

A Space for New Voices in Cinema

Qumra

مؤسسة الدوحة للأفلام

DOHA FILM INSTITUTE

3-8 March, 2017



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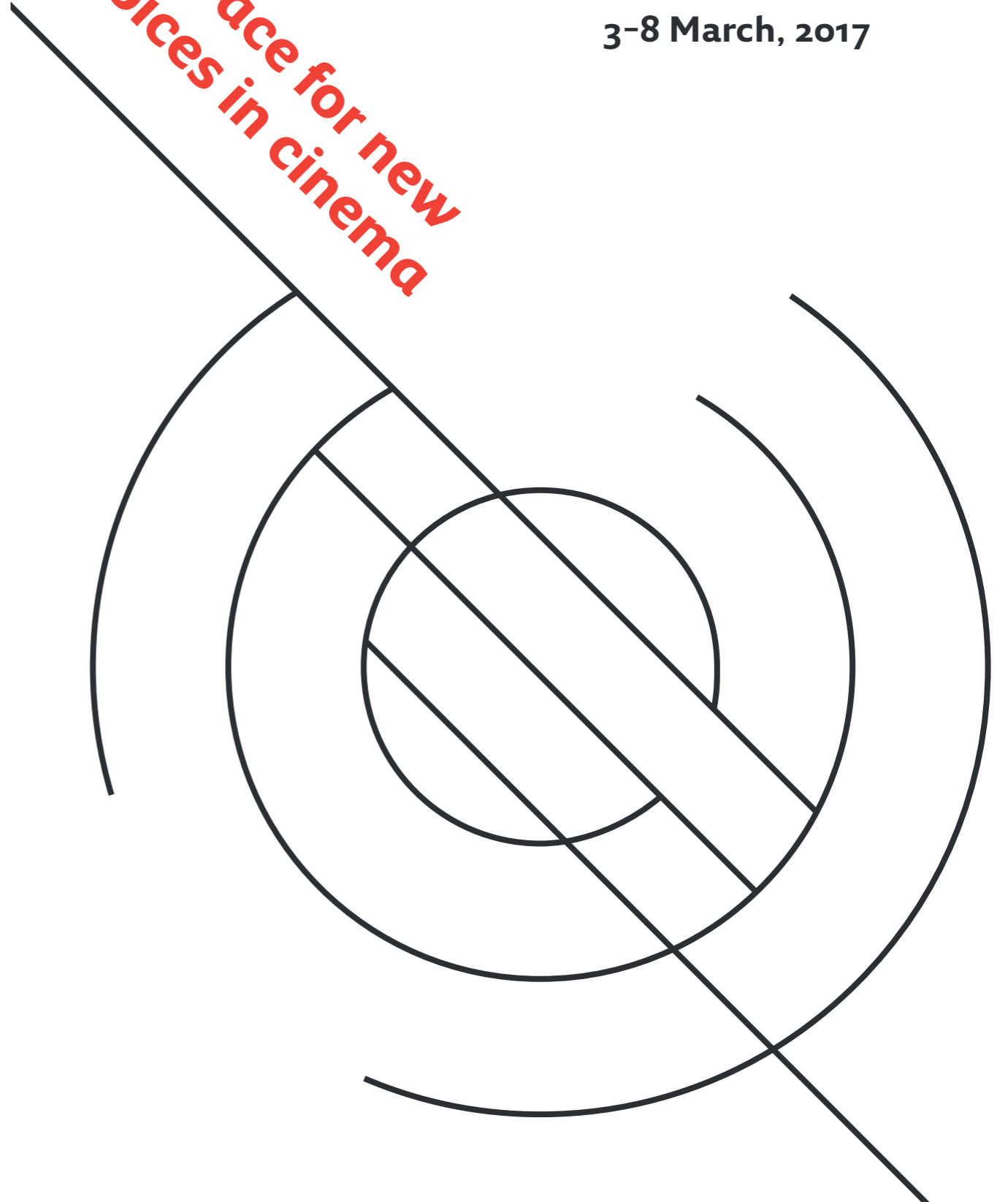


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**A space for new
voices in cinema**



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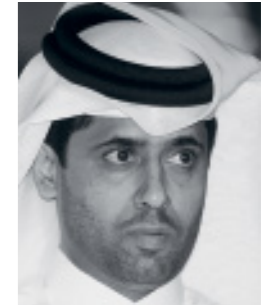
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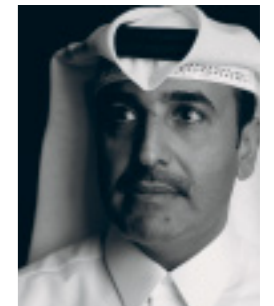
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Al Mohannadi**

I look back on the seven years of the Doha Film Institute with a sense of pride and achievement. When we launched the Institute in 2010, we had a vision others might have regarded as rather ambitious.

Our goal was to strengthen the foundations of a thriving film industry in Qatar, and to extend our support to emerging filmmakers from across the Arab region and beyond.

Today, it gives me great confidence to witness the remarkable strides made by our family of filmmakers, who are redefining Arab cinema, and making their presence felt on the world stage.

We established Qumra as an initiative that represents the culmination of our diverse funding, development and screening programmes. Through Qumra, we bring together filmmakers from Qatar, the Arab world and the rest of the globe who have been supported by the Institute, and provide them with the opportunity to establish connections with some of today's most significant and influential names in media and world cinema.

The feedback we have received from the past two editions has been overwhelmingly positive – and has guided us in shaping this third edition of Qumra. The results have been more than encouraging in providing the momentum to keep us moving forward with renewed energy.

Qatar's film industry is gaining in significance but still young. Through Qumra and other year-round initiatives, we at the Doha Film Institute are doing our utmost to strengthen the foundations that will support new projects and provide a nurturing space where filmmakers can learn their craft and develop their skills. The initiative is also a platform to help them present their work in front of audiences around the globe. Qumra 2017 includes 12 distinctive projects from Qatar, some from established names and others from emerging young talents, and we are immensely proud to assist them in pursuing their filmmaking ambitions right here at home in Qatar.

We know that these few days together will be only the beginning of new collaborations and creative networks that will form long-lasting, productive relationships that will bear value well into the future. This is the real purpose of Qumra.

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Qumra 2017, and I hope it provides you with a constructive space to exchange ideas, culture and creativity.

Thank you for your contribution to Qumra. I wish you all the best for an enriching week of cinema.



**H.E. Sheikha
Al Mayassa Bint Hamad
Bin Khalifa Al-Thani**

Chair, Doha Film Institute



Fatma Al Remaihi

**CEO, Doha Film Institute
Director, Qumra**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the third edition of Qumra, the Doha Film Institute's initiative that is dedicated to nurturing the next generation of film talents from around the world. We are now recognised as the key funding entity for both emerging and established names in Arab and world cinema, and a platform for discovering new voices and compelling stories.

When we launched Qumra three years ago, we were asked how it would both stand apart and yet add value to our year-round mandate of supporting emerging filmmakers. Qumra 2017 is the perfect answer to these original questions, as it now serves as a modern and relevant project incubator, and a specially curated industry matchmaker.

The event taps into world-class filmmaking expertise, combining it with the ideal balance of elements from workshops, markets and festivals around the world to support emerging and established talent, and provides them with the creative and practical support required to propel their work to the next level.

As an industry-focused event, Qumra fosters interaction and networking opportunities among emerging and established filmmakers, and global industry professionals. It is designed to help first- and second-time directors gain invaluable insights into the art and craft of cinema, and help them navigate the evolving film landscape.

Now in its third year, the Qumra experience has expanded to a wider audience with the evolution of the Accredited Delegates Programme, which will allow local and regional media professionals and students to access new opportunities, that are sure to inspire their creativity and add momentum to their professional development.

Qumra 2017 welcomes 34 projects, including 12 from Qatar, that represent a tremendous diversity of perspectives. Each participating project will be mentored by industry experts from a wide cross-section of the industry, who have become part of this unique creative network that is committed to supporting the new generation of storytellers. The qualitative uplift to projects mentored at Qumra over its first two editions is underlined by their success at leading international festivals, among them the Festival de Cannes and the Berlin and Toronto International Film Festivals.

I would like to acknowledge our 2017 Qumra Masters – five luminaries of contemporary cinema, who by sharing their personal perspectives on filmmaking will provide lasting benefit to the emerging filmmakers and have a meaningful impact on all the initiatives' participants. Each of the Masters, while very different in their approach to making films, are renowned for their innovative approach to their craft, and they are an inspiration to us all.

I would like to thank all the participants of Qumra 2017 for taking part in our creative journey, and for contributing to our investment in the future of cinema. This is the essence of Qumra – a platform for learning and for sharing experiences, and for new voices in cinema to emerge and flourish.

This third edition of Qumra insists on remaining faithful to its essence and ideal; to being precise, consistent and sincere.

Unyielding and steadfast, it continues to defy compromise and does not bask in the euphoria of its past successes.

The gathering promises to persist as a space of surprise and a place of discovery, thereby preserving its identity as the hidden side of the creative process.



Elia Suleiman

**Artistic Advisor,
Doha Film Institute**

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Jana Wehbe

Qumra Industry Senior Coordinator

CULTURAL PARTNERS

Qatar Museums

Qatar Museums connects the museums, cultural institutions and heritage sites in Qatar and creates the conditions for them to thrive and flourish. It centralises resources and provides a comprehensive organisation for the development of museums and cultural projects, with a long-term ambition of creating a strong and sustainable cultural infrastructure for Qatar. Under the patronage of His Highness the Emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, and led by its Chairperson, Her Excellency Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, QM is consolidating Qatar's efforts to become a vibrant centre for the arts, culture and education, in the Middle East and beyond.

Since its foundation in 2005, QM has overseen the development of the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA), Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, and the Al Zubarah World Heritage Site Visitor Centre. QM also manages the QM Gallery at Katara Cultural Village, the ALRIWAQ DOHA Exhibition Space and the Fire Station: Artists in Residence. Future projects include the launch of the highly anticipated National Museum of Qatar and the 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum.

QM is committed to instigating Qatar's future generation of arts, heritage and museum professionals. At its core is a

commitment to nurturing artistic talent, creating opportunities and developing the skills to service Qatar's emerging art economy. By means of a multi-faceted programme and public art initiatives, QM seeks to push the boundaries of the traditional museum model, and create cultural experiences that spill out onto the streets and seek to involve a wide audience. Through a strong emphasis on originating art and culture from within and fostering a spirit of national participation, QM is helping Qatar find its own distinctive voice in today's global cultural debates.

The Museum of Islamic Art

The Museum of Islamic Art collection features manuscripts, ceramics, metal, glass, ivory, textiles, wood and precious stones. Collected from three continents — including countries across the Middle East and reaching as far as Spain and China — the museum's artworks represent the diversity of the Islamic world and date from the 7th through the 20th centuries. The museum rises from the sea on Doha's Corniche and was designed by noted architect I.M. Pei, who was inspired by elements of classic Islamic architecture. The Museum of Islamic Art is the flagship project of Qatar Museums, which under the leadership of its Chairperson, H.E. Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, is transforming the State of Qatar into a cultural capital of the Middle East.

Sarajevo Film Festival

In 1995, towards the end of the four-year-long Siege of Sarajevo, the Obala Art Centre initiated the Sarajevo Film Festival with the aim of helping to reconstruct civil society and retain the cosmopolitan spirit of its city. Today, over two decades later, it is a trailblazing film festival with a special focus on the region of Southeast Europe that shines an international spotlight on the region's talent, their current films and future projects. High-quality programming, a strong industry segment, and an educational and networking platform for young filmmakers attract the international film industry, film authors and media representatives to the event, along with a public audience of more than 100,000. Together, this makes it a leading film festival in Southeast Europe.

Qumra Screenings

Modern Masters

Qumra is proud to present the Modern Masters Series – a showcase of films presented by Qumra 2017 Masters Paolo Branco, Bruno Dumont, Asghar Farhadi, Lucrecia Martel and Rithy Panh.

Qumra Master Classes

Qumra Master Classes are sessions with each of the Qumra Masters, where they share their professional experiences and offer guidance to the participants of the event.

Moderators:



VIOLETA BAVA was born in Buenos Aires. In 2002, she received a double degree in the Theory,

Aesthetics and History of Cinema and Drama from Buenos Aires University. She is also the founder of Ruda Cine, a film production company based in Argentina. Bava is the programmer of the Buenos Aires International Film Festival and for 12 years was the co-director of BAL, a leading co-production market for Latin American films. Since 2012, she has been the Latin American delegate for the Venice International Film Festival. She sits on the TorinoFilmLab Advisory Board and is an industry and programming consultant for the Doha Film Institute.



RICHARD PEÑA was the Program Director of the Film Society of Lincoln Center and the Director

of the New York Film Festival from 1988 until 2012. At the Film Society, Peña organised retrospectives of many film artists, among them Michelangelo Antonioni, Sacha Guitry, Abbas Kiarostami, King Hu, Robert Aldrich, Roberto Gavaldon, Ritwik Ghatak, Kira Muratova, Fei Mu, Jean Eustache, Youssef Chahine, Yasujiro Ozu, Carlos Saura and Amitabh Bachchan, as well as major film series devoted to African, Arab, Argentine, Chinese, Cuban, Hungarian, Korean, Polish, Swedish, Taiwanese and Turkish. Together with Unifrance, in 1995 he created Rendez-Vous with French Cinema,

the leading American showcase for new French cinema. He is Professor of Film Studies at Columbia University, where he specialises in film theory and international cinema, and in 2015/16, he was a Visiting Professor in Film Studies at Harvard University. He also currently hosts WNET/Channel 13's weekly 'Reel 13'.

Paulo Branco

Honoured by the European Parliament as one of the 'Greatest European Producers,' Paulo Branco is one of the most important figures of independent production in the world. He has had the largest number of films selected for the Festival de Cannes – 60 films in total, of which 36 were in competition for the Palme d'Or. He is recognised for providing numerous aspiring filmmakers with the opportunity to make their first films; many of them have gone on to become major names in international cinema. Branco has produced more than 300 films, and has worked with some of the world's most renowned filmmakers, among them Chantal Akerman, Olivier Assayas, David Cronenberg, Manoel de Oliveira, Cedric Kahn, Werner Schroeter, Alain Tanner and Wim Wenders.



Lisbon Story

Germany, Portugal / German, English, Portuguese / 1994
100 mins / Colour / DCP



An exquisitely gentle film, on its surface Wim Wenders's 'Lisbon Story' is the simple, meandering tale of Philip Winter, a sound recordist who travels to Lisbon to work on his friend Friedrich's film. When Philip arrives, however, the film's director is nowhere to be found. For three weeks, Philip wanders about, recording the sounds of the city; meeting a group of youngsters who are fascinated by his vocation, as well as the world-famous Portuguese musical group Madredeus, who are recording songs for Friedrich's film.

But the film is a complex, powerful paean to filmmaking and a consideration of the perennial question: What is cinema? The film's story revolves around a vacuum - the absent director and so the missing image - while the other elements swirl around it, waiting to offer support. These elements include sound (Philip's recordings) and music (the work of Madredeus), but also various musings on the nature of cinema, including a wonderful monologue delivered by esteemed Portuguese director Manoel de Oliveira in which he claims cinema as a tool of memory - even if memory is itself an illusion.

As well, Wenders inflects his films with reminders of other cinematic greats, from tributes to the physical humour of Charlie Chaplin and Jacques Tati to the suggestive image/sound combinations of Alfred Hitchcock and Bernard Herrmann; from the existential doubts of Michelangelo Antonioni's 'L'Avventura' to the professional doubts of Federico Fellini's '8 1/2'. In the end, 'Lisbon Story' is a film that offers great satisfaction by putting the 'moving' back in 'moving image'.

Director / Screenwriter
Wim Wenders

Producer
Ulrich Felsberg, Paulo Branco

Cinematographer
Lisa Rinzler

Editor
Peter Przygodda, Anne Schnee

Music
Madredeus, Jürgen Knieper

Cast
Rüdiger Vogler, Patrick Bauchau, Teresa Salguero, Madredeus, Manoel de Oliveira

Production: **Road Movies**
Sales: **The Festival Agency**



Wim Wenders was born in Düsseldorf in 1945 and studied Medicine and Philosophy in Freiburg and in his hometown, later studying Filmmaking in Munich. A major figure of the New German Cinema movement, Herzog's significant output as a director includes 'Alice in the Cities' (1974), 'The American Friend' (1977), 'The State of Things' (1982, winner of the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival), 'Paris, Texas' (1984, winner of the Palme d'Or at the Festival de Cannes), 'The End of Violence' (1997) and 'Buena Vista Social Club', among many others.

Bruno Dumont

Hovering on the border between realistic drama and the avant-garde, the films of Bruno Dumont have defined a new narrative idiom in world cinema. Known for writing complete novels that form the basis of his films, Dumont is deeply influenced by the fine arts that are reflected in the visual richness of his cinema. Deeply influenced by Greek and German philosophy, his films are festival favourites.

Born in 1958 in France, Dumont taught Philosophy before his debut in cinema, when he wrote and directed 'The Life of Jesus' in 1997. Among other honours, the film won the FIPRESCI Prize at the Chicago International Film Festival and a Caméra d'Or Special Mention at the Festival de Cannes, and was named Best New International Feature at the Edinburgh International Film Festival.

Dumont's second film, 'Humanité' (1999) won the Grands Prix for both Best Actor (Emmanuel Schotté) and Best Actress (Séverine Caneele) at the Festival de Cannes, while 'Flanders' (2006) clinched the Grand Prix of the Jury at Cannes. In addition to several shorts, Dumont has directed nine feature-length films, the most recent being 'Slack Bay' (2016), starring Juliette Binoche. He served as the President of the Caméra d'Or jury at Cannes in 2008.



L'il Quinquin (Episode 1)

'P'tit Quinquin' / France / French / 2014

54 mins / Colour / DCP



Broadly, director Bruno Dumont's body of work is provocative, at times controversial, occasionally grotesque and always hard-hitting. Eschewing traditional screenwriting methods, his scripts are adapted from stories first written as complete novels; he also manipulates standard narrative techniques, instead relying on methods that make use of atmosphere and situation as much as, if not more than, events and dialogue.

This has led to films that are brilliantly dark, brooding and seething with foreboding – Roger Ebert once wrote that Dumont 'shoots through a lens filter called "abject Gallic misery"', referring as much to the blandly beautiful countryside of the north of France where Dumont's films are invariably set as to the tone of his stories. With 'Li'l Quinquin', however, Dumont turns this on its head, taking his traditional story elements and creating a very dark and unsettling comedy.

The murder of a farmer's wife starts the story off, but the circumstances of her demise are as ridiculous as they are horrendous. The title character, an incorrigible, mouthy and racist youngster, is surrounded by adult figures who are not so much dysfunctional as they are non-functional, their blank stares suggesting a universal state of near-idiocy – chief among them the head of the gendarmerie, whose bumbling attempts to solve the crime take second place to his spouting platitudes about police work and stroking his own ego. Dumont's is a universe of violence, bewilderment and life's unpleasantness – to find comedy here is a stroke of genius.

Director / Screenwriter

Bruno Dumont

Producer

Jean Bréhat, Rachid Bouchareb, Muriel Merlin

Cinematographer

Guillaume Deffontaines

Editor

Bruno Dumont, Basile Belkhiri

Cast

Alane Delhaye, Lucy Caron, Bernard Pruvost, Philippe Jore

Production: **3B Productions,**

ARTE France

Sales: **NDM**

Distribution: **Luxbox Films**

Asghar Farhadi

Asghar Farhadi made his first short film at age 13 in a youth cinema club. In 2002, he wrote and directed his first feature film, 'Dancing in the Dust' (2003), which won the Best Actor Award at the 25th Moscow International Film Festival and was named Best Film by the Russian Society of Film Critics', and also won Best Screenplay and Best Director prizes at the 48th Asia-Pacific Film Festival.

A year later, Farhadi made 'Beautiful City'. Following 'Fireworks Wednesday' (2006), he made 'About Elly' (2009), which had simultaneous world premieres at the Berlin International Film Festival and the Fajr Film Festival. It went on to win the Silver Bear for Best Director in Berlin and the Crystal Simorgh for Best Directing in Fajr.

Farhadi's next film, 'A Separation' (2011) took the Golden Bear for Best Film and two Silver Bears for its performers when it was screened at the Berlin International Film Festival. It went on to win more than 70 awards, among them the César for Best Foreign Film and both the Golden Globe and Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film.

