



The Knight

Festival Director
Intishal Al Timimi

Editor in Chief
Mohamed Kandil

Editorial Manager
Nahed Nasr

Art Director
Ahmed Atef Megahed

Editing & Proofreading
Hani Mustafa
Heba Hassan
Nada Abdelkader

Head of Press Office
Ola El Shafey

Graphic Team
Ahmed Zaater
Ahmed El Sayed
Maha Naguib

Photographers
Mohamed Hamed
Mostafa Abdelaty
Hana Hafez

Archive
Mahmoud Lashin



GFF Kicks off its 5th Edition Insightful Look to the Future

“In terms of film festivals El Gouna Film Festival is like a child whose birth we all witnessed.”
Akram Hosny

From the heart of the magical resort town of El Gouna, El Gouna Film Festival officially raised the curtains on its 5th edition in a glamorous opening ceremony. Gracing the 5th edition of GFF's red carpet was a horde of Egyptian, regional, and international stars and starlets, filmmakers, and an assortment of industry professionals, who were dressed to the nines in arrays of colorful fabrics and lovely silhouettes. Among these stars were Egyptian GFF jury members actresses Arwa Gouda and Menna Shalaby in addition to, superstar Youssra, Asser Yassin, Ola Roshdy, Ahmed Dawood, Mona Zaki, Asmaa Galal, Laila Eloui, Naglaa Badr, Sherif Mounir, Ahmed Hatem, Hend Sabri, Karim Kassem, Mohamed Farag, and Passant Shawky, in addition to GFF's Career Achievement Award recipient Ahmed El Saka. Also GFF's red carpet presence included; FIPRESCI jury member

Helen Barlow, Egyptian film critic Tarek El Shinnawi, salient stars Ashraf Abdelbaky, Ashraf Zaki, Rogena, Lebleba, Saba Mubarak, Hana Shiha, Laila Eloui, Elham Shahine, Hesham Maged, Akram Hosny, Dalia El Beheiry, Jamal Sulaiman, Ahmed Rizk, Sarrah Abdelrahman, Hadia Ghaleb, Lamees El Hadidy, Inas El Deghidy, Dina El Sherbiy, USA Ambassador Jonathan R. Cohen, and Egyptian actor Akram Hosny, who mentioned his thrill regarding the 5th edition of GFF. “In terms of film festivals”, he said. “El Gouna Film Festival is like a child whose birth we all witnessed just as we witnessed its growth into what it is now.” Egyptian actress Dalia El Beheiry also mentioned her excitement regarding GFF and its parti-colored lineup this year. “I'm incredibly curious about several films, but I mostly want to see Amira by Mohamed Diab,” says the actress:

Following the red carpet, GFF's opening ceremony began with an introduction by TV personality Nardine Farag and a short documentary film about the past four editions of GFF as well as its most memorable events, special international guests, and milestones were presented. Shortly afterward, Red Sea Governor, Major General Amr Hanafy, took to the stage and gave a speech about the power that the medium of art holds over humanity and how it moves our emotions. Additionally, he extended his gratitude to the efforts of the Egyptian government and the workers who extinguished the fire that occurred a day before GFF's opening. He also expressed his firm belief in the soft power of cinema, stressing its key role as an element that paves the way for change and brings people together. Additionally, Engineer Samih Sawiris,

Founder of El Gouna, along with superstar Youssra, member of GFF's International Advisory Board, gave a joint speech about the ambitions that GFF holds.

Sawiris also discussed his insistence on holding a music festival soon. He said: “Every edition of GFF is harder than the one that came before it, as we constantly seek what rejuvenates the core of our festival and makes it more special.” Eng. Samih also thanked the Ministry of Health and Population for supporting GFF during its 4th edition –an experience that international film festivals took as an example. He also commended the Red Sea Governorate, which was an essential factor of GFF's success.

