

## RED SEA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES JURIES OF ITS INAUGURAL EDITION

*Academy Award-winning director and writer Giuseppe Tornatore will preside over the Jury for the Festival's inaugural Red Sea: Features Competition*

**Jeddah, Saudi Arabia – 24 November 2021** – The Red Sea International Film Festival (RedSeaIFF), which will have its inaugural edition from 6-15 December, today announced the jury selections for its Red Sea: Features and the Red Sea: Shorts Competitions.

Academy Award-winning Italian director and writer **Giuseppe Tornatore** will preside over the Festival's five-strong **Red Sea: Features Competition Jury**, whose members span four continents and are majority female. Tornatore is most famously known for his 1988 Academy Award-winning film *Cinema Paradiso*. Widely considered as one of the most acclaimed directors in Italian cinema, his career has spanned over 30 years and includes the films *Deception*, *The Legend of 1900* and *Malena*. He is also known for his longstanding association with Ennio Morricone, one of the most prolific composers of the twentieth century, of whose life Tornatore's latest documentary, *Ennio*, tells the story and will enjoy its Arab premiere at the Festival out-of-competition in the International Spectacular selection.

On the jury, Tornatore will be joined by Egyptian-based, Tunisian actress **Hend Sabry** (*The Blue Elephant 2*, *Silence of the Palace*, *Noura's Dream*, *Asmaa*, *The Island*), Palestinian-American director, writer, actress, and producer **Cherien Dabis** (*Amreeka*, *May in the Summer*), Mexican film director, writer, and editor **Daniela Michel** and Saudi film director **Abdulaziz Alshlahei** (*Zero Distance*, *The Tambour of Retribution*).

**Giuseppe Tornatore**, President of the Red Sea: Features Competition Jury, said: "It is a uniquely special honour to be asked to preside over the jury of any festival's first edition, let alone the first international film festival to ever take place in a country. There is such a strong selection of films competing in the Red Sea: Features Competition, that are representative of the very best cinema coming from the Arab world, Asia and Africa. I am sure that we will see some truly pioneering and innovative films that will undoubtedly shape the future of international cinema."

The **Red Sea: Shorts Competition Jury** will be led by Egyptian director **Marwan Hamed** (*The Yacoubian Building, The Blue Elephant, El-Asliyyin, Lilly*). He will be joined on this jury by Saudi Arabian actress and director **Ahd Kamel** (*Wadjda, Collatera, La sainteté*) and Finnish-Somali director and writer **Khadar Ayderus** (*The Gravedigger's Wife, The Night Thief*).

The Red Sea: Features and Red Sea: Shorts Competitions will showcase the highest creative achievements from a diverse array of filmmakers from Asia and Africa, including the Arab region. The line-up of 16 features and 18 short films will showcase the most compelling, unique, and impressive work from the past year, with winners in each competition selected by the highly esteemed juries.

Edouard Waintrop, Artistic Director of the RedSeaIFF, said: "We are thrilled to announce the remarkable juries of our inaugural edition. Both juries are representative of the diversity of experience that we wish to emulate at the Festival, as well being such highly accomplished collectives of directors, writers, actors and producers. I looking forward to seeing how the juries work together in honouring some of the truly ground-breaking slate of work in competition."

The **Red Sea: Immersive** strand which features a selection of the latest leading Virtual Reality (VR) storytelling and art projects in and out of competition from award-winning international artists and directors, will be adjudicated by an all-female jury of three leading international artists. The jury will be presided over by pioneering American avant-garde artist Laurie Anderson, who will be joined by BAFTA-winning director Victoria Mapplebeck and one of the first Saudi Arabian street artists, Sarah Mohanna Al Abdali.

The inaugural edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival will run in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia from December 6-15, 2021.

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## **Editors Notes:**

### **Red Sea International Film Festival**

The inaugural edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival in partnership with the MBC GROUP, Saudia Airlines and VOX Cinemas is set to bring the best in Arab and World Cinema to the UNESCO world heritage site of Jeddah Old Town from December 6-15, 2021.

The Festival will showcase a compelling slate of new and diverse films, alongside a retrospective programme celebrating the masters of cinema as well as introducing audiences to exciting new voices from the region and beyond. The Festival will provide a platform for Arab filmmakers and industry professionals from around the world to connect, host feature and short film competitions, and present a series of events, masterclasses, and workshops to support emerging talent.

