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DOHA FILM INSTITUTE

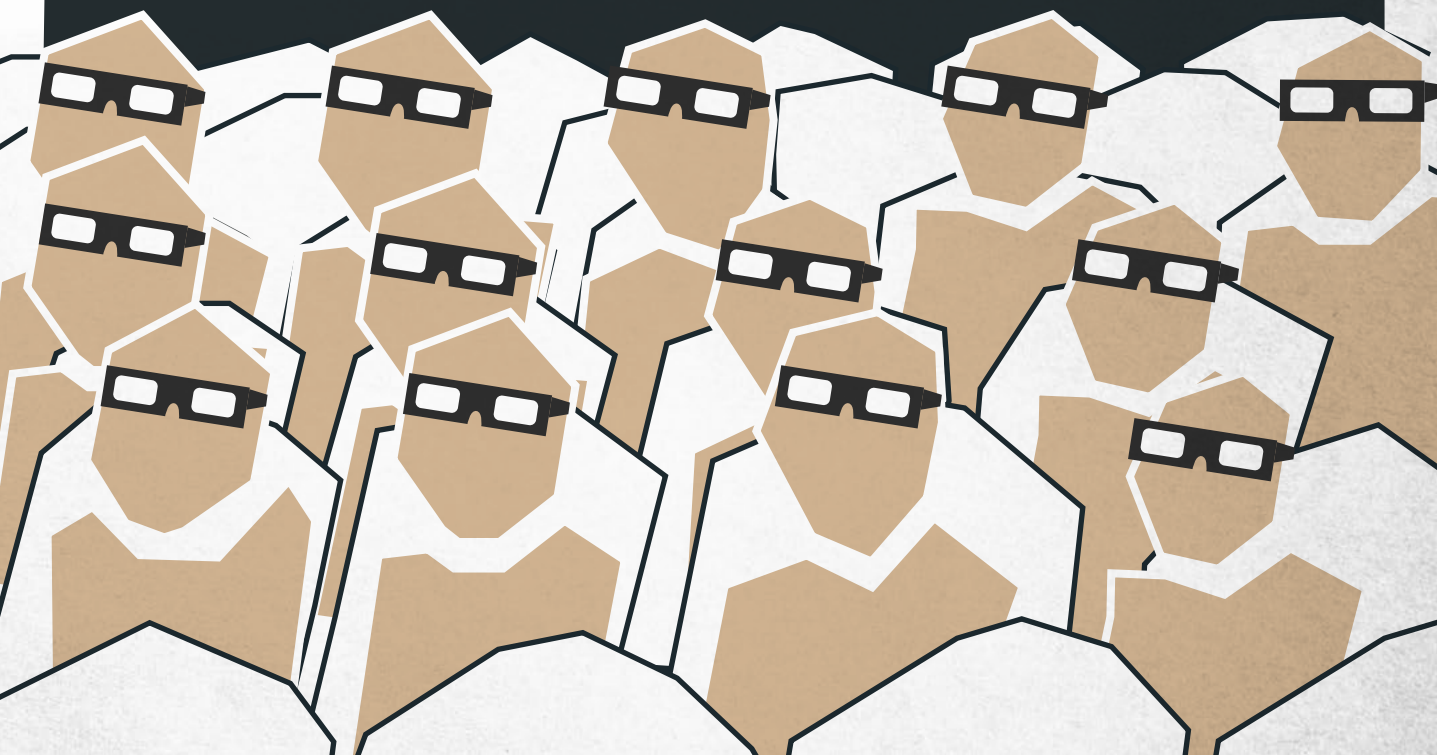
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مهرجان أجيال السينمائي

Ajyal Film Festival

# MOMENTS THAT لحظات MATTER تشغلنا

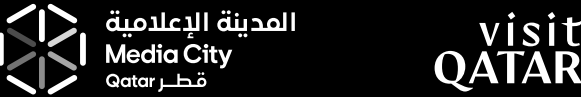
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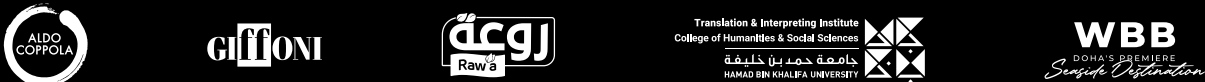
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Ajyal Film Festival  
2024

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**Doha, Qatar, November 2024**

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

Chairperson,  
Doha Film Institute



As the region endures another wave of conflict impacting lives, livelihoods, and the foundations of entire communities, it is more important than ever to foster cultural understanding, promote mutual respect, and work to rebuild trust around the world.

Ajyal 2024 is an opportunity for us as a community to create moments that matter – for ourselves and those around us – that unite us in reminder of our collective strength, resilience, and of the power of shared experiences.

Qatar’s history as a beacon of progress and hope in the region by amplifying voices of the vulnerable and promoting respectful dialogue continues to build bridges to a bright future. The creative ecosystem Doha Film Institute has built — from project funding and mentorship to networking — is a pivotal contribution to this future in challenging perspectives and catalysing positive change in representation.

Ajyal 2024 honours the moments that foster genuine global perspectives, break down misconceptions, and affirm our common humanity. The deep-dive discussions between young jurors, screenings of thought-provoking films and meaningful interaction in workshops are a testament to our enduring commitment to stories that inspire understanding, foster unity, and empower independent thought.

We believe that the Moments that Matter, honoured at Ajyal, extend far beyond the event itself. These moments inspire young talents to tell their stories, encourage cultural dialogue, and contribute to the world we aspire to create—a world defined by peace and prosperity for all.

Ajyal 2024’s message to the world is simple yet powerful: Let us unite for humanity, deepen our understanding and empathy, and build a world that future generations will proudly inherit.

**Fatma Hassan Alremaihi**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Doha Film Institute

Festival Director,  
Ajyal Film Festival



As the scale of violent aggression in our region continues to spread to an unprecedented level, our hearts carry a heavy weight of immeasurable human suffering, and loss of innocence.

When violence first escalated last year, we made the incredibly difficult but necessary decision to defer the 2023 edition of Ajyal Film Festival. This year, with escalating violence not just in Palestine but also in Lebanon, bringing Ajyal back was an even harder choice.

As a cultural organization, we cannot turn away. We have a responsibility to use the universal reach of film to amplify the voices that the world needs to hear, to raise awareness of the realities unfolding around us, and to stand in solidarity with those that are being oppressed.

Ajyal 2024 returns with the theme “Moments that Matter” to honour the moments that bring us stories of substance to seed hope, understanding and shared humanity. Even in the darkest times, the role of culture is to guide us towards a more compassionate understanding of one another.

Ajyal has always served to tell the stories that matter most and give a platform to the filmmakers who bravely shine a light on human suffering and resilience. The Festival’s strong reputation for curating important and timely films is reflected in this year’s line-up of 66 films from 42 countries including 18 features and 48 shorts, which includes 26 incredible films by Arab filmmakers and 24 extraordinary women directors.

From our thought-provoking opening film, Sudan, Remember Us, to special showcases on Palestine and community focused programming, Moments That Matter pays a heartfelt tribute to the profound impact that cinema and diverse voices have on shaping and enriching our interconnected lives. Some of our Ajyal jurors – who have always been a culturally and geographically diverse group of young people – come from areas that no longer exist and many of them have suffered unimaginable personal loss. Their bravery in coming to Ajyal and sharing their perspectives at the most painful time of their lives strengthens our belief in the unique power of film to transcend boundaries and deeply connect us all.

We are proud to present the 2024 edition of our ‘Made in Qatar’ programme, a testament to the growth and progress of our homegrown talents and present a special selection of films that authentically represent the diverse aspects of Moroccan life and the country’s dynamic cultural landscape as part of the Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture. We are equally honoured to showcase 14 films supported by the Institute that have earned critical acclaim at international festivals, underlining the global reach of our commitment to unique and exceptional voices in cinema.

The guidance of our Chairperson and the dedication of our partners, staff, and volunteers who continue to work tirelessly to make this event possible reminds us that out of the most challenging moments, we can create something meaningful together.

We invite the community to join us in making Moments that Matter at Ajyal 2024—moments that bring us together, enable us to understand each other better, and light a brighter way forward.

## Ajyal Programming Team

Festival Director, Ajyal Film Festival  
**Fatma Hassan Alremaihi**

Deputy Director, Ajyal Film Festival  
**Abdulla Al Mosallam**

Director of Strategy & Development  
**Hanaa Issa**

Programmers  
**Aya Al-Blouchi**  
**Majid Al Remailhi**  
**Rawda Al-Thani**  
**Farah El-Buy**  
**Karem Kamel**

Pre-Screeners  
**Amna Al-Binali**  
**Sahar Bou Hamdan**  
**Maya Mechmoum**  
**Ben Robinson**

## Cultural Partners



### Katara Cultural Village Foundation

The Cultural Village Foundation is an exceptional project of hope for human interaction through art and cultural exchange – a project made possible thanks to the inspired vision, solid faith and wise leadership of HH Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir of the State of Qatar.

Keeping pace with the emerging global culture that emphasises the importance of diversity in human development, Katara Cultural Village is the largest and the most multidimensional cultural project of Qatar. It is a place where people come together to experience the cultures of the world. With beautiful theatres, concert halls, exhibition galleries and cutting-edge facilities, Katara aims to become a world leader for multi-cultural activities.

In line with the goals set forward by the Qatar National Vision 2030, Katara serves as a guardian to the heritage and traditions of Qatar and endeavours to spread awareness about the importance of every culture and civilization and as such, Katara hosts international, regional and local festivals, workshops, performances and exhibitions.



# FESTIVAL OVERVIEW



## Ajyal Competition

The true stars of our festival are always our young Ajyal Jury. Aged from 8 to 25, they form the juries of the Ajyal Competition, and their involvement and opinions matter dearly to us at DFI. By casting their vote, our jurors decide which directors will receive funding towards their next project, helping to guide, support, and champion cinema that resonates deeply with their generation.

Our competition provides them access to acclaimed international cinema and renowned filmmakers, ensuring they experience moments that matter—ones that will help them develop their understanding of the world around them and grow into confident and mindful global citizens. At its heart, the Ajyal Competition inspires creative thinking, cooperation and self-expression— leading to empowered young minds and friendships that will last a lifetime.

# Ajyal Jury

The Ajyal Competition Jury is divided into three sections by age group. The three juries are:



**Mohaq**  
Mohaq means ‘New Moon’ in Arabic, and these are Ajyal’s youngest jurors, aged 8 to 12. These jurors will enjoy one programme of uplifting short films and a selection of enchanting feature-length films.



**Hilal**  
Ajyal’s jurors aged 13 to 17 make up our Hilal jury, which means ‘Crescent Moon’ in Arabic. Four fascinating feature films and one programme of inspiring shorts make up this jury’s film selection.



**Bader**  
The most mature of Ajyal’s juries, Bader—Arabic for ‘Full Moon’—jurors are aged 18 to 25 and will select their favourite films from four compelling features and two programmes of thought-provoking short films.

## Awards

Each of our three Ajyal Juries awards a Best Film prize to their favourite short and feature-length films, for a total of six awards. The directors of the winning films are granted funding toward their next film, giving our jurors the empowering opportunity to nurture and support stories and voices that matter to them the most.

Our youngest audiences vote for their favourite film in the Bariq programme, and a jury of regional industry professionals will decide the best film in the Made in Qatar section. Finally, the general public will decide on our Ajyal Audience Award.



# FESTIVAL FILMS

## Sudan, Remember Us

France, Tunisia, Qatar / Arabic, English / 2024

76 mins

DFI Supported Film



In the face of a repressive military regime, young Sudanese activists Shajane, Maha, Muzamil, and their fellow revolutionaries stand resolute, expressing their resistance through poetry, chants, and creative art. As the country grapples with political turmoil and escalating violence, these activists are driven by a dream of a civilian-led Sudan—a vision they pursue despite the risks to their lives and freedom. Their poetic revolution serves as both a weapon and a form of solace, allowing them to communicate the suffering and aspirations of their generation. As protests intensify, the activists endure relentless challenges: police crackdowns, brutal military actions, and the looming threat of exile. Yet, their words resonate as a call to action, inspiring others within Sudan and beyond.

Through powerful scenes that capture the vibrancy of Sudan's youth, the story provides an intimate glimpse into the spirit of a generation undeterred by hardship. Set against the backdrop of Sudan's contemporary political struggles, this portrait of resilience and hope underscores the profound impact of art and words in confronting oppression. The activists' journey reflects a shared determination to redefine Sudan's future—offering a deeply moving testament to the enduring power of artistic resistance.

Opening Night

Giornate degli Autori Selection  
at Venice International  
Film Festival 2024

Director / Cinematographer:

**Hind Meddeb**

Producers: **Abel Nahmias,**  
**Michel Zana, Alice Ormières**

Editor: **Gladys Joujou**

Music: **Arthur H**

With: **Shajane, Maha,**  
**Muzamil, Khattab**



**Hind Meddeb,**  
a Franco-Tunisian  
filmmaker,  
developed  
her unique  
perspective  
through life

across France, Morocco, and Tunisia. A graduate of the Paris Institute of Political Studies, she has directed documentaries acclaimed for their exploration of rebellion and cultural resistance. Her films, including 'Electro Chaabi', 'Tunisia Clash', and 'Paris Stalingrad', have received international recognition, with the latter earning the World Cinema Award at New Zealand's Documentary Edge Festival. 'Sudan, Remember Us', premiering at Venice, furthers Meddeb's dedication to amplifying voices of social change.

# MADE IN QATAR

This special film showcases and celebrates the work of Qatari filmmakers, and those who call Qatar home. The programme presented this year features some internationally shown and critically-acclaimed short documentaries and narratives.

## Made in Qatar Jury

### Saleh Bakri

Head of the Jury



Saleh Bakri is an acclaimed Palestinian actor who is celebrated for his contributions to theatre and cinema both locally and internationally. He began his stage career in 2000 with performances in Palestine, including 'Death and the Maiden', directed by Juliano Mer Khamis, and 'Junoon', directed by Sameh Hijazi. Internationally, he appeared at London's Royal Court Theatre in 'Fireworks', written by Dalia Taha. In cinema, Bakri is known for roles in 'The Time That Remains' by Elia Suleiman and three films by Annemarie Jacir: 'Salt of This Sea', 'When I Saw You', and 'Wajib'. His role in 'Salvo' won the Grand Prix at the Cannes Film Festival's Semaine de la Critique, and he recently starred in 'The Blue Caftan' and 'The Teacher'. His work has earned him numerous accolades, including Best Actor at the Dubai International Film Festival for 'Wajib' and awards from the Festival d'Angoulême and Tangier National Film Festival for 'The Blue Caftan'. Bakri's 2021 role in the Oscar-nominated and DFI-supported 'The Present' further cemented his reputation as a leading figure in Arab cinema.

### Debra Aroko



Debra is a Kenyan filmmaker and producer with a passion for telling stories that capture the nuanced realities of communities facing the effects of a global climate crisis. Her work seeks to highlight the challenges they face while also exploring the resilience and hope that sustain them. Debra serves as a producer at the Solutions Storytelling Project, supported by the Skoll Foundation, overseeing the production of 19 short documentary films from across the African continent. The project connects African filmmakers with social innovators to create solutions-focused films that inspire positive change in their communities.

### Amal Al Muftah



Amal Al Muftah is a Qatari Filmmaker and Director. Her filmmaking career began in high school, directing short fiction films and documentaries. During her time at university, Amal directed two award-winning films, 'Smicha' (2015) and 'Sh'hab' (2018), which travelled to more than 50 festivals worldwide. Entering the art world through filmmaking, she directed a short art film for Qatar Museums' Art Mills exhibition, 'In Memory Of' (2022), and a feature documentary, 'Ode To Our Land' (2023), for the Doha Film Institute (DFI) and the National Museum of Qatar (NMoQ). Her recent work includes 'Light The Sky' (2022), a music video for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™. After experimenting with multiple formats, Amal is currently focusing on fiction storytelling.

## Alkaline

**Qatar / Malayalam, English / 2024**

18 mins

Created with Support from the Ministry of Public Health of Qatar



A father's health scare changes his life, leading him to an extreme organic lifestyle in an effort to maintain control over his health. However, his strict routines and dietary restrictions create a rift with his son, who lives a healthy life but does not meet his father's standards. Through conversations and self-reflection, the son attempts to bridge their divide, exploring the underlying fears and family dynamics driving their conflict. The film highlights the complex interplay between personal choices, family expectations and how fear can shape relationships in profound ways.

Director / Editor: **Paul Abraham, Abdulla Al-Hor**

Screenwriter / Producer: **Paul Abraham**

Cast: **Saju Paul, Paul Abraha**

**Paul Abraham** is an Indian filmmaker based in Qatar whose background in architecture shapes his cinematic storytelling. His work explores narrative and visual composition, blending architectural elements with film. 'Alkaline' marks his continued journey in documentary filmmaking and narrative expression.

**Abdulla Al-Hor**, a Qatari filmmaker with an MA in Film and Media from Johns Hopkins University, focuses on sound recording and design. His recent project, 'The Experiment', is currently in post-production. Al-Hor is also a Teaching Assistant at Qatar University, contributing to film studies.

