



SEASON 60 Programme 15
23rd April 2024

The Blue Caftan
Morocco, 2022, 122 mins

Director: Maryam Touzani
Writing: Maryam Touzani & Nabil Ayouch
Editor: Nicolas Rimpl
Cinematography: Virginie Surdej
Music: Kristian Eidnes Andersen
Running Time: 122 min, colour
Language: Arabic

LEADING PLAYERS

Lubna Azabal	...	Mina
Saleh Bakri	...	Halim
Ayoub Missioui	...	Youssef
Mounia Lamkamel	...	Blue Caftan Client
Abdelhamid Zoughi	...	Doctor
Zakaria Atifi	...	Bachir

The film is set in one of Morocco's oldest Medinas, where a husband and wife team run a small, traditional shop selling beautiful, handmade caftans - a type of artisan business which is always going to be under constant time pressure in the modern world where customers want everything done yesterday. The wife, Mina, is the front of house manager, who takes no nonsense from uppity and demanding customers, whilst her husband, Halim, is the master tailor, sewing and embroidering out the back.

Halim is secretly gay but his wife turns a blind eye to his repressed homosexuality. Complications arise, however, when a strong, mutual attraction develops between him and the shop's new young apprentice, Youssef.

The Blue Caftan is not a film about being gay in Morocco - although that is illegal and punishable with 3 year's imprisonment; it is a film about love and understanding. All three of the main protagonists are deeply sympathetic characters and although the husband and wife are sexually incompatible, there is an extremely deep and powerful bond between them.

The result is a tender, compassionate and understated drama with outstanding performances, particularly from Lubna Azabal, who plays the wife, Mina. The husband, Halim, is played by Saleh Bakri, who starred in two earlier RFS screenings, *The Band's Visit* and *Wajib*, in Seasons 47 and 57 respectively.

The film was a big hit on the festival circuit, garnered numerous awards (including three at Cannes) and, as Morocco's entry, was shortlisted for the 2023 Best International Feature Film Oscar.

Peter Maguire

OUR NEXT FILM 7th May 2024, 8pm

OUR RIVER, OUR SKY **Iraq** **117 mins** **Directed By: Maysoon Pachachi**
