CMES Spring 2019 Film Series ? 'Tales of the Middle East'

Date:
December 4, 2018

The UA's Center for Middle Eastern Studies presents its spring 2019 film series, themed "Tales of the Middle East."

All screenings will be held on the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Manuel Pacheco Integrated Learning Center, Room 130, 1500 E. University Blvd.

See the series lineup below.

February 6

"The Midnight Orchestra" [1] [2]

Click here [3] to watch the trailer.

Review excerpt from Jewish Renaissance [4], by Judi Herman:

"Wall Street whizz kid Michael Abitbol returns to his childhood home in Casablanca to be reunited with his elderly father: legendary band leader and local hero Marcel Botbol, from whom he is estranged. Botbol is returning there himself for the first time since leaving his native city and adoring fans for Israel in 1973, when the Yom Kippur War caused an anti-Semitic backlash in Morocco. But no sooner do they meet again than tragedy strikes and the son must engage with officials of the local Jewish community to bury his father. But first, Michael must fulfil his father's last wish ? to reunite the band and this becomes an overwhelming desire to do so for one last, transcendent gig.

"It's Michael's dogged pursuit of these eccentric and impossible, even dangerous, old men that drives the narrative: A pimp and gangster, complete with moll, an eccentric millionaire who prefers life as a beggar and the harmonica player confined in an asylum since he jumped into the nighttime harbor swearing he heard the midnight orchestra playing out at sea."

Director
Jérôme Cohen-Olivar

Country of origin
Morocco

Language
French, Arabic, English

Year/length
2015/114 min.
March 6

"Sepideh [5]"

Click here [6] to watch the trailer.

Review excerpt from Variety [7], by Dennis Harvey:

"Danish director Berit Madsen's first documentary feature spends a few years in the company of its titular figure, a provincial Iranian teenager whose dream of becoming an astronaut ? or even "just" an astronomer ? requires stubborn, single-minded focus, since almost no one around her thinks those are fit pursuits for a young woman in a conservative Muslim culture.

"Sixteen when we meet her, Sepideh Hooshyar lives with her mother and brother (her father died suddenly a few years ago) in Sa?adat Shahr, a town in the southwestern province of Fars. Though the family seems comfortably situated, their finances are turning precarious. The fields they own have gone dry and unplanted, and the late husband's relatives have not been helpful about repairing a well. Mom also worries constantly that Sepideh invites gossip by going out stargazing at night and fixes on career goals that many consider unrealistic. (For one thing, they probably can't afford to send her to university.)"

**Director**
Berit Madsen

**Country of origin**
Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Iran

**Language**
Persian, English

**Year/length**
2014/90 min.

April 3

"Come to My Voice [8]"

Click here [9] to watch the trailer.

Director Hüseyin Karabey will be joining us for a digital Q&A after the film.

Review excerpt from Variety [10], by Jay Weissberg (warning ? full review contains spoilers):

"A Kurdish girl and her grandmother are placed in the Kafkaesque situation of needing to find nonexistent guns in order to free the girl?s father from a Turkish prison in 'Come to My Voice,' a beautifully crafted drama whose traditional storytelling movingly conveys a sense of a community burdened by loss.

"A Kurdish village gathers around a bard (Muhsin Tokcu), known as a 'Dengbej,' to hear the narrative that becomes the film. Just as Berfe (Feride Gezer) is telling her young granddaughter, Jiyon (Melek Ulger), the story of a fox that lost its tail, the Turkish army raids
their rustic village, demanding weapons that a spiteful informer claims are hidden in peoples’ homes. The malicious captain (Nazmi Sinan Mihci) has Jiyan’s father, Temo (Tuncay Akdemir), arrested along with all the menfolk, informing the villagers they can free their loved ones if they bring him their weapons.”

**Director**
Hüseyin Karabey

**Country of origin**
France, Germany, Turkey

**Language**
Kurdish, Turkish

**Year/length**
2014/105 min.

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May 1

"Manpower [11]"

Click [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it8aveprJkg) to watch the trailer.

From [Haaretz](http://www.haaretz.com), by Uri Klein:

"Kaplan's new movie is entirely fictional, but his ability to take a credible look at the physical, human, social and cultural reality around him and to situate his characters within it is still apparent. 'Manpower' follows the stories of four Israeli men in crisis. But while many other movies track parallel plot lines in order to bring them together, that is not Kaplan's main goal, even if some of the stories do intersect eventually. Rather, by looking at all four stories, Kaplan tries to offer a portrait of Israeli masculinity that emerges somewhere on the blurry lines between the center and the margins of Israeli society? on the margins, mainly."

**Director**
Noam Kaplan

**Country of origin**
France, Israel

**Language**
English, Hebrew, Igbo

**Year/length**
2014/85 min.


**Source URL**: https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/uannounce/cmes-spring-2019-film-series-tales-middle-east

**Links**
[2] https://cmes.arizona.edu/events/midnight-orchestra