Presented by Egyptian actor Sayed Ragab and his sentimental narration, the next segment of GFF's opening ceremony presented a video tribute in remembrance of the works of stars and filmmakers who passed earlier this year, such as Samir Ghanem, Dalal Abdel Aziz, Wahid Hamed, Ezzat El Alaili, Ramses Marzouk, Moufida Tlatli, and Jean-Paul Belmondo.

In a speech following this, Festival Director Intishal Al Tamimi said: “We are proud of what GFF has achieved in its previous editions. Also, we're proud of our position and as Engineer Samih Sawiris said, the next edition of GFF will be harder because we always seek challenges to provide a different GFF edition.”

After Al Tamimi's speech, a video showcasing the most important films in GFF's competitive sections in its 5th edition was presented. He then began introducing the juries for El Gouna Film Festival's 5th edition, as the members of these juries, starting with the members of El Gouna Green Star Award's jury, followed by the juries of GFF's Short Film Competition, Feature Documentary Competition, and the Feature Narrative Competition.

Festival Director, Intishal Al Tamimi welcomed GFF's jury members on stage. The 5th edition's jury names are as follows: El Gouna Green Star Award: Arwa Gouda (Egypt), Kayvan Mashayekh (USA), Rana Najjar (Jordan); Feature Narrative Competition: Rob Allyn (United States), Kabir Khan (India), Menna Shalaby (Egypt), Sara Hoch (Mexico), Georges Hachem (Lebanon); Feature Documentary Competition: Martha Sosa (Mexico), Jay Jeon (South Korea), Kim A. Snyder (USA), Mahmoud Al Massaad (Jordan), May Odeh (Palestine); Short Film Competition: Kamla Abou Zekry (Egypt), Tamer Ashry (Egypt), Alice Kharoubi (France), Nadia Kounda (Morocco), E. Nina Rothe (Italy). This was followed by a collective memorial photo of the 5th edition's jury members on stage together with Al Tamimi, Amir Ramses, Artistic Director, and Bushra Rozza, Co-Founder and Chief Operations and Foreign Relations Officer.

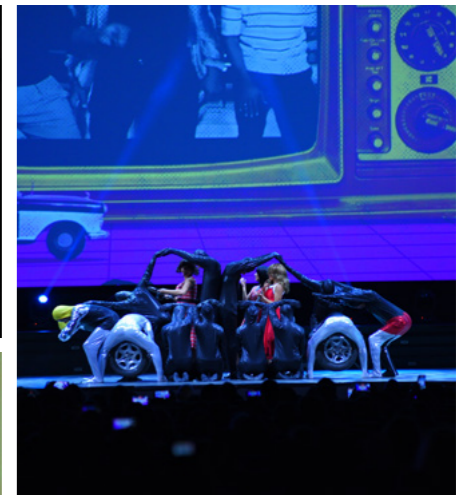
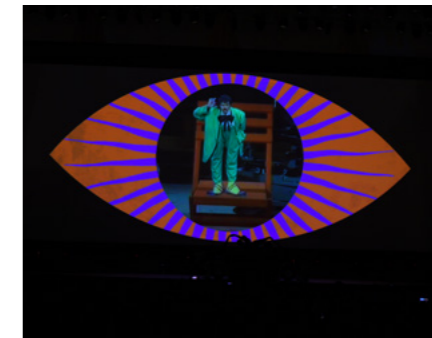
Following this, film star Hend Sabri introduced GFF's Career Achievement Award, which was presented to Egyptian actor Ahmed El Saka, who went on stage and received the award.

In introducing El Saka, Hend Sabri said: “He constantly pushes the walls of the cinematic industry to include us all without fail.”