#### **About MBC GROUP:**

MBC GROUP is the largest and leading media company in the Middle East & North Africa region that enriches people's lives through information, interaction and entertainment. In 2002, nearly a decade after the launch of MBC1 in London, in 1991, MBC GROUP moved its headquarters to Dubai Media City, United Arab Emirates.

Today, MBC GROUP includes over 17 leading TV channels: MBC1 (general family entertainment); MBC2 & MBC MAX (24-hour western movies); MBC3 (children's edutainment with a mix of both local productions and western acquisitions); MBC4 (entertainment for young families with a female-focus); MBC ACTION (an indigenous adrenaline-packed channel targeting young males with local and homegrown productions); MBC VARIETY (Western films and general entertainment with uninterrupted broadcasting); MBC DRAMA (24/7 Arabic drama) & MBC+ DRAMA (a joint pay-TV channel between MBC and OSN); MBC PERSIA (general family entertainment dubbed and subtitled in Farsi); WANASAH (24-hour Arabic music channel); MBC MASR & MBC MASR2 (general family entertainment geared towards the Egyptian family); MBC BOLLYWOOD (delivering the freshest in Bollywood content geared towards the region via an Arabized interface); MBC USA (on "Dish Network" in the US); MBC IRAQ (a premium channel aimed at the entire Iraqi family), MBC5 (new satellite channel dedicated to the Maghreb); all of them benefit from MBC STUDIOS which produces the region's most compelling premium content for cinema, television and on-demand platforms. MBC GROUP also includes two FM radio stations: MBC FM (Gulf music) and Panorama FM (contemporary Arabic hit music). Furthermore, part of MBC GROUP is Shahid and its premium subscription-based service Shahid VIP, the world's leading Arabic streaming platform, home to highly rated original productions from the Arab world, a wide range of exclusive movies and premieres, as well as the top watched live Arab TV channels.

#### **About Saudi Arabian Airlines (SAUDIA):**

Saudi Arabian Airlines (SAUDIA) is the national flag carrier of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Established in 1945, the company is one of the Middle East's largest airlines.

SAUDIA is a member of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the Arab Air Carriers Organization (AACO). It has been one of the 19 member airlines of the SkyTeam alliance since 2012.

SAUDIA has received many prestigious industry awards and recognitions. Most recently, it was ranked a Global Five-Star Major Airline by the Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX) and the carrier was awarded the Diamond status by APEX Health Safety powered by SimpliFlying.

For further information on Saudi Arabian Airlines, please visit [www.saudia.com](http://www.saudia.com)

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## **About Majid Al Futtaim**

Founded in 1992, Majid Al Futtaim is the leading shopping mall, communities, retail and leisure pioneer across the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

A remarkable business success story, Majid Al Futtaim started from one man's vision to transform the face of shopping, entertainment and leisure to 'create great moments for everyone, every day'. It has since grown into one of the United Arab Emirates' most respected and successful businesses spanning 17 international markets, employing more than 43,000 people, and obtaining the highest credit rating (BBB) among privately-held corporates in the region.

Majid Al Futtaim owns and operates 29 shopping malls, 13 hotels and four mixed-use communities, with further developments underway in the region. The shopping malls portfolio includes Mall of the Emirates, Mall of Egypt, Mall of Oman, City Centre malls, My City Centre neighbourhood centres, and five community malls which are in joint venture with the Government of Sharjah. The Company is the exclusive franchisee for Carrefour in over 30 markets across the Middle East, Africa and Asia, operating a portfolio of more than 375 outlets including City+, the region's first checkout-free store, and an online store.

Majid Al Futtaim operates more than 600 VOX Cinemas screens as well as a portfolio of world-class leisure and entertainment experiences across the region including Ski Dubai, Ski Egypt, Dreamscape, Magic Planet, Little Explorers and iFLY Dubai. The Company is parent to a Fashion, Home and Specialty retail business representing international brands such as Abercrombie & Fitch, Hollister, AllSaints, lululemon athletica, Crate & Barrel, Maisons du Monde, LEGO and THAT, a Majid Al Futtaim fashion concept store and app. In addition, Majid Al Futtaim operates Enova, a facility and energy management company, through a joint venture operation with Veolia, a global leader in optimised environment resource management.

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