



37th Annual Film Festival

A Hairy Tale (Iran) 2019, 104 minutes. In Farsi with English subtitles. Director: Homayoun Ghanizadeh. Producer: Ali Mosaffa. **Print Source: Iranian Independents.** Danesh is in love with both cinema and Homa, a well-known actress. Kazem Khan is in love with both the movie, and his barber shop's certificate. Shapoor is in love with both canned tuna and politics. The city is full of beggars while an earthquake may happen soon. Every now and then a body of a dead woman, with shaved head, is found near the sea. As the Inspector Kiani says: It's a messy situation.



A Hairy Tale

A Star in the Desert (United States) 2020, 15 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Zachary Kerschberg. Producers: Oaday Awadalla, Nam Luong, Lily Vi Pham, and Yasmeen Turayhi. *A Star in the Desert* is a 15-minute dramatic fantastical short story of the first day of the Gulf War in Baghdad told from a 7-year-old child's point of view. The film explores how children often retreat to fantasy and dreamscape in order to make sense of what's happening around them during times of tragedy and conflict. In the film, there is a

universal message about human suffering and using denial and imagination to escape reality as a coping mechanism during a time of tragedy and fear. Escapism is often the answer to much of human suffering and fear today. When our external reality is so painful and terrifying, we are often



conditioned to find ways to escape through alcohol, relationships, status, power, dreams, and more that take us away from the present moment. Whether we escape through our imagination or through external influences, the core theme is denial - and turning away from what is painful and scary, which often begets more pain & suffering. We wanted the audience to really feel what is going on in the mind of a child who is coming to terms with his situation at such a young age. The boy slips in and out of dream state where his reality is a nightmare but his dreams are hauntingly beautiful and magical and become a window into a better life. In a sense, he is caught in between two worlds. This story and the corresponding message could take place in any war zone, and in any place in the world. Our goal is to capture the reactions of a child who is faced with tragedy and create a dialogue about human suffering and escapism.

About a War (Lebanon) 2018, 84 minutes. In various languages with English subtitles. Directors: Daniele Rugo and Abi Weaver. Producers: Daniele Rugo and Abi Weaver. **Print Source: Collective Eye Films.** Moving through the testimonies of Assad, a right-wing Christian intelligence officer; Ahed, a Palestinian refugee fighter, and Nassim, a Communist commander, *About a War* unpicks the personal motivations, trauma, and regret of militiamen who picked up arms during the civil war. With no official account of the conflict, their testimonies build a multi-perspective picture of a crucial turning point in Lebanese history that radically transformed the Middle East. "In their powerful and sensitive *About a*

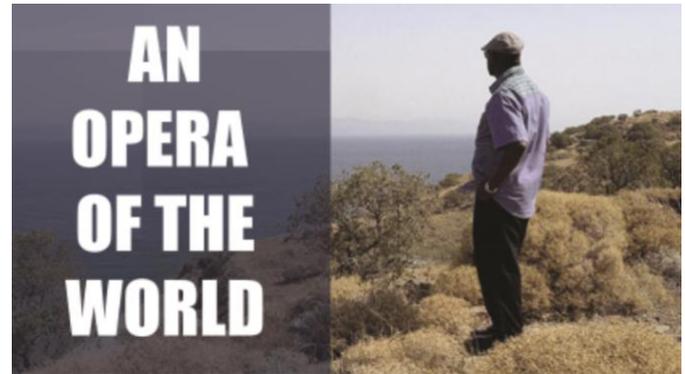


War, Rugo and Weaver take great care to let the events of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-90) speak for themselves, thereby assisting the many still hoping to 'finally get out of this war'". - Prof Nikolaj Lubecker, Professor of

Film, St John's College, University of Oxford.

An Opera of the World (Greece, France, and Mali) 2018, 70 minutes. In English. Director: Manthia Diawara. **Print Source: Third World Newsreel.** Manthia Diawara's film is based on the African opera *Bintou Were*, a Sahel Opera, which recounts an eternal migration drama. The *Bintou Were* opera, filmed on location in Bamako, in 2007, serves as a mirror for Diawara to build an aesthetic and reflexive story, through song and dance, about the current and yet timeless drama of migration between North and South, and the ongoing refugee crises. The film ponders on the realities of cultural encounters through the concepts of métissage and hybridity. The success and limits of fusing African and

European perspectives are tested by interlacing performances from the *Bintou Were* opera, past and present archival footage of migrations, classic European arias, and interviews with European and African intellectuals, artists and social activists – including Alexander Kluge, Fatou Diome, Nicole Lapierre, and Richard Sennett.