As he gave his speech, Ahmed El Saka dedicated his award to late Samir Ghanem, Dalal Abdel Aziz, Onsi Sawiris, his father, Egypt's late pioneer of the Puppet Theatre, Salah El



“We constantly seek what rejuvenates the core of our festival and makes it more special.”
Eng. Samih Sawiris



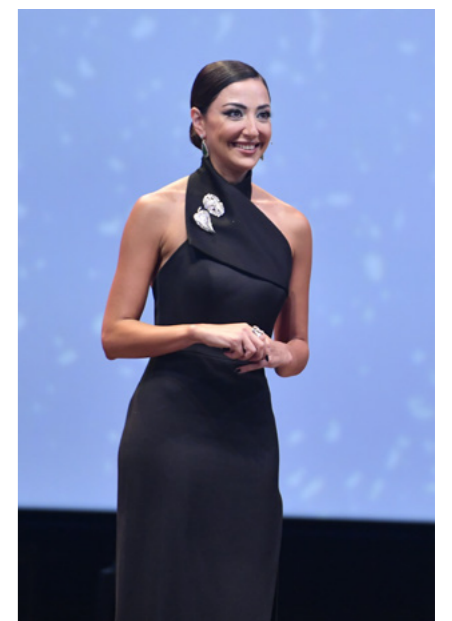
“I'm incredibly curious about several films, but I mostly want to see Amira by Mohamed Diab.”
Dalia El Beheiry

Saka, his mother Nadia El Sorougy, as well as his wife Maha Al Sagheer and his colleagues.

In this regard, he said: “In the late 1990s, Egyptian cinema came back to life with films such as An Upper Egyptian at the American University, which was an innovation. I'm proud I was a part of that stage.”

Under the guise of commemorating the great Egyptian actor Samir Ghanem, who had dearly departed on May 20, 2021, renowned actress Lebleba gave a speech about the late cinematic icon, which was followed by a video celebrating his long, illustrious artistic career accompanied by contemporary choreography performance.

At the end of the opening ceremony, Egyptian artist Mohamed Ramadan took to the stage to present the last segment, which was a live performance that featured actress Mais Hemdan.



Today

★ Red Carpet



Today, the cast and crew of Moroccan director Nabil Ayouch's **Casablanca Beats** will walk the red carpet of the **Festival Plaza at 5:30 p.m.**, with its screening starting at **6:30 p.m.** Participating in the 5th edition of **GFF's Feature Narrative Competition**, the film

tells the story of former rapper Anas, who takes a job at a cultural center in a working-class Casablanca-based neighborhood and steadily inspires his students. It's noteworthy that **Casablanca Beats** was part of the 2021 Cannes Film Festival's official competition. Walking the red carpet for this film are its director Nabil Ayouch, producer Badih Massaad, and two of its cast members Anas Basbousi and Ismail Adouab.

★ Meet the filmmaker

Life of Ivanna

Doc Competition
Guest(s) in attendance:
Director:
Renato Borraro Serrano
Sea Cinema 2
3:00 p.m.

Natural Light

out of Competition
Guest(s) in attendance:
Cinematographer:
Tamás Dobos
Producer:
Marcell Gerő
TU Berlin Audimax
3:45 p.m.

Casablanca Beats

Narr. Competition
Guest(s) in attendance:
Director:
Nabil Ayouch
Producer:
Badih Massaad
cast
Anas Basbousi
Ismail Adouab
Meryem Nekkach
Festival Plaza
6:30 p.m.

Mama, I'm Home













Out of Competition
Guest(s) in attendance:
Director:
Vladimir Bitokov
Arena Cinema
9:30 p.m.



Gemini Africa's CinemaTech

Organized by **Gemini Africa**, a pitching session will be held under the title **CinemaTech** today, October 15, 12:00 p.m in the TUB, Audimax. **Gemini Africa** will be opening its doors after its successful patented event, dawning from Egypt and extending into Africa and the Middle East, for tech startups to showcase their innovative solutions. **CinemaTech** is the first entrepreneurial track bridging the gap between entrepreneurship and filmmaking, with the aim of uplifting the industry by injecting technological solutions offered by startups.

