit and innate drive for survival, as they fight for a better life for themselves and the families they left behind.

VIRTUAL FEATURES



THE RESILIENCE OF THE POPPY - Mona Hammoud Lebanon (40 mins) Documentary - ARA

This film dives into Lebanon's stand-up comedy scene, where laughter is a survival mechanism, despite a backdrop of war. Through the sharp wit of comedians like Wissam Kamal, Chaker Bou Abdalla, John Achkar, Stephanie Ghalbouni, and Mohamad Baalbaki, the documentary reveals how humor empowers Lebanese people to confront their toughest challenges. It's a compelling story of resilience, where every joke becomes a tool to push back against hardship and keep hope alive, showcasing Lebanon's unbreakable spirit.



MONUMENTING - Anahi Alviso-Marino France (53 mins) Documentary, Experimental - ARA/ENG/FR

As monuments continue to be toppled, relocated and reassessed all over the world, this documentary takes us to Dubai, Kuwait City, Abu Dhabi and Sanaa, questioning what defines monuments -what they are and what they could become, while retracing their non-linear biographical trajectories. In these cities, they have been virtually understudied and their stories remain invisible. Monumenting retraces them as we follow how participants to the research process engage in guessing rather than asserting what they know. Without noticing it, we are invited into a research journey in which diverse voices offer an unusual approach to cities in the Arabian Peninsula and a kaleidoscopic mapping of monuments and memory.

CO-PRESENTED BY IMAGES FESTIVAL





IF YOU SEE SOMETHING - Oday Rasheed USA (103 mins) Feature - ARA

Deep in the throes of a new love, Ali, an Iraqi immigrant seeking political asylum in the US, and Katie, an ambitious American young woman, start to build their life together in New York. But when a crisis strikes, Katie and Ali are forced to navigate its impact on their relationship...and the secrets they have been keeping from each other.

VIRTUAL SHORTS



NINE TWELVE - Hussein Hammouda USA (28 mins) Documentary, Essay

Destiny leads Musa to explore his unusual ability to communicate with the hidden world from everyone; therefore, he faces a personal and existential challenge during his work as the hearse driver.

A POSTERIORI SHORTS



I LOVE YOU MORE - Nour Alkheder Netherlands (17 mins) Documentary, Autobiography - ARA

Nour's journey to recognition of her longing for her father and Syria, where she confronts loss and the emotional impact of absence.



ON THE EDGE OF LIFE, I SAW A FILM - Razan Hassan

Netherlands (22 mins) Doc - ARA/DUTCH This poetic film takes us on an emotional journey of a girl contemplating death. Her jump from the edge allows her to fly around and meet different people. These encounters challenge her perspective on her narrative in life, death and transformation.



MY REASON FOR BEING - Julie Kebbi Germany (18 mins) Documentary - ARA/FR

A young filmmaker and her mother reconnect in their family home confronting exile through memories and reflections.



BLOOD LIKE WATER - *Dima Hamdan Palestine (14 mins) Drama - ARA* Based on true stories.

INCONCEIVABLE SHORTS



YA HANOUNI - Lyna Tadount, Sofian Chouaib France (3 mins) Drama - ARA

While the Mom and the Dad try to put their baby to sleep, a competition arises between them: who will manage to get the baby to say the first word?



THE NIGHT OF ABED - Anis Djaad Algeria (14 mins) - ARA

From a remote village in deep Algeria, a couple awaits the birth at high risk of their first child, Only the medicine from the distant capital will save him.



TALISMAN - Karar Hayder

Iraq (7 mins) Social Issues, Women's Rights - ARA In her final attempt, Rural girl Sabreen seeks to obtain a talisman that will make her capable of conceiving, In order to preserve her traditional iraqi marriage.



SHABAKA

Each year, TAF curates a selection of professional development opportunities designed to support both emerging and mid-career filmmakers. Through panels, masterclasses, workshops, and networking sessions, participants gain valuable insights into the evolving landscape of the film industry, connect with leading professionals. These initiatives aim to foster growth, collaboration, and long-term career sustainability within the filmmaking community.

GRANT WRITING FOR ARTS COUNCILS WORKSHOP

SATURDAY JUNE 21 // 11 AM // CSI - 720 BATHURST ST.

Learn the fundamentals of applying to the various levels of Arts Council funding in this comprehensive workshop. The workshop will cover the elements of the application forms and process. You will learn how to craft an artist statement that best befits your practice and aspirations, as well as crafting feasible work plans and budgets. Finally, you will get an understanding of how to assemble support material to bolster your application.

CRAFTING YOUR BUDGET WORKSHOP

SUNDAY JUNE 22 // 11 AM // CSI - 720 BATHURST ST.

When you are in the midst of envisioning the creation of your content, you can afford to "blue sky" your story. But it's important to realize that you may not be able to afford everything you want. You need to know exactly how your funds are best spent, and what each dollar can bring to the screen. It's about allocating the budget where it'll be best spent.

IN PARTERSHIP WITH WOMEN IN FILM AND TELEVISION



INDUSTRY MEET & GREET

SUNDAY JUNE 22 // 12:30PM // CSI - 720 BATHURST ST.

Networking doesn't have to be intimidating. Join us for a relaxed meet and greet where you can connect with industry leaders and executives in a casual, welcoming setting. Invited guests include representatives from Telefilm Canada, National Film Board of Canada, Ontario Creates and more.



MASTERCLASS WITH AMBER FARES AND RABAB HAJ YAHYA SUNDAY JUNE 29 11 AM // CSI

Join filmmaker duo Amber Fares (Director) and Rabab Haj Yahya (Edtor) of *Co-Existence, My Ass*! in this deep dive into documentary filmmaking. It will focus on the director-editor process, relationship and collaboration.

WAYS TO SUPPORT AND CONTACT

We are always happy to hear from anyone interested in partnering or collaborating with TAF in any way. By spreading the word about the festival and our year-round activities, you play a crucial role in building awareness and fostering a wider community of film enthusiasts and supporters.

For detailed information on sponsorship and advertising opportunities, please reach out to us at: development@arabfilm.ca

To volunteer, be in touch at info@arabfilm.ca

You can donate via our website arabfilm.ca

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