

Red Sea International Film Festival and Art Jameel announce a collaborative programme

Hayy Cinema's opening programme, developed in collaboration with Red Sea International Film Festival, includes a Youssef Chahine retrospective and 'As Seen', a Gamal Fahmy archival exhibition

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 05 2022:

Red Sea International Film Festival and Art Jameel announce an archival exhibition presenting Gamal Fahmy's legacy and a Youssef Chahine film retrospective. The programme invites audiences to discover unique images of the great photographer Gamal Fahmy and rediscover some of the iconic and unmissable titles that came to define the history of Arab cinema.

Coinciding with Hayy Jameel's one year anniversary, Hayy Cinema, a permanent space developed by Art Jameel, opens to the public from December 6, 2022, during the Red Sea International Film Festival. Hayy Cinema is defined by its unique approach of curated and research-oriented filmic content that intends to nurture audiences with an ethos of curiosity and inclusivity, while furthering research into the history of independent film in the region.

One of the Kingdom's first centers for independent cinema, Hayy Cinema expands the role of what a cinema can be, serving as a meeting point to watch, learn, exchange, discover and research the vast world of cinema and filmmaking. It includes a 168-seat theatre, a 30-seat community screening room, a multimedia library, and an educational space. Intended as a year-round home for the Saudi film community and local cine-enthusiasts, the cinema is designed by Jeddah-based architectural practice [Bricklab](#), whose design won an international architectural competition run by Art Jameel.

Mohammed Al Turki, CEO of the Red Sea International Film Festival, said: "The opening of Hayy Cinema will bring together communities to engage with film, share ideas, and collaborate on new and exciting projects. The Red Sea International Film Festival is delighted to be working with Hayy Cinema, it provides the perfect opportunity to widen our reach and build our audiences so more people can enjoy all the festival has to offer."

Fady Jameel, Founder and Chairman of Art Jameel, commented, "We are delighted to welcome the community to Hayy Cinema -- designed as a year-round 'home from home' for Saudi filmmakers and cinephiles and enthusiasts of all ages. It's truly a great pleasure for Art Jameel to collaborate with Red Sea International Film Festival on the opening programme and to work so closely together on restoring, preserving and showcasing the archives of Arab cinema's most defining figures. Art Jameel is dedicated to supporting and complementing the work of our colleagues-in-culture across both the government and private sectors, and the opening of Hayy Cinema is a milestone for us all. We look forward to the breadth and depth of opportunities such collaborations bring about for the community."

The exhibition of Gamal Fahmy's work, titled 'As Seen' and co-curated by Jeddah-based writer and director Yaser Hammad and Hayy Cinema Senior Manager Zohra Ait El Jamar, is a celebration of Egyptian cinema and culture. Fahmy collaborated with major Egyptian filmmakers, notably Youssef Chahine, Hussein Kamal, Aly Badrakhan, Ali Reda and Said Marzouk. His work was not limited to creating stills of films during shoots, but also behind the scenes photography, photography sessions of filmmakers and actors. His work is an example of great artistic photography, with striking compositions and excellent use of light and shadows. The exhibition runs from December 6, 2022, to March 25, 2023 and is largely drawn from the Red Sea International Film Foundation Archives Collection.

The Youssef Chahine film retrospective includes a selection of the filmmaker's greatest works. Gamal Fahmy took behind the scenes photographs of five of Chahine masterpieces.

Chahine was a pioneer in the film d'auteur genre, his films enticed a whole generation to engage in honest and courageous storytelling. Class conflict and labor strife featured prominently in Chahine's early works. The lineup includes "Alexandria, Why?", which marked a radical, newly introspective turn in Chahine's filmmaking career. "Alexandria, Why?" is the first in a semi-autobiographical tetralogy, titled "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man", which focuses on a precocious adolescent whose dreams and colorful attempts to become an actor unfold against the vivid backdrop of Alexandria during World War II. The autobiographical nature and nostalgic flavor of Alexandria, Why? make it one of Chahine's most accessible works, a charming and entertaining film.

"Alexandria Again and Forever" is the third instalment in Chahine's quartet of autobiographical films, in which the director's work is stalled by a strike. During the interruption in filming, the relationship between director and performer is depicted symbolically, in a tender dance number clearly in homage to the Hollywood musical.

