



Qumra 2021

A Space for New Voices in Cinema



Catalogue

Qumra 2021 Online Edition

A Space for New Voices in Cinema

12-17 March, 2021

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On its eleventh anniversary, the Doha Film Institute continues to blaze a path led by the vision of establishing a permanent space in the global narrative for emerging voices and Arab perspectives. With its unique model of specialized training, mentorship and networking, and now in its most robust edition, Qumra 2021 is truly a blueprint for global success in creative development and cultural collaboration, helping inspired stories reach wider audiences.

The evolution of storytelling has expanded the scope and expression of ideas and influence, and out of the pandemic challenges of the past year evolved innovation and determination that will ensure that unique perspectives will continue to be shared widely around the world. At Qumra, filmmakers work closely with industry experts to tell authentic stories that transcend geographies, languages and cultures, and remind us amid many conversations around separation the power of our universal connection.

Art and culture are at the heart of Arab identity and tradition, and connect us with our past, open windows to our future and free our collective imagination. Through the enormous trials of 2020, the creative industry has evolved to an increasingly important role that leverages its inherent power to inspire, bring about change, and amplify underrepresented voices. The Doha Film Institute's commitment to excellence and innovation continues to equip emerging talent with powerful creative and technical tools that will make ideas a reality and broaden understanding of the Arab experience across the world.

Representation matters, and Qumra empowers filmmakers to boldly own their narrative and represent all the complex facets of our individual and collective cultural identities authentically and accurately. The support they receive from our Qumra Masters and industry mentors, who fearlessly forged their own unique paths, instill confidence in these creative talents to push boundaries and redefine cinema in their own unique ways.

This year's Qumra projects fuel the Institute's continued commitment to bring importantly diverse stories to life, and to strengthen a vibrant and sustainable film industry in Qatar and the wider region. We are extremely proud of the resiliency of our filmmakers and the legacy that they are building, and excited to witness the global impact that their future success will bring.

We are honoured to host the foremost industry professionals and most promising emerging voices in world cinema on Qumra's innovative format that enables access from anywhere in the world. I welcome you all to celebrate with us the visionary power of filmmaking at Qumra 2021, and hope you find many inspiring moments over this coming week.



Fatma Hassan Alremaihi

**Chief Executive Officer,
Doha Film Institute**

Director, Qumra

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the seventh and most expansive edition of Qumra, the Doha Film Institute's initiative that is dedicated to developing the next generation of film talents from around the world. After the past five successful editions, the Institute was faced with the unprecedented challenge of a pandemic in its sixth. We answered the challenge with innovation, and produced a first online Qumra edition in 2020 that was able to maintain and expand upon its unwavering commitment to nurturing creative ambition in film, and we are excited to return with the largest virtual Qumra 2021 yet that will reach even further out into the global film community.

Qumra brings together emerging film talents with accomplished film professionals to provide inspiration and mentorship to support the future of storytelling. It serves as an important platform and project incubator for new voices and compelling stories in Arab and world cinema and a unique industry matchmaker.

An industry-focused event, Qumra combines world-class filmmaking expertise with the essential components of workshops and mentoring sessions to support promising creative talents with the practical and networking support to confidently navigate the evolving film landscape and propel their work to the next level.

Qumra 2021 welcomes 48 projects, including 19 from Qatar, representing our tremendous diversity in perspectives. I thank the filmmakers for their courage and trust in the Institute as the caretakers of their creative journeys and applaud their role in accelerating the evolution of a vibrant film industry in Qatar and the region.

Industry experts who are committed to supporting exceptional storytellers mentor each participating project. Equipped with the skills and confidence to successfully navigate the global film landscape, Qumra participants go on to garner international acclaim as exceptional filmmakers. We are extremely grateful to the accomplished professionals who invest their valuable time and energy in the success of the projects.

At the heart of Qumra are the internationally celebrated legends of cinema that have a lasting and meaningful impact on the participating filmmakers – we are deeply indebted to our Qumra Masters for returning this year to bring immeasurable value to a fresh new lineup of projects. While the Masters each have their own distinctive approach to the art and craft of filmmaking, their commitment to excellence and ability to redefine cinematic expression inspires us all.

The Doha Film Institute remains dedicated to investing in a bright and promising future of cinema in Qatar and the region and continuing to provide important opportunities for filmmakers through Qumra. I thank you all for your contribution to realizing our vision of a vibrant global creative community and hope you find many moments of inspiration over this coming week.



Elia Suleiman

**Artistic Advisor,
Doha Film Institute**

In a moment of low self-esteem and low spirits I'd been living, during a chat over dinner with writer John Berger, who, incidentally, might be the reason I make films, I asked – *How could you be so optimistic still, when you look at the ways of the world today?* How can you have hope still? "We still do look at the world with hope, but we do so with a scarred eye", said he.

* * * * *

A catastrophic crescendo of globalization, mounting over the past few decades and mired with worldly tensions and states of exception, just landed us a pandemic. Since then, the world has been silenced and paralyzed, rendered mute and immobile.

We, the living, live the past and the present, and envision the future. Many of us had a premonition of what would land on us, even if we could not precisely know what it was. We might have been listening to the silence before the storm for a good while before it happened. We might have not expressed it, or rather kept it to our own solitary selves, to avoid burdening our close relations and friends or in dread, out of superstition, that our fears and anxieties would become reality should we express them. The painful truth, however, is that we saw it coming.

So how can tomorrow be saved?

Many of us managed to appropriate the rupture for our own good, for a meditative and self-evaluative journey. We read and watched many films, and envisioned a back to normalcy that would be a new normalcy, devoid, perhaps, of that consumerism that essentially benefits and serves the few on top, to be replaced by love, humor and creativity. A poetic existence, so to speak. And poetical language, however it may express itself, cinematically or artistically, in dance, literature, or song, has an immortal soul that has been transgressing boundaries and checkpoints, in all their variants, including plagues and pandemics, since time immemorial. Poetics, in short, are immune to pandemics.

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Qumra Industry Senior Coordinator

Ania Wojtowicz

Qumra Shorts Senior Coordinator
Film Workshops & Labs
Senior Coordinator

Cultural Partners

Qatar Museums

Qatar Museums (QM), the nation's preeminent institution for art and culture, provides authentic and inspiring cultural experiences through a growing network of museums, heritage sites, festivals, public art installations, and programmes. QM preserves and expands the nation's cultural offerings, sharing art and culture from Qatar, the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia (MENASA) region with the world and enriching the lives of citizens, residents, and visitors.

