



N°93
March 2011

“What is well conceived is easily described – the words for it come easily”

PriMed – the new name of the International Festival of Mediterranean Documentary and Current Affairs Film, a name both shorter and easier to remember. From now on you'll be going to PriMed. And don't forget, if you want to take part this year, register your film before April 15th – the deadline to send in your films.

In this month's newsletter, the Mediterranean is still in the headlines, with broadcasters reacting to events in the Arab world; Jordan unveils a new television channel, Ro'Ya TV; close-up on “Storydoc”. the web-site which specialises in international training – and spot-light on the Middle East Now Film Festival. And, as every month, you'll find the usual items: Life in the Channels, Programmes, Economy....

Happy reading to all of you

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Directeur de publication : François Jacquel

Rédaction : Valérie Gerbault, Julien Cohen

CMCA - 96 La Canebière 13001 Marseille Tel : + 33 491 42 03 02 Fax : +33 491 42 01 83

<http://www.cmca-med.org> - cmca@cmca-med.org

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HEADLINE...

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE.....

Prix International du Documentaire et du Reportage Méditerranéen



The International Festival of Mediterranean Documentary and Current Affairs Film is changing its name! It is now simply **PriMed**, a shortened version of *Prix* and *Mediterranean*, to make it stand out better in the landscape of the numerous other festivals. No longer will you be going to the International Festival of Mediterranean Documentary and Current Affairs Film, but to **PriMed**, less of a mouthful, easier to write.

The **Centre Méditerranéen de la Communication Audiovisuelle (CMCA)**, in partnership with RAI, has just launched the call to take part in the 16th International Festival, now known as **PriMed**.

This year, in response to the ways producing and broadcasting film are evolving, we have two new items on the agenda:

- **The Award for the best Mediterranean "short" (2,500 €)**: this award is for a documentary or a current affairs film of less than 30 minutes, dealing with some aspect of the Mediterranean.
- **The Mediterranean Multimedia award (2,500 €)**: This is for a production like a web-documentary or a SMEW (Short Multimedia Work) on any Mediterranean subject.
A *web-documentary* is a documentary conceived and made for the internet, and distributed on the internet, using photos, text, sound effects and videos, with an interactive dimension.
A *SMEW (Short Multimedia Work)* is a video production calling on the skills of a photographer, director, web-designer, sound creator and illustrator. A video montage breathing life into a still image, giving it a third dimension, a different approach to the subject.

Plus, as every year, you will find the usual awards:

- "Mediterranean Issues" Grand Prix (€6,000)
- "Mediterranean Memory" award (€5,000)
- "First Documentary" award (€5,000)
- "Mediterranean Art, Heritage and Culture" award (€5,000)
- "Best investigation" award (€5,000)
- Special Jury award (€5,000)
- Young public award (€5,000 - new last year)

The PriMed also gives broadcasting awards, something unusual enough to be worth emphasising.

For more information and to register:

<http://www.cmca-med.org/fr/home.php>
prix@cmca-med.org

and visit our Facebook page: [PriMed Cmca](#)

Do not forget, the deadline to register your films is the

15 avril 2011

You can also see images of last year's festival on our blog:

www.prixcmca.wordpress.com

The CMCA and PriMed present at the 7th Babel Med Music in Marseille

Since 2005, Marseille's Babel Med Music – a series of concerts, meetings and debates – has been *the* showcase for every strand of "World Music". This year 30 groups from 21 countries representing each of the 5 continents will be seen on three stages, all within *Dock des Suds*. As each year, 5 awards for boundless creativity and sheer unstoppable talent will be presented at the opening ceremony. During the three days there will also be 16 conferences to take a rain check on the health of world music and debate its future. The professional world will also be represented with 170 stands, including the CMCA's, which invites you to join it on this occasion.

Revolution and evolution in the Arab countries...continued

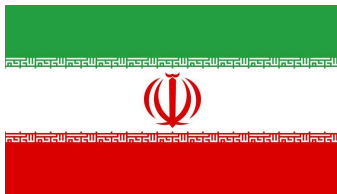


ALGERIA :

[President Bouteflika decrees an equal amount of air-time for all political parties](#)

On February 3rd, Algerian president Abdelaziz Bouteflika announced that the national television channels must offer an equal amount of airtime to all the country's political parties. He also reminded the nation that *« as far as [...] access to television and radio by political parties is concerned, there is no law or decree which has ever forbidden it to any legal entity or association whatsoever. »*

This “access decree” was nevertheless followed by precise directives, giving television channels the chance to re-organise their schedules. For the political parties concerned, Mr. Bouteflika emphasised that this great freedom *“must not under any circumstances lead to abuse, escalation or any form of anarchy, for which Algeria has already paid a high price.”*



IRAN :

[The BBC's Persian TV service scrambled by Iran](#)

Since February 10th, the Persian TV service of the BBC has been scrambled by Iran (whose authorities object to the broadcaster's coverage of the developments in Egypt). For Peter Horrocks, head of the BBC World Service, *“the events in Egypt are being followed across the whole world and it is wrong that our significant Iranian audience is being denied impartial news and information....the BBC is not going to stop covering the situation in Egypt and will continue to broadcast to the Iranian people”*. And indeed the Persian service of the BBC is continuing its coverage on the web.



EGYPT:

[One resignation and two arrests](#)

On February 12th, Egyptian television announced that Anas Fekki, the country's minister of information, had tendered his resignation. The press agency Mena was more specific: *“the prosecutor general Abdel Maguid Mahmoud has forbidden (...) Information Minister Anas Fekki (...) to leave the country because of the charges against him...”*.

