

# THE HAIFA FILM FESTIVAL IS BACK!



Each year, during the holiday of Succoth a popular international film festival is held on the ridge of Mount Carmel in Israel (Sept. 27 - Oct. 4). Many experts agree that this event is the first of its kind in Israel. It was founded in 1983 and features a great variety of films, documentaries and a very interesting complimentary program.

The popularity of the Haifa international festival has been gradually rising. The audience of 60, 000 spectators come here to admire the work of hundreds of representatives of the film and television industries. The visitors may participate in many outdoor activities, screenings or very appealing work shops.

This year, the festival's opening film is Amos Gitai's "Disengagement", starring Juliette Binoche. Its topic, the struggles of an Israeli family during the 2005 withdrawal from Gaza, suggests the thematic orientation of the festival itself. However, Gitai's movie is not one of the six new Israeli films that will participate in the official competition.

A special day is dedicated purely to Palestinian film industry. One of the documentaries to be screened here is the "Women's Testimonies of the Nakba" by Raneen Geries. It presents Palestinian women who talk about their homes they had to leave in 1948, soon after the state of Israel was created.

Director Michael Winterbottom is expected to present his new film "A Mighty Heart" starring Angelina Jolie, who plays the role of Mariane Pearl, the wife of journalist Daniel Pearl, executed in Pakistan in 2002.

The festival will also honor the Czech film director Jiri Menzl. The Oscar-winning director will receive an award for cinematic excellence and his films "Closely Watched Trains", "Larks on a String", "My Sweet Little Village" and the 2007 "I Served the King of England" are to be screened as well.

Many visitors cannot wait to see the beautiful Sophie Marceau, a French actress, who is to introduce her directing debut featuring herself and Christopher Lambert - "La Disparue de Deauville".

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