



AL AKHAWAYN
SHORT FILM
FESTIVAL

THE GUIDE

The Program
Meet the Jury
The Student Short Films
The Guest Lectures
The Panel Discussion
The Screenings & Discussions with Filmmakers
The Award Ceremony

جامعة الأخوين
AL AKHAWAYN
UNIVERSITY



Thursday
April 3rd

Friday
April 4th

Saturday
April 5th

14:00

Master Class:
Storytelling by Anass
El Gad in *Darija*

Panel Discussion: *How can the Moroccan film industry help student filmmakers encourage their career and creative aspirations?*

Panelists: Meryem Ben'mbarek, Anass El Gad, Izza Genini, Abdenbi El Benioui, Roland Carrée, Bilal Marmid, Youssef Ksiyer, Khalid Mouna, Karim Souissi, Safae Lahgazi Alaoui and Yassine Bouhouch

16:00

Production Workshop:
Fundamentals of cinematographic and creative production by Sophia Menni from Tamayouz Cinema Foundation

18:00

Acting Workshop by Abdenbi El Beniwi

Guest Lecture:
CinéCasablanca, la Ville Blanche en 100 films by Roland Carrée in French

Tribute to Izza Genini
and Special Screening of *Meqboulène, The Hosts of Toumliline*

20:00

OPENING CEREMONY
Screening of Official Selection of Student Short Films

Screening of *Sofia*
& discussion with Meryem Ben'mbarek

AWARD CEREMONY
Dress Code: Moroccan Elegance

22:00

Screening of *My Dad is Not Dead* and discussion with Adil El Fadili and Abdenbi El Beniwi

23:00

DJ Club Afterparty

DJ Club Afterparty

MEET THE JURY



President of the Jury

MERYEM BENM'BAREK



Moroccan film director and screenwriter. She was a recipient of the 2017 Gan Foundation prize and a grant from the Doha Film Institute in 2017. Her feature film, *Sofia* won the best screenplay award at Cannes, *Un Certain Regard* section in 2018. She has also written and directed five short films, winning two filmmaking awards for her 2014 film *Jenna* in the United States.



Member of the Jury

ABDENBI EL BENIWI



Moroccan actor who worked in many Moroccan and foreign works, in cinema, on television and on stage. He is known for his work on *Mount Moussa* (2022) and *Qasr El Bacha* (2019). He is the main actor in Adil El Fadili's latest film, *My Dad is Not Dead* (2023), which won Best Film in the Tangier FilmFestival.



Member of the Jury

ANASS EL GAD



An emerging Moroccan director and screenwriter, expert in visual storytelling and creative direction. He collaborated with several top Moroccan and international brands, producing captivating advertisements that connect deeply with target audiences, winning multiple awards.

THE OFFICIAL SELECTION COMMITTEE



Fatima Matousse

Matousse, a Moroccan native, is an independent filmmaker and 2016 Fulbright Scholar. In 2018, Matousse graduated with an MFA in Documentary Film at the City College of New York (CUNY), where her debut film, *"Family in Exile,"* won Best Cinematography at the graduation ceremony. Fatima's film has been an official selection of highly renowned international festivals all over the world such as Interfilm Berlin and Arab Film Festival in San Francisco in addition to winning awards in the US, Portugal, Morocco and Russia.



roland carrée

Carrée holds a doctorate in film studies from the University of Rennes 2 and is a lecturer and researcher at the École Supérieure des Arts Visuels (ESAV) in Marrakech, where he is also responsible for the film and cultural programming. In 2024, he presented his second book, *CinéCasablanca: la Ville Blanche* en 100 films, written with Rabéa Ridaoui and published by Le Fennec.



mikael f. daoudi

Docteur en Arts, études cinématographiques, audiovisuelles et scéniques, Daoudi est un artiste visuel et sonore basé à Tétouan, spécialisé dans des œuvres mêlant disciplines artistiques et technologies. Depuis 2015, il enseigne à l'Institut National des Beaux-Arts de Tétouan (INBA), où il propose des cours d'animation expérimentale, de vidéo art et d'art numérique.