Angels are Made of Light (Afghanistan) 2018, 117 minutes. In Dari, Pashto, and Arabic with English subtitles. Director: James Longley. Producer: James Longley. **Print Source: Grasshopper Film.** Filmed over the course of three years, *Angels are Made of Light*, the new documentary from two-time Academy Award nominated director James Longley (*Iraq in Fragments*, *Sari's Mother*), traces the lives of young students and their teachers at a school in the old city of Kabul. Interweaving the modern history of Afghanistan with a present-day portrait of a working-class neighborhood, the film offers an intimate and nuanced vision. Moving seamlessly through the points of view of multiple characters—three brothers, their friends, parents, male and female teachers, an elderly cleaning woman at the school—the film allows their thoughts and ideas to play out on the grand stage of Kabul. Their memories of the Afghan kingdom, the communist revolution and the civil war are brought to life through rare 35mm archival material unearthed in Afghanistan.

Balloons over Babylon (Iraq) 2019, 1 minute. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Folke Rydén. Producer: Folke Rydén. **Print Sources: Rise and Shine World Sales/Folke Rydén Production.** The incredible story of one man's quest to fight terrorism and promote peace & love by flying hot air balloons over his

war-torn country. Murtada Al-Hachami loves his country. But he hates the world's perception of it as a land of war and destruction. After 18 years of forced exile, he returns to his native Iraq. He is obsessed with the vision to attract investors and tourists by showcasing a beautiful and welcoming paradise. How? By having the world's best hot air balloon pilots peacefully flying their gigantic inflated vessels over Babylon and ancient Mesopotamia, the birthplace of human arts and culture. But at the same time a new terrorist organization is beleaguering the war-torn country and far from everyone shares his dream. As Murtada puts it: "One day you will find me shot for what I'm doing."

Bipen B.K. (Kuwait) 2020, 13 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Yousef Alabdullah. Producers: Yousef Alabdullah, Abdulaziz Alballam, and Yousef Ben Ali. **Print Source: Yousef Alabdullah.** A true story about the suicide of an Asian worker that causes controversy in his workplace.



Brooklyn Inshallah (United States) 2019, 83 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Ahmed Mansour. Producer: Ahmed Mansour. **Print Source: New Day Films.** Khader El-Yateem, an Arab American Pastor from Palestine, and Linda Sarsour, organizer of the Women's March on Washington, come together in the wake of President Trump's anti-Muslim policies. With Sarsour's support, El-Yateem runs for New York City council. Will he be the first Arab American to ever win a seat in the race? The documentary follows the drama of his candidacy.

Calling of the Congress (Qatar) 2018, 5 minutes. In English. Director: Maysaa Almumin. Producer: Maysaa Almumin. The Travelers have lost faith in the powers of the Chambers, and it has been long since any have summoned The Congress. The Chambers stand abandoned weathered by the storms of Dalg Is-hel. After a long journey, a Traveler has found the last sacred article to complete a long-forgotten ritual but when she finally has the chance to make the Calling on the Congress, she faces the moment when she too may lose her faith.



Calling of the Congress

Composing Freedom - تأليف الحرية (Palestine) 2020, 31 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Sarah Vasen. Producer: Sarah Vasen. **Print Source: Sarah Vasen.** Music is more than just a sequence of sounds reaching our being. It can bring back memories, call up fantasies, dreams, feelings, and emotions. Music can destroy borders and connect us. Palestine has been under occupation since 1948, which impacts lives every day. Freedom is limited, because of restrictions within society and imposed



identities by Israel. Inspired by her own experiences as a musician in the Netherlands, Sarah Vasen explores the meaning of music for young Palestinians. Does music open up for vulnerability within the hard realities of everyday life? How does music enrich lives of the new generation in Palestine?

Freedom Fighters (Pakistan) 2018, 33 minutes. In Urdu with English subtitles. Director: Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy. Producer: Reveal News. **Print Source: Video Project.**



Pakistan routinely is ranked among the most dangerous countries for women. Much of the nation is extremely conservative, with women often subjected to violence at the hands of men. Repercussions are minimal, and more than half of Pakistani women who experience violence say nothing out of shame and fear. *Freedom Fighters* follows three brave women who are speaking out against inequality and pushing for equal rights in their country. The short film interweaves the stories of Tabassum Adnan, Saima Sharif and Syeda Ghulam Fatima as they strive to create a more just country for their fellow citizens. Adnan was sold as a child bride but eventually gained her freedom and now seeks justice for abused women also trapped in marriages with a historic female “jirga,” a gathering of influential elders who make decisions on cases brought by members of the community. Sharif is the only woman in her village to have joined the police force. In the wake of the death of her brother, who also was a police officer, she joins the Elite Force, an antiterrorism unit that assists the police. Fatima works to eradicate bonded labor and child labor, especially within the brick kiln industry. She has helped to free an estimated 80,000 people from slavery. Each woman faces personal risk for her chosen path, but none waver in the face of adversity. Verite sequences and 2D animation help to tell the stories of these powerful women and the victims they have helped in their journey to challenge the status quo.