Under the patronage of His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, and led by its Chairperson, Her Excellency Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, QM has made Qatar a vibrant centre for the arts, culture, and education in the Middle East and beyond. QM is integral to the goal of developing an innovative, diverse, and progressive nation, bringing people together to ignite new thinking, spark critical cultural conversations, and amplify the voices of Qatar's people. Since its founding in 2005, QM has overseen the development of the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) and MIA Park, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, the National Museum of Qatar (NMOQ), QM Gallery Al Riwaq, QM Gallery Katara, and the Tasweer Qatar Photo Festival. Future projects include the soon to open 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum and the Qatar Children's Museum.

Through its Department of Archaeology, QM spearheads several initiatives to preserve and restore Qatar's historical sites and buildings. QM also initiates and supports projects—such as the Fire Station: Artist in Residence and the creative hub for innovation, fashion and design, M7—that nurture artistic talent and create opportunities to build a strong and sustainable cultural infrastructure.

Sarajevo Film Festival

In 1995, towards the end of the four-year-long Siege of Sarajevo, the Obala Art Centre initiated the Sarajevo Film Festival with the aim of helping to reconstruct civil society and retain the cosmopolitan spirit of its city. Today, over two decades later, it is a trailblazing film festival with a special focus on the region of Southeast Europe that shines an international spotlight on the region's talent, their current films and future projects. High-quality programming, a strong industry segment, and an educational and networking platform for young filmmakers attract the international film industry, film authors and media representatives to the event, along with a public audience of more than 100,000. Together, this makes it a leading film festival in Southeast Europe. In a territory of more than 140 million inhabitants, the Sarajevo Film Festival serves as a common platform for film businesses, setting the future standards for festival organisation, film promotion and presentation in Southeast Europe. By partnering with the Doha Film Institute, we are connecting our region to the Arab world and opening up new cooperation possibilities that will ultimately enhance creativity and intercultural dialogue.

Qumra Masters

We are truly honoured to present our Qumra Masters, a group of internationally renowned creative visionaries who will share with us their professional insights in a series of inspirational Master Classes held online to support the development of global storytelling.

Our five distinguished Masters for 2021 encompass the full spectrum of filmmaking as a craft, from direction and screenwriting to cinematography and sound. Between them, these luminaries of the film industry have created some of the finest examples of contemporary world cinema and will provide invaluable guidance and inspiration to all Qumra participants.

This year the programme includes legendary French auteur Claire Denis, BAFTA and Academy Award-nominated cinematographer Phedon Papamichael, internationally celebrated director and Cannes veteran James Gray, Silver Lion-winning film director and screenwriter Jessica Hausner and Academy Award-winning sound designer Mark Mangini.

Qumra Master Class Moderator



Richard Peña was the Programme Director of the Film Society of Lincoln Center and the Director of the New York Film Festival from 1988 until 2012. At the Film Society, Peña organised retrospectives of many film artists, as well as major film series devoted to numerous national cinemas. Together with Unifrance, in 1995 he created Rendez-Vous with French Cinema, the leading American showcase for new French cinema. He is Professor of Film and Media Studies at Columbia University, where he specialises in film theory and international cinema, and has served as a Visiting Professor at the Sorbonne, Beijing University, UNAM-Mexico City and the University of São Paulo. He also currently hosts WNET/Channel 13's weekly 'Reel 13'.

Claire Denis

A true master of her craft, Claire Denis is a French film director and writer who is widely regarded as one of Europe's most distinctive auteurs. Speaking on her collaborative approach to filmmaking, she will take participants through her body of work which continues to influence European cinematic identity.

Denis's feature film directorial debut 'Chocolat' (1988), competed for the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival and is a semi-autobiographical reflection on French colonialism in Africa that examines racial tension, and belonging.

With films such as 'US Go Home' (1994), Locarno Golden Leopard winner 'Nénette et Boni' (1996), 'Beau Travail' (1999), 'Trouble Every Day' (2001), and 'Vendredi Soir' (2002), she established a reputation as a filmmaker who is able to "reconcile the lyricism of French cinema with the impulse to capture the often harsh face of contemporary France". Denis went on to win widespread acclaim for '35 Rhums' (2009), a compelling portrayal of a father-daughter relationship in a mixed immigrant community. Her film 'Bastards' (2013) was presented at Un Certain Regard at Cannes Film Festival in 2013. In 2017,



Denis returned to Cannes with 'Let The Sunshine In', screened as the opening film in Directors' Fortnight and winner of the SACD prize. In 2018, she completed and released 'High Life', her first English-language feature film, with Robert Pattinson cast as the lead.

Ultimately, the films of Claire Denis ask us to examine the lines that divide us and to confront the Other. The intrusion of the body, of borders, of culture and of limits, asks both Denis's characters and her audience to come face to face with their differences. Wesley Morris, a

cultural critic for the New York Times, has compared her work to a stew that's been cooking all week—a reduced and potent pleasure.



James Gray

World-renowned director, screenwriter and Cannes Veteran James Gray will share with us his personal approach to filmmaking and how he captures the full range and depth of human emotions in his work.

He made his directorial debut in 1994 at the age of twenty-five with crime drama 'Little Odessa', a widely acclaimed film that won the Silver Lion award at the 51st Venice International Film Festival. Since then, he has made six other features, four of which competed for the

Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. In 2000, Gray wrote and directed 'The Yards', his second feature and his first with Joaquin Phoenix, who would go on to become a frequent collaborator. The drama premiered in competition at the Cannes Film Festival.

Gray's New York crime drama 'We Own the Night' (2007) starred Mark Wahlberg, Joaquin Phoenix, Eva Mendes and Robert Duvall. The film received a César nomination in 2008 for Best Foreign Film and screened in competition at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival. His fourth feature,

'Two Lovers' (2008), received nominations at the Independent Spirit Awards for Best Director and Best Female Lead.

