

Egypt

Egypt remains a reference for film in the Southern Mediterranean and the crisis of the Egyptian film industry is no more than an unpleasant memory. It is proof that in spite of piracy and changing tastes, it is perfectly possible in an Arab country to bring audiences back into cinemas and revive a national film industry at every level. Thanks to favourable legislation, fifty new cinema theatres have been built, whereas a hundred others have been renovated and upgraded to the highest commercial standards. The result in 2007 was positive box-office takings for close to 40 films, with the resounding success of “Morjane” interpreted by Adel Al Imam. This trend was confirmed during the first semester of 2008 with “Assef, Ani el ijaz” that broke box office records with more than a million pounds per day. The Egyptian film industry is producing some fifty films per year and once again features among the major players. After the death of Youssef Chahine, all that remains for this giant of the Middle East to do is to recover the quality of its golden age.

Population: 76 840 million inhabitants (2008 estimate)

GDP in billions of USD (estimates): 140 (2008)

Currency/rate of exchange:

Egyptian pound (EGP), 1 euro = 8.35145 EGP

Sources: INED, FMI – World Economic Outlook Database, inforEuro

Public funds available for the cinema:

N/A

PRODUCTION

Number of production companies:
approximately 100

Number of films produced per year:
59 35 mm feature-length (2006) 49
(2007), 32 at 01/09/08 (source ECC)

Number of co-productions per year:
<10 films

Average budget of a film:
5 to 20 M EP (between 0.6 and 2.4 M€)

Source ECC

FILM LABORATORIES

8 35 mm laboratories (source ECC), between 12 and 15 laboratories for 16 mm and 150 laboratories for digital

TRAINING

High Cinema Institute (the only establishment that teaches filming in 35mm with 8 departments training 10-15 students each).

The main universities have 'Media' departments offering training in video/TV; Ten organisations offer filmmaking workshops (SEMAT, Raafat El Mihy, Caravane, Jesuites, Cairo Lab...).

CO-PRODUCTION AGREEMENTS

France

MAIN FESTIVALS

Egyptian National Film Festival

Cairo International Film Festival for Children

Film Festival of the Egyptian Association for Cinematographic Art

Short Film Festival of Port Said

Alexandria International Film Festival

El Ismailia International Film Festival for Documentary and Short Films

Nile International Environmental Film Festival

Cairo International Film Festival

Image Festival

Egyptian Oscars

MAIN PRIZES OBTAINED

Youssef Chahine received many prizes for several of his films.

The film "Al Bant dol" by Tahani Rached was presented in the official selection out of competition at the 2006 Cannes Festival and won the grand prize of the Ismailia Festival in 2006 (Atlas des Cahiers du cinema 2007).

Several Egyptian films, including recently "The Yacoubian Building" obtained prizes in international festivals, including the Arab Film Biennial in Paris (IMA).

DISTRIBUTION, EXHIBITION

- Number of screens: between 200 and more than 300 according to different sources. A lot of recently built multiplexes
- Number of other films screened in cinemas: 181 in 2007 (source: Central Department of Audio-visual Censorship)
- Number of European films screened in cinemas: 100 films
- Number of US films screened in cinemas: 30 films
- Number of admissions: between 16 and 40 million according to different estimates
- Market share of national films in cinemas: 81 % (2005 figures in the Atlas des Cahiers du cinéma 2007)
- Number of distributors: 10
- Best box-office takings: « Assef ani el izaj » in its first week (August 2008) made more than a million in box-office takings per day
- Cost of an admission: 10 - 75 LEP depending on quality
- Cost of a one-hour connection to the Internet: not available

MEDIA

Television

2 terrestrial channels, 6 regional channels, 8 satellite channels, 300 channels received

The Egyptian satellite channels are highly prevalent on the Egyptian and Arab markets

Broadcast languages: Arabic, English, Hebrew and French

Number of national films broadcast on TV:
200 films

Radio

Radio Cairo (broadcasts in 33 languages), 8 local radios, 1 international radio, Radio Saout el arab, Radio Nil FM, Noujoum FM, 11 community radios (broadcast in several languages) and 4 specialised radios

Warning: no statistical sources have been officially published. The data above come from professional contacts, except when specifically mentioned (NB – ECC: Egyptian Cinema Chamber, September 2008).

When there were doubts concerning the sources the most conservative figures were used.



“Chaos”

Dir: Youssef Chahine

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