Home to Home: How a Yemeni Refugee Found Love in South Korea (South Korea) 2020, 10 minutes. In Korean with English

subtitles. Directors: Juyoung Choi and Saad Ejaz. Producer: Juyoung Choi. **Print Source: Pulitzer Center.** Mohammed Ameen came to Jeju Island, South Korea as a refugee in 2018. There, he met Ha Min-Kyung, who hired him as a chef. She wanted him to help run the new restaurant she had opened for the Muslim refugees from Yemen. As they worked together, Ameen and Min-Kyung fell in love and eventually got married. This is how it happened.

In Mansourah, You Separated Us (Algeria) 2020, 71 minutes. In Arabic and French with English subtitles. Director: Dorothee-Myriam Kellou. **Print Source: Icarus Films.** Dorothee-Myriam Kellou accompanies her father, Malek, on his return home to the village of Mansourah, Algeria for the first time since his childhood. During the Algerian war of independence, Mansourah was one of thousands of communities the colonial French rulers turned into resettlement camps for the more than 2.3 million Algerians forcibly displaced by the French military. The story of these deportations remains largely unknown, both in France and among younger generations of Algerians.



In Your Eyes (Israel and Ethiopia) 2018, 56 minutes. In Hebrew, Arabic, and Amharic with English subtitles. Director: Barak Heymann. Producer: Barak Heymann. **Print Source: Heymann Brothers Films.** The film follows the less-known aspects of the lives of four “web stars” – Israeli YouTubers: Moti Taka, one of the busiest singers in Israel today, who visits Ethiopia for the first time with his mother Dalia. Suzi Boum, aka Lior Israelov, a successful, well-known drag queen, who was born and raised in a religious family in southern Tel Aviv. Chen Halfon, a 25-year-old mother of three, who is one of the few orthodox YouTubers in



Israel. Hannah Ziad, an Arab YouTuber with about half a million followers, who reveals a complex family story about her father's death.

Jaddoland (United States) 2018, 90 minutes. In English. Director: Nadia Shihab. Producers: Nadia Shihab and Talal Al-Muhanna. **Print Source: Grasshopper Films.** Winner of the Truer Than Fiction Award at the 2020 Film Independent Spirit Awards, *Jaddoland* explores the meaning of home and the search for belonging across generations. When the filmmaker returns to her hometown in the Texas panhandle to visit her mother, an artist from Iraq, she turns her lens on her mother's



increasingly isolated life, as well as the beauty and solace that emerge through her creative process. Soon, the filmmaker's charismatic grandfather arrives, still longing for the homeland he recently left. While the shadow of geopolitical and historical forces looms on the periphery, the filmmaker searches for unexpected moments of meaning in the everyday, subtly weaving threads between past and present, her mother's work and her own. In doing so, she draws an artful and deeply intimate portrait of one family reimagining its relationships to the places they call home.

It's Up to Us (United States) 2020, 29 minutes. In English. Director: Deb Bergeron. Producers: Deb Bergeron and Kim Cornell. **Print Source: Women's Learning Partnership.** *It's Up to Us* explores interconnected threats to human security, including conflict, climate change, economic inequality, discriminatory family laws, and gender inequality, and offers solutions based on human rights and equitable decision-making. Among other issues, experts discuss the Syrian refugee crisis, the war in Yemen, the water crisis in Lebanon, and discriminatory nationality laws in a global context. In this 30-minute film, women's rights advocates share



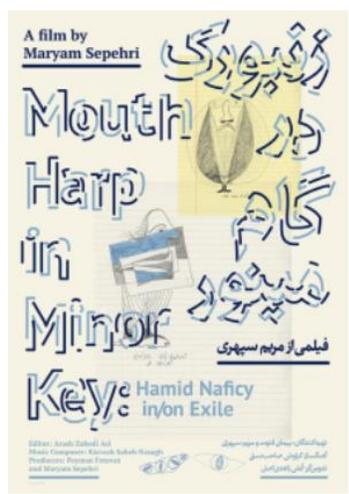
their insights into how women have been impacted by cross-cutting injustices, and how women's leadership is critical to solving the world's most pressing issues. The film includes commentary from: Mary Robinson – Former President of Ireland and Chair of the Elders, Mahnaz Afkhami – Former Minister of Women's Affairs in Iran and Founder and President of Women's Learning Partnership, Najat Saliba – Professor of Analytical Chemistry, American University of Beirut, Asma Khader – Founder and CEO of Solidarity is Global Institute, Maliha Zia Lari – Associate Director, Legal Aid Society Pakistan, Lopa Banerjee – Chief of the Civil Society Section of UN Women and many more...