Asmaa El Alaoui

El Alaoui has directed and produced cultural programs for the two national channels and more than 25 documentaries of 52 minutes, 4 documentaries of 26 minutes, 160 capsules of 5 minutes, 1 docufiction of 90 minutes, broadcast on the Al Jazeera Documentary Channel. In addition to being a producer and director, she created in 2003 the first film and audiovisual school in Morocco: ISCA Rabat. She has been a member of the Moroccan Chamber of Documentarists since 2019.



THE OFFICIAL SELECTION

TO WATCH ON OPENING NIGHT THURSDAY APRIL 3RD @20:00

- Words from the Official Selection Committee, **Roland Carrée & Fatima Matousse**
- Words from the Jury, **Meryem Benm'barek, Abdenbi El Beniwi and Anass El Gad**
- **Screening of Official Selection**; 10 student short films from AUI, ESAV, ISMAC and AUC in documentary and fiction.
- **Musical Performance by Band 17**
- **Audience Vote**

	School	Director	Short Film Title	Synopsis
Documentary	AUI	Soukayna Essaldi	A Tale of The Man & The Land	A Tale of The Man & The Land is a short documentary that explores the profound and emotional connection between the people of Tafraout and their homeland. Through a series of intimate conversations and personal narratives, "Afgan d Akal" explores themes of belonging and identity. Tafraout serves as both the backdrop and the protagonist of the story, reflecting the relationship between humans and the land.
	ESAV	Ines Lehaire	Abdellah	Fouzia, a devoted mother, hides a haunting childhood secret. At 8, she is sent to work for a family in Casablanca, enduring unimaginable hardships. Now, having found her voice, she confronts her past while protecting her children from the shadows that threaten to resurface.
	ESAV	Salma Kortobi	Echoes of the Past	Today, Aouli and Mibladen look like ghost towns in the Wild West, but not before. At the beginning of the 20th century, the French discovered lead mines and decided to develop mining activities there. The cessation of this activity will have a major impact on the local population.
	ESAV	Léna Lucas	Little Paris	A son captures the poignant echoes of his father's post-retirement life, marked by dialysis and a haunting daily routine. The delicate symphony of memories unfolds as emotions, sensations and pain are painted like delicate petals in this touching human sonnet.
	ISMAC	Zakaria Dinia	Echoes in Ephemeral Light	A son captures the poignant echoes of his father's post-retirement life, marked by dialysis and a haunting daily routine. The delicate symphony of memories unfolds as emotions, sensations and pain are painted like delicate petals in this touching human sonnet.
Fiction	AUI	Deyae El Moujahid	The Stain	The film begins with drops of blood falling onto a beautiful flower, staining its soft petals. In the background, a terrible act is taking place. A child is being raped. As the blood spreads, the flower starts to wither, losing its life and beauty. This simple yet powerful imagery tells a heartbreaking story of innocence lost and the deep scars left behind. It's a quiet but emotional call to protect children and fight against such acts of violence.
	ESAV	Charlérie Chateau	Blue Square	In a post-apocalyptic future where artificial intelligences care for wealthy individuals who have abandoned their physical forms to live within their memories, "Blue Square" tells the story of a man virtually imprisoned in a childhood memory on a tropical beach. Through the narration of an AI voice-over, we witness a world where nature has almost entirely disappeared, leaving behind only digital echoes of the past. The AI, tasked with preserving these memories, reflects on its own inability to experience the natural world, evoking a sense of loss and nostalgia.
	ESAV	Amine Rharbal	A Journey Without a Ticket	An exploration journey, between dream and reality.
	ISMAC	Omar Zaafaoui	My freind seddik	A foolish boy accidentally kills his friend and goes to hide in the forest. Starving, he sneaks into people's houses at night, looking for something to eat.
	ISMAC	Sefyane Salamat	Soul balance	A nomadic family living in the Moroccan Saghro Mountains in 1980. The grandmother tries to save the life of her five-year-old granddaughter from a deadly disease after the older brother escapes on a one-way journey in search of a doctor.



