

IWPR Screens Film as Part of Tunisian Festival

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Lebanese film on truth, justice and the past reverberates with issues now facing Tunisians.

Cinema, human rights and history come together at Tunisia's first Human Screen Festival, a showcase for feature films and documentaries with a focus on human rights, women's rights, and transitional justice.

As part of the December 6-9 festival, IWPR, partnering with the Tunisian Cultural Association for Integration and Training, is screening "Chou Sar?" ("What Happened?"), an award-winning film by Lebanese director De Gaulle Eid.

The choice of location – Sbeitla, Kaserine in northern Tunisia – is particularly poignant as the second anniversary of the uprising approaches.

"Kaserine was one of the first places to suffer casualties during the revolution," Chaima Bouhleb, project officer for IWPR Tunisia, explained.

"Chou Sar?", which will be screened on December 8, documents Eid's return to his home region of northern Lebanon to uncover the facts about a massacre that killed more than a dozen members of his family in 1980. Banned in Lebanon, the film won a number of awards.

The film seeks to confront how individuals and nations can face up to difficult questions of loss justice and reconciliation – issues that Tunisia is also wrestling with in the aftermath of its revolution.

After the showing in Sbeitla, IWPR's Tunisia country director Marwan Maalouf will moderate a discussion on reconciling with the past, involving Eid, Hicham Ben Ammar, who directed "Tunisia Votes" about the October 2011 election, and Terry Michel from Belgium, who documented post-war justice issues in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

It is one of a cycle of post-screening debates and conferences on human rights themes, creating a forum for discussions about human rights, transitional justice, women's rights, and the role of culture in social justice.

These issues are hugely relevant to Tunisia, where the status and rights of women are being debated by the Constituent Assembly, and the behaviour of the police – seen by many as a vestige of ousted president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's regime. Another live issue is how art can promote social justice, given that so many Tunisian artists are also pro-democracy activists.

Elyes Baccar is executive director of the Human Screen event, and says he was inspired to organise it after touring other human rights festivals with his film Red Word. He said he wanted his festival to promote a "break with the tyranny and abuses of the past".

At the same time as the Human Screen Festival, another event is taking place in Tunis to present collective memory through photos, art, poetry and debate. The Memory Festival: Against Oblivion will take place at the former headquarters of Ben Ali's ruling RCD party.

Human Screen comes on the heels of the annual Carthage Film Festival, which also included some world films touching on human rights. Human Screen is collaborating with the Nuremberg Festival, the One World International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival in Prague, and the Karama (Dignity) Human Rights Film Festival in Jordan. A programme for the festival can be downloaded [here](#).

Location: [Tunisia](#)

Topic: [Human rights](#)

Focus: [Tunisia](#)

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