In 2013, 'The Immigrant', which starred Joaquin Phoenix, Marion Cotillard and Jeremy Renner, went on to garner numerous awards, including Best Actress (Marion Cotillard) and Best Cinematography (Darius Khondji) prizes from the New York Film Critics Circle. Gray's film 'The Lost City of Z' was based on the best-selling novel by David Grann and starred Charlie Hunnam, Sienna Miller, Robert Pattinson and Tom Holland. Gray first confirmed his plans to write and direct sci-fi space epic 'Ad Astra' during the 2016 Cannes Film Festival, and the visually compelling journey to the vast reaches of space, starring Brad Pitt, was released to critical acclaim in 2019.

Jessica Hausner

Distinguished Austrian film director and screenwriter Jessica Hausner developed a deep love of film as she grew up in Vienna, spending her days at the city's independent cinemas. Hausner will discuss with us her passion for cinema and what she draws on for inspiration in her films that often depict defiant portrayals of female protagonists, love and the human condition.

Hausner initially studied psychology and later trained as a director at the Vienna Film Academy. While studying, she made the short film 'Flora' (1996), which won the Léopard de Demain at the Locarno Festival. 'Inter-view', her graduation film, won the Prix du Jury of the Cinéfondation at the Cannes Film Festival in 1999.

She received international attention in 2001 when her first feature 'Lovely Rita'—a portrait of a young girl who feels confined by family constraints—was screened in the Un Certain Regard section at the 2001 Cannes Film Festival. Just three years later, she returned to Cannes with her thriller 'Hotel' (2004). Her next film, 'Lourdes', a mysterious and brilliantly composed drama, had its premiere at Venice Film



Festival 2009 in International Competition where it won the FIPRESCI Prize.

Her 2014 film 'Amour Fou', based on the tragic life of the German writer Henrich von Kleist, was selected to compete in the Un Certain Regard section at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival. She was appointed a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 2017. Hausner's fifth and most recent film, 'Little Joe', is her first English-language feature. It was presented in the main competition at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival and garnered the acting award for lead actress Emily Beecham.



Mark Mangini

Mark Mangini is an Academy Award-winning, and five-time nominated sound designer. Drawing on over four decades of experience, he will share with us the vital importance of sound in realising the full gamut of creative expression in filmmaking.

Best known for films including 'Blade Runner 2049' (2017), Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home (1986), 'The Fifth Element' (1997), 'Gremlins' (1984) and 'Raiders of the Lost Ark' (1981), Mangini won the 2015 Academy Award for

Best Sound Editing for his work on 'Mad Max: Fury Road' (2015).

A native of Boston, Mark Mangini was a foreign language major in college, until he could no longer ignore his love of film and moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in sound design. Mangini's first job in entertainment was as a cartoon sound editor at Hanna Barbera Studios. "Having grown up a musician, I am avowed of the idea that all organized sound is music." he says to underpin his roots in music. "My works are no less considered, designed, creative or manipulative. They

just aren't hummable." He has spent his entire 42-year career in Hollywood imagining and composing altered sonic realities for motion pictures. He is a frequent lecturer, an outspoken proponent for sound as art and a guitarist/songwriter.

He founded and ran Weddington Productions, a successful Hollywood post-production sound company for 25 years. Today he works at the Formosa Group in Hollywood, California continuing his work as a supervising sound editor, sound designer and re-recording mixer on such recent films as 'Black Mass' (2015), 'The Accountant' (2016) and the upcoming 'Dune' (2021).

Phedon Papamichael

Phedon Papamichael is an Academy Award-nominated and internationally acclaimed cinematographer. He is widely regarded for his collaborations with directors James Mangold, Alexander Payne, and Wim Wenders. During Qumra, Papamichael will take us through his extensive body of work, which is celebrated for its versatile array of visual styles.

Born in Athens, Greece, Papamichael later moved with his family to Germany, where in 1982, he completed his education in Fine Arts in Munich. Working as a photojournalist brought Papamichael to NYC in 1983, where he started crossing over into cinematography. Papamichael now counts over 45 features to his credit as Director of Photography, including the early blockbusters, 'While You Were Sleeping' (1995), 'Cool Runnings' (1993) and 'Phenomenon' (1996), all directed by Jon Turteltaub. Papamichael was accepted as a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 1997, where he served several years on the Cinematographers Branch Executive Committee.

In 2000, Papamichael shot 'The Million Dollar Hotel' by Wim Wenders, which was chosen as the Opening Film of the 2000



Berlin Film Festival and won the Grand Jury Prize, the Silver Bear, as well as the Golden Camera. In 2001, Papamichael shot 'Moonlight Mile', directed by Brad Silberling, starring Dustin Hoffman and Susan Sarandon. It was followed by 'Identity' (2003), directed by James Mangold, and the Oscar-nominated 'Sideways' (2004), directed by Alexander Payne. His credits continued with 'Walk the Line' (2005), again directed by Mangold. Papamichael also shot the Academy Award-nominated western '3:10 to Yuma' (2007) by James Mangold, and the blockbuster 'Pursuit of Happyness' (2006) by Gabriele Muccino. Incredibly, he shot two

of the most award-winning films of 2011, Alexander Payne's 'The Descendants' and 'The Ides of March', directed by George Clooney.

For his exceptional black and white lensing on the highly acclaimed 'Nebraska' (2013) by Alexander Payne, which received six Academy Award nominations, Papamichael received an Oscar nomination, a BAFTA nomination, and an ASC nomination. Papamichael's work for Mangold's 'Ford V Ferrari' (2019) earned him another BAFTA nomination, and he has been recently lauded for his capturing of 1960s' Americana in 'The Trial of the Chicago 7' (2020).

Qumra Talks

Our Qumra Talks invite leaders from film and the arts to weigh in on diverse topics impacting the creative industries. This year, we are honoured to host pioneering singer-songwriter Yasmine Hamdan, and the influential photographer Brigitte Lacombe.

Yasmine Hamdan

On Music and Film

Lebanese singer-songwriter Yasmine Hamdan is one of the most pioneering musicians in the Middle East. Her personal, contemporary take on Arabic pop has won her fans across the world. Often crossing genres and blending traditional boundaries, she has worked with visionary artists from all disciplines, including filmmakers Jim Jarmusch and Elia Suleiman, as well as theatre productions at the Comédie-Française. In this inspirational Qumra Talk, Yasmine will take us on a journey of discovery, outlining her creative process and discussing what it is like to work in a collaborative creative process.