In the same year, he was named one of 'Time' magazine's 100 most influential people in the world, and began work on the screenplay for 'The Past' (2013), which won the



Best Actress Award at the Festival de Cannes and was nominated for Golden Globe and César Awards.

His most recent film, 'The Salesman' (2016), was selected for the Official Competition of the Festival de Cannes.

About Elly

'Darbareye Elly' / Iran / Persian / 2009

119 mins / Colour / DCP



In his fourth feature-length film, which immediately preceded his 'A Separation', for which he received worldwide critical acclaim, director Asghar Farhadi employs the same respectful but unsettling examination of interpersonal relationships that characterise much of his work. Placing several middle-class couples – and a pair of singletons who are being subjected to a matchmaking exercise – in the limited space of a holiday house on the Caspian Sea, Farhadi creates a complex story that explores socialised gender roles, the impact of secrets and lies, and the dangers of manipulating others.

Relying on strikingly naturalistic performances (an evening's game of charades is particularly noteworthy) and a script that moves forward gently but with defined momentum, Farhadi takes us into an atmosphere that seems perfectly normal – charming, even – until, quite suddenly, gaps in understanding and expectations begin to show, and the placid drama takes a sharp and very disturbing turn.

The film's title is, appropriately, both enigmatic and something of a double entendre. Elly, who is the unknown, new friend among the group, occupies the centre of the narrative (to define exactly why is to spoil the narrative): she is by definition the primary character. And yet, the others revolve about her, never quite able to ascertain who she is. 'About Elly' is a deeply incisive and moving look at the failings and foibles of human nature.

Director / Screenwriter
Asghar Farhadi

Producer
Asghar Farhadi, Simaye Mehr, Mahmoud Razavi

Cinematographer
Hossein Jafarian

Editor
Hayadeh Safiyari

Music
Andrea Bauer

Cast
Golshifteh Farahani, Taraneh Alidousti, Shahab Hosseini, Merila Zarei, Mani Haghighi, Peyman Moadi

Production / Sales: **DreamLab Films**
Distribution: **DreamLab Films**

Lucrecia Martel

Lucrecia Martel studied at the National Experimentation Filmmaking School in Buenos Aires in her native Argentina, making a number of short films between 1988 and 1994. Her award-winning short film 'Dead King' was part of the omnibus film 'Brief Tales I', a collection of shorts by new Argentinian filmmakers.

Her debut feature-length film, 'La Ciénaga' (2001) was internationally hailed as the arrival of an exciting new voice in world cinema. It won the Alfred Bauer Prize at the Berlin International Film Festival, where it had its world premiere; several awards, including Best Director, at the Havana Film Festival; and the Best First Film award from the Argentine Film Critics Association. It went on to be voted the greatest Latin American film of the decade in a poll of New York film critics, festival programmers and industry professionals, and is seen as an important development in the New Argentine Cinema.

Martel's follow-up, 'The Holy Girl' (2004), continued the acclaim won by 'La Ciénaga', was selected for competition at the Festival de Cannes, and appeared in numerous festivals around the world. In 2008, she released 'The Headless Woman', which premiered in competition at Cannes and won several awards, including the Best Director Award



from ACE, the Argentine Academy of Cinematography Arts and Sciences and the Argentine Film Critics Association.

All her films have been well-received at international film festivals, including the Sundance Film Festival, the Toronto International Film Festival, the New York Film Festival and the International Film Festival Rotterdam, among many

others. Retrospectives of her work have been screened at prestigious institutions including Harvard University, the UC Berkeley Art Museum and the Tate Museum in London. She has been a juror at festivals in Berlin, Cannes, Rotterdam, Sundance and Venice, among many others.

Martel's fourth feature-length film, 'Zama', is slated to premiere in 2017.

La Ciénaga

Argentina, France, Spain, Japan / Spanish / 2001
102 mins / Colour / 35mm



Shortly after Lucrecia Martel's 'La Ciénaga' begins, a group of children look on while a panicked cow, trapped in quicksand up to its haunches, struggles to free itself from the mire. This moment of helpless tragedy sets the tone for the film to come, in which a decayed bourgeois family is hopelessly trapped in a morass of nonchalant lethargy.

The story revolves around Mecha, a middle-class, middle-aged mother of five. Bugged down in a pathetic marriage, Mecha spends the dank, humid summer days lazing about in a haze, erupting with bitterness, which she expresses by lashing out at her family, her friends and her Amerindian servants, whom she accuses of being lazy and deceitful in exasperated tones laced with racism. When Mecha's cousin Tali, who lives in the nearby city of La Ciénaga ('the swamp' in English), comes to visit with her husband and children, the cracks in a family plagued by repression and social stagnation threaten to split open.

Grounded in a precise script, wonderful cinematography, a brilliant use of sound and riveting performances, 'La Ciénaga' simmers with claustrophobic dread as it moves inexorably forward to its shocking conclusion. With her award-winning debut feature, Martel provides scathing social commentary at its best.

Director / Screenwriter
Lucrecia Martel

Producer
Lita Stantic

Cinematographer
Hugo Colace

Editor
Santiago Ricci

Cast
Graciela Borges, Mercedes Moran, Martín Adjemian, Diego Baenas, Leonora Balcarce, Silvia Bayle

Production: **Wanda Visión, Riofilme, TS Productions**

Sales: **Lita Stantic Producciones**

Rithy Panh

Rithy Panh is a Cambodian-French filmmaker, writer and producer. Born in Cambodia, he studied filmmaking at the Institut des Hautes Études Cinématographiques in France. His work as a filmmaker focuses primarily on the contemporary fallout resulting from the genocide committed by the Khmer Rouge regime in his homeland. Rooted in his first-hand experience of living in a remote labour camp, where he witnessed untold hardships and suffered irreparable losses, Panh's works have a rare and striking authority.

He has directed numerous internationally acclaimed films, including 'The Rice People', which was selected for the Official Competition of the Festival de Cannes in 1994; 'The Land of Wandering Souls' (2000), which won several awards, including the Robert and Frances Flaherty Award at the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival; the influential 'S21: The Khmer Rouge Death Machine' (2004), which took numerous awards around the world, among them the Albert Londres Award; 'Paper Cannot Wrap Embers' (2007), 'The Sea Wall' (2008) and 'Duch, Master of the Forges of Hell' (2012).

In 2013, Panh directed 'The Missing Picture', which was nominated for the Academy Award for Best



Foreign Language Film and won the Grand Prix in the Un Certain Regard section at the Festival de Cannes. His most recent directorial effort, 'Exile', once again considers the grave crimes and abuse of the Khmer Rouge regime. It won wide critical and public acclaim at Cannes in 2016.

Panh is dedicated to helping rebuild the Cambodian film industry. In 2006, with fellow Cambodian film

director Ieu Pannakar, he opened the Bophana Audiovisual Resources Centre in Phnom Penh to collect audiovisual testimonies of the Cambodian people and make this heritage accessible to all. He is also a principal founder of the Cambodian Film Commission, an industry development organisation that includes the CFC Film Lab, a professional film training programme for Cambodians.

The Missing Picture

'L'Image manquante' / Cambodia, France / French / 2013

91 mins / Colour / DCP



Director
Rithy Panh

Producer
Catherine Dussart

Editor
**Rithy Panh,
Marie-Christine Rougerie**

Music
Marc Marder

Production:
**Catherine Dussart Productions,
ARTE France, Bohana Production**
Sales: **Films Distribution**

In 1975, the Khmer Rouge took Cambodia's capital city of Phnom Penh. Within mere hours, the entire city was evacuated, its inhabitants forcibly transported via cattle car and wagon to the countryside in support of the repressive and violent regime's bid to create a state built on the model of Stalinism and Maoism. This deportation is the 'missing picture' in Rithy Panh's continuation of the project of recounting, documenting and accounting for the suffering visited upon the people of Cambodia during the years of the Cambodian genocide.

The film employs an almost astonishing device to describe the horrors of life for prisoners under the Khmer Rouge: painstakingly handcrafted miniature human figures that are used in tableaux of the various scenes the film describes. Combined with archival footage of films from Cambodia's golden age of filmmaking as well as documentary examples of the emptied capital city and forced labour in work camps, these toylike figures are disarming in that they are somehow endearing, even as they act out the gut-wrenching scenes of inhumanity the regime's many victims were made to endure.

The common people under Pol Pot's regime were reduced to nothing – as Panh suggests in the film, their choice was to be indoctrinated as revolutionaries or become fertiliser for rice. 'The Missing Picture' brilliantly revives the memory of those who disappeared, giving them an image that can be remembered, if not a voice.

Qumra Screenings

New Voices in Cinema

A selection of acclaimed films made with the support of the Doha Film Institute's Grants Programmes and Filmmaking Labs.



Dogs

Director / Screenwriter

Bogdan Florian Mirică

Producer

Elie Meirovitz, Marcela Ursu

Cinematographer

Andrei Butică

Editor

Roxana Szel

Music

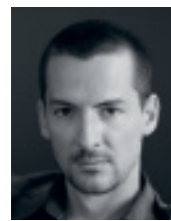
Codrin Lazăr, Sorin Romanescu

Cast

Dragoș Bucur, Gheorghe Visu, Vlad Ivanov

Production: **EZ Films, 42 KM Film, Argo Film**

Sales: **BAC Films International**



Bogdan Florian Mirică studied Screenwriting at the University of Westminster, London. In 2011, Mirică wrote and directed his first

short film, 'Bora Bora', which was named Best European Short Film in Premiers Plans (Angers, France), and was selected for the Festival del Film Locarno and the Warsaw and Thessaloniki International Film Festivals, among others. Mirică's debut feature-length script, 'Dogs', was selected for L'Atelier du Festival at the Festival de Cannes, TorinoFilmLab's Script & Pitch, and Cinelink, where it won the ARTE Award. The film had its premiere in the Un Certain Regard section of the Festival de Cannes in 2016.

'Câini' / Romania, France, Bulgaria, Qatar / Romanian / 2016

100 mins / Colour / DCP



Young Roman gets a whole lot more than he bargained for when he inherits a large tract of land on the Romanian border with Ukraine from his late grandfather. His hopes that the sale of the property, for which as a city-dweller he has no particular use, will be a painless transaction are dashed soon after he arrives at the house and meets Granddad's associates, who - very firmly and with more than a little menace - advise him not to sell.

So begins Bogdan Florian Mirică's deftly constructed thriller, which hovers somewhere in the space between the wide open frontier of a classic Western and the claustrophobic living spaces that often characterise the films of the recent Romanian New Wave. As Roman's tale progresses and he comes to uncover both the shady past dealings that have taken place here and how the local thugs are involved, things start to add up and the sinister threat of extreme violence becomes palpable.

Much of Romanian cinema over the past few decades has been a consistently clear-eyed examination - and often an insightful critique - of the social and political climate in that country in the years since the violent overthrow of Nicolae Ceaușescu's harsh regime. With 'Dogs', Mirică continues this project, on the one hand exposing a form of corruption that flourished under the communists, and on the other musing on how and why that same corruption continues in a country that on paper has abolished the tyranny of authoritarian rule.

Holy Cow

'Müqəddäs inäk' / Azerbaijan, Germany, Romania, Qatar / Azerbaijani, Persian / 2015

80 mins / Colour / DCP



Tapdig has what seems like a perfectly straightforward wish - to obtain a cow from Europe - for a perfectly logical reason - such a cow will produce more milk than the local Azerbaijani stock. He asks the village elders for their advice, and by implication their blessing, but the response is one bordering on hysteria. A foreign cow will contaminate the traditional values of the village! An animal from elsewhere will bring disease and infect the other livestock! What about the fresh air? Tapdig should be banished from the village for such an affront!

'Holy Cow' brilliantly highlights some of the arguments that so often buttress the many nonsensical claims that accompany xenophobia, overlaying naturalistic settings, sequences and performances with a truly absurd - yet all-encompassing - judgement that is based on the unfounded fear of change. We witness an ordinary man living a simple life, working tirelessly to support his family (scenes involving his young sons are charming beyond words) and devising a way to improve their lot in life, and the contagion of fear that his forward thinking engenders.

As with any good satire, 'Holy Cow' has a target, here the ridiculous lengths people will go to with in order to defend outdated and unproductive traditions. A hugely enjoyable reminder of the dangers of unfounded fear - all the more refreshing in today's climate of exclusionary politics and populist sentiment.

Director / Screenwriter

Imamaddin Hasanov

Producer

Andra Popescu, Veronika Janatková, Stefan Kloos

Cinematographer

Sarvar Javadov

Editor

Philipp Gromov

Cast

Xanali Tapdiq Huseynov, Vafa Huseynova, Jalil Huseynov, Atamai Huseynov, Emil Huseynov

Production: **Free Art Production, Kloos & Co., Medien, Conset**

Sales: **Rise and Shine Boutique**



Born in 1980, **Imamaddin Hasanov** holds a degree in Film and Theatre Directing. He emerged as a director staging several plays in

Baku Camera Theatre. In 2006, after a Studio Ateliers Varan Course on Documentary Film in Tbilisi, he started working as a director on several short TV documentaries. His first short observational documentary, 'The Virgin's Happiness or the Invisible Side', is currently in post-production. Through his films, Hasanov sheds lights on the lives of the less privileged, emphasising their internal conflicts in a society that imports values that are not always in accordance with the established local norms.

Mimosas

Director
Oliver Laxe
 Producer
Lama Chraïbi, Nadia Turinev, Felipe Lage Coro
 Screenwriter
Santiago Fillol, Oliver Laxe
 Cinematographer
Mauro Herce
 Editor
Cristobal Fernandez
 Cast
Ahmed Hammoud, Said Agli, Shakib Ben Omar, Hamid Fardjad, Margarita Albores, Ikram Neki, Ahmed El Otmani
 Production: **Zeitun Films, La Prod, Rouge International**
 Sales: **Luxbox**
 Distribution: **MC Distribution**

Spain, Morocco, France, Qatar / Arabic / 2016
 93 mins / Colour / DCP



An elderly sheikh, nearing death, seeks to travel to his birthplace in the Atlas Mountains so he may find final rest among his family and loved ones, but the road is treacherous and more than the caravan that accompanies him can manage. When the old man dies, a guide is recruited from a ragtag group of itinerant workers, and he takes on the task of leading the small party of three whose task it is to return the old man's body home.

Bordering on the surreal, 'Mimosas' travels deeper and deeper into the mountain range, seeming to dislocate itself in time and becoming an inner journey of endurance, passion and will. The duty-bound men are increasingly focused on their goal to the extent that it becomes a moral mission; one by one they face their doubts and fears, gaining strength from hardship and faith from failure.

Drawn in part from director Oliver Laxe's experiences of exploring Sufism, the film is a stunningly beautiful (16mm cinematography splendidly captures the wild elegance of the landscape, its wide-open plains contrasting with its narrow, craggy passes), carefully considered and deeply moving meditation on the possibilities of approaching, and perhaps convening with, the divine.



Oliver Laxe lives and works in Morocco. His first feature-length film, 'You All Are Captains' (2010) was premiered at the Directors'

Fortnight at the Festival de Cannes, where he received the FIPRESCI Prize. He is one of the founders of Zeitun Films. He is currently working on a new feature, 'Yihad'.

Tramontane

'Rabih' / Lebanon, France, UAE, Qatar / Arabic / 2016
 100 mins / Colour / DCP



Young Rabih is well-liked by family, friends and the community of the Lebanese village he calls home. A blind, extremely talented singer and tablah player, he spends much of his time rehearsing with the musical group he plays in. When the band is invited to perform in Europe, Rabih, excited by the opportunity, heads to the magistrate's office to obtain his passport – only to discover there are certain "irregularities" with his identity card. Denied international travel until he can prove to the authorities who he is, Rabih finds himself opening a closet full of family skeletons.

It is clear that in 'Tramontane', director Vatche Boulghourjian is telling a tale that parallels Lebanon's experience of delving into the turmoil of its recent history. Rabih asks questions about the past that inspire fear, contempt, regret and indignation; the responses he receives, when they are not outright untruths, are laden with feeble attempts to justify unforgotten disgrace. At the same time, the film has a universal ring in its examination of the grief, guilt and shame that are the wages of lies and betrayal.

Boulghourjian is careful to avoid overdramatisation or blame, maintaining instead the balanced understanding that arises from watching characters as their eyes and faces register the flicker of culpability – an approach that, appropriately, inspires conciliation rather than animosity, and champions the freedom of truth over the prison of deceit.

Director / Screenwriter
Vatche Boulghourjian
 Producer
Caroline Oliveira, Georges Schoucair
 Cinematographer
James Lee Phelan
 Editor
Nadia Ben Rachid
 Music
Cynthia Zaven
 Cast
Barakat Jabbour, Julia Kassar, Toufic Barakat
 Production: **Rebus Film Production, Abbout Productions**
 Sales: **The Bureau Films**
 Distribution: **Abbout Productions**



Vatche Boulghourjian is from Lebanon and holds an MFA in film from New York University. Before attending NYU, Boulghourjian

worked throughout the Middle East on documentaries for television networks while also making his independent shorts, experimental films, and documentaries. 'Fifth Column', his thesis film, received a production grant from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association and in 2010 had its premiere at the Festival de Cannes as part of the Cinéfondation programme, where it won third prize. Boulghourjian is currently developing his first feature, 'Tramontane', which was selected by the Venice Biennale to take part in the inaugural edition of the Biennale College – Cinema.

I Have Been Watching You All Along



'A'tarif Anany Baqeit Uraqibuk Taweelan' / Qatar / No dialogue / 2016

10 mins / Colour / DCP

Director / Screenwriter /
Cinematographer / Editor:
Rawda Al-Thani

Cast: **Noor Al-Thani**

Production: **Doha Film Institute**

A young woman wanders about an abandoned cinema, rummaging through its storerooms and curiously exploring the mechanical and celluloid detritus that has been left behind. A sense of transgression is in the air – the woman is, after all, trespassing – and she finds herself constantly being watched by several men who, we assume, oversee the disused property. This vague threat notwithstanding, she projects scraps of old footage, creating a freeform narrative all her own, breathing new life into forgotten artifacts.

Director

Rawda Al-Thani likes to spend her time exploring places in Qatar where the nation's past and present landscapes have merged to form its current state. Through these explorations she finds inspiration for her short films and art projects. She studied Communications at Northwestern University in Qatar, where she focused on Experimental Filmmaking, Art Directing and Middle Eastern Studies. Her first short film was shot in Doha's abandoned Gulf Cinema and portrays the search for an answer to the explorer's questions of identity through her journey into that forgotten space.

Kashta



Qatar / Arabic / 2016

12 mins / Colour / DCP

Director / Screenwriter: **A.J. Al Thani**

Producer: **Jaime Siordia**

Cinematographer: **Christopher Moon**

Editor: **Menna Kamel**

Cast: **Mansour Al Nahdi, Ali Al Nahdi, Ahmed Nasser Afif Alyafei**

Production: **The Film House**

Out in the beautiful quiet of the desert, a man teaches his young sons how to track and hunt. Frustration leads to an apparently harmless struggle between the two brothers – but their carelessness brings about sudden disaster. Qatari filmmaker A.J. Al Thani's film strikes just the right balance of calm and calamity, adolescence and adulthood, knowhow and panic to tell a seemingly simple story with a sense of gravity that will echo with anyone who has seen an innocent plan go horribly wrong.

Director

A.J. Al-Thani is a Qatar-born filmmaker. Her love for movies and moviemaking began at the age of six when she saw 'Star Wars' (1977) in the cinema in 1999. She began to pursue her dream of being a filmmaker with the launch of the Doha Film Institute. Her relationship with the Institute began in 2010 when she participated in one of its first film workshops, which opened the door for many local filmmakers to pursue their passion. For almost six years she has been developing her skills with the help of the Institute. 'Kashta' was made through a grant from the Doha Film Institute.

Our Time Is Running Out



Waq'tna Yamdi' / Qatar / Arabic / 2017

15 mins / Colour / DCP

Director: **Meriem Mesraoua**

Screenwriter: **Dana Atrach,**

Meriem Mesraoua

Producer: **Nadine Toukan**

Cinematographer: **Ghassan Nazmi**

Editor: **Abdul Jabbar Maki**

Cast: **Kareem Abu Roza, Laila Kabesh, Omar Abdel Majid, Zakaria Al Arab**

Production: **Doha Film Institute**

With 'Our Time Is Running Out', director Meriem Mesraoua creates a compelling and disturbingly blissful alternate universe in which a society of children lives according to strict and absolute rules. Every day, there are lessons and tasks – and every day, there is trepidation, for any deviation from the norm means eternal banishment. When one youngster wakes to find himself changed, he makes a desperate attempt to cling to the familiar. Time and life, however, march inexorably forward.