★ Schedule

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|
|  | CASABLANCA BEATS Festival Plaza 6:30 PM |  | ONE SECOND Sea Cinema 1 6 PM |  | Krzysztof Kieslowski - I'M SO-SO Sea Cinema 3 3:15 PM |
|  | NATURAL LIGHT Audimax (TU Berlin) 3:45 PM |  | PLAYGROUND Sea Cinema 1 9:15 PM |  | PARIS, 13TH DISTRICT Sea Cinema 3 8:45 PM |
|  | ARTHUR RAMBO Audimax (TU Berlin) 7 PM |  | LIFE OF IVANNA Sea Cinema 2 3:00 PM |  | COPPELIA Arena 6:45 PM |
|  | THE BLIND MAN WHO DID NOT WANT TO SEE TITANIC Sea Cinema 1 3:15 PM |  | ANIMAL Sea Cinema 2 5:45 PM |  | MAMA, I'M HOME Arena 9:30 PM |

Tomorrow



An Exhibition Tracing Kieslowski's Philosophy

A Retrospective Exhibition commemorating the 25th anniversary of director **Krzysztof Kieslowski's** passing will open tomorrow at 12:00 pm. The exhibition showcases the life and works of the renowned Polish filmmaker. Curated by acclaimed production designer and art director Onsi Abou Seif, the exhibition is set to be presented through a cinematic lens that brings the displayed works to life. The exhibition will feature 23 framed posters from the Film Museum in Łódź, all inspired by **Kieślowski's** films. Additionally, it will incorporate original material from the established film archive the French Cinémathèque, featuring 50 photos including posters from **Kieślowski's** iconic films, their filming locations, the filming process, as well as photos of **Krzysztof Kieślowski** himself. A highlight of the exhibition will be the screening, in loop, of a documentary film that doubles as a mosaic of the late director's life, thoughts, and filmography, titled **Krzysztof Kieślowski - I'm So-So**, directed by **Krzysztof Wierzbicki**. The **Krzysztof Kieślowski** Retrospective Exhibition is produced by Xlab Group. Specialized in mixing art and technology for the last 20 years, Xlab Group has experienced engineers and creatives under one roof in order to drive growth and innovation for many multinational companies via tailored digital transformation solutions.

CineGouna Platform Kicks off

The opening of the **CineGouna Platform (CGP)** will take place tomorrow October 16 at 9:30 PM in the Festival Plaza - GFF Lounge.

The CGP is an industry-oriented event created to support and empower Egyptian and Arab filmmakers, helping them find artistic and financial support. **CineGouna Platform** presents the **CineGouna SpringBoard** and **CineGouna Bridge** programs that provide opportunities for sharing and learning.

The 5th edition of **CineGouna Bridge** will present panel discussion, workshops and masterclasses with key industry professionals and experts on several cinematic topics. The programs and activities of **CineGouna Platform** will take place at the TU Berlin, El Gouna Campus and at Sea Cinema from October 16 to 21, 2021

For its 5th edition, **CineGouna SpringBoard** received submissions from all over the Arab world. A panel of experts reviewed the submissions and made a selection of 13 projects in development (8 narratives and 5 documentaries) and 6 films in post-production (2 narratives and 4 documentaries) on the basis of their content, artistic vision, and overall financial feasibility.