## Breshna

**Qatar / Arabic / 2024**

13 mins



After surviving a brutal terrorist attack in Kabul, Breshna finds herself forced to leave Afghanistan as it falls deeper into unrest. She arrives in Qatar, carrying with her the scars of her past and dreams left behind. This moving short captures her reflections on hope, resilience, and the longing for peace as she comes to terms with loss and survival. Through her story, the film offers a deeply personal perspective on displacement and the strength needed to seek a new beginning amidst painful memories.

Director: **Obada Jarbi**

**Obada Jarbi** is a Jordanian-Palestinian filmmaker based in Qatar, with a background in Mass Communication. His debut film, 'Addicted to Alienation' (2016), began as a university project, followed by 'The Fishermen' (2017), his first work selected for various film festivals. Known for his narrative-driven style, Jarbi's project, 'Okht Rjal' (Woman of Steel) (2021), explored resilience through a culturally rooted lens, which is also central to his latest short 'Breshna'—a reflection on loss and the pursuit of peace.

## Can You See Me?

**Qatar / Arabic, English / 2024**

6 mins



Trapped in the repetitive cycle of her daily life, Maryam finds herself increasingly isolated and detached from those around her. Amid silent frustrations and unmet expectations, her solitude deepens as she feels invisible in her own world. Faced with an overwhelming sense of loneliness, Maryam is finally driven to confront the reality of her situation and the possibility of change. This evocative short is a reflective journey through the quiet struggles of inner turmoil, exploring resilience and self-discovery.

Director / Screenwriter: **Dhoha Abdelsattar**

Producer: **Muntaha El-Mumin**

Cinematographer: **Yanis Cherif**

Editor: **Amit Chowdhury, Abdul Jabbar Maki**

Music: **Walah**

Cast: **Rosey Nader, Yousef Rammah**

**Dhoha Abdelsattar** is a Qatari lens-based artist, writer, and director. Her work delves into themes of identity and community through portrait photography, alternative darkroom techniques, and narrative filmmaking. Abdelsattar has exhibited internationally and participated in creative residencies and labs, including with Arthere Istanbul, Foundation Fotodok in Utrecht, and Doha Film Institute's short documentary lab.

## Cochlea

**Qatar / Arabic / 2024**

8 mins

Created with Support from the Ministry of Public Health of Qatar



Rokia, a 50-year-old divorced Arab woman, reunites with her twenty-year-old son, Youssef, after six months apart. During their reunion, Rokia insists on performing a ritual she has often imposed on him: washing him. Youssef becomes increasingly frustrated as she washes his hair, scrubs his elbows, and cleans his ears. The ritual feels both mentally and physically painful to him. Despite his resistance, he begins to understand that his mother's unusual way of expressing love and care runs deeper than simply wanting him to be clean.

Director / Screenwriter: **Karim Emara**

**Karim Emara** is an Egyptian-American filmmaker who graduated from Northwestern University in Qatar and is pursuing a Master of Fine Arts in Film & Media at Emerson College. Raised in multiple cultures, Emara navigated a layered identity as an Arab and Muslim in the United States and as a Westerner in Qatar. His experiences have inspired him to create films that explore complex identities and cultural dynamics. His recent short, 'The Chandelier' (2023), won a Best Film award in Qatar and was screened at multiple film festivals across the Middle East. Emara is currently developing his next film, 'The AC' (2024).

# I Lay for You to Sleep

**Qatar / Arabic / 2024**

14 mins



As women gently wash his body, Ali journeys through memories and reflections, confronting the mysteries of life, death, and rebirth. Drifting between moments of his past and revelations about his loved ones, he seeks answers to profound questions about mortality. This contemplative experimental narrative uses poetic imagery to explore the emotional depths of loss, solitude, and renewal. With its meditative tone and immersive sound design, the film offers a deeply personal and spiritual exploration of how we navigate the abyss of grief and death.

Director / Screenwriter: **Ali Al Hajri**

Producer: **Basel Owies**

Cinematographer: **Zahed Bata**

Editor: **Abduljabbar Maki**

Music: **Vincent Erdeven**

Cast: **Ali Al Hajri, Roua Kalai, Ahmed Aljabri, Mohammed Al Dosari**

**Ali Al Hajri** is a Qatari filmmaker whose work is deeply rooted in a profound fascination with narratives that blur the lines between fantasy and realism. His commitment to innovative storytelling is evident in his exploration of the intricacies of human experiences and inner conflicts. Professionally, Ali Al Hajri is associated with the Qatar Foundation, where he uses his skills to produce and direct short documentaries that embody authenticity. His latest short film, ‘I Lay for You to Sleep’, is a nuanced exploration of the interplay between life, loss, and rebirth.

# MADE IN QATAR SHABAB

## Inspiring Young Talent Expanding DFI's Legacy of Local Storytelling

Made in Qatar Shabab is a dynamic two-day extension of our long-standing and ever-popular Made in Qatar initiative. This programme offers young filmmakers access to enriching talks, hands-on workshops, and informal networking opportunities. Designed to build on the success of Made in Qatar, this new initiative provides emerging talents with the essential tools and industry insights they need to thrive in the world of filmmaking.

The decision to expand into Made in Qatar Shabab reflects our commitment to supporting the next generation of filmmakers in Qatar. By offering specialised sessions that focus on practical skills and industry know-how, we aim to inspire and equip young creatives to continue the legacy of local storytelling, ensuring that their voices are heard both regionally and globally.

## I Made a Film, Now What?

### Understanding Film Distribution and Getting Your Film Seen

This masterclass empowers young filmmakers to take the next decisive steps after completing their films. From mastering distribution and marketing strategies to building vital industry connections, participants will learn how to effectively get their films in front of audiences. The session also offers key insights into securing funding for future projects and creating a network of lasting relationships within the industry, equipping filmmakers with the tools needed to build a sustainable and successful career.

## From Short to Feature

### A Journey of Personal and Professional Growth

This inspiring panel explores the transformative path from creating short films to producing feature-length projects, with a special focus on the importance of proof of concept. Panelists will discuss both the professional skills and personal growth that filmmakers experience as they transition to larger projects. The session will highlight how short films can serve as crucial stepping stones for securing funding and support for feature films, while also offering strategies for expanding creative vision and overcoming the challenges of long-form storytelling.

## The Art of Film Pitching

### Unleashing Your Persuasive Potential

This interactive workshop equips filmmakers with the tools to craft compelling pitches, from concept to final presentation. Participants will learn the key elements of storytelling, persuasion, and communication, transforming their ideas into engaging pitches that capture the attention of producers, investors, and collaborators. By honing their pitching skills, filmmakers will unlock their persuasive potential and bring their creative visions closer to reality.



# BARIQ

Our youngest audiences sparkle with energy. The films in this section are selected to satisfy the excitement and curiosity of children from the age of four and are appropriate for the whole family.

## Baking with Boris

'La Boulangerie De Boris' / France, Switzerland, Croatia  
/ No Dialogue / 2024

9 mins



In this delightful animated short, Boris, a devoted village baker, faces an unexpected challenge when he suddenly develops an allergy to flour. Known for his fresh, crusty bread, Boris must now devise a creative solution to continue baking for his neighbours. Through humour and charm, *Baking with Boris* by Maša Avramović explores themes of resilience, community, and adaptability, capturing the spirit of a small village rallying together and celebrating tradition in the face of change.

Director / Screenwriter: **Maša Avramović**  
Producer: **Reginald de Guillebon, Nicolas Burlet, Draško Ivezić**  
Cinematographer: **Maša Avramović**  
Editor: **Antoine Rodet**  
Music: **Pablo Pico**

Born in 1994 in Belgrade, **Serbia**, **Maša Avramović** is an animation director and illustrator. A graduate of the Faculty of Applied Arts (2017) and *La Poudrière* (2020), her films have gained recognition at festivals worldwide. Her works include the graduation film 'Stuck Together' and 'Trails of the Morning', which was part of the "Fresh Out of School" collection. 'Baking with Boris', created during her residency at Folimage, continues her exploration of storytelling through animation.

## Bottle

South Korea / No Dialogue / 2023

5 mins



Discarded on a beach alongside other waste, a glass bottle soon finds itself alone as everything else is carried off by the tide. Struggling to connect with a nearby seagull, crab, and clams, it experiences an overwhelming sense of isolation. As a storm rolls in, reflecting its desolation, the bottle's journey subtly captures the consequences of environmental neglect and the enduring need for connection. 'Bottle' uses animation to highlight themes of loneliness and the overlooked impact of human waste.

Director / Screenwriter: **Minseo Kim**  
Music: **G-Yerro, Jakub Pietras, Alon Peretz, Anthony Vega**

Born in Gimpo, South Korea, in 1998, **Minseo Kim** is an emerging animator and filmmaker who graduated from Sungkyunkwan University with a degree in Film, TV, and Multimedia in 2023. Through works like *Bottle*, Kim brings a delicate perspective to themes of isolation and environmental impact, blending visual storytelling with emotional depth.

Filante

France / No Dialogue / 2023  
9 mins



Paulette, a young girl, sees the same shooting star every night and wishes for the return of her mysteriously missing pet rat. Despite her nightly wish, the pet doesn’t come back, and Paulette begins to suspect that something might be wrong with her star. ‘Filante’ is a touching, dialogue-free animated short that explores themes of hope, loss, and wonder through a visually stunning journey across the night sky. The cut-out animation style adds an element of dreamlike beauty to this poetic tale.

Director / Screenwriter: **Marion Jamault**  
Producer: **Lisa Verhaverbeke, Marin Dalmier**  
Music: **Chamaye**

**Marion Jamault** is an animator and illustrator based in Paris. After studying editing at the Institut National de l’Audiovisuel, she trained in animation at the Diplôme des Métiers d’Arts in Clermont-Ferrand and later at La Cambre in Brussels. Her animated works have been showcased at numerous international film festivals, including ‘Le Loup Boule’, which was screened at the Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival and the Tehran International Animation Festival.

Rice Ball Rice

Japan / No dialogue / 2023  
2 mins



This visually captivating short takes viewers on a journey through the life cycle of rice—from planting and growing to harvesting and cooking. Accompanied by lively music, the film invites children to explore the beauty of nature and the joy of simple, everyday things. Designed for young audiences, this whimsical film brings rice to life in a way that is sure to delight and educate. The stop-motion technique adds a unique touch to this heartwarming tale of appreciation for food and culture.

Director: **Kato Ikuo**  
Music: **Abo Wakako**

**Kato Ikuo** is an independent Japanese animator who studied animation at university. After graduating, he continued to create animated films, working with TaMaNi Film, a collective dedicated to imaginative storytelling. His work is known for its creative use of claymation and glass-based animation techniques. With ‘Rice Ball Rice’, Kato brings his playful, tactile approach to life, sharing a love for everyday wonders through the lens of animation.

Scrubby

Germany / No Dialogue / 2023  
7 mins



A young creature named Scrubby lives a warm and comfortable life nestled in his mother’s thick fur. But when she starts to lose her fur, Scrubby’s secure world is thrown into uncertainty. As he sets out to find her, he encounters a cold, naked creature in the snow. Scrubby must decide if his fur is enough to protect both of them. Through beautiful animation, Scrubby tells a touching story about love, sacrifice, and finding warmth in unexpected places.

Director: **Damaris Zielke**  
Screenwriter: **Manuel Ostwald**  
Producer: **Jiayan Chen**  
Cinematographer: **Michael Throne**  
Sales: **AG Animationsfilm**  
Distribution: **Fabian&Fred**

**Paul Vollet**, born in 1996 in Düsseldorf, Germany, has been passionate about animation from a young age. He began his career working for a video agency in Hamburg before enrolling in the Animation program at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg in 2017. Paul graduated in 2023, with ‘Scrubby’ as his final project. His filmography includes ‘Loop’ (2014), ‘The Old Woman and the Sea’ (2018), and ‘Ignophobia’ (2020), showcasing his talent for storytelling through animation.

# Imaginary Friends Cine-Concert

A co-production by Cinéma Public / Ciné Junior and Forum des images



A symphony for all the senses as music and movies merge as one—forming a truly magical moment for all ages! French singer and songwriter Joseph d’Anvers is renowned for his electro-rock music, which he has developed over the course of five acclaimed albums. A multi-instrumentalist, he has collaborated with numerous famous French artists, like Françoise Hardy and Alain Bashung.

In ‘Imaginary Friends’, he has composed enchanting tracks to accompany five spellbinding shorts, each narrating tales of charming creatures embarking on heartwarming adventures. As these stories unfold, d’Anvers’ compositions breathe life into every frame, taking viewers on a journey where enchanting characters dance, dream, and discover.

**‘Silence Under The Bark’** by Joanna Lurie  
Amidst the towering pines and wintry backdrop, mysterious creatures convey tales that touch the heart, emphasising that true communication often transcends language.

**‘Every Star’** by Yawen Zheng  
A boy emerges from nature’s embrace to ensure that every city child, despite the fog, experiences the wonder of the night sky.

**‘Hop Frog’** by Leonid Shmelkov  
In a world of endless jumps and fun, a misstep leads to an adventurous musical journey of reconnection in this melodic tale about finding one’s rhythm again.

**‘Children of the Moon’** by Ursula Ulmi  
A celestial lullaby unfolds in the heart of the moon’s tender embrace. Once cocooned in lunar slumber, children awaken to explore the mystique of its now-green meadows.

**‘Moon Dog’** by Mathieu Guimond  
As the world sleeps, a wolf awakes to a liminal landscape full of nature’s nocturnal nuances, inviting viewers into a star-filled vista seldom seen.



# MOHAQ COMPETITION

The new moon is full of hope and endless possibilities. The critical minds of young people will be challenged and inspired by these films, which are appropriate for audiences 8 years of age and older.

## Diplodocus

Poland, Czech Republic / English / 2024

90 mins



Set in a comic book universe, 'Diplodocus' follows a young, adventurous dinosaur on a quest to rescue his family. His peaceful life is shattered by a mysterious fog that takes his parents away, prompting him to venture into unknown worlds. Alongside Hocus Pocus, the wizard, Professor Nervekowsky, and Entomology, the pilot, Diplodocus faces fantastical creatures and awe-inspiring landscapes. Together, they unveil the truth: they are characters in the comic series of Ted, a struggling artist pressured by his publisher to abandon his vision.

Combining 3D animation and a nod to Poland's classic comic art by Tadeusz Baranowski, 'Diplodocus' is a heartfelt tale of self-discovery, imagination, and resilience. As Diplodocus and his friends strive to escape Ted's eraser, they remind him of the joy in embracing one's unique voice. This ambitious project—Poland's first 3D animated feature—balances absurd humour and philosophical depth, making it both a family-friendly adventure and a reflection on artistic integrity. Wojtek Wawszczyk's direction honours the legacy of Polish comics while charting new territory in animation.

Director / Screenwriter:

**Wojtek Wawszczyk**

Cinematographer:

**Tomasz Lew Leśniak**

Music: **Mikołaj Stroiński**

Cast: **Julian Wanderer,**

**Tadeusz Baranowski,**

**Rachel Butera, Helena Englert**



**Wojtek**

**Wawszczyk**

is an acclaimed Polish animator and filmmaker, known for his work

in both feature films and short animations. A graduate of Lodz Film School and Filmakademie Ludwigsburg, Wawszczyk has directed numerous award-winning shorts including 'Headless' and 'Mouse'. His animation expertise brought him to Hollywood's Digital Domain, where he contributed to I, Robot (2004) and Aeon Flux (2005). He later co-directed George the Hedgehog (2011), which won the Grand Prix at South Korea's SICAF. Currently with Human Film, Wawszczyk is celebrated for his animated feature Diplodocus, inspired by Tadeusz Baranowski's iconic comics.

Nominated for the Un Certain  
Regard Award at Cannes 2024

Director / Editor: **Gints Zilbalodis**  
Screenwriter: **Gints Zilbalodis, Matīss Kaža**  
Producer: **Matīss Kaža, Gints Zilbalodis, Ron Dyens, Gregory Zalcman**  
Music: **Gints Zilbalodis, Rihards Zalupe**



**Gints Zilbalodis** is a Latvian filmmaker and animator known for his distinctive style and ability to create

emotionally resonant, dialogue-free narratives. His debut feature, 'Away', was awarded the Contrechamp Award at Annecy and screened in over 90 festivals worldwide, including Ajyal 2019. Zilbalodis has a background in hand-drawn animation, 3D animation, and live-action, blending these techniques in his work. His latest feature, 'Flow', premiered in the Un Certain Regard section at Cannes in 2024 and continues his exploration of visual storytelling and themes of survival, nature, and collaboration.

# Flow

Latvia, France, Belgium / No Dialogue / 2024  
85 mins



In a world overtaken by a catastrophic flood, a lone cat is forced to leave its devastated home and seek safety on a boat filled with an unlikely group of animals. As they navigate the surreal, waterlogged landscapes, each animal must confront the challenges of survival in an unfamiliar environment. Despite their differences, the creatures gradually learn to rely on one another, forging an uneasy but necessary alliance as they sail through this transformed world. The journey is marked by moments of danger and wonder as the animals face obstacles, both external and internal, testing their instincts for self-preservation and community.

The film presents a visually stunning, dialogue-free experience that relies on powerful imagery and emotional nuance to convey its themes. Through the vivid, dreamlike landscapes, the animals' interactions speak to the primal forces of survival, fear, and cooperation. The film explores how isolation and togetherness shape the characters' experiences in a post-disaster reality, offering a contemplative look at how creatures—human or otherwise—adapt to new environments. As they travel through this flooded world, the animals discover not only the vastness of the transformed landscape, but also the potential for connection in a time of profound uncertainty.

