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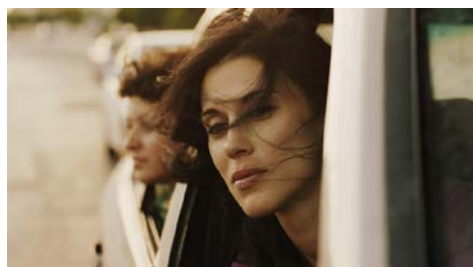
News



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SAN FRANCISCO EMBRACES ARAB HERITAGE MONTH

**Arab Cultural Festival, Arab Film Festival,
Roads of Arabia exhibition celebrate Arab
Heritage Month in October**

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 2, 2014—San
Francisco celebrates Arab Heritage Month

with three major events in October. The 20th Annual Arab Cultural Festival kicks off the festivities on Saturday, Oct. 4 in Union Square. This day-long event transforms Union Square into an Arab bazaar for one Saturday every year, offering food, games and entertainment to the whole family. On Oct. 10, the Arab Film Festival launches its 18th edition at the Castro Theatre with screenings throughout the Bay Area, serving as the largest independent annual showcase of Arab films and filmmakers in the country. Rounding out the month is the new exhibition *Roads of Arabia: Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* at the Asian Art Museum. *Roads of Arabia* features recent archaeological discoveries that have radically transformed our understanding of Saudi Arabia. The exhibition includes more than 200 objects, revealing the Arabian Peninsula's role as a cultural crossroads through trade and pilgrimage over thousands of years. Event details follow.

20th Annual Arab Cultural Festival

Union Square, 333 Post Street
Sat., Oct. 4, 11 AM–6PM
Free

The Arab Cultural Festival is the largest celebration of Arab arts and culture in Northern California. Since 1995, this day-long event has showcased the arts, entertainment, cuisine, traditions and spirit of Arab Americans and the Arab world. Performers present Arab music and dance onstage at the center of the outdoor booth bazaar.

The festival reflects and embraces the Arab community's diversity and its contributions to the Bay Area's cultural landscape. The event's goals embody the Arab Cultural and Community Center's mission statement: Through the platform of performance,

Cherien Dabis and Alia Shawkat in the film *May in the Summer*.

MORE

community engagement and cultural relations, the center empowers Arab Americans to express pride in heritage and to express themselves.

18th Annual Arab Film Festival

Bay Area

Oct. 10–23

Opening Night: Oct. 10, 7:30 PM at the Castro Theatre (429 Castro St.); tickets \$25

Film Festival tickets: general \$12, student/senior \$10; passes available

The Arab Film Festival opens on Oct. 10 at the Castro Theatre with the San Francisco premiere of *May in the Summer*. The film's director, Cherien Dabis, lovingly breathes life into a world rarely depicted on screen: contemporary Jordan, where ancient traditions, burgeoning modernity and Western imitation deliciously collide, and nothing is quite what it seems. This year the festival screens in San Francisco, Berkeley, Oakland and Palo Alto before heading to Los Angeles and San Diego in November.

With an international standing, the Arab Film Festival is considered one of the most important festivals of Arab films outside the Arab world. The festival presents a range of contemporary films with insight into the beauty, complexity and diversity of Arab culture, art, history and politics.



Roads of Arabia: Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Asian Art Museum, 200 Larkin St.

Oct. 24, 2014–Jan. 18, 2015

Tuesdays–Sundays, 10 AM–5PM

\$10–\$15

An eye-opening look at the largely unknown ancient past of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, this exhibition draws on recently discovered archaeological material never before seen in the United States. *Roads of Arabia* features objects excavated from several sites throughout the Arabian Peninsula, tracing the impact of ancient trade routes and pilgrimage roads stretching from Yemen in the south to Iraq and Mediterranean cultures in the north. Elegant alabaster bowls and fragile glassware, heavy gold earrings and Hellenistic bronze statues testify to a lively mercantile and cultural interchange among distant civilizations.

The Asian Art Museum presents a range of insightful public programs to accompany the exhibition. Join us for an interactive Arab music performance with the Bay Area music ensemble ASWAT. Enjoy new concert works inspired by ancient Arabic texts, by composers Mohammed Fairouz and Behzad Ranjbaran, pianist Lara Downes, baritone Zachary Gordin and cellist Jennifer Kloetzel. Learn about languages from the Arabian Peninsula and listen to poetry with students from the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. More program details at www.asianart.org.

Roads of Arabia: Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is organized by the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution in association with the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. ExxonMobil and Saudi Aramco are gratefully acknowledged as principal co-sponsors of the tour of *Roads*

Funerary Mask, 1st century. Saudi Arabia; Thaj, Tell al-Zayer. Gold. *Courtesy of National Museum of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, 2061.*

of Arabia in the United States. Sponsorship is also provided by The Olayan Group and Fluor Corporation. Presentation at the Asian Art Museum is made possible with the generous support of Chevron Corporation, Saudi Aramco, The Akiko Yamazaki and Jerry Yang Fund for Excellence in Exhibitions and Presentations, ExxonMobil, and ATEL Capital Group. Saudi Aramco is gratefully acknowledged as the lead *Roads of Arabia* education and public programs sponsor. Additional support is generously provided by ExxonMobil. Media sponsors: ABC7, Examiner, KQED, San Francisco magazine.

ABOUT ARAB CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY CENTER

The Arab Cultural and Community Center of San Francisco is a nonprofit organization devoted to promoting Arab art and culture and enriching the lives of the Arab American community. The center achieves this by providing culturally focused social services and promoting cross-cultural events to all residents of the Bay Area and beyond. www.arabculturalcenter.org

ABOUT ARAB FILM FESTIVAL

The Arab Film Festival enhances understanding of Arab culture and provides alternative representations of Arabs that contradict stereotypes frequently encountered in the American mass media while fostering a space for independent Arab filmmakers to screen work for the public. www.arabfilmfestival.org

ABOUT THE ASIAN ART MUSEUM

The Asian Art Museum–Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture is one of San Francisco's premier arts institutions and home to a world-renowned collection of more than 18,000 Asian art treasures spanning 6,000 years of history. Through rich art experiences, centered on historic and contemporary artworks, the Asian Art Museum unlocks the past for visitors, bringing it to life while serving as a catalyst for new art, new creativity and new thinking. www.asianart.org

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