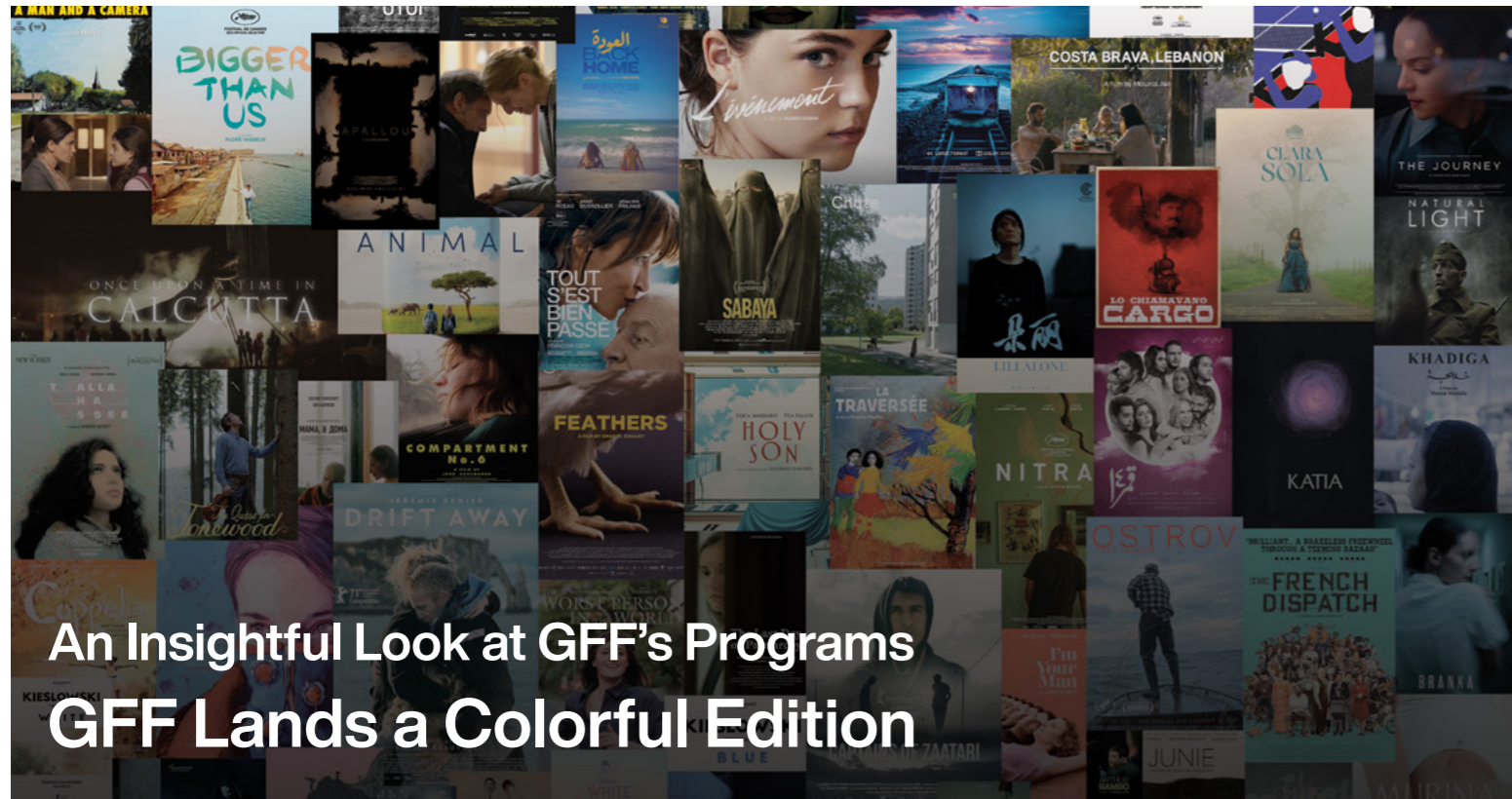


★ GFF's Short Film Program Kicks Off!

Today, the **Short Film Competition** for the 5th edition of **GFF** will kick off with all its screenings being shown at **TU Berlin's Audimax at 6:15 p.m.** Showing five films, **GFF's Short Film Competition** will start off with a screening of director Faiza Ambah's **Nour Shams**, which was nominated for Best Live Short over 15 Minutes at the 2021 Palm

Springs International ShortFest. Other films in the **Short Film Competition's** first short film program include **CAI-BER** by Egyptian director Ahmed Abdelsalam, which is having its World Premiere, as well as **Branka** by Ákos K. Kovács, **Lili Alone** by Zou Jing, and **Noir-Soliel** by Marie Larrivé.

For the 5th edition of **GFF**, 23 films are participating in its **Short Film Competition** with the prize being **El Gouna Golden Star for Short Film, along with a trophy, certificate, and US \$15,000**, in addition to **El Gouna Silver Star for Short Film with a trophy, certificate, and US \$7,500**, **El Gouna Bronze Star for Short Film with a trophy, certificate, and US \$4,000**, and **El Gouna Star for Best Arab Short Film with a trophy, certificate, and US \$5,000**.



