

Moroccan Film Festival



presented by the
High Atlas Foundation

PROGRAM OF FILMS

The Burned Hearts (Les Coeurs Brulés) [Opening Night w/Director Q & A]

Dir. Ahmed EL MAANOUNI

1:20 2007 Drama

East Coast Premiere Amin, a Moroccan architect, returns from Paris to Fez because the uncle who raised him is dying. His re-integration into his native culture triggers bad memories of his childhood, but also opens new possibilities for friendship and romance. Amin's problems reflect those of many North Africans, torn between a modern European lifestyle and a traditional homeland. Striking black & white cinematography of Fez and its environs. **English Subtitles.**

Casanegra

Dir. Nour-Eddine LAKHMARI

2:07 2009 Comedy/Drama

[Morocco's entry for Best Foreign Language Film in the 2010 Academy Awards] Karim and Adil are crafty young men, coping with unemployment in the underbelly of present day Casablanca. One of them has a fantasy goal to emigrate to Sweden, which draws them both into petty criminal capers. Peopled with a varied cast of predators, victims, and ordinary citizens, *Casanegra* both entertains and informs its audience with an insider look at the harsh realities of Morocco's largest city. **English Subtitles.**

The Dog's Life of Juanita Narboni

Dir. Farida Benlyazid

1:48 2005 Comedy/Drama

U.S. Premiere The recent history of Tangier, from the 1930's through the 1960's, is seen through the eyes of an Anglo-Spanish spinster. The film focuses on Juanita's father and sister, a close Jewish friend, and her loyal Moroccan maid, but the real arc of the storyline is how their lives change as Tangier is transformed from an international zone to a truly Moroccan city. Almodóvar veteran Mariola Fuentes (*Broken Embraces, Talk to Her*) conveys a delicate balance of outrage, loneliness and poignancy. **English Subtitles.**

La Grande Villa

Dir. Latif LAHLOU

1:46 2010 Drama

U.S. Premiere Rachid, an environmental engineer, moves back to Morocco with his French wife and their young son in order to take a career-boosting job. His professional success is offset by conflicts between his family, who house them temporarily, and his wife, who is warmly welcomed only on the surface. Veteran French actress Bulle Ogier supports an outstanding cast that brings to life the jealousies and intrigues that develop when cultural borders are crossed. **English subtitles.**

Looking for My Wife's Husband

Dir. Abderraham Tazi

1:25 1995 Comedy

U.S. Premiere A farcical situation develops when a jeweler with three wives decides to divorce his third wife, then realizes that he wants her back. Islamic law requires him to arrange for another man to marry her, then divorce her, before he can remarry her. One of the most successful Moroccan films ever made, Tazi's classic social comedy was a landmark in the development of his country's new wave of cinema. **English Subtitles.**

I Love Hip Hop in Morocco

Dir. Josh Asen & Jennifer Needleman

1:20 2007 Documentary

East Coast Premiere Young Moroccans struggle to put on a hip hop festival. They face opposition from different layers of government and their own families. This is the festival's only film not directed by a Moroccan, but its view of Moroccan youth is both accurate and entertaining, especially the portrayal of a young woman whose parents support her independence and interest in modern, foreign music. The concert performances offer an unusual perspective on how America's pop culture is influencing the world outside our borders. **English Subtitles.**

In Pieces [Closing Night, w/Director Q & A]

Dir. Hakim Belabbes

1:31 2009 Documentary

U.S. Premiere The director, who now lives in Chicago, points his camera at events unfolding within his extended family in Morocco. These range from childbirth to illness and death, joyful reunions and lonely separations. Each segment is a *cinema vérité* portrait that helps us eventually to piece together their connecting relationships. Belabbes shows us a cross section of his diverse family, and in so doing shows us a cross section of his homeland. **English Subtitles.**