Director

Meriem Mesraoua was born in Doha and raised in France. She returned to Qatar while in high school, and earned a BSc with Honours in Media Industries and Technologies from Northwestern University in Qatar. Mesraoua explored various facets of the film industry through internships with Miramax and NYWIFT, among others, and as a production trainee on Michael Winterbottom's award-winning film 'Trishna' in 2011. She received a Qatari Film Fund grant from the Doha Film Institute in 2015 for her short film 'Our Time Is Running Out,' with which she participated in the first edition of Qumra. Mesraoua is now developing her first feature-length project, 'The Other Wife,' which she developed during the 2016 Hezayah Screenwriting Lab in partnership with TorinoFilmLab.

Red



Hamar' / Qatar / No dialogue / 2017

9 mins / Colour / DCP

Director / Screenwriter: **Kholood Al Ali**

Production: **Doha Film Institute**

A shy and lonely boy trudges through the snowy streets of a desolate, abandoned urban landscape, where he sees an abandoned pair of red trainers hanging from a telephone wire. He wants them dearly – but can he stamp out his fears and find a way to get them on his feet? The spectre of fear and doubt that lives inside us all, questioning our courage and making our confidence falter, gets a kick in the pants in this charming animated work.

Director

Kholood Al Ali Kholood Al Ali holds a BA in Art Education from Qatar University. She started drawing at an early age, and currently works as an illustrator and a graphic designer at Al Jazeera Children Channel (JCC). In 2015, Al Ali wrote, produced and directed the animated series 'My Little World' which airs on Baraem, a JCC member that programs content for preschoolers. Al Ali cites comic book artist Foo Swee Chin as an influence, and finds inspiration in anime and the works of Tim Burton.

Turtles Are Always Home



'Sokun Al Solhufat' / Qatar, Lebanon, Canada / Arabic / 2016

13 mins / Colour / DCP

Director / Cinematographer / Editor:

Rawane Nassif

Production: **Doha Film Institute**

Lebanese-Canadian filmmaker Rawane Nassif considers the feelings of displacement and otherness that come with being an expat – a situation that gives rise to a contradictory sensation of transient belonging. Her exploration of a residential complex that is still under construction allows the artist to reflect on what it means to live in a fragmented series of places one calls “home” – and to recognise the difference between a home for one’s heart and a home for one’s feet.

Director

Born in Beirut in 1983, **Rawane Nassif** has a BFA in Filmmaking from the Université Saint Joseph in Lebanon and an MA in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Alberta. Her work addresses space, traditions, identity, displacement and memory. She has directed several documentaries and written a book on the politics of memory in Lebanon, worked with immigrants in Canada, conducted visual research on nomadic traditions in Kyrgyzstan, taught anthropology in Tajikistan, and written children’s books based on the oral histories of Honduras. She currently works for the Doha Film Institute as a film researcher with the National Museum of Qatar.

Qumra Projects

Twenty-five feature-length and nine short film projects at various stages of production have been selected to benefit from the experience of the Qumra Masters, as well as bespoke mentorship and business meetings with international experts. The primary motive of this international gathering of creative film professionals is to contribute to the development of emerging voices in cinema, with a special focus on first- and second-time filmmakers.



Development / Feature Narrative

'Azooz, the Bully Slayer' by Mohammed Al Hamadi

'The DNA of Love' by Hafiz Ali Ali

'Hitch 60' (working title) by Sara Al Obaidly

'A House in Jerusalem' by Muayad Alayan

'iPhone Memory' by Mahdi Ali Ali

'The Maiden's Pond' by Bassem Breche

'The Other Wife' by Meriem Mesraoua

'The Return' by Meyar Al-Roumi

'Solo' by Mehdi Hmili

'You Will Die at Twenty' by Amjad Abu Alala

'Zanka Contact' by Ismaël El Iriki

Development / Feature Narrative

Azooz, the Bully Slayer

Director / Screenwriter / Producer

Mohammed Al Hamadi

Co-Director

Mohammed Jassim Almulla

Company Profile

Innovation Films is a film and television production company whose main vision is to create a solid film industry that exports world-class filmmaking. Past productions include the feature film 'Lockdown: Red Moon Escape', as well as several successful short films; the company also co-produced the American indie title 'KillCam'. Innovation prides itself on creating and nurturing local talent, both in front of and behind the camera, and most crew members working with Innovation are local film professionals or trainees. We actively contribute to local expertise by having interns shadow industry professionals on set and placing trainees on commercials, and short and feature films. Innovation also conducts scriptwriting, producing and directing classes, and weekly acting workshops overseen by Academy Award nominee Scander Copti.

Contact

Mohammed Al Hamadi

Innovation Films

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com

'Azooz' / Qatar / Arabic

Genre: Animation, Drama, Fantasy

Interests: Children, Social Issues

Set in 1992 and inspired by Al Watwat (Batman) stories, 'Azooz the Bully Slayer' is the tale of a 12-year-old who fends off a thief who has made off with a stash of Sega video-game tapes.



Right after Eid Al Fitr back in 1992, 'Streets of Rage 2', the Sega Mega-drive cartridge, started disappearing in the neighbourhood from one house after another. Azooz was the main suspect, since his cartridge hasn't been stolen... yet. So Azooz, inspired by 'Al Watwat' comics goes on an adventure to clear his name and to save the "fereej" from the thief who is stealing the precious cartridges. Through this journey, Azooz meets his sidekick Ali, and with him he faces his fears and unites the kids of the neighbourhood to fight this evil. He overcomes many obstacles, yet every one he faces helps him grow up and evolve.

Mohammed Al Hamadi



Mohammed Al Hamadi works as a Senior Standards Engineer at Qatar Petroleum. He graduated from the University of Tulsa with a BSc in Chemical Engineering and is completing a degree in Fine Arts from Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, with a double major in Painting & Printmaking and Fashion Design. Al Hamadi has been heavily involved in the arts scene in Doha since 2007 and in Tulsa before that. In 2011, he joined the Innovation Group as a board member and Executive Producer at Innovation Films and has since then produced a number of films, corporate videos, web series and music videos.

Mohammed Jassim Almulla



Mohammed Jassim Almulla is a Director at Jeem TV and has been working in the entertainment business for over a decade. He started his career as a sound engineer with Al Jazeera Sports and worked his way to be the Head of Sound at Jeem TV, then was sent to the New York Film Academy in New York City to train as a film director. Also a musician, Almulla has played the oud for over 20 years and has received training from the Music Creativity Center in Qatar. He worked on creating the score of Amal Al-Muftah's short film 'Smicha', and his music has been featured in several films, corporate videos and other projects, including 'Amreeka Laa!' by Hind Al-Ansari, and the 'Sadow', a documentary produced by Qatar Museums.

Director's Note

In this age of information sharing, nano-technology and VR, we tend to forget how life used to be not that long ago. We have left behind basic skills we used to rely on, such as patience and communicating with other human beings. I have written this film as a reminder of the good, simple life in Doha back in the early 90s, when there was no Internet, no cell phones or iPads, and kids actually talked to each other instead of staring at a screen all the time. I chose to write it from the point of view of a child to have a more simplified perspective about our lives back then. Azooz reflects me and my generation's life growing up in little Doha, when our world was only as big as our neighborhood. We did not care about the origins or the last names of our friends; we used to call them only by their first and second names, or by nickname. I also feel that we need a Qatari superhero, and Azooz, the Bully Slayer could be him.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$1,000,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Innovation Films, Qatar

Looking For:

- Film funds
- Script consultants

Development / Feature Narrative

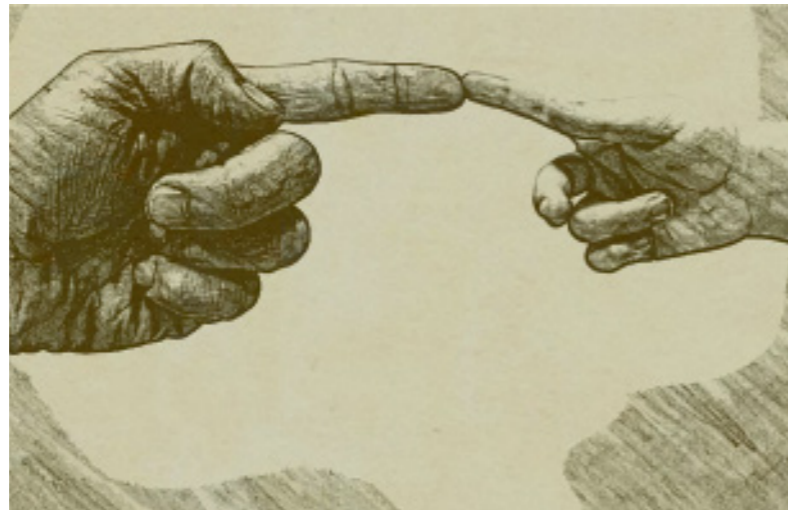
The DNA of Love

Director
Hafiz Ali Ali
Screenwriter
Tom Abrams

Contact
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'Jeenat Al-Hob' / Qatar / Arabic, English
Genre: Adventure, Comedy, Drama
Interests: Family

After the death of his Qatari wife, a retired engineer visits the United States to find his estranged daughter, while the same daughter travels to Doha to find answers to her late mother's past.



Twenty years ago, while studying in Texas, Nasser, a young Qatari man, fell in love and married Sara, an American. They had a baby, Sofia, and Nasser brought his new family back to Doha. When it is suggested that he take a second, Qatari, wife, Sara angrily rejects the idea and takes baby Sofia back to the USA, cutting ties with Nasser and keeping secret the fact that he is Sofia's father. Out of respect for his new wife, Nasser chooses not to pursue Sara. When his Qatari wife dies, Nasser regrets the loss of his daughter. He decides to visit America and re-establish contact with her. Meanwhile, Sara is killed in a car accident in Texas, and Sofia, now a genetics student at Sara Lawrence College, discovers that her birth father is a Qatari man named Nasser. In a twist of irony and fate, Sofia decides to travel to Doha in the hope of finding and establishing contact with him. As the characters engage in their own particular search for identity, they find themselves on a journey of redemption, love and self-discovery.

Hafiz Ali Ali



Hafiz Ali Ali is an established Qatari film director with extensive experience in the arts. He began his creative endeavours in television and theatre while still in school. He graduated from the California Institute of the Arts in 1999 with a BFA in Theatre Design and Technology, and from Chapman University in 2005 with an MFA in Film Directing. He obtained his Executive MBA from HEC Paris in 2014. Between 2000 and 2009, he directed several fiction and documentary films for Qatar TV and Al Jazeera Children's Channel. His films, which have been selected for many international festivals and have won several awards, include 'Cab Driver' (2004), 'The Oryx Return' (2007) and 'Scents and Shadows' (2010). Hafiz directed his first feature-length film, 'Gharangao', in 2008 and with the support from the Doha Film Institute, is currently developing two feature-length projects: the animated 'The Search for the Star Pearl' and narrative 'The DNA of Love'.

Director's Note

This project started in 2008, when I heard the story of a Qatari man who wanted to meet his daughter after 20 years of estrangement. I had heard of such conditions in other parts of the world, but I was shocked that they were also happening in my own country. I was moved by the story and set out to make a film that would expose these issues and have something positive to say. The primary themes of 'The DNA of Love' are identity, culture, discovery, family and redemption. The film focuses on the intersection of these themes through three stories about a Qatari man, his American wife and their daughter. The film weaves back and forth among the three storylines: the father's humbling attempt to find his daughter in the USA, the daughter's eye-opening hunt for him in Qatar, and the father's memories of his troubled past with his wife. As each character engages in their own particular search for identity, we come to understand more fully the meaning of family and the ever-prevalent cultural disconnect.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: TBD

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Co-producers
- Distributors
- Funding

Development / Feature Narrative

Hitch 60 (working title)

Director / Screenwriter

Sara Al Obaidly

Producer

Ania Wójtowicz

Contact

Sara Al Obaidly

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Qatar, UK, Turkey / English

Genre: Arthouse, Based on a True Story, Road Trip

Interests: Coming of age, History, Identity, Patriarchy, Politics, Social Issues, Travel, Youth Culture

Two mod girls from South East London embark on a dream holiday but end up on the journey of a lifetime, crossing continents and cultures, and growing up on the road.



Two mod girls from South-East London embark on a journey across continents, travelling away from their peers and the hedonism of 1960s Europe, into unknown territories in the Middle East and beyond. Maureen and Sherry face poverty, treacherous terrain, lecherous men and a transformative education at the university of life while on the road to becoming adults.

Sara Al Obaidly



Sara Al Obaidly started her career as a portrait and landscape photographer. Her work has been exhibited in the National Portrait Gallery, London, and was selected by 'TIME' magazine's Lightbox in the best portraits of 2014. Storytelling and poetic imagery are at the heart of Al Obaidly's work. She prefers to shoot in real locations using natural light. Her background in photography has given her a clear understanding of people, as well as human interaction and emotion. Based on the story of her 17-year-old British mother, who had a dream of reaching the Middle East, 'Hitch 60' (working title) will be her first full-length feature film as a director.

Ania Wójtowicz



Ania Wójtowicz is a creative producer and artist based in Qatar. Her Polish-American sense of identity and contemporary nomadic lifestyle heavily inform her perspective; her projects emphasise cultural hybridity and explore the intersections of film with other creative fields such as architecture, fashion and fine art. Recently, her video and sound installation 'Fully Furnished' was exhibited as part of the 2016 Oslo Architecture Triennale. Prior to that, she began her career in film studies, then shifted to filmmaking and working as a directorial assistant. She was then an assistant director and producer on large-scale international productions for clients including World Cup 2022, Coca-Cola, Dubai Tourism, Qatar Museums, the Qatar Foundation, Commercial Bank and Vodafone. In 2015, she returned to her creative roots, and now supports Qatar's filmmaking community through the Doha Film Institute's Film Training and Development programmes, where she has played a key role in the production of more than 20 short films.

Director's Note

What forces decide who we are? Where we go in life? Who we could become, if we made choices outside the path well-trodden? This film is based on the real-life journey of my mother and her best friend, who have inspired me with their stories since childhood. Only now, as an adult wanting to understand more about the world that I live in, have I truly come to understand the significance of their unique, cross-continent expedition in 1963. What strikes a chord with me personally, amid the devastating, war-torn climate of the Middle East today, is the mass destruction of the territory my mother once dreamed of reaching as a young adult; the place she would later return to, to marry my father. While I am deeply saddened that I may never be able to follow exactly in her footsteps, I aim to celebrate this unique moment in history through the medium of film, igniting a passion for cultural exploration and exchange within the hearts and minds of the audience; illustrating how experiences shape who we become; and celebrating those friendships which, once built, can last a lifetime.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: TBD

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Co-Writer
- Development advice
- Development funding
- Producers
- Production advice

Development / Feature Narrative

A House in Jerusalem

Director

Muayad Alayan

Screenwriter / Producer

Muayad Alayan, Rami Alayan

Company Profile

Co-founded by Muayad Alayan and Rami Alayan, PalCine Productions is a film production company based in Bethlehem, Palestine. PalCine started out as a collective of Palestinian filmmakers and artists coming together to produce their own audio-visual collaborations and productions. It soon expanded to offer experience and skills to other local and international productions, non-profit organisations, communities and institutions seeking to produce audiovisual projects in Palestine. PalCine's projects range from documentaries and narrative films to commercials and music and educational videos, and several of its films have won international awards.

Contact

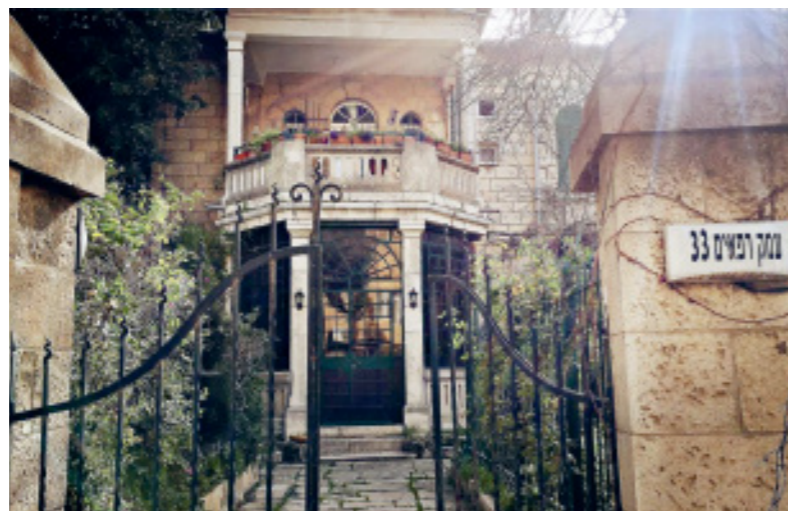
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'Bayt fi Al-Quds' / Palestine, Qatar / Arabic, English, Hebrew

Genre: Drama, Fantasy, Psychological

Interests: Politics, Social Issues, Visual Art

A Jewish American family finds it hard to adapt to their new home in Jerusalem after they discover the grave of a young Palestinian girl.



In the hope of fulfilling their life-long desire of living in the Holy Land, a Jewish American family move to Jerusalem, where they buy a house that was once the property of Palestinians. Shortly after they settle in, they discover the grave of a young Palestinian girl in their new garden, which dates to the 1940s. Their hopes for a utopian life begin to crumble as seven-year-old Rebecca finds it hard to adapt to her new home, and is increasingly haunted by the ghost of the dead girl.

Muayad Alayan



Muayad Alayan is a film director, cinematographer and producer based in Palestine. His directorial debut 'Love, Theft and Other Entanglements' (2015), which he also produced, had its premiere in the Panorama section of the Berlin International Film Festival. It was nominated for the First Feature Award and has since been distributed in more than 20 territories. His first short film premiered at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival in 2009 and went on to screen at more than 60 festivals. He also co-directed and produced the documentary 'Sacred Stones', which won the Al-Jazeera Channel Award in 2012.

Rami Alayan



Rami Alayan is a Palestinian screenwriter and film producer. His first feature-length production, 'Love, Theft and Other Entanglements', had its premiere in the Panorama section at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2015, and was sold to more than 20 territories. His two short film productions screened in more than 60 festivals worldwide, and were broadcast and distributed on DVD. Alayan has participated in numerous production and screenwriting workshops, including the Rotterdam Producers Lab, EAVE, Dov Simmons, the Mediterranean Film Institute's Film 2 Script, several John Truby master classes and Guillermo Arriaga's non-linear storytelling workshop. He holds degrees in Engineering and Business from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a professional certificate in screenwriting from UCLA Extension.

Director's Note

I grew up driving with my father through the West Jerusalem neighbourhoods of Baq'a and Talbiya to get to school in the old city. My father used to narrate stories that painted in my imagination how life there was when Palestinians still lived there before 1948. Today, years after my father passed away, I still take that same road, and, like all Palestinians, I see the juxtaposition of life there today with what once was. It is here that the story of this film is set. It explores how the new residents of the Arab houses deal with the past and its phantoms through denial, rejection, cognitive dissonance, distortion and, in rare cases, acknowledgement. Questions about truth and justice are best answered by children because they are innocent and pure. Through the story of a young Jewish American girl who has just moved to Jerusalem with her family and her discovery of a the ghost of a Palestinian girl of the same age, who lived with her family in the same house before 1948, the film explores the innocence with which children approach one another before they are corrupted by the fears and prejudices of their parents.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$930,000

Secured Financing: \$30,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Film Lab Palestine
- PalCine Productions, Palestine

Looking For:

- Funding
- Project packaging
- Sales agents
- Script consultants
- Visual effects consultants

Development / Feature Narrative

iPhone Memory

Director / Screenwriter
Mahdi Ali Ali

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'Thakirat Al iPhone' / Qatar / Arabic, French

Genre: Docufiction

Interests: Social Issues

In Paris, a Frenchman battles cancer while his wife wants an abortion; a Romani girl looks for someone to adopt her sister; a Syrian immigrant boy tries to survive by acting in the cinema.