In the early morning of **February 24th**, the Fraud Squad arrested both former information minister Anas Fekki and the chairman of the state broadcaster, Oussama el-Cheikh, at their homes, following accusations of corruption.



LIBYA :

Cutting the Internet

On February 18th, the country's internet services were frequently disrupted, according to two separate reports, one by Arbor Networks, a provider of network security and monitoring solutions, the other by Renesys, an authority in global Internet intelligence and traffic analysis.

On February 19th, Libya cut virtually the entire internet network – starting by censoring the main social networking sites and the international news media. This axing of the main internet services was organised by Mouammar Kadhafi's eldest son, chairman of Libya Telecom & Technology.

Premises of a television and radio station sacked in Tripoli

February 20th, according to several eye-witnesses, the Tripoli offices of Al-Jamahariya 2, a television company, and the radio station Shababia, were sacked by demonstrators. Al-Jamahariya's programmes were suspended on Sunday, but resumed again the following day. As a reminder, these two public broadcasters were launched in 2008 by Seïf Al-Islam, the son of the Libyan leader, Mouammar Kadhafi, and were later nationalised.

Al Jazeera censored

February 21st, after the internet and all other means of communication had been cut, the broadcaster Al Jazeera was censored in Libya and Saudi Arabia. According to the Lebanese minister of information, *“the Nilesat satellite broadcast was cut”*.

Al-Arabiya affected in its turn by the censorship in Libya

February 26th, the Saudi satellite channel Al-Arabiya, based in Dubai announced that its broadcasts were being scrambled. It claimed that *“although the source of the jamming has not yet been identified, the channel's directors confirm this deliberate jamming is aimed at disrupting live and continuous coverage of the events which are taking place in several parts of the Arab world.”*



TUNISIA :

Radio France sets up a senior reporter in Tunis

On March 3rd, Jean-Luc Hees, Chairman of Radio France, decided to base a senior reporter in Tunisia to coordinate the work of the group's different channels. His or her job will be to provide a permanent presence in the country, as a back-up for the special correspondents and news crews who move about the whole region. In a statement, Jean-Luc Hees said that *“as a public service group it's our duty to provide the means not only for a broad coverage of current events, but also for deeper insights into the region's various political movements”*.

LIFE IN THE CHANNELS

Jordan / A new television channel Ro'ya TV

Qatar / Al Jazeera negotiates the purchase of a Turkish channel

The Netherlands / Launch of an Arab radio channel on Netherlands Worlwide

Belgium / Al Maghreb TV, a new web channel for Moroccans

Francophonie / TV 5 Monde Mediterranean Channel!



Jordan / A new television channel Ro'ya TV

A new satellite channel, Ro'ya TV, was launched in Amman on January 1st. It forms part of the Sayegh Group's bouquet and is the younger sister of a channel called "Deciders", broadcast from Dubai in the Arab Emirates. Created in 1932, the Sayegh group is currently made up of 32 companies spread across the Arab world, Europe and Asia. Employing 5,000 people, it has fingers in many areas:

engineering, the chemical industry, mines, property, financial services, aviation and the media.

The new channel's creators want to make sure Jordan's visual media keep abreast of the times, taking into consideration the changes and preoccupations of Jordanian citizens, indeed of all Arab people. Their aim is to respect their viewers' intelligence, whatever their cultural, religious, social and political differences. A major part of the schedule is based on programmes which are both interactive and local, broadcast live, aimed at the different layers of Jordanian society. Drama series are offered as well, reflecting the channel's spirit and commitment to diversity.

Based in Amman's Media City studios, the channel has 600 square metres of digitally equipped studio space. Programme production is done in-house. The channel targets the Arab public throughout the world.

For more information: www.roya.tv (in Arabic)

Qatar / Al Jazeera negotiates the purchase of a Turkish channel

The Qatari satellite television network, Al Jazeera, is apparently in negotiation with the Turkish savings bank for the purchase of *Cine 5*, formerly belonging to the Turkish media magnate Erol Aksoy. Created in 1993, the channel was conceived on the same lines as *Canale 5* in Italy. It is transmitted by the D-Smart bouquet and on the Digiturk satellite. Al Jazeera has wanted to launch a channel in the Turkish language for some time, seeing it as a good way of getting into this market of nearly 70 million people with huge advertising potential. With an initial offer of 21 million dollars, Al Jazeera finally put 40.5 million dollars on the table. Source (La lettre Med)



launched the *Amsterdam*". In analyse North



RADIO
NETHERLANDS
WORLDWIDE

young Arabs looking for independent news. To extend the radio broadcasts, there is also an Arabic web-site, www.hunaamsterdam.nl.

Every Wednesday the North African edition of "*Huna Amsterdam*" will look at issues common to both North Africa and the Netherlands, such as inter-cultural dialogue, immigration and human rights. To fill out the edition, weekly programmes will be broadcast. Radio Netherlands Worldwide broadcasts in-depth programmes worldwide in ten languages – on radio, television, internet and cell phones.

The Netherlands / Launch of an Arab radio channel on Netherlands Worlwide

In February the Dutch international radio station, Radio Netherlands Worldwide, North African version of "*Huna* Arabic, it aims to inform, debate and African news. Its creators are targeting



Belgium / Al Maghreb TV new channel for Moroccans on the web

AMTV, Almaghreb TV, is the first Belgian and European channel specifically for the north African community. Launched initially on the internet, it is

now available on Belgacom TV. This new channel, a shop-window for Brussels' north African community, broadcasts independently produced videos, essentially in Arabic. The channel is focussed on cultural information. Offering an alternative to local North African stations, its creators hope "*to reach as many people as possible who at the moment watch the various Arab channels relayed from their home-country via satellite.*"



[# Francophonie / TV 5 Monde – the Mediterranean Channel!](#)

For a long time *TV 5 Monde*, with its worldwide broadcasting network and internet site, has reflected the diversity and richness of Mediterranean cultures. For more than 15 years the channel has also created links with the region's most important cultural events, giving them the international recognition and impact they deserve, far beyond the shores of the Mediterranean. This commitment is reiterated in the channel's recent support of Marseille-Provence 2013. Since the beginning of March, *TV5Monde*'s news crews have been out and about meeting people involved in the project, looking at the local and international issues raised by this event. On March 7th Marie-Christine Saragosse, *TV5Monde*'s managing director, was in Marseille to sign a partnership agreement with Marseille-Provence 2013.

