

## Gala Screenings Welcomes the Best of World Cinema to the Madinat Arena at DIFF

### Event and Exhibitions

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**USPA NEWS** - The 14th Edition of the Dubai International Film Festival returns with its Red Carpet Galas that will be shining the spotlight on wonderful new works from acclaimed directors, and adding a touch of sparkle to proceedings. The Red Carpet Galas are an opportunity to watch screenings throughout the week at DIFF's purpose built state-of-the-art venue, the Madinat Arena. There will also be a series of Red Carpet presentations at the Madinat Theatre in the Souk Madinat Jumeirah, along with screenings from the Arab world and beyond at VOX Cinemas, Mall of the Emirates.

Kick-starting the much-anticipated Gala Screenings on Thursday 7th December is British Director Dominic Cooke's, "On Chesil Beach" based on the 2007 Booker Prize-nominated novel by Ian McEwan. Looking in-depth at relationships in the 1960's, the film follows the goings-on of a young couple on their honeymoon. A second Gala Screening will follow - "Orchestra Class", a heartwarming tale of new beginnings for a struggling violinist and the power of music from French Actor and Director, Rachid Hami.

On Friday, 8th a triple-bill bursts into life at the Madinat Arena with the Children's Gala, "Ferdinand" from legendary Brazilian director, Carlos Saldanha. Renowned for his masterful animated works, Saldanha's "Ferdinand", is a children's adventure-comedy centred around a fighting bull with an identity crisis, voiced by John Cena. Second on the roster is the critically appraised, "The Death of Stalin" from Scottish-Italian filmmaker Armando Iannucci, who brings soviet-era satire about one of the world's most ruthless leaders, to the modern era of cinema. Finishing off a jam-packed roster of world-class cinema is Australian director, Warwick Thornton's period-western "Sweet Country", inspired by true events, boasting a stellar cast of Michael Palin, Steve Buscemi, Jason Isaacs and Jeffrey Tambor.

Saturday 9th December also boasts a trio of international hits. DIFF's afternoon Gala is Academy Award-nominated actor, writer, producer and director Rob Reiner's "Shock and Awe" which takes a real-life look at a group of journalists who uncovered the unsubstantiated claims by President George W. Bush's administration that led to the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Everyone's favourite fun-fueled action-packed family adventure, "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle", revs into gear on Saturday evening at the Madinat Arena with a superstar cast that includes, Dwayne Johnson, Kevin Hart, and Jack Black, and is directed by American television director Jake Kasdan. Bringing the curtain down for the day is Hollywood hotshot James Franco, with the much celebrated, "The Disaster Artist", a behind-the-scenes look at the making of Tommy Wiseau's "The Room" from 2003 "an undoubtedly awful film - that has become one of the most treasured cult classic of all time.

Dubbed one of the most creative and visionary artists of his generation, Mexican Director Guillermo Del Toro presents the stunning romantic fantasy "The Shape of Water" on Sunday, 10th. The highly anticipated feature and winner of the Golden Lion Award for Best Film at the Venice Film Festival exudes talent with the likes of Academy Award nominees Sally Hawkins, Michael Shannon and Richard Jenkins, and Academy Award winner Octavia Spencer.

From the head-turning film, "Clash" (2016) comes acclaimed TV and Film writer, Khaled Diab's latest feature, "Induced Labor", to open the Gala Screenings on Monday, 11th December. After tireless attempts to obtain legitimate entry to the US fail, an Egyptian couple believes that storming the US embassy in Cairo and birthing their twins there will grant them citizenship, however not everything goes to plan in this raucous comedy. Bringing a darker shade of humour to the evening of the 11th, is "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" from Academy Award winning British Filmmaker, Martin McDonagh. The Oscar front-runner starring Frances McDormand, Woody Harrelson, and Sam Rockwell has snowballed on the festival circuit winning Best Screenplay Award at the Venice Film Festival, the People's Choice Award at TIFF, and a further 11 nominations for British Independent Film Awards.

Tuesday the 12th welcomes a duo of award winning international hits, starting with BAFTA Award winning Director Lynne Ramsay and her gripping thriller, "You Were Never Really Here". Picking up awards for Best Actor and Best Screenplay at Cannes Film Festival, the feature received a phenomenal reception and standing ovation from audiences. Matt Damon is the pick of the bunch in Alexander Payne's Academy Award winning satirical sci-fi piece, "Downsizing". Centred on a man who chooses to shrink himself (literally) to simplify his life, the fun and touching film concludes the screenings in the Arena, with help from Kristen Wiig, Christoph Waltz, Laura Dern, Jason Sudeikis, Alec Baldwin, and Neil Patrick Harris.

Masoud Amralla Al Ali, DIFF's Artistic Director, commented on the spectacular Gala Screenings: "Bringing standout, original and compelling films to audiences at DIFF is key to the success of the festival, and with an abundance of incredible features gracing our screens again this year, we are confident that we will deliver on that promise. Featuring world-renowned directors and stellar cast performances, the Gala Screenings represent some of the most anticipated releases of the year."

Fans can enjoy the Red Carpet experience for just AED100.

The 14th Edition of the Dubai International Film Festival will see films screened over eight days at the Madinat Jumeirah Arena, Madinat Theatre, Souk Madinat Jumeirah and VOX Cinemas, Mall of the Emirates and THE BEACH "" opposite JBR.

Film-lovers can buy tickets from the DIFF box office at diff.ae and at VOX Cinemas, Mall of the Emirates. Tickets will be available from December 5th at the Madinat Arena, Madinat Jumeirah, and from the Madinat Theatre, Souk Madinat Jumeirah on December 6th.

**Article online:**

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**Editorial program service of General News Agency:**

United Press Association, Inc.

3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168

Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA

(702) 943.0321 Local

(702) 943.0233 Facsimile

[info@unitedpressassociation.org](mailto:info@unitedpressassociation.org)

[info@gna24.com](mailto:info@gna24.com)

[www.gna24.com](http://www.gna24.com)