**MEDFILM FESTIVAL 30th EDITION**

***The Mediterranean cinema in Rome***

**7/17 November 2024**

Crowded cinema, the evening of the **Awards Ceremony of the 30th MedFilm Festival** has been intense and participated. The event dedicated to Mediterranean cinematographies brought 80 films, 60 guests, special events, meeting industry, literary meetings and masterclasses to Rome in locations spread throughout the city: The Space Cinema Moderno, MAXXI Museum - National Museum of XXI Century Arts, Palladium Theatre and Casa del Cinema, and streamed all over Italy on **MYmovies**.

The schedule will continue at **MAXXI until November 17** at the MAXXI - National Museum of XXI Century Arts with replays and special events, including a tribute to Palestinian filmmaker Rachid Masharawi.

MedFilm is a testimony of the past and a glimpse into the future, because as the director Ginella Vocca wrote, “*the festival welcomes direct testimonies of a place in the world pregnant with meaning, the Mediterranean, thanks to the human and humanist dialogue with the artists who inhabit it, inform it, and build it. Day by day, frame by frame, making it an inescapable bed of widespread cultural richness and creativity. And antidote: to wars, to climate change. To the pain, of everyone. In a time that is frightening for the loss of humanity and empathy, we think we need to turn on and illuminate Peace. And right from here, from Italy, the cradle and crossroads of Mediterranean cultures. And it is from here, from Europe, that the conflict has been able to disavow it, keeping away the bloody, bloodthirsty stench of war. For us, at the MedFilm Festival, the Cinema has been over these thirty long but fast years an inexhaustible source of knowledge of the other and hope for the future of all*”.

Thus, the hope is to keep giving strength and visibility to the film talents of this area, from film school students to the great authors, in a counter-song capable of offering a vision of the Mediterranean as a place of great creative, artistic and industrial ferment, as confirmed by the success of MedMeeetings, the festival's industry platform that offers Italian professionals further opportunities for cooperation within the virtuous international Euro-Mediterranean circuit.

So many young people crowded the cinema and participated in the scheduled events, and to them goes our commitment to do better and better.

Heartfelt participation of institutions, national and international, supporting the *dialogue builders project*. The MedFilm Festival has the Support of the President of the Italian Republic, the Patronage and support of the Representations in Italy of the European Commission, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Ministries of Culture, Foreign Affairs, Education, Justice, FAMI - Asylum Migration and Integration Fund, Economic Development, the Lazio Region, the Municipality of Rome and Intesa Sanpaolo as Main Sponsor. Supporting the event are the IOM - International Organization for Migration, Diplomatic Missions in Italy, Ministries of Culture and Film Institutions from more than 40 countries, 150 schools of Cinema, the Universities of Rome: La Sapienza, Roma Tre, UNIMED.

Media partner of the festival: Ansa, Rai Movie, Rai Radio3, Avvenire, Taxi Drivers e B-Hop Magazine.

Special mention to the MedFilm Festival team that makes it possible, year after year, and under all conditions, to hold the event with commitment, expertise and passion. Working together for the future of Cinema, as rich in its diversity as the Mediterranean Sea. Trusting that “*the sea unites the countries it separates*” (Cit. Alexander Pope).

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**The winners of the 30th Medfilm Festival edition**

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## **MedFilm Festival - Official Feature Film Competition**

The Official Competition Jury, including Michela Cescon, Piera Detassis, Viola Prestieri, Ludovica Rampoldi and Desideria Rayner, has awarded:

LOVE AND PSYCHE AWARD for Best Film:

***Les Fantômes*** by Jonathan Millet (France/Germany/Belgium, 2024, 105') - **The film will be distributed soon by Maestro Distribution**

*A gripping and tense narrative that tells us about the boundary between justice and revenge, personal pain and collective trauma, and the visceral relationship that forms between victim and perpetrator. The story of a Syrian exile on his torturer's trail is told combining thriller and art film, tension, horror and beauty. A manhunt magnificently played by Adam Bessa - whose outer and inner wounds are those of an entire people - and his antagonist Tawfeek Barhom.*