PROGRAMMES

[# Netherlands-France / broadcast of the documentary “*Première passion*”](#)

[# France / the March contents of MEDITERRANEO](#)



[# Netherlands-France / broadcast of the documentary “*Première passion*”](#)

Philippe Baron's documentary “*Première passion*” (The First Passion Play), produced by *Vivement lundi !* and winner of the TV5 Monde broadcasting award at last year's International Festival of Mediterranean Documentary and Current Affairs Film organised by the CMCA, will soon be broadcast :

In Holland on April 23rd, on *Nederland 1*

In France on April 24th on *Ciné Cinéma Classic*, and probably in Switzerland as well, though that date has not been fixed

Shot in Palestine in 1912, **From the Manger to the Cross** was the first feature film taken from the Gospels. **Première Passion** unearths this film and through an investigation taking us to Jerusalem, London, Nantes and New York, it brings to life the era in which it was made, in the Palestine at the beginning of the 20th century.

By exploring this cinematic fresco of Christ's life, Philippe Baron's documentary also takes us on a journey to the origins of cinema, questioning the relationship between image and religion.


Première Passion has been sold in several other countries.



[# France / the March contents of MEDITERRANEO](#)

The beginning of 2011 will remain a marker in the tormented history of North Africa and the Middle East.

Tunisia is where it all started, after the tragedy of the young graduate Sidi Bouzid who, to express his deep despair, set fire to himself – an event relayed round the planet by the world's media. The revolt grew. At first it was purely about economic concerns, but then it took on political over-tones, ending with the overthrow of Ben Ali. The Tunisian revolution spread to neighbouring countries, first Egypt then Libya. Today Tunisia is in a difficult situation. Certainly a wind of change blows through the country, but the hopes, the euphoria of the early days has given way to uncertainty and impatience. Four reports about Tunisia: first of all freedom of expression regained, including press freedom, in a country where the media has been muzzled for a long time. Another issue over the next few months will be the presence of the Islamic movement – one of its political parties, Ennadha, is preparing for the next elections. On the economic front as well the situation remains very tense: we talked to the heads of French companies



which have been in the country for many years. Finally, we wanted to know how the Tunisian community in France views these events. We met several Tunisians in Marseille.

Also on *Mediterraneo's* March programme, Istanbul: in today's Turkey of moderate Islam, a country often cited these past few weeks as the example to follow, what legacy remains of the ideas of the Republic's founder, Mustafa Kemal? Also in Istanbul, a calmer meeting with hundreds of professional and amateur fishermen on the Galata bridge. Moving to Marseille, the Mediterranean Arab world on stage at the *Theatre de la Friche* and finally, in Sicily, discovering the gardens of Kolymbetra in the valley of the temples of Agrigento.

ECONOMY

[# Italy / A record year for the cinema](#)

[# Algeria, Morocco / Canal Plus Maghreb quits Algeria and Morocco](#)

[# Spain / The Prisa group lost €72.9 million in 2010](#)



[# Italy / A record year for the cinema](#)

According to figures published by ANICA, the results of 2010 confirm the good state of Italian cinema. While the box-office takings in Italian cinemas increased by nearly 18%, the market share of Italian-made films rose to 27.3% and even climbed up to 65% in January 2011, thanks to the huge success of *Che Bella Giornata* and *Qualunque sia*. According to Riccardo Tozzi, chairman of the producers' section of ANICA, this market share could be the "best in the world", although second, of course, to the unbeatable United States. Tozzi's advice is to continue investing in comedies, adored by the Italian public, and in *cinéma d'auteur*.

Nevertheless there are clouds on the horizon, the public contribution to Italian production is falling, for example (down 50% compared with 2008), and co-productions are becoming rarer, which will eventually affect the sale of Italian features abroad.



[# Algeria, Morocco / Canal Plus Maghreb leaves Algeria and Morocco](#)

On March 1st Bertrand Méheut, CEO of the Canal Plus group, announced officially that the *Canal Plus Maghreb* bouquet would be wound down in Algeria and Morocco. No 6-month or 1-year prepaid cards have been bought since January, and at the beginning of February the channel's headquarters in Algiers closed its doors, with no statement from the group to explain this sudden decision. The failure of pirating controls are apparently the reason for the decision, as M. Méheut explains: " *Viaccess, the system controlling access on some of the satellites has broken down, and as long as that situation remains unresolved, we shall maintain a very low profile in these two countries.*"

Moroccan and Algerian subscribers who have purchased pre-paid cards before January will continue to receive Canal Plus programmes via satellite until the end of 2011. At the same time, the arrival of *Canal Plus Mahgreb* in Tunisia, which at one stage was being talked about, has been put off for the foreseeable future.

Canal Plus experienced a similar failure in 2001 when the group stopped broadcasting *Canal Plus Horizons* in North Africa.



Grupo PRISA

[# Spain / The Prisa group lost €72.9 million in 2010](#)

Prisa, the leading Spanish communication group and publisher of the national daily newspaper *El País*, registered a deficit of nearly €73 million for the fiscal year 2010 – whereas the previous year the Group had showed a profit of more than €50 million. The annual turn-over, some €2.69 billion, is down 14.8%.

