

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**SEPTEMBER FILMS BRING BEST OF IRANIAN AND TURKISH
CINEMA TO THE HIGH**

September 5–26: 11TH Annual Iranian Film Today
September 20–October 4: Discovering Turkish Cinema

ATLANTA, August 5, 2008 – Two film series at the High in September present the finest films from Iran and Turkey. The 11th annual **Iranian Film Today** returns to the High beginning Friday, September 5, and runs through Friday, September 26. The six-film series offers an exceptional sampling of Iranian filmmaking, from quiet drama and dark comedy to interwoven stories and farcical tales. **Discovering Turkish Cinema** brings three award-winning films to the screen, exploring the dramatically complex themes and visually stunning scenes of modern Turkey.

“The films in the Iranian and Turkish series this year explore themes of modernity and tradition in patriarchal culture, the lasting impact of the Iran/Iraq war and the search for meaning and connection shared by all people,” said Linda Dubler, the High’s curator of media arts. “These films powerfully explore the complexities of relationships, the weight of history and the strong visual style represented in modern Iranian and Turkish filmmaking.”

Iranian Film Today begins on Friday, September 5, with Amir Shahab Razavian’s “Colors of Memory,” a moving drama that follows Dr. Parsa, a divorced surgeon who returns to a vastly changed Iran after many years abroad. He rediscovers the country through the eyes of a young driver and through his friendship with an elderly musician on a trip to his earthquake-ravaged hometown. His encounters help him come to terms with his past and find a path toward the future.

On September 6, “Persian Carpet” is a compilation of short films from 15 leading Iranian directors. Each director weaves their story around the theme of carpets, which have served as iconic expressions of Persian art and culture since ancient times. Ranging from purely visual celebrations to potent short dramas, the contributions to this ambitious omnibus film include episodes by Abbas Kiarostami (“The Wind Will Carry Us”) and Dariush Mehrjui (“Santouri”).

Showing September 12, Saman Salour’s “A Few Kilos of Dates for a Funeral” is a dark comedy about male friendship, following two men who tend a gas station on a little-used desert highway. The Edinburgh Film Festival program praised it as “. . . a gentle, at times laugh-out-loud funny and also surprisingly wise meditation on the vicissitudes of modern life, the Iranian landscape . . . and most of all, people’s seemingly infinite capacity to drive each other crazy.”

Pourya Azarbayjani’s “Unfinished Stories,” screening on September 13, is a trio of interwoven tales exploring the obstacles facing women in contemporary Iran. A lovelorn high-school student, a middle-class woman who’s been thrown out by her husband and the mother of a newborn find themselves alone on the freezing streets of Tehran. This strong debut from director Pourya Azarbayjani features fine performances and a beautifully observed script.

On September 19 is “Night Bus,” Kiumars Puraahmad’s suspenseful anti-war film set during the 1980s Iran-Iraq War. Strong performances and striking black-and-white cinematography serve the gripping story of two Iranian soldiers and a bus driver who transport 38 blindfolded, bound Iraqi POWs through the minefield-laced desert to their base camp. In “Variety,” Deborah Young praised the film’s “pleasing sparseness” and “powerfully authentic” lead performance.

Closing the festival on September 26, Kamal Tabrizi’s “Look for the Woman,” considers the eternal misunderstandings between men and women in this farcical tale of a couple on the brink of divorce. Based on a series of short stories by Seyyed Mohammad Shoja-ee, the film centers on the relationship between Omid and Maryam, a young couple who have lost touch with the things they love about each other. Tabrizi explores how men assume their own superiority and how women actually run the show. **Actor Reza Kianian will be present to introduce the film.**

Discovering Turkish Cinema begins on September 20 with “Bliss,” a visually stunning film from Abdullah Oguz, exploring themes of modernity and tradition, love and duty, and the persistence of patriarchal values in a changing society. A young woman is raped, and then becomes the target of an honor killing because she is deemed “tainted.” Her fate is in the hands of a distant cousin transporting her to Istanbul, where he is to abandon her body. When he’s unable to complete his mission, they end up on the run, finding employment with a disenchanted professor who has himself fled his past to explore the exquisite landscape of the Aegean coast.