# Through Rocks and Clouds

'Raíz' / Peru, Chile / Quechua, Spanish / 2024  
83 mins



In the isolated Andes, 8-year-old Feliciano lives a simple life, herding alpacas and sharing his excitement about Peru's World Cup qualifiers with his loyal companions—a young alpaca named Ronaldo and his dog, Rambo. Beneath this peaceful routine, however, lies a growing threat to his village: a mining company that has contaminated their land and water, pressuring villagers to sell their property. As Feliciano's community grapples with the environmental destruction and the potential loss of their homes, the situation takes a personal turn when he discovers that his alpaca, Ronaldo, has gone missing.

While his village fights to resist the corporate takeover, Feliciano embarks on a determined search for his beloved animal. His journey through the Andes highlights the struggles faced by indigenous communities who find themselves caught between preserving their traditional ways of life and the destructive forces of modern industry. Through Feliciano's eyes, the film presents a deeply human story of innocence, resilience, and the fight for survival, set against the backdrop of the majestic but threatened Andean landscape.

Special Mention of the  
Generation Kplus International  
Jury at the Berlin International  
Film Festival 2024

Director: **Franco García Becerra**  
Screenwriter: **Annemarie Gunkel, Alicia Quispe**  
Producer: **Diego Sarmiento, Jorge Constantino, Annemarie Gunkel**  
Cinematographer: **Johan Carrasco**  
Editor: **Franco García Becerra, Juan Francisco González**  
Music: **Daniel Castro**  
Cast: **Alberth Merma, Nely Huayta, Richard Taipe, José Merma, Rubén Huilca**



**Franco García Becerra** is a Peruvian filmmaker whose debut feature, 'Southern Winds' (2018), premiered

at the Lima Film Festival and was screened at numerous international festivals, including the Chicago Latino Film Festival and Cine de las Américas. His second feature, 'Through Rocks and Clouds' (2024), had its world premiere at the 74th Berlin Film Festival. García is known for his visually rich and socially conscious films, which explore the lives and struggles of indigenous and Andean communities.



Director: **Klemen Dvornik**  
Screenwriter: **Dora Šustić**  
Producer: **Barbara Daljavec, Braislav Srdić**  
Cinematographer: **David Hofmann**  
Editor: **Ivana Fumić**  
Music: **Davor Herceg**  
Cast: **Kaja Zabret, Kaja Šuštar, Niko Lemark, Youri Friderich**



**Klemen Dvornik** is an acclaimed Slovenian director, born in 1977 in Novo Mesto. He holds a degree in Film and TV directing from the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film, and Television in Ljubljana. His career spans music videos, television, and feature films, and he is best known for directing the successful TV series ‘The Lake’ (2019). Block 5 marks his latest feature film, selected for the Locarno Kids Screenings, which showcases his continuing passion for stories that bridge generational divides and promote social cohesion.

# Block 5

Slovenia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Serbia / Slovenian / 2024  
79 mins



‘Block 5’ tells the story of 12-year-old Alma, who has recently moved to a new neighbourhood with her father after the death of her mother, an environmental activist. Alma struggles to adjust to her new surroundings and finds herself at odds with Luna, the leader of a local skate gang. The two girls are bitter rivals until Alma discovers that her father’s company plans to demolish the community playground to build a parking lot. Determined to save the cherished green space, Alma realises she has no choice but to join forces with Luna and her gang.

What begins as a mission to stop the construction soon becomes a journey of understanding and teamwork. Alma and Luna, once enemies, must learn to work together to achieve their goal, discovering the importance of friendship, unity, and forgiveness along the way. As they plot to sabotage the construction project, their efforts reflect the greater struggle of preserving natural spaces in the face of modern development. The film is a touching and energetic adventure that highlights the power of young voices in the fight for environmental preservation, offering a heartwarming look at community and resilience in the face of challenges.

## A Short Film About Kids

Palestine / Arabic, English / 2023

10 mins



Four children from a refugee camp in Bethlehem yearn to see the sea for the first time. Facing restrictions and living under difficult circumstances, they embark on a journey driven by sheer imagination and determination. Their adventure becomes a symbol of resilience, capturing the spirit of children who, despite their realities, hold on to hope and the simple joys of life. Director Ibrahim Handal crafts a touching exploration of the power of childhood dreams in the most challenging environments.

Director / Screenwriter / Cinematographer: **Ibrahim Handal**  
Producer: **Ibrahim Handal, Wisam Al Jafari**  
Editor: **Ibrahim Handal, Hayat Laban**  
Cast: **Omar Qaraqe, Ayham Qaraqe, Majd Al-Khatib, Omar Al Kurd**

**Ibrahim Handal** is a Palestinian filmmaker and cinematographer from Bethlehem. He graduated in Cinematography from Dar Al-Kalima University in 2019. Ibrahim has served as Director of Photography on several acclaimed short films, including 'Bethlehem 2001', 'Ambience', and 'Between You and Me'. His directorial work reflects a deep connection to his homeland, with films like 'Cold' and 'A Short Film About Kids' capturing the resilience and dreams of Palestinian life. He is currently developing his first feature film.

## Bottles

Morocco / Arabic / 2024

18 mins



Said, a 13-year-old living in Rabat's old Medina, spends his summer collecting empty beer bottles to sell. Driven by compassion, he uses the earnings to feed a dog he secretly cares for, challenging his family's and community's beliefs about what is 'haram' or forbidden. As his friend urges him to abandon his mission, Said wrestles with loyalty, religious expectations, and his own values in this moving short film about personal conviction.

Director / Screenwriter / Producer: **Yassine El Idrissi**  
Cinematographer: **Matteo De Angelis**  
Cast: **Hind Dafer, Rabii El Fakih, Youssef Benmamoun**

Born in Morocco in 1983, **Yassine El Idrissi** developed a passion for photography and visual storytelling at age 16. He worked as a journalist for Moroccan and international publications before directing his first documentary short, 'Waiting for the Snow', in 2009. A 2013 graduate of the Netherlands Film Academy, El Idrissi has since focused on directing, with his films screening at over 140 festivals, including the Rotterdam Film Festival and the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival.

## Head in the Clouds

'Tête en l'air' / Belgium, France / French / 2023

11 mins



Alphonse, a little squirrel, is endlessly captivated by the clouds, often losing himself in their beauty and even snapping pictures of them. Despite the playful scepticism of his parents and friends, Alphonse's curiosity is unwavering as he pursues his passion with the same boldness as great explorers. Through vibrant animation, Head in the Clouds captures the importance of appreciating the world around us and celebrates the unique perspectives that make us who we are. This enchanting short invites audiences to pause, look up, and marvel at life's quiet wonders.

Director / Screenwriter: **Rémi Durin**  
Producer: **Arnaud Demuynck**  
Music: **Yan Volsy**

**Rémi Durin** is a Belgian filmmaker and co-founder of L'Enclume Animation Studio in Brussels. A graduate of the ENSAV La Cambre animated film workshop, Durin's work spans shorts, feature films, and musical animations, including 'The Scent of Carrots' and 'Big Wolf & Little Wolf'. He also co-directed 'Yuku and the Himalayan Flower', a feature film released in 2022. Known for his vivid storytelling and attention to detail, Durin's films often reflect themes of nature, imagination, and human connection.

## H2O

France, Belguim / No Dialogue / 2024

10 mins



This cinematic exploration of water's essence unveils its beauty and power in a series of meticulously crafted vignettes. Beginning with clouds cascading over the Auvergne mountains, H2o traces the journey of water in its many forms: ice, snow, and the life-sustaining role it plays through irrigation. Shot in stunning, high-definition detail, this experimental short film honours water as an element we often overlook. With no dialogue, H2o invites viewers to meditate on water's enigmatic and essential role in life and the environment.

Director / Screenwriter / Cinematographer: **Alexis Jeannot**  
Music: **Héloïse Schippers**

**Alexis Jeannot**, born in Auvergne, France, in 1987, initially pursued environmental chemistry before transitioning to a career in filmmaking. He spent four years working on air pollution in French Guiana, which inspired his dedication to environmental storytelling through film. After studying video at the École Agnès Varda in Brussels, Jeannot returned to Auvergne to establish Gagus Productions. His films, including 'Our Ghost Rivers' and 'Story of a Narse', explore environmental themes with a poetic touch, and 'H2o' is his latest visual tribute to nature's wonders.

# Lullaby

'Tahweeda' / Jordan / Arabic / 2024  
8 mins



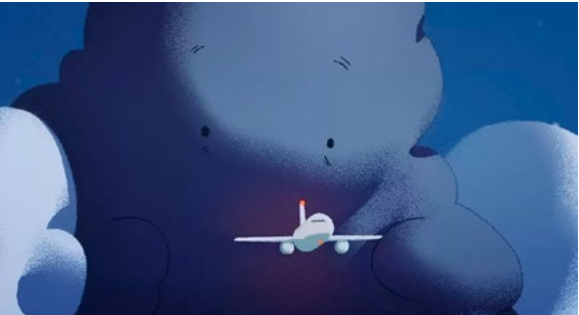
A father tells his daughter a touching story about his deep connection with six sheep, each with a unique personality. Through a mix of live action and animation, the film captures their idyllic moments together, until one sheep goes missing. The father risks everything to rescue it, demonstrating love, bravery, and the unbreakable bonds that shape our lives. Inspired by real events, this short film is a heartfelt tribute to the director's father and the heroism of all fathers.

Director / Screenwriter: **Haneen Aisha**  
Producer: **Joseph Shamoun**  
Cinematographer: **Ahmad Jalboush**  
Editor: **Haneen Aisha, Majd Manna**  
Music: **Yosour AlZoubi**  
Cast: **Ishaq Elias, Tia Shehadeh**

**Haneen Aisha** graduated with a BA in Computer Graphics & Animation from Princess Sumaya University in 2015. Passionate about filmmaking, she honed her skills through the MedFilm Factory and has since worked on various projects as an editor and colourist. Haneen has taught editing in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain. Known for blending animation with live action, she created 'Lullaby' as a tribute to her father and spends her time expanding her knowledge of cinema.

# Nube

France, Hungary, Mexico / No Dialogue / 2023  
8 mins



Noma, a fluffy white cloud, lives peacefully in the sky, but her daughter Mixtli—a dark and tempestuous young cloud—is on the verge of raining prematurely. Witnessing another storm cloud dissipate in sorrow, Noma becomes fearful for her daughter's safety. 'Cloud' tells a story of nurturing and the delicate cycles of life, capturing the balance between maternal protectiveness and the natural flow of change. Through rich, painterly animation, this tender film takes viewers on a visual journey of loss, renewal, and the beauty inherent in each phase of life.

Director / Screenwriter: **Diego Alonso Sánchez de la Barquera Estrada, Christian Arredondo Narváez**

**Diego Alonso Sánchez de la Barquera Estrada** began his career in animation as a motion designer, spending 12 years directing advertisements. His passion for storytelling led him to pursue a Master of Arts in Character Animation at Gobelins, where he co-directed 'Cloud', his first animated short.

**Christian Arredondo Narváez** is an animator and illustrator, also trained at Gobelins, with a deep commitment to the visual arts since 2009. His directorial work includes 'Tauromaquia' and 'La Frontera'. Through 'Cloud', he explores themes of loss and life cycles, drawing on his background in animated storytelling.

# Rasmalai

India / Hindi / 2024  
9 mins



When Guddi, the youngest in a small-town Indian family, feels her achievements go unnoticed by her father, a quiet shift unfolds in the household. Conversations turn tense, and family dinners grow cold as Guddi's silent defiance challenges her father's role as head of the family. Rasmalai captures the subtle shifts in family dynamics, where love and respect hang in a delicate balance. As tensions rise, a peace offering as simple as a dish of "rasmalai" can hopefully mend the bond between father and daughter.

Director / Screenwriter: **Debopom Chakraborty**  
Music: **Subhasish Chakraborty**  
Cast: **Ajay Kumar Tiwari, Parul Keshri, Soma Banerjee**

**Debopom Chakraborty** is a filmmaker and animation student at the National Institute of Design in India, specialising in Animation Film Design. Growing up in various parts of India, he developed a keen eye for slice-of-life storytelling, capturing everyday nuances with humour and emotion. His creative journey began with illustration and expanded to animation, leading him to tell stories that feel both authentic and nostalgic. 'Rasmalai' is his debut short, exploring family bonds and traditional roles in Indian households with a uniquely personal touch.

# Sour Candy

'Anaar Daana' / India / Hindi, Marwari / 2024  
20 mins



Guddal, an imaginative 5-year-old, lives a carefree life with her siblings in their ancestral home. Surrounded by love and playfulness, her world is simple and joyful. However, a sudden, unsettling event brings unfamiliar guests into their home, altering the harmony she once knew. As Guddal navigates these changes, her understanding of family and life begins to evolve. 'Sour Candy' is a poignant exploration of childhood innocence, capturing the emotional complexities of loss, confusion, and growth.

Director / Screenwriter: **Nishi Dugar**  
Producer: **Nishi Dugar, Kush Patel, Anirudh Chordia**  
Cinematographer: **Ashwin Ameri**  
Editor: **Pavan Theurkar**  
Music: **Dawn Vincent**  
Cast: **Veda Agrawal, Lavya Jain, Manav Hinduja**

**Nishi Dugar** is a filmmaker and cinematographer from Jaipur, India. She studied Cinematography at the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, and holds a bachelor's degree in Multimedia from Saint Xavier's College, Kolkata. A member of the Indian Women Cinematographer's Collective, Nishi has been fascinated by films since childhood. She began exploring photography and cinema with a desire to tell stories that capture the intimate and delicate facets of human relationships. 'Sour Candy' is her debut short film, through which she returns to her roots in Rajasthan.



The Girl with the Occupied Eyes

Portugal / No Dialogue / 2024

8 mins



A distracted girl journeys through various environments, fixated on her phone while missing the fantastical characters trying to engage with her. From dolphins to aliens, everyone fails to catch her attention—until an unexpected incident breaks her from her digital trance. This visually captivating animation explores the tension between our reliance on technology and the beauty of the real world, offering a touching reflection on human connection in a tech-obsessed age.

Director / Screenwriter / Editor: **André Carrilho**  
Producer: **Hemi Fortes, Filipe Araújo**  
Music: **Nuno Costa**

**André Carrilho**, a Portuguese illustrator, cartoonist, and filmmaker, has earned over 100 awards throughout his 30-year career. His work has been showcased in prominent publications like The New York Times and The New Yorker, as well as exhibitions across the globe. His first animated film, ‘Dinner in Lisbon’, debuted in 2007. ‘The Girl with the Occupied Eyes’, adapted from his award-winning children’s book, marks his second venture into animation, exploring the delicate balance between technology and human experience.

# HILAL COMPETITION

Carried along by the crescent in their teenage years, soon-to-be adults will find films in this section that encourage their self-expression. Hilal films are suitable for audiences 13 years of age and older.

## Brief History of a Family

China, France, Denmark, Qatar / Mandarin / 2024

99 mins

DFI Supported Film



In 'Brief History of a Family', director Jianjie Lin examines the delicate balance of familial relationships when a new, mysterious presence enters the fold. Wei, the outgoing only child of a middle-class family, forms an unexpected bond with his quiet classmate Shuo after an incident at school. Inviting Shuo into his home, Wei's parents are immediately taken with the boy's charm, maturity, and academic potential—qualities they had hoped to cultivate in their own son. As Shuo becomes a fixture in their home, long-buried emotions and unresolved family tensions begin to surface.

Shuo, whose troubled background contrasts sharply with Wei's privileged upbringing, becomes the focus of the parents' attention, subtly shifting the family dynamic. With every interaction, the family's seemingly perfect life begins to unravel, revealing cracks in their relationships, unmet expectations, and unspoken desires. The film navigates these tensions with an eerie, slow-building intensity, as Shuo's presence forces each family member to confront uncomfortable truths about themselves. 'Brief History of a Family' is a psychological drama that deftly explores the complexities of family life, identity, and the subtle power dynamics that shape interpersonal relationships.

Winner of the Best Artistic Contribution Award at the Beijing International Film Festival 2024

Director / Screenwriter: **Lin Jianjie**

Producer: **Lou Ying, Zheng Yue, Wang Yiwen**

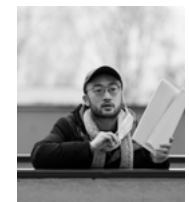
Cinematographer: **Zhang Jiahao**

Editor: **Per K. Kirkegaard**

Music: **Toke Brorson Odin**

Cast: **Zu Feng, Guo Keyu,**

**Sun Xilun, Lin Muran**



**Jianjie Lin**

is a Chinese filmmaker who began his career studying bioinformatics before

transitioning into cinema. He holds an MFA in filmmaking from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Lin's short films, including 'A Visit' (2015) and 'Gu' (2017), have been screened at international festivals. Brief History of a Family is his feature film debut, exploring themes of family, societal change, and psychological depth through a suspenseful narrative.