This docu-fiction uses the device of a stolen iPhone to depict the struggles of several Parisians, both born-and-bred and immigrants, whose layered gazes generate a map of the multi-faceted French capital. We discover images of the owner and his pregnant wife preparing to welcome their child into their world. In a teenage gypsy girl's hands, the iPhone captures snaps of her bohemian family's lifestyle in Paris – but then the phone is stolen again. Now it is in the possession of a teenage Syrian refugee, who plunges us into his universe as he documents his wanderings around the arrondissements with spontaneous images of himself and those he meets along the way. These photos and short videos unveil the mysterious lives of the people of Paris, as well as the refugees who have settled in Paris to find a better life.

Mahdi Ali Ali



Mahdi Ali Ali is a Qatari filmmaker who is charged with the training and education of filmmakers. Since joining the Doha Film Institute, he has successfully worked to provide filmmakers in Qatar with comprehensive learning initiatives led by the industry's major players. He is the executive producer and supervisor for more than 30 short films that have been produced by the Institute. He holds an MFA from EICAR, the International Film School of Paris, and has made short films including 'Champs Elysées, I Love You' (2009) and 'The Gulf Habibi' (2011), as well as others for Al Jazeera Documentary Channel and Al Jazeera Children's Channel.

Director's Note

By examining events through the eyes of a juvenile, and setting this feature away from the ground zero of today's Syrian tragedy, I hope to approach this emotional issue from a fresh perspective. The simplicity of the narrative structure is designed to allow the audience to grasp the parallels between the experiences of the characters in the Champs Elysées. My vision for the aesthetic is inspired by the French New Wave, in particular the work of Jean-Luc Godard. The cinematography will be inflected and interpretative throughout, and include flights of surrealism to signal that this is a symbolic exploration of the tragedy rather than a factual representation.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: TBD

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Distributors
- Film funds
- Producers

Development / Feature Narrative

The Maiden's Pond

Director

Bassem Breche

Screenwriter

Bassem Breche, Ghassan Salhab

Producer

Jana Wehbe

Co-producer

Roman Roitman

Company Profile

The Attic is a growing boutique film production house with an innovative sparkle that intends to bring to light films by emerging talented directors. Based in Beirut, The Attic was founded in 2009. It aims to participate vigorously in the present and future of cinema in the Middle East by focusing on fine and exceptional content without compromise. The Attic produced Elie Kamal's short films '2½' (2010), which was screened at numerous film festivals and received a FIPRESCI Prize at the Dubai International Film Festival in 2010, 'Talej' (2012) and 'Revoltango' (2014), along with a series of corporate projects. Currently, The Attic is producing several other promising projects.

Contact

Jana Wehbe

The Attic

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'Birket Al-'arous' / Lebanon, Germany, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: Drama

Interests: Identity, Women's Issues

The story of two women trying to maintain and negotiate their lives - with and against each other.



'The Maiden's Pond' tells the story of two women trying to maintain and negotiate their lives with and against each other. Salma survived the difficulties of her past by letting go of any attachments, including those to her daughter. But the past did not let go of Salma, and has returned her daughter to her - defeated, divorced and pregnant.

Bassem Breche



Bassem Breche is an Emmy Award-winning scriptwriter. He began his career as an actor in Lebanon and the UK, appearing in John Furse's

'Blind Flight' (2003) and Antonia Bird's 'The Hamburg Cell' (2004). His first short film, 'Both' (2007), was selected for the Critics' Week at the Festival de Cannes. From 2009 through 2011, Breche worked on the Emmy Award-winning web-drama 'Shankaboot' as Lead Writer and Online Content Producer. He also worked as a scriptwriter on the award-winning web series 'Fasateen'. In 2013, Breche won the Robert Bosch Foundation Prize at the Berlin International Film Festival for his short film 'Free Range' (2014). He is the director of the screenwriters' collective Scenario Beirut.

Jana Wehbe, Roman Roitman



Jana Wehbe studied Filmmaking at IESAV in Beirut, and Modern Oriental Singing at the Lebanese National High Music Conservatory.

She became known to renowned directors and production companies in Lebanon and the region for her

work in the production of narrative and documentary films, television commercials and music videos. Her filmography as a producer includes '2 1/2', 'This Little Father Obsession' 'Revoltango' and 'Talej'. In 2011, she joined the team at the Doha Film Institute to work on their annual film events. Wehbe is currently producing several film projects.



Roman Roitman is a film producer. In 2010 he graduated from Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow with a

diploma in Journalism. Since 2002, he has been involved in several theatre and film productions in the roles of director, author, dramaturge and assistant director. Roitman participated in the Producers Workshop at the Festival de Cannes and was selected for Simon Perry's International Producing programme at ifs/Cologne. In 2015, he co-founded Monokel, a production company supported by Mediengründerzentrum NRW. The same year, he won the Film Prize of the Robert Bosch Stiftung, was selected by the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW for the Rotterdam Lab at CineMart, and participated in EURODOC@NRW, EAVE@Cologne and ACE@Cologne.

Director's Note

'The Maiden's Pond' follows the relationship between Salma and Thuraya as it unfolds without culminating in a resolution or confrontation. What connects these two women is the inheritance of loss and pain, handed down through the generations despite action or rebellion. In such a context, verbal communication is impossible, apologies are not available, and forgiveness is not an option. Forgetting, ignoring and surviving might be all that is left - a lesson that goes against the grain in a present that is all too keen on resolutions, endings and moral lessons. Salma reluctantly returns to her state of motherhood, only to discover that option is not available any more. Thuraya returns to her past in search of a trauma that might be resolved, only to discover there is nothing there. Uttering the words "mum" and "daughter" does not end the conflict; it merely exacerbates it. Moving forward often requires letting go of the past, aborting it, and discovering a different self - one that can provide some comfort for the time that remains.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$539,000

Secured Financing: \$70,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- Co-producers
- Distributors
- Funding
- Legal advice

Development / Feature Narrative

The Other Wife

Director / Screenwriter

Meriem Mesraoua

Producer

François d'Artemare

Company Profile

Les Films de l'Après-Midi has produced feature-length films from countries all over the world, including Bosnia and Herzegovina (Aida Begić's 'Children of Sarajevo', 'Djeca', and 'Snow'); Ethiopia (Hiwot Admasu's short film 'New Eyes'); Hungary (Balint Kenyeres's 'Hier'); Iran (Keywan Karimi's 'Drum'); Portugal (João Canijo's 'Fatima'; Marco Martins's 'São Jorge'; three films by Manoel de Oliveira; João Salaviza's 'Montanha'; and João Viana's 'Our Madness'); and Romania (Radu Muntean's 'One Floor Below'). The company is strongly committed to supporting young filmmakers, among them Admasu, Karimi, Kenyeres, Meriem Mesraoua, Jérôme Plon, Salaviza, Colombe Schneck, and Myriam Verreault. We also develop projects by established directors like Begić, Canijo, Pelin Esmer and Muntean.

Contact

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'Al Okhra' / Qatar, France / Arabic, French

Genre: Drama

Interests: Identity, Social Issues, Women's Issues

Determined to secure her status as a wife, Salima enlists a secondary spouse for her husband – only to find she has jeopardised her position.



Despite clinging fiercely to her status as wife and mother, Salima does not want to go through another pregnancy and so sacrifice another 20 years of her life. When she observes her husband displaying the first signs of yearning for a child, Salima takes the situation into her own hands and determines that a secondary wife is the only solution. She dictates all the terms of the union and the agreed-upon childbearer's upcoming move into their home, ensuring total control over the new pairing... or so she thinks. Salima finds she must now put re-emerging emotions aside, all the while sharing her haven with the woman who will soon claim her status of main wife. Bereft of the identities she has amassed over the years, Salima realises she can no longer live under the umbrella of worn-out social principles, but instead must write her own future as a woman.

Meriem Mesraoua



Meriem Mesraoua was born in Doha and raised in France. She returned to Qatar while in high school, and earned a BSc with Honours in

Media Industries and Technologies from Northwestern University in Qatar. Mesraoua explored various facets of the film industry through internships with Miramax and NYWIFT, among others, and as a production trainee on Michael Winterbottom's award-winning film 'Trishna' in 2011. She received a Qatari Film Fund grant from the Doha Film Institute in 2015 for her short film 'Our Time Is Running Out,' with which she participated in the first edition of Qumra. Mesraoua is now developing her first feature-length project, 'The Other Wife,' which she developed during the 2016 Hezayah Screenwriting Lab in partnership with TorinoFilmLab.

François d'Artemare



François d'Artemare established the Portuguese film company Filmes do Tejo in 1996. Its current library of more than 70

films includes many debuts, among them those of Margarida Cardoso, Serge Trefaut, Ines de Medeiros and João Salaviza. In 2001, d'Artemare founded the Paris-based company Les Films de l'Après-Midi, which has produced films from all over the world, including Aida Begić's 'Snow' (2008) and 'Children of Sarajevo' (2012); Flora Gomes's 'The Children's Republic' (2012); Zeze Gamboa's 'The Hero' (2005) and Manoel de Oliveira's 'Christopher Columbus: The Enigma' (2007), 'Eccentricities of a Blonde-Haired Girl' (2009) and 'The Strange Case of Angelica' (2010). D'Artemare currently has four features films in post-production: Balint Kenyeres's 'Hier', João Canijo's 'Fatima', Pelin Esmer's 'Something Useful' and João Viana's 'Our Madness', as well as numerous projects in development.

Director's Note

The premise of 'The Other Wife' is unfortunately not uncommon throughout the Arab world – a woman who will bend over backwards in order to please society, her family or her husband, all in accordance with outdated traditional principles, or from the fear of being seen as an outsider. With this film, I seek to comprehend the reasons that would drive a woman to such extremes – ready to push aside her emotional health, base her contentedness on the happiness of others, and over time cultivate unfounded, pathological fears. 'The Other Wife' is not a criticism of polygamy nor of men; rather, it is an exploration of a woman's impulsive decision to subjugate herself to other people and to intangible principles. In doing so, this same woman concludes that beyond fabricated fears lies great strength.

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

Looking For:

- Co-producers
- Funding
- Sales agents

Development / Feature Narrative

The Return

Director / Screenwriter

Meyar Al-Roumi

Producer

Xavier Rocher

'Al Aoudeh' / Syria, France, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: Drama, Road Trip

A journey across Syria during which Taysir and Juliette meet and go to bury Kamal, who died during the fighting.

Company Profile

La Fabrica Nocturna Productions was created by producers Marina Perales Marhuenda and Xavier Rocher in 2010. The company aims to produce feature films and documentaries that are a high-quality, innovative proposal for cinema, and that open up frontiers for creation from all around the world.

Contact

Xavier Rocher

La Fabrica Nocturna Productions

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A man and a woman cross Syria at war. Forty-year-old Taysir, a Syrian, an exile in France, but despite the risks has returned to his homeland to return the body of his elder brother Kamal, who died during the fighting ravaging the country, to the village of his ancestors in the north of the country. Juliette, Taysir's French passenger, wants to return to France. These two do not know each other, but must nevertheless travel together. During the journey, they learn that Kamal had joined the jihadi camp, a betrayal that leads Taysir to question his mission. There is no turning back, however. In spite of the threats they face, Taysir and Juliette come to know each other during the trip. At their journey's end, they bury Kamal's remains on Mesopotamian land. A new lease on life.

Meyar Al-Roumi



Born in Damascus in 1973, Meyar Al-Roumi worked as a photographer before studying cinema in Paris at the Université

Paris VIII and La Fémis, from which he graduated in 2001. He worked as a director of photography on several documentary and fiction films in France and in Syria including Omar Amiralay's 'Flood in Baath Country' (2003) and Mohammad Al-Roumi's 'Blue-Grey' (2004), and directed several documentaries, including 'A Silent Cinema' (2001) and 'Waiting for the Day' (2003). Al-Roumi has also directed short fiction films, including 'The Voyage of Rabeya' (2005) and 'Journey' (2011). He completed his first feature-length fiction film, 'Round Trip', in 2012.

Xavier Rocher



Before creating La Fabrica Nocturna, Xavier Rocher was CFO of the production company Les Films du Poisson in Paris, and worked on

award-winning films including Mathieu Amalric's 'On Tour' and Julie Bertuccelli's 'The Tree'. He graduated from the EMLYON Business School in Lyon, and studied Producing at La Fémis and the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg. Over the last few years, he has produced more than 10 short and feature-length films, including Fernando Perez's 'Tata Cedron' (2012) and Matthieu Taponier's 'Rites' (2012), and released films including Shahrbanoo Sadat's 'Wolf and Sheep' (2016), which won the Art Cinema Award in the Director's Fortnight at the Festival de Cannes, and Francisco Hervé's 'The Lost City' (2016), which premiered at Visions du Réel. Currently, he is developing feature films including Nicolás Lasnibat's 'Roberto Bolaño or The Invented Biography', Marcelo Martinessi's 'The Heiresses' and Meyar Al-Roumi's 'The Return'.

Director's Note

The ongoing disaster suffered by Syria, my homeland, is behind the development of this project. In recent years, I have helplessly watched as a stolen revolution – a revolution I had longed for – turned into a civil war of staggering violence. As a result, life has not had the same meaning: neither for me nor for my friends, those close to me, my family. I saw the script for 'The Return' in this way: the story of the burial of Kamal's body was an opportunity to discuss the human impact of this chaos, which has become extremely complex.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$1,898,374

Secured Financing: \$200,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Région Nouvelle Aquitaine, France

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- Distributors
- Funding
- Legal advice

Development / Feature Narrative

Solo

Director / Screenwriter

Mehdi Hmili

Producer

Moufida Fedhila

Tunisia, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: Drama

Interests: Family, Social Issues

Amel is released from prison after an affair. In the lower depths of Tunis, she seeks her missing son, Moumen.



Company Profile

Yol Film House is a Tunisian film production company that develops, produces and co-produces short and feature-length films. Our vision is to tell original and moving stories that provide a refreshing challenge for an international audience. The company plays an active role in supporting emerging Tunisian and international talents, and the projects we develop have strong potential for international co-production and distribution.

Contact

Moufida Fedhila
Yol Film House
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Amel works in a factory in Tunis. She lives with her alcoholic husband Tahar, a former local football star, and their only son Moumen, a talented teenage football player. To convince the boss of the factory to provide her with connections for her son, Amel betrays her fellow workers, who have been organising a strike. Amel meets the connection: Adel, a corrupt, wealthy businessman of ex-president Ben Ali's era, who takes advantage of the situation and abuses Amel. She surrenders to his advances in order to offer her son the opportunity of a lifetime. When the police catch them, the scandal goes viral, and Amel is imprisoned, accused of adultery and prostitution. After her release, she searches for Moumen in the lower depths of Tunis. During her journey, Amel has to face the fall of Tunisian society.

Mehdi Hmili



Mehdi Hmili was born in Tunis and graduated from the Paris Film School. While in France, he directed his trilogy in black-and-white about love and exile: 'X-Moment' (2009), 'Li-La' (2011) and 'The Night of Badr' (2012). His first feature-length film, 'Thala mon amour' (2015), a drama that takes place in the city of Thala during the Tunisian Revolution, was part of the official selection of the Carthage, Rome and Torino Film Festivals. Hmili is also a popular poet in Tunisia, known for his poems against the regime of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. A former football player, Hmili recounts his own story in 'Solo', his second feature-length film currently in development.

Moufida Fedhila



Moufida Fedhila is a producer, director and visual artist. Her work has been shown in numerous solo and collective exhibitions around the world. Her works are part of several private and public collections. Combining her strengths in artistic direction and producing, she co-founded Yol Film House with several independent filmmakers and has produced and co-produced several documentary and narrative films with partners in Canada, France, Qatar and Tunisia. She has sat on the juries of film festivals in Europe and in the Maghreb, among them the Francophone Trophies for Cinema. Currently, Fedhila is developing Mehdi Hmili's second full-length film, 'Solo', a family drama that will be shot in Tunisia. She lives and works between Paris and Tunis.

Director's Note

'Solo' is the entanglement of three themes that have always haunted me: family, guilt and redemption. Through these themes I seek to depict and translate the complexity of family existence in a minimalistic way. This story of a fallen family is a way to throw the spectator into the inner life of the Tunisian man of today in this society that is in freefall. 'Solo' is an uncompromising portrait of a society that is unable to get rid of the demons of its past. The context of this Tunisian post-revolutionary society shows how corruption, violence, obscurantism and criminality have taken possession of the mind of the individual. The film is also a way for me to go back to my past as a football player in Tunis, and to film three worlds that I went through furiously and noisily: family, football and the street.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$640,000

Secured Financing: \$100,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Yol Film House, Tunisia

Looking For:

- Co-producers
- Funding
- Sales agents

You Will Die at Twenty

Director
Amjad Abu Alala
Screenwriter
Yousif Ibrahim
Producer
Hossam Elouan

'Satmoot Fel Eshreen' / Sudan, Egypt, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: Adaptation, Drama

Interests: Coming of age, Youth

In a world where extremism rules, a young man has to choose between life and death.

Company Profile

Transit Films is an independent, Cairo-based production company established by producer Hossam Elouan. The company specialises in producing Egyptian and Arab art-house films that have the potential to break into the international film market. Transit Films focuses on fresh talents who can become a source of innovation for both Egyptian and Arab cinema. Among the company's recent productions are Sherif Elbendary's 'Ali, the Goat and Ibrahim', which was selected for the 2016 Dubai International Film Festival, and Hala Elkoussy's 'Cactus Flower', which appeared in the Bright Future Competition at the 2017 Rotterdam International Film Festival.

Contact

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In a Sudanese village, a mother gives birth to Muzamel, a boy cursed by a Dervish prophecy that he will die at the age of 20. Muzamel grows up surrounded by looks of sympathy that make him feel dead before his time, until Suliman, a cinematographer who has worked in the city, returns to the village. Suliman's old cinema projector opens a window onto a whole new world for Muzamel. His personality starts to change with Suliman's presence, and slowly he comes to doubt the truth of the prophecy. His mother desperately attempts to prevent the prophecy from coming to pass. After many defeats, including losing his father, Muzamel begins to dig his own grave. When the day of his 20th birthday arrives, he is torn by doubt and left with the choice between death and a bus to the world he is eager to know about.

Amjad Abu Alala



Amjad Abu Alala is a Sudanese filmmaker who was born and raised in the UAE. He studied media at United Arab Emirates University. As a producer and director, Abu Alala has made numerous short films that have been shown at film festivals, including 'Tina' (2009), 'Coffee and Orange' (2004), and 'Feathers of the Birds' (2005), which is considered to mark the return of cinema in Sudan. His 'Studio' (2012) was supervised during a workshop conducted by Abbas Kiarostami. In 2013, Abu Alala won the Best Arabic Theatre Script Award from the Arab Authority for 'Apple Pies'. Currently, Abu Alala is Head of the Programming Committee of the Sudan Independent Film Festival.

Hossam Elouan



In 2008, Hossam Elouan received his MA in Cinema Studies from San Francisco State University. He received a post-graduate diploma in International Co-production from EAVE in 2011, and trained in post-production at the EP2C Workshop in 2012. Elouan founded Transit Films in 2013 to produce Arab films that represent new Arab realities, and promote Arab presence in international film culture. His interests include issues of representation and misconceptions of otherness in global societies.

Director's Note

After 14 years of making short films, I felt puzzled about how to choose my first feature film. I wanted to tackle one of Sudan's cinematically undiscovered stories, but I hesitated due to their sheer number and diversity until I read 'Sleeping Under the Mountain's Feet' by Arab Booker Award nominee Hammour Ziada. Despite its simplicity, Ziada's short story depicts a lot of grief and pain for those communities who are drowning in ignorance and belief in imposters and their superstitions. 'You Will Die at Twenty' might appear to be a melancholy film about death, superstitions, ignorance and poverty, yet it is not. When we dive into the absurdity of the story, we might see the comedy hidden beneath the darkness that has been imposed upon the protagonist and the other characters. The film is inspired by folk drama along with fantasy and a rich visual language.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$625,819

Secured Financing: \$100,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Etisal Fund, Egypt

Looking For:

- Co-producers
- Film funds
- Sales agents

Development / Feature Narrative

Zanka Contact

Director / Screenwriter

Ismaël El Iraki

Producer

Saïd Hamich

Morocco, France, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: Underground

Interests: Music, Social Issues, Women's Issues

Casablanca. The romantic idyll and eventful odyssey of a has-been rocker and a singer with a golden voice. Their love will turn underground and dangerous Morocco upside-down.



