



## THE JURY OF THE 19TH EDITION OF THE MARRAKECH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES THIS YEAR'S AWARDS

### THE ÉTOILE D'OR AWARDED TO *A TALE OF SHEMROON* BY IRANIAN DIRECTOR EMAD ALEEBRAHIM DEHKORDI

**Marrakech, 19 November 2022.** The 19th edition of the Marrakech International Film Festival came to a close this evening. After nine days of screenings and exchanges, the jury, chaired by Italian director Paolo Sorrentino, unveiled the awards for this edition.

The jury chose to award the Étoile d'Or—the Festival Grand Prize—to *A Tale of Shemroon* by Iranian director Emad Aleebrahim Dehkordi.

The Jury Prize was awarded *ex æquo* to *Alma Viva* by Cristèle Alves Meira (Portugal) and *The Blue Caftan* by Maryam Touzani (Morocco). The Best Directing Prize went to *Thunder* by Carmen Jacquier (Switzerland). The award for Best Performance by an Actress went to Choi Seung-Yoon for her role in *Riceboy Sleeps* by Anthony Shim (Canada). The award for Best Performance by an Actor went to Arswendy Bening Swara for his role in *Autobiography* by Makbul Mubarak (Indonesia).

Alongside Sorrentino, the jury for this year's competition included British actor Vanessa Kirby, German actor Diane Kruger, Australian director and screenwriter Justin Kurzel, Lebanese director, screenwriter and actor Nadine Labaki, Moroccan director Laïla Marrakchi and French actor Tahar Rahim.

In all, the jury watched 14 films in the Official Competition, representing 14 countries on five continents (Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Indonesia, Iran, Morocco, Mexico, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey).

### **An Exceptional Edition**

The 19th edition of the Marrakech International Film Festival was exceptional in many ways. First, it marks the return of the event after a two-year break due to the pandemic. It also confirms the great enthusiasm of the public for the various sections of the Festival, as more than 150,000 spectators attended 124 film screenings at the Marrakech Palais des Congrès, the Cinéma Le Colisée, on Place Jemaa El Fna and at the Musée Yves Saint Laurent. In all, nearly 20,000

people were accredited and received electronic badges to attend the Festival—almost double the number of accreditations recorded for the 18th edition in 2019. Nearly 5,000 children and teenagers attended screenings held for young audiences.

As in previous editions, the 2022 edition of the Marrakech International Film Festival reserved a special place for Moroccan cinema with a programme that honoured a new generation of filmmakers whose works are critically acclaimed both at home in Morocco and around the world. As such, *Queens*, the first feature film by Yasmine Benkiran, *The Damned Don't Cry*, the second feature by Fyzal Boulifa, and *Fragments from Heaven*, the first feature by Adnane Baraka, met with great success during their screenings in Marrakech. The Moroccan Panorama, which presented five films, opened with the world premiere of Faouzi Bensaidi's *Summer Days*, which screened before a packed and enthusiastic audience.

The 19th edition of the Festival saw significant participation of film professionals from Morocco, who numbered around 350.

### **Tributes and Emotion**

The 19th edition was also marked by tributes to four great names in world cinema.

Indian actor Ranveer Singh expressed his “immense pride, as an ambassador of Indian cinema,” to be honoured in Marrakech. Receiving his trophy from French actor Marion Cotillard, American director James Gray remarked that “Morocco and Marrakech hold a special place in my heart” before appealing to filmmakers and artists in general: “We need you because you open our minds and you comfort us.”

Moroccan director, screenwriter and producer Farida Benlyazid—who was a member of the jury of the first edition of the Festival in 2001—did not hide her emotion when she received her tribute at this 19th edition. In her speech, she recalled that “the Festival was ready to commence on 28 September, but the fateful date of 11 September arrived. There was talk of cancelling the event but the King made a decision. By his will, the Festival went forward.”

Scottish actor and producer Tilda Swinton shared a vibrant plea for cinema: “Cinema shows us who we are, in our great diversity. It reflects our desires, our failures, our triumphs and our dreams. Long live cinema and long live difference!”

## **Conversations and Exchanges**

Another highlight of the Festival's 19th edition was its series of conversations with leading film personalities. Free sessions allowed festival-goers to exchange thoughts with renowned directors and actors including Leos Carax, Julie Delpy, Julia Ducournau, Asghar Farhadi, Marina Foïs, Jeremy Irons, Jim Jarmusch, Ruben Östlund, Ranveer Singh and composer Gabriel Yared.

The 19th edition of the Marrakech International Film Festival brought together 250 international professionals around a selection of 23 projects and films as part of the 5th edition of the Atlas Workshops. Since its launch in 2018, this platform, which is dedicated to the film industry, has supported 111 projects and films from the Arab world and the African continent, among them 48 works from Morocco.

After a two-year forced break, the return of the Marrakech International Film Festival was marked by a remarkable participation of audiences and the enthusiasm of filmmakers to meet and exchange ideas with audiences. Once again, the Festival has highlighted the diversity of world cinema and revealed new talents, all the while allowing film lovers and the public at large to encounter great personalities of world cinema.