Winner of the SACD Award  
at Cannes Film Festival 2024

Director: **Leonardo van Dijl**  
Screenwriter: **Leonardo van Dijl, Ruth Becquart**  
Producer: **Gilles De Schryver, Gilles Coulier, Wouter Sap, Roxanne Sarkozy**  
Cinematographer: **Nicolas Karakatsanis**  
Editor: **Bert Jacobs**  
Music: **Caroline Shaw**  
Cast: **Tessa Van den Broeck, Ruth Becquart, Koen De Bouw, Claire Bodson, Laurent Caron**



**Leonardo van Dijl** is a Belgian writer and director known for his emotionally charged

storytelling. His short film 'Stephanie' (2020) was selected for prestigious festivals including Cannes, San Sebastian, and TIFF, winning multiple international awards. 'Julie Keeps Quiet' marks his feature debut, a co-production between Belgium and Sweden, which explores the nuances of silence, agency, and identity. With a strong focus on character-driven narratives, van Dijl's work consistently sheds light on the complexities of human behaviour. He is an alumnus of several renowned film labs, including Berlinale and TIFF Talent Labs.

# Julie Keeps Quiet

'Julie Zwijgt' / Belgium, Sweden / Dutch, French / 2024  
97 mins



Julie, a talented young tennis player at an elite academy, finds herself at the centre of a scandal when her coach is suddenly suspended amidst an investigation. As her peers are encouraged to come forward with their stories, Julie decides to stay silent, refusing to speak out about the situation. Her silence becomes both a shield and a burden as she navigates the mounting pressures from the academy, her teammates, and herself. The film deftly explores the complexities of silence as both a form of power and suppression, exploring the emotional and psychological impact of Julie's decision.

Her inner turmoil unfolds slowly, offering a profound commentary on the broader societal expectations of women to speak out or remain silent in the face of adversity. Director Leonardo van Dijl crafts a nuanced narrative where every pause and unspoken word resonates, highlighting the tension between individual agency and external demands. With a standout performance by Tessa Van den Broeck in the title role, 'Julie Keeps Quiet' is a poignant and thought-provoking debut that examines how silence can be both a prison and a form of quiet resistance.

# Requiem for a Tribe

Iran, Spain, Qatar / Farsi / 2024  
70 mins  
DFI Supported Film



In 'Requiem for a Tribe', director Marjan Khosravi paints a powerful and poignant portrait of Hajar, a resilient 55-year-old woman from Iran's Bakhtiari nomadic tribe. Hajar's world is rapidly changing: her family, influenced by the pressures of modern life, urges her to abandon the nomadic way of life and settle in the city. However, Hajar is not ready to give up her deep connection to nature, her flock of sheep, or her freedom. Through Hajar's struggle, the film captures broader social issues like increasing urbanisation, patriarchal control, and the effects of climate change on traditional lifestyles.

The film's narrative resonates deeply due to Khosravi's personal background as a Bakhtiari herself. It presents an intimate and compassionate exploration of the sacrifices nomadic women are expected to make in the face of modernity. Shot over several years, 'Requiem for a Tribe' not only highlights the emotional and physical struggles of Hajar but also becomes a testament to the fading traditions of nomadic life in Iran. This documentary, supported by major international film funds, such as the Hot Docs CrossCurrents Fund and Doha Film Institute, is a compelling reflection on identity, survival, and the cost of progress.

Director: **Marjan Khosravi**  
Screenwriter: **Marjan Khosravi, Milad Khosravi**  
Producer: **Milad Khosravi, Stephanie von Lukowicz**  
Cinematographer: **Mehdi Azadi, Mohammad Gholipour**  
Editor: **Loghman Sokhanvar**  
Music: **Mehdi Khosravi**  
With: **Hajar Faramarzi**



**Marjan Khosravi** is an award-winning Iranian filmmaker whose work focuses on the

intersection of tradition, women's rights, and modernity. Her first mid-length documentary, 'The Snow Calls,' won the Best Feature Documentary award at Big Sky IDFF. Khosravi has since created a series of impactful documentaries, including 'The Dream of a Horse' and 'Mrs. Iran's Husband,' both of which received critical acclaim at major international film festivals. In 2024, she premiered her first feature documentary, 'Requiem for a Tribe,' which reflects her deep connection to her Bakhtiari heritage.

Winner of the Albert Maysles  
Award at the Tribeca  
Film Festival 2024

Director: **Debra Aroko, Nicole Gormley**  
Screenwriter: **Vickie Curtis, Peter Goetz, Debra Aroko**  
Producer: **Nicole Gormley, Peter Goetz, Mungai Kiroga, Caryn Capotosto**  
Cinematographer: **Campbell Brewer**  
Editor: **Tessa Malsam, Davis Coombe**  
Music: **David Naroth, Monica Sonand, David Fleming**  
With: **Simon Ali, Haron Wanyoike**



**Nicole Gormley** is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and ocean advocate. She has produced

content in over 50 countries, including the Netflix Emmy-nominated series ‘Ugly Delicious’. Her previous work includes ‘Lessons from Jeju’ and ‘Daughter of the Sea’.



**Debra Aroko** is a Kenyan filmmaker focused on stories that capture the nuanced

realities of communities impacted by climate change. She currently serves as a producer for the Solutions Storytelling Project, creating films that highlight African perspectives on global issues.

# Searching for Amani

Kenya, USA / English, Swahili / 2024  
80 mins



In the vast landscapes of Laikipia, Kenya, 13-year-old Simon Ali’s life takes a devastating turn when his father, a respected conservancy guide, is mysteriously murdered. Grief-stricken but determined, Simon picks up his video camera and embarks on an investigation to uncover the truth. With his best friend Haron by his side, Simon’s quest for answers leads them deeper into the complexities of the region’s political conflicts, unresolved colonial tensions, and the grim realities of climate change. As Simon delves into his father’s death, he begins to realise the interconnectedness of these issues. The encroaching drought threatens both the wildlife conservancies and the local communities, amplifying already existing tensions.

Simon’s pursuit of justice evolves into something far greater than a personal journey—he discovers the harsh realities of how environmental degradation is exacerbating inequality, deepening regional conflicts, and displacing entire communities. ‘Searching for Amani’ is a poignant coming-of-age documentary that portrays Simon’s transformation from a grieving boy into an impassioned activist. The film sensitively captures his personal growth, all while confronting the larger global crises of climate change and social justice. Through Simon’s unfiltered lens, the film offers a powerful and moving reflection on resilience, activism, and the fight for a better future.

## A Meal

South Korea / Korean / 2023

14 mins



When a delivery driver accidentally topples his motorcycle, spilling a meal across the street, he hastily repackages the food and delivers it to his customer, who has special needs. Upon receiving a complaint, he returns to the restaurant, only to find they cannot remake the meal due to missing ingredients. Torn between his job and conscience, the driver decides to buy the ingredients himself and returns to personally prepare the meal for the customer, leading to a poignant shared experience.

Director / Screenwriter / Producer: **Hyunmin Yang**

Cinematographer: **Jaehyun Kim**

Music: **Jeongyeon Lee**

Cast: **Joonyoung Son, Kimyoung Han, Jungyoon Kang**

**Hyunmin Yang**, born in 1996, is a South Korean filmmaker currently studying at Chung-ang University's Film Department. With a focus on character-driven storytelling, he directed 'A Meal' in 2023, which has been selected for festivals, including the 46th Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival and the 15th Seoul Yeongdeungpo International Extreme-Short Film Festival. Yang's work often examines complex human interactions, as demonstrated in 'A Meal', which explores the themes of empathy, responsibility, and connection.

## Canary in a Coal Mine

Lebanon / Arabic / 2024

20 mins



Set in a remote Lebanese village, Canary in a Coal Mine follows Anis, who is left to guard his aunt's house for the night. When thieves break in, Anis pretends to be one of them to survive. Coerced into helping them steal from the home, he later discovers that the intruders are actually corrupt law enforcement officers. This darkly comedic tale offers a sharp commentary on the pervasive corruption in Lebanon and the absurd roles that citizens often play within it.

Director / Screenwriter: **Dwan Kaoukji**

Cast: **Josef Akiki, Ahmad Ghossein, Fadi Abu Samra**

**Dwan Kaoukji** is a Lebanese filmmaker born and raised in Kuwait. With a background in social sciences, she recently ventured into filmmaking. 'Canary in a Coal Mine' marks her debut in short fiction. Previously, Kaoukji directed the BBC World Service documentary 'The Soul of the Rose', which explored the lives of natural perfumers in Northern India. Broadcast in 2016, the film was featured on the BBC World Service and BBC World News website. 'Canary in a Coal Mine' showcases her growing interest in social issues through the medium of film.

## Dancing in the Corner

Poland / Polish / 2024

14 mins



After the fall of communism, colour television sets flood Polish homes, changing how people perceive their world. But as a father and son's lives evolve over three decades, they discover that dreams and reality don't always align. 'Dancing in the Corner' captures this subtle transformation, using their relationship as a metaphor for Poland's societal changes. Through heartfelt storytelling, this compelling short reflects on the universal challenge of reconciling expectations with life's realities.

Director / Screenwriter: **Jan Bujnowski**

Producers: **Marcin Malatyński**

Cinematographer: **Jan Grobliński**

Editor: **Kosma Kowalczyk**

Music: **Jan Bujnowski, Bogdan Klat**

Cast: **Marcin Bujnowski, Filip Bojarski, Henryk Ceballos,**

**Ignacy Ceballos, Ignacy Marczyk**

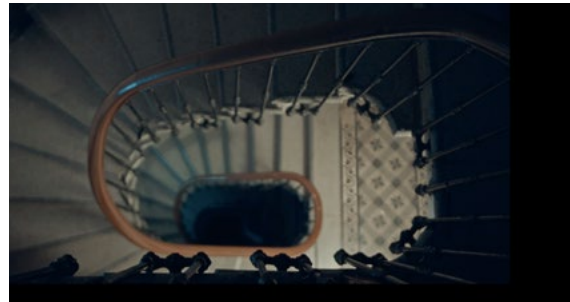
Distribution: **Marvin&Wayne Short Films**

**Jan Bujnowski** is a Polish filmmaker and lecturer, currently pursuing his Ph.D. at the Polish National Film, Television, and Theatre School in Łódź, where he also teaches. His short films have been screened at more than 60 international festivals, including Clermont-Ferrand and Oberhausen. His 2023 short, 'Tea Time with Diabel', received a special jury mention at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival. With 'Dancing in the Corner', Bujnowski continues his exploration of family dynamics and post-communist transitions in Polish society.

## Minus One

'Eksi Bir' / Turkey / Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic / 2024

15 mins



A suspicious building manager becomes fixated on a mysterious smell he believes is coming from new tenants in the basement. Determined to evict them, he embarks on a campaign to gather signatures from the other residents. As tensions rise, the film subtly unravels themes of prejudice, fear, and community dynamics. Through dark humour and tense interactions, the story offers a reflection on human behaviour and the often-misguided efforts to maintain control.

Director / Screenwriter: **Ömer Ferhat Özmen**

Producer: **Rüken Tekeş**

Cinematographer: **Deniz Eyüboğlu Aydın**

Editor: **Ali Aga**

Cast: **Müfit Kayacan, Erol Babaoglu, Nalan Kuruçim,**

**Senan Kara, Cem Uslu**

**Ömer Ferhat Özmen**, born in Bitlis in 1993, is a Turkish-Kurdish filmmaker. He graduated from Marmara University's Faculty of Fine Arts, specialising in Film Design. His debut short, 'Beyoğlu Cinema', won 15 awards and screened at over 50 festivals. His second film, 'Karganın Aşınan Gagası', received support from the Ministry of Culture. His most recent short, 'Minus One', premiered at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival and screened at Busan and Istanbul Film Festivals. Özmen's work explores social and political themes, often blending them with humour.

Muna

UK / English, Somali / 2023  
18 mins



Muna, a British-Somali teenager, is caught between her own dreams and family traditions after her grandfather’s passing. While yearning to go on a school trip with her friends, she must also navigate an unexpected mourning period for a family member she barely knew. Through a delicate exploration of grief, culture, and generational connection, Muna discovers that her journey is more intertwined with her grandfather’s than she realised in this coming-of-age story highlighting the complexities of identity and cultural duality.

Director / Screenwriter: **Warda Mohamed**  
Producer: **Angela Moneke, Simon Hatton**  
Cinematographer: **Olan Collardy**  
Editor: **Mdhamiri Á Nkemi**  
Music: **Cassie Kinoshi**  
Cast: **Kosar Ali, Elmi Rashid Elmi, Raha Farah Isse, Ahmed Nur**

**Warda Mohamed** is a British-Somali filmmaker known for exploring the complexities of identity and diaspora in her work. She made her directorial debut with ‘Sorry My Somali Is Not Very Good’, which premiered on BFI Player in 2021. Warda consulted on Sarah Gavron’s award-winning film ‘Rocks’, contributing to the authenticity of Somali representation. ‘Muna’, her debut narrative short film, has gained international acclaim, screening at festivals like Berlinale and BFI London. Mohamed is currently developing her first feature film, backed by BBC Film.

Sheep

Iran / Farsi / 2024  
14 mins



Rose, a young girl in Tehran, lives with her mother and a dog. When she discovers her neighbours preparing sheep for sacrifice during the Eid-e-Ghorban ceremony, she is both puzzled and disturbed. Unable to accept these customs in a modern world, Rose embarks on a mission to rescue the animals. This heartfelt story presents the quiet defiance of a child standing up to tradition, exploring how innocence and compassion can challenge long-held practices within a close-knit community.

Director / Screenwriter / Producer: **Hadi Babaeifar**  
Cinematographer: **Adib Sobhani**  
Editor: **Hamid Najafirad**  
Cast: **Rose Tabatabaie, Gelavij Alam**

**Hadi Babaeifar** was born in Tehran in 1983. He found his passion for filmmaking in his early twenties, studying at the Karnameh Institute of Arts and Culture and working as a set photographer. In 2018, he completed his directing degree. His debut short, ‘Deer’, premiered in Berlin’s Generation section in 2022 and won the Special Jury Prize, marking the start of his animal trilogy. ‘Sheep’, the second in the series, examines cultural customs through a child’s eyes and premiered in 2024.

Tennis, Oranges

USA / Mandarin / 2023  
11 mins



Set in the quiet alleys of LA’s Chinatown, ‘Tennis, Oranges’ follows the introspective journey of an ageing rabbit couple as they navigate the fading echoes of their youth. Simultaneously, a robot vacuum embarks on its own metaphorical quest for autonomy and purpose. Through stop-motion animation, the film juxtaposes stillness and motion, blending themes of memory, ageing, and personal exploration into a meditative narrative. A playful yet profound exploration of time and self-discovery.

Director / Screenwriter / Cinematographer: **Sean Pecknold**  
Editor: **Aaron Beckum, Sean Pecknold**  
Music: **Studio Kamp**

**Sean Pecknold** is a filmmaker and animator from Seattle, currently based in Los Angeles. Known for his distinct style of stop-motion animation, his work includes acclaimed projects such as ‘White Winter Hymnal’ and ‘The Shrine / An Argument’, which won multiple awards at SXSW and the UKMVAs. Pecknold co-founded Sing-Sing Studio and teaches stop-motion animation worldwide. His recent short film, ‘Featherweight’ was nominated for an Annie Award. ‘Tennis, Oranges’ further solidifies his reputation for creating deeply emotional, visually striking narratives.



# BADER COMPETITION

Young adults have completed the circle of youth and are now taking their own steps on the path of life. Their opinions resonate more strongly, and this appealing programme exposes them to cinema as a contemporary art form

Director / Screenwriter: **Laila Abbas**  
Producer: **Laila Abbas, Hanna Atallah, Ronza Kamel**  
Cinematographer: **Konstantin Kroening**  
Editor: **Heba Othman**  
Cast: **Yasmine Al Massri, Clara Khoury, Kamel El Basha, Ashraf Barhoum**



**Laila Abbas** is a Palestinian filmmaker and producer who studied cinema in Jordan before pursuing an MA in Film and TV Production at Royal Holloway University in the UK. She made her mark with the documentary 'Ice & Dust' (2013), and in 2016, founded Young Oak Productions. Laila was selected for the Berlin Film Festival's Berlinale Talents in 2019, and 'Thank You for Banking with Us' is her debut feature. Abbas's work focuses on exploring gender, family, and societal struggles, and she has gained recognition for her insightful storytelling.

## Thank You for Banking with Us

Palestine, Germany, KSA, Qatar, Egypt / Arabic / 2024

92 mins

DFI Supported Film



Following their father's passing, two Palestinian sisters find themselves in a high-stakes battle for financial independence. When they learn their estranged brother, who lives in the U.S., is legally entitled to half of the inheritance, the sisters devise an urgent plan to claim the funds before it's too late. Set in Ramallah, the story explores the complexities of gender dynamics in Palestinian society, with inheritance laws favouring male heirs. Mariam and Noura must not only contend with these legal restrictions but also with their own personal struggles—Mariam's failing marriage and Noura's desire to start a new life.

Over the course of a single night, their scheme becomes a journey of self-discovery, as they confront the moral dilemmas of their actions and the broader societal issues surrounding them. The film is a poignant reflection on the intersection of family, gender, and justice, with moments of dark humour that bring levity to the intense narrative. Through its portrayal of these women's struggles, the film offers a resonant critique of patriarchal structures while highlighting the unbreakable bond between sisters. The story transcends local issues, delivering universal themes of resilience and the quest for equality.