Itto, The Morning Star

Dir. Mohamed Oumouloud Abbazi

1:55 2009 Drama

The setting is a Middle Atlas Berber village in 1955. Morocco is on the brink of independence from France, and everyone is dreaming of a better future. Itto is a girl, prevented from going to school because of her gender. She decides to outsmart the dominant males in the village to earn her own form of liberty. A rare film in the Berber language, **Amazigh with English subtitles.**

Marock

Dir. Laila Marrakchi

1:38 2005 Drama

U.S. Premiere A big success upon its Moroccan release, *Marock* focuses on three wealthy young women on the brink of finishing high school and deciding their futures. Rita falls in love with a Jewish classmate à la Romeo and Juliet, a relationship which is complicated by her brother's burgeoning interest in Islamic fundamentalism. Part teen romance, part "Rebel Without a Cause", part scathing social commentary, *Marock* is a stinging challenge to the contemporary mores of the *haute bourgeoisie*. **English Subtitles.**

Mousssem

Dir. Izza Genini

0:24 Documentary

U.S. Premiere A festival near El Jadida is the occasion for a fantasia, or Berber cavalry charge. We follow one of the horsemen from his arrival, through the exhilarating equestrian displays, and his departure. Handsome photography from unusual perspectives enhances this dialogue-free short, which tells its story in pictures without voiceover narration. A must-see for any who have thrilled to this exciting tradition.

Tenja (Testament)

Dir. Hassan Legzouli

1:10 2004 Drama

East Coast Premiere An expatriate Moroccan (played by popular actor Roschdy Zem) is secretly driving his deceased father's body back to his home village in the High Atlas for burial. A funny and endearing road film with quirky characters and even a touch of magical realism: his father comes back to life from time to time. A story that bridges the gap between urban and rural life, with an accurate portrayal of a rural Berber village. Stunning landscapes provide a rare glimpse of the remote High Atlas Mountains. **English Subtitles.**

Where Are You Going, Moishe?

Dir. Hassan Ben Jalloun

1:33 2007 Drama

A central Moroccan town is the setting, in 1963. Shlomo, a Jewish barber, struggles with himself and his family over emigrating to Israel. His decision will have a domino effect on his lifelong friends, who pull strings to influence him to stay. A heartfelt story that casts light on a little-known period in Moroccan history, as well as the bonds and conflicts between Muslim and Jew in the common hometown they've shared for centuries. **English Subtitles.**

Student Films

L'Ecole Supérieur des Arts Visuels in Marrakech has submitted eight short student films, all of excellent quality and quite varied in content. Each will be combined with a feature-length film. **French Subtitles.**

Le coq chante, le jour paraît...

Dir. Adama SALLE

11 Min. 2008

A dispassionate, *cinéma vérité* documentary about a day at a poultry butcher shop in Marrakech.

Les cowboys sont morts

Dir. Youssef MAMAN

14 Min. 2009

A retired projectionist in an abandoned cinema reminisces about earlier days when moviegoing was a vital part of Moroccan life.

El roua

Dir. Hanaa AMRAHOU

10 Min. 2009

A documentary depiction of life on the fringe. A young couple make do with little work and one room to live in.

Linge Sale

Dir. Mehdi AZZAM

21 Min. 2010

An evocatively photographed surreal drama featuring a strangely silent young man, a padlock, a wine bottle full of wet sand, a broken traffic sign, cruelty, voyeurism, sexual abuse, and a scorpion. Reverie or nightmare?

Nam'Ass (Oui Monsieur)

Dir. Mahassine EL HACHADI

15 Min. 2008

An endearing documentary portrait of a primary schoolteacher. The kids steal the show.

Passion Courte

Dir. Mahassine ELHACHADI

10 Min. 2009

A young woman's erotic fantasies lead to a prolonged flirtation with a cab driver.

Peaux de chagrins

Dir. Saida JANJAGUE

14 Min. 2009

A documentary about tannery workers in Marrakech, whose hard luck life stories are compounded by no social/health benefits on the job.

Who Am I?

Dir. Abderrafia EL ABIDOUI

7 Min. 2010

Sophisticated animation techniques tell the story of an old man who ages in reverse, all the way back to sperm and egg.