An Insightful Look at GFF's Programs GFF Lands a Colorful Edition

Written by Heba Hassan

Through its five consecutive editions, **El Gouna Film Festival** has survived critical conditions and successfully managed to grow as a focal point of international cinematic interest. The festival in its 5th edition has increasingly attracted more film premieres, featuring a robust lineup in its different sections. In this context, here's a rundown of key anticipated highlights from **GFF's** 5th edition that reflect the powerful institution that the festival has grown to become from one edition to the next.

World Premieres at GFF 2021

In a short span of time, **El Gouna Film Festival** has cemented its role as a prominent hub for feature and short films. In its 5th edition, **GFF's** lineup this year boasts multiple films that will be landing their world premieres. These films include the short films: *Arnoos* by Samer Battikhi (Jordan), which received support from the Jordan Film Fund; *Cai-Ber* by Ahmed Abdelsalam (Egypt); *A Dike* by Bilel Bali (Tunisia); *Apallou* by Niko Avgoustidi (France); *His Name Was Cargo* by Marco Signoretto (Italy), which was one of the winning projects of the Zavattini Prize in 2019; and *Khadiga* by Morad Mostafa (Egypt), as well as the Feature Documentary Films *Back Home* by Sara Shazli, and *The Blue Inmates* by Zeina Daccache (Lebanon).

A Robust Lineup of Globally Distinguished Films

El Gouna Film Festival is attracting

many of the finest films that premiered at international festivals this year including; Cannes, Venice, Toronto, or San Sebastián film festivals, among others. These films include the grotesque comedy *Captain Volkonogov Escaped* by renowned filmmaking duo Natalya Merkulova and Alexey Chupov, which world premiered at Venice; Mohamed Diab's *Amira*; director Teemu Nikki's fifth feature *The Blind Man who Did Not Want to See Titanic*; Mounia Akl's feature debut *Costa Brava, Lebanon* that landed world premiere at Venice. Other outstanding globally recognized films include: the debut short film by Chinese director Luo Runxiao *Hair Tie, Egg, Homework Books*; French director Audry Diwan's film *Happening* that received the Golden Lion Award at Venice; director Antoneta Alamat Kusijanovic's feature narrative *Murina*, winner of the prestigious *Caméra d'Or* award at the 2021 Cannes; and *Feathers* by Omar El Zohairy. Other featured films include, *Another World* that comes as Stéphane Brizé's final movie of his trilogy—beginning with *The Measure of a Man*, then *At War*; Mexican director Michel Franco's *Sundown* that landed world premiere at Venice; the Finnish film *Compartment no.6* by Juho Kuosmanen that had its world premiere at Cannes 2021; Kira Kovalenko's winner of Cannes' Un Certain Regard prize *Unclenching the Fists*; *One Second* by celebrated

Chinese director Zhang Yimou that was festival opener at San Sebastián 2021; *Paris- 13th District* by Jacques Audiard winner of the Silver Bear for Best Director at the 2021 Berlinale; Dénes Nagy's *Natural Light*, winner of the Silver Bear for Best Director at the Berlinale in 2021; and the celebrated German actress-director Maria Schrader's *I Am Your Man*.

A French Flavored Festival Edition

This round's films have an extra special French flavour featuring high-quality French films by celebrated filmmakers. These films include French renowned director Stéphane Brizé's *Another World*, which was selected to vie for the Golden Lion at Venice International Film Festival; *Drift Away* by award winning director Xavier Beauvois; *Animal* by Cyril Dion that was screened at Cannes 2021; Audrey Diwan's *Happening*, winner of the Golden Lion at Venice Film Festival; *The French Dispatch* by Wes Anderson that world premiered at Cannes 2021; *Arthur Rambo* by Laurent Cantet; *Bigger Than Us*, which marks the first feature documentary film by Flore Vasseur; and *Paris-13th District* by award-winning French director Jacques Audiard. He has previously received the Cesar Award for Best Film and the BAFTA Award for the Best Film Not in the English Language.