SPECIAL JURY PRIZE:

***Who Do I Belong To*** by Meryam Joobeur (Tunisia/France/Canada, 2024, 118')

*A film wrapped in a dreamlike atmosphere, with images of extraordinary evocative power. When her missing son returns to the village with a silent, pregnant woman veiled in a niqab that reveals only magnetic, disturbing eyes, the mother is torn by the conflict between searching for the truth and the need to hold the family together. In portraying this disintegration, Joobeur creates a world in which reality and projection blur, letting mystery prevail over explanation, and in which repressed guilt resurfaces with dark and destructive violence, threatening the entire community.*

ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AWARD:

**To the performance of Nisrin Erradi in *Everybody Loves Touda*** by Nabil Ayouch (Morocco/France/Belgium, 2024, 102')

**The film will be distributed soon by Maestro Distribution**

*The actress plays Touda and her dream of becoming a true Sheika, a traditional Moroccan singer who gives voice to the soul and words of ancestral poetesses. Vibrant, dreamy, always battered by men in the provincial clubs where she performs, she will find the strength to take on new challenges for her son and her art, in other places. Nisrin's proud performance, her Mediterranean and tenacious face, represent a saving challenge to humiliation and poverty.*

SPECIAL MENTION:

***No Other Land*** by Yuval Abraham, Basel Adra, Rachel Szor, Hamdan Ballal (Palestine/Norway, 2024, 96')

**The film will be released in theatres on January 13/14/15 with Wanted**

*Basel Adra, Hamdan Ballal, Yuval Abraham, and Rachel Szor with their very powerful film* No Other Land *have made us part of a heroic and desperate story of everyday resistance, made of friendship and incredible courage. In Masafer Yatta, in the West Bank, lives a community that for decades has resisted a vicious policy of eviction by the State of Israel: Bulldozers tear down what overnight residents desperately try to rebuild in an attempt not to abandon their land. For decades, Basel Adra has been documenting what is happening in his community by his camera, using it as one of the few tools available to defend himself, filming the actions of soldiers and the violence of settlers. The film originates from this material, and is signed by 4 directors: 2 Palestinians and 2 Israelis. A story of friendship that crosses the borders. It is an act of creative resistance that inflames and outrages us and reminds us how cinema can become a real tool of resistance and struggle, on its way to the search for justice, so much reviled in these dark days.*

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## **MedFilm Festival - Official Short Film Competition**

The Jury of the International Short Film Competition, including Yonatan Workneh Ayallew, Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia) Wissam Bentikouk, La Fémis (France) Bezawit Fekadu Bogale, Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia) Anas Bouzammour, ISMAC (Morocco) Nicolò Folin, CSC (Italy) Alessandra Kalka, Libera Università del Cinema (Italy) Barbara Di Roma, Sentieri Selvaggi School of Cinema (Italy) Ana Logar, University of Nova Gorica (Slovenia) Marine Auclair March, Escac (Spain) Shrijan Pandey, Northwestern University (Qatar) Eleni Parone, Auth (Greece) Omar Rezgui, ISAMM (Tunisia) Lizi Tabagari, RUFA (Italy) and by a group of inmates from Rome Rebibbia Prison, Rome Rebibbia Women's Prison, Rome Rebibbia New Complex Prison, III Rome Rebibbia Prison, awarded:

METHEXIS AWARD FOR BEST SHORT FILM

***Après le soleil*** by Rayane Mcirdi (Algeria/France, 2024, 24')

*The diverse set of films from the Mediterranean region showed a range of strong emotions expressing pain, conflicts, values and messages that are very relevant in today's status-quo. With an excellent blend of cinematic storytelling and creative challenges to conventional film language, the films are a strong testament to the direction that modern filmmaking is taking, especially in terms of depicting sensitive issues such as war, family, migration, identity, and culture. Among these challenges, one film powerfully showed the complexity of family life against the backdrop of migration and its hidden politics. This film mixed the tenderness of the characters with hidden tensions, such as the profound depiction of a father's family dynamics and its subtle reversal into anxiety and conflict. During our meeting and discussion: we young people and Rebibbia inmates as jurors related to the issues of the complexity of integration in new societies and how restrictive it can be to remain stuck in particular cultures. Similarly, by foregrounding children's emotions, the film challenged the concept of belonging when squeezed between two cultures. It seemed to us that this strong theme relates to the experiences of many people navigating a dynamic and globalized world.*

CERVANTES ROMA AWARD TO THE MOST CREATIVE SHORT FILM:

***Valerija*** by Sara Jurinčić (Croatia, 2023, 16')

*In watching* Valerija *in all of us there was a shared feeling - a powerful and beautiful way of telling a story that feels like poetry. The film's poetics were mainly achieved through its aesthetics, driven by the director's strong, innovative and imaginative choices. It evokes emotions that touch you deeply. The spirit of our ancestors - characterized by feminine strength and their legacy - remains with us, even after they are gone. A unique interpretation of the war through a female perspective highlights the social changes and absence of men caused by the conflict*.

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**Valentina Pedicini Award - Best First and Second Work**

The Valentina Pedicini Award jury, including Gianluigi Attorre, Rä di Martino and Massimo Gaudioso, wrote that:

“*It was not easy to decide which was the best first work among a shortlist of very different films, each with a strong identity and a definite style of storytelling. To help us choose, we opted for the following yardstick: what quality should a first work have in our opinion? The immediacy and freshness of the storytelling; a real need to document the life that flows before us by privileging one's instincts, without filters or too much claims, taking the risk of being wrong*,” and awarded the prize:

BEST FILM:

***No Other Land*** by Yuval Abraham, Basel Adra, Rachel Szor, Hamdan Ballal (Palestine/Norway, 2024, 96')

*Inherited and lived testimony of a collective drama lasting 30 years in Masafer Yatta, West Bank. The narrative evolves with the same repetitiveness as the bulldozers that daily appear before the young authors' eyes. Rather than opening itself to broader reflection, it remains within the boundaries of the village, within the identical woes and laments of its inhabitants. But it is precisely in this daily attrition that its inherent strength lies. A force that goes beyond the screen and straight to our consciences.*

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**BEST EURO-MEDITERRANEAN CO-PRODUCTION AWARD**

**First and Second Work, in collaboration with the Representation in Italy of the European Commission.**

The Award jury, including Donatella Finocchiaro, Massimo Pronio and Pilaar Saavedra, awarded:

BEST FILM:

***I diari di mio padre*** (My father's diaries) by Ado Hasanovic (Italy/France, 2024, 83')

*The director uses a personal and intimate, unfiltered diaphragm to tell the story of a fratricidal conflict that tore the former Yugoslavia apart. His traumatic legacy becomes awareness and opportunity for a new future through the authenticity of storytelling.*

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**MED MEETINGS**

**OIM Prize – STADION VIDEO Prize – PITCHING Prize**

The MedFilm Works in Progress Jury, including Gaia Furrer, Esmeralda Calabria and Stefan Ivančić awarded:

OIM PRIZE (10.000 euros) to ***Dream of another summer*** by Irene Bartolomé

PREMIO STADION VIDEO (3.500 euro) to ***Kriegsausgabe*** by Tarik Aktaš

Professionals participating in MedPitching have awarded:

MEDPITCHING PRIZE (1.000 euros) to ***Saffron’s Land*** by Yassine El Idrissi

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## **Amnesty International Human Rights Award**

Amnesty International awarded the Amnesty International Human Rights Award of the 30th MedFilm Festival to:

***No Other Land*** by Yuval Abraham, Basel Adra, Rachel Szor, Hamdan Ballal (Palestine/Norway, 2024, 96')

*In the story of the resistance of the Palestinian villages of Masafar Yatta and the friendship between a Palestinian activist and an Israeli journalist, the institutionalized division between communities, the fact that for some people there are rights, less for others, that a part of the population lives under constant threat, with an absolute sense of precariousness, emerge powerfully. This film shows and chronicles daily occupation and prevarication, which have created an unsafe system for all, devastating for too many people.*

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**WWF MEDFILM AWARD**

The Prize is awarded to the film that is most “*able to recount in backlight and with an original and effective narrative the increasingly close connection between the conditions of the environment and the lives of the communities and individual inhabitants who populate the Mediterranean region*.” The Award consists of a Parchment and a symbolic cash award.

The WWF MedFilm Award jury, including Paolo Di Paolo, Matteo Grandese and Catherine McGilvray , in viewing the four films in the selection found that the theme of memory ran through all the works like a common thread. The memory of the earth first and foremost, of the planet, which despite being constantly threatened with obliteration by human intervention, resists tenaciously. And people's memory. In many cases short, through guilt or superficiality, in others romantically or courageously clinging to a more welcoming, healthier, more intact land of the past.

The jury decided to award the prize to:

***Mango*** by Randa Ali (Egypt/UK, 2024, 22')

*For the completeness of the narrative, the stylistic maturity, the fusion of the environmental and the sentimental tracks. In this short film set in Egypt, the fragile fruit tree almost becomes a co-star of the narrative. Mango is a bittersweet and proud little jewel to be savoured with satisfaction. The memory of its protagonists and the memory of the land are intertwined, creating a bond that powerfully engages the viewer through photography that with its textural grain makes the environments in which the story unfolds almost palpable, and through a direction capable of moving from delicate, respectful shots made up of wings and reflections to a handheld camera that takes us inside the scene right next to its talented lead actress.*

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## **Additional Awards of the 30th Medfilm Festival**

**University Juries**

The University Jury is composed of two juries parallel and autonomous to the official ones, one for each Competition (Feature and Short Films), chaired by Antonietta De Lillo (director and producer) and Valerio Ferrara (director) and composed of students from Department ISO Italian Institute of Oriental Studies Faculty of Humanities and Philosophy, University of Rome La Sapienza, Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities and Philosophy, University of Rome La Sapienza, Department of History Anthropology Religions Arts and Entertainment, Faculty of Humanities and Philosophy, University of Rome La Sapienza, Macroarea of Humanities and Philosophy, Department of History, Cultural Heritage, Education and Society, University of Rome Tor Vergata, Department of Philosophy, Communication and Entertainment, University of Rome - Roma Tre, University of Rome UNINT International Studies, UNIMED - Union of Mediterranean Universities, Luiss University Business School - Writing School for Cinema and Television, Major - Master in Media and Entertainment, John Cabot University.

BEST FEATURE FILM AWARD:

***Salve Maria*** by Mar Coll (Spain, 2024, 111’)

*The jury unanimously awarded* Salve Maria *appreciating the story and the well-written script that shows us the motherhood from a different point of view than we are used to. It is a personal and intimate story that with the themes of horror and thriller shows us a protagonist who creates empathy with the audience, both women and men. An empathy that makes us understand her actions by not judging the protagonist even when her actions threaten the child's life by keeping us in a worrisome state.*

SPECIAL MENTION FEATURE FILMS:

***No Other Land*** by Yuval Abraham, Basel Adra, Rachel Szor, Hamdan Ballal (Palestine/Norway, 2024, 96')

*The jury decided to give special mention to* No Other Land *because it is proof that reality cinema can be as strong a carrier of feelings and narratives as fiction cinema. A very interesting element is the alliance of the two protagonists of the two different factions Israel and Palestine. Hopefully, this film can be an inspiration in similar situations by bringing the world into dialogue. Through the big screen this topic acquires a more impactful power than what we perhaps see in the news and media, for example in the heart-breaking scenes of homes and schools “crumpled” before the eyes of those who live in them.*

