

# THE RED SEA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL SETS THE STAGE FOR THE SECOND EDITION

## Jeddah, Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December

The Red Sea International Film Festival (Red Sea IFF), in partnership with VOX Cinemas and the MBC GROUP, raised the curtain on the second edition, which will run from 1-10 December in Jeddah, nestled on the eastern shore of the Red Sea. The Festival opened with romantic comedy *What's Love Got to Do with It?* directed by Shekhar Kapur, written by Jemima Khan and produced by STUDIOCANAL and Working Title.

The Red Sea Corniche, the Festival's new outdoor venue, where movies will be screened for free opened with Bollywood's iconic romantic blockbuster *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (DDLJ)*, directed by Aditya Chopra. The beloved classic that has influenced India's pop culture for generations, kicked off 10 days of screenings and concerts.

During the opening ceremony the Festival presented a GOLD YUSR Honorary Award to three incredible talents for their extraordinary contribution to cinema. From India, legendary superstar, actor and producer Shah Rukh Khan, Egyptian cinema icon Yousra and acclaimed British director Guy Ritchie.

The program will present 131 feature films and shorts from 61 countries in 41 languages from both established and emerging talent and will host 34 World Premieres, 17 Arab Premieres and 47 MENA Premieres, with a number of filmmakers and actors in attendance for many of the films. A slate of new Saudi films will be shown alongside the best of new international cinema, featuring 25 new films from an exciting wave of Saudi filmmakers.

The Festival will feature a program of conversations where Festival goers will have the unique opportunity to hear filmmakers and actors talk about their cinematic career and achievements. The line-up includes: Sharon Stone, Andy Garcia, Guy Ritchie, Luca Guadagnino, Gurinder Chadha, Nadine Labaki, Akshay Kumar, Spike Lee, Andrew Dominik, Fatih Akin, Adil El Arbi & Bilal Fallah, Kaouther Ben Hania, Nelly Karim, Mo Amer, Ranbir Kapoor, Antonio Banderas, Gaspar Noé, Jackie Chan, and Hrithik Roshak.

Mohammed Al Turki; CEO of the RedSeaIFF commented: "The RedSeaIFF is now more important than ever, a clear indicator of change and plays a crucial role in transforming and reshaping the future for our next generation of creatives. We have a unique opportunity to make new films accessible to wider audiences, showcase the work of exciting new voices and make a meaningful contribution to the Saudi culture and wider region. We are excited to welcome film lovers, storytellers, talent and industry professionals from around the world to Jeddah for our second edition, which I hope will exceed expectations."

The global film industry in attendance at the Festival's Opening Ceremony from **Saudi and GCC** included stars and filmmakers such as: Haifaa Al Mansour, Mohammed Alatawi, Lulowa Al-Mulla, Adwa Fahd, Mila Alzahrani, Zaara Albulushi, Baraa Alem, Yasir Alsaggaf, Alaa Fadan, Ibrahim Alhajjaj, Nour Alkhadra, Sohayb Godus, Fatima Al-Banawi, Sanaa Bakur Younis, Faisal Al-Dokhi, Ibraheem Alkhairallah, Hisham Fageeh and many more.

From the **Arab world**: Nadine Njeim, Dorra, George Khabbaz, Nour AL Ghandour, Tara Emad, Ahmad Yassin Al Daradji, Wissam Diyaa, Hala Sedki, Leleba, Karim Fahmy, Hassan El Raddad, Ola Roshdy, Ahmed Dawood, Imen Noel, Ziad Jallad, Yassir Kazzouz, Soudade Kaadane, Khairy Beshara, Adnane Baraka, Salma Abu Deif and many more.

**International talents** included: Shekhar Kapur, Jemima Khan, Shabana Azmi, Sajal Ali, Shah Rukh Khan, Guy Ritchie, Sharon Stone, Meryem Uzerli, AR Rahman, Jeff Mirza, Luca Guadagnino, Park Hae Soo, Andy Garcia, Henry Golding, Priyanka Chopra, Giuseppe Tornatore, Scott Eastwood. Luna Maya, Michelle Rodriguez, Lucy Hale, Freida Pinto, Rosy de Palma, Gaspar Noe, Andrew Dominik, Nadine Labaki, Fatih Akin, Sanjar Madi, Marina Ruy Barbosa, Nolan Funk, Melanie Laurent, Maria Pedraza, Alex Gonzalez, Alejandra Onieva, Jon Kortajarena, Hiba Abouk, Julianne Hough, Ham Tran, Gurinder Chadha, Ery Claver and more.

Also in attendance were all members of the Red Sea Juries including, Academy Award-winning director Oliver Stone, Nelly Karim, Kaouther Ben Hania, Levan Koguashvili and Ali Suleiman, as well as members of the Red Sea: Shorts Jury, Joana Hadjithomas, Shahad Ameen, and Ozzy Agu.

The Red Sea: Competition will showcase the highest creative achievements from filmmakers in its Red Sea Feature and Shorts Competition sections. The line-up of 26 shorts and 15 features showcases an incredible array of talent across both the Arab, African and Asian world, showcasing some of the most exciting, unique and impressive work produced in the past year.

The **Red Sea Souk**, the Festival's industry market platform, will offer a packed program of curated events to foster co-production, international distribution, and encourage new business opportunities.

Representatives from 46 countries will attend the Souk which runs from 3-6 December to network and enjoy access to the vibrant new Saudi scene, as well as the best of the Arab and African production.

-ENDS-

For further press information:

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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.