Hailed as “Arabic music’s modern voice” by the New York Times, Yasmine Hamdan draws inspiration from the many great Arab women singers from the middle of the 20th century. ‘Hal’, a track from her critically-acclaimed debut album ‘Ya Nass’, was featured in Jim Jarmusch’s film ‘Only Lovers Left Alive’. Over her career, she has composed several film scores and collaborated with renowned directors such as Elia Suleiman, Ghassan Salhab, Khalil Joreige, Joana Hadjithomas, Faouzi Bensaïdi, and Danielle Arbid. In 2014, Yasmine was honoured with the ‘Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres’ by the French Minister of Culture, and she actively contributes to the promotion of Arabic culture—acting as a vocal advocate of its dynamism and richness.

Moderated by:

Born in Beirut, Lebanon, Rania Stephan graduated in Cinema Studies from Latrobe University, Australia and Paris VIII University, France. She has worked as a first assistant with renowned filmmakers, including Simone Bitton and Elia Suleiman. She has directed numerous short and medium length videos and creative documentaries, which are notable for their play with genres, and the long-running investigation of memory and identity. Anchored in the turbulent reality of her country, her documentaries give a personal perspective to political events. Her first feature film, ‘The Three Disappearances of Soad Hosni’ (2011), described as a contemporary classic, was internationally acclaimed and won numerous prizes. She has had solo exhibitions at MoMA PS1, New York, Alt Art Space, Istanbul, and Marfa’ Gallery, Beirut.

Brigitte Lacombe

The Art of Groundbreaking Photography

In this intimate conversation, influential and acclaimed photographer Brigitte Lacombe will showcase her renowned body of work in photography and discuss her experiences and inspirations. The presentation will span Brigitte Lacombe’s illustrious career in the world of cinema, working with some of the film industry’s biggest names, including Martin Scorsese, Meryl Streep, Mike Nichols, Lynne Ramsay, David Mamet, Alejandro González Iñárritu, Sofia Coppola, Wes Anderson, and Quentin Tarantino, amongst many others.



French photographer Brigitte Lacombe is known for her influential and revelatory portraiture. Over the past four decades, she has created iconic and intimate photographs of many of the world’s most celebrated artists, actors, politicians and intellectuals. Lacombe has won the Eisenstaedt Award for Travel Photography (2000), the Lifetime Achievement Award for Photography (Art Directors Club Hall of Fame, 2010), and the Lucie Award for Lifetime Achievement in Travel & Portraiture (2012). As a special photographer, Lacombe has worked behind the scenes on many film sets, starting with Alan Pakula’s ‘All the President’s Men’ and ‘Fellini’s Casanova’ both in 1975.

Moderated by:

E. Nina Rothe is a journalist and blogger who was born in Florence, Italy and grew up in New York City. She has written for Vogue Italia, Harper’s Bazaar Arabia, Cosmo Middle East, The Art Newspaper, Empire Arabia, the HuffPost, Tehelka, The National, Bespoke and several other publications. She currently contributes to the Los Angeles-based magazine Flaunt, where she explores the crossroads between cinema and fashion and has recently co-founded The Moving Image Middle East which will launch in the Spring of 2021 as a platform for everything visual in and from the region.

Qumra Screenings

Our Qumra Screenings are a selection of acclaimed feature-length and short films made with the support of the Doha Film Institute's Grants Programmes and Filmmaking Labs. This year we present bold stories from both new and seasoned voices—offering audiences fresh, original perspectives from the MENA region and beyond. All Qumra Screenings include a pre-recorded Q&A with the filmmaker, moderated by film critic and programmer Joseph Fahim.

Joseph Fahim is an Egyptian film critic and programmer. He is the Arab delegate of the Karlovy Vary Film Festival, the 2018 curator of London's Safar Film Fest, a former member of Berlin Critics' Week and the ex-director of programming of the Cairo International Film Festival. He co-authored various books on Arab cinema and has written for numerous outlets around the world, including Middle East Eye, the Middle East Institute, BBC, MUBI, Verite, Al-Monitor, Al Jazeera, and The National (U.A.E.). To date, his writings have been translated into six different languages. He is also a script consultant and has worked with various funds and producers in the Arab World and Europe.

Director/ Screenwriter:
Ameen Nayfeh

Producer:
May Odeh

Editor:
Kamal El Mallakh

Cinematographer:
Elin Kirschfink

Cast:
**Ali Suliman, Lana Zreik, Samia Bakri,
Tawfeeq Nayfeh, Maryam Nayfeh**

Sales:
True Colours



Ameen Nayfeh was born in Palestine in 1988, and spent his formative years moving between Jordan and

Palestine. Despite an early interest in filmmaking, in 2010 he earned his BSc in Nursing from Al-Quds University in East Jerusalem. Two years later, he attained an MFA in film producing from the Red Sea Institute of Cinematic Arts in Jordan. Ameen Nayfeh's previous films include 'The Crossing' (2017), 'Suspended Time / Zaman Muaalaq' (2014), 'The Eid Gift' (2012), and 'The Uppercut' (2012). '200 Meters' is his first feature film.

200 Meters

Palestine, Jordan, Qatar, Italy, Sweden / Arabic, English, Hebrew / 2020 / 96 mins / Colour



Mustafa (Ali Suliman) and his wife Salwa live a mere 200 metres apart in two Palestinian villages, separated by a dividing wall. One day he gets a call every parent dreads—his son has been in an accident. Rushing to cross the checkpoint, Mustafa is denied on a technicality. But a father's love won't give up, and he will do anything to reach his son. A 200-metre distance becomes a 200-kilometre odyssey. Mustafa, left with no choice, attempts to smuggle himself to the other side of the wall.

Seasoned trafficker Nader is willing to help, but for a price. One that is shared between a motley crew of fellow passengers who join Mustafa on his endeavour. There is the young and brash Rami, artsy activist Kifah and German photographer Anne, who attempts to film the whole experience. Caught between two divided worlds, where distance is relative, the film beautifully closes the gap both geographically and emotionally between its characters and subject matter. The depiction of everyday life in an occupied land and the obstacles the people there face are a universal appeal to breaking down barriers the world over.

