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Myriam Ben Salah Selected to Curate Tribute Program at Thessaloniki Film Festival

Oct 30 – Nov 9, 2025

Ben Salah, who was also recently appointed as the curator of France's pavilion in the upcoming Venice Biennale, will conceptualize a program of films for TIFF that explore the notion of the plot twist as a cinematic device as well as a broader mode of recognition, reversal and ethical disruption.

"A plot twist is often mistaken for spectacle: the sudden reversal, the neat trick that makes an audience gasp," says Ben Salah. "But what if the real twist isn't about surprise at all? What if it's about recognition: that unsettling instant when what has been there all along finally comes into view. As Isabella Hammad writes, the power of recognition lies not in revelation, but in the belated alignment of perception and truth. It is tragic not because it shocks, but because it arrives too late."

Ben Salah curates the Festival's grand tribute, featuring works from 1976 through 2025, selected for their radical engagement with narrative, form and sociopolitical change. Her selection will open during the Festival's 66th edition and will include rare works, hybrids of fiction and documentary, and pieces which treat the "twist" as condition rather than gimmick.

This year's Festival tribute is accompanied by a special thematic edition featuring essays and analyses by leading voices in cinema, sociology, and journalism. Contributors include Myriam Ben Salah, Nadja Argyropoulou, screenwriter and author Nikos Panagiotopoulos, Artistic Director Orestis Andreadakis, and Editions Coordinator Geli Mademli, exploring the theme of the "plot twist." The exhibition opens on Friday, October 31, at the MOMus-Experimental Center for the Arts, running through November 16, 2025, as the opening act of Biennale 9, which launches in May-July 2026.

ABOUT MYRIAM BEN SALAH

Myriam Ben Salah is a Tunisian-French curator and writer currently serving as Director and Chief Curator of the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago. Formerly Editor-in-

CHICAGO, IL (OCT 27, 2025)—The Renaissance Society is pleased to announce that Executive Director and Chief Curator, **Myriam Ben Salah**, has been selected by the **Thessaloniki International Film Festival (TIFF)** to serve as curator of the 66th edition's special tribute program, titled "**Plot Twist – Beyond Sixth Sense**," set to take place October 30 through November 9, 2025.

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Chief of *Kaleidoscope* magazine (2016–2020) and Curator of Special Projects and Public Programs at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2009–2016), she co-curated *Made in L.A. 2020: a version* at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. Ben Salah has organized exhibitions and programs at institutions including the Kamel Lazaar Foundation, ICA London, Beirut Art Center, Kunsthall Stavanger, Kadist Foundation, Pejman Foundation, and DESTE Foundation. She serves on the Scientific Committee of MUDAM, Luxembourg, and the Commissioning Committee of the Hartwig Art Production | Collection Fund, Amsterdam.

ABOUT THE RENAISSANCE SOCIETY

The Renaissance Society is an independent, non-collecting museum that presents contemporary art exhibitions, events, and publications. The Renaissance Society was founded by a group of University of Chicago faculty in 1915, making it one of the oldest contemporary art institutions in the United States. The name references their intention to create a space in which to foster engagement with new ideas in arts and culture. In the early 20th century, the Renaissance Society played a key role in bringing avant-garde practices to Chicago. More recently, it has commissioned important exhibitions for contemporary artists such as Diego Marcon, Kerry James Marshall, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Kara Walker, Diane Severin Nguyen, Meriem Bennani, and many others. As it continues this history, the Renaissance Society is at its core a space of possibility. For artists it offers an unfettered platform for bold experimentation.

MEDIA CONTACT

For all press inquiries, contact the team at **Mottley**.