THE WORKSHOPS



THURSDAY APRIL 3RD

18:00

**ACTING WORKSHOP BY
ABDENBI EL BENIOUI**

FRIDAY APRIL 4TH

16:00

**FUNDAMENTALS OF
CINEMATOGRAPHIC AND
CREATIVE PRODUCTION BY
SOPHIA MENNI**



LIMITED SEATS





THE GUEST LECTURES



MASTER CLASS

Visual Storytelling (in Darija)

By Anass El Gad

Friday April 4th @14:00



CinéCasablanca

la Ville Blanche en 100 films (in French)

By Roland Carrée & Rabéa Ridaoui

Friday April 4th @18:00

Based on a selection of one hundred national and international films, from the beginning of the 20th century to the present day, this guest lecture seeks to describe how Casablanca appears and deciphers its artistic intentions, the choice of locations, the historical, urban and architectural context as well as its interpretations in relation to reality.



THE PANEL DISCUSSION

Paving the Way for Emerging Filmmakers

How can the Moroccan film industry encourage student filmmakers' career development and creative aspirations?

Panelists

Meryem Ben'mbarek, Anass El Gad, Izza Genini, Abdenbi El Beniouï, Roland Carrée, Bilal Marmid, Youssef Ksiyer, Khalid Mouna, Karim Souissi, Safae Lahgazi Alaoui and Yassine Bouhouch

Sub-Themes

- **Funding and Resources:** Access to funding and resources is a major concern. Filmmakers discuss strategies for securing financial support, navigating grants, and finding affordable equipment and locations.
- **Censorship and Freedom of Expression:** The balance between creative freedom and censorship is a hot topic. Filmmakers explore how to address sensitive social issues while adhering to local regulations
- **Representation and Diversity:** Ensuring diverse representation in Moroccan cinema is crucial. Discussions often focus on how to portray various social, cultural, and gender perspectives authentically
- **International Collaboration:** With Morocco becoming a popular filming destination, young filmmakers are interested in opportunities for international collaboration and co-productions
- **Technological Advancements:** The impact of new technologies on filmmaking, such as digital editing and special effects, is another important topic. Filmmakers share insights on how to leverage these tools to enhance their work



SCREENINGS



SOFIA (2018)

Sofia, 20, lives with her parents in Casablanca. Following a denial of pregnancy, she finds herself illegally giving birth to a baby out of wedlock. The hospital leaves her 24h to provide the papers of the father of the child before alerting the authorities.

Friday April 4th at 20:00

(2025) مقبُولَيْن، ضيُوف تومليلين MEQBOULINE, THE HOSTS OF TOUMLILINE

In 1952, twenty Benedictine monks from En-Calcat Abbey founded a monastery in Toumliline, Morocco, during a pivotal historical period. The film explores their integration, revealing an encounter between three spiritualities and resulting in mutual acceptance, making these monks "Meqbouline" people

Saturday April 5th at 18:00.



(2023) أَبِي لَمْ يَمِتْ MY DAD IS NOT DEAD

Malik and his father Mehdi live in a funfair where they work as handymen. Mehdi gives his son five special paintings. Curious Malik is dazzled by the beauty of these works. The next day, the two accidentally find themselves in the middle of a political rally.

Saturday April 5th at 21:15



THE AWARD CEREMONY

ON FRIDAY APRIL 5TH

- Words of the **Vice President of Academic Affairs**
- Words of the **President of the Jury**
- Musical Performance by **Voice United Choir**
- Documentary Prize presented by **Abdenbi El Benioui & Izza Genini**
- Documentary Audience Prize presented by **Khalid Mouna**
- Fiction Prize presented by **Anass El Gad and Karim Souissi**
- Fiction Audience Prize presented by **Youssef Ksiyer**
- Grand Prize presented by **Meryem Benm'barek & Bilal Marmid**
- **Screening of the Grand Prize**

THE PRIZES

Given that the microfilms were not selected, the prizes will only concern the documentary and fiction categories. The audience will get to vote for their favorite fiction and documentary. The student participants will also win a certificate which attests of the Audience Prize in both categories. The jury of the festival will give 3 prizes:



The documentary prize

4000 dhs cash, a certificate signed by the president of the jury



The fiction prize

4000 dhs cash, a certificate signed by the president of the jury



The grand prize

20 000 dhs contract with Al Akhawayn Alumni Association, a Trophy, and the distribution of a new short film on Jooj Media