A Comedian in a Syrian Tragedy

Syria, France, Denmark, Jordan, Norway, Qatar / Arabic, French / 2019 / 95 mins / Colour



A gripping chronicle of a revolution and war, experienced by Syrian actor Fares Helou. As one of the most famous film and television personalities in Syria, Fares Helou's political opinions are not taken lightly by the Assad regime. The highest-ranking officials of the dictatorial regime try to win him over with a dual strategy—first by showing him respect, and then with masked threats. Fearing for his life and his family's safety, Helou goes into hiding, where he is joined by director Rami Farah and his camera.

When Helou is eventually forced to flee from Syria to France, Rami follows him. However, neither the actor nor the director had a script for this new and unexpected chapter in their lives: exile. A chapter full of questions, disappointments, and alienation, but also of absurdity and cultural confusion that calls for laughter. While they try to find their footing on a new continent, the need to remain faithful to the dream of a free and democratic Syria becomes a matter of integrity—an existential quest. 'A Comedian in a Syrian Tragedy' is an intimate observation of the psychological violence and the exiled existence experienced by the director and his favourite actor.

Director:
Rami Farah

Producer:
Signe Byrge Sørensen, Lyana Saleh

Co-producers:
**Cindy le Templier,
Anita Rehoff Larsen**

Editor: **Gladys Joujou**



Rami Farah is a Syrian filmmaker, actor and performer, born in 1980 and currently based in Paris.

After studying dance at the Higher Institute of Arts in Damascus, he attended numerous training courses and workshops in contemporary film and dance. His first films and videos blend dance and audiovisual material. 'ZamKan' (2004), unfolds as a dialogue between a ceiling fan and a chair in a silent room. It was followed by 'Point' (2004), a short video that was screened in several exhibitions and festivals. In 2006, Farah shot and produced a 35-minute documentary about the Golan Heights entitled 'Silence'.

Director:
Atieh Attarzadeh, Hesam Eslami

Cinematographer:
Mehdi Azadi, Moslem Tehrani

Editor:
Farid Daghagheleh

Producers:
Etienne de Ricaud, Hesam Eslami, Atieh Attarzadeh, Fiona Lawson Baker

With:
Sahar Iranshahi, Marjan Khodayari, Seyfolah Nahvi



Atieh Attarzadeh holds a BA and Masters in Cinema Studies from the University of

Tehran and a Masters in Documentary Practice from the University of Bristol. She has directed three short documentary films, '40 Days of Pine' (2016), '17 Years Old' (2014) and 'I am an Ordinary Woman' (2010).



Hesam Eslami was born in 1982 in Ahwaz, south of Iran. He holds a BFA and MA in Cinema from Tehran

University of Art. Since 2009 he has worked as an editor and director, making documentaries for TV. Juvenile offenders and social issues are the main themes of his work. In 2017 his first feature-length documentary, '20th Circuit Suspects' premiered at Hot Docs.

The Marriage Project

Iran, France, Qatar / Persian / 2020 / 80 mins / Colour



Encourage the patients from a psychiatric hospital to form relationships with each other, get married and live as a family. That is the bold new idea of the head of Ehsan House in Southern Tehran. For the past 20 years, its 480 patients have lived in separate male and female units with no hope of ever leaving or of having meaningful intimate relationships. But in 2017, the head of the centre secured the necessary funding to build a new unit of marital facilities. Despite strong opposition to his project, he was convinced the patients would benefit from being in a couple.

As a selection committee begins evaluating patients, intriguing questions begin to arise, and hidden affections come to the surface. Finally, the team selects two patients to form the first couple of the experiment. Are these two patients capable of having a relationship that leads to marriage? What do their families think? And what about the patients who were not selected but still crave human relationships? A compelling and compassionate look at the often-invisible hierarchies and unspoken laws of a self-contained community, where love is often forced to find a way around the rules.

Mica

Morocco, France, Qatar / French / 2020 / 93 mins / Colour



Ten-year-old Mica lives with his mother and sick father in a slum in the suburbs of Meknes, which is destined for destruction. A friend of his parents'—who happens to be a handyman in a swanky tennis club in Casablanca—chooses the young boy as his apprentice. Mica finds himself catapulted into a completely different world where a new life suddenly seems possible. Mr. Slimani, a rich and cultured man and owner of the club, dreams of making his son Omar a tennis champion. To this end, he hires Sophia, a former French champion, as a private trainer.

But Omar has very little talent and no passion for the sport. On the other hand, Sophia notices Mica and decides to take him under her wing. Ismael Ferroukhi's 'Mica' captures the coming-of-age journey of a child from an impoverished background who dreams of a new life in a society where inequality is the unwritten rule of law. Ultimately a story of hope, the French-Moroccan filmmaker's third feature shows us both sides of modern-day Moroccan society, separated less by potential, and more so by opportunity.

Director:
Ismaël Ferroukhi

Screenwriter:
Fadette Drouard, Ismaël Ferroukhi

Producer:
Lamia Chraïbi

Cinematographer:
Eva Sehet

Cast:
Sabrina Ouazani, Azelarab Kaghat, Zakaria Inan

Production Company:
La Prod, Elzévir Films



Ismaël Ferroukhi is a French-Moroccan film director born in 1962 in Morocco. He gained

exposure with his 1992 short film 'L'Exposé', which won two prizes (Kodak and Prix SACD for Best Short Film) at Cannes Film Festival. Later, Ismaël co-wrote the Cédric Kahn film 'Trop de Bonheur' in 1994. His directorial debut 'Le Grand Voyage', won the Lion of the Future for a First Film at Venice Film Festival in 2004. His last film, 'Free Men' was screened at Cannes Film Festival in 2011.

Director / Cinematographer
/ Sound Design:
Lina Soualem

Producer:
Marie Balducci

Editor:
Gladys Joujou

Distribution:
Sweet Spot Docs



Lina Soualem is a French-Palestinian-Algerian filmmaker and actress, born and based in Paris.

After studying History and Political Science at La Sorbonne University, Lina worked as a journalist and as a programmer in film festivals such as the International Human Rights Film Festival in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She currently works on film and documentary projects as an author and director. Lina acted in three feature films directed by Hafsia Herzi, Hiam Abbass and Rayhana.

Their Algeria

'Leur Algérie' / Algeria, France, Switzerland, Qatar / Arabic, French / 2020 / 72 mins / Colour



After 62 years of living together, Lina's grandparents, Aïcha and Mabrouk, have decided to separate. They have moved out of their shared apartment and opted to live in two buildings facing each other instead. The enduring couple came together from Algeria to Thiers, a small medieval town in the middle of France, more than six decades ago. Side by side, they have experienced this chaotic immigrant life. For Lina, their separation is an opportunity to question their long journey of exile and their silence.