Winner of the Un Certain  
Regard – Jury Prize at Cannes  
Film Festival 2024

Director: **Boris Lojkine**  
Screenwriter: **Boris  
Lojkine, Delphine Agut**  
Producer: **Bruno Nahon**  
Cinematographer: **Tristan Galand**  
Editor: **Xavier Sirven**  
Cast: **Abou Sangare, Nina Meurisse,  
Alpha Oumar Sow Barry**



**Boris Lojkine**,  
a graduate of the  
Ecole Normale  
Supérieure with  
a background  
in philosophy,  
began his career

directing documentaries focused  
on post-war Vietnamese experiences,  
including 'Ceux Qui Restent' and  
'Les Âmes Errantes'. Transitioning  
to fiction, Lojkine's first feature, 'Hope',  
received acclaim at Cannes Critics'  
Week. His second film, 'Camille', won  
multiple accolades, including the  
Audience Award at Locarno. 'The Story  
of Souleymane', winner at Cannes  
2024 in Un Certain Regard, continues  
his exploration of poignant social  
narratives.

# The Story of Souleymane

'L'Histoire De Souleymane' / France / French / 2024  
93 mins



Facing a life-changing asylum interview in just two days, Souleymane, a young Guinean immigrant, must juggle his work as a bicycle courier with the mounting pressures of his undocumented life in Paris. Navigating the city's bustling streets, he grapples with the realities of being invisible in a society that sees him only as a worker—present, yet disregarded. As challenges mount and time slips away, he encounters relentless obstacles, from run-ins with the police to social isolation and the daily uncertainties that define his existence. The film unfolds over two pivotal days, capturing Souleymane's journey in a tense, fast-paced sequence that immerses viewers in his world.

Director Boris Lojkine crafts a strikingly authentic portrayal, blending documentary-inspired realism with a powerful narrative structure. Through intimate cinematography, audiences are transported into Paris's heart, encountering a version of the city seldom witnessed—one where survival requires resilience, resourcefulness, and courage. As Souleymane approaches the interview that could determine his future, the film reveals a deeply human story of determination and fortitude in the face of overwhelming odds, offering an unfiltered look into the invisible lives of undocumented workers and their fight for a place in society.

# Ways to Traverse a Territory

'Formas de atravesar un territorio' / Mexico / Spanish, Tsotsil / 2024  
72 mins



In the remote highlands of Chiapas, Mexico, indigenous Tsotsil women shepherd their sheep and weave wool, preserving traditions that have been passed down for generations. Their connection to the land is sacred, and through their work, they honour the memory and history of their ancestors. This documentary follows their daily lives, revealing how their identity and cultural heritage are deeply tied to the territory they inhabit. The filmmaker's journey to the mountains opens up a dialogue about what it means to belong to a place.

By observing the Tsotsil women and reflecting on her own memories tied to the land, the film explores how personal and collective identities are shaped by our connection to the environment. The documentary combines archival footage, staged moments, and intimate conversations to create a poetic meditation on cultural preservation, the passage of time, and the transformation of landscapes. Through its stunning visuals and contemplative tone, 'Ways to Traverse a Territory' examines the relationship between people and the land they call home, offering a rich reflection on memory, identity, and the enduring ties that bind us to our environments.

Official Selection at the Locarno  
Film Festival 2024

Director / Screenwriter:  
**Gabriela Domínguez Ruvalcaba**  
Producer: **Pía Quintana Enciso**  
Cinematographer: **Natali Montell**  
Editor: **Dalia Huerta Cano,**  
**Gabriela Domínguez Ruvalcaba**  
Music: **Arcadio M. Lanz**  
With: **Sebastiana Hernández,**  
**Maribel Pérez Hernández,**  
**Margarita Pérez Hernández**



**Gabriela Domínguez Ruvalcaba**  
is a Mexican  
filmmaker and  
editor whose  
work spans

documentary and film essay forms. Her debut feature, 'La Danza del Hipocampo', won several prestigious awards, including Best Documentary at the Monterrey International Film Festival and the Jury Mention at FICM Morelia. A graduate of the Autonomous University of Barcelona and EICTV in Cuba, she explores themes of identity, memory, and the environment. 'Ways to Traverse a Territory', her second feature, premiered at Locarno and FICUNAM 2024, continuing her exploration of cultural preservation and the human connection to the natural world.

Nominated for a Golden Bear Award at the Berlin Film Festival 2024

Director / Screenwriter:  
**Meryam Joobeur**  
Producer: **Nadim Cheikhrouha, Sarra Ben Hassen, Annick Blanc, Maria Gracia Turgeon, Meryam Joobeur**  
Cinematographer:  
**Vincent Gonneville**  
Editor: **Maxime Mathis, Meryam Joobeur**  
Music: **Peter Venne**  
Cast: **Salha Nasraoui, Mohamed Hassine Grayaa, Malek Mechergui, Adam Bessa, Dea Liane**



**Meryam Joobeur** is an Academy Award-nominated filmmaker based in Montreal. Her

short film ‘Brotherhood’ (2018) won over 75 international awards and was nominated for an Oscar in 2020. With roots in both Tunisia and Canada, her films examine family, identity, and societal conflicts. Her first feature film, ‘Who Do I Belong To’, continues her exploration of complex human emotions set against challenging socio-political landscapes. Meryam is an alumna of the TIFF Talent Lab, Berlinale Talent Lab, and the Sundance Screenwriters Lab.

# Who Do I Belong To

‘Mé el Ain’ / Tunisia, France, Canada, Norway, KSA, Qatar / Arabic / 2024  
118 mins  
**DFI Supported Film**



Aicha lives a quiet, secluded life with her husband and youngest son in a remote village in northern Tunisia. The family remains consumed by the grief and anguish of losing their eldest sons, Mehdi and Amine, who left to fight in the violent Syrian conflict. When Mehdi suddenly returns home with a mysterious pregnant wife, the fragile peace of the family begins to unravel. A darkness slowly emerges, threatening to consume not just the family, but the entire village. Aicha is forced to navigate between her overwhelming maternal love and her pursuit of the truth behind Mehdi’s war experiences.

As tensions escalate, she must reconcile with painful revelations that challenge her deepest beliefs and maternal instincts. Through the lens of a mother’s struggle, the film explores themes of family, war, and the destructive impact of extremism on the most intimate of relationships. This haunting and visually stunning drama from Academy Award-nominated director Meryam Joobeur blends elements of magical realism with a deeply rooted human story, creating an unforgettable portrayal of the complexities of motherhood in the shadow of war.

## Alarms

'Apnées' / France / French / 2024  
16 mins



Pierre, a diligent project manager, is tasked with overseeing the construction of a large building. As pressure mounts to meet deadlines and expectations, safety concerns begin to surface, forcing Pierre to confront the moral complexities of his role. When warnings go unheeded, the potential consequences grow increasingly dire. In this tense social thriller, director Nicolas Panay brings into focus the ethical challenges that accompany modern urban development, exploring the personal and professional costs of prioritising progress over safety.

Director / Screenwriter: **Nicolas Panay**  
Producer: **Philippe Wendling, Noëlle Levenez**  
Cinematographer: **Giovanni C. Lorusso**  
Editor: **Antoine Flandre**  
Cast: **Thomas Coumans, Laurence Côte, Emine Meyrem**

**Nicolas Panay** co-founded the "Court en Scène" Troyes International Short Film Festival in 2016, serving as its director and programmer for six editions. In 2022, he directed his first short film, 'Breakpoint', a social drama exploring the struggles of factory workers in a globalised economy. After its premiere at Clermont-Ferrand, the film was selected in nearly 50 festivals and won multiple awards, including the Unifrance Best Actress Prize at Cannes. 'Alarms', his second short film, continues his commitment to socially engaged storytelling, focusing on the humanity behind complex issues.

## Amphibious

Syria, France / Arabic / 2023  
15 mins



Arriving in an unfamiliar city, Khaled faces isolation in a place where the language and culture feel alien. Seeking companionship, he adopts a goldfish, a small but comforting presence in his new life. Through his bond with the fish, Khaled confronts feelings of loneliness and the need for connection. Amphibious explores themes of belonging and identity, offering a powerful metaphor for the journey of migration and the delicate balance between survival and adaptation.

Director: **Amer Albarzawi**  
Screenwriter: **Mohamed Saad El-Din, Amer Albarzawi**  
Cinematographer: **Vinicius Mantovi**  
Editor: **Majid Mohammad Doust**  
Music: **Elias Abou Assali, Bashar Darwish**

**Amer Albarzawi**, born in Damascus, Syria, in 1987, is a multidisciplinary artist exploring identity, exile, and human resilience through film and performance. His work, which includes the award-winning 'Fade to Black', sheds light on the complex experiences of Syrians and the personal impacts of migration. Now based in France, Albarzawi continues to develop his cinematic voice at Le Fresnoy - Studio National des Arts Contemporains, blending digital and natural elements in his exploration of memory and isolation.

## Apoleon

Egypt, France / Arabic, French / 2024  
14 mins



In 'Apoleon', Egyptian artist Amir Youssef reimagines Napoleon's campaign to Egypt through the eyes of figurines from a museum diorama. As they journey through a surreal landscape, they confront the broken nose of the Sphinx, symbolising the fractures of history. The film blends humour and critique, addressing the lingering impacts of colonisation and challenging traditional historical narratives. Through creative visual storytelling, this compelling short invites viewers to reconsider history from a decolonial perspective.

Director / Screenwriter: **Amir Youssef**  
Producer: **Alain Fleischer**  
Cinematographer: **Alan Guichaoua**  
Editor: **Amir Youssef, Leo Guillaume, Perch Women, Valentine Gelin**

**Amir Youssef** is an Egyptian visual artist and filmmaker known for his interdisciplinary approach, incorporating robotics, media archaeology, and video into his work. He studied at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Alexandria and the École supérieure d'art d'Aix-en-Provence. Youssef's practice focuses on reinterpreting historical narratives through art, often critiquing colonial legacies. His latest film, 'Apoleon', is a creative fusion of art and history, challenging the traditional understanding of Napoleon's campaign.

## Circle

South Korea / No Dialogue / 2024  
7 mins



This minimalist animation presents a symbolic journey where individuals are drawn into a confined space, representing the pressures of societal expectations. The act of erasing the boundary signifies the potential for liberation and the ongoing struggle between conformity and self-expression. Through its subtle and evocative storytelling, the film invites viewers to reflect on the ways we navigate and challenge the invisible lines that shape our lives.perspective.

Director / Screenwriter: **Joung Yumi**  
Producer: **Kim Kihyun**  
Editor: **Joung Yumi, Kim Kihyun**

**Joung Yumi** is an acclaimed South Korean director specialising in animation, known for her delicate pencil drawing technique. She studied animation directing at the Korean Academy of Film Arts (KAFA) and earned early recognition with 'Dust Kid' (2009), which screened at Cannes. Her award-winning works, including 'Love Games' (2013) and 'Math Test' (2010), have been featured in international festivals such as Berlinale and Animafest Zagreb. Her latest film, 'Circle' (2024), marks her fourth Berlinale Shorts selection, solidifying her as a prominent figure in contemporary animation.



Coal

Iran / Farsi / 2024  
19 mins



Two miners, Eesa and Mokhtar, clash underground, leading to an accident that leaves Mokhtar dead. As Eesa helps others escape, guilt weighs heavily on him. Mokhtar’s oxygen tank, damaged during their fight, was empty, leaving him to suffocate. Eesa now faces a harrowing decision—remain silent and be hailed as a hero or confess his involvement and be branded a killer. This short film explores themes of guilt, truth, and the moral consequences of one’s actions.

Director / Cinematographer: **Saman Lotfian**  
Screenwriter: **Saman Lotfian, Mahdi Torab Beigi**  
Producer: **Seyed Mazyar Hashemi**  
Editor: **Esmail Alizadeh**  
Cast: **Sajad Afsharian, Nasrollah Radesh, Mehdi Miami, Mah Monir Bitari, Mohammadreza Oraman**

**Saman Lotfian** is an Iranian cinematographer and director, best known for his work on the award-winning documentaries ‘Atlan’ and ‘Concrete Man,’ as well as the feature films ‘Drown’ and ‘When the Moon Was Full.’ ‘Coal’ marks his directorial debut in short films, winning the Grand Audience Award at the Clermont-Ferrand Festival. With a background in cinematography, Lotfian’s visual storytelling creates intense, thought-provoking narratives that explore human conflict and moral dilemmas.

Gaza Bride 17

Palestine / Arabic, English / 2023  
21 mins



Saleh, a fisherman from Gaza, is deeply affected by the tragic death of his young son, who was killed during an encounter with a military vessel. Haunted by post-traumatic stress, Saleh’s life is a cycle of memory and anguish as he navigates a psychological odyssey. Through minimal dialogue and intense scenes, Gaza Bride 17 evokes the harsh reality of Gaza’s siege, portraying a father’s sorrow and resilience against a backdrop of relentless conflict. This film transcends personal loss, embodying the spirit of Palestinian endurance and survival.

Director / Screenwriter: **Wassim Khair**  
Producer: **Sana Tanous**

**Wassim Khair**, an independent Palestinian filmmaker born in 1986 in Upper Galilee, began his career in theatre as an actor and director, later transitioning to film. His first short film, ‘Throe’, starred Palestinian actress Maisa Abd Al Hadi, and his second documentary, ‘120 km’, won awards at multiple international film festivals. Khair’s latest work, ‘Gaza Bride 17’, reflects his commitment to highlighting Palestinian stories and exploring themes of resilience, trauma, and identity in the context of Gaza.

I Lay for You to Sleep

Qatar / Arabic / 2024  
14 mins  
DFI Supported Film



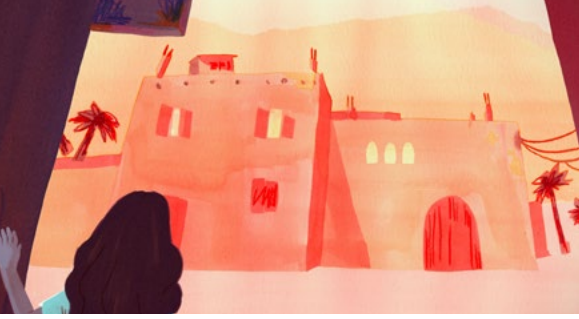
As women gently wash his body, Ali journeys through memories and reflections, confronting the mysteries of life, death, and rebirth. Drifting between moments of his past and revelations about his loved ones, he seeks answers to profound questions about mortality. This contemplative experimental narrative uses poetic imagery to explore the emotional depths of loss, solitude, and renewal. With its meditative tone and immersive sound design, the film offers a deeply personal and spiritual exploration of how we navigate the abyss of grief and death.

Director / Screenwriter: **Ali Al Hajri**  
Producer: **Basel Owies**  
Cinematographer: **Zahed Bata**  
Editor: **Abduljabbar Maki**  
Music: **Vincent Erdevan**  
Cast: **Ali Al Hajri, Roua Kalai, Ahmed Aljabri, Mohammed Al Dosari**

**Ali Al Hajri** is a Qatari filmmaker whose work is deeply rooted in a profound fascination with narratives that blur the lines between fantasy and realism. His commitment to innovative storytelling is evident in his exploration of the intricacies of human experiences and inner conflicts. Professionally, Ali Al Hajri is associated with the Qatar Foundation, where he uses his skills to produce and direct short documentaries that embody authenticity. His latest short film, ‘I Lay for You to Sleep’, is a nuanced exploration of the interplay between life, loss, and rebirth.

Shadows

France, Jordan, Qatar / Arabic / 2024  
13 mins



At a crowded airport, Ahlam, a 14-year-old girl from Baghdad, embarks on a journey to escape a life of violence and reclaim her future. Haunted by memories of trauma and domestic abuse, she is forced to confront her past and reflect on the resilience that has carried her forward. ‘Shadows’ uses animation to depict Ahlam’s subjective experiences, illuminating the often-hidden realities of domestic violence and child marriage. Director Rand Beiruty’s nuanced storytelling sheds light on Ahlam’s strength, capturing her refusal to be defined by her circumstances.

Director / Screenwriter: **Rand Beiruty**  
Editor: **Abdallah Sada**  
Cinematographer: **Marta Magnuska**  
Music: **Kinane Moualla, Regis Diebold**

**Rand Beiruty** is a filmmaker and co-founder of Shaghab Films, based in Amman, Jordan. She holds a practice-based PhD in representation and participatory filmmaking from the Konrad Wolf Film University of Babelsberg. Known for her advocacy on international stages, Beiruty’s work has earned awards from Tribeca Film Institute and Mifa Animation du Monde. Her debut feature, ‘Tell Them About Us’, premiered at CPH 2024 and won the ECFA Award for Best European Feature Documentary. Her short animated documentary, ‘Shadows’, debuted at the 81st Venice International Film Festival.

## The Last Straw 'Lid Vid Lid'

Faroe Islands, Denmark / Faroese / 2023  
15 mins



When Ívar is stranded on a remote mountain road in the Faroe Islands during mid-winter, he is forced to reach out to his estranged brother, Mikkjal, for help. Initially refused, Ívar's offer of money persuades Mikkjal to assist him, albeit reluctantly. However, the mix of money, distrust, and unresolved issues quickly leads to a long-overdue confrontation. 'The Last Straw' explores the fragile nature of family bonds, the complexities of forgiveness, and the emotional weight carried by past grievances in the stark, unforgiving landscape of the Faroe Islands.

