



ABOUT ELLY



THE BUS



HAREM SUARE

Middle Eastern Film Festival

For this year's Middle Eastern Film Festival, the focus falls on Turkey. Cinema came to Turkey early – the Lumiere brothers' *L'arrive d'un train en Gare* (1896) was screened in Istanbul in the year of its release – but it wasn't until 1914 that the first truly Turkish film was produced. During the First World War, General Enver, understanding the power of film as propaganda, set up a film department in the army; then, following the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, film was seen as a way of establishing a national identity. In the same year, the privately owned studio Kemal Film was established, but it wasn't until the 1950s and the establishment of a number of successful production companies, specialising mostly in populist genre films, that the Turkish film industry really took off. These films were mostly for domestic consumption, but in 1964 Turkish cinema began to attract international attention with the release of Metin Erksan's *Dry Summer*, winner of the Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival.

By the mid-1970s cinemagoing habits, partly due to the popularity of video and partly due to civil unrest, were on the wane and film production went into decline, with some production companies resorting to pornography and others looking for new markets engaging Turkey's Diaspora. Migration became a major theme, with Tunc Okan's *The Bus* (1976) dealing with immigration into Europe. Kurdish cinema found its voice in the eighties with Yilmaz Guney's *Yo!* (1982). From the mid-nineties there was a marked increase in Turkish film production, fanned initially through television money and latterly through European co-productions, such as *Harem Suare* (1999) and *Head-On* (2004). The result has seen a new wave of Turkish filmmakers, notably Zeki Demirkubuz (*Innocence*), Reha Erdem (*Times and Winds*) and Nuri Bilge Ceylan (*Uzak*).

Also included in this year's festival are two award-winning Iranian films, *About Elly*, winner of the Silver Bear at Berlin, and *Tehroun*, winner of the International Critics Award at Venice. *Shahada* takes a look at the pressures on Muslims living in contemporary Europe, in particular the dynamic between faith and secularism, and *Son of Babylon* is a melancholy Iraqi road movie. Completing the line-up are a programme of shorts from the Scottish Documentary Institute and Jordanian drama *Captain Abu Raed*, a hit with audiences at the 2008 Edinburgh International Film Festival.

The Middle Eastern Film Festival is organised by Neill Walker (on behalf of MESP), and James McKenzie (Filmhouse) with special thanks to Nazmi Okan, 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



About Elly Darbareye Elly

Thu 10 Feb at 5.45pm

Asghar Farhadi • Iran 2009 • 1h59m • 35mm
Persian and German with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Golshifteh Farahani, Shahab Hosseini, Taraneh Alidoosti, Merila Zare'i, Mani Haghighi.

Over a weekend at the seashore, a group of well-to-do young Teheranians tries to set up their freshly-divorced friend Ahmad with an amiable yet aloof kindergarten teacher Elly, whom none of them knows very well. But their relaxed weekend suddenly takes a dramatic turn when Elly disappears, and various lies – casual and serious, necessary and unnecessary – come back to haunt the characters.

The Bus Otobüs

Sat 12 Feb at 1.15pm

Tunc Okan • Switzerland/Turkey 1976 • 1h31m • 35mm
Turkish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Tunc Okan, Tuncel Kurtiz, Björn Gedda, Oguz Arlas, Aras Oren.

A group of Turkish workers are travelling by bus to Switzerland to find work when their money and passports are stolen, and the bus, with them in it, is abandoned in the middle of a 24-hour shopping mall. Lost and puzzled, they remain with the bus until the need to eat and relieve themselves drives them to make forays into the mall. A black comedy with serious overtones.



TEHRAN BACKYARD



YOL



INNOCENCE

Harem suaré

Sat 12 Feb at 6.20pm

Ferzan Ozpetek • Turkey/ Italy/ France 1999 • 1h34m • 35mm
Turkish, French and Italian with English subtitles • 18

Cast: Marie Gillain, Alex Descas, Lucia Bosé, Valeria Golino.