Company Profile

Barney Production is an independent company created in 2010 by Saïd Hamich. In 2012, the company received the Jean-Luc Lagardère Foundation Grant for Film Producers. With the ambition of developing auteur cinema, Barney Production has already produced 14 short films, and also co-produced Nabil Ayouch's 'Much Loved' (2014), Faouzi Bensaïdi's 'Volubilis' (coming 2017) and Walid Mattar's 'Northern Wind' (coming 2017). The company is currently working on four short films and developing several feature-length films.

Contact

Saïd Hamich
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Casablanca. Larsen, a self-destructive has-been rocker, meets Rajae, a singer with a golden voice and a bad temper. They're both running away: he from the heroin monkey on his back, she from life on the streets. Through their common passion for music, they fall madly in love. Rajae confides in Larsen, and he writes a rock anthem that tells her party-girl life better than she ever could. Their adventure rumbles and tumbles in this little-known, underground and dangerous Morocco, filled with music-buff pimps, torturer cops and pit-bull-raising ladies of the night. When Rajae breaks free by fighting back against her most cruel and powerful client, the lovers flee south, towards redemption. But they are being followed and their freedom spree might end in a bloody mess... Can their romance survive it?

Ismaël El Iraki



Ismaël El Iraki was born in Morocco in 1983 and emigrated to France in 2001. After studying Philosophy and Cinema at the Sorbonne, he joined the Directing Department of La Fémis in 2004. All of his short films concern Morocco and are linked to the Nayda artistic movement in Casablanca. El Iraki's two latest shorts were both noted successes: 'Carcasse' (2007) won the Short Film Corner Prize at the Festival de Cannes, and 'H'rash' (2009) won a Special Mention at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival. Today, El Iraki is developing two feature-length films, including 'Zanka Contact'.

Saïd Hamich



Saïd Hamich was born in 1986 in Fez, Morocco. After growing up in France, he graduated from the production department of La Fémis in Paris. In 2010, he founded the Barney Production society, which is aimed at producing demanding and popular art-house films by French and international directors. In 2012, he won the Film Producer grant from the Lagardère Foundation. He has produced 14 short films and was line producer on Boris Lojkine's 'Hope' and Clément Cogitore's 'Whakan Front'. He produced Nabil Ayouch's 'Much Loved', Faouzi Bensaïdi's 'Volubilis' and Walid Mattar's 'Northern Wind', and is currently working on several short and feature-length films.

Director's Note

Ever-changing, farcical and sometimes revolting, Casablanca is a formidable playground for a filmmaker. In an old country tempted by traditionalism, the city is like a rebellious teenage girl at the age when everything still seems possible. Like a teen, it is violent, contradictory, ugly and beautiful at the same time. The city of the richest and the poorest; the cradle of radical Islam and the birthplace of anti-establishment movements; home of subversive rock and traditional chaabi; such is Casablanca in 'Zanka Contact'. If it seems to move from realism to genre, if it feels like a roller-coaster between fun and drama it is because that mixture of tones is my most honest way of portraying the city as I see and love it. My Casablanca is a land of fiction, a collective hallucination of sorts; a raw cocktail of dream and reality.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$1,804, 434

Secured Financing: \$459,933

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- CNC, France
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Mont Fleuri Productions, Morocco

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- Co-producers
- Funding
- Legal advice

Qumra Projects

Development / Feature Documentary

'My Friend Gadgadhi' by Rafik Omrani

'Republic of Silence' by Diana El Jeiroudi



Development / Feature Documentary

My Friend Gadhgadhi

Director / Producer
Rafik Omrani

Company Profile

Majez Films is a Tunisian film production company that produces and supports films that are actively engaged in society. Majez passionately supports creative projects with original aesthetics and innovative form.

Contact

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'Sadiki Al Gadhgadhi' / Tunisia, Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: Animation, Creative Documentary, Docufiction

Interests: Politics, Social Issues

Kamel Gadhgadhi, the most infamous terrorist in Tunisia during the years 2013 and 2014, turns out to have been a close friend of the director at college. The latter begins to reflect on terrorism.



A few days after the assassination of left-wing Tunisian militant Chokri Belaïd in early 2013, the Tunisian media started to talk about a prime suspect: a certain Kamel Gadhgadhi. Two weeks later, director Rafik Omrani stumbles upon a picture of the alleged killer. To Omrani's great surprise, Gadhgadhi is a friend from his university days. A kind of patchwork emerges, one that defines a more finely textured image of Gadhgadhi... Tuesday, 4 February, 2014: The Tunisian Minister of the Interior announces that Gadhgadhi was killed during security operations.

Rafik Omrani



Rafik Omrani is a director and film editor who resides in Tunisia. He began his career with marketing and communication oriented scholarship, then accumulated experience in fiction, documentary and short animation filmmaking in parallel with his work as financial director. In 2011, he decided to devote himself entirely to cinema. 'Fallega 2011' (2011), his first medium-length documentary film, was shown at numerous international festivals, demonstrations and art institutions around the world, and won five awards including the First Work Award from the the Tetouan International Mediterranean Film Festival and the Osman Sanban Award from the Festival of African Cinema in Marseille. 'White Doves', his first feature-length documentary, was produced in 2016. Omrani has produced a number of documentaries for television and for the benefit of many Tunisian and international organisations. In 2012, he was elected a member of the executive board of the Association of Tunisian Filmmakers.

Director's Note

Tunisia's most infamous terrorist was my friend 15 years ago. Should I be discreet? Should I remain unconcerned? Chokri Belaïd, assassinated by my one-time friend, was an activist, a lawyer and a human rights defender, who frequently pleaded in trials during Ben Ali's regime. Belaïd was a charismatic man and a remarkable leader, but especially a poet and a great intellectual. His murderer is someone I know, a man the same age as me. There is an awkwardness that I can't define: the awkwardness of being the friend of the killer of my idol. It is proven that it doesn't only happen to others! This film is research work into the phenomenon of religious extremism and the creeping radicalisation of Tunisian youth. It's not a bio-pic of a terrorist. Based on a personal story, this is a film about the damaging effects of religious extremism on the minds of our young people.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$494,759

Secured Financing: \$67,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- Co-producers
- Funding

Republic of Silence

Director

Diana El Jeiroudi

Producer

**Orwa Nyrabia, Diana El Jeiroudi,
Camille Laemlé**

Company Profile

No Nation Films is a film production company that specialises in creative documentary films for the international market, founded in Berlin in 2014 by Orwa Nyrabia and Diana El Jeiroudi, to continue their previous work as Proaction Film, in Syria and Egypt. Over the years, the company has co-produced films with partners from Canada, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany and Yemen. Its award-winning documentaries have addressed a variety of topics, including women's rights, cultural identity, radicalisation and life in the midst of war. No Nation Films productions have been released theatrically in France, Italy, Austria, Japan, Portugal, Spain and the UK, and have been selected for more than 150 film festivals around the world, including Busan, Cannes, IDFA, Locarno, London, New York, Sundance and TIFF, among others. Its films have been broadcast worldwide on numerous television networks, as well as on premium VOD platforms. No Nation Films productions have won a considerable number of awards, including a Grierson Award and a Sundance Grand Jury Prize.

Contact

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Syria, Germany, France, Qatar / Arabic, English

Genre: Biography, Creative Documentary

Interests: Conflict, Filmmaking, Human Rights, Politics, Social Issues

She grew up in a land of dictators and surveillance. Today, from her exile, she is reclaiming the images and sounds of Syrians, half of whom are scattered around the world.



She grew up in the lands of dictators and surveillance, where images are censored, photos are burned, thoughts are discreet, and mouths are kept shut. Forty years later, from her exile in Germany, Diana El Jeiroudi is a documentary filmmaker reclaiming the images and sounds of the Syrian land and its people, half of whom are scattered around the world. In this emotionally charged carefully crafted film, El Jeiroudi presents a first-person account of how she ended up in Berlin, how she grew up to internalise a world of silence and oppression, how she learned to negotiate her existence and well-being in the face of a mutating enemy, how she bore witness and became involved, how she revolted and claimed herself – and how cinema has saved her life.

Diana El Jeiroudi



Diana El Jeiroudi is a Syrian director and producer who has resided in Berlin since 2013. In 2002, she co-founded Proaction

Film, the first independent production company in Syria after the Damascus Spring. Her filmography includes 'The Pot' (2005), which was selected for the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, and 'Dolls, A Woman from Damascus' (2007) and 'Morning Fears, Night Chants (2012), both of which screened at the International Documentary Festival Amsterdam. In 2008, she co-founded the DOX BOX Film Festival, followed by the DOX BOX Association in Berlin. El Jeiroudi's work has been recognised through various awards, including an EDN Award and a Katrin Cartlidge Award. She has served as a juror for several film festivals and funds, including Sundance, the International Documentary Festival Amsterdam and One World, and she sat on the jury of L'Oeil d'Or, the first documentary award at the Festival de Cannes, in 2015. She is a member of the Deutsche Filmakademie.

Orwa Nyrabia



Berlin-based Syrian producer Orwa Nyrabia studied acting in Damascus, and has worked as a journalist and actor. He played the

main role in Yousry Nasrallah's 'La Porte du soleil' (2004), which was selected for the Festival de Cannes before moving into documentary filmmaking. He co-founded Proaction Film in Damascus in 2002, and produced the films of Diana El Jeiroudi; together, they produced Wiam Bedirxan and Ossama Mohammed's 'Silvered Water, Syria Self-Portrait' (2014), which was selected for Cannes, and Talal Derki's 'Return to Homs' (2013), which screened at the International Documentary Festival Amsterdam. Nyrabia has served on the juries of several film funds and festivals, and works as an advisor and tutor for documentary projects around the world. He is a member of the Deutsche Filmakademie, EDN and IDA.

Director's Note

Throughout my life, I have enjoyed playing around with people's obsessions with stereotyping each other according to religion, ethnicity, gender, nationality or language. Because people are rarely able to locate me within a religion or ethnicity, I have had a safe space in which to breathe and exist, but still remain unnoticed. Unlike the majority of people around the world, I enjoyed staying unidentified: I was anonymous. Today, I am a Syrian – and that is all I am for everyone, Syrians and non-Syrians alike. The sense of rage I feel today is immense, for, once again, I must negotiate a space where I can exist and breathe – a necessity that means struggling against the stereotypes created by everyone around me. It is my individual responsibility today to show that Syria is not a YouTube video, nor is it a newsflash; it is neither the cradle of civilisation, nor a flag, nor a symbol of radicalism, war or liberation.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$500,000

Secured Financing: \$300,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- BKM, Germany
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- FFA, Germany
- Les Films d'Ici, France
- Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Germany
- No Nation Films, Germany
- Proaction Film, Syria

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- Co-producers
- Funding

Qumra Projects

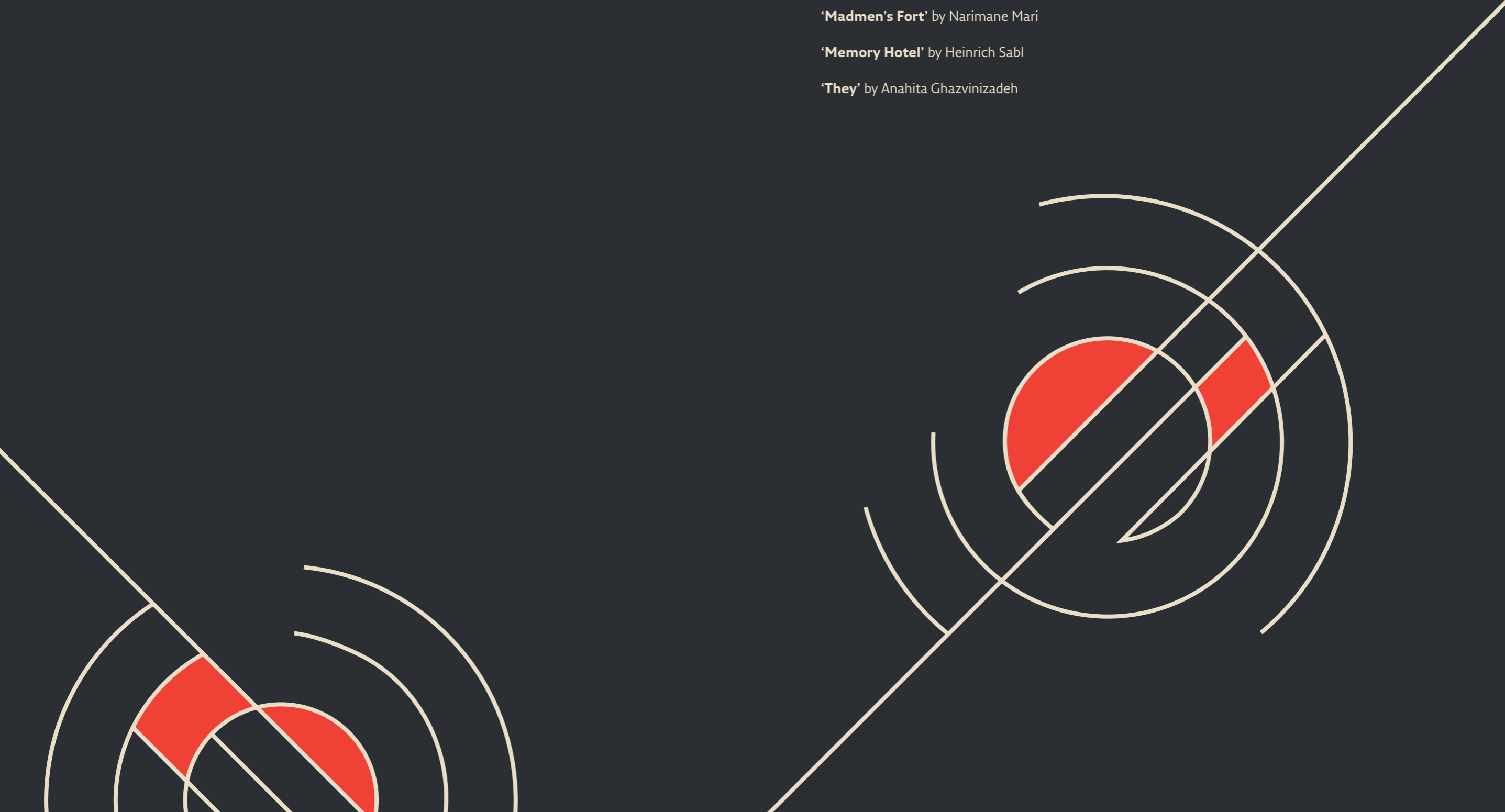
Works-in-Progress / Feature Narrative

'Land' by Babak Jalali

'Madmen's Fort' by Narimane Mari

'Memory Hotel' by Heinrich Sabl

'They' by Anahita Ghazvinizadeh



Work-in-Progress / Feature Narrative

Land

Director / Screenwriter

Babak Jalali

Producer

**Ginevra Elkann,
Christophe Audeguis,
Arnold Heslenfeld,
Julio Chavezmontes**

UK, Italy, France, The Netherlands, Mexico, Qatar / English / 2017 / 100 mins

Genre: Drama

Interests: Politics, Social Issues

'Land' is a story about Native Americans, white people, distance, longing and abuse, set in the American plains.



Company Profile

Established in 2010 by Ginevra Elkann, Asmara Films is a production company whose main goal is to foster the projects of young auteurs coming from all around the world. Our prerogative is to work hand-in-hand with filmmakers and artists, connecting cinema with the arts and all domains of contemporary culture. Among Asmara's productions are Leonardo Brzezicki's 'Noche', which was selected for the International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2013, Noaz Deshe's 'White Shadow', which took the Lion of the Future award at the Venice Film Festival in 2013, and Lamberto Sanfelice's 'Chlorine', which played at the Sundance Film Festival in 2015.

Contact

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The Denetclaws are a Native American family who live on the Prairie Wolf Indian Reservation. News reaches them that Floyd, the youngest son, has died during military service in Afghanistan. The waiting begins to return his body to the reservation to be buried. Wesley, the youngest surviving son, is an alcoholic. His brother's death doesn't really hit him, as his only aim during the day is to get hold of some beer. Wesley is in daily contact with the white population who run the liquor stores right outside the reservation. This already uneasy relationship becomes unpleasant when acts of violence break out and Wesley is directly affected. The eldest son, Raymond, is a recovering alcoholic with a wife and two sons. Although he feels a sense of responsibility for his extended family, he seems to feel too emasculated to do anything about the situation they are in, until the troubles that have affected his two brothers force him to stand up and be a man again.

Babak Jalali



Babak Jalali was born in Iran in 1978, and moved to London at a young age. His graduation film, 'Heydar: An Afghan in Tehran' (2005), was nominated for the BAFTA for Best Short Film. In 2009, he made his debut feature-length film, 'Frontier Blues', with the support of the Festival de Cannes Cinéfondation Residency. It had its premiere in the Official Competition at the Festival del Film Locarno, and won the FIPRESCI Prize for Best Film at the San Francisco International Film Festival. His second feature, 'Radio Dreams' (2016), won the Hivos Tiger Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam.

Ginevra Elkann



Ginevra Elkann studied Visual Communications at the American University of Paris and Filmmaking at the London Film School. She was Assistant Director on Bernardo Bertolucci's 'L'assedio' (1998) and a video assistant on Anthony Minghella's 'The Talented Mr. Ripley' (1999). She is the president of the Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, which was founded in Torino in 2002 through a donation of the collection of her grandparents, Gianni and Marella Agnelli. In 2009, she co-produced Babak Jalali's 'Frontier Blues', and in 2010, she founded the production company Asmara Films. Elkann is a founding partner of Good Films, an Italian film distribution company that has been active since 2011.

Director's Note

I have always been interested in marginalised and forgotten communities and their relationships to their more dominant neighbours. Various Native American tribes, who live on reservation land in the United States, are examples of such people, and the relationship between the tribes and the white people who live nearby play a significant role in this film. I have been interested in the history of Native Americans for a long time, and have in recent years become curious about the living conditions on the reservations. I wondered about my legitimacy as an Iranian writing a story about a people with whom I have no personal connection, but with every new draft of 'Land' I feel more at ease. I am determined to do this, and I hope I do justice to the people I portray.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$2,085,000

Secured Financing: \$1,600,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- BAC Films, France
- CNC, France
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Eurimages, EU
- Media Programme, EU
- MiBAC-DGC, Italy
- Netherlands Film Fund
- Rai Cinema, Italy
- To Be Continued, France
- TorinoFilmLab, Italy

Looking For:

- Completion funds
- Distributors
- Festivals

Work-in-Progress / Feature Narrative

Madmen's Fort

Director / Screenwriter

Narimane Mari

Producer

Narimane Mari, Fenia Cossovitsa

Associate Producer

Olivier Boischot

'Le Fort des fous' / Algeria, France, Greece, Germany, Switzerland, Qatar / Amazigh, Arabic, English, French / 2017 / 150 mins

Genre: Drama

Interests: History, Politics

Desires and greed lurk like raptors, preparing to transform a utopian dream into a tragedy.

Company Profile

Centrale Electrique is committed to producing creative cinematic works about society. Its editorial line is based on projects by directors and artists who take part in their contemporary history by means of cinema and visual arts.

Contact

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In 1860, the Algerian Sahara is coveted by the colonial powers of the time, who dream of it as a rich land full of promise. Expeditions and ambitions of conquest, however, have all been destroyed by this uncharted and mysterious terrain. Nevertheless, there are men who rise above turf wars, and who believe in the power of this mystical land to establish a society that is out of the ordinary. But greedy people circle like vultures, and are turning this utopian dream into a tragedy.

Narimane Mari



Born in Algiers, Narimane Mari began her career in Paris, where she co-founded two communications agencies and created cultural content for print and television media. She has contributed to developing art galleries and initiated a collection of photography books. In 2001, she produced her first film, 'L'Arpenteur', which won the Jean Vigo Award. In 2010, she founded Allers Retours Films in Algeria. In 2013, she directed her first feature-length film, 'Bloody Beans', an internationally multi-award-winning work. The following year, she produced Hassen Ferhani's 'Roundabout in My Head', which won five Grands Prix, and in 2016 she produced Djamel Kerkar's documentary 'Atlat', which took first prize at FIDMarseille.

Fenia Cossovitsa, Olivier Boischot



Fenia Cossovitsa is an acclaimed film producer with many years of experience in development, shooting and post-production, with a background of more than 30 Greek and international feature films and documentaries in her resumé. She has worked with such internationally acclaimed filmmakers as Peter Bogdanovich and Jonathan Nossiter. Her productions have won awards including Best Film of the Year ('J.A.C.E'), Best Documentary ('I Put a Spell on You'), the FIPRESCI Prize at the Thessaloniki International Film Festival ('Blind Sun'), Best Screenplay in the Un Certain Regard section of the Festival de Cannes ('Voir du pays') and audience awards at Thessaloniki ('I Still Hide to Smoke' and 'The Other Me').



