

مهرجان البحر الأحمر السينمائي الدولي
RED SEA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

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CELEBRATES WORLD CINEMA IN ITS ARAB AND
INTERNATIONAL SPECTACULAR SECTIONS

*Sixteen of the most highly-anticipated films of the year make up the **Arab** and **International Spectacular** sections of the Festival*

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia – November 9th 2022 – The second edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival (RedSealFF), which will take place from 1-10 December 2022, today announced the line-up of films in both its **Arab** and **International Spectacular** sections. Seven films will be showcased in the Arab Spectacular and nine in the International Spectacular, with the sections including World, Arab and Saudi premieres.

Antoine Khalife, Director of Arab Programs & Film Classics for the RedSealFF, said: “Arab directors take us through their films to extraordinary countries that help the characters to better understand values, whether it is the green mountains of Lebanon, or the Atlas Mountains in Morocco, passing through the beauty of the Saudi deserts or recently explored urban areas in Kuwait. Each of these mainstream films will make local audiences dream, cry, laugh and love, through funny, tender, and romantic characters”.

Kaleem Aftab, Director of International Programming for the RedSealFF, added: “Our International Spectacular section brings together the most thought-provoking storytelling from this year’s global film festival circuit. Comprised of films from both established filmmaking voices and emerging talent, the International Spectacular section promises to share the years’ most disruptive films with Saudi audiences.”

World premiering as a Gala screening is Saudi director Fahad Alammari’s **Alkhallat+**. From the creators of the generation-defining digital series “AlKhallat”, 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.

In **All Roads Lead to Rome**, award-winning Lebanese director Lara Saba turns her attention to romantic comedy in the unlikely setting of a convent in the serene Cedars and Qannoubin valley. When Hadi (Chadi Haddad), a famous young actor finds himself staying as the guest at a convent for a role, a beautiful adventure begins, bringing him to a new understanding of what really matters: nature, human connections, love and generosity.

The Banshees of Inisherin is the latest film from Academy-Award winning director Martin McDonagh. Every day for as long as anyone remembers, dairy farmer Padraic (Colin Farrell) has stopped by the cottage where local musician Colm (Brendan Gleeson) resides to take him to the pub. When Colm suddenly tells him the friendship is over, Padraic takes it as a joke, gets distressed, and then gets angry. The film had its World Premiere at this year’s Venice Film Festival, where McDonagh won the Golden Osella for Best Screenplay and Farrell won the Volpi Cup for Best Actor.

Broker is the first film shot in South Korea from award-winning writer-director Hirokazu Kore-eda. The film is inspired by the local “baby box” phenomenon: boxes outside churches where unwanted new-borns can be left anonymously for eventual adoption. Song Kang-ho won the Best Actor Award for BROKER at this year’s Cannes Film Festival, where the film had its World Premiere.

South Korean master Park Chan-wook’s latest film **Decision to Leave** tells the story of a conscientious homicide detective (Park Hae-il), hitherto happily married, investigating an experienced climber’s unlikely fall from the top of a monolith. The chief potential suspect is the man’s beautiful, much younger Chinese wife (Tang Wei). Soon the detective is falling in love while interrogating her, a tragic dereliction of duty for which his young suspect will come to feel an even more destructive guilt. The film premiered at this year’s Cannes Film Festival, where Director Park won Best Director, and has been selected as the South Korean entry for Best International Feature at the upcoming 95th Academy Awards.

In **Empire of Light**, Academy Award-winning director Sam Mendes draws on elements from his own past, telling a powerful and poignant story about human connection and the magic of cinema set in a quiet seaside in early 80s Britain. Starring Olivia Colman, Colin Firth and Michael Ward, the film had its World Premiere at the Telluride Film Festival earlier this year.

How I Got There is the latest feature from award winning director Zeyad Alhusaini. 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 dramatic action film, the first of its kind to be set in the Gulf, takes the audience along with its naïve protagonists on a wild ride through a murky world of arms dealers, terrorists, mercenaries and small-time gangsters.

Hunt is the directorial debut of “Squid Game” star Lee Jung-jae, who also co-wrote and stars in the film. Set against the backdrop of the real-life political scheming and scattergun extra-judicial executions that followed the 1979 assassination of the South Korean president, the film chronicles the search for a mole in the upper reaches of the KCIA. It had its World Premiere in the Midnight Screening section of this year’s Cannes Film Festival.

Kamla is the latest film from Egyptian writer-director John Ikram Sawers. Kamla is deeply committed to her work as a psychiatrist, but society does not accept that she is an unmarried woman in her 40s, still living with her elderly father. Her aunt, Ansaf, insists on bringing around potential husbands, but Kamla has, in fact, met a man – a glamorous writer, Youssif, who speaks in defense of love, freedom and women’s rights – and fallen in love.

Carlo Collodi’s dark fable about a naive wooden puppet named **Pinocchio** is presented in dazzling stop-motion animation by Oscar winning director Guillermo del Toro and Mark Gustafson. In 1930s Italy, where fascist dictator Benito Mussolini rules with an iron fist, carpenter Geppetto’s life is dominated by his grief over the loss of Carlo, his 10-year-old son. He finds comfort in carving a wooden puppet, which a blue wood spirit unexpectedly brings to life. Geppetto names it Pinocchio.

Queens is the first feature film from Moroccan writer-director Yasmine Benkiran. With a nod to Thelma and Louise, the story follows two women and a young girl with a fixation on witches and human djinns with goats’ hooves as they drive across the desert in a bid for freedom. An ode to womanhood, liberty and the glories of the Moroccan Atlas, the film was selected to close Venice Critics Week.

Prolific Moroccan directors Adil El Arbi and Bilall Fallah's latest film ***Rebel*** is an immensely powerful, personal, and nuanced portrayal of a family torn apart over a little Muslim boy's future. Featuring powerhouse performances from Amir El Arbi, Aboubakr Bensaihi and Tara Abboud, the film, was one of the most challenging and impressive films at this year's Cannes Film Festival which must be seen to be believed.

In Ruben Östlund's wickedly funny Palme d'Or winner ***Triangle of Sadness***, social hierarchy is turned upside down, revealing the tawdry relationship between power and beauty. Celebrity model couple, Carl (Harris Dickinson) and Yaya (Charlbi Dean) are invited on a luxury cruise for the uber-rich, helmed by an unhinged boat captain (Woody Harrelson). What first appeared instagrammable ends catastrophically, leaving the survivors stranded on a desert island and fighting for survival.

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 boy perceived as having a disability. Only his older sister Siham recognizes that his difference is part of him.

Opening the second edition of the RedSeaIFF is ***What's Love Got to Do with It?*** Sliding between London and Lahore, love and friendship, tradition and iconoclasm, the film is a cross-cultural British romantic comedy that follows a filmmaker who decides to document her best friend's journey towards an arranged marriage. It stars Lily James, Shazad Latif, Shabana Azmi, Sajal Aly, Asim Chaudhry and Academy-Award winner Emma Thompson.

The second edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival will run in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia from the 1-10 December 2022.

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For further press information:
media@redseafilmfest.com

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.