Director / Screenwriter: **Andrias Høgenni**  
Producer: **Lovísa Dröfn, Nadia Abraham**  
Cinematographer: **Mark Newman**  
Editor: **Ania De Sa**

**Andrias Høgenni** is a Faroese filmmaker based in Denmark. He graduated from the Danish film school Super16 in 2018. His thesis film, 'Ikki Illa Meint', won the Canal+ Award at Semaine de la Critique in 2019. He has directed several TV series for the Danish broadcaster DR and is currently working on his first feature film. 'The Last Straw' marks Høgenni's return to short films, exploring the intricate dynamics of familial relationships set against the backdrop of his native Faroe Islands.

## The Man Who Could Not Remain Silent

'Covjek koji nije mogao sutjeti' / Croatia, France, Bulgaria, Slovenia / Croatian, Serbian / 2024  
14 mins



On February 27, 1993, a passenger train travelling from Belgrade to Bar was stopped by paramilitary forces in Strpci, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Amidst the chaos of an ethnic cleansing operation, only one man out of 500 passengers stands up against the violence. This short film recounts the true story of a brave individual who could not remain silent in the face of terror, capturing a poignant moment in a tragic chapter of the Bosnian War. Starring Goran Bogdan—an Ajyal Spotlight guest in 2020—the film highlights the strength of moral courage in the darkest of times.

Director / Screenwriter: **Nebojša Slijepčević**  
Producer: **Katarina Prpić, Danijel Pek, Katya Trichkova**  
Cinematographer: **Gregor Božič**  
Editor: **Tomislav Stojanović**  
Cast: **Goran Bogdan, Alexis Manenti, Dragan Mićanović, Silvio Mumelaš**

**Nebojša Slijepčević**, born in 1973 in Zagreb, Croatia, is a film director known for his impactful documentaries. His feature documentary 'Srbenka' (2018) was shortlisted for the European Film Awards and won numerous accolades, including the Heart of Sarajevo Award. Slijepčević's 'Gangster of Love' (2013) was a box office hit in Croatia and garnered international recognition. A prominent figure in Croatian cinema, he has directed numerous documentaries and short films and also teaches at the Academy of Dramatic Art in Zagreb.

## The Mother and the Bear

Egypt / Arabic / 2024  
12 mins



Yasmina El Kamaly's short documentary presents a poignant exploration of mother-daughter relationships spanning three generations. The film captures both the moments of closeness and conflict between the filmmaker, her mother, and her grandmother, offering insight into the shared emotional journeys of women within a family. As each woman navigates her own role, the film reflects on the deeper meanings of family, memory, and how we carry our family legacies forward.

Director / Screenwriter / Cinematographer:  
**Yasmina El Kamaly**  
Producer: **Amal Ramsis**  
Editor: **Yasmina El Kamaly, Simon El Habre**

**Yasmina El Kamaly** is a filmmaker and visual artist from Cairo, Egypt. She studied Directing at the High Cinema Institute in Cairo and co-founded the streaming platform Glifics in 2022, where she currently serves as Head of Film Acquisition & Programming. Her directorial debut, 'The Mother and the Bear', premiered at the Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival in 2024. A multidisciplinary artist, her video installations have been exhibited at events such as "Being Borrowed." Yasmina also has four years of experience working with film festivals and cultural organisations in Egypt, including the Manassat Film Festival and El Gouna Film Festival

## The Teacher

Palestine / Arabic / 2023  
5 mins



A displaced teacher in Gaza embarks on a difficult daily journey from his tent camp to the city, searching for essentials like bread, water, and power for his mobile phone. However, he repeatedly finds himself empty-handed, unable to provide for his family. As he returns home, he encounters one of his former students, who offers him much-needed help. The Teacher, part of the From Ground Zero collection, offers a glimpse into the resilience of those displaced, confronting the hardships and small acts of solidarity that define survival in Gaza.

Director: **Tamer Nijim**

Born in Gaza in 1991, **Tamer Nijim** is a theatre and television artist at Ashtar for Theatre Productions and Training. He holds a BA in Media from Al-Azhar University and a diploma in Acting and Theatre Training. Nijim has been actively involved in theatre, participating in numerous local and international productions and festivals. 'The Teacher' is his latest work, contributing to the 'From Ground Zero' collection, which captures the experiences and resilience of Gaza's residents.



## The Watchman

**'Nöbetçi'** / Italy, France / Turkish / 2024  
26 mins / Colour



A young soldier stationed at a remote outpost in Northern Cyprus begins witnessing strange lights and mysterious occurrences during his night watch. As his sense of duty merges with paranoia, the soldier finds himself trapped between reality and hallucination. This visually striking short explores the psychological toll of isolation and the weight of unresolved history, blending the supernatural with the political realities of a divided land.

Director / Screenwriter: **Ali Cherri**  
Producer: **Leonardo Bigazzi, Alessandro Rabottini**  
Cinematographer: **Bassem Fayad**  
Editor: **Denis Bedlow**  
Cast: **Halil Ersev Gökçek**

**Ali Cherri**, born in Beirut and based in Paris, is a multidisciplinary visual artist and filmmaker. His works, often blending video, film, sculpture, and installation, explore the construction of historical narratives. Ali won the Silver Lion at the Venice Biennale in 2022 for his installation 'Of Men and Gods and Mud'. His films, including 'The Digger' (2015) and 'The Dam' (2022), have screened at prestigious festivals, including Cannes Directors' Fortnight. 'The Watchman' (2024) continues his exploration of socio-political themes through an experimental, visually arresting lens.

## Why Did You Leave the Horse Alone?

**Pourquoi As-Tu Laissé Le Cheval À Sa Solitude?'** / France / Arabic / 2023  
9 mins



A lone rider on a tired horse gallops through a desert landscape, but despite the director's best efforts, the horse doesn't meet expectations on set. Several retakes later, frustrations mount, and the crew grapples with the question—what should they do with the horse? 'Why Did You Leave the Horse Alone?' is a contemplative exploration of decision-making in the creative process, set against the vastness of nature, where artistic challenges and practical realities collide.

Director / Screenwriter / Cinematographer: **Faouzi Bensaïdi**  
Producer: **Saïd Hamich Benlarbi, Sophie Penson**  
Cast: **Artur Garnica, Mohamed Hmimsa, Abdelhadi Taleb, Amine Afouzar**

**Faouzi Bensaïdi** is a Moroccan director, screenwriter, and actor known for his multi-award-winning films. His debut short film, 'La Falaise', won international prizes in 1997, and he co-wrote 'Loin' with André Téchiné. His first feature, 'Mille Mois', premiered at Un Certain Regard at Cannes, earning two prestigious awards. Bensaïdi's latest film, 'Deserts', which received a Doha Film Institute grant, was screened at Qumra 2023. His acclaimed films 'WWW - What a Wonderful World' and 'Mort à Vendre' earned recognition at Venice and the Berlinale.

# AJYAL SPOTLIGHTS

## Honouring Storytellers Who Inspire Change

This year, Ajyal Film Festival is privileged to present two influential voices as our esteemed Ajyal Spotlight guests. Each brings an unyielding commitment to storytelling as a force for change. Through their shared insights and personal journeys, they inspire us to explore the transformative power of art and to embrace art as a catalyst for understanding and empathy.

## Hiam Abbass



Image Credit: Norman Wong

Hiam Abbass, Palestinian actress and filmmaker, was born in Nazareth and grew up in the small village of Deir Hanna in Galilee. She started acting in the Palestinian El-Hakawati Theater in East Jerusalem, in the 80s. After a detour in London, Hiam Abbass settled in Paris, France.

Today, she leads an international career in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and the United States, from auteur films to Hollywood productions. She is known for her roles in 'Satin Rouge', 'Paradise Now', 'Free Zone', 'Munich', 'The Visitor', 'Lemon Tree', 'In Syria', 'Blade Runner 2049', and 'Gaza Mon Amour'. She has worked with prominent directors from around the world, such as Yousry Nasrallah, Hani Abu Assad, Steven Spielberg, Jim Jarmusch, Denis Villeneuve, Tom McCarthy, Terrence Malick, Eran Riklis, Radu Mihaileanu, Amos Gitai, Ridley Scott and more.

Polyglot and passionate, she keeps on touring the world on cinema sets, from Nazareth to New York, Tunis or Paris. She was nominated and won several awards for her performances in several films. In recent years, she gained prominence for her role as Maysa in the award-winning comedy 'Ramy' on Hulu and as Marcia Roy in the HBO drama series 'Succession'.

# Misan Harriman



Misan Harriman, a Nigerian-born photographer, creative director, and founder of ‘What We Seee’, has carved a unique space in the world of photography. From his documentation of London’s Black Lives Matter protests to his historic role as the first Black photographer to capture British Vogue’s September cover, Harriman’s work is a visual commentary on the human spirit, resilience, and the fight for social justice.

Described by The Evening Standard as “the most talked about photographer of our times,” Harriman’s images span activism, cultural commentary, and celebrity portraiture, making him a powerful advocate for diversity and inclusion in the arts.

Through “What We Seee”, Harriman amplifies underrepresented voices, creating a platform for diverse stories. As a spotlight guest at Ajyal, Harriman’s dedication to social justice aligns with the themes of this year’s opening film, Sudan, Remember Us. His presence at Ajyal serves as a powerful reminder of photography’s role in shaping narratives, celebrating resilience, and inspiring action.

# AJYAL TALKS

## Conversations that Matter

The Ajyal Film Festival 2024 is thrilled to present this year's Ajyal Talks, an exclusive platform showcasing transformative voices in arts and culture who embody the spirit of change, creativity, and resilience. These talks invite our young jurors to engage in meaningful discussions with talented artists who use their craft to inspire and empower. Through these sessions, our special guests will share their unique insights on storytelling, artistic expression, and the role of creativity in advocating for social change.

## Trailblazing in Music: A Journey of Unconventional Paths



### Sylvia M. Zakhary

Sylvia M. Zakhary is a powerhouse in the entertainment industry, known for founding Mamag Group, a globally recognised company fostering creativity across music, TV, and film. Her collaborations with icons like Beyoncé and Alicia Keys have earned her numerous accolades, including an NAACP Image Award. Through Storyhouse, a global creative community, Sylvia continues to empower over 5,000 artists worldwide, reinforcing her commitment to innovation.

### Featuring: Sylvia M. Zakhary and Anees

This Ajyal Talk explores the diverse journeys of two creative figures who have carved their own paths in the music industry. Their stories showcase how staying true to one's passions and values can lead to meaningful impact and personal success. Sylvia M. Zakhary, an Egyptian-American creative entrepreneur, and Anees, an independent artist and genre-bending musician, share their personal stories of perseverance and how they shaped careers that resonate deeply with their identities and values.

From Sylvia's visionary leadership as Founder of Mamag Group, which supports diverse storytelling across film, TV, and music, to Anees' soulful blend of hip-hop and R&B that connects with millions globally, both have embraced the challenges of the music industry with authenticity and purpose. In this session, they will discuss how music serves not only as a form of personal expression but also as a powerful tool for social connection and change.

### Exclusive Live Performance by Anees

Following the talk, attendees are invited to a special live acoustic set by Anees. Known for his soulful, genre-blending sound, Anees will share a selection of his music in an intimate performance. This unique session promises to be a memorable experience, offering a deeper connection to his artistry and the messages in his work.

### Anees

An independent artist with a unique fusion of pop, hip-hop, and R&B, Anees has gained widespread recognition for his deeply personal lyrics and genre-defying sound. His viral singles, including "sun and moon," have topped international charts and resonated with audiences across social media. With over 500 million streams globally, Anees' music is rooted in themes of love, healing, and personal growth, which have earned him a dedicated following and critical acclaim.



# Voices Through Art: Creating Change and Inspiring Action

**Featuring: Ghada Al Khater, Khalid Albaih**  
**Moderated by Nadir Nahdi**

In this powerful session, Ajyal explores how art becomes a voice for the underrepresented and a force for change. Ghada Al Khater, a Qatari multidisciplinary artist, and Khalid Albaih, a renowned Sudanese artist and activist, each use their unique styles to challenge societal injustices and ignite empathetic dialogue and mutual understanding. Ghada’s illustrations and sculptures tackle complex socio-political issues, encouraging critical reflection on realities. Khalid’s political cartoons confront human rights issues and advocate for freedom, often drawing from his experiences as a Sudanese artist in exile.

Moderated by Nadir Nahdi, a cultural storyteller, the discussion will explore how artists like Ghada and Khalid harness creative expression to empower audiences and drive social awareness. Together, they showcase the enduring strength of art to spark conversation, drive meaningful change, and broaden representation in global media.



**Ghada Al Khater**

Ghada Al Khater is a Qatari multidisciplinary artist whose work merges art, politics, and social commentary through cartoons, illustrations, and sculptures. Her creations offer satirical perspectives on socio-political issues within the GCC and other relevant international affairs. Known for works like Jardin de Lumiere and A Blessing in Disguise, Ghada continually challenges conventional narratives, inspiring audiences to think critically and creatively about societal issues.



**Khalid Albaih**

A celebrated Sudanese artist, Khalid Albaih is internationally known for his thought-provoking political cartoons and his unwavering dedication to human rights. He is the founder of getfadaa.com, an innovative platform supporting Sudanese artists and connecting them with the global community. Khalid’s work has appeared in major publications like The Guardian and Al Jazeera and continues to inspire audiences worldwide through exhibitions and social activism.

# SPECIAL SCREENINGS

## Meeting with Pol Pot

‘Rendez-Vous Avec Pol Pot’ / France, Cambodia, Taiwan, Qatar, Turkey / French, Cambodian / 2024

112 mins

DFI Supported Film



In the late 1970s, Democratic Kampuchea—under the rule of the Khmer Rouge—remains one of the world’s most mysterious and secretive regimes. In 1978, three French journalists are invited by the regime to conduct an exclusive interview with its leader, Pol Pot. Upon arrival, they are presented with an image of utopia: orderly cities, industrious workers, and a harmonious society. However, as their stay progresses, the cracks in this carefully constructed image begin to show. The journalists discover the devastating reality—a nation on the brink of collapse, a government teetering between paranoia and violence, and a population devastated by genocide.

Inspired by Elizabeth Becker’s personal account, ‘When the War Was Over’, the film blends historical fact with fiction, drawing viewers into the moral dilemmas faced by journalists in war zones. Director Rithy Panh, whose work often delves into the horrors of the Khmer Rouge era, uses the film to explore themes of truth, manipulation, and the ethical responsibilities of the media. As the journalists come face to face with the brutal realities of the regime, they are forced to confront not only the atrocities they witness—but also the power of propaganda and their role as observers in shaping history.

Nominated at the Asia Pacific Screen Awards 2024

Director: **Rithy Panh**  
Screenwriter: **Pierre Erwan Guillaume, Rithy Panh**  
(based on *When the War Was Over* by Elizabeth Becker)  
Producer: **Catherine Dussart, Rithy Panh**  
Cinematographer: **Aymerick Pilarski, Mesa Prum**  
Editor: **Rithy Panh, Matthieu Laclau**  
Music: **Marc Marder**  
Cast: **Irène Jacob, Grégoire Colin, Cyril Gueï, Bunhok Lim, Somaline Mao**



Born in Phnom Penh in 1964, **Rithy Panh** is one of Cambodia’s most acclaimed filmmakers, known for his poignant portrayals of the Khmer Rouge era. His work often revisits the traumas of his homeland, aiming to preserve memory and seek justice for the victims of mass atrocities. Panh has directed numerous award-winning films, including ‘The Missing Picture’ (2013), which won the Un Certain Regard at Cannes and was nominated for an Academy Award, and ‘Irradiated’ (2020), which won the Berlinale’s Golden Bear for Best Documentary. ‘Meeting with Pol Pot’ continues his exploration of Cambodia’s tragic past.

Nominated for a  
Golden Bear Award at  
the Berlin Film Festival 2024

Director / Screenwriter:  
**Meryam Joobeur**  
Producer: **Nadim Cheikhrouha,**  
**Sarra Ben Hassen, Annick**  
**Blanc, Maria Gracia**  
**Turgeon, Meryam Joobeur**  
Cinematographer:  
**Vincent Gonneville**  
Editor: **Maxime Mathis,**  
**Meryam Joobeur**  
Music: **Peter Venne**  
Cast: **Salha Nasraoui,**  
**Mohamed Hassine Grayaa,**  
**Malek Mechergui,**  
**Adam Bessa, Dea Liane**



**Meryam Joobeur** is an Academy Award-nominated filmmaker based in Montreal. Her

short film 'Brotherhood' (2018) won over 75 international awards and was nominated for an Oscar in 2020. With roots in both Tunisia and Canada, her films examine family, identity, and societal conflicts. Her first feature film, 'Who Do I Belong To', continues her exploration of complex human emotions set against challenging socio-political landscapes. Meryam is an alumna of the TIFF Talent Lab, Berlinale Talent Lab, and the Sundance Screenwriters Lab.