Aïcha and Mabrouk got married in 1952, in the village of Laouamer in Algeria, without knowing each other. Their story is like many Algerian families of the time, uprooted from their home with a promise of a better one across the sea, one which they never truly succeeded in making. Through this intimate portrait of the filmmaker's own grandparents, 'Their Algeria' shines a light on the infinite and often closely guarded secrets of an entire generation, allowing us to share in both the laughter of shared moments and the tears of dissolution.

The Unknown Saint

Morocco, France, Qatar / Arabic / 100 mins / 2019 / Colour



In this brilliantly comedic modern fable, debut feature director Alaa Eddine Aljem takes audiences on a deadpan desert caper with a subtle touch of absurdity. A thief has just stolen a considerably large bag of cash. With the cops hot on his heels, he acts quickly and buries his ill-gotten gains atop of a hill in the desert, fashioning a makeshift grave with rocks to help him identify the location later. Upon being released from prison, he returns to the spot only to discover that the local inhabitants have mistaken his hastily constructed hiding place as a miracle grave for a mysterious, albeit completely fictional saint.

An impressive shrine now covers the thief's loot, and to his infinite surprise, there is even a whole new town that has sprung up nearby to support the legions of pilgrims who travel from far and wide to visit the mausoleum. Along with his dim-witted abettor, the thief settles into the village and begins plotting a way to break into the shrine. But with the loot now hidden in a holy place, retrieving it suddenly becomes much more complicated in this farcical and quirky satire on superstitions.

Director / Screenwriter:
Alaa Eddine Aljem

Producers:
Francesca Duca, Alexa Rivero

Cinematography:
Amine Berrada

Editing:
Lilian Corbeille

Cast:
Younes Bouab, Salah Bensalah, Bouchaib Essamak, Mohamed Naimane

Sales: **The Match Factory GmbH**



Trained at ESAV Marrakech and INSAS in Brussels, **Alaa Eddine Aljem** directed several short

films, including 'The Desert Fish' (2015), which gained great acclaim on the film festival circuit and took the Critics, Screenwriting and Grand Prize at the Moroccan National Film Festival. 'The Unknown Saint' is Aljem's debut feature. With this project, Aljem participated in the Open Doors Lab at the Locarno Festival, where it won the ICAM award. Aljem also took part in La Fabrique des Cinémas du Monde in Cannes in 2016, and in the Sundance Screenwriters' Lab. In 2016, Alaa was named by Screen International as one of the "Five Arab Stars of Tomorrow".

Al Tabbab



Qatar / Arabic / 2020
7 mins / Colour

Director / Screenwriter:

Khalifa Al Mana

Producer: **Basel Owies**

Sound Design: **Falah Hannoun**

Music: **Greg Johnson**

A boy and his father set sail to a secret site where they perform an ancient offering ritual to harvest pearls from a mysterious sea monster. The young boy is determined to make his father proud but struggles with the demanding tasks given to him. When the sea monster prefers the boy's pet goat to the usual offerings, our young hero must perform a gallant rescue to save his friend and show his father that he's ready to be his own man.

Khalifa Al Mana is an engineer, 3D animator and filmmaker. He completed an intensive 18-month programme on character animation and has recently directed his first 3D Animated short film entitled 'Al Tabbab'. In all of his work, Khalifa is striving to put the Qatari animated film industry on the map internationally and regionally. He is committed to telling original Qatari and authentic Arab stories of great cultural relevance to the world.

The Blue Star



'L'Étoile bleue' / France, Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic, French / 2020
17 mins / Colour

Director: **Valentin Noujaïm**

Screenwriter: **Valentin Noujaïm, Dinah Ekchajzer**

Producer: **Orane Gibier**

Editor: **Dinah Ekchajzer**

It all happened one dark night. The Man was tired of being a stranger, tired of being insulted by others simply because he speaks Arabic to a wife who speaks French with their beloved mixed-race son. He looked at the sky and shouted. But that night, far in the cosmos, a voice answered. Combining archive documents and collages to create a blend between diary and science-fiction, Valentin Noujaïm retraces the history of his family.

Valentin Noujaïm was born in France in 1991 to parents from Egypt and Lebanon. After studying political sciences, Noujaïm worked as assistant director and co-writer for the documentary 'THF Central Airport' by Karim Ainouz. (Berlinale Panorama, 2018). Between 2018 and 2019, Valentin made his first experimental documentary, 'Before She Forgets Heliopolis', and in 2019 he wrote and directed his second short film 'The Blue Star', which was financed by the Doha Film Institute and AFAC. In his short and feature film projects, Valentin brings to life marginal characters, in a fantasized, almost surreal world, rich with social and postcolonial issues.

Ceuta's Gate



France, Morocco, Qatar / Arabic, Spanish / 2019
19 mins / Colour

Director: **Randa Maroufi**

Producer: **Saïd Hamich**

Benlarbi, Sophie Penson

Cinematographer: **Luca Coassin**

Editor: **Ismaël Joffroy**

Chandoutis, Randa Maroufi

Ceuta's Gate is a series of reconstructed situations based on observations made on the border of Ceuta, a Spanish enclave on Moroccan soil. Thousands of people cross the border every day, an endless ballet of migration and the trafficking of manufactured goods to be sold at discounted prices. The film focuses on the larger political and economic tensions that arise in such a small territory that has become a gateway between Africa and Europe.

Randa Maroufi was born in Casablanca, Morocco. She is a Fine Arts graduate at Tetouan (Morocco), Angers (France) and Le Fresnoy (France). Randa Maroufi belongs to this generation that grew up in an era dominated by images. She collects them with as much eagerness as suspicion, and ceaselessly questions their veracity. She prefers to put her ambiguous fictions in the service of reality, and the field of her experimentation encompasses the occupation of public space and gender issues, of which she highlights the founding mechanisms.

