



Encounter with Iranian Cinema
Asian Film Festival Barcelona | OFF-FESTIVAL
From the 4th to the 31st of October 2019 | **Auditorium**

For years, Iranian cinema has been one of the most awarded cinematographies at the international film festivals. In the last decade, the recognitions have been multiplying at the same pace as new titles have been appearing coming from the current generations of directors formed in Iran. Names like Monir Gheydi, Roqiye Tavakoli, Mohammad Hossein Mahdavian, Ebrahim Mokhtari, Mohammad Hamzei, Sadeq Sadeq Daqiqi, Hosein Namazi (Official Section's Best Screenplay Award at the AFFBCN 2018 for *Appendix*), Hamid Reza (Panorama Section's Audience Award and Best Director Award at the AFFBCN 2017 for *A House of 41st Street*), Gholamreza Sagharchiyan (Best Screenplay Award by the AFFBCN 2017's Youth Jury for *Houra*) and Ramin Rasuli, among others, belonging to the younger generations which maintain the pulse of those filmmakers like Abbas Kiarostami, Dariush Mehrjui, Mohsen Makhmalbaf, Maryam Keshavarz, Reza Mirkarimi or Asghar Farhadi who consecrated Iranian cinema, to which they gave its own and unmistakable identity. CASA ASIA aims to continue contributing to the dissemination of this cinema, taking into account the different narratives which are transmitted and the personality of a cinematography whose success results to a large extent from the strength of the corresponding scripts. Iranian cinema is a cinema which mimics theatre in a certain way, due to the importance that it gives to orality. With their speech, the main characters amplify the locations and the chain of events, in a way that the moving image enhances everything that is narrated. The conflict always resides at the origin of this particularly dramatic cinema, dealing with everyday events and which reveals the domestic life's "insides" of a country of which we know little. CASA ASIA programs at CaixaForum an anthology of the most recent Iranian cinema, with the collaboration of the Farabi Foundation and the independent Iranian film distributor directed by Mohammad Attebai, for the next edition of the Asian Film Festival Barcelona | AFFBCN 2019 with a dozen new titles from this country.



Iranian Cinema

CaixaForum (Auditorium)

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I. FILMS

Friday the 4th of October, 18h

1 - Footwork | Mazdak Mirabedini | Iran | 2017 | 81' | Drama | VOSE | **Official Section**

The main character of the film, Mohammad Ali Vandi, is a filmmaker, actor and theatre director. Having lost all hope to finally migrate to the US, he returns to his home country with his wife. Upon arriving in Tehran, he is forced to find a suitable house to rebuild his life once more. At the same time, they find out that they are expecting their first child. In fact, "Footwork" tells the story of many middle-class families who see their dreams fail due to the problems generated by any move to another country. His wife, Mitra Sadri, is a painter and shares with him the concern to become parents in a congested city like Tehran. At last, it is the living portrait of a generation that shares the benefits of progress and the desolation that derives from its contradictions.

Presentation and colloquium by Menene Gras Balaguer, director of the AFFBCN and director of Culture and Exhibitions of Casa Asia.

Mazdak Mirabedini was born in 1976 and majored in film by the University of California. During this period, in the USA, he made eight short films in Los Angeles. In 2010 he started his film and theater educational work with children, while taking his first steps into documentary work. He has participated as an actor in several films such as *Farewell Bagdad* and *Everything for Sale*, and he also regularly performs as an actor in his own films. *Footwork* is his first feature film, which he has written and directed himself.

Friday the 4th of October, 20h

2 - Wild Jonquils | Rahbar Ghanbari | Iran | 2017 | 83' | Children's, Drama | VOSE | **NETPAC Section**

In rural heights, a school receives a warrant from the Ministry of Education, stating that if the required capacity is not fulfilled, the school should shut down. The teacher decides to go to the neighbouring villages, heights and forests in person to convince all the parents that it is a must for their children to get educated. When he falls ill, his fiancée steps forward to assist him. But everything gets more complicated and eventually one of the students volunteers to take responsibility for keeping classes running smoothly.

Presentation and colloquium by Menene Gras Balaguer, director of the AFFBCN and director of Culture and Exhibitions of Casa Asia.

Born in 1961, **Rahbar Ghanbari** is a graduate from Islamic Center for Film Studies. He has been active as a film teacher and filmmaker since the 1980s. Writer and director of fifty short and medium-length films and twelve TV movies, Ghanbari is best known for his *The Little Bird Freak* (2002) and *Growing in the Wind* (2012) which was shown and acclaimed in International film festivals. He has won twenty-six awards in national and international film festivals.

Saturday the 5th of October, 20h

3 - Yeva | Anahid Abad | Iran, Armenia | 2017 | 96' | Drama | VOSE | **Discoveries Section**

Yeva is a young woman who escapes her influential in-laws with her daughter Nareh, after her husband's tragic death and takes refuge in one of the villages of Karabakh, Armenia. However, Yeva is a complete stranger in this village and is obliged to live her daily life in disguise. Anahid Abad, claims he has found his characters in an area as remote as Karabakh, in which the insecurity of war forces its inhabitants to behave with honesty and transparency. The main character in *Yeva*, is forced to face alone the problems, threats and even their own weaknesses. Humans are human anywhere in the world, but what makes them different are the cultures to which they belong.

Presentation and colloquium by Menene Gras Balaguer, director of the AFFBCN and director of Culture and Exhibitions of Casa Asia.

