

Press Release



Last-minute entry: Forum to show Jehane Noujaim's *Control Room*

The *Forum* has decided to include *Control Room* by Jehane Noujaim in its programme as another documentary focussing on the year's main political topic. The 90-minute film addresses the media battle behind the American campaign in Iraq. The Egyptian-American director witnessed the toppling of the Ba'athist regime from two completely different perspectives in Qatar on the Persian Gulf. On the one hand, there were the American propaganda strategists, on the other, Arab journalists working for Al-Jazeera television.

The film features television producer Sameer Khader saying of Al-Jazeera, "We are what America wants for the region: an Arab channel with a Western mentality"; Lieutenant Josh Rushing, the Coalition Central Command press spokesman who is learning Arabic, but claims Al-Jazeera sympathises with Saddam Hussein's regime; Tom Mintier, an experienced CNN correspondent who complains about how the US military treats non-American journalists; Sudanese journalist Hassan Ibrahim, who went to school with Osama bin Laden and considers Al-Jazeera to be the only independent station in the Middle East; David Shuster, a young NBC correspondent who sees the Western press as the model for the entire world; and Deema Khatib, a dedicated young Syrian woman who describes Western coverage of the war as "The most incredible piece of theatre I have ever seen."

Control Room is an American-Egyptian co-production and one of three entries in this year's *Forum* programme (the others being the American documentary *Neverland* and the Italian feature film *Dopo mezzanotte*) screened in high-definition.

Forum screenings:

Saturday, February 7th, 10 am, CinemaxX 3

Sunday, February 8th, 9 pm, CinemaxX 2

Press Office
February 5, 2004

**54. Internationale
Filmfestspiele
Berlin**
05. – 15.02.2004

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