Olivier Boischot began his professional career in the sound production for theatre, and worked for 10 years with Daniel Mesguich. In 1984, he co-founded Carolus, a post-production company.

He created Banc Public in 1992, and surrounded himself with different teams to design, build, produce and post-produce films. He is a co-founder of Central Electrique.

Director's Note

How to tangle the false with the true and bring to the fore the real power of the imagination? Like images of nightmares or daydreams, our outdated or necessary beliefs, inaccurate memories and superstitions that continue to scare or surprise us and not forgetting History, which is no longer very clear. This story carries these phenomena: past and present without distinction, exactly as our inner self functions if everything decides to work all at once. The film's structure in five acts tolerates very well the density and potential of the subject, giving control since it is built as a series of episodes that follow one another. The work at hand is that of orchestrating it through specific formal choices.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$555,000

Secured Financing: \$354,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Allers Retours Films, Algeria
- Blonde, Greece
- Centrale Electrique, France
- CNC, France
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

- Festival del Film Locarno, Switzerland
- Joon Film, Germany
- Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Germany
- SDC/DDC Switzerland
- visions sud est, Switzerland
- World Cinema Fund, Germany
- Xenia Film, France

Looking For:

- Distributors
- Post-production partners
- Sales agents

Work-in-Progress / Feature Narrative

Memory Hotel

Director / Screenwriter

Heinrich Sabl

Producer

Philippe Bober, Heinrich Sabl

Company Profile

Founded in 1987 by French producer Philippe Bober, Coproduction Office produces and sells bold and award-winning films by directors with strong personal vision, maintaining long-lasting working relationships with groundbreaking European directors Roy Andersson, Thomas Clay, Michelangelo Frammartino, Jessica Hausner, Ruben Östlund and Ulrich Seidl. Coproduction Office's international sales company is one of Europe's best sales entities, differentiating itself through both its outstanding catalogue of carefully chosen gems and the broad exploitation of its films. In the field of film production, Coproduction Office is home to three companies – Essential (Berlin), Parisienne (Paris) and Coproduction Office (Copenhagen) – with which Philippe Bober has worked as a producer on 30 films. Sixteen of these have been selected for competition at the Festival de Cannes, the Venice Film Festival and the Berlin International Film Festival, and seven appeared in the Un Certain Regard section at Cannes.

Contact

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Germany, France, Qatar / German / 2018 / 95 mins

Genre: Animation, Drama

Interests: History

In a Red Army hotel in post-World War II Germany, the orphan Sophie grows up. She marries a paratrooper before escaping with another man. An emotional journey through European history.



Germany, 1945. World War II is nearing its climactic end. Five-year-old Sophie and her parents are refugees fleeing from the advancing Red Army. They hide in a hotel, where they encounter Nazi officer Scharf and Hitler Youth member Beckmann. As the Russians come closer, Sophie falls into a lift and is knocked unconscious. Meanwhile, Scharf accidentally kills Sophie's mother and Wassily, a paratrooper, kills her father. Time passes and teenage Sophie works for Soviet soldiers as a kitchen maid in the hotel. Food sometimes disappears, but Sophie finds the culprit: Beckmann, who has been hiding in a corridor beneath the hotel since the war ended. As an adult, Sophie reluctantly marries Wassily and develops a relationship with Beckmann. Decades go by; the Russians leave and Scharf takes over the hotel. Sophie convinces Beckmann to leave, and the pair head for the North Sea, turning their backs on the hotel and its memories.

Heinrich Sabl



Heinrich Sabl grew up in the former East Germany in the 1960s, in a small industrial town close to the Polish border, where he escaped the strictures of the world by immersing himself in the world of theatre. He settled in East Berlin during the mid-80s and started directing animated short films, which were screened in key film festivals including the Annecy International Animated Film Festival, the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival and in competition at the Berlin International Film Festival, winning several significant film and animation awards. Most of his films have been broadcast on German television and on ARTE. Currently, Sabl is considered one of the best stop-motion animation directors.

Philippe Bober



Philippe Bober, founder of Coproduction Office, has a reputation for discovering and nurturing new talent. He was involved in the early films of Lars von Trier, Lou Ye, Carlos Reygadas and Kornél Mundruczo. Bober currently works with Roy Andersson, and has worked with Michelangelo Frammartino, Jessica Hausner, Mundruczo, Ruben Östlund and Ulrich Seidl since their feature-length film debuts.

Director's Note

November 1991, an anarchic time in East Germany. After a 46-year-long presence, the Red Army departs the country. I stroll through an abandoned Russian military airport near Berlin with my girlfriend. That walk was fascinating, but a few years were to pass before the enthusiasm I felt gelled into an idea. 'Memory Hotel' contains precise hints about its context – from the end of World War II until the time of German Reunification – yet in terms of space, the story is set in a hotel that could be any hotel anywhere in the world. The protagonist's main endeavour is to break out of the hotel into a new world that holds the promise of salvation. This story is rooted in a quite classical narrative structure. I have then put a lot of energy into bringing life to the "dead" material of the puppets, making them as credible as possible in order to hold the spectator spellbound until the final frame.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$ 2,139,546

Secured Financing: \$ 2,139,546

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Arte France
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Filmförderungs Anstalt, Germany
- Filmfund Hamburg, Germany
- Filmfund Hamburg-Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
- Kulturelle Filmförderung Mecklenburg Vorpommern, Germany
- Kulturelle Filmförderung Sachsen, Germany
- Kulturstiftung des Freistaats Sachsen, Germany
- Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Germany
- ZDF/Arte, Germany

Looking For:

- Distributors
- Post-production partners

Work-in-Progress / Feature Narrative

They

Director / Screenwriter

Anahita Ghazvinizadeh

Producer

Zoe Sua Cho, Simone Ling

Company Profile

Mass Ornament is a transnational film collaborative based in Chicago. Born out of collaborations by filmmakers Zoe Sua Cho, Yoni Goldstein and Anahita Ghazvinizadeh, the company is committed to developing and producing art-house cinema, documentaries, and moving-image works by emerging international filmmakers.

Contact

Zoe Sua Cho

Mass Ornament Films

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Iran, USA, Qatar / Persian, English / 2017 / 100 mins

Genre: Drama

Interests: Coming of age, Social Issues

Through the prism of J, a gender-expansive teenager going through puberty suppression, 'They' explores notions of in-between-ness, whether of gender, cultural identity, or the idea(s) of "home".



Fourteen-year-old J goes by the pronoun "They" and lives with their parents in the suburbs of Chicago. J is exploring their gender identity while taking hormone blockers to postpone puberty. After two years of medication and therapy, J has to make a decision whether or not to transition. Over this crucial weekend while their parents are away, J's sister Lauren and her maybe/maybe-not Iranian partner Araz arrive to take care of J. During this time together, J, Lauren and Araz form an intimate family unit. Each character is in a state of suspension, of being in-between, of not belonging. J voices what all three feel: a reluctance to change, a desire to remain in childhood where innocence is still possible even as it recedes into the distance.

Anahita Ghazvinizadeh



Anahita Ghazvinizadeh received her BFA in Film from the Tehran University of Art and her MFA in Studio Arts from the School of the

Art Institute of Chicago. Among other awards, she has won the Cinéfondation First Prize at the Festival de Cannes and the Silver Hugo from the Chicago International Film Festival. She was selected as one of the 25 New Faces of Independent Filmmaking by 'Filmmaker' magazine in 2013. She was a writing fellow at the Sundance Screenwriters' Lab in 2013, and is also the co-writer of the acclaimed feature film 'Mourning' (2011). In 2016, she made the short film 'What Remains' as part of a collective international project called Break the Silence, which aims to increase public knowledge and engagement against the abuse and exploitation of children. Currently, Ghazvinizadeh is working on her first feature-length film, 'They'. As part of her Cinéfondation award, the film is guaranteed to have its premiere at the Festival de Cannes.

Zoe Sua Cho



Currently based in Chicago, Zoe Sua Cho is a Korean-born, New Zealand-bred filmmaker and co-founder of Mass Ornament Films.

Committed to artistic collaborations that challenge traditional boundaries of cinema and modes of production, she has produced a number of films, including 'The Recorder Exam', named Best Short Film at the Woodstock Film Festival; 'Needle', winner of the Cinéfondation First Prize at the Festival de Cannes in 2013; and 'Wolkaan', which premiered at the 2015 Toronto International Film Festival. Recently, Cho edited, co-produced and shot Laura Stewart's feature-length documentary 'Drifting Towards the Crescent' (2017), which premiered at the International Film Festival Rotterdam. Cho received her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, is a recipient of the New Zealand Film Commission's Professional Development Award, and was selected as a 2016 Film Independent Project Involve Producing Fellow.

Director's Note

A child will become an adult. I realised once that this simple phrase is the core of my work. Rather than defining the states of childhood and adulthood, I reflect on the transition; the verb "to become" is the stimulus for my work. The transitional child or the becoming adult - with their strong intuition, amorphous sensibility and unconscious perceptions - is the character at the centre of fiction; indeed, they themselves are the fiction. I try to picture the moments that bring out the urge for self-determination: those situations that function as a delay in which the child grows out rather than up, to drive thinking about the possibilities of becoming for a child, and ponder the philosophical and ethical questions of what constitutes a person and what determines personhood.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$400,000

Secured Financing: \$350,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Digital Art, South Korea
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Grasswood Media, USA
- Leeden Media, USA

Looking For:

- Distributors
- Sales agents

Qumra Projects

Works-in-Progress / Feature Documentary

'**Agnus Dei**' by Karim Sayad

'**Dream Away**' by Marouan Omara, Johanna Domke

'**The Man Behind the Microphone**' by Claire Belhassine

'**Al Sahra**' by Saeed Al Batal, Ghiath Al Haddad

'**Stronger than a Bullet**' by Maryam Ebrahimi



Work-in-Progress / Feature Documentary

Agnus Dei

Director

Karim Sayad

Producer

Joëlle Bertossa

Algeria, Switzerland, Qatar / Arabic / 2017 / 80 mins

Genre: Creative Documentary

Interests: Politics, Youth

Algiers, 2016. On one of Bab el Oued's football fields, the tension is at its peak. Habib and his sheep El Bouq are getting ready for the fight...



Company Profile

Close Up Films is an independent production company based in Geneva. Not limited by genre, Close Up undertakes a wide range of fiction and documentary projects. Aspiring to reach a wide audience with projects that are demanding in both form and content, Close Up produces films from both young talents and established auteurs. Our films strive to question society and expand viewpoints on cinema and the world, and we choose to work on projects with international appeal, collaborating regularly with foreign partners.

Contact

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Close Up Films

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Bab el Oued, Algiers, 2016. Men and sheep. Sixteen-year-old Habib dreams of becoming a veterinarian. He has not yet been able to study for his hoped-for profession, but he has bought a sheep named El Bouq. His hope? Training the animal to become a fighting champion. Meanwhile, 42-year-old Samir no longer has any dreams, other than to make enough money by selling sheep that he can survive the hardships of daily life. With the Eid celebration coming closer, Samir has a unique opportunity to maximise his profits, as everyone in the country will be buying sheep for slaughter. But for Habib, it's another story... Will El Bouq become a champion? Or will he face a more tragic destiny?

Karim Sayad



Karim Sayad was born in Lausanne in 1984 to an Algerian father and a Swiss mother. After obtaining an MA in International

Relations from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies of Geneva, he decided to become a documentary filmmaker. 'Babor Casanova' (2015), his first film, was selected for numerous international film festivals, including the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival, and won awards from Doclisboa and the Festival dei Popoli in Florence.

Joëlle Bertossa



Joëlle Bertossa graduated from the film school INSAS in Brussels in 1999 and worked on several films as first director's assistant

before being hired by Nicolas Wadimoff at Akka Films in 2003, where she produced such films as his 'Aisheen, Still Alive in Gaza'. In 2012, Bertossa founded Geneva-based Close Up Films. Over the last five years, she has co-produced around 20 documentaries and six fiction films, among them 'Volta a Terra', a documentary directed by João Pedro Plácido, which premiered at Visions du Réel and was presented at ACID at the Festival de Cannes in 2015; as well as the Philippe Garrel feature 'The Shadow of Women', which opened the Director's Fortnight at Cannes. She recently co-produced Raoul Peck's 'I Am Not Your Negro', which was selected for the Toronto International Film Festival and nominated for a 2017 Academy Award.

Director's Note

'Agnus Dei' seeks to draw a parallel between the violence present in the relationship of the master to his animal and that in the relationship of society to individuals. The aim of the film is neither an apology for violence against animals nor an attempt to justify it; rather, it wishes to ask what these mistreatments might tell us of the challenges faced by the youth of Algeria in a country that offers them little hope. The intention is not to judge the violence, but instead to focus on how these men's exploitation of animals is an outlet for their frustrations. The human violence visited on the animals is seen as an unconscious reflection of the violence undergone by citizens in the current political system.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$470,000

Secured Financing: \$400,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Cinéforum, Switzerland
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Suissimage, Switzerland
- Swiss Federal Office of Culture

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- Distributors
- Sales agents

Work-in-Progress / Feature Documentary

Dream Away

Director

Marouan Omara, Johanna Domke

Producer

Roman Roitman, Mark Lotfy

Company Profile

Growing out of the film production company Filmbucht and the interactive design collective peira, **Monokel** was founded in 2015 as a unique enterprise for producing feature films, video games and transmedia projects. As producers and developers, we strive to create extraordinary narratives across different forms of media. We focus on international co-productions and on first films by German filmmakers, including feature-length narrative and documentary films as well as games. Our target is to tell stories that fuse relevance and depth with commercial success. Among Monokel's current projects are the short film 'The Parrot', which received the Film Prize of the Robert Bosch Stiftung in 2015; the feature-length documentary 'Dream Away', which is in post-production and has received international recognition at the Hot Docs Forum Pitch and the Berlinale Talents Doc Station Award. The video game 'Shadow of Steam' is currently in production and was selected for the IndieArena at Quo Vadis 2016 in Berlin. Monokel's current transmedia projects include Milo Rau's 'The Congo Tribunal' and Marc Wiese's 'Slaves', two feature-length documentaries.

Contact

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'Al Holm Al Ba'eed' / Egypt, Germany, Qatar / Arabic, English / 2017 / 85 mins

Genre: Creative Documentary

Interests: Identity, Immigration, Politics, Social Issues, Women's Issues, Youth

In Sharm El Sheikh, a tourist hub that has been the target of terror attacks in recent years, young Egyptian workers are trapped between a liberal Western lifestyle and their traditional culture.



Representing freedom and easy cash, Sharm El Sheikh has long been a dream destination for Egyptian youth. Recently, terror attacks have brought tourism in the resort town to a halt. 'Dream Away' follows a group of young employees of a luxury hotel compound, where clichés and stereotypes of Western and Oriental cultures clash. This carousel-like experience elevates the youths into a dreamlike state; in the shadow of the shimmering hotel facades, they lead double lives, their families unaware of the sinful temptations of the town. Still, they are torn in the face of the prevailing Western culture: for some the liberal values represent long-dreamt-of independence, while for others it is simply not enjoyable. While leaving is not an option – it is too difficult to jettison their liberal lifestyle and return to their traditional culture – they now lack both financial and personal opportunities, and find themselves on an existential quest for identity.

Marouan Omara, Johanna Domke



Marouan Omara is a documentary filmmaker from Egypt. He studied Applied Arts at Helwan University, and filmmaking at

the Academy of Cinema, Arts and Technology in Egypt. His works seek to express a dreamlike notion by exploring the overlap of fiction and reality. He currently teaches film and video at the German University in Cairo and is an adjunct professor in film production at the American University in Cairo.



Johanna Domke is a visual artist and filmmaker from Germany. She studied Fine Arts at the Royal

Danish Art Academy and the Malmö Art Academy, and attended the Postgraduate Programme in Film at the Media Art Academy in Cologne. She produces work that lies in the space where art and cinema meet, with a combined structural and socio-political approach. Her work has received considerable attention at exhibitions and film festivals around the world.

Roman Roitman



Roman Roitman is a film producer. In 2010 he graduated from Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow with a

diploma in Journalism. Since 2002, he has been involved in several theatre and film productions in the roles of director, author, dramaturge and assistant director. Roitman participated in the Producers Workshop at the Festival de Cannes and was selected for Simon Perry's International Producing programme at ifs/Cologne. In 2015, he co-founded Monokel, a production company supported by Mediengründerzentrum NRW. The same year, he won the Film Prize of the Robert Bosch Stiftung, was selected by the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW for the Rotterdam Lab at CineMart, and participated in EURODOC@NRW, EAVE@Cologne and ACE@Cologne.

Directors' Note

'Dream Away' focuses on a part of the world where young people have only recently started to question their limited choices in life. In the face of current political developments in the Middle East and their effects on the rest of the world, this film presents a micro-scale snapshot of encounters between young Arabs and Western culture. Sharm El Sheikh captures an extreme picture of this encounter, as the place is a caricature of both Arab and Western cultural customs. 'Dream Away' provides some insight, but at the same time demands accountability. Challenging the current political circumstances, the film stirs up questions leading into a global identity crisis.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$360,000

Secured Financing: \$360,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- Catapult Film Fund, USA
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, Germany
- Fruitmarket, Germany
- Hot Docs-Blue Ice Group Documentary Fund, Canada
- WDR, Germany

Looking For:

- Distributors
- Festivals
- Sales agents

Work-in-Progress / Feature Documentary

The Man Behind the Microphone

Director
Claire Belhassine
Producer
Mike Lerner

Tunisia, UK, Qatar / English, French, Arabic / 2017 / 86 mins

Genre: Creative Documentary

Interests: Culture, Family, History, Identity, Music, Tunisia

An amazing story of love and family, celebrity and music. A portrait of Hedi Jouini, the godfather of Tunisian music.

Company Profile

Roast Beef Productions began in 2005 and has had an incredible impact in just a few years, most recently with 'The Square' and 'Pussy Riot - A Punk Prayer'. Five Roast Beef films have been presented at Sundance, and have won six awards there, two Grierson Awards and the Prix Italia, along with two Oscar nominations. We understand how to make documentaries compelling, gripping and funny. We are not afraid of "big" subjects, but our films humanise and popularise them. Neither are we afraid of original approaches to filmmaking, working with animation, hybrid doc drama forms and new technologies. As a result our films have met with success, and we have burst onto the global documentary scene, attracting funding from co-producers and getting sales and distribution deals worldwide.

Contact

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Hedi Jouini is the most popular musical star in Tunisian history, known as the "Frank Sinatra of Tunisia". His songs continue to inspire revolutionaries and conservatives alike, striking at the heart of the post-colonial social and political upheaval of Tunisia and its continuing search for identity in the wake of the Arab Spring. But why did he keep his fame hidden from his family? What dark secrets did he keep from the nation that worshipped him? 'The Man Behind the Microphone' reveals the incredible story behind a man and his music, and offers fascinating insight into Tunisia's cultural evolution. The film builds a profound portrait of the godfather of Tunisian music - father to a nation yet not to his family.

Claire Belhassine



Claire Belhassine holds a BA in Drama and Film Arts from London University and a Master's degree in Filmmaking from the London Film School. She worked extensively in the British media as a writer and stylist for Condé Nast publications, 'Dazed and Confused' magazine and 'Entertainment News'. After completing her studies, she worked as a producer-director in the corporate world, with clients including Sony, MTV and Deutsche Bank. She was selected as part of the new writers development team on Channel 4's popular teen series 'Hollyoaks', and also worked as a script reader for Channel 4. 'The Man Behind the Microphone' is her first feature as a director.

Mike Lerner



Director and producer Mike Lerner has been making films since 1988, among them the Academy Award-nominated 'Hell and Back Again'. He produced or executive-produced 'Afghan Star', 'Smash & Grab - The Story of the Pink Panthers', 'The Square', 'The Do Gooders' and 'A Whole Lott More', and directed 'Pussy Riot: A Punk Prayer'. He has won a number of industry awards and accolades, including an Academy Award nomination for Best Documentary Feature 2012; six Sundance Awards (including Grand Jury, Special Jury, Best Director, Audience and Cinematography prizes); an Emmy Award for Best Documentary; two Grierson Awards for Best Documentary; the Prix Italia; two Royal Television Society Award nominations; two IDA Award nominations; a Cinema Eye Award; an Independent Spirit Award nomination; and a Gotham Independent Film Award nomination.