The group is currently undergoing financial restructuring, helped particularly by their patron Nicolas Berggruen, who has injected €650 million into Prisa's accounts. If the group's overall debt is still enormous (nearly €3 billion), it has nevertheless decreased by 50% in the past year. Following February's release of these results, Prisa has announced 2,500 jobs would be cut, involving all its subsidiaries in Spain, Portugal and Latin America.

In April 2010, Prisa sold its channel *Cuatro* to the *Gestevisión Telecinco* group, principally owned by the Italian *Mediaset*. 44% of the pay-bouquet *Digital Plus* was also sold to *Telecinco* and *Telefonica*.

CINEMA

[# France – 3 PriMed 2010 award-winners get cinema distribution](#)

[# Spain / Alex de La Iglesia back in business](#)

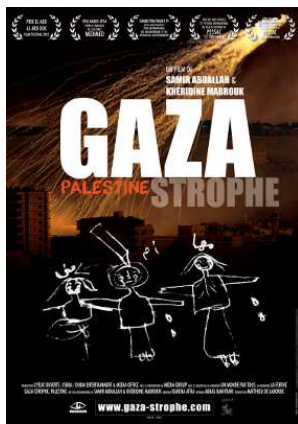
[# Algeria / Moussa Haddad's new film](#)

[# Algeria / April screening at Tlemcen for documentary about Imam Essenouci](#)

[# Morocco / Khadija Leclerc shoots her first film at Aït Ourir](#)

[# Morocco / An Indian film being shot in Marrakesh](#)

[# France / A bio-pic about Dalida in pre-production](#)



[# France – 3 PriMed 2010 award-winners get cinema distribution](#)

Three documentaries from last year's official selection at PriMed will be distributed in French cinemas as from this month.

Winner of *France Télévision's* Grand Prix: Mediterranean Issues last December, Samir Abdallah and Kheridine Mabrouk's *Gaza-Strophe*, *The Day After* will be released on March 16th. It's an eye-witness account of life in Gaza the day after a cease-fire following the Israeli offensive in January 2009.

Also on March 16th, José Luis Penafuente's *Les Chemins de la Mémoire* will be released by Colifilms. Showing the slow process of understanding and mourning in Spain, 30 years after the death of Franco, this feature film received Primed's Mediterranean Memory

award.

Finally, *Nous, Princesses de Clèves* will begin on March 30th, distributed by Shellac. A documentary filmed in Marseille showing how the pupils of a lycée used La Fayette's novel *La Princesse de Clèves* to explore and understand their own lives.



[# Spain / Alex de La Iglesia back in business](#)

Having created a fair amount of fuss by resigning his job as Chairman of Spanish Film Academy (he was opposed to the Ministry of Culture's Sinde Law against pirating), the Basque film-maker, Alex de la Iglesia (photo) has retraced his steps back to film sets. On February 7th he began shooting his tenth feature film, *La Chispa de la Vida* (The Spark (or wit or sparkle) of Life) Taken from an original script by Randy

Feldman, *La Chispa de la Vida* is a bitter comedy about the madness of the media. An out-of-work advertising agent finds himself between life and death and decides to sell his story to a television company. The comic actor José Mota, together with Mexican actress Salma Hayek and Santiago Segura, are currently breathing life into this story which fits the old trouble-maker La Iglesia like a glove. The film is produced by *Trivision* and *Alfresco Enterprises*, in collaboration with the French *La Ferme Productions*. La Iglesia's previous film, *Balada Triste de Trompeta*, won many awards.



Algeria / Moussa Haddad shooting a new film

On February 5th the Algerian film-maker Moussa Haddad (*Auprès du Peuplier, Libération*) began filming his seventh feature film, *Harraga Blues*. The film takes place mainly in Algiers and Annaba, and follows the lives of two friends, Zine and Rayane, both of whom want to cross to the northern shores of the Mediterranean, hoping for a better life there. “*The initial idea is to make a film about illegal immigration – but without moralising,*” explains the director, making his first film for twelve years. To achieve this, Haddad has brought together some of the great names of Algerian cinema and television, such as Kaci Tizi Ouzou, Bahia Rachedi and Ahmed Benaissa. Shooting should take 2 and a half months for a budget of around €590,000.



Algeria / April screening at Tlemcen for a documentary about the Imam Essenouci

As part of “Tlemcen, Capital of Islamic Culture 2011” in April, there will be screenings of a biographical documentary about the fifteenth century imam, Benyoucef Essenouci Tlemçani Al-achâri (1423-1488). Financed by the Algerian Ministry of Culture for about €80,000, like the other 47 documentaries which have been produced for the occasion, the film explains the life and work of this erudite philosopher, who is still considered one of Tlemcen's great religious figures. 6 months' research were necessary to prepare the documentary, which will combine scenes from the life of the teacher, using actors, and contributions by researchers and historians.



Morocco / Khadija Leclere shoots her first film at Aït Ourir

Actress, then casting director, now director, Khadija Saidi Leclere (photo) has won awards at several festivals for her short films. Now she is shooting her first feature film, *Le Sac de Farine* (Bag of Flour). Having begun shooting in Belgium, the film crew have been at Aït Ourir in Morocco since February 14th for a further 5 weeks filming. Produced by *Sahara Productions*, *T-chin T-chin Productions* and the

Compagnie Cinématographique Européenne for a budget of €2.2 million, *Le Sac de Farine* brings together Hafsia Herzi, Abderrauof, Souad Saber and Faouzi Bensaidi. Based to some extent on her own life, the film is about a Moroccan girl, Sarah, brought up in Brussels by a Catholic family in the 1970's.