Khat-e Penhan/Hidden Line (United States) 2019, 8 minutes. No dialogue. Director: Gazelle Samizay. Producer: Raymond Lee. **Print Source: Gazelle Samizay.** *Khat-e Penhan/Hidden Line* explores the tension between self-expression and the pressures and rewards of finding acceptance through the eyes of an Afghan American girl. Finding



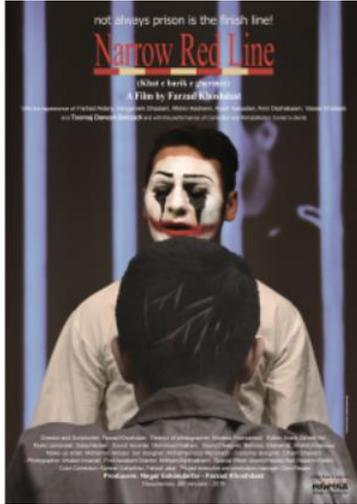
herself in a surreal landscape, the girl follows a mysterious green ribbon to a gathering of masked, uniform figures--her elders. These figures, their masks marked with Farsi calligraphy denoting Afghan and American status symbols, hurl judgments on her in the form of black ribbons expelled from their mouths, entangling her and preventing her escape. She finally agrees to their demand that she wear a mask. The ribbons disappear and she is able to see the figures as they see themselves, distinguished and eloquent. She joins their dance, but finds even this is not enough to satisfy their demands.

Mouth Harp in Minor Key: Hamid Naficy In/On Exile (United States & Iran) 2017, 61 minutes. In Persian with English subtitles. Director: Maryam Sepehri. Producer: Maryam Sepehri. **Print Source: Third World Newsreel.** For Iranian scholar Hamid Naficy, exile is like an elevator that runs between “two cultural poles, two memories, two lives.” Naficy belongs to the Iranian generation that lived through the modernization of the country that preceded the Islamic Revolution of 1979, and the Islamization that followed it. Like many Iranians who were studying in the United States universities when the revolution began, he chose not to return to Iran. Both bilingual and bicultural, Naficy is known for conducting penetrating analyses of both the rich cultural heritage of his homeland—his roots—and of the fecund terrain of exile in his adopted land—his routes. In his adopted country, he became a professor at Northwestern University, published author, filmmaker, leading expert in diaspora studies, exile, and postcolonial cinema, as well as a husband and father. At the same time, he managed to keep a close link to Iran, his culture, his family and more importantly, his mother. Iranian filmmaker Maryam Sepehri followed both Hamid Naficy in the United State and his family in



Iran to capture a documentary portrait that packs a powerful punch elucidating the complexities of personal identity in a globalized world, where individual, national, and transnational forces interact. A timely documentary film about exiles in America and the families they left behind, *Mouth Harp in Minor Key* sheds light on the dynamics of our contemporary times, beset by globalization and consolidation of capital and media, on the one hand, and by fragmentation and disruptions of nation-states, on the other.

Narrow Red Line (Iran) 2020, 90 minutes. In Farsi with English subtitles. Director: Farzad Khoshdast. Producer: Negar Eskandarfar. **Print Source: Iranian Independents.** A group of juvenile offenders in an Iranian Juvenile Rehabilitation and Correction Centre decide to rehearse and perform a play with the help of few trainers. So, if they manage to perform their paly in the theatre festival, they would be able to get out of the prison for one day. And this could be a chance for some to break out on that very day.

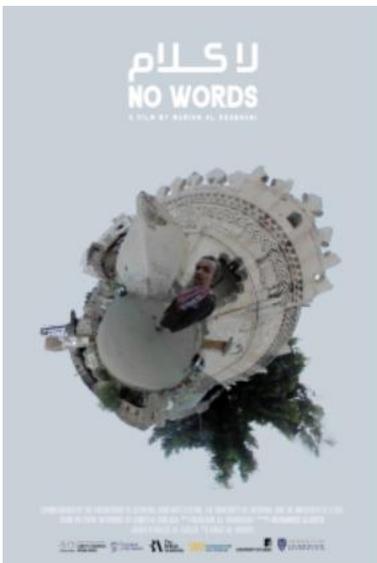


Nasrin (Iran) 2020, 90 minutes. In various languages with English subtitles. Director: Jeff Kaufman. Producer: Marcia Ross. **Print Source: Collective Eye Films.** This compelling documentary follows the life and work of Nasrin Sotoude, a human rights lawyer and activist in Iran. From her work on eliminating the death penalties for minors, fighting for optional hijab-wearing, to her eventual arrest, this call-to-action film gives an intimate look at one of the world's most caring individuals. “Nasrin Sotoudeh is an extraordinarily brave woman. I urge you to see this timely, important film!” - Margaret Atwood “Long the voice of the voiceless in Iran, Nasrin Sotoudeh requires every ounce of her extraordinary courage to avoid being silenced herself.” - The Guardian “Nasrin - the woman



and the documentary - will make you angry at injustice, and give you hope. This is a must-see film!" - Gloria Steinem "Nasrin Sotoudeh is Iran's Nelson Mandela." - The Independent