Harem Suare tells of an impossible love affair between a Sultan's concubine and her eunuch in the last Harem of the Ottoman Empire, at the turn of the twentieth century. In the Sultan's Harem, Safiye swears allegiance to Nadir, one of the black eunuchs, who is in charge of and serves the women inside the Harem. Through their story we enter a world of secrets, plotting, fear, unexpressed desires, warm friendships and grave betrayals.

Yol The Road

Sun 13 Feb at 5.45pm

Serif Gören & Yılmaz Güney • Turkey/Switzerland/France 1982
1h54m • HD-Cam • Turkish and Kurdish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Tarik Akan, Serif Sezer, Halil Ergün, Meral Orhonsay, Necmettin Çobanoğlu.

Five men are each granted a week's leave from prison in order to visit their families. As this compelling and moving drama follows each one across Turkey, it portrays the joys and sorrows of their lives.

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.

Tehran Backyard

Sun 13 Feb at 1.30pm

Roxana Pope • Iran/UK • 2008 • 28m • Digibeta
Persian with English subtitles • Documentary

Pari is a sixty five year old woman who lives on the outskirts of Tehran. Each day she travels over six hours into the sprawling city to work as a cleaning lady for the middle class ladies of north Tehran. Her husband is blind, she has five children and two grandchildren and she is still the main breadwinner. Set against the backdrop of political demonstrations marking the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution and promoting Iran's right to Nuclear Energy, we travel behind the political scenes to witness the extraordinary life of Pari, an extraordinary woman who has carried her family through many adversities.

PLUS SHORTS

The Bees

Rana Ayoub • UK/Lebanon 2009 • 13m • Arabic with English subtitles

My Mother's Daughter

Saleyha Ahsan • UK/Iran 2007 • 12m

Red Burqa

Roxana Pope • Iran/UK/Portugal 2009 • 5m • Persian with English subtitles

The screening will be followed by a Q&A.

Innocence Masumiyet

Mon 14 Feb at 6.00pm

Zeki Demirkubuz • Turkey 1997 • 1h50m • 35mm
Turkish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Güven Kıraç, Derya Alabora, Haluk Bilginer, Nazim Gök, Engin Kurtcuoglu.

Yusuf, released from prison after having served a ten-year sentence, goes to live with his sister. But that soon becomes difficult, and Yusuf, with few other prospects, decides to check out an address given to him by a fellow inmate. It turns out to be a run down, cheap hotel, and Yusuf checks in. Soon, his path crosses that of a strange family – a couple with a child – who become the focus of Yusuf's life.

Uzak Distant

Tue 15 Feb at 6.00pm

Nuri Bilge Ceylan • Turkey 2002 • 1h50m • 35mm
Turkish with English subtitles

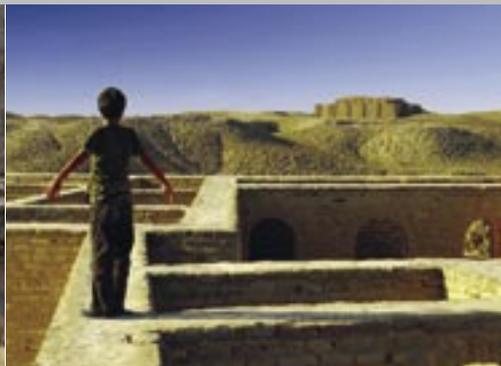
15 – Contains strong language and moderate nudity

Cast: Muzaffer Ozdemir, Emin Toprak, Zuhul Gencer Erkaya, Nazan Kırılmaz.

Nuri Bilge Ceylan's story of two emotionally isolated Istanbul men thrown unhappily together is simultaneously sad, funny and ravishing to look at. The story of an unemployed rural man who comes to Istanbul to crash in the apartment of a distant relative while fruitlessly looking for work on the city's wintry docks, *Uzak* announces its unrushed, isolating world view from the very first shot.