Anahid Abad was born in an Armenian family in 1969 in Tehran. She has cooperated with prominent directors such as Alireza Davood Nejad, Abolfazl Jalili, Rasoul Sadrameli, Ahmad Reza Darvish, Varuzh Karim-Masihi, Bahram Beizaie, and so on. Since 2006, she has been a member of the Central Board of Assistant Directors & Program Planners Institute of Iran Cinema. In 2010 she became the Head of this institute. She claims that, in fact: "I am a Christian Armenian woman who was born and lives in a country like Iran". For her being part of a minority within a majority has always been part of her life.

Friday the 11th of October, 18h

4 - First Autograph for Rana | Ali Zhakan | Iran | 2018 | 90' | Family, Drama | VOSE | **Discoveries Section**

Jahangir Golstaneh, a novelist, has been married to a woman called Rana for several years and they have a 7-year-old son together. Jahangir has written

several novels, however, he has only been able to publish one of his books. His only source of income is through writing and he is not willing to do anything else to make ends meet. This decision creates problems and obstacles in his life.

Born in Tehran in 1950, **Ali Zhakan** started his career with acting in television and cinema. He made his first feature film *The Mare* in 1986, well-received in international festivals including Venice and Karlovy Vary.

Friday the 11th of October, 20h

5 - Astigmatism | Majid-Reza Mostafavi | Iran | 2018 | 85' | Drama | VOSE | **Special Section**

A man has returned after a few years of separation from his family and wants to take back his house from his wife, son, daughter-in-law, and grandson. His son, who farms leeches in the basement and hopes to get rich by doing that, tries to reconcile his father with his mother to stay at home, but his mother intends to marry someone else. The grandson, who is just 9 years old, falls in love with his teacher at school and this causes problems in both the boy and the teacher's family.

Born in Iran in 1984, **Majidreza Mostafavi** started his film career by editing and making short films. His first feature film *Unripe Pomegranates* (2014) was screened in the main competition sections of more than 10 international film festivals. *Astigmatism* is his second feature film. Mostafavi has always tried to deal with the forgotten class and the important but less seen events with a human theme in his films.

Saturday the 12th of October, 20h

6 - Orange Days | Arash Lahooti | Iran | 2018 | 102' | Drama | VOSE | **Official Panorama Section**

Alban is walking through a lush green plantation, inspecting her workers as they bring in the harvest. The assertive forty-something woman has been involved in the male-dominated orange business for years. She employs a group of seasonal female workers to harvest orange trees in northern Iran. This year she has received the largest order in the region – a fact that is not readily accepted by her male competitors. As soon as the harvesting begins, so does the sabotage on Alban's work and she is forced to deal with the numerous consequences: harvesting is running slow, money is running out and her worker's motivation is dwindling. To top it all off, her husband Majid packs his bags and leaves her.

The director, **Arash Lahooti** was born in Tehran in 1982. He graduated in film and editing and is a director, producer and editor of documentary films and a member of the Iranian Union of Documentary Filmmakers. His first documentary, *Trucker and the Fox* (2013), has been screened at more than 45 festivals and has received 9 awards.

Saturday the 19th of October, 20h

7 - Orduckly | Behrouz Gharib Pour | Iran | 2018 | 86' | Drama | VOSE | **Official Panorama Section**

Ordakly's father who is a technician at the Tabriz Railway station is forced to move to Tehran to treat his wife who is suffering from a terminal illness. Once in Tehran, he registers his clever son at a renowned school without thinking about the tragic consequences he will be facing because of his name. The film portrays a suffering being shared by hundreds of Iranians: oppression, lack of security, superficiality, dissatisfaction and many other similar things.

Presentation and colloquium by Menene Gras Balaguer, director of the AFFBCN and director of Culture and Exhibitions of Casa Asia.

Behrouz Gharib Pour was born in 1950 and he is a scriptwriter, stage and cinema director and a puppet master. *Orduckly* is his debut feature film.

Saturday the 26th of October, 20h

8 - The Dark Room | Rouhollah Hejazi | Iran | 2018 | 101' | Drama | VOSE | **Official Panorama Section**

Haleh and Farhad, together with their 5-year-old son, Amir, have been recently resided in a new complex. Amir is lost in the desert, front of the complex, however, his parents find him soon. Later, Amir tells his father that someone has seen his body and an enraged Farhad starts looking for the suspect who has sexually harassed his little boy.

Born in Abadan in 1979, **Rouhollah Hejazi** directed his first short film, *Start*, in 1995, then followed up with ten more, shown at domestic and international festivals. He directed television dramas before making his debut feature film *Among the Clouds* in 2008, which garnered several awards at festivals around the world.

Thursday the 31st of October, 20h

9 - **Pastarioni** | Soheil Movafagh | Iran | 2019 | 97' | Family, Children's | VOSE | NETPAC Section

After several years abroad, when Houshang returns home he finds out that his father's restaurant has closed. However, he is not willing to give up. This young director portrays the return of those who went abroad at a given moment in their lives and later return to their country of origin with the aim of recovering what they left behind.

Soheil Movafagh was born in 1980 and he began his professional experiences as an actor at the young age of 13 and in 2001 he started working as a producer and director. He has collaborated with IRIB (TV) as a producer, director and actor since 2005. He debuted at the silver screen with *Chocolate* (2018), which participated in some children's festivals such as the Canada Kids Film Festival and the Golden Elephant Film Festival.