No Words (Yemen) 2020, 5 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Mariam Al-Dhubhani. Producer: Mohammed Aljaberi. *No Words* is a poetry film that showcases the poet's loss of words to what is happening to his beloved city Taiz and the situation in Yemen. It utilizes 360 footage into a regular display placing the viewer at the camera's point of view as an observer to what is happening in the city. The images resonate with the words and create a poetic feel of the ongoing conflict. The cultural heritage of Yemen is at extreme risk due to conflict: displacement has resulted in many children not learning cultural traditions and linguistic practices of their regions. Many native speakers believe the only way to protect their oral heritage is to share the language of their regions. Working with diasporic Yemeni communities in the UK, the project asks how storytelling might heighten and enhance both



political and public awareness of the situation in Yemen, lead to wider cultural understanding of diaspora and refugee communities in the UK. The material created so far includes a range of poetry, academic texts, photography and video work, and it seeks to show how

storytelling and poetry can heighten understanding of the situation in Yemen, while showcasing the creativity of the Yemeni diaspora and refugee communities in the UK.

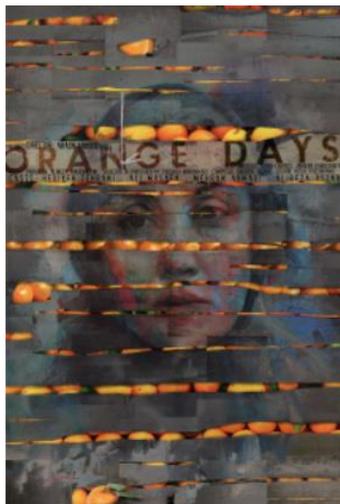
Many of the poems produced for the project – importantly – address conflict resolution.

Of Land and Bread (Palestine) 2020, 90 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Ehab Tarabieh. Producer: B'Tselem. **Print Source: Video Project.** In 2005, human rights organization B'Tselem established a video department, seeking to amplify the impact and power of their written reports on human rights violations in the Occupied Territories with visual documentation. Two years later, they launched the Camera Project,



providing video cameras and training to Palestinian volunteers in the West Bank to document their own lives under Israeli occupation. Since the project launched, the real-time images taken by these amateur photographers have become a staple of B'Tselem's reporting. Raw material captured by staff and volunteers over the past decade have been carefully catalogued into an extensively unique video archive. *Of Land and Bread* consists entirely of footage from this archive, showing first-hand the lived experiences of Palestinians. The film shows the regular injustices enacted upon Palestinians under occupation from uniformed soldiers and police, as well as from Israeli settlers who are acting under their protection. The Palestinians have neither political rights nor the right to protest, and lie on the receiving end of a project of dispossession of land, resources, and culture. *Of Land and Bread* challenges prevailing narratives regarding settlements and offers an opportunity for expression and empathy.

Orange Days (Iran) 2018, 102 minutes. In Farsi with English subtitles. Director: Arash Lahooti. Producer: Alireza Ghasemkhan. **Print Source: Iranian Independents.** The empowering fiction-feature debut from documentary director Arash Lahooti stars Hadieh Tehrani as a tough-as-nails farm contractor proving she can compete, against unfair odds, with male competitors and lead her crew of female workers on northern Iran's largest orange harvest. This empowering story of self-sacrifice and a riveting fight against the odds takes place in northern Tehran. Arash Lahooti's *Orange Days* showcases an inspiring performance from Hadieh Tehrani as a woman struggling to prove her worth in a man's world. Aban, an overworked contractor in her forties, is dead set on outbidding her male competitor Kazem to harvest, with her crew of seasonal



female workers, the largest orange orchard in the region. Tough as nails and proudly self-sufficient, she wins the tender by going so far as to put up her house as collateral. But she soon finds herself doing damage control when it feels like the entire

operation is being sabotaged at every step of the way. First, unpaid workers threaten to go on strike. Then a mysterious break-in robs her of the first harvest. On top of that, her distracted husband (Ali Mosaffa) seems no longer willing to recognize her efforts in maintaining their household. With everything unravelling, Aban will have to give up her shielded stoicism and her illusion of control and put her faith in the goodwill of providence.