Director's Note

Two decades after my grandfather's death, by chance I overheard Hedi's music during one of life's random moments in a taxi - and this was the key to unlocking his compelling story. My inquiry pushes the question of Hedi's unique and unusual status. Why is he revered as the Godfather to his people? How is this reflected in his relationship to the state? The story will be firmly anchored to my literal and metaphysical journey as the narrator, a very personal story of a Tunisian family - essentially using family drama to offer insight into a changing Arab culture at key moments in modern Tunisian history, all along the way showcasing, for those not familiar with Arab pop music, some of Tunisia's best-loved classics.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$350,000

Secured Financing: \$315,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Kuwait National Cinema Company
- The Rambourg Foundation, Tunisia

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- Completion funds
- Distributors
- Sales agents

Work-in-Progress / Feature Documentary

Al Sahra

Director

Saeed Al Batal, Ghiath Al Haddad

Producer

Mohammad Ali Atassi

Syria, Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic / 2017 / 120 mins

Genre: Biography, Creative Documentary

Interests: Identity, Immigration, Politics, Road Trip, Social Issues, War, Youth

Two artists become entwined in the affairs of the besieged city of Gouta in this personal story about a group of young people in Syria.



Company Profile

Launched in early 2013, Bidayyat for Audiovisual Arts is a civil company that specialises in producing short and feature-length documentaries made by emerging Syrian filmmakers who wish to question and reflect on the reality they witness from their own distinct points of view. As a platform for exchange and education, Bidayyat seeks to contribute to the re-emergence of a documentary cinema in the Middle East that relates to and interacts with its societies. Bidayyat develops and produces its film projects through its own funding, as well as by acquiring regional funds and through international co-production.

Contact

Mohammad Ali Atassi

Bidayyat for Audiovisual Arts

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'Al Sahra' is a feature documentary that follows art students Saeed and Milad, who decide to leave Damascus and go to Douma, a suburb under rebel control. Over more than four years, the film depicts the two friends and their acquaintances as they go about their daily lives, capturing the transformation of the city of Douma and its people as they go through liberation, war, siege and hunger. More than 500 hours of footage was shot, and the men face grave questions about life and death, revolution and armed struggle, dreams and doubts, fear and love, and the use of art in a world facing destruction. Saeed and Milad try to launch a graffiti art project in Douma, but things in the besieged city take a turn for the worse after a chemical attack on eastern Gouta. After he loses one of his friends, Milad decides to revive the art project with the help of his friends by painting colourful graffiti on the grey, devastated walls of the city. Saeed and Milad finally get out of Douma and seek refuge in Beirut, where they face loss, exile and hope.

Saeed Al Batal, Ghiath Al Haddad



Saeed Al Batal was born in Tartous, Syria, in 1988, and is a citizen journalist, photographer and filmmaker. He is a founder of Humans of

Syria, the online gallery Sam Lenses, and many other projects. He has worked as a reporter for several radio stations, including NPR and Denmark Radio.



Ghiath Al Haddad was born in Syria in 1989 and graduated from the faculty of Fine Art at the University of Damascus in 2013. A videographer

and sound recordist with directing and producing experience in Syria and Lebanon, Al Haddad has worked with local and international NGOs, teaching visual communication and art therapy to refugee children in Lebanon. He has also been involved with numerous non-profit organisations, such as Humans of Syria, with graphic design work and short films that have been featured on websites and in exhibition spaces around the world.

Mohammad Ali Atassi



A journalist and documentary filmmaker, Mohammad Ali Atassi was born in Damascus in 1967. He obtained a diploma in Civil

Engineering from Damascus University in 1992 and a DEA in History from the Sorbonne in 1996. Since 2000, he has been writing on political and cultural topics for several Arab and international newspapers. Since 2001, he has made two feature-length and two short documentaries. His films have been shown in numerous festivals worldwide and have won several awards. Currently, he is the director of Bidayyat for Audiovisual Arts in Beirut.

Director's Note

The conflict that followed the uprising in Syria changed the life of every Syrian in a most extreme way, but the stories of individuals are lost among news reports. 'Al Sahra' provides unique access to a place on the frontline: the besieged city of Douma – a revolution stronghold – which has witnessed the worst humanitarian crisis since World War II. The spectator is thrown into the world of the Syrian revolution as seen through the eyes of a small group of friends; the film becomes a prism for their dreams, fears, loves, wars and battles between life and death. We see how they struggle to make their art exist in a world undergoing destruction. As Saeed Al Batal, one of the main subjects and co-director of the film, says: "The image is the last defence line against time; it is my defence line against reality, my tool for preserving my balance and a way to elude the question: What are we doing?"

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$250,000

Secured Financing: \$120,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Bidayyat for Audiovisual Arts, Lebanon
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Rusol Productions, Lebanon

Looking For:

- Distribution advice
- Funding
- Marketing advice

Work-in-Progress / Feature Documentary

Stronger than a Bullet

Director
Maryam Ebrahimi
Producer
Nima Sarvestani

Company Profile

Over the past 26 years, **NimaFilm** has produced a variety of documentary films in which unique global issues are explored through personal life stories. The company has produced several documentaries on subjects surrounding the Middle East, about people in harsh environments fighting for their rights. By making films that comment on our society and our times, NimaFilm seeks to give those who rarely have the chance to be heard the opportunity to tell their stories. The major themes of NimaFilm's productions concern human rights, and many of the films have generated debate and won awards worldwide. 'No Burqas Behind Bars' won the Prix Europa for Best European Documentary and an International Emmy Award in 2014.

Contact

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Iran, Sweden, Qatar / Persian / 2017 / 80 mins

Genre: Biography, Creative Documentary

Interests: Politics, Psychological, Social Issues, War

Saeed Sadeghi is the Iranian photographer responsible for images from the Gulf War that were used to propel the myth of a holy war to many Iranians.



Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, war propaganda has been Iran's largest industry. In the name of combating the enemies of Islam, it serves as the political and economical engine of the country. This Holy Defence industry was created in part around photographer Saeed Sadeghi's pictures taken during the first Persian Gulf War. People were seduced by stories of Shiite honour and the place in paradise granted by a martyr's death. Many of them were children. Using the deep-rooted religious beliefs of the people, the potential existed to create an army with soldiers who were not merely fighting for their country, but for God; whose reward was not of this world, but awaited them in the eternal gardens of Paradise.

Maryam Ebrahimi



Maryam Ebrahimi was born in Iran. She studied at the Art University of Tehran and continued her education at university in Stockholm.

'No Burqas Behind Bars' (2012) was her first documentary as a co-director. It shows how laws surrounding moral crimes are used to control women in post-Taliban Afghanistan. The film was shot over a lengthy period of time inside a women's prison. It was named Best Documentary at the International Emmy Awards in 2014.

Nima Sarvestani



Nima Sarvestani began his career as a journalist in Iran and has concentrated on documentary filmmaking since moving to Sweden

in 1984. He founded the independent Swedish film production company NimaFilm in 1987. Focused on social and political issues, Sarvestani is inspired by those who fight passionately for their cause. 'No Burqas Behind Bars', his fourth film as a producer, was named Best Documentary at the International Emmy Awards in 2014.

Director's Note

Almost three decades after the Iran-Iraq War ended, I still have the same nightmare. A giant plane flies just a few centimetres over my motionless body. Reflected on it, I see thousands of skeletons. They died all those years ago; I did not. I wake with an indescribable pain in my heart, feeling a responsibility to tell the story of those thousands of boys who were sent to the front, dreaming of martyrdom and eternal paradise. Perhaps I am lucky I was born a girl, otherwise I would not have the opportunity to tell their stories. By making this film, maybe I can end my lifelong nightmare and give voice to the children who offered their lives up for a war-mongering regime.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$658,371

Secured Financing: \$412,012

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Media Desk, EU
- Swedish Art Committee
- Swedish Film Institute
- SVT, Sweden

Looking For:

- Festivals
- Post-production partners

Qumra Projects



Picture Lock / Feature Narrative

'Beauty and the Dogs' by Kaouther Ben Hania

'Hunting Season' by Natalia Garagiola

'The Journey' by Mohamed Jabarah Al Daradji

Twenty-minute excerpts of Picture Lock features will be presented to selected festival programmers, sales agents and distributors during Qumra sessions.

Picture Lock / Feature Narrative

Beauty and the Dogs

Director / Screenwriter

Kaouther Ben Hania

Producer

Habib Attia, Nadim Cheikhrouha

Company Profile

Since 1983, Cinéféfilms has been one of the leading production companies in Tunisia and the Arab world. Its latest films have premiered at festivals in Cannes, Locarno, Toronto and Venice, and have been distributed in several countries. Habib Attia has been the managing director of the company since 2007. Working in a context of international coproduction, Attia develops new fiction and documentary projects dealing primarily with contemporary socio-cultural issues.

Contact

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'Aala Kef Ifrit' / Tunisia, France, Sweden, Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic / 2017 / 95 mins

Genre: Based on a True Story, Drama

Interests: Identity, Social Issues, Women's Issues

Mariam just wanted to enjoy her night out, but something terrible happens. What can be done when the perpetrator of a crime against you is also the arbiter of justice?



Mariam is a young Tunisian student, beautiful like a flower. One night, all she wants to do is dance in the disco with its shimmering lights, and get to know Youssef, a young man who was staring at her. But something terrible breaks her wings. Three policemen catch her on the beach, outside the nightclub, kissing Youssef. Claiming a routine check, they extort money from Youssef and rape Mariam repeatedly. Despite the trauma and pain, Mariam is adamant: she wants to file a complaint before the evidence of the abuse that has stained her body disappears... Supported by the young man she just met, Mariam embarks in a showdown against all the guardians of the set order, fighting for her most basic right: the right to transcribe in black and white in an official report the facts of the crime that will allow her to prosecute the aggressors. Her task is to face the coldness of bureaucracy and the dishonesty of law enforcement. Filing suit will become for Mariam a matter of honour, integrity and tenacity.

Kaouther Ben Hania



Tunisian director Kaouther Ben Hania studied cinema in Tunisia and in Paris at La Fémis and the Sorbonne. She has directed

several short films, including 'Wooden Hand' (2013), which had a lengthy and successful run on the international festival circuit. Her documentary film 'Imams Go to School' had its premiere at the International Documentary Festival Amsterdam in 2010 and was selected for numerous prestigious film festivals. 'Challat of Tunis', her first feature film, opened the ACID section of the Festival de Cannes in 2014. Her most recent film, 'Zaineb Hates the Snow', shot over years in Canada and Tunisia, premiered in the Official Selection of the Festival del Film Locarno in 2016, won a Golden Tanit at the Carthage Film Festival, and was named Best Documentary at Cinémed.

Habib Attia, Nadim Cheikhrouha



Tunis-born film and television producer Habib Attia is currently the managing director of Cinéféfilms, one of the leading production

companies in Tunisia and the MENA region. Since 1983, the company has produced some of the biggest blockbusters in Tunisian and Arab cinema, including 'Man of Ashes', 'The Silences of the Palace' and 'Halfaouine'. Attia focuses on projects dealing with contemporary socio-cultural issues.



Nedim Cheikhrouha graduated from HEC in 1998. After a year at TF1 Films Production, he moved to presales

at TPS Cinema. In 2002, he joined Mandarin Films, where he held the position of CEO for four years before joining Screen Runner. He is also the head of NYCC, specialising in advising producers and audiovisual distributors. He has produced several feature films.

Director's Note

Perhaps the hardest thing about a rape is for the victim to speak out loud in the hope of having their voice heard. Paradoxically, nobody listens; instead, they make accusations: "You are not a victim; you are as guilty as the assailants." Along with this grave issue, what also interests me is the "second rape" that is a result the legal proceedings - a form OF institutional violence. 'Beauty and the Dogs' is a film made up of NINE sequence shots. I feel that this formal constraint is advantageous for this film - it places the audience fully in the action in real time, which will make for almost unbearable immersion in the events of the story.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$800,000

Secured Financing: \$720,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Aide aux cinémas du monde, France
- Chimney, Sweden
- Cinéféfilms, Tunisia
- CNC, France
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Film i Väst, Sweden
- Fonds Image de la Francophonie
- Hubert Bals Fund, The Netherlands
- Institut Français, Tunisia
- Integral Film & Literature, Norway
- Laika Film & Television, Sweden
- SACEM, France

- Schortcut Films, Lebanon
- Sørfond, Norway
- Swedish Film Institute
- Tanit Films, France
- Tunisian Ministry of Culture
- visions sud est, Switzerland
- World Cinema Fund Europe

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- Distributors (except France)
- Festivals
- VOD platform

Picture Lock / Feature Narrative

Hunting Season

Director / Screenwriter

Natalia Garagiola

Producer

Santiago Gallelli,
Benjamín Domenech,
Matías Roveda, Gonzalo Tobal

Company Profile

Rei Cine was created to provide a creative platform for groundbreaking filmmakers in Buenos Aires. Completed films as main producer include Benjamin Naishtat's 'History of Fear' (2014), Jazmin López's 'Leones' (2012), Adrián Villar Rojas's 'What Fire Brought to Me' (2013) and Gonzalo Tobal's 'Villegas' (2012); all of these were successfully distributed worldwide and selected for major festivals in Berlin, Cannes, Venice, Rotterdam and Locarno, among many others. In 2013, we launched Rei Distribucion, a distribution label based in Argentina. Specialising in tailor-made releases of Latin American films, we handle titles like Dominga Sotomayor's 'Thursday Till Sunday' (2012), Carlos Reygadas's 'Post Tenebras Lux' (2012), and Ana Guevara and Leticia Jorge's 'So Much Water' (2013).

Contact

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'Temporada de Caza' / Argentina, France, Germany, USA, Qatar / Spanish / 2017 / 100 mins

Genre: Drama

Interests: Coming of age, Father and son, Hunting, Life in the wilderness

A violent teenager is reunited with his hunter father in the southern woods of Patagonia. Forced to help the older man in a struggle against the wilderness, the youth faces his ability to love and kill.



Nahuel is a violent teenager from Buenos Aires. When his mother dies after enduring lengthy treatment for an illness, he leaves home to travel south to Patagonia in order to spend three months with his father Ernesto, a hunter who lives in isolation in the mountains with his new family. The two have not seen each other in over a decade, and are linked by their rancour. But, like the snow around them, ill-feeling slowly fades away as Ernesto teaches Nahuel the skills he needs to live in the harsh environment. Between parties with local friends and silent hunting journeys with his father's team, Nahuel finally understands the reason for his trip.

Natalia Garagiola



Born in Buenos Aires, Natalia Garagiola graduated from the Universidad del Cine, where she later taught. In 2004, she obtained an MA in Screenwriting from FIA-UIMP in Spain. She also took part in the Experimental Film Lab at the Universidad Di Tella in Buenos Aires. Her videos 'Track' (2007) and 'Square' (2008) were selected for Videoforbes Video Art & Digital Cultures. She has written and directed three short films: 'Rincón de López' (2011), released at BAFICI; 'Mares and Parakeets' (2012), which premiered in the Cannes Critics' Week, and 'Sundays', which premiered in the 2014 Cannes Director's Fortnight. 'Hunting Season' is her first feature-length film.

Santiago Gallelli



Santiago Gallelli was born in Argentina in 1986, and graduated as a filmmaker from the Universidad del Cine in Buenos Aires. In 2010, he created Rei Cine as a creative platform for groundbreaking filmmakers that is focused on international co-productions. Since then, he has produced 10 feature films along with the works of acclaimed directors and artists including Lucrecia Martel, Gael García Bernal and Adrián Villar Rojas. He is a member of EAVE and sits on the executive board of CAIC, Argentina's chamber of audiovisual industry. His most recent films as a producer include Martel's 'Zama' (2017), Natalia Garagiola's 'Hunting Season' (2017), Adrián Villar Rojas's 'The Theatre of Disappearance' (2017) and Marcela Said's 'The Dogs' (2017).

Director's Note

For me, Southern Patagonia awakens a sense of survival. There is something ancient and dark hiding in the shade of the trees and the depths of the lakes. The stunning scenery implies menace: one is part of nature, but also submissive to it. I believe this to be the ideal context in which to develop this story; one of a teenager who is reunited with his father and wonders what kind of man he wants to become, and explores the father-son relationship within the particular world of hunting. It is through the construction of specific scenes and details that I want to look at the universality of this relationship, and the desire to be part of something greater than oneself.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$628,425

Secured Financing: \$580,288

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Augenschein Filmproduktion, Germany
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Les Films de l'Étranger, France
- Gamechanger Films, USA
- RPC Mecenazgo, Argentina
- Strasbourg Eurométropole, France
- TorinoFilmLab, Italy
- World Cinema Fund, Germany

Looking For:

- Distributors
- Post-production partners
- Sales agents

Picture Lock / Feature Narrative

The Journey

Director

Mohamed Jabarah Al Daradji

Screenwriter / Producer

**Mohamed Jabarah Al Daradji,
Isabelle Stead**

Company Profile

After the international success of films including Mohamed Al Daradji's 'Ahlaam' (2004), 'Son of Babylon' (2010) and 'In My Mother's Arms' (2010), production company **Iraq Al-Rafidain** established the Iraqi Independent Film Centre (IIFC) in 2010, with the intention of encouraging and supporting a new generation of filmmakers, while actively pursuing the re-establishment and development of the Iraqi film industry. The IIFC has produced 12 short films by young filmmakers, which have screened at the Toronto and Berlin International Film Festivals, among numerous other prestigious festivals. In 2014, the IIFC produced Al-Daradji's 'In the Sands of Babylon', a prequel to 'Son of Babylon'. Al-Daradji's 'The Journey' is the second feature-length film to be produced by the IIFC. The Centre is busy producing two further feature-length films in 2017.

Contact

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'Al Rihla' / Iraq, UK, France, Qatar / Arabic / 2017 / 82 mins

Genre: Drama

Interests: Psychology, Social Issues, War, Women's Issues

As Sara stands on the cusp of committing an unthinkable act, time stands still, giving her an opportunity to witness the consequences of her action. But is this a second chance or an admission of guilt?



Baghdad, 30 December, 2006. Sara, an unassuming young woman, enters Baghdad's central train station with sinister intentions. On the edge of committing a destructive and heinous act, Sara finds her plans are drastically altered, complicated by an unwanted and awkward encounter with Salam, a self-assured and flirtatious salesman. In an unfortunate twist of fate, Salam becomes a hostage in Sara's confused and deluded master plan to blow up the station. Caught up in the chaos of a situation he cannot begin to comprehend, Salam desperately tries to understand Sara's motives and to sway her decision. In a moment of reflection, Sara is given the opportunity to learn about the lives she has been so willing to destroy for others.

Mohamed Jabarah Al Daradji



Mohamed Jabarah Al-Daradji studied in Iraq and the Netherlands before travelling to the UK to complete his Masters degree in

Cinematography and Directing at the Northern Film School in Leeds, where he won the prestigious Kodak Student Commercial Award for Cinematography. In 2003, he returned to Iraq to make his first feature film, 'Ahlaam', which screened at more than 125 international film festivals and received more than 30 awards, as well as Academy Award and Golden Globe consideration. His multi-award-winning 'Son of Babylon' (2010) screened at Sundance and the Berlin International Film Festival, where it won the Amnesty Film Award and the Peace Prize. Al-Daradji was named 'Variety' magazine's Middle Eastern Filmmaker of the Year after his documentary 'In My Mother's Arms' (2010) premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and won the Asia-Pacific Screen Academy Award for Best Documentary. 'In the Sands of Babylon' (2013) screened at the Abu Dhabi Film Festival, where it won the award for Best Arab Film.

Isabelle Stead



Following five years of working in Los Angeles in both independent and studio contexts, Isabelle Stead returned to the UK and produced 'Son

of Babylon' (2010), which screened at Sundance and the Berlin International Film Festival, where it received the Amnesty Film Award and the Peace Prize. In 2011, Stead produced 'In My Mother's Arms', which had its premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival and received the Asia-Pacific Screen Academy Award for Best Documentary in 2011. In 2013, she produced 'In the Sands of Babylon', which won the award for Best Arab Film at its premiere in the Abu Dhabi Film Festival.

