



Chicago Palestine Film Festival
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13th ANNUAL CHICAGO PALESTINE FILM FESTIVAL
April 19-May 1, 2014

TWO WEEKS OF PALESTINIAN FILMS IN CHICAGO!!

The Chicago Palestine Film Festival is pleased to announce our 13th Annual Film Festival lineup of ground breaking Palestinian films. CPFF continues to search the globe for the most riveting and fascinating films that represent all facets of everyday Palestinian life, while at the same time offering audiences a glimpse into the unique culture and values of the Palestinian people.

Offering the perfect backdrop to our films, this year we are pleased to be featuring 10 amazing films at the prestigious, Gene Siskel Film Center, located in the heart of downtown Chicago's Theater District. A special weekend screening will also take place on the southwest side of Chicago at Moraine Valley Community College's impressive Fine Arts Theater Building.

CPFF is excited to add another Oscar nominated film to our lineup. 2014 Academy Award Nominated Best Foreign Language Film, **OMAR**, directed by Hany Abu Assad, opens our festival on April 19th at 8:00pm. A tense, gripping thriller about love and betrayal, **Omar**, is an action packed suspenseful story about the moral dilemmas and tough choices of those living in the West bank have to face in the midst of a conflict that has no signs of letting up. Rounding off opening night, is the dark comedy short, **MAQLOUBEH**, directed by Nicolas Damuni. Set in Ramallah, the film uses the

traditional Palestinian dish, Maqloubeh, as the main project of a group of men, confined to their house due to curfew. **The film screening will be followed by a Q & A with director Hany Abu Assad via Skype.**

Sunday, April 20th the festival continues with *Under the Same Sun* and *Corner Stores*. Set in the near future, ***UNDER THE SAME SUN*** tells the story of two businessmen - one Palestinian and one Israeli - who struggle to set up a solar energy company, and how they use social media to set up a movement to make change from within. ***CORNER STORES***, directed by Al-Jazeera America Associate Producer, Amina Waheed, goes inside the urban neighborhoods of Chicago and follows the story of the mom and pop stores that are often run by immigrant Palestinians and how they assimilate into the neighborhood they work in. **Film screening followed by Q & A with Chicago-native *CORNER STORES* filmmaker Amina Waheed in attendance. The April 24th Film screening will be followed by Q & A with *UNDER THE SAME SUN* producer Susan Koscis in attendance.**

Week 2 of the festival offers multiple options as we showcase four powerful films on Saturday, April 26th starting at 3:00pm. ***MARS AT SUNRISE***, directed by Jessica Habi, is a film inspired by one of her trips back to Israel. It tells the story of a war waged on imagination. The film abstractly portrays the conflict between artists on either side of Israel's militarized borders, and explores how a powerful creative mind survives, and even thrives, under pressure. ***ISMAIL***, directed by Nora Al Sharif, is set in Palestine in 1949 and inspired by a day in the life of Palestinian painter Ismail Shammout. This short film tells the compelling story of a young Palestinian struggling to support his parents after their expulsion to a Refugee camp in 1948 by the Israeli forces. **The Wednesday, April 30th screening of these films will be followed by Q & A with *ISMAIL* director Nora Al Sharif and her father screenwriter Hatem Al Sharif via Skype.**

Cinema Palestine and Though I Know the River is Dry, complete Saturday's lineup at 5:00pm. ***CINEMA PALESTINE*** is a poetic documentary which explores the life and work of multiple generations of Palestinian filmmakers and media artists. Winner of the Best Short from the Arab World at the 2013 Abu Dhabi Film Festival, ***THOUGH I KNOW THE RIVER IS DRY*** is the story of a man who has returned to Palestine, only to be caught between his brother's past and his child's future. His choice to leave and return has triggered a catastrophe for his family. The result, a cinematic masterpiece by Egyptian/British filmmaker Omar Hamilton. **Film screening followed by Q & A with *CINEMA PALESTINE* director Tim Schwab in attendance.**

Closing night, Thursday, May 1st at 8:15pm showcases two captivating, intimate films about the Palestinian experience living under occupation. ***PALESTINE STEREO***, a compelling and ironic drama about two brothers on the West Bank who, rendered homeless by an Israeli air strike, hustle odd jobs to raise enough money to immigrate to Canada. A charming drama, tinged with irony, *Palestine Stereo* is a searing meditation on the significance of homeland and homemaking. ***THE CUP READER*** director, Suha Araj, creates this humorous film about a young woman who has the mystic ability to look into the women of the town's future through the eyes of a Turkish coffee cup. Some women

get what they came for, some women don't. You'll have to catch the film to find out their fate. **Film screening followed by Q & A with *THE CUP READER* director/producer in person or via Skype.**

This year the festival is proud to add a Southside Chicago venue to the lineup. We have partnered with Moraine Valley Community College's Arab Student Union to offer 2 films at their impressive Fine Arts Building. Sunday, April 27th at 3:00pm two inspiring films being featured. ***JUST PLAY*** tells the story of a group of men and women working with Al Kamandjati, a Palestinian Cultural Association conducting a program of music education in the West Bank. This picture is about them and their difficulties in transforming music into a means of freedom and liberation. Preceded by ***APARTMENT 10/14*** by Tarzan and Arab Nasser, an artistic film about a man's vision's in and out of reality as he waits for the love of his life to arrive at his home bringing him his special birthday gift.

Over the past 80 years, Palestinian Cinema, has shown to be the gateway to showcasing our traditions, culture, and struggle to the rest of the world. It's proven to be a powerful force to understanding the human experience of a people often misunderstood and misrepresented by the nature of the political struggles that encompass the region. The 2014 Chicago Palestine Films Festival looks to open the doors to this region and showcase the true beauty of our heritage: **OUR PEOPLE. AND THE RICH STORIES THEY HAVE TO TELL.** We look forward to hosting these extraordinary films and bringing them to our Chicago community.

A complete list of all other films being featured can be found on our website at www.palestinefilmfest.com

Background on the Festival:

We are the world's longest running festival dedicated solely to bringing the stories of Palestine to Chicago through film. With over 250 films showcased to date, every year the festival strives to bring together films about Palestine that engage, enlighten and entertain our audiences and leave you inspired.

The Chicago Palestine Film Festival (CPFF) is an independent, not-for-profit, nonsectarian project based in Chicago that exhibits and promotes films by Palestinian directors and films about Palestine. CPFF is dedicated to presenting a film festival that is open, critical, and reflective of the culture, experience and vision of the filmmakers.

The Festival began in 2001 and continues to be organized by a group of dedicated volunteers. We are supported by a local community of individuals, small businesses, and organizations. The Chicago Palestine Film Festival is a program service of the Middle East Cultural and Charitable Society, a 501(c)3 charitable organization.

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