CAPTAIN ABU RAED



SON OF BABYLON



TIMES AND WINDS

Tehrour

Thu 17 Feb at 6.00pm

Nader T Homayoun • France/Iran 2009 • 1h35m • 35mm
Persian with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Ali Ebdali, Farzin Mohades, Sara Bahrami, Missagh Zareh.

Filed with a skeleton crew a few months before the Iranian elections and subsequent demonstrations, Nader T Homayoun's searing feature debut exposes a side of life in the Islamic Republic that few Westerners see. Combining social drama, crime thriller and black comedy, it tells the story of Ibrahim, who leaves his village and family to try his luck in Tehran, but winds up begging on the streets. He rents a sickly baby from a local gang lord to increase his begging income, but is forced to go deep into the slums of the city to get the child back after it's stolen by a prostitute.

Captain Abu Raed

Fri 18 Feb at 6.10pm

Amin Matalqa • Jordan 2007 • 1h44m • Format t.b.c.
Arabic, French and Italian with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Nadim Sawalha, Rana Sultan, Hussein Al-Sous, Uday Al-Qiddissi, Ghandi Saber.

Abu Raed is a widower who mops floors at the airport in between imaginary conversations with his late wife. While wearing a pilot hat he found in the trash, Abu is mistaken for a globe-trotter by one of his neighbour's children. Abu is at first hesitant to interact with him, but soon begins weaving elaborate stories for the impoverished neighbourhood's children.

Son of Babylon

Sat 19 Feb at 6.10 (+Q&A),

Sun 20 Feb at 3.30pm + 5.45pm &

Wed 23 Feb at 8.40pm

Mohamed Al Daradji • Iraq/UK/France/Netherlands/United Arab Emirates/Egypt/Palestine 2009 • 1h40m • 35mm
Arabic and Kurdish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Yasser Talib, Shazada Hussein.

In the chaotic aftermath of the fall of Saddam Hussein, Ahmed, a young Kurdish boy, and his grandmother set out in search of his father (her son), arrested and missing since the Gulf War. Against the backdrop of the US occupation, they make their way through a country in ruins, from prison to mosque to mass grave. In *Son of Babylon*, Mohamed Al Daradji has crafted a beautiful and melancholy testament to the suffering of millions, as well as a deeply humane vision of a people in search of the way forward.

We are delighted to welcome award-winning Iraqi director Mohamed Al Daradji for a Q&A following the 6.10pm screening on Saturday 19 February.

Presented by Take One Action, Scotland's global action cinema project. For more world-changing films and events, visit www.takeoneaction.org.uk



Dry Summer *Susuz yaz*

Sat 19 Feb at 1.30pm

Metin Erksan • Turkey 1964 • 1h30m • 35mm
Turkish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Ulvi Dogan, Erol Tas, Hülya Kocuyigit, Hakki Haktan.

An evil and vindictive landowner attempts to steal away his brother's wife while the latter serves time in prison for a murder committed by the former. Inspired by Italian Neorealism and Turkish folk culture and music, Metin Erksan offers a contemporary retelling of the Cain and Abel story that is at once sensuous and cruel.

Restored in 2008 by the World Cinema Foundation at Cineteca di Bologna / L'Imagine Ritrovata Laboratory.

Times and Winds *Bes vakit*

Sun 20 Feb at 1.15pm

Reha Erdem • Turkey 2006 • 1h52m • 35mm
Turkish with English subtitles • 15 – Contains strong language

Cast: Ali Bey Kayali, Ozkan Ozen, Elit Iscan, Selma Ergeç.