Director's Note

The female suicide bomber is invisible, untouchable; an unsuspecting asset to extremist missions. Many are preyed upon by extremist factions operating in Iraq, throughout the Middle East and around the world. We start life innocently, so what changes a person and drives them to commit such extreme and atrocious acts? This film is not intended as a political statement, nor a condemnation or glorification of attacks. It will offer audiences the rare opportunity to engage with a woman swept up in something she and we cannot fully fathom, the implications of which are potentially disastrous. If we do not fully comprehend the causes behind these actions, there will be no end to suicide terrorism. I am fully aware of the sensitive nature of this film; it has been made with great respect for the troubling subject it deals with, detailing a very real and unfortunately frequent scenario of tragic events.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$725,000

Secured Financing: \$550,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- CNC, France
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Distributors
- Festivals
- Sales agents

Qumra Projects

Development / Short Narrative

'Angels, Spiders and Other Miserable Creatures' by Fahad Al-Kuwari

'Awakenings' by Fahad Al Obaidly

'Burn the Bird' by Zahed Bata

'Clouds' by Muzna Al MUSAfer

'Reem Planted a Flower' by Rawda Al-Thani

'Selective Mutism' by Khalifa AlMarri

'Sh'hab' by Amal Al-Muftah

'Simsim' by Amer Jamhour

'Ya Hoota' by Latifa Al Darwish, Abdulaziz Yousef

Angels, Spiders and Other Miserable Creatures

Director / Screenwriter
Fahad Al-Kuwari

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'Malaika, 'Anakib, wa Makhloukat Ba'issa Okhra' / Qatar / Arabic

Genre: Animation, Fantasy

Interests: Stop-motion animation

A couple pray for a miracle, and God sends them an angel. What will they do with it?



Bu Shaheen and Umm Shaheen are an odd, greedy couple with a sick child. Their life is becoming difficult and they are slowly losing their faith. They pray for a miracle, and God sends them an angel. Not knowing what to do with it, nor whether it is a blessing or a curse, they use the angel to make money, and neglect the health of their son. They use the angel in all the wrong ways until God takes it back from them.

Fahad Al-Kuwari



Born in Qatar in 1990, Fahad Ahmed J. Al-Kuwari is an independent writer-filmmaker. He was raised in the suburbs of Doha, which influences the setting of most of his works. Al-Kuwari comes from an arts and design background, and never studied film in an academic context. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar. He was introduced to filmmaking through working in production design, which is apparent in the aesthetic of his work. Al-Kuwari has worked on several short films, including Ali Al Anssari's 'Qarar' (2014) and Sarah Al-Derham's 'Ghazil' (2012). He wrote Al Anssari's 'I' (2013), and wrote and directed 'Ruqya' (2011). His first participation in a major feature-length film was on the set of Mira Nair's 'The Reluctant Fundamentalist' (2012).

Director's Note

'Angels, Spiders, and Other Miserable Creatures' is an attempt to create a traditional Qatari dark fable that teaches a lesson about the human condition. At the core of every fable is a metaphorical ugly truth about us, and this story is no different. It examines the human tendency to try and take advantage of God's gifts to us, and use them for our own benefit.

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

Looking For:

- Animation experts
- Script consultants
- Stop-motion animation experts

Development / Short Narrative

Awakenings

Director / Screenwriter

Fahad Al Obaidly

Producer

Salwa Alkhalifa

Contact

Fahad Al Obaidly

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Qatar / English

Genre: Drama

Interests: Social Issues

Haunted by an obscure memory from his past, a young contemporary dancer inadvertently stumbles upon a painful forgotten truth, which releases his soul from the clutches of despair.



Since the death of his father, Adam has felt a weight of responsibility and through dance has used his body to fill the void of loss. Unable to find peace, he lives in emotional isolation until he is cast in a play titled 'Single Soul' in a role he feels deeply connected to on some cosmic level. During his poorly delivered audition, Adam experiences hallucinations that lead to the truth about his father's death.

Fahad Al Obaidly



Fahad Al Obaidly is a Qatari director, writer and fashion consultant who works for Qatar Museums. In 2016, he received the Hussein

Sharif Black Elephant Award from the Sudan Independent Cinema Festival for his documentary 'Inside Out'. The same documentary was part of the Short Film Corner at the Festival de Cannes, and was screened by the Doha Film Institute, the Cameron Film Festival, the Voronezh Film Festival, and the Innsbruck International Film Festival. Al Obaidly is currently working on a number of projects, including two short films to be released in 2017 as well as his second fashion film and a narrative work.

Salwa Alkhalifa



Salwa Al Khalifa is a Sudanese filmmaker. She Studied Mass Communication at Qatar University, and obtained a diploma

in Documentary Filmmaking. She has directed a few short films, and has worked as an assistant director and script supervisor on a number of independent short films in Qatar.

Director's Note

Throughout our childhood, we encounter many incidents and ordeals that in turn influence our behaviours, shape our personalities and form our beliefs. As a young boy, I lived with my mother, who was unable to communicate her love for me in a way I could comprehend. As I matured, I realised that I am unable to express my true emotions with those who love me. The message I wish to convey in this film is that no matter what our past was, whether good or bad, we must accept it and use it to express and not repress our true feelings. In order to move forward, we must acknowledge our past, and feel it in all its pain and glory.

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

Looking For:

- Film funds
- Mentorship
- Script consultants
- Short film experts

Development / Short Narrative

Burn the Bird

Director / Screenwriter
Zahed Bata

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Jordan, Qatar / Arabic
Genre: Dark Comedy
Interests: Family, Social Issues

Grief-stricken Samaa and her son Mohye go out in the middle of the night to bury her beloved parrot, and inadvertently awaken buried feelings from a previous tragedy.



Very late in the night in the empty neighbourhoods of Doha, Samaa, a woman of 56 years, and her son Mohye find themselves in search of a proper burial spot for Samaa's pet parrot Zaki, who passed away last night after struggling with a disease. After attempts to dig a hole in the rocky barren land fail, Samaa realises that the only way to have peace of mind is to cremate Zaki - at 2 AM. Upon getting caught by police patrol, the suspicious duo are stopped from starting a fire in the residential area. However, Samaa's unexpected emotional breakdown over her parrot leaves the policeman struggling for a way out. Samaa finally succeeds in putting the parrot's death behind her as she sets his body alight.

Zahed Bata



Zahed Bata is a Doha-based filmmaker and a graduate of Northwestern University in Qatar. He has worked on a variety of projects including documentaries, narrative and experimental films, and advertisements. His experience as a director of photography on numerous short films compelled him to focus on the visual side of storytelling. He has previously worked with Al Jazeera Channel and recently joined AJ+. He is currently working on his short film, 'Burn the Bird'.

Director's Note

'Burn the Bird' is a deeply personal film modelled after a real-life event in which my mother and I set out to bury Nagnoosh, our late pet parrot, and ended up cremating him later that night after hours of trying. It was also a window of time during which my mother and I finally spoke about death, a subject that had for the most part remained taboo since my father's demise 23 years ago. In a way it was a symbol to our struggle in accepting death as part of the natural cycle of life through what is arguably one of the most bizarre nights of my life.

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

Looking For:

- Funds
- Industry advice
- Mentorship
- Producers (based in the Gulf region)
- Script consultants

Clouds

Director / Screenwriter

Muzna Almusafir

Producer

Stephen Strachan

Company Profile

Based in the UAE, Europe and the USA, Film Solutions is a group of experienced creative producers who share the goal of creating premium films and television content in the Middle East. The company likes to work with the best and brightest creative minds and loves investing its time and energy to nurture up-and-coming directors, writers and producers. Veteran producer Paul Miller and Stephen Strachan have been working in the Gulf region for the past six years. They met at the Doha Film Institute, where Paul was Director of Film Financing and Stephen ran a creative development team dedicated to helping Qatar's filmmakers tell their stories. Both wanted to invest more time in the Middle East, and they set up Film Solutions in early 2016. They have since been joined by Canadian producer Sahar Yousefi in the UAE. Miller and Strachan will produce 'Scales', Saudi director Shahad Ameen's first feature-length film, in the spring of 2017.

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'Ghoyoom' / Oman, Qatar / Jibbali / 2017 / 17 mins

Genre: Drama

Interests: Art, Dhafari Culture, History, Politics

A leopard hunter in a traditional village in the mountains goes through a transformation.



In 1978, in the south of Oman some time after the Dhofar Rebellion, Ghafali is a widower and war veteran who lives with his daughter and son in a traditional village on Samhan Mountain. Ghafali faces pressure from his tribe to kill a leopard that has threatened the village - pressure that becomes all the greater when he decides not to kill the animal, instead setting it free.

Muzna Almusafir



Muzna Almusafir was born in Muscat. Her admiration for images began at an early age through her father, a painter and photographer. She graduated from Kuwait University majoring in Mass Communication with a minor in Political Science, and studied Swedish Cinema and Television Culture at Stockholm University. Her first short film, 'Niqab', won the student competition short at the Gulf Film Festival in 2010. 'Cholo' (2013) won the Best Script prize at the Abu Dhabi Film Festival, had its premiere at the Dubai International Film Festival, and was screened at several festivals and institutes. 'PASHK' and 'The Goats of Dana', two creative documentaries that Almusafir collaborated on, were screened in the DOX Film festival in Copenhagen and KIFAK in Tunisia, and at the Women Deliver World Conference. In 2016, Almusafir participated with her project 'Clouds' at the Robert Bosch Foundation in the Amman Project Market.

Stephen Strachan



Stephen Strachan is the managing director and founder of Film Solutions, a film production company based in the UAE that specialises in short and feature-length film production, and feature film packaging. Previously, Strachan was a key member of the team at the Doha Film Institute, where he worked as a producer and mentor for four years, developing the skills of local and regional filmmakers. He was instrumental in developing the Qatari Film Fund, a film development and production fund that offers financing, mentorship and support to film projects directed by Qatari citizens.

Director's Note

'Clouds' is set in 1978, two years after the Dhofar rebellion in the south of Oman. The project reflects my fascination with the culture of the south - my dearest childhood remembrance is of visiting the mountains every summer, loving the closeness I experienced with the inhabitants. I always wished in those days that I could become a Jibbali myself. For me, this film is a journey that takes us inside a tribal society that is undergoing a transformation, and an opportunity to explore Oman cinematically from a new angle.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$59,074

Secured Financing: \$15,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Distributors
- Festivals
- Film funds
- Producers

Reem Planted a Flower

Director / Screenwriter
Rawda Al-Thani

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'Reem Zar'at Warda' / Qatar / Arabic

Genre: Fantasy

Interests: Women's issues, Middle-East, Art direction, Youth

A textbook example of a well-behaved schoolgirl defies the omnipresent voice of a narrator in order to play with a dog.



A girl is a textbook example of the well-behaved child. The narrator of a children's book dictates her daily activities. She is tempted to break the rules when she finds something that sparks her curiosity. It is only when she acts on these impulses that she finds she can narrate her own story.

Rawda Al-Thani



Rawda Al-Thani likes to spend her time exploring places in Qatar where the nation's past and present landscapes have merged to form its current state. Through these explorations she finds inspiration for her short films and art projects. She studied Communications at Northwestern University in Qatar, where she focused on Experimental Filmmaking, Art Directing and Middle Eastern Studies. Her first short film was shot in Doha's abandoned Gulf Cinema and portrays the search for an answer to the explorer's questions of identity through her journey into that forgotten space.

Director's Note

I am interested in telling stories that encourage people to be themselves, and I am currently focusing on the female protagonist and how she can overcome expectations to reach that goal, even if she has to break some rules in order to do so. In my first film, I depicted that character in a young woman who defies social expectations by breaking into an abandoned cinema. This current film I'm working on channels a younger version of the same character; an eight-year-old schoolgirl who takes over the voice of an omnipresent children's book narrator to tell her own story.

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

Looking For:

- Directing mentors
- Festivals
- Script consultants

Development / Short Narrative

Selective Mutism

Director / Screenwriter
Khalifa AlMarri

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'Al Samt Al Ikhtiyari' / Qatar / Arabic

Genre: Crime, Mystery, Thriller

Interests: Justice, Social issues

A young man is caught up in various incidents of deception, intrigue and murder.



Hamad is a delinquent. He is forever stealing the neighbour's car to go joyriding with his friend, then returning it without the owner ever knowing it was taken. He notices his father's new obsession with camel beauty contests, finding it very strange that a city man is so interested in such a thing. One day, Hamad's friend calls him up, asking for help to cover up the unintentional murder of his girlfriend. Hamad determines that the young woman is just unconscious and tries to help her. He and his friend take her to Hamad's house, and Hamad's father leaves for a business trip. Everything goes well until the police show up at the door, looking for Hamad's father, who has been laundering money at the beauty contests. Hamad now deals with the situation of his friend's girlfriend with a different view on life.

Khalifa AlMarri



Khalifa AlMarri was born in Qatar in 1992. An artist who has made several contributions to the fine art community in Qatar, he is the director of 'Man of the House', which won a Made in Qatar Award at Ajyal in 2015 and was invited to the third GCC Film Festival in Abu Dhabi. AlMarri studied Mass Communications at Qatar University and holds a diploma in Directing and Filmmaking from the New York Film Academy. He made 'Fragile' as part of a joint Doha Film Institute - La Fémis summer course in Paris in 2016. He is currently in development with the short film 'Selective Mutism'.

Director's Note

We always focus on the major criminals and neglect a growing cancer in our community, which is the actions of some youth. We protect the ones we love, but we are betrayed by the closest of them. This film deals with real-life events and shines a light on an important subject in our society that is not normally covered by the media. Things like this have been happening a lot recently, so we need to face up to reality.

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

Looking For:

- Mentorship
- Script consultants
- Short film experts

Development / Short Narrative

Sh'hab

Director / Screenwriter
Amal Al-Muftah

Qatar / Arabic / 2017 / 15 mins

Genre: Drama

Interests: Culture, History, Youth

Contact

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An orphan embarks on a mythical journey that could reunite him with his parents.



Upon hearing about the myth of falling stars, an orphan's hope of reuniting with his parents is restored. When night falls on Al-Wakrah village, he sneaks out to the beach with his stepbrother. He realises things have not gone as planned, however, when he wakes up the next morning and his stepbrother is nowhere to be found.

Amal Al-Muftah



Amal Al-Muftah was born in Doha in 1994. She started making films in high school, including 'AlKora' (2013) and the award-winning 'Alhamali' (2014). After graduating from high school, she enrolled in Northwestern University in Qatar's Communications programme. During her first year there, she worked on 'Smicha' (2016) with Innovation Films, and 'Eh fe Amal' (2015). Her third narrative film, 'Sh'hab', is currently in development.

Director's Note

I grew up listening to my grandmother narrate tales that were hundreds of years old. Tales about the sea, the desert and the people; tales that took me back to a time when "human spirits were high" and "life was not that hard". I am making 'Sh'hab' to pay tribute to these tales and to re-create feelings of longing for my grandmother's tales.

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

Looking For:

- Art directors
- Festivals
- Mentorship
- Regional producers
- Short film experts

Simsim

Director / Screenwriter

Amer Jamhour

Producer

Mervat Aksoy

Contact

Amer Jamhour

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Jordan, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: Drama

Interests: Social Issues, Youth

A 12-year-old cemetery cleaner and con artist tries to save enough money for a train ticket to Latakia, where he can become a fisherman away from his greedy boss.



Amman, 1980s. Simsim, a 12-year-old cemetery cleaner and con artist, dreams of becoming a fisherman in Latakia, away from his greedy boss. Every day, Simsim and his friend Makki swap the flowers that are left at the tombs of the wealthy with garbage collected from the poorer areas of the graveyard. By doing so, the pair are able to trick rich mourners into tipping them to “control the rubbish problem”. As their boss squeezes every penny out of them, for Simsim and Makki to save enough money to get away seems an impossible task. Fate intervenes when Simsim stumbles upon a bouquet of flowers and finds some cash hidden along with a series of love letters between a Circassian couple who are planning their own escape.

Amer Jamhour



Amer Jamhour was born and raised in Amman, where he obtained a BA in Business and Marketing from the University of Jordan

before moving to London to pursue a career in the creative industries. He dabbled in advertising and motion graphics for 10 years and took several short courses in filmmaking, until he graduated from the National Film and Television School with a post-graduate diploma in Script Development. Since then, Jamhour has developed scripts with writers and producers from the Middle East on a freelance basis, and recently directed his first short film, 'Dunia'. Now based in Madrid, Jamhour is currently working on his next short and feature-length projects.

Mervat Aksoy



In 2003, Mervat Aksoy began working at The Royal Film Commission – Jordan. Being right in the middle of it all, she developed a passion for

the local film industry, and a fascination with how it all works. As she was originally a graphic designer, media production and content creation felt like a natural progression of her skills and interests. She graduated from the Red Sea Institute of Cinematic Arts in 2010, and has since gone on to produce local films, television and web content. Among her notable projects are the award-winning feature-length narrative 'A 7-Hour Difference', which is a part of the RFC EduFeature programme, and two seasons of the Jordanian television and web comedy show 'Bath Bayakha'. Aksoy aims to continue her contributions to the voice of the Jordanian and Arab screen industry.

Director's Note

'Simsim' sheds a light on child labour, exploitation, classism and corruption, but it steers away from over-dramatisation to deliver a light-hearted drama that focuses on the protagonist's quest to achieve the impossible, through which he transforms from law-abiding citizen to rebel. The location of the cemetery presents a pessimistic point of view one might have of a situation, society or city, while the conflict among the different classes of characters generates a drama that revolves around the polarisation of wealth, and how it can backfire. At the same time, juxtaposing the need to make a living off the dead shows a determination to challenge the status quo and find a way to survive, even in the most dire surroundings. The film serves as a reminder of a friendlier time, when Amman seemed younger, wealth was more evenly distributed and people were generally more tolerant and somehow innocent. The film seeks to remind the audience of the beauty found in the simplicity of life back then.

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

Looking For:

- Directing expertise
- Distributors
- Festival consultants
- Funding
- Pitch training
- Script consultants

Ya Hoota

Director
Latifa Al Darwish, Abdulaziz Yousif
Screenwriter
Latifa Al Darwish

Qatar / Arabic
Genre: Animation, Comedy
Interests: Folklore

A little girl attempts to save the moon from a gigantic whale along with her cousin. Will she succeed?

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A curious little girl is determined to save the Moon from a lunar eclipse, all to find out what happens next in the story her grandmother is telling. As there will be no moonlight if the eclipse takes place, the little girl searches for the mythological characters in her grandmother's stories in order to utilise their magical powers so that she can reach the Moon. Along with her cousin, she leaves the house in search of the Afternoon Donkey. She strongly believes in the mythical creature's existence, while her cousin wants to prove otherwise. Their grandmother reveals to them that she is in fact the Afternoon Donkey, and although she fails to help the girls reach the Moon, they accidentally get there by way of the Man on the Moon's fishing net, and learn that the Moon is in no danger from the whale. They later return home to tell their grandmother their story.

Latifa Al Darwish



Latifa Al Darwish is an award-winning independent filmmaker and television producer, who uses animation and documentary formats to tell unheard local stories. She graduated from Northwestern University in Qatar with a BSc in Communication, and studied Culture and the Creative Industries at King's College London. Her films include 'Bader' (co-director, 2012), which was selected for the Doha Tribeca Film Festival and the Abu Dhabi Film Festival and 'Temsah' (2013), which also appeared at Abu Dhabi. She has also created animations for the @Wransade safe driving campaign and for @3yooznews with the team from Qartoon.

Abdulaziz Yousef



Abdulaziz Yousif is a cartoonist whose experience includes working on daily newspapers as well as television. His work has taken the form of sketches, illustration, fine art, animation, moving pictures, product design and graphic design. Creating cartoons is part of his daily life as a 2-D illustrator at Al Jazeera Children's Channel and Al Raya newspaper.

Director's Note

I find myself between cartoons and documentaries. These two time-based formats might seem to be in opposition, but both provide us with the ability to tell stories. Capturing and mediating memories to give them another life is what motivates us to utilise film as an art form to tell stories. Storytellers are the carriers of memory. People from different cultures have not only been attentively listening to stories, but transferring them from one generation to the next. Grandmothers have occupied an essential role in this memory transportation process. 'Ya Hoota' is inspired by Abdulaziz Yousif's 'Sekanwa' comics about the magical djinn of traditional tales. However, while 'Sekanwa' is aimed at an older age group, our short film targets younger generations to inspire them to connect to the past and appreciate the present. We aim to have this film grow beyond the traditional lifespan of shorts; if it succeeds, it will serve as a pilot for an animation series, and a transmedia project to create a culture and inspire generations to come.

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

Looking For:

- Animation experts
- Distributors
- Festivals
- Mentorship

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