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Cairo Station

Reportedly (and understandably) Youssef Chahine's most popular film among Egyptians, this gritty and relatively early (1958) black-and-white masterpiece also features his most impressive acting turn, as a crippled news vendor working at the title railroad station. The adroit interweaving of various miniplots around the station is matched by a heady mix of moods and genres: at various junctures this movie

becomes a musical, a slasher film, a neorealist drama, a comedy, and a horror film—come to think of it, it's pretty noir as well. On the same program: Chahine's 1991 short film *Cairo... as Told by Chahine*, which I haven't seen, apparently a simultaneous portrait of the city and himself. Film Center, Art Institute, Columbus Drive at Jackson, Saturday and Sunday, July 10 and 11, 4:00, 312-443-3737. —Jonathan Rosenbaum