BEST SHORT FILM AWARD:

***An Orange From Jaffa*** by Mohammed Almughanni (Palestine/France/Poland, 2024, 26')

*The film offers a glimpse of everyday life in the border area of a disputed country where individual needs collide with the absurdity of an endless conflict. The intertwining of tension and irony make it engaging and unpredictable.*

SPECIAL MENTION SHORT FILMS:

***Mentor*** by Tinkara Klipšteter (Slovenia, 2024, 15')

*For the ability to construct in such a small space as the theatre such a universal narrative. The short film helps us ask an important question: how far can a teacher or art enthusiast go in the name of creativity? We are aware of how difficult it is to tackle this kind of issue, but the director has managed to tackle it flawlessly with excellent cinematography, script, and direction.*

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**Piuculture Jury**

The Piuculture Jury including Huseein Al-Lami, Fatou Sokhna, Feride Fem Dizdar, Setareh Ali Doost Dafsari, Youssef Ramadan Said and Nicol Sofia Cacho Stefan, awarded the Best Film Prize to:

***No Other Land*** by Yuval Abraham, Basel Adra, Rachel Szor, Hamdan Ballal (Palestine/Norway, 2024, 96')

*The team of filmmakers and photographers who made the work possible are, not surprisingly, Palestinian, the filmmaker and journalist Basel Adra and the photographer Hamdan Ballal, and Israeli, the Israeli director of photography Rache Szor and the journalist Yuval Abraham. The documentary deeply engages the viewer who becomes a participant in an everyday life marked by the resistance of the inhabitants of the Masafer Yatta region of the West Bank. The documentary uses archive footage and traces the life of the filmmaker Basel Adra from childhood to adulthood when Basel began filming the everyday life of his people, punctuated by destruction and reconstruction. The camera never indulges in scenes of violence and yet it becomes, in his hands, a weapon that testifies to the patience, sabr, with which the Palestinian community reacts to the constant attempts to expropriate territory. However, the filmmakers, Basel in Yuval, just like the communities in Masafer Yatta, do not give up and prefer to think that a peaceful solution is possible, as the friendship between them has been possible.*

With a mention for:

***Salve Maria*** by Mar Coll (Spain, 2024, 111’)

*For the peculiarity of the subject matter, motherhood and the dark side that haunts the young mother.*

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## **Recognitions**

**KOINÉ AWARD 2024 to Matteo Garrone**

*Among the most tenacious, versatile and international Italian filmmakers, Matteo Garrone won the Koiné 2024 Award. For the first time awarded to a director, the prize goes to an author who, film by film, builds bridges between cultures, generations and peoples, moving between the most sophisticated auteur cinema and the attention to the audience. Powerful in terms of images and imagery, Matteo Garrone creates real relationships with the people and communities he narrates: in his film,* Io Capitano*, he spoke clearly of the desire denied to so many young people to travel, managing to embody in his characters the dream of a common Koiné.*

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The MedFilm Festival is honoured of the Support of the President of the Italian Republic, the Patronage and support of the Representations in Italy of the European Commission and Parliament, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Ministries of Culture, Foreign Affairs, Education, Justice, FAMI - Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration, Economic Development, the Lazio Region, the Municipality of Rome and Intesa Sanpaolo as Main Sponsor.

Supporting the event are the IOM - International Organization for Migration, Diplomatic Missions in Italy, Ministries of Culture and Film Institutions from more than 40 countries, 150 schools of Cinema, the Universities of Rome: La Sapienza, Roma Tre, UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union.

The project is the winner of the two-year Public Call ‘Cultures in Motion 2023 - 2024’ of Roma Capitale

**Thanks to all the guests, authors, distributors with whom we collaborated**

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