



ALMANYA



JOURNEY TO THE SUN



HEJAR



MOURNING

Middle Eastern Film Festival

This year's Middle Eastern Film Festival boasts the strongest line-up of films yet, with new releases by Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Jafar Panahi and Mohammad Rasoulof appearing alongside the work of rising filmmakers such as Morteza Farshbaf, Hesham Issawi and Leyla Bouzid, and a succinct retrospective on Kurdish cinema which, despite the groundbreaking efforts of Yilmaz Guney in the seventies, only really came to prominence over the last decade and half. This retrospective takes as its starting point Yesim Ustaoglu's poetic masterpiece, *Journey to the Sun*, a film that announced the arrival of a new Kurdish cinema, then takes its own journey through a remarkable selection of works that places Kurdish filmmakers within the context of Middle Eastern cinema and the broader diaspora. At its best Kurdish cinema not only evokes the sufferings and travails of its people, but also contains moments of great lyricism, humour and humanism, and it is these qualities that have struck such a resonant chord with moviegoers and critics alike.

Complementing the Kurdish season will be a day workshop, facilitated by Mustafu Gundogdu, one of the pre-eminent authorities on Kurdish cinema, and a personal appearance and masterclass by acclaimed documentary filmmaker Yuksel Yavuz.

For the first time the festival will also be showcasing visual artists with a connection to the region, in a programme of works curated in association with the internet channel The Agent Ria:registeredinar (www.youtube.com/registeredinar). Featured artists will be Hakan Akcura and Erkan Ozgen.

Rounding the festival off will be an exhibition in the cafe bar of works by the Palestinian-born artist Leena Namdari – see page 26 for details.

This project is organised by Neill Walker (on behalf of MESP), James McKenzie, and Filmhouse, and is managed by Neill Walker (on behalf of the Edinburgh International Centre for Spirituality and Peace, EICSP, Scottish Charity, SC038996). Middle East Festival Website: www.mesp.org.uk



Almanya

Almanya – Willkommen in Deutschland

Mon 6 Feb at 6.15pm

Yasemin Samdereli • Germany 2011 • 1h37m • Digital projection
German and Turkish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Vedat Erincin, Fahri Ogün Yardim, Aylin Tezel, Lilay Huser, Demet Gül.

A charming cross-cultural comedy about three generations of German-Turks, *Almanya* is the story of a Turkish family living in Germany who set off together for their homeland. Moving across the past and present, the journey is full of memories, arguments and reconciliations, until the family trip takes an unexpected turn...

Journey to the Sun

Günese yolculuk

**FOCUS ON
KURDISH CINEMA**

Tue 7 Feb at 6.15pm

Yesim Ustaoglu • Turkey/Netherlands/Germany 1999 • 1h44m
35mm • Turkish, Kurdish and Dutch with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Nazmi Kirik, Newroz Baz, Mizgin Kapazan, Ara Güler, Lucia Marano.

Turkish Mehmet and Kurdish Berzan are two lonely souls trying to keep their heads above water. Mehmet comes from the west of Turkey and Berzan's village is far away in the southeast, near the Iraqi border. They meet in the threatening urban environment of Istanbul, where Mehmet is working for the water department and Berzan is selling music cassettes on the street. Mehmet's hopes for a new life come to an abrupt end when he is mistakenly arrested as a terrorist suspect when a package containing a gun is found next to him on the bus.



FOTOGRAF



TRANSIT CITIES



GRANDMA, A THOUSAND TIMES

Hejar

Büyük adam küçük ask

Wed 8 Feb at 8.30pm

Handan Ipekci • Turkey/Greece/Hungary 2001 • 2h • 35mm
Turkish and Kurdish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Sükran Güngör, Dilan Erçetin, Füsün Demirel, Yıldız Kenter, İsmail Hakkı Sen.

This controversial film was unanimously nominated to represent Turkey at the Academy Awards in the Best Foreign Film category. At the film's heart is the relationship between a nationalist, authoritarian judge and a five-year-old Kurdish orphan. The judge, who is the girl's neighbour, takes her in following a botched police raid that results in the death of her guardian. *Hejar* was the winner of several awards, including Best Picture, at Turkey's prestigious Golden Orange Film Festival (2001).