# Who Do I Belong To

'Mé el Ain' / Tunisia, France, Canada, Norway, KSA, Qatar / Arabic / 2024  
118 mins

DFI Supported Film



Aicha lives a quiet, secluded life with her husband and youngest son in a remote village in northern Tunisia. The family remains consumed by the grief and anguish of losing their eldest sons, Mehdi and Amine, who left to fight in the violent Syrian conflict. When Mehdi suddenly returns home with a mysterious pregnant wife, the fragile peace of the family begins to unravel. A darkness slowly emerges, threatening to consume not just the family, but the entire village. Aicha is forced to navigate between her overwhelming maternal love and her pursuit of the truth behind Mehdi's war experiences.

As tensions escalate, she must reconcile with painful revelations that challenge her deepest beliefs and maternal instincts. Through the lens of a mother's struggle, the film explores themes of family, war, and the destructive impact of extremism on the most intimate of relationships. This haunting and visually stunning drama from Academy Award-nominated director Meryam Joobeur blends elements of magical realism with a deeply rooted human story, creating an unforgettable portrayal of the complexities of motherhood in the shadow of war.

# Ode to Our Land

Qatar / Arabic, English / 2023  
81 mins

DFI Supported Film



His Highness, the Father Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, was once a young man who lived in a city that would one day become a great metropolis and global centre. On the path to becoming a leader, his vision was formed by many things—memory, dreams and aspirations—all coalescing to make the backbone of a lucid and intelligent development of a nation. Charting the path from childhood to the ascension to power and through interviews, recollections and the filmmakers' poetic and subjective explorations, 'Ode to Our Land' is a journey into courage, persistence and radical foresight.

Director: **Amal Al Muftah,**  
**Rawda Al-Thani**



**Amal Al Muftah** is a Qatari filmmaker and director who began her career in high

school, directing short fiction films and documentaries. During university, she directed two award-winning films, 'Smicha' (2015) and 'Sh'hab' (2018), showcased at over 50 festivals worldwide. Her entry into the art world through film includes 'In Memory Of' (2022), a short art film for Qatar Museums' Art Mills exhibition, and 'Ode To Our Land' (2023), a feature documentary for DFI and the National Museum of Qatar. Her recent work, 'Light The Sky' (2022), is a music video for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™. After exploring multiple formats, she is now focusing on fiction storytelling.



**Rawda Al-Thani** is a Qatari filmmaker and film programmer at Doha Film Institute.

A Communications graduate with a focus on Middle Eastern Studies from Northwestern University, she worked as an art director on short films, sparking her interest in architecture and filmmaking. Her first short film, 'I Have Been Watching You All Along' (2017), premiered internationally at the Arab Film Festival in San Francisco, screened at L'Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris, and won the Special Jury Award at Ajyal 2017. She continues to explore film through both practice and research in her Master's in the History of Art and Architecture of the Islamic Middle East at SOAS.



**Exclusive Ajyal Premiere:**  
**The Apprentice: ONE Championship**  
**Edition Season 2 Comes to Qatar**



Doha Film Institute and the Ajyal Film Festival are proud to present the exclusive premiere of an episode from The Apprentice: ONE Championship Edition Season 2. Powered by Media City Qatar and filmed right here in Qatar—ahead of the official season launch just days away.

The second season of ONE Championship's critically acclaimed reality series, The Apprentice: ONE Championship Edition, featuring Chairman and CEO Chatri Sityodtong, is set to premiere on beIN's TOD across MENA on November 20. Co-produced by Media City Qatar, this season was filmed in two vibrant locations – Qatar and Singapore. Before the official launch, an exclusive red-carpet screening will be held at the Ajyal Film Festival on November 18, featuring an insightful panel discussion about the show and its filming journey in Qatar.



# VOICES FROM PALESTINE

In times of profound collective reflection and mourning, the Ajyal Film Festival stands in solemn solidarity with Palestine, honouring its narratives and voices in a special programme, Voices From Palestine. This poignant series brings together powerful cinematic works by Palestinian filmmakers, who courageously document the lived realities of their people—their resilience, resistance, and enduring hope.

Our Voices From Palestine programme is a testament to the unbreakable spirit of the Palestinian people, preserving vital stories and perspectives that might otherwise remain unheard. Through these films, audiences are invited to experience the heart of Palestinian identity—a call for recognition, justice, and empathy amid a backdrop of adversity. At Ajyal, we strive to create a space of understanding and shared humanity, where these essential stories can resonate, inspire, and ignite solidarity across borders.

## From Ground Zero

Palestine, France, Qatar, Jordan, UAE / Arabic / 2024

112 mins



Set against the backdrop of the 2023 attacks, this project brings together 22 short films created by filmmakers from Gaza. Each film, ranging from 3 to 6 minutes, offers a unique and personal lens into life in Gaza under siege. The project provides an intimate and poignant portrayal of the human experience in a war-torn enclave, where survival, loss, and hope coexist in fragile balance. Through the perspectives of both seasoned and emerging filmmakers, the collection captures the raw emotions and everyday struggles of life under occupation, giving voice to those whose stories are often silenced.

Covering a variety of genres—including fiction, documentary, animation, and experimental cinema—the films explore universal themes such as resilience, displacement, family, and the human spirit's capacity to endure. Despite the severe challenges faced during production, from restricted resources to the constant threat of violence, the filmmakers managed to create a powerful anthology that highlights the vibrant artistic scene in Gaza. The project stands as both a testament to the filmmakers' perseverance and a reflection of the collective experience of a people enduring unimaginable hardship, capturing moments of beauty, pain, and defiance.

Director: **Rashid Masharawi, Various Filmmakers**

Producer: **Rashid Masharawi, Laura Nikolov**

Cinematographer:

**Various Filmmakers**

Editor: **Denis Le Paven**

Music: **Naseer Shamma**



**Rashid Masharawi** is a renowned Palestinian filmmaker known for his commitment

to documenting life in Palestine through film. Born in Gaza, Masharawi has directed numerous films that have been screened at international film festivals, earning awards and critical acclaim. His works often focus on the human experience of living under occupation, using both documentary and narrative storytelling to highlight the resilience and spirit of the Palestinian people. With 'From Ground Zero', Masharawi extends his commitment to giving a platform to emerging voices from Gaza.

Director / Producer:

**Mohammad Bakri**

Cinematographer: **Ramez Kazmus**

Editor: **Leandro Pantanella**

Music: **Said Murad**

With: **Mohammad Bakri,**  
**Residents of Jenin refugee camp**



**Mohammad Bakri**, born in 1953 in Bi'ina, Palestine, is a celebrated actor and filmmaker

known for his bold portrayals of the Palestinian experience. He studied acting and Arabic literature at Tel Aviv University, graduating in 1976, and went on to star in both Arabic and Hebrew films. His 2002 documentary 'Jenin, Jenin' sparked controversy for its depiction of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Despite legal battles, Bakri continues to use cinema as a platform to voice Palestinian narratives. 'Janin Jenin' is his latest exploration of life in occupied territories.

# Janin Jenin

**Palestine / Arabic / 2024**

60 mins



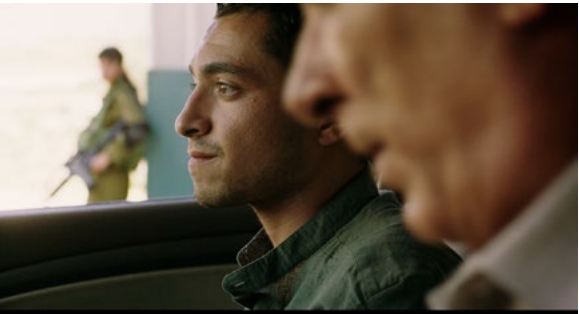
Director Mohammad Bakri revisits the Jenin refugee camp, reflecting on the devastation caused by Israel's 2023 military invasion. Building on the framework of his 2002 documentary 'Jenin, Jenin', this new film captures the ongoing struggle of the camp's residents as they recount their experiences of destruction, loss, and resistance. Divided into four parts, the documentary begins by revisiting the events of 'Jenin, Jenin', followed by an exploration of the legal challenges Bakri has faced for over two decades. The third section presents a historical overview of the Palestinian refugee crisis since 1948.

The final segment—focusing on the testimonies of those who endured the latest military offensive—reveals the personal toll of continuous conflict. Bakri's empathetic direction allows these voices to emerge with unfiltered emotional power, shedding light on the persistence of suffering under occupation. While the film confronts difficult truths, it serves as an essential perspective on a conflict too often seen through a single lens. 'Janin Jenin' challenges audiences to consider the deeper, human implications of an enduring political struggle.

## An Orange from Jaffa

**Palestine, Poland, France / Arabic, Hebrew, English / 2024**

27 mins



Mohammed, a young Palestinian, embarks on a tense journey to cross an Israeli checkpoint with a temporary Polish identity card. After being turned down by other drivers, Farouk, a well-meaning taxi driver, offers him a ride. However, they soon encounter severe trouble when the checkpoint authorities discover Mohammed's previous failed attempt to cross. The film powerfully captures the oppressive reality of life under occupation and the personal costs involved.

Director / Screenwriter: **Mohammed Almughanni**

Cinematographer: **Maciej Edelman**

Editor: **Natalia Jacheć**

Cast: **Samer Bisharat, Kamel El Basha,**  
**Nisreen Aljubeih, Ameer Khlawe**

**Mohammed Almughanni** is a Palestinian filmmaker from Gaza, celebrated for his evocative storytelling that blends personal and political narratives. His latest short film, 'An Orange from Jaffa', premiered at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival in 2024, winning the prestigious International Grand Prix. Almughanni's films often explore the emotional landscapes of individuals living under occupation, drawing on his own experiences and reflecting the broader Palestinian struggle.

## The Deer's Tooth

**Palestine / Arabic / 2024**

15 mins



In Dheisheh refugee camp, young Wisam struggles with grief and isolation following his younger brother's death. When he finds his brother's last milk tooth, memories resurface, reminding him of his promise to throw it into the sea—an unreachable place due to restrictions. Determined to keep his word, Wisam sets out on a dangerous journey that explores themes of love, loss, and resilience. His quest becomes a testament to the strength found in family bonds and the lengths taken to preserve memories.

Director / Screenwriter: **Saif Hammash**

Cinematographer: **Ibrahim Handal**

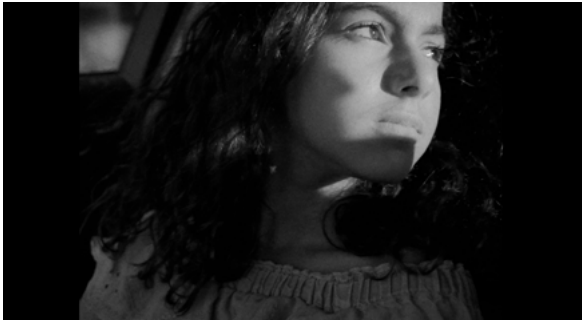
Music: **Victor Kawwas**

Cast: **Wisam Al-Jafari, Readah Ghazaleh,**  
**Yasmin Shalaldeh**

**Saif Hammash** is a Palestinian filmmaking student based in Dheisheh Refugee Camp, Bethlehem. Throughout his studies, he has directed short fiction, experimental, and documentary films, and has worked on numerous other productions as a scriptwriter, assistant director, and editor. His work was featured in the Palestinian Refugees Film Festival, where he served as editor in 2022. His filmography includes 'Escape Attempt' and 'Click of a Button'. 'The Deer's Tooth' is his latest short fiction film, exploring themes of memory, loss, and familial connection.

## The Poem We Sang

Canada, Palestine, Jordan / Arabic / 2024  
20 mins



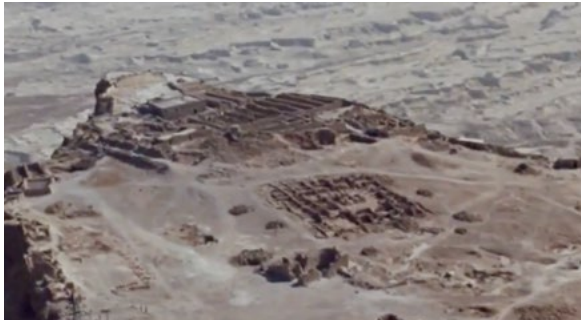
An experimental documentary which meditates on love, longing, and the trauma of forced migration. Drawing on personal family history, the film explores the impact of displacement on generations through the lens of a poem sung by the director's father and uncle about their childhood home in Palestine. With richly layered visuals and a deeply personal narrative, the film serves as a tribute to memory, heritage, and the resilience of the Palestinian spirit.

Director / Screenwriter / Cinematographer: **Annie Sakkab**  
Producer: **Annie Sakkab, Paul Lee**  
Music: **Tareq Jundi**  
With: **Annie Sakkab**

**Annie Sakkab** is a Palestinian-Jordanian-Canadian filmmaker and photojournalist. Known for her focus on women's issues, identity, and social justice, her debut short documentary 'Hollie's Dress' (2020) premiered at Hot Docs and won multiple awards. Annie's work has appeared in major publications such as The New York Times and The Washington Post. Her latest film, 'The Poem We Sang', explores intergenerational trauma and the power of memory, making a poignant contribution to Palestinian storytelling.

## Undr

Palestine, Germany / No Dialogue / 2024  
15 mins



Director Kamal Aljafari presents a striking visual narrative of the Palestinian landscape under occupation. Combining archival footage with aerial views, the film juxtaposes scenes of pastoral calm—farmers working, children playing—with violent intrusions of dynamite and destruction. As explosions reshape the land, 'Undr' quietly illustrates the slow, deliberate appropriation of land and history. With its haunting images, the film reflects on the enduring impact of surveillance, militarism, and colonialism in Palestine.

Director: **Kamal Aljafari**  
Producer: **Kamal Aljafari, Flavia Mazzarin**  
Editor: **Yannig Willmann**  
Music: **Simon Fisher Turner**

**Kamal Aljafari** is a Palestinian filmmaker and visual artist known for his exploration of Palestinian history and memory through experimental techniques. He studied at the Kunsthochschule für Medien in Cologne and has held teaching positions at The New School in New York and the DFFB in Berlin. His films include 'A Fidai Film' (2024) and 'An Unusual Summer' (2020). 'Undr' continues his use of archival footage and landscape to critique the political realities of occupation.



# MADE IN MOROCCO

In honour of the 2024 Qatar-Morocco Year of Culture, Ajyal Film Festival proudly presents Made in Morocco, a specially curated programme showcasing the talented voices of Moroccan cinema today. Developed in partnership with Qatar's Year of Culture initiative and the Marrakesh Short Film Festival, this selection of short films spans multiple genres, providing an authentic view of contemporary Moroccan society through the eyes of its most promising filmmakers.

These films offer a glimpse into Morocco's unique heritage, highlighting personal and societal narratives that reflect the diversity and richness of Moroccan life. As part of a year-long celebration, Made in Morocco symbolises the spirit of cultural exchange, aiming to foster understanding and inspire dialogue between our communities. Through these cinematic stories, audiences are invited to connect with the essence of Morocco—its people, its culture, and its vision—bringing the spirit of collaboration to life through the universal language of film.

## Bottles

Morocco / Arabic / 2024  
18 mins



Said, a 13-year-old living in Rabat's old Medina, spends his summer collecting empty beer bottles to sell. Driven by compassion, he uses the earnings to feed a dog he secretly cares for, challenging his family's and community's beliefs about what is 'haram' or forbidden. As his friend urges him to abandon his mission, Said wrestles with loyalty, religious expectations, and his own values in this moving short film about personal conviction.

Director / Screenwriter / Producer: **Yassine El Idrissi**  
Cinematographer: **Matteo De Angelis**  
Cast: **Hind Dafer, Rabii El Fakih, Youssef Benmamoun**

Born in Morocco in 1983, **Yassine El Idrissi** developed a passion for photography and visual storytelling at age 16. He worked as a journalist for Moroccan and international publications before directing his first documentary short, 'Waiting for the Snow', in 2009. A 2013 graduate of the Netherlands Film Academy, El Idrissi has since focused on directing, with his films screening at over 140 festivals, including the Rotterdam Film Festival and the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival.

## Bye Bye Benz Benz

France, Morocco / Arabic / 2023  
9 mins



Since 2016, Morocco's effort to modernise public transportation has focused on scrapping its old taxis. Kbir, one of the last drivers clinging to his Mercedes 240, sees his car as a symbol of resilience and a connection to simpler times. As newer, safer taxis gain popularity, this documentary preserves the fading legacy of these iconic vehicles, capturing both the nostalgia and the inevitability of change. The film offers an intimate look at Kbir's journey and his unique bond with a car that defines an era.

Director / Cinematographer: **Mamoun Rtal Bennani, Jules Rouffio**  
Producer: **Saïd Hamich Benlarbi**  
Editor: **Laura Rius**

Born in Casablanca in 1988, **Mamoun Rtal Bennani** is a self-taught photographer specialising in early photography techniques. After completing his architecture studies in Paris, he returned to Morocco, where he combines photography with architecture.

**Jules Rouffio**, born in Paris in 1990, discovered a love for photography during his travels and pursued it passionately. His collaboration with Mamoun Rtal Bennani on a photographic series documenting Morocco's Mercedes taxis led them to create 'Bye Bye Benz Benz', a tribute to the stories behind these vehicles.



Moon

‘Ayyur’ / Morocco / Amazigh / 2024  
13 mins



Set in a remote Amazigh village, ‘Moon’ tells the story of Hasna and Samad, two 14-year-olds who find solace in painting and creative expression. Against the harsh, sun-baked landscape, their brightly coloured artwork and astronaut-like helmets seem alien to the local environment. Through their unique perspective, they reveal the beauty hidden in the everyday world. The film uses this visually compelling contrast to explore themes of isolation, resilience, and the pursuit of light in the darkest circumstances.