Emsahar



Qatar / Arabic / 2020
6 mins / Colour

Director / Screenwriter:

Hassan Al-Jahni

Producer: **Ben Robinson**

Young Fatima is heartbroken to discover her ailing grandmother and attempts to harness the magical powers of a local Ramadan drummer to make her better. Despite her best efforts, her grandmother peacefully passes away in her sleep—transformed into a benevolent, Emsahar. Tears of joy replace tears of sorrow as Fatima says a final goodbye to her beloved grandmother, watching in awe as she marches away, drumming and singing into the dawn light.

Hassan Al-Jahni is a Qatari filmmaker. He graduated from Northwestern University with a degree in Media, Industries, and Technologies and a concentration in film and Middle Eastern studies. Intrigued by animation and worldbuilding, he wrote and directed his first animated short 'Emsahar'. His work is inspired by local and regional culture and a need to bring Arab stories to the forefront of global cinema. Currently, Al-Jahni is pursuing his MFA in Film and Television at USC.

Omé



Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic / 2019
17 mins / Colour

Director: **Wassim Geagea**
Screenwriter: **Tony Eli**
Kanaan, Wassim Geagea
Producer: **G. Zarazir, Gabriel Chamoun**
Editor: **Sebastien Leclercq**

Nine-year-old Elias, an active churchgoer preparing for his first communion, tests his faith following the unexpected death of his mother. Naive and desperate to have her by his side, he attempts to bring his mother back from Jesus' Heaven. The film, heartfelt and emotional, focuses on the intense and troubled feelings caused by the loss of loved ones—it is a story about grief.

Wassim Geagea is an award-winning Lebanese filmmaker, who studied Cinema at the Lebanese University, Faculty of Fine Arts, before pursuing a master's degree in filmmaking at St-Joseph University in Beirut. Wassim's realistic stories and unique style made waves in many international film festivals with his two short films 'My Grandfather's Photo' (2011) and 'Omé' (2019). Geagea is currently filming his third short film 'Dear Son' and developing his first feature film 'Barka'.

Under Her Skin



'À fleur de peau' / Qatar, France, Algeria / Arabic / 2020
15 mins / Colour

Director / Screenwriter:
Meriem Mesraoua
Producer: **François d'Artemare**
Cast: **Amina Hilal, Salima Abada, Mohammed Benameur, Hayem Delfi**
Cinematographer: **Mohamed Tayeb Laggoune**
Editor: **Marie Molino**

Making its world premiere in the Orizzonti Short Films Competition at Venice Film Festival last year, Meriem Mesraoua's 'Under Her Skin' explores a young Algerian girl's rite of passage as she struggles for control over her self-image. Disturbed by her daughter Sarah's sudden nervous habit of nail-biting, a domineering mother attempts to correct the behaviour. But deeper issues are at play in this profoundly nuanced portrait of adolescence and rebellion.

Meriem Mesraoua earned a BSc with Honours in Media Industries and Technologies from Northwestern University. Her short films include 'Our Time Is Running Out' (2017) and 'Under Her Skin', which premiered at the 2020 Venice Film Festival. Meriem is currently developing her first feature narrative, 'The Other Wife'.

Woman of Steel



'Okht Rjal' / Jordan, Qatar / Arabic / 2020
16 mins / Colour

Director: **Obada Yousef Jarbi**
Editor: **Amit Chowdhury**
Sound Design: **Severin Favriau, Falah Hannoun**

An earnest and empathetic portrait of a matriarch who works tirelessly for her family. Um Mohamed is a proud mother and a wife. Due to her husband's post-polio disability, he is incapable of working. As a result, Um Mohamed roams the streets of Irbid, collecting scrap metal and recyclables to sell in the male-dominant industrial area. Though she provides for her family and has undoubtedly earned the title of "breadwinner", she lacks the recognition and power often afforded to a man in her situation.

Obada Yousef Jarbi is a Jordanian resident of Qatar who holds a bachelor's degree in Mass Communication and Broadcast Journalism from Qatar University. He made his directorial debut with the documentary 'Addicted to Alienation' (2016). His second short film 'The Fishermen' (2017), created through Doha Film Institute's documentary workshop, screened in several international film festivals. In 2016 he started developing his documentary 'Okht Rjal', going through the development process at Qumra 2018 and beginning filming in 2019 as a part of DFI's documentary workshop with 'Rithy Panh'.

Qumra Projects

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

Development Feature Narrative

'A Road to Damascus' by Meedo Taha

'Ashkal' by Youssef Chebbi

'Cotton Queen' by Suzannah Mirghani

'Hounds' by Kamal Lazraq

'In a Dream You Saw a Way to Survive and You Were Full of Joy' by Remi Itani

'My Classmate Ali for Supreme Leader' by Nadia Al-Khater

'The Pearl' by Noor Al-Nasr

'Under Construction' by Nadim Tabet

A Road to Damascus

Director / Screenwriter:

Meedo Taha

Producer:

Marie Mouchel-Blaisot

Company Profile:

MAT Productions (formerly MAT Films) is a Paris-based independent production company which develops and produces French and international projects, feature films, and creative documentaries. The company is managed by Richard Magnien and Marie Mouchel-Blaisot, who have over 20 years of experience in production and distribution, with award-winning films in international festivals. Those include 'The Silences of the Palace' by Moufida Tlatli (Caméra d'Or Special Mention at Cannes, 1993), 'La Buena Estrella' by Ricardo Franco (Un Certain Regard Cannes, 1997 and winner of five Goyas), 'Les lionceaux' by Claire Doyon (Director's Fortnight Cannes, 2003), 'A Police Romance' by Stéphanie Duvivier (Fassbinder Prize at Mannheim, 2008), 'Garimpeiro' by Marc Barrat (São Paulo International Film Festival, 2009). More recently, 'Fataria' by Walid Tayaa (with Tunisia), 'L'Agnello' by Mario Piredda (with Italy), 'Bedridden' by Byamba Sakhya, (with Mongolia). In post-production, 'Glorious Ashes' by Bui Thac Chuyen (with Vietnam and Singapore). In development, 'A Road to Damascus' by Meedo Taha (with Lebanon), 'Miren Como Corre El Agua' by Jairo Boisier (with Chile).

Contact:

Marie Mouchel-Blaisot

MAT Productions

m.mouchel@matproductions.fr

'Tariq Dimashq' / Lebanon, France, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: **Mystery, Drama**

Interests: **Immigrant Rights, Feminist Issues, Socioeconomic Disparity**

An ambitious policewoman conducts a murder investigation that threatens to turn her own hometown against her.



