

Document Citation

Title	A'rab
Author(s)	Deborah Young
Source	<i>Variety</i>
Date	1988 Nov 16
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	A'rab (Arab), Jaziri, Fadhel, 1988

A'rab 11/16/88
(Arab)
(TUNISIAN) Variety

An Apollo release of an Intl. Monastir Film/Collectif du Nouveau Film/Carthago Film coproduction. Directed by Fadhel Jaziri, Fadhel Jaibi. Screenplay, Le Nouveau Theater; camera (color), Belgacem Jelliti; editor, Moufida Tlatli; art direction, Jaziri Jaibi; production manager, Radhi Trimeche. Reviewed at Carthage Film Festival (competing), Tunis, Oct. 21, 1988. Running time: **100 MIN.**

Houria Jalila Baccar
 Kuraich Lamine Nahdi
 Khalil Fadhel Jaziri
 Mannubi Fethi Haddaoui
 Arbia Zahira Ben Ammar
 Asfour Fatma Ben Saidane

■ **Tunis — Adapted from their hit stage play by the 20-year-old Tunisian stage company Le Nouveau Theater, “A’rab” is Tunisia’s most ambitious film of the year.**

Co-helpers Fahdel Jaziri and Fahdel Jaibi aim at summarizing and commenting on nothing less than the history of the Arab world. While undoubtedly an important work that few Middle East watchers will want to miss, the film version makes for difficult viewing for those without a firm grasp of history.

Film won the Bronze Tanit at the Carthage Festival and opened wide in Tunisia the following day.

Lensed at the vast church of St. Louis in Carthage, “A’rab” retains a strong stage flavor. A flight attendant who just has left war-torn Beirut arrives at the church (never precisely located, a symbol for Western civilization) in search of her lost lover, and finds herself in a besieged fortress.

Leader of the motley group of guerrillas, is Kuraich, a hero gone mad who takes out his wrath and disappointment on Mannubi (Fethi Haddaoui) in scenes of stomach-churning violence.

Keeping to himself, lost in his dreams, is Khalil (played by codirector Fahdel Jaziri, whose face is familiar from “Les Traversees”). There are also two women, one the unbeatable, half-mystic Arab woman Arbia (Zahira Ben Ammar), the other, cowed little Asfour (Fatma Ben Saidane, with an unforgettable face and birdlike scurrying). Their interaction provides film with its motor.

The dialog-ridden, intellectual film demands attentive viewing, but rewards the patient. Precision lensing by Belgacem Jelliti is a pleasure to watch, and cast, all of which participated in writing script and dialog, is universally fine. — *Yung.*