Morocco / An Indian film being shot at Marrakesh

In February, Indian film director Vikas Mahesh Kumar Sharma began shooting his new film, *Crazy Boys*, with locations in Morocco and Portugal. Principal photography is in Marrakesh, making this the third Indian feature shot in Morocco in the past 7 months.

Produced by *Murti Movie Productions PVT Limited*, the film is due for release at the end of the year. Several Bollywood stars are in the cast, including Indira Arambhavi and Dixita Dhansukhbhai Modi.



France / A bio-pic about Dalida in pre-production

Pathé Distribution has announced the early stages of production of a feature film about the life of singer Dalida. Franco-Moroccan actress Nadia Farès has been cast in the title role. Lisa Azuelos (*LOL, Tout ce qui brille*) and Kamir Aïnouz are the writers but as yet no director has been assigned. Shooting should begin in 2012 between Egypt, Italy and France, with a release date in 2013. *Pathé*, *Martal Productions* and *Bethsabée Mucho* will co-produce the film.

Dalida, born in 1933 in Cairo, was well-known in France in the 60's and 70's before committing suicide in 1987 while deeply depressed.

FESTIVALS

CLOSE-UP ON... Festival Film Middle East Now

FILM MIDDLE EAST NOW

From March 18th to 22nd the Middle East will be found in Florence, Italy, with Film Middle East Now 2011, a programme of films and documentaries from the Middle East. For this, its second year, 25 of the best recent Arab films have been selected – a showcase for films that would not normally be distributed in Italian cinemas. The organisers want the culture and life of the Arab countries to be better known in Italy, dispelling prejudices and cliché in the process. The film-makers have all been invited to Florence to talk about how their films were made.


A new element this year is Dream City, an exhibition of photographs by a young Dutch photographer Anoek Steketee and journalist Eefje Blankevoort: the theme is amusement parks in war-torn countries, often those striving for democracy. Ideal places to observe people as reality is temporarily suspended. The photographs show amusement parks in ten different countries across the globe, including Iraq's "Dream City", Beirut's "Lunapark", Israel's "Super-land" and Palestine's "Funland".

For this second year, there will be discussions on the difficulties of living in the Middle East. How can the ordinary people in war situations hope to fulfil satisfying lives? How can they find peace or moments of happiness? How can they achieve some settled equilibrium in which their differences, religious and political, disappear?

It's a journey travelled in stages, touching the hottest areas of the Middle East, offering us a look at individual stories and the hottest issues.

Afghanistan: the war with the Taliban, the Burqa – but Orlando Von Einsiedel shows a different aspect in his documentary "*Skateistan*", about an NGO teaching kids of Kabul how to skate board, giving them a focus, and a break from wandering the streets.

Havana Marking's "*Afghan Star*" shows another aspect, the Afghan version of the "X-Factor", a competition for young, unknown singers, the most popular programme in the country.



Palestine and Israel, shown in Jiulia Bacha's documentary "*Budrus*" (winner of many awards). The film is about the Palestinian residents of Budrus fighting the construction of the West Bank separation barrier on their land. They are helped in their battle by hundreds of peaceful protesters – Israeli citizens and pacifists from across the world.

In "*Fix me*", Palestinian film-maker Rahed Andoni tells us that, to deal with his existential migraines, he had to start analysis. With much humour and irony he takes us on a search for his Palestinian identity.

Mahmoud Al Massad's documentary "*This is my picture when I was dead*", won awards at the latest Dubaï Film Festival. The central figure is a young Palestinian, Bashir Mraish, erroneously declared dead in 1983 when his father, Mamoun Mraish, a PLO leader, was killed in Athens. The film poses questions about the father and the present life of the young Bashir. It's a profound reflection on the Palestinian cause.

Also at Florence, "*Arab Labour*" the most popular sitcom in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. It is based on the life of a young Arab couple, Amjad and Bushra, who live with their daughter in a Jerusalem suburb. Much of the series is about Amjad's conflicting love/hate relationship with his Arab identity and his desire to integrate himself better into Israeli society. The sitcom was conceived and written by journalist and writer Sayed Kashua, born in Israel with Palestinian roots.

Post-Saddam Iraq is characterised by a terrible instability, with many people at a loss to know where to turn: both aspects are illustrated in Mohamed Al-Daradji's "*Son of Babylon*", the odyssey of a young Kurd searching for his father, and Thomas Kaan's "*Dream City*", about the leisure park in Iraqi Kurdistan where Sunnite, Shi'ite and American soldiers mingle together in a happy microcosm.

The Lebanon, one of the most open and dynamic societies of the Mediterranean, struggling with the ghosts of its past while reflecting on the political instability of the present. Hady Zaccak's documentary "*A History lesson*" is a delicate, ironic film shot in five Beirut schools – where we discover there are several different versions of the country's national history.

Elie Khalife and Alexandre Monnier's "*Yanoosak*", is about Rudi, a young Swiss living in Beirut, coming up against total lack of understanding when it comes to cultural differences.

Ghassan Salhab's "*1958*", an autobiographical documentary retracing some of the Lebanon's dramatic history through the eyes of one of its best known young film-makers.

Iran is currently living a particularly difficult moment, with many people desperate for change. Ali Samadi Ahadi's "*The Green Wave*" takes another look at the events during and after the presidential elections of 2009. This film consists of amateur videos, blogs, Twitter messages, interviews and reconstructed animated sequences.

Firouzeh Khosrovani's "1001 Irans". A clever film about the West's false image of Iran. An attempt to get to the essence of today's Iran, with its many different facets – a complex country with a deep split between ordinary people and the ruling class.