New Film Finds at GFF

El Gouna Film Festival has been functioning as a catalyst for the success of several filmmakers, who are taking part with their film debuts. These films include; *Clara Sola* the film debut by Costa Rican-Swedish filmmaker Nathali Álvarez Mesén that world premiered at Cannes; *Costa Brava, Lebanon*, feature debut by Beirut-born filmmaker Mounia Akl; *Murina*, feature debut by Croatian filmmaker Antoneta Alamat Kusijanovic; Omar Zohairy's debut feature *Feathers*- winner of the Grand Prize at the Critics' Week in Cannes; and Belgian director Laura Wandel's debut *Playground* that had its world premiere at the Un Certain Regard within Cannes in 2021.



Seven Egyptian Films to Screen at GFF 2021

El Gouna Film Festival's edition this year will feature seven Egyptian films, marking the largest number of home-grown films to screen under the flagship of **GFF** since its inception. The lineup of Egyptian films at **El Gouna** this year include: director Omar El Zohairy's feature debut *Feathers*, recipient of the Grand Prize at Cannes, marking the first Egyptian film within the Critics' Week; Mohamed Diab's *Amira*, winner of the three prestigious awards: the Laterna Magica Award, the Interfilm Award, and Enrico Fulchignoni's CICT-UNESCO, at its world premiere within Venice; *Captains of Za'atari*, the first feature documentary film by director Ali El Arabi. The film landed its world premiere at Sundance earlier this year. Furthermore, Sara Shazli's feature debut *Back Home* will land its world premiere at **GFF**. Among the other Egyptian films are the award-winning director Morad Mostafa's third short film *Khadiga*, Ahmed Abd El Salam's directorial debut *Cai- Ber*, as well as *Full Moon* by renowned director Hadi El Bagoury.

Films Marking their Homecoming Participations

El Gouna Film Festival has supported several films through its different sections and its industry arm, **CineGouna Platform**. In its 5th edition, **GFF** is hosting films and filmmakers whose films have been granted support and awards through its previous editions. These films include: *Hanging Gardens* by director

Ahmed Yassin Al Daradji that was supported by **GFF** two years ago while it was in development and is back for support in the post-production phase. *The Blue Inmates*, by Zeina Daccache, will be featured among the festival's Feature Documentary Competition films. Among the films marking their comeback after being previously supported at **GFF's CineGouna platform** are *The Sea Ahead* by Ely Dagher, *Costa Brava, Lebanon* by Mounia Akl, *Captains of Za'atari* by Ali El Arabi, and *Abo Zabal 1989* by Bassem Mortada, which is taking part as a project in Post-production.

Commemorating the Iconic Krzysztof Kieślowski

As an international film festival in the Arab world, **GFF** has always made a point of highlighting cherished local and international films through its **Special Presentations** section. This year, the Special Presentations will focus on renowned Polish director **Krzysztof Kieślowski** to commemorate the 25th anniversary of his passing by showcasing his recently restored films. Some of his key films that influenced the industry the world over will be screening; *The Double Life of Veronique* (1991), winner of the Prize of the Ecumenical Jury and the FIPRESCI Prize at the 1991 Cannes Film Festival, as well as the Best Actress Award for Irène Jacob, *The Three Colors trilogy* (1993, 1994), a collective title of three films named *Blue*, *White*, and *Red* representing the colours of the French flag, A

Short Film About Killing (1988), and *Krzysztof Kieślowski: I'm So-So*. The film explores *Kieślowski's* life, his approach to cinema, his art philosophy, and the motivations behind his themes as well as his reaction to the position his films occupied in the world. In addition a **Retrospective Exhibition**, curated by renowned Egyptian production designer and Art Director **Onsi Abou Seif** will feature 23 framed posters inspired by *Kieślowski's* films.



“ El Gouna Film Festival is attracting many of the finest films that premiered at international festivals

“ This round's films have an extra special French flavour featuring high-quality French films by celebrated filmmakers



