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The House of Cinema's Representatives at Cannes Film Festival;

# In The Capital of Cinema



Five members of the Iranian Alliance of Motion Picture Guilds travelled to Cannes during the 63rd Cannes Film Festival as the House of Cinema's representatives.

Mohammadreza Sharafdin (Producer / Head of the Association of Sacred Defence Films), Parvin Safari (Set Designer / President of the Set Designer's Association), Mohammadreza Muini (Film Editor / President of the Film Editors' Association), Naghi Nemati (Film Director / President of the Iranian Short Film Association) and Ravanbakhsh Sadeghi (Animator / Head of Animation Films' Association) took apart this festival and besides watching the movies of the official selection, met their colleagues from other countries and planned meetings with them. This programme which was organized by

the House of Cinema's International Affairs office, in order to increase the relationship between the Iranian filmmakers and their colleagues, brought an opportunity for the representatives experience one of the most important events in the world of cinema.

Also the Iranian Alliance of Motion Picture Guilds (The House of Cinema) held its stand at Marche Du Film. The stand was managed by Hamidreza Pournasiri, The House of Cinema's International Affairs Officer.

At this year's festival, "Certified Copy" the movie by Abbas Kiarostami, which was made by an Iranian-Italian-French group, was screened at the competition section. The film portrays an English writer (William Shimell) who meets a French woman (Juliette

Binoche) in Tuscany and falls in love with her. This movie brought the best actress prize for Binoche and was admired by the most of film critics.

Since last year, The House of Cinema has expanded its international relationships and as the most influential non-governmental organization in the Iranian Cinema, has received lots of attention from all over the world. Hosting a delegation of the Academy of the Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and organizing trips to Paris and California to discuss with other nations' filmmakers are some of these activities which will be continued with a trip to other film festivals in coming months.

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Farabi Cinema Foundation's Stand at the Marche Du Film



The Iranian Alliance of Motion Picture Guilds' Stand at the Marche Du Film

Studio Canal's stand at the Marche Du Film



Cannes



Cinema from Spain at the Marche Du Film



## Screening of *Syriana*

A session of screening the film "Syriana" directed by Stephen Gaghan, followed by discussion was held as part of the program of film review and analysis at the House of Cinema on Saturday, May 8, in collaboration with the Film Critics and Writers Society, Allameh Tabatabaie University.

The session was attended by Kamran Maleki from the International Affairs Office, Dr. Hossein Salimi, as well as film critics and writers.

Kamran Maleki began the session by saying, "As was pointed out we are shown horrible images in the film 'Syriana' and other similar movies some of which will be screened and reviewed in our future sessions.

"But I wish to point out as a spectator that the horrible images in this group of films are beautiful in a special sense. The images have been carefully crafted and that indicates the filmmakers value their works and are not totally engrossed by the films' box office potentials.

"'Syriana' was produced at a cost of \$50 million, and its box office receipts totaled only \$51 million. In other words, the film's commercial potentials was not important for the creators who only wished to present pictorial images of their ideas.

"In 'Syriana' four episodes are welded together in such a way that the episodes crosscut at unpredictable points. They all deal with problems in the Middle East and weapons trafficking and the totality of the film faces us with a puzzle.