Film Middle East Now is organised by Map of Creation, a cultural organisation under the artistic direction of Lisa Chiari and Roberto Ruta, in collaboration with the Stensen Foundation and with the support of Florence Town Hall's cultural service, the Regional Médiathèque and the Toscana Film Commission.

For further information:

http://www.middleeastnow.it/Middle_East_Now/Programma_Film_Middle_East_Now_2.html

Other Festivals

- [# Turkey / 9th International Festival of Women's Cinema: Filmmor](#)
- [# Spain / Ourense International Film Festival](#)
- [# Morocco / First Aboujaad Festival of Short and Documentary Film](#)
- [# Morocco / A political film festival at Fès in 2012?](#)
- [# France / Call for films for the official selection of FIDMarseille 2011](#)
- [# France / Fishers of Images – Mediterranean films weeks](#)
- [# France / 33rd CINEMED](#)
- [# France / 18th year for FIGRA at Touquet-Paris-Plage](#)



[# Turkey / 9th International Festival of Women's Cinema: Filmmor](#)

The 9th International Festival of Women's Cinema, “*Filmmor*”, will take place between March 12th and April 10th. 25 countries are represented through their films and invited guests. Created in 2003, the Festival is organised by a women's co-operative with the aim of helping women produce and promote films. The 60 films selected for the Festival are all about women's cinema, the women of the Middle East, maternity, sexuality and women's

emancipation. On the fringe there will be debates and conferences, amongst other things on sexuality in the cinema and censorship. Some of the film-makers will also discuss their work. The festival is a moveable feast: it starts in Istanbul at the *Centre culturel français* from March 12th to 20th, it will be at Van on March 26th and 27th, then in Antalya on April 2nd and 3rd and finally at Trabzon on April 9th and 10th.



[# Spain / Ourense International Film Festival](#)

The call for films to take part in the 16th Ourense International Film Festival in Galicia has just been launched. The films must have been produced in 2010 or 2011 and not have been marketed in Spain. There are five categories:

Drama films (more than 60 minutes), Documentaries, Short Dramas (less than 60 minutes), Animation and New Media (experimental audiovisual works).

Last year the Festival received 1,893 films from 95 different countries. Over 10 days 242 films were screened, of which 119 were in the official competition and 123 on the fringe.

This year the Festival will be offering €62,000 in awards.

The deadline to register films is May 15th.

For further information: www.ouff.org

Festival Contact: coordinador@ouff.org



[# Morocco / First Aboujaad Short and Documentary Film Festival](#)

The first festival of short films and documentaries will take place at Aboujaad, from April 13th to 17th. The theme will be “cinema and the cultural mix of people”. 26 short films and 10 documentaries have been chosen to take part in the competition which offers three awards: Best Director and Best Script in the short film category and Best Documentary. 21 countries will be represented in the official competition. At the same time there will be training workshops, debates and discussions about the screened films. Two homages will also be given: one for the Moroccan actor and theatre director Driss El Mamoun and the other for the Egyptian actor Yahya Al Fakhrani.



[# Morocco / A political film festival at Fès from 2012?](#)

Faouzi Skali, chairman of an organisation called Spirit of Fes, wants to set up a festival of political film to “*kick-start public discussion*” about questions of society. He also wants to revive the town's cinemas, most of which have closed over the past few years as audiences dwindle. According to Skali, a political theme would mark out Fes from the other Moroccan film festivals.



[# France / Call for films for the official selection of FIDMarseille 2011](#)

FIDMarseille, an international documentary film festival, is currently preparing its 22nd year, which will take place from July 6th to the 11th at La

Criée, the *Théâtre National* in Marseille. Registration for the Official Selection is open until March 18th and should be made directly on the Festival's web-site. Films must have been made since January 1st 2010. Any media and any length are acceptable. Screening copies must be sent in their original version, sub-titled in French or in English if necessary. In 2010, 145 films were presented at FID, of which 36 were in one of the three categories “International Competition”, “French Competition” and “First Film”. Register on line: www.fidmarseille.org.



France / Fishers of Images – Mediterranean films weeks

From March 30th to April 12th, *Pêcheurs d'Images* (Fishers of Images), an association based in the town of Lunel (southern France) will be holding the 27th Mediterranean Film Weeks, with the aim of encouraging inter-cultural dialogue, integration and the fight against discrimination. It's also an important look at current Mediterranean film-making. In addition this year, following the imprisonment of the Iranian film-maker Jafar Panahi, the organisers want to highlight "prevented" cinema, to remind us that *"film-makers are censored, imprisoned, killed because they observe and portray the world, particularly their own country, as it is."*

Also on the programme a competition of short drama and documentary films, the *CinéVocations "Antoine Bonfanti"* which this year plays host to many young North African directors, and "A View of Algerian Cinema" showing films from the Tlemcen Festival, finally the *Rencontres du Grand Sud*, bringing together students, sixth-formers and secondary school pupils to talk about the cinema.

Some thirty drama and documentary films will be on offer, representing many Mediterranean countries: Algeria, Egypt, Spain, Israel, Italy, Morocco, Palestine, Turkey, Tunisia and the Lebanon.



France / 33rd CINEMED

The 33rd Montpellier International Festival of Mediterranean Cinema, Cinemed, will take place between October 21st and 29th. Already registration is open on-line at www.cinemed.tm.fr.

The organisers are looking for films made since January 1st 2010, whose subject-matter and treatment bring something new to the cinematic image of the Mediterranean and whose director comes from a country on the Mediterranean or the Black Sea, from Portugal or Armenia.

NB: different categories have different deadlines;

August 31st for full-length drama films and **July 8th** for short dramas and documentaries.