"Adieu Bonaparte" is one of Chahine's ventures into the historical genre. Set in 1798, when Napoleon lands his army in Egypt, defeats the Mamluks and reaches Cairo, the story revolves around three brothers – Egyptian patriots who reject the prospect of French domination. Bakr, the eldest, is a hothead, quick to advocate armed rebellion; Ali is more philosophical and poetic while Yehia is young and impressionable. Determined to make Frenchmen out of the brothers, one of Napoleon's generals, the one-legged intellectual Caffarelli, decides to open a bakery where their father works.

Based on the novel by Andrée Chedid, "The Sixth Day" explores a period in British-colonialized Egypt during the mid-twentieth century. In a poor Cairo neighborhood, Sadika is taking care of her bedridden husband, and later, her cholera-infected grandson. She shares a subtle relationship with the young Okka, who makes his living performing song and dance numbers with a monkey. Okka's joyful and life-affirming spirit is a welcome challenge to the atmosphere of death that overwhelms the impoverished neighborhood; it is also the vehicle through which Sadika finds resiliency, love, and social connection despite the isolation she suffers as her grandson's caregiver. This film has gathered Chahine with the legendary Dalida in one of her best performances ever.

Also adapted from a novel, "Return of the Prodigal Son" depicts a family going through a fatal crisis. Ali Madbouli, a former social activist who went on to marry the daughter of a wealthy contractor with lucrative government construction deals, returns home to his family after ten years in prison. Ali had been imprisoned for his involvement in a cost-cutting scheme having resulted in the collapse of a contracted building. But the man who returns is no longer the well-loved Ali they remember. Through this film the Red Sea Film Festival & Hayy Jameel are paying tribute to the late Hesham Selim.

Youssef Chahine's films will be screened on various dates throughout December, with the opening film screening on December 6 at 8pm. The Red Sea International Film Festival runs from 1st to 10th December 2022.

ENDS

About the Red Sea International Film Festival

The second edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival will bring the best in Arab and World Cinema to Jeddah, nestled on the eastern shore of the Red Sea. The Festival will showcase a compelling slate of new and diverse films, alongside a retrospective program 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.

Running alongside the Festival is the Red Sea Souk, the Festival's industry market, designed for global exchange and partnerships between the international and Saudi film industries. The four-day market will offer a packed program of curated events to foster co-production, international distribution, and new business opportunities. The Souk offers unbeatable access to the new vibrant Saudi scene, as well as the best of the Arab market through pitching sessions, one-on-one meetings, screenings, industry talks, and networking events.

The Red Sea International Film Festival will take place from December 1 -10, 2022.

For further press information:

media@redseafilmfest.com

About Hayy Jameel

Hayy Jameel is developed and managed by Art Jameel as Saudi Arabia's dedicated arts complex and creative hub. Hayy joins Jameel Arts Centre in Dubai – which opened in 2018 – in its efforts to build culture-oriented, connected communities. Designed by waiwai, Hayy references the Arabic word for neighbourhood, denoting the convivial and collaborative nature of the complex and its intent on bringing together a wide range of creative disciplines in one destination. Alongside the museum Hayy Arts, education platforms Hayy Learning and Hayy Studios is Hayy Cinema, Saudi's first independent audiovisual centre, designed by Jeddah-based architects Bricklab – and now Hayy Explorers, a forthcoming 'drop-in' children's zone, featuring a year-long dynamic programme. Fena Hayy, a multi-purpose space for performances, workshops and talks opens onto Saha, a central community courtyard underpinned by philosophies of sustainability and adaptability.

The Art Jameel-run not-for-profit spaces are joined by Hayy Residents – a set of pioneering, homegrown creative enterprises that range from contemporary art and performance to design and publishing, culinary institutes, new cafes and eateries.

The launch of Hayy Jameel in 2021 marked 75 years of Jameel family global philanthropies and is in line with Vision 2030, coming to fruition with a new era for the arts and creative sector across the Kingdom.

About Art Jameel

Art Jameel supports artists and nurtures creative communities. Founded and supported by the Jameel family philanthropies, the independent organisation is headquartered in Saudi Arabia and the UAE and works globally. Art Jameel's programmes – across exhibitions, commissions, research, learning and community-building – are grounded in a dynamic understanding of the arts as fundamental to life and accessible to all.

Art Jameel's two institutions – Hayy Jameel, a dedicated complex for the arts and creativity in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and Jameel Arts Centre, an innovative contemporary institution in Dubai, UAE – are complemented by digital initiatives plus collaborations with major institutional partners and a network of practitioners across the world.

For further press information:
ruba@artjameel.org