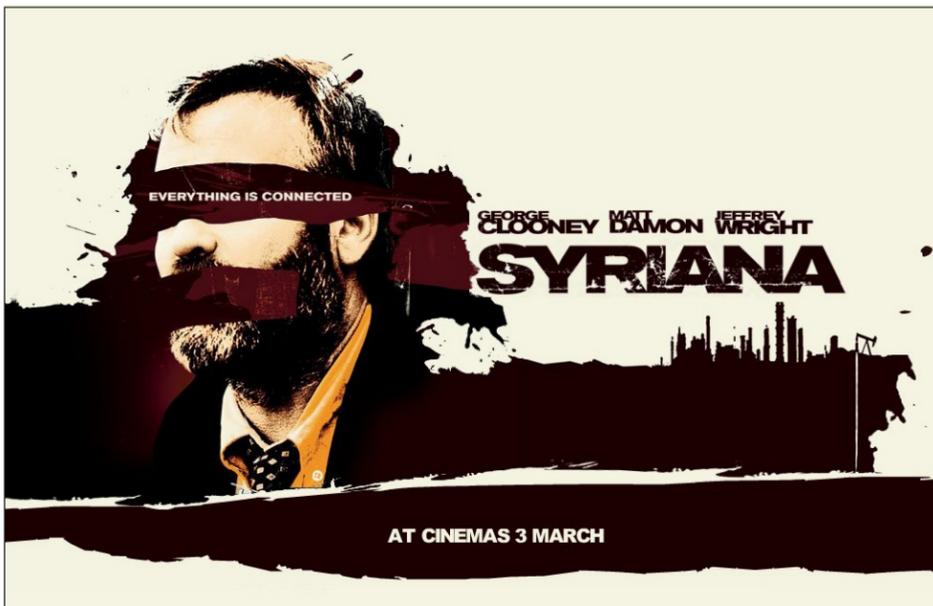
"The film has been directed by Stephen Gaghan who also adapted the script from existing material, and the cast includes George Clooney, Jeffrey Wright, Christopher Plummer, Matt Daemon, etc. The film focuses on the issue of oil and the events caused by this boundless wealth. The film's basic thesis is the idea that Western powers are in need of oil to achieve greater power, and in the process the film does not present a true image of the people in the Middle East. Gaghan had previously written the script for "Tafficking" which was produced by Steven Soderberg who is also the producer of 'Syriana'. The film runs 126 minutes and is a 2005 production.

"Clooney received the Oscar for best supporting actor and Gaghan was nominated for best adapted script."

After the screening of the film Dr. Salimi presented his ideas on the film.

"This group of films present a certain view of politics and international relations with which I do not agree. An anal-

ysis of the film's content would have to be conducted on two levels. On a super-



ficial level the film deals with the foundations of power on the world scene and in the Middle East. The film posits the idea that the hidden hands of the multinational companies do not hesitate to engage in any action to gain control of the oil resources in the region; that governments and security organization are only tools in the hands of these com-



panies, and that power relations in the Middle Eastern and Arab countries are managed by the oil companies and their conspiracies arrange everything in the world.

"Together with this idea the film presents a simplistic view of religion and the struggle in the name of religion and the relation between this world and the world beyond believed by simple people who think they are fighting for a worthy cause but are in fact engaging in vain efforts. This group of people include well-intentioned princes who wish to introduce modernism in their countries, or honest security agents in the United States who are in the end the victims of the hidden Satanic hands. There is also a fundamental view underneath this superficial layer which considers all politics as the works of the Devil and believes that power and wealth are basically Satanic.

"I once wrote an article, which was never published, saying that the Devil would

like to be looked on as such a powerful being who controls all events in the world and that no one can do anything against him. Such a Satanic view of politics is also propagated by the Zionists. There is a tendency in the world to think that Zionists control everything in the world, global economics, politics major film productions in Hollywood and the world media. Now the question is whether such a view of Zionists is to their advantage or disadvantage? In my view it is to their advantage for although it presents a Satanic view of them, it promotes the idea that they are invincible, and that therefore

it would be better to leave all affairs of the world in their hands.

"I believe this is part of the idea that all world affairs are handled through conspiracies by invisible Satanic hands. But how did such a theory infiltrate into the mentality of people in the third world. Why has the idea that all matters are handled by hidden conspirators been fostered among ordinary people? Because it leads to the logical conclusion that there is no use fighting them and that one can only surrender. It may discourage well-intentioned people from entering into the arena of politics and fighting for the welfare and freedom of the people.

"In fact this idea has been inculcated into the people's mentality for a long time. People used to say that there are hidden hands who plan everything. They have the power to execute their plans and there is nothing we can do about it.

"Such a defeatist view propagates the idea you can have no effective role in politics and in controlling your fate, that the hidden hands who control power and wealth have absolute control over everything. The view presents a horrifying image of politics. As a result of such a view even the images of liberation movements presented in these films are dreadful, whether it is the Hizbollah movement in Lebanon, or similar movements and governments in other parts of the world. These groups or movements are usually shown as ignorant extremists. That is why I believe this is the hidden aspect of the same theory of conspiracy which present the Zionists as inaccessible giants against which nothing can be done."

### The House of Cinema Newsletter

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