France / 18th FIGRA at Touquet-Paris-Plage

22 major international current affairs films and documentaries will be in competition from March 23rd to 27th. As usual the official selection is broken down into four categories: Politics (French Africa Part 2: Money Rules), Economics (The Wages of Debt), Medical (To be born or not to be born) and Food (Poison in the tap water).

22 other films will compete in parallel sections: “Seen Differently” and “Land of History”. Accreditation for professionals and journalists is open until March 15th by downloading forms from the Festival web-site (www.figra.fr).

WEB-SITE OF THE MONTH... www.storydoc.gr

Storydoc is a not-for-profit organisation based in Greece, providing training for international documentary co-productions. In partnership with other international institutions, it organises seminars and training sessions for both new and experienced directors. It offers consultant services on every aspect of documentary-making – from setting up a production to world-wide distribution. For the training, Storydoc relies on two organisations: the European Documentary Network (EDN) and Documentary Campus.

Storydoc is supported by the European Union's Media programme and by Greek public television, ERT.

Since 2005, Storydoc has organised two workshops a year on documentary development.

[Storydoc 2011 – call for candidates for Mediterranean documentary projects](#)

Storydoc is a training programme specialised in the development of documentary projects. For 2011, all projects must have a link with the Mediterranean.

The programme is open to directors from the Mediterranean region but also to those from elsewhere as long as their project is about some aspect of the Mediterranean.

25 projects will be chosen, among them 5 from Greece.

Storydoc offers a subsidy for five of the applicants.

Particular attention will be given to candidates from the Palestine Territories.

The training programme, which takes place in two periods, will be led by experienced documentary film-makers, heads of programmes, producers and others working in the business.

During the second training period, pitching sessions will be organised involving between ten and fifteen broadcasters and distributors.

The directors will work on their scripts, on the different ways a subject can be treated, as well as on the best way of presenting short extracts of their projects.

The aim is to create a network of those taking part and the visiting producers and distributors, so interchange and exchanges between professionals can be developed across the Mediterranean.

The deadline for registration is April 26th. The first session will take place in Corfu from July 11th to 15th, the second in Athens from November 28th to 30th.

A special session is being planned in Ramallah in the Palestinian Territories from March 25th to 27th.

This training is organised in collaboration with the Greek public television ERT and EDN (European Documentary Network)

For further information: lampidou@storydoc.gr

<http://www.storydoc.gr/Storydoc-activities/item/295-STORYDOC-2011-Call-for-Filmmakers-with-Mediterranean-Projects>

THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN WAY

Jordan / Call for candidates for the Euro-Jordanian Press Award

The European Union's delegation in Jordan invites Jordanian economic and social journalists to take part in the Euro-Jordanian Press Award for Excellence in Writing, which will be presented at a ceremony in June this year. Three winners will be chosen and each will receive between 1,000 and 3,000 Jordanian dinars.

The aim of the Award is to encourage more in-depth political journalism within the Kingdom and to stimulate Jordanian journalism in general by rewarding questioning articles which raise public awareness and strive for more transparent politics.

With the registration form (downloadable from the web-site

www.eurojordanianpressaward.com), would-be candidates must include the published article in its entirety and original form, proof of its publication and a CV. The deadline for sending the dossier is April 28th.



Public presentation of the EUROMEDINCULTURE recommendations

On March 16th, members of the **EUROMEDINCULTURE(s) network** presented the fruit of the vast consultation they have been carrying out since January 2009 on the cultural issues connected with European construction and the place those issues ought to take in future community policies. The project is coordinated by the ADCEI, the presentation was at the European Parliament in Brussels before elected representatives, representatives of the European institutions, the main European cultural organisations and the general public.

Supported by the European Commission as part of its programme “Europe for its citizens”, the consultation process has involved thousands of people throughout Europe. In an on-line questionnaire and in many public meetings in the countries involved with the project, these people have expressed their opinion on the mobility of artists and people working in the field of culture, on whether the economic potential of cultural and artistic work is sufficiently emphasised, on whether cultural aspects should be integrated into educational programmes and on the place of culture in the E.U.'s external relations and more particularly around the Mediterranean.

Then, on March 16th, the project's partners presented a series of recommendations on how to shape the Community's future cultural policy, based on the considerations and propositions sent in by people. Thanks to the support of MEP Vincent Peillon, the presentation took place in the heart of the European Parliament in Brussels. The meeting was punctuated by the screening of a film made during the project in the different countries.



Testimonies of young volunteers in culture

As part of its rôle in helping young people move freely round the Euro-Mediterranean, ADCEI wants to publish on its EUROMEDINCULTURE web-site first-hand accounts of how that works in practice. Already the site has written accounts and videos by young European and Mediterranean volunteers whom ADCEI has helped come to cultural organisations in France, and there are also equivalent accounts by young French people who have been able to travel to the cultural

organisations of different European and Mediterranean countries.

Also, right at the heart of current events, there are accounts by several young women who describe what it's like being in Tunisia or Egypt. In these troubled countries, the young people observed and lived through remarkable events. <http://euromedinculture.org>



DOCmed launches a new training programme aimed at Mediterranean documentary producers and directors

Chosen by the Euromed Audiovisuel III Programme, DOCmed is organising the first training workshop for documentary producers, directors and writers in the southern half of the Mediterranean (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, the Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, Syria and Tunisia). It will run from March 22nd to 26th. Overall, the training consists of three sessions, each one week long, spread over a year.

At the same time as the first session, 10 Lebanese producers or directors who are working on a documentary project will be able to develop their ideas, benefiting from the presence of the Arab and European producers .