September 27 brings “The Edge of Heaven,” 2007 Cannes Film Festival winner for best screenplay. Familial and erotic love, children lost, parents never found and widening generational and geographic distances permeate Fatih Akin’s interwoven tale centering on two mothers, two daughters, and a father and son. In his “New York Times” review A. O. Scott observed that “As the lives of the characters cross and entwine, there is a sense of human connections becoming stronger and thicker. . . . And even as the movie bristles with violence . . . its tone is curiously gentle.” **This film is not appropriate for children.**

The series closes on October 4 with Reha Erdem’s “Times and Winds,” the poetic and visually ravishing winner of the Best Turkish Film Award at the 2006 Istanbul Film Festival. Structured around the five Islamic daily calls to prayer, it explores rural life through the eyes of two boys, Omer and Yakup, and their female friend Yildiz. All are on the cusp of adolescence, with families who curb their dreams as surely as the mountain and sea confine their isolated village.

Film Series Schedule

All films are screened in the Richard H. Rich Theatre, located in the Memorial Arts Building, adjacent to the High at Peachtree and 15th Streets in midtown Atlanta. All films are screened at 8 p.m. in the Rich Theatre unless otherwise noted. All films are in their original language with English subtitles.

Iranian Film Today

“Colors of Memory”
Friday, September 5
(Iran/Germany/Canada, 2007, 100 minutes)

“Persian Carpet”
Saturday, September 6
(Iran, 2007, 109 minutes)

“A Few Kilos of Dates for a Funeral”
Friday, September 12
(Iran, 2006, 85 minutes)

“Unfinished Stories”
Saturday, September 13
(Iran, 2007, 76 minutes)

“Night Bus”
Friday, September 19
(Iran, 2007, 90 minutes)

“Look for the Woman”
Friday, September 26
(Iran, 2008, 105 minutes)

Discovering Turkish Cinema

“Bliss”
Saturday, September 20
(Turkey/Greece, 2007, 127 minutes)

“The Edge of Heaven”
Saturday, September 27
(Turkey/Germany/Italy, 2007, 122 minutes)
This film is not appropriate for children.

“Times and Winds”
Saturday, October 4
(Turkey, 2006, 111 minutes)

Organization and Support

Iranian Film Today is co-organized by Linda Dubler, curator of media arts at the High Museum of Art, and Iranian cinema specialist Reza Sohrabi, who generously donated his time and expertise to this program.

Discovering Turkish Cinema is organized by Linda Dubler and co-sponsored by the Atlanta Turkish Arts Council and the Turkish American Cultural Association of Georgia. 35mm projection facilities in the Rich Auditorium were provided by a gift from George Lefont.



New Ticketing Information

Tickets are \$7 for the public and \$6 for Museum members, students and seniors. Patron-level members enter free. Tickets can be purchased in advance online at www.High.org, by visiting the Woodruff Arts Center Box Office or by calling 404-733-5000. Tickets also may be purchased at the door on the night of the screening. Phone and internet orders will incur a \$1-per-ticket service fee.

The public may call the High's film hotline at 404-733-4570 for up-to-the-minute information about visiting directors, receptions, changes or cancellations and for a free subscription to the quarterly film calendar. The Museum's website is www.High.org.

High Museum of Art

The High Museum of Art, founded in 1905 as the Atlanta Art Association, is the leading art museum in the southeastern United States. With more than 11,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American and decorative art; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists and is distinguished as the only major museum in North America to have a curatorial department specifically devoted to the field of folk and self-taught art. The High's Media Arts department produces acclaimed annual film series and festivals of foreign, independent and classic cinema. In November 2005, the High opened three new buildings by architect Renzo Piano that more than doubled the Museum's size, creating a vibrant "village for the arts" at the Woodruff Arts Center in midtown Atlanta. In October 2006, the High launched an unprecedented three-year partnership with the Musée du Louvre in Paris to bring hundreds of works of art to Atlanta. *For more information about the High, please visit www.High.org.*

The Woodruff Arts Center

The Woodruff Arts Center is ranked among the top four arts centers in the nation. A not-for-profit center for performing and visual arts, its campus comprises the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art, Young Audiences and the 14th Street Playhouse.

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DIGITAL IMAGES FOR THE FILMS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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