With this beautifully photographed, pastoral portrait of the life, rhythms and seasons of a remote mountain village, Reha Erdem adds his name to those of Nuri Bilge Ceylan and Fatih Akin in the list of directors heading up the impressive recent revival of Turkish cinema. The conflicts of Turkey's poised situation – at a crossroads between Asia and Europe, tradition and modernity, secularism and religion – are reflected in the lives of its three pubescent protagonists – Omer, Yakup and Yildiz – as we experience the hardship and strictures of rural life through their variously troubled and subtly handled rites of passage. One hates his father, or believes he does, and schemes to kill him. Another is hopelessly enamoured of his attractive young schoolteacher.



SHAHADA



HEAD ON



TRUNK CRIME

Shahada

Sun 20 Feb at 6.00pm

Burhan Qurbani • Germany 2010 • 1h28m • 35mm
German, English and Turkish with English subtitles • 15

Cast: Carlo Ljibek, Jeremias Acheampong, Maryam Zaree, Marija Skaricic, Sergej Moya.

Three Muslims grapple with how to reconcile their beliefs with the guilt, violence, and forbidden sexuality that are woven into the fabric of their everyday lives in Berlin. As they navigate this treacherous terrain, they find themselves pulled between religious tolerance and radicalism. Burhan Qurbani's polished feature debut has already received widespread praise for its intimate view of the tension between modern life and timeworn tradition.

Head On Gegen die Wand

Mon 21 Feb at 6.00pm

Fatih Akin • Germany/Turkey 2004 • 2h2m • 35mm

German, Turkish and English with English subtitles • 18 – Contains very strong language, strong sex, hard drug use and suicide theme

Cast: Birol Unel, Sibel Kekilli, Catrin Striebeck, Meltem Cumbul, Stefan Gebelhoff.

Raw, impassioned and provocative, German/Turkish drama *Head On* lives up to its title in its opening minutes, as angry alcoholic Cahit deliberately drives his car into a wall. This failed suicide attempt brings him together with Sibel, the equally desperate daughter of strict Muslim Turks, who begs Cahit to join her in a marriage of convenience. Soon enough, though, faked feelings turn real in a film that's part comedy, part tragedy and filled with a sense of edgy surprise.

DAY WORKSHOP

The History and Themes of Turkish Cinema

Saturday 19 February 2011

Drawing upon film clips, this day workshop covers the whole history of Turkish cinema from the early years to the present.

Facilitator: Ozlem Guclu, Film scholar, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

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

Registration: 10am-10.30am. Workshop: 10.30am-4pm.

Cost: £10. (Free for students).

For a Registration Form contact: Neill Walker, mesp2011@hotmail.co.uk, 0131 331 4469.

Ozlem Guclu is a PhD candidate in Media and Film Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, with a thesis entitled 'Silent Female Characters in the New Cinema of Turkey: Gender, Nation and Memory.' She is working on Turkish cinema – on the new cinema of Turkey, in particular – in its historical contexts and its relation to gender, sexuality, nation, ethnicity and memory.

Projecting the Archive

A collaboration with the British Film Institute aimed at unearthing and reappraising a wealth of lesser-known British feature films using the BFI National Archive's holdings, and giving audiences the opportunity to see and celebrate British cinema beyond the usual titles, on the big screen.



Boulting Brothers Double Bill

Mon 28 Feb at 6.15pm
1h52m • PG

Two early films from the production/direction team John and Roy Boulting.

Trunk Crime Roy Boulting • UK • 1939 • 51m • 35mm • PG

Cast: Manning Whitley, Barbara Everest, Michael Drake, Thorley Walters.

A taut, macabre thriller concerning a meek and mild university student who decides to turn the tables on his bullying tormentors, starting with the burying alive of their ringleader in a trunk.

PLUS

Inquest Roy Boulting • UK • 1940 • 1h1m • 35mm • PG

Cast: Elizabeth Allan, Herbert Lomas, Hay Petrie, Barbara Everest, Olive Sloane.

A young widow comes under the spotlight when the body of her husband is exhumed a year after burial and declared to have been the victim of murder. The coroner is convinced of her guilt, but a crusading lawyer comes to her defence. An absorbing and gripping courtroom drama.