Director / Screenwriter: **Zineb Wakrim**  
Cinematographer: **Amine Berrada**  
Editor: **Pierre Bael**

**Zineb Wakrim**, born in Casablanca in 2001, is a Moroccan film director and screenwriter. Inspired by the surrealist movement from a young age, she honed her skills at the School of Visual Arts in Marrakech, where she graduated in 2023. Wakrim’s film ‘Moon’ premiered at the Cannes Film Festival, where it won third prize in La Cinéf. Her work is marked by a deep engagement with themes of spirituality, art, and resilience, as reflected in her visually poetic storytelling.

The Scarecrow

Morocco / Arabic / 2024  
24 mins



Saïd leads a dull life working desolate fields, longing for a better future with his beloved Zineb. As they plot their escape from the oppressive reality that binds them, Saïd’s inner turmoil and fear of the unknown threaten to keep him trapped in his circumstances. ‘The Scarecrow’ is a compelling drama that portrays the tension between aspiration and fear, reflecting on the courage needed to pursue change in the face of uncertainty.

Director / Screenwriter: **Anas Zemati**  
Producer: **Amine Abouelkacem**  
Cinematographer: **Houssam Loukili**  
Editor: **Salaheddine Belboudali, Anas Zemati**  
Music: **Jajouka Group**  
Cast: **Ali Boumehdi, Aya Jabrane**

**Anas Zemati** is a Moroccan filmmaker from Guelmim who started his journey into the audiovisual world in 2016. After graduating with a Higher Technical Certificate in Cinema and Audiovisual from Lycée al Layloun, Zemati directed his first film, ‘Guelmim That I Aspire For’. His second project, ‘The Scarecrow’, won the Grand Prize at the Tangier National Film Festival’s School Film Competition. Zemati continues his studies in cinema and creative writing, with a deep connection to the stories and culture of Morocco’s nomadic tribes.

What Else Grows on the Palm of Your Hand?

Morocco, Belgium, France / Arabic / 2023  
16 mins



This visually intimate film explores the bond between Hayat and her late grandmother, conveyed through the simplest of gestures. As Hayat prepares meals and reflects on her past, the memories of her grandmother return through the actions of her hands. These quiet moments illustrate how routine and repetition can preserve a connection across time. What Else Grows on the Palm of Your Hand? is a poignant look at how the small, seemingly insignificant actions of daily life keep loved ones present long after they are gone.

Director / Screenwriter: **Dhiaa Biya**  
Producer: **Walid Bekhti Ammour**  
Cinematographer: **Gaston Pepin Struye**  
Editor: **Vince De Leenheer**  
Cast: **Najia Sabir, Zineb Abbad Al Andaloussi, Alaa Assab**

**Dhiaa Biya** is a Moroccan photographer and filmmaker based in Brussels. She earned her bachelor’s degree in image techniques from L’Institut Supérieur des Métiers de l’Audiovisuel et du Cinéma in Rabat and pursued her master’s in filmmaking at LUCA School of Arts. Dhiaa’s work often explores the beauty of everyday life and human interactions, using precise framing and composition to tell visually compelling stories. Her notable films include ‘The Journey of a Book’ (2019), ‘Ici’ (2021), ‘Makan’ (2021), and ‘What Else Grows on the Palm of Your Hand?’ (2023).

Why Did You Leave The Horse Alone?

‘Pourquoi As-Tu Laissé Le Cheval À Sa Solitude?’ / France / Arabic / 2023  
9 mins



A lone rider on a tired horse gallops through a desert landscape, but despite the director’s best efforts, the horse doesn’t meet expectations on set. Several retakes later, frustrations mount, and the crew grapples with the question—what should they do with the horse? ‘Why Did You Leave the Horse Alone?’ is a contemplative exploration of decision-making in the creative process, set against the vastness of nature, where artistic challenges and practical realities collide.

Director / Screenwriter / Cinematographer: **Faouzi Bensaïdi**  
Producer: **Saïd Hamich Benlarbi, Sophie Penson**  
Cast: **Artur Garnica, Mohamed Hmimsa, Abdelhadi Taleb, Amine Afouzar**

**Faouzi Bensaïdi** is a Moroccan director, screenwriter, and actor known for his multi-award-winning films. His debut short film, ‘La Falaise’, won international prizes in 1997, and he co-wrote ‘Loin’ with André Téchiné. His first feature, ‘Mille Mois’, premiered at Un Certain Regard at Cannes, earning two prestigious awards. Bensaïdi’s latest film, ‘Deserts’, which received a Doha Film Institute grant, was screened at Qumra 2023. His acclaimed films ‘WWW – What a Wonderful World’ and ‘Mort à Vendre’ earned recognition at Venice and the Berlinale.

# INTAJ 'FROM GROUND ZERO' EXPERIENCE



Doha Film Institute (DFI) and Ajyal Film Festival are honoured to present From Ground Zero, a poignant collection of 22 short films by filmmakers from Gaza. Initiated by acclaimed Palestinian filmmaker Rashid Masharawi, this project captures raw, unfiltered glimpses of life within one of the world's most harrowing environments. Each filmmaker brings forth a deeply personal narrative of resilience, offering audiences a genuine view of Gaza's enduring spirit through stories shaped by hardship and hope.

Spanning three to six minutes, these films explore a range of genres—fiction, documentary, animation, and experimental cinema—revealing a vibrant artistic community that continues to create despite immense obstacles. With screenings across three digital spaces, we invite viewers to connect with voices that embody Gaza's strength, courage, and humanity. This exhibit stands as a testament to the power of storytelling and the unbreakable will to express one's truth.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the filmmakers, whose works bring Gaza's culture and community vividly to life:

Rashid Masharawi, Reema Mahmoud, Muhammad Al Sharif, Ahmed Hassouna, Islam Al Zeriei, Mustafa Kolab, Nidal Damo, Ahmed Al-Danaf, Alaa Islam Ayoub, Khamis Masharawi, Bashar Al-Balbisi, Tamer Nijim, Etimad Washah, Karim Satoum, Alaa Damo, Aws Al-Banna, Rabab Khamis, Mustafa Al Nabih, Neda'a Abu Hassnah, Hana Eleiwa, Wissam Moussa, Basel El-Maqousi, and Mahdi Kreirah.

# GEEKEND 2024



## **A Platform for Qatar's Creative Community**

Ajyal Film Festival and DFI are excited to host the return of Geekend, Qatar's premier festival celebrating pop-culture and the creative community at the Geekdom Building, Lusail Boulevard. Geekend November 2024 invites artists, fans, creators, and game developers to join a dynamic four-day event designed to foster collaboration, creativity, and dialogue within Qatar's vibrant creative sector.

This year's programme features an expanded lineup of engaging activities, with dedicated spaces for creators to connect with fans and showcase their work. Highlights include the Geekend Game Jam, an exhilarating event presented in partnership with Media City Qatar and SCALE7, which invites Qatar's creative minds to bring new games to life in a fast-paced, collaborative setting.

The Game Developers Hub provides an essential platform for local game creators—individuals and companies alike—to display their latest creations. This showcase invites visitors to discover and interact with a diverse selection of games, spanning multiple genres and styles, all created here in Qatar. The Game Developers Hub also offers opportunities for networking with fans and industry professionals, strengthening connections within the local gaming community and spotlighting the depth of Qatari talent in this growing industry.

The bustling Geekend Market is also back as an essential outlet for local artisans, illustrators, and designers, offering exclusive merchandise and artwork that reflects Qatar's rich cultural diversity. Alongside the market and developer showcases, Geekend 2024 will feature immersive workshops led by industry experts, providing practical skills and inspiration to artists at all levels. The popular Escape Room returns, challenging participants with a new narrative experience. Whether it's through cosplay, gaming, or art, Geekend offers Qatar's creative community an opportunity to celebrate their passions and connect meaningfully with like-minded individuals.

Geekend 2024 continues Ajyal's and Doha Film Institute's dedication to supporting and elevating local talent and fostering a creative ecosystem in Qatar. By offering an inclusive space for artists, creators, and fans, Geekend contributes to the development of a thriving creative culture in the region.

Doha Film Institute and Ajyal Film Festival Team

<b>Chief Executive Officer, Director of Ajyal Film Festival</b> Fatma Hassan Alremaihi	Siraj Ibrahim Taniya Tleubayeva Zainab ElKhouly	<b>Community Outreach</b> Nagham Dahleh Alanoud AlSaiani Aisha Guiamadin Mohammed AlJaser Hussen Qamar Abdulla Kilani
<b>Deputy Director of Ajyal Film Festival</b> Abdulla Jassim Al Mosallam	<b>Co-Financing</b> Lauren Mekhael	
<b>Festival Managing Director</b> Nikolaos Bempis Kolyfas	<b>Education Films</b> Basel Owies Benjamin Robinson Tais Angelova	<b>Design</b> Shaima Qadi Dawood Al-Anwari Raymond Bobar Sara Al-Afifi
<b>Deputy Festival Managing Director</b> Minas Stratigos	<b>Film Programming</b> Aya Al Blouchi Karem Kamel Majid Al Remaihi Rawda Al Thani Farah ElBuy	<b>Editorial</b> Shane Brennan Lubaba Al-Hawari
<b>Creative Advisor</b> Issam Bou Khaled		
<b>Executive Office</b> Fatma Hassan Alremaihi Dana An Natsheh		
<b>Government Relations &amp; Protocol</b> Nasser Abdulla Rana Mostafa Sarah Loulou Yara Amr	<b>Film Training &amp; Development</b> Ali Khechen Mahdi Al Sharshani Quay Chu Amna Al-Binali Ania Wojtowicz Anthea Devotta Aya Al Blouchi Farah El Kassis Khalifa Al Thani Yanis Cherif	<b>Marketing</b> Rasha Awada Aimee Merheb Amer Jamhour Anagha Robbin Anand Mondhe Ayah Battiri Davor Marenjak Elena Pavlaki Eman Kamel Ezzedine Al Saidi George Lee Ghanimeh El-Taweel Hana Natsheh Kleopatra Korai Lubna Wafi Mayar Hamdan Milana Zhanat Nour Al Soliman Obada Bahri Mostafa Al Sheshtawy Mustafa Hassan Mustafa Mohamed Khair Nasreen Zahan Rana Houssami Shaima Al Tamimi Shaima Shiref Stanley Mathews Tariq Daud Theunis Knoetze Waheed Khan
<b>Film Programmes and Funding</b> Hanaa Issa		
<b>Ajyal Jury</b> Aya Al Blouchi Hend Khader Raquel Pintor Abdelkareem Ghassan Ahmad Barakat Anas Haroun Bayan Dahdah Carole Mezher Ghada Salha Huda Barakat Husam Mirza Jana Shalaby Jaser Alagha Khaled Al-Atawneh Khayal Al Rubaie Mahmoud Shaat Muntaha ElMumin Najwan AlSaqqa Sahar Bou Hamdan	<b>Grants</b> Khalil Benkirane Mahitab Taha Yassine Ouahrani	
	<b>Communications</b> Majid Wasi Angel Cheng Dana Mohammed Joelyn Baluyut Julie Alagos Khaled Al-Atawneh Mike Marsland Mohammed Jradi Rajeev Nair Roald Aron	

Yanis Cherif Yazid Taki Ayoub Laroui Ali Touahria Elias Elasmar	<b>Geekdom</b> Shorooq Shaheen Ahmed Al Sharif Ashma Guiamadin Arwa Abul Foul Mohamed SidAhmed Mustafa Esam Khaled Abdoh Sina Hosseinipour Ilyes Chachoua Alaa AlHakawati Hanene Rougani Mohamed Sirelkhitem Ali Ahmaditayeb Seren Abouhassanein Laila Noor Julie Abi Nader Dawood Al-Anwari Sara Al-Afifi	<b>Interpretation</b> Faisal Khan Delia Mackenzie-Cameron Kyriaki Giagli Ayisha Mishbah
<b>Partnerships</b> Wesam Said Rana Kakish		<b>Security</b> Faisal Khan Mohammed Arda Osama Al Samman Abdalhadi Shurair
<b>Film Production</b> Ricardo Ceballos		<b>Ticketing &amp; Accreditation</b> Adi Tunovic Fedja Purivatra Marko Lendic Sabrina Besirevic Nada Guiamaden Noura Khan Thasnim Nashim Anwar Al Sharbadzhi
<b>Project Management Office, Event &amp; Festival Management</b> Nikolaos Bempis Kolyfas		<b>Venue Operations</b> Faisal Khan Katerina Kotsiarini Ahmad AlSamman Ahmed Yaser Abujoudeh Ayham Muftah Bilal Iqbal David D'Souza Rana AlAlam Fatima Hussein Larissa Pereira Marianna Grigoraki Mohamed Yousif Mohammad Khalid Mohammed Zameen Mostafa Bensaad Nawazish Quereshi Nesma Sherif Noura Habjouqa Thasmeer Ummer Ushera Nadeem Akter Zaid Naveed
<b>Festival Management Office</b> Minas Stratigos	<b>Intaj Experience</b> Khalifa Al-Thani Shorooq Shaheen Marwa Hajwel Maryam Shaheen Salma Saleh	
<b>Project Management Office</b> Farah El Buy Hend Khader Raquel Pintor Shorooq Shaheen Zahra Al-Anssari	<b>Guest Relations</b> Uhain Poignon Sara Allouba Anida Devedzic Lejla Karišik Inigo Palenzuela Yasmine Mohamed Shereen El Buy	
<b>Event Production</b> Dariusz Bolton Graziela Garcia Shahana Akkawi Sameer Kavungalayil Julia Taribo Yazan Shorbaji Nimer Abonaadj	<b>Guest Services and Registration</b> Angeliki Leivaditi Ramina Kim	
<b>Film Screening Operations</b> Farah El Buy Maya Mechmoum Tereza Soldatova Sara Riad	<b>Hospitality</b> Mansha Farooq Pelin Cifti Bircan Angel Raphael Louella Arriba	
<b>Presentation</b> Chris Myers Patricia Donohue Kinan Akaoui Maryam Al Musleh Panagiotis Giannakos		



## Festival Team

**Volunteers**  
Faisal Khan  
Marilou Zotiadou  
Walaa Abdelkarim  
Najlah Mohammed Ali  
Muna Ibrahim

Faisal Khan  
Marilou Zotiadou  
Walaa Abdelkarim  
Najlah Mohammed Ali  
Muna Ibrahim

## Transportation

Faisal Khan  
Mohammed Arda  
Abdul Hafeedh Haneefa  
Fahad Abdulkareem  
Shamna Hameed  
Abdulahad Altaf  
Kamal Sai  
Ajmal Mohammed  
Haroon Muhammad  
Mohamed Anas  
Shalna Anas  
Azzam Nasarudheen  
Shaheen Kothur

Faisal Khan  
Mohammed Arda  
Abdul Hafeedh Haneefa  
Fahad Abdulkareem  
Shamna Hameed  
Abdulahad Altaf  
Kamal Sai  
Ajmal Mohammed  
Haroon Muhammad  
Mohamed Anas  
Shalna Anas  
Azzam Nasarudheen  
Shaheen Kothur

**Administration**  
Abdulla Jassim Al Mosallam  
Ravinder Kaur

Abdulla Jassim Al Mosallam  
Ravinder Kaur

**Finance**  
Riyas Peediyekkal  
Ahmed Alrefaei  
Chadi Abdulrahim  
Galib Bin Dastagir  
Yahia ElBakri

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Ahmed Alrefaei  
Chadi Abdulrahim  
Galib Bin Dastagir  
Yahia ElBakri

**General Services**  
Ziad Haddad  
Ranim Ajeeb  
Saad Ahmad  
Sanjeewa Roshan  
Sara Abou Nahl

Ziad Haddad  
Ranim Ajeeb  
Saad Ahmad  
Sanjeewa Roshan  
Sara Abou Nahl

**Human Resources**  
Clare Peacock  
Ahmed Taha  
Deena Wafy  
Sara El Natsha  
Victoria Allan

Clare Peacock  
Ahmed Taha  
Deena Wafy  
Sara El Natsha  
Victoria Allan

**Information Technology**

Peter Okorn  
Abdulla AlNaimi  
Amit Chowdhury  
Fadeela Totah  
Furkhan Ali  
Mohammed Gani  
Mohammed Ismail  
Mohammed Farouq  
Mohammed Yunus  
Nashim Shukkur

Peter Okorn  
Abdulla AlNaimi  
Amit Chowdhury  
Fadeela Totah  
Furkhan Ali  
Mohammed Gani  
Mohammed Ismail  
Mohammed Farouq  
Mohammed Yunus  
Nashim Shukkur

**Production Operations**  
Abdul Jabbar Maki  
Amit Chowdhury  
Clare Peacock  
Falah Hannoun  
Renjith Babu  
Yasser Mustafa

Abdul Jabbar Maki  
Amit Chowdhury  
Clare Peacock  
Falah Hannoun  
Renjith Babu  
Yasser Mustafa

**Procurement**  
Iman Ghareeb  
Dana Abou Nahl


Iman Ghareeb  
Dana Abou Nahl

**Legal**  
Russell Frame  
Dina Bolboul

Russell Frame  
Dina Bolboul

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