Queen Lear (Turkey) 2019, 84 minutes. In Turkish with English subtitles. Director: Pelin Esmer. Producers: Pelin Esmer and Dilde Mahali. **Print Source: LightDox.** Sixteen years ago, a handful of peasant women from the mountains of southern Turkey formed a theatre group, which later became the subject of the documentary *The Play*. The women

acted out their own life stories in the village, and the play changed their lives. Now, they



take the road with an adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, travelling dusty and risky roads to remote, forgotten villages in the mountains of Turkey that are hardly reached by drinking water. The play delicately becomes *Queen Lear* in the hands of the group.

Revolution from Afar ثورة من بعيد (United States/Sudan) 2020, 70 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Bentley Brown. Producer: Bentley Brown and Makkawi Atif Makkawi. **Print Source: Aboudigin Films.** The Sudanese revolution in full force an ocean away, Sudanese-American musicians and poets, children of families who left Sudan thirty years ago at the start of Omar al-Bashir's authoritarian regime, can only watch via social media until an internet blackout shuts down all news from Sudan. What happens when that revolution is finally here, but they can only watch from afar? At the heart of this film is a careful navigation of third-culture identity, as many of the artists feel caught in the middle



between myriad identities: Sudanese, American, tribal/ethnic, black, African, Arab, first- and second-generation immigrants, and others. Do they, having lived most or all of their lives away from Sudan, have a true stake in the country's future, and if so, what is it?

Rite of Passage

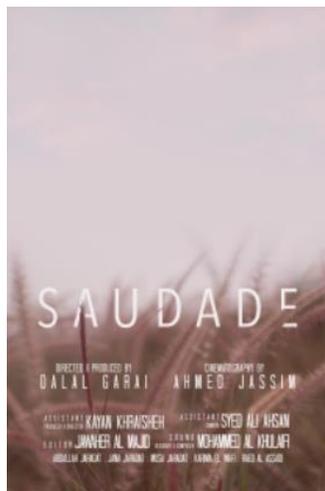


Rite of Passage (Qatar) 2018, 3 minutes. No dialogue. Director: Maysaa Almumin. Producer: Maysaa Almumin. The Child has been prepared well for this day. In the presence of The Mother to bear witness, The Child must overcome the menacing Creature in a rite of passage.

Rosa (United States) 2020, 23 minutes. In Arabic, and Spanish with English subtitles. Director: Suha Araj. Producers: Maryam Keshavarz and Anna Abelo. While working at her aunt's flower shop, Rosa takes her job underground when she begins a side business of shipping undocumented bodies to their home countries for burial.



Saudade (Qatar) 2019, 5 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Dalal Garai. Producer: Dalal Garai. **Print Source: Dalal Garai.** After being abandoned years ago by his family, a young man spends his days searching for them with the help of a private investigator. When he finally locates them, the situation is much different than expected. Saudade (n.) is a Portuguese word for the feeling of longing for an absent something or someone that you love but might never return.



Tahiti (Algeria) 2018, 17 minutes. In French and Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Latifa Said. Producer: Latifa Said. **Print Source: Latifa Said.** Tahiti, 35 years old, was born in Cameroon. Attached to the mythical history of Algeria, he left his country to live there. Without papers after ten years now, he tries to survive working at the Alger Aero-Habitat building, where he also lives. Disillusioned and disappointed by the reception, Tahiti plans to come back home and be again with his family.



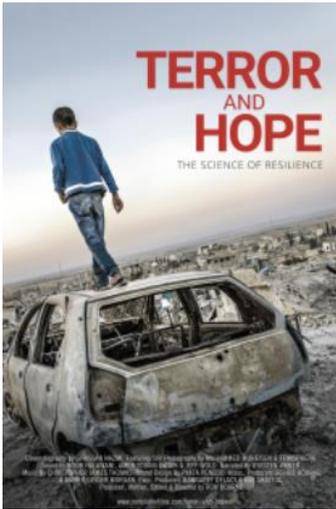
Tahiti

Tea with Mama (Qatar) 2020, 5 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Nur Munawarah Hussain and Marielle Cortel. Producer: Nur Munawarah Hussain and Marielle Cortel. *Tea Time with Mama* is a documentary about Afnan and her mother as they recollect their memories of their homeland in Yemen before they moved to Qatar. They also bonded over the topics of the sacrifices and role of a mother while they spend tea time together.

Tea with Mama



Terror and Hope (Syria) 2019, 38 minutes. In various languages with English subtitles. Director: Ron Bourke. Producer: Ron Bourke. **Print Source: Collective Eye Films.** *Terror and Hope* offers a unique window into the impact of war on children through the pioneering work of an international team of scientists and humanitarians. Our film follows



researchers from Yale, Harvard, and Hashemite Universities as they investigate the impact of toxic stress on young refugees fleeing the brutal Syrian civil war. As our cameras join them in their research in Jordan's refugee camps and communities, we

witness the role that science is playing to mitigate one of our planet's most intractable social problems – the forced displacement of entire populations due to war and famine. The film also explores issues not normally associated with scientific research, including the role of love and compassion in the practice of science. Due to the innovative work of these dedicated researchers and aid workers, there is hope for the future of children scarred by war.