DOCmed is a training programme set up by Beirut DC (the Lebanon), Eurodoc (France) and Doc à Tunis (Tunisia), in co-operation with Arte France. The training programme is aimed at Arabs working in documentaries who have a project needing international co-production. 10 professionals will be chosen each year.

To know more: www.beirutdc.org/beirutdc/news/default.aspx?ni_id=73.

INDEPENDENT MEDITERRANEAN PRODUCERS' WAY

L'apimed

Association internationale de producteurs indépendants de la méditerranée

MEROE FILMS AT NEW YORK's "NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS"

"Man without a Cell Phone", Sameh Zoabi's feature film, produced by Méroé films, will be shown at New York on April 1st, as part of the New Directors/New Films Festival.

In co-production with *Lama Films* (Israel), *Kanmakan Films* (Palestine) and *Versus Productions* (Belgium), with the support of *Fonds Sud* (France), the *Rabinovitch Film Fund* (Israel), Belgian tax shelter and the Doha Film Institute. International Sales: Memento Films.

Jawdat, a young Israeli Arab construction worker simply wants to have fun with his mates, spend some time on his cell-phone and above all, find love. Instead, he navigates unconvincing dates with Muslim, Christian, and even Jewish girls, and wrestles with the Hebrew college entrance exam. Meanwhile, his curmudgeonly olive-farming father, Salem, is determined to drag Jawdat and the whole village into a fight against a nearby Israeli cell phone tower that he fears is poisoning the community with radiation. As Salem's efforts to remove the tower disrupt Jawdat's precious cell phone reception, preventing any further communication with his potential girlfriends, Jawdat is forced to face the battle and grow up to be a man.

Winner of the Groupama Gan Foundation for cinema and shown at Dubaï Film Connection.

MEROE FILMS

2 rue de l'agent Bailly - 15 rue Rodier

75009 Paris

Tel. : +331 47 70 27 00

Fax : +331 47 70 59 60

meroe-films@wanadoo.fr

REAL PRODUCTIONS' NEW DOCUMENTARY

Sabina Subasic has just completed her documentary **"Notre camarade Tito"** for Real Productions, to be broadcast on March 16th on France Ô. Pitched at MEDIMED 2007, the film is about a people's devotion for their dictator. Rich in personal memories, this film begins as a journey through ex-Yugoslavia. It is built on meetings, first-hand descriptions and archive material. It raises the question of Tito's legacy to his country, treated with a typical Slav sense of humour.

REAL PRODUCTIONS

25, rue de Saint Quentin, F-75010 Paris

Tel.: +331 40 35 55 00

Fax : +331 40 35 55 06

bruno.florentin@real-productions.net

STRANGERS CEMETERY, CRYSTAL FILMS' NEW PRODUCTION

The Lebanese producer and director Dima Al Joundi, has just completed her latest documentary **"Strangers Cemetery"**, co-produced by Crystal Films and Al Jazeera Documentary Channel.

In the suburbs of Tripoli (Lebanon's second town), there is a cemetery for foreigners, the Catholic cemetery of Fanar where immigrant workers are buried. But this is not only peopled by the dead, there are also many living people who come to the Lebanon dreaming of a better life and they have made the cemetery their home. The Lebanese call them "the strangers". Their daily life is hard and their nights very quiet...

The documentary is a reflection on the narrow line between life and death.

The film's international première will be in April at the Al Jazeera Doc Festival.

For further information, please contact CRYSTAL FILMS

Tel. : + 961 3605 988

Fax : + 961 1567 419

crystalf@cyberia.net.lb

For all information : Sergi Doladé, Director of MEDIMED (+ 34 93 244 98 50) Fax: (+ 34 93 247 01 65), info@apimed.org, www.medimed.org – Post: MEDIMED c/ Girona, 20, 5 planta, 08010 Barcelona, SPAIN.

Paule Héradès, the APIMED office (+ 33 6 07 78 61 04) email: paule.herades@gmail.com

STOP PRESS...



Sud Ecriture's next training workshop will be to help young Tunisian film-makers. The aim is to give 6 would-be directors from that country the chance to make a documentary about their take on the January 14th Revolution. The 6 film-makers chosen will be led by people working in the business who can help them make the best of their project. The deadline for submitting your candidacy was March 15th. Each candidate must send a one-page synopsis to:
sudecriture.nomadis@planet.tn



Syrian director Omar Amiralay died on February 5th in Damascus at the age of 67. Between 1970 and 2000, he made more than fifteen documentaries which explore Syria and the Arab world. His 2003 film "Deluge in the land of the Baas", produced by Arte, received the Best Short Film Award at the Arab Cinema Biennale at the Arab Institute in Paris. That particular film earned him a lot of trouble in his own country. Indeed most of his films cannot be shown in Syria.



Amal Kateb has received the *France Télévisions* Short-Film Award for "On ne mourra pas". He was given the Award during the 33rd Clermont Ferrand International Festival of Short Film. The jury of journalists and programmers was chaired by the French actress Zabou Breitman. His film questions the place of love in contemporary Algeria.



The Roberto Cimetta Fund, which every year gives travel grants for artists and cultural managers, has just launched its call for this year's candidates.

Applications from candidates from the southern and eastern parts of the Mediterranean will be given particular attention and studied

in priority.

Requests for grants must conform to the eligibility criteria and are open for every destination, artistic discipline and direction of mobility.

A special mobility fund has been opened for applications from or to Guimaraes (Portugal), as part of "Guimaraes, European Culture Capital 2012". Priority is given to candidates wishing to stay in an artistic residency to work in the following areas: music, performing arts, cinema, visual arts, design and architecture.

Every application must be submitted before March 25th, by filling in the form available on the Robert Cimetta Fund web-site: (www.cimettafund.org)

Translated from the French

by
Tim King