

SAUDI TALENT SET TO SHINE AT THE SECOND EDITION OF THE RED SEA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

The upcoming edition will present seven feature films and 18 short films from the country's most innovative filmmakers

Jeddah, Monday 31 October: The Red Sea International Film Festival (RedSealFF) today announced the world premiere of seven new Saudi feature films and 18 Saudi short films within the 130 + strong film programme at the Festival, which is set to take place from 1-10 December in Jeddah, nestled on the eastern shore of the Red Sea. This exciting wave of filmmakers are leading a new generation of creatives responsible for bringing an audacious vibrancy to Saudi cinema.

The films have been selected to highlight the fresh new perspectives and storytelling techniques that young Saudi filmmakers are utilizing across the region, with the RedSealFF shining a light on the talent and innovation coming from young filmmakers in the region.

Mohyee Qari, Program Manager at the RedSealFF, said: "Since the inaugural edition of RedSealFF we've seen significant progress made within the Saudi film industry. Having seven Saudi features in this year's festival line-up, two of them in our official competition, is a true testament to the impressive filmmaking in the Kingdom. The RedSealFF has created a unique opportunity to showcase the work of young Saudi filmmakers and we're incredibly proud to have created a platform that allows us to showcase these remarkable talents to the world."

The Festival will close with the world premiere of **Valley Road** from award-winning Saudi writer and director Khaled Fahd starring Hamad Farhan, Naif Khalaf and Aseel Omran. An uplifting and emotional feature, *Valley Road* is set in the beautiful mountain village of Alwadi and follows Ali, a young man perceived as having a disability. Only his older sister, Siham, recognises that his difference is part of him; she sees him as perfect as he is.

World premiering as a Gala screening is Saudi director Fahad Alammari's **Alkhalat+**. From the creators of the generation-defining digital series "AlKhalat", which amassed over 1.5 billion views during its 22-episode run, comes to you in an anthology film of social deception and trickery in four unlikely places. Two thieves crash a wedding to save their co-conspirator. A chef working in a fine-dining restaurant puts the establishment on the line to save her parents' failing marriage. A friend returns to a morgue to bury a secret from the deceased's wife. A mother searches for her husband while he searches for their son in a nightclub. There's always a way out, and whoever has a trick in their bag, they shall use it.

Slave, directed by Mansour Assad, follows Sakkir and his wife Latifa who together have made a movie. However, their creation has created outrage within society. As a result, Sakkir is questioning his life and

existence and is struggling with whether to continue living, or to go back in time to appease the same society his film created uproar within. The film stars Mohammed Ali, Khairiah Abulaban and Ziyad Alamri

Sattar tells the story of Sa'ad, a huge wrestling fan who finds out a professional wrestling organization is holding auditions in his hometown of Riyadh. In the hopes of becoming a Saudi wrestler, Sa'ad attends the audition but in a crushing moment he fails. However, his luck has not completely run out as he meets Ali Hogan, an eccentric man who offers to be Saad's manager and promises to change his life.

The world premiere of the historical drama **Within Sand**, marks Saudi filmmaker Mohammed Alatawi's *directorial debut*. It's the spectacular account of a young man making his way through the desert with the help of a wolf. Travelling alone, he's ambushed by thieves who leave him for dead.

Raven Song is the feature debut from Saudi director Mohamed Al Salman, and tells the story of 30-year-old drifter Nasser who is convinced his father doesn't understand him. His life comes into sharp focus when he diagnosed with a brain tumor. At the same time, he meets and becomes infatuated with a striking but enigmatic young woman and must make some rapid decisions before he undergoes risky neurosurgery. Somehow, he must find a way to reach this young woman before it's too late.

How I Got There is a co-production between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and a labour of love from award-winning director Zeyad Alhusaini who spent 15 years crafting this dramatic action film, the first of its kind to be set in the Gulf. When two childhood friends – now grown up and dabbling in the illegal alcohol trade – find a cache of stolen guns, they jump at the chance to get rich quick. The film starring Yaqoob Abdullah, Hamad Al Omani, Ron Perlman, and Jaaved Jaaferi takes audiences on a wild ride with its naïve protagonists encountering a murky world of arms dealers, terrorists, mercenaries and small-time gangsters.

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About The Red Sea International Film Festival

The second edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival will screen the best of the Arab and international cinema in Jeddah. The Festival will also showcase a retrospective program to celebrate the masters of cinema. The Red Sea International Film Festival is a platform for Arab filmmakers and industry professionals from around the world to connect, host competitions for short and feature films, and organize masterclasses to support emerging talent. It will take place from December 1 — 10, 2022.