The Artist: Yacoub Missi (Qatar) 2019, 5 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Tony El Ghazal. Producer: Tony El Ghazal. *The Artist: Yacoub Missi* is a personal documentary that follows the life of Yacoub Missi, a Syrian painter, and sculptor while he

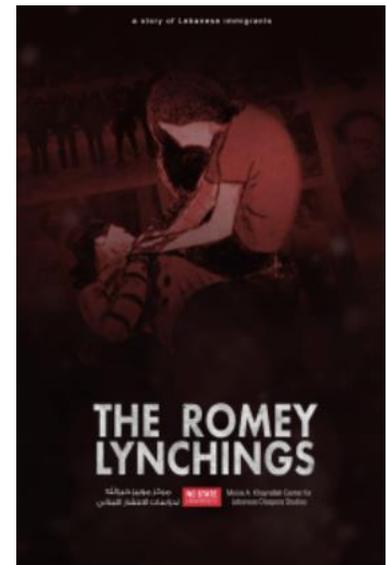


talks about how he learned to become an artist and master of his craft. The film tackles themes such as memory, passion, and art.

The Cave (Syria) 2019, 106 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Feras Fayyad. Producers: Kirstine Barfod and Sigrid Dyekjaer. **Print Source: National Geographic.** Oscar nominee Feras Fayyad (*Last Men in Aleppo*) delivers an unflinching story of the Syrian war

with his powerful new documentary, *The Cave*. For besieged civilians, hope and safety lie underground inside the subterranean hospital known as *The Cave*, where pediatrician and managing physician Dr. Amani Ballour and her colleagues Samaher and Dr. Alaa have claimed their right to work as equals alongside their male counterparts, doing their jobs in a way that would be unthinkable in the oppressively patriarchal culture that exists above. Following the women as they contend with daily bombardments, chronic supply shortages and the ever-present threat of chemical attacks, *The Cave* paints a stirring portrait of courage, resilience and female solidarity.

The Romey Lynchings (United States) 2020, 26 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Producer: Akram Khater. **Print Source: Moise Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies.** In the early morning hours of Friday, May 17th, 1929, an Arab immigrant was lynched in Lake City, Florida. He was shot multiple times and left to die along a lonely stretch of the road heading south out of Lake City to Fort White. N'oula Romey was the fourth victim of racial terror that year in Florida, and one of ten people who were lynched by white mobs across the US in 1929 alone.



Just hours before, his wife Hasna (Fannie) Rahme was fatally shot by Lake City police in the couple's store. Their tragic murders were the most gruesome and violent attacks on early Arab immigrants in the US, but it was not an isolated incident. Their killing was a part, and the culmination, of a widespread pattern of racially-motivated hostility, vitriol and physical abuse directed at early Arab immigrants who came to, worked, and lived in America between the 1890s and the 1930s. This film tells their story.

The Room (France) 2019, 17 minutes. In French and Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Latifa Said. Producer: Latifa Said. **Print Source: Saudade Productions.** Anne must come and pick up her father's stuff at his household room. An Algerian emigrant she barely knew, he just passed away. Anne is going to discover her father through his objects and realize, after all those years, that he loved her.



The Room

The Unseen (Iran) 2019, 61 minutes. In Farsi with English subtitles. Director: Behzad Nalbani. Producer: Behzad Nalbani. **Print Source: Iranian Independents.** During the times when Tehran hosts foreign dignitaries, the local authorities clean up Tehran's urban image through an 'urban beautification' process which includes the rounding up of unsavory characters from the city streets; i.e., drug addicts and prostitutes. The men are released after a few days but the women are kept as wards of the state in perpetuity. They are sent to holding centers on the outskirts of the city where no records are kept by the social workers; these women cease to exist. A friend of my sister, happened to work in one of these detention centers, and she helped me go there with a recorder and interview some of the women without any officials. I explained to each woman what I was doing and asked for their permission and promised them not to film them. This animated documentary attempts to give a just voice to homeless women taken off the streets against their will, stripped of their rights and kept incarcerated until their lives end.

The Warden (Iran) 2019, 90 minutes. In Farsi with English subtitles. Director: Nima Javidi.

Producer: Majid Motalebi. **Print Source: Iranian Independents.** In 1966, a prison in south of Iran is being evacuated because of the proximity to the city's new airport. Major Jahed, the warden, transfers the prisoners to the new prison and then soon receives a report that one prisoner, sentenced to death, is missing!