Mourning

Soog

Thu 9 Feb at 8.30pm

Morteza Farshbaf • Iran 2011 • 1h25m • Digital projection
Persian with English subtitles • 12A

Cast: Kiomars Giti, Sharareh Pasha, Amir Hossein Maleki, Sahar Dolatshahi, Peyman Maadi.

A dark comedy chronicling a road trip through Iran's countryside to attend the funeral of a young boy's parents, who are killed in a tragic accident following an argument in the middle of the night. The now orphan is escorted by his two deaf relatives, who choose to keep the death of his parents a secret. *Mourning* is a successfully unconventional exploration of the road trip as a vehicle for grieving.

FOCUS ON KURDISH CINEMA

Fotograf

Fri 10 Feb at 6.30pm

Kazim Oz • Turkey • 2001 • 1h6m • 35mm
Turkish and Kurdish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Feyyaz Duman, Nazmî Kirik, Zulfıye Dolu, Muhlis Asan, Mehmet Ali Oz.

An imaginatively shot and revealing film following the stories of two young men travelling to Turkish Kurdistan by bus. They sit next to each other, each of them hiding the reason for his journey from the other. Who are they? Where are they going? And why?

PLUS SHORTS

Kurdish Lessons 1-3 Hakan Akçura • 2010 • 3m

FOCUS ON KURDISH CINEMA

DOUBLE BILL

Sat 11 Feb at 1.15pm

Transit Cities

Mohammed Hushki • Jordan • 2010 • 1h10m • Digibeta
Arabic with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Saba Mubarak, Mohammad Al-Qabbani, Shafika Al Til, Ashraf Farah, Manal Seihmeimat.

Divorced after 14 years of marriage in the US, a 36-year-old Jordanian woman returns to Amman but finds her hometown, family and friends much changed. Hoping to rebuild her former life, Laila arrives at her parents' home without warning – and without mentioning her divorce. She finds her once active, intellectual father is now a broken man who practically refuses to talk to her, her mother and sister are wearing hijab and frown upon her Western clothing, and her MA degree doesn't seem to mean anything to her former university when she goes to apply for a job. The last straw comes when she finds she can't even do as she pleases in her own rented apartment. An atmospheric and affecting drama about cultural estrangement.

PLUS

Grandma, a Thousand Times

Mahmoud Kaabour • United Arab Emirates/Qatar/Lebanon
2010 • 50m • Digibeta • Arabic with English subtitles • 12A
Documentary

Teta Fatima is the 83-year old matriarch of the Kaabour family and the sharp-witted queen bee of an old Beirut quarter. With great intimacy, this playful magic-realist film documents her larger-than-life character, as she struggles to cope with the silence of her once-buzzing house and imagines what awaits her beyond death.

The Agent Ria:registeredinar

Lyndsay Mann, who runs Agent Ria (an internet channel screening artist's films), has curated two works to be screened in the cinema – Hakan Akçura's *Kurdish Lessons 1-3* and Erkan Ozgen's *Breath* – and a longer work by Hakan Akçura, *Phuket: Two Sides of the Islands*, to be shown online at www.youtube.com/registeredinar and to be presented in person by the artist at Stills Gallery, 23 Cockburn Street, Edinburgh, on Saturday 18 February from 4 - 6pm.

SEASON CONTINUES OVERLEAF



GITMEK: MY MARLON AND BRANDO



ONCE UPON A TIME IN ANATOLIA



TURTLES CAN FLY



CLOSE UP KURDISTAN

Gitmek: My Marlon and Brando

Gitmek: Benim Marlon ve Brandom

Sat 11 Feb at 8.30pm

Huseyin Karabey • Turkey 2008 • 1h33m • Digibeta English, Kurdish and Turkish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Ayca Damgaci, Hama Ali Kahn, Nesrin Cevadzade, Omer Sahin, Cengiz Bozkurt.

Gitmek: My Marlon and Brando follows the long-distance love affair between Ayca, an actress from Turkey, and Hama Ali, an actor from Iraq. When Americans invade Iraq and the country is engulfed in with hellish violence, Ayca decides to go on a dangerous and seemingly futile journey to Iraq, in search of her lover.

