

DVD press release



## Shirin

A film by Abbas Kiarostami

Widely regarded as one of the most important, ambitious and rewarding filmmakers at work today, Kiarostami continues to explore the potential of cinema, stimulating and challenging the viewer's imagination to an extraordinary degree. *Shirin* is a re-telling of a classic Persian love story.

Following its UK premiere at the Edinburgh International Film Festival and its nationwide theatrical release by the BFI in June 2009, Abbas Kiarostami's *Shirin* is now released on BFI DVD.

What *Shirin* shows us – and indeed all it shows us – is an audience of more than 100 women who are deeply absorbed in watching a film we never see. We observe instead how the drama plays out on the faces of the audience, seen in close-up, mostly one at a time, illuminated by the flickering light of the screen. It is a mesmerising series of portraits of women young and old, many of them strikingly beautiful, their expressions variously wistful, quizzical, amused, enraptured and distraught. Also helping us to reconstruct the tale for ourselves are the unseen film's impassioned narration, dramatic dialogue, romantic, doom-laden score, and richly evocative sound effects.

Although *Shirin* creates a strong illusion of real women watching a real film, the audience is in fact made up of well-known Iranian actresses (plus Juliette Binoche who happened to be there when filming was taking place and who will star in Kiarostami's next film). Reportedly, the entire film was shot in Kiarostami's living room, with the women looking only at a blank screen while imagining their own love stories, and the *Shirin* narration was decided upon only after Kiarostami had finished filming.

### Special features

- *Taste of Shirin* (2008) - Hamideh Razavi's documentary on the making of *Shirin*
- Illustrated booklet containing essays and credits

### Release date: 26 October 2009

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFIVD848 / cert PG

Iran / 2008 / colour / 91 mins + 27 mins extra material / Farsi with optional English subtitles / DVD9 / ratio 1.78:1 (16x9 anamorphic widescreen)

BFI DVDs are available from all good DVD retailers; by mail order from the BFI Filmstore  
Tel: 020 7815 1350 or online at [www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore](http://www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore)

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Images are available at [www.image.net](http://www.image.net) under BFI>DVD2009

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