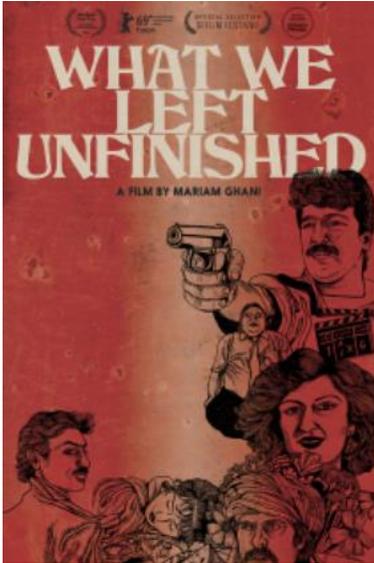


Tick Tock - توقف الزنبرك (Qatar) 2018, 14 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Director: Awad Al Khateeb. Producer: Wijdan Al Khateeb. **Print Source: Studio 20Q.** In a university in Sudan, Ahmed gets elected by the corrupt school administration to be the president of the student body. Students who are against the Sudanese regime, gather in a protest led by Azza to fight this decision. A clock rings in Ahmed's room continuously as he sleeps in his room. Once Ahmed notices the protests and chaos in the courtyard, the alarm stops and he signals the police officers to capture Azza. He gets ready for the inauguration. As Ahmed gets on stage, he is handed a whip by the president of the school and is asked to whip Azza to prove his loyalty to the regime. The alarm clock rings, it triggers



Ahmed and forces him to whip Azza as he tries to make it stop. The crowd cheers and the rebels continue their protest. Ahmed continues to whip Azza, and the alarm gets louder. The president tries to stop Ahmed to celebrate his loyalty, Ahmed pushes the president to the ground and the alarm stops. Everyone is surprised, the clock starts to ring again. Ahmed is faced with an ultimatum of either whipping Azza, or the president, which would silence the clock once and for all.

What We Left Unfinished (Afghanistan) 2019, 71 minutes. In Dari with English subtitles. Director: Mariam Ghani. Producers: Alysa Nahmias and Mariam Ghani. **Print Sources: Good Docs/Indexical.** *What We Left Unfinished* is the mostly true story of five



unfinished feature films from the Communist era in Afghanistan (1978-1991). It reunites the newly restored footage from these lost films with the people who went to crazy lengths to make them in a time when films were weapons, filmmakers became targets, and the dreams of political regimes merged

with the stories told onscreen. Archival fictions, present-day recollections, and both imagined and real visions of Afghanistan collide in a film that reminds us that nations are inventions, and films can reinvent them.

When the Moon was Full (Iran & Pakistan) 2019, 135 minutes. In Farsi, Baluchi, and Urdu with English subtitles. Director: Narges Abyar. Producer: Mohammad-Hossein Ghasemi. **Print Source: Iranian Independents.** This film is based on true events. Abdol-Hamid is a young man who lives on the border of Iran and Pakistan. He falls in love with a young girl (Faezeh) from Tehran and they decide to get married. But Abdol-Hamid's brother, Abdol-Majid, who has been trained by Al-Qaeda forces in Pakistan, opposes their marriage. Disregarding his opposition, Hamid and Faezeh get married and have a child. After two years, Abdol-Majid, who is now known as Abdol-Malek Rigi and is the leader of the

Jundallah terrorist group in south-east Iran and across the border in Pakistan, gets his entire family - including his brothers - involved in his terrorist activities, committing armed offensives and suicide attacks in Iran and Pakistan. Faezeh and Hamid decide to immigrate to Europe to get away from Iranian intelligence forces. They travel to Pakistan along with Faezeh's brother, in order to apply for asylum in Europe from the UN office in Pakistan. But their asylum process is slow, and during this time Abdol-Hamid gradually gets drawn into his brother's terrorist group. Abdol-Hamid and Abdol-Malek Rigi's religious extremism overpowers love, and Faezeh and her brother ultimately become victims of their fanaticism.



Yahoota (Qatar) 2019, 11 minutes. In Arabic with English subtitles. Directors: Abdulaziz Yousef and Latifa Al-Darwish. Producer: Ben Robinson. A curious little girl is determined to save the Moon from a lunar eclipse, all to find out what happens next in the story her grandmother is telling. As there will be no moonlight if the eclipse takes place, the little girl searches for the mythological characters in her grandmother's stories in order to utilize their magical powers so that she can reach the Moon. Along with her cousin, she leaves the house in search of the Afternoon Donkey. She strongly believes in the mythical creature's existence, while her cousin wants to prove otherwise. A story about how far stories could push people to go and explore.

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