Based on Meedo's novel of the same title. A bus carrying immigrant farmers is gunned down just outside a prosperous wine-producing town in the mountains of Lebanon. The authorities are quick to label the murder politically motivated. They bring in Nancy, a young police cadet born in this town, to console her townspeople. However, Nancy refuses to play into the narrative and instead embarks on her own secret investigation. Meanwhile, a local college professor behaves erratically, covers up evidence, and tells misleading stories about what happened. As he grows into her prime suspect and as their lives intertwine, Nancy's quest for the truth threatens to destroy the delicate balance of their community.

Meedo Taha



Meedo Taha is a Lebanese filmmaker and author whose work uses genre elements to explore the

space between individual identity and collective memory. His short film 'The Incident' received awards from the Directors Guild of America, Phoenix Film Festival, and Lebanese Film Festival. His feature film project 'Other People' participated in the Sundance Institute's Screenwriters Intensive, and won honourable mention at the Samuel Goldwyn Writing Awards and Francis Coppola's American Zoetrope Screenplay Competition. Meedo has a PhD in Architecture from the University of Tokyo and an MFA in Directing from UCLA.

Marie Mouchel-Blaisot



As a graduate of Psychopathology, former psychologist involved with mutual help organizations,

and former copywriter in advertising, Marie Mouchel-Blaisot developed an early passion for arthouse cinema from around the world. She started her producing career on low-budget award-winning documentaries, then joined MAT Films in 1998, where she began a long collaboration with Richard Magnien. Together, they have produced more than 10 feature films and 50 creative documentaries. Now with MAT Productions, she focuses on the international co-production of feature films. She graduated from Eurodoc, is a regular expert in national film commissions, and is a member of the Syndicat des Producteurs Indépendants (SPI).

Director's Note

'A Road to Damascus' is based on a novel I wrote during a dark year when a series of assassinations shook Lebanon and allowed personal vendettas to be covered up as politics. Today, we face a new challenge as we revolt against decades-old deals that still govern our lives. In this character-driven genre film, suspects are drawn from the four institutions on which our country is built: the church, the technocrats, the landowners, and the workers. Policewoman Nancy is caught in a dilemma. She belongs to the system, yet is tyrannized by the system. She was born among these townspeople, yet must honour her official duty to dig through their lives and expose their secrets. Like the classical mystery books I grew up reading, 'A Road to Damascus' uses a murder investigation as a lens through which to dissect a closed society. It promises a logical solution to a seemingly impossible problem. And it encourages us to find meaning in our lives, even as our country teeters on the brink of chaos.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$570,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Co-production
- Financing

Director / Screenwriter:

Youssef Chebbi

Producer:

Farès Ladjimi

Company Profile:

Supernova Films was founded to offer young filmmakers the means to express their vision of the world. The company keeps searching and supporting singular points of view and films. They have produced several fiction films and documentaries.

Contact:

Farès Ladjimi

Supernova films

fares@supernovafilms.fr

Ashkal

Tunisia, Qatar, France / Arabic

Genre: **Thriller**

Interests: **Politics, Revolution**

In the gardens of Carthage in Tunis—a new neighbourhood where modern constructions rub shoulders with abandoned construction sites and vacant scrubby lots—Batal and Fatma are investigating a strange case of immolation. The charred body of the caretaker of a vacant building has been discovered on the site. It is strange as usually, cases of self-immolation come with clear political statements and often take place in city centres and public spaces. The confusion grows when a new calcined body is found in the same neighbourhood.



In the gardens of Carthage, a new district where modern buildings are juxtaposed with abandoned sites and wastelands, the body of a caretaker is found calcined in the middle of a construction site. Batal and Fatma are in charge of the investigation and begin by questioning the workers of the neighbouring yards. The police quickly conclude suicide by immolation, a gesture of despair. Batal and Fatma refute this thesis. Why choose a place so reclusive when usually one immolates oneself in the city centres, hoping to provoke a popular reaction? A few days later, in the same neighbourhood, a teenager is found dead in the middle of a wasteland, also calcined. Our investigators are far from imagining what will happen next...

Youssef Chebbi



Youssef Chebbi is an author and director born in Tunisia in 1984. After studying art, he directed two short films,

'Vers le Nord' and 'Les Profondeurs'. Both were made with the support of the CNC and went on to feature in competition at Festival de Clermont Ferrand and several other international festivals. In 2012 he co-directed a feature documentary 'Babylon' which won the jury prize at the FID of Marseille and was presented at MoMA.

Farès Ladjimi



Farès Ladjimi has been producing films since 2007. He aims to offer unique young creators the means

to express their vision of cinema. Now, more than ever, he continues supporting filmmakers and their films, identifying new talents and cinematic voices from the world. To this day, he has produced or co-produced over 15 feature films. He is a member of the Ace network, and most of his films have premiered in internationally renowned festivals such as Cannes, Venice, Berlin, Toronto.

Director's Note

In Tunisia, we talk of the person who sets fire to himself as a martyr; it's often someone who'll be canonised immediately, as a recognition of this solitary gesture that testifies to the hurt and injustice felt by others. In the majority of cases, religion condemns suicide. But in the context of immolation, it is dubbed and sanctified, with the aim of maintaining a sense of peace and framework that remains certainly salutary. This political act and its spiritual dimension have inspired me to draw the lines of the police investigation. A faith that starts by an act of desperation, of sacrifice, of self-destruction but that also contains the possibility of a new path.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$780,000**

Secured Financing: **\$400,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Blast Films, Tunisia
- Ciclic, France
- CNC-CNCI, France
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- OIF, France

Looking For:

- Co-Producers
- Sales Agents
- Financing

Director / Screenwriter:
Suzannah Mirghani

Contact:
Suzannah Mirghani
suzannahmirghani@gmail.com

Cotton Queen

Sudan, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: **Narrative Fiction**

Interests: **Coming-of-Age, Family Drama, Women's Issues**

In a cotton-farming village in Sudan, 15-year-old Nafisa must stand up for the idea of love and stand up to her greatest obstacle: her grandmother, the foreboding Al-Sit.



In a cotton-farming village in Sudan, 15-year-old Nafisa lives a simple life, picking cotton with her friends, crushing on a village boy, and learning from her grandmother Al-Sit, the respected village matriarch