Once Upon a Time in Anatolia

Bir Zamanlar Anadolu'da

Sun 12 Feb at 1.00pm

Nuri Bilge Ceylan • Turkey/Bosnia and Herzegovina 2011 2h30m • 35mm • Turkish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Muhammet Uzuner, Yilmaz Erdogan, Taner Birsel, Ahmet Mümtaz Taylan, Firat Tanis.

A haunting journey into the heart of darkness and into the heart of Anatolian identity. A murder has been committed and a man has confessed; all that remains is for him to lead police to the body, but it soon becomes clear that the killer can't locate the place where he left his victim. Unsurprisingly, master director Nuri Bilge Ceylan's Cannes prize-winner is no ordinary police investigation thriller. Nothing significant may seem to happen but things are not always as they appear to be. People, emotions and events develop in unexpected ways until the grand design of this subtle, rich and audacious film comes gradually into focus.

FOCUS ON
KURDISH CINEMA

Jiyan

Sun 12 Feb at 6.15pm

Jano Rosebani • Iraq/USA 2002 • 1h39m 35mm • Kurdish with English subtitles

12A – Contains moderately distressing scenes

Cast: Kurdo Galali, Pirshang Berzinji, Choman Hawrami, Derya Qadir.

Five years after the chemical and biological bombing of Halabja, Diyari, a Kurdish-American architect returns to his homeland, intending to build an orphanage in what is left of the town. He finds himself in a community where daily burials of the dead are a regular occurrence, even years after the attack. In the midst of this situation he discovers two children, cousins Jiyan and Sherko, who prove that it is still possible to salvage something from this destruction.

Min Dit: The Children of Diyarbakir

Mon 13 Feb at 6.10pm

Miraz Bezar • Germany/Turkey • 2009 • 1h42m • 35mm Kurdish and Turkish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Senay Orak, Muhammed Al, Hakan Karsak, Suzan Ilir.

Ten-year-old Gulistan and her younger brother Firat live happily with their parents in Diyarbakir, the heart of Turkish Kurdistan. When they are suddenly orphaned, Gulistan, Firat and their infant sister are cared for their young, politically active aunt Yekbun, who is trying to arrange for her and the children to move to Sweden. Before she is able to complete the process, however, Yekbun disappears without a trace, and the children are left alone.

PLUS SHORT

Breath Erkan Ozgen • Turkey 2008 • 6m

FOCUS ON
KURDISH CINEMA

Turtles Can Fly

Lakposhtha parvaz mikonand

Tue 14 Feb at 6.10pm

Bahman Ghobadi • Iran/Iraq/France 2004 • 1h37m 35mm Kurdish with English subtitles

15 – Contains implied sexual assault and war trauma

Cast: Soran Ebrahim, Avaz Latif, Saddam Hossein Feysal, Hiresal Feysal Rahman, Abdol Rahman Karim.

The first film to be made in Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein, *Turtles Can Fly* is set in a Kurdish refugee camp on the Iraqi-Turkish border just before the US invasion in spring 2003. Director Bahman Ghobadi concentrates on a handful of orphaned children and their efforts to survive the appalling conditions. Using an entirely non-professional cast, Ghobadi vividly immerses the viewer in the nightmarish realities of daily existence in this makeshift community.

Close Up Kurdistan

Thu 16 Feb at 8.00pm

Yüksel Yavuz • Germany 2007 • 1h44m • Digibeta Kurdish, Turkish and German with English subtitles • 15 Documentary

Reversing the route of refugees fleeing conflict and insecurity in Kurdistan, Yüksel Yavuz documents his journey from the relative safety of Europe back through Turkey to a refugee camp in Iraqi Kurdistan. Through the often harrowing stories of those he meets along the way – including Nobel Peace Prize nominee Ismail Besikci, imprisoned for 17 years as a dissident intellectual – Yavuz's film gives Western audiences an invaluable perspective on some of the most pressing political issues facing the Kurds.

This screening will be followed by a Q&A with director Yüksel Yavuz.

FOCUS ON
KURDISH CINEMA

FOCUS ON
KURDISH CINEMA



CAIRO EXIT



GOODBYE



THIS IS NOT A FILM

Cairo Exit

Fri 17 Feb at 6.10pm

Hesham Issawi • Egypt • 2010 • 1h40m • Digibeta
Arabic with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Mohamed Ramadan, Maryhan, Ahmed Bidder, Safaa Galal.

A powerful account of life in Cairo, this raw drama about a pair of star-crossed lovers shines a powerful spotlight upon the social and cultural taboos that riddle the city's diverse population. Amal is an 18-year-old Coptic girl, living in the slums of Cairo. Her Muslim boyfriend Tarek is planning to leave Egypt on an illegal boat-crossing to Italy. When Amal tells Tarek she is pregnant, he gives her an ultimatum – leave the country with him, or have an abortion. Despite her love for Tarek, Amal rejects both choices, but when she is fired from her job her already precarious future looks bleak.

PLUS SHORT

Soubresauts Leyla Bouzid • Tunisia/France 2011 • 22m

Hisham Zaman: 3 Films

FOCUS ON
KURDISH CINEMA

Sat 18 Feb at 1.45pm

1h25m • 35mm • Kurdish and Norwegian with English subtitles • 15

Three films by Kurdish-Norwegian director Hisham Zaman.

Bawke Hisham Zaman • Norway 2006 • 15m

A father is forced to choose between two evils to provide for his son.

Winterland Hisham Zaman • Norway 2007 • 52m

A love story about two Kurds in the north of Norway.

Other Ones (De andre) Hisham Zaman • Norway 2009 • 18m

A man is driving through a winter landscape. All of a sudden, his car hits someone, and he flees the scene in panic.

Goodbye

Sat 18 Feb at 8.20pm

Mohammad Rasoulof • Iran • 2011 • 1h40m • Digital projection
Persian with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Leyla Zareh, Fereshteh Sadre Orafaiy, Shahab Hosseini.

A young Iranian lawyer faces callous bureaucratic indifference and frightening governmental harassment as she attempts to maintain her professional life while seeking an exit visa. An overtly critical and thus political – and courageous – film, it is also beautifully artistic, with a sense of rhythm, framing, lighting, metaphor and symbol that is both subtle and communicative. Lacking official state approval, it was smuggled out of Iran for its Cannes Film Festival appearance last year, where it won Best Director in its section. After the events of the Green Revolution, the director was arrested along with Jafar Panahi, and both now face prison sentences.

PLUS SHORT

Into Thin Air Mohammadreza Farzad • Iran 2010 • 26m

TICKET DEALS

See any three (or more) films in this season and get 15% off

See any six (or more) films in this season and get 25% off

See any nine (or more) films in this season and get 35% off

These packages are available online, in person and on the phone, on both full price and concession price tickets.

Tickets must all be bought at the same time.

This Is Not a Film + SDI shorts

Sun 19 Feb at 1.00pm

1h45m • 15

This Is Not A Film will be followed by two short films dealing with the Middle East, from graduates of the Scottish Documentary Institute, and a discussion, lead by Finlay Pretsell, on the importance of film in documenting contemporary issues within the region.

This Is Not a Film

Jafar Panahi & Mojtaba Mirtahmasb • Iran • 2010 • 1h15m
Format TBC • Persian with English subtitles • 12A • Documentary

Iranian filmmakers Jafar Panahi and Mojtaba Mirtahmasb's mesmerising documentary depicts a day in Panahi's life as he appeals his conviction for 'propaganda against the system' – which carries with it a jail sentence and a twenty-year ban from writing or directing. *This Is not a Film* is not only a philosophical reflection on the nature of making art; it is also an urgent and personal defence of the artist. When Panahi's day ends on the threshold of the outside world, we see just what's at stake.

PLUS SHORTS

Road to Damascus Roxana Vilik • 2010 • 2m

Yemen Uprising Sara Ishaq • 2012 • 28m

SEASON CONTINUES OVERLEAF



KICK OFF



RED HEART



BAA PROGRAMME 3 – ERNESTO

Kick Off

FOCUS ON
KURDISH CINEMA

Sun 19 Feb at 6.10pm

Shawkat Amin Korki • Iraq/Iran/Japan 2009 • 1h21m
35mm • Kurdish with English subtitles • 12A

Cast: Atug Asu, Hamed Diyar, Hamajaga Hilin, Anwar Sako.

In Iraq, where thousands of families have seen their homes destroyed or confiscated, a ruined football stadium is the only refuge many can find. Hundreds of Kurds, Turks, Assyrians and Arabs live side by side in makeshift quarters inside the vast concrete structure. Aso is a young man who is bringing up his younger brother Diyar, who has lost a leg in a mine blast, under these frightful conditions. Along with his friend Sako, he organises a friendly match with the help of Kurdish TV. Comical and poignant, *Kick Off* conveys the reality of life in Iraq better than any news report.

Red Heart

Rødt hjerte

FOCUS ON
KURDISH CINEMA

Mon 20 Feb at 8.20pm

Halkawt Mustafa • Norway/Iraq 2011 • 1h17m
Digital projection • Kurdish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Shahan Jamal, Soran Ibrahim, Ali Ahmed.

Shirin and Soran, two Kurdish teenagers, are secretly sweethearts. When Shirin's mother dies, her father decides to remarry, but his new wife demands that Shirin has to marry her son. To be together, Soran and Shirin have no other choice but to escape. Life on the run is not easy – Soran is sent to prison and Shirin is left alone, in a society where a young woman without her father or her husband becomes fair game.

WORKSHOP AND MASTERCLASS

Please note these events are NOT taking place at Filmhouse – see individual event information for details.

Workshop: The History and Themes of Kurdish Cinema

An opportunity to learn more about cinema from the biggest stateless nation in the world

Facilitator: Mustafa Gündoğdu, Co-ordinator of the London Kurdish Film Festival

Venue: Sanctuary, Augustine United Church, 41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EL.

Date: Saturday 11 February 2012, 9.30am-4pm.

Cost: £15/£10 (Concessions, Students Free)

For a Registration Form contact: Neill Walker, mesp2012@hotmail.co.uk, 0131 331 4469.

Masterclass with Yuksel Yavuz

A conversation with Kurdish-German filmmaker Yuksel Yavuz.

Venue: Studio 2, Screen Academy Scotland, A Skillset Film and Media Academy, Edinburgh Napier University, 2A Merchiston Avenue, Edinburgh, EH10 4NU.

Date: Thursday 16 February 2012, 2pm-4pm

Cost: Admission Free. Everyone Welcome.

Contact and Booking: Michele Marcoux: M.Marcoux@napier.ac.uk

British Animation Awards 2012

Your chance to vote for winners in the British Animation Awards 2012! The last of three programmes containing a mix of animated shorts, music videos and commercials, offering an opportunity to see the cream of a fantastic range of animation films made over the past two years – on the big screen.

Voting forms will be handed out at the start of each screening.



BAA Programme 3

Mon 6 Feb at 6.30pm

1h12m • 15

Spin Spun Span (Emily Howells & Anne Wilkins, 4'30"), **Moxie** (Stephen Irwin, 6'), **Thursday** (Matthias Hoegg, 7'), **Get Well Soon: Impaled Leg** (Phoebe Boswell, 4'), **The Henhouse** (Elena Pomares, 7'), **You May Now** (Daniel Keeble & Dane Winn, 1'30"), **Liz Green: Displacement** (Kate Anderson, 4'), **Lukid: Stripes** (David Gilbert & Maxim Lucas, 4'), **Get Well Soon: Bob** (Darren Walsh, 2'20"), **I'm Fine Thanks** (Eamonn O'Neill, 4'30"), **Architeq: Into the Cosmos** (Darren Robbie, 3'), **Dry Riser: Tangerine** (Thomas Hicks, 4'), **Nokia: Gulp** (Sumo Science, 1'30"), **Statoil: Goodnight** (David Prosser, 1'), **Pilsner Urquell Legends: The Day Pilsner Struck Gold** (Chris Randall, 1'), **All Consuming Love (Man in a Cat)** (Louis Hudson, 9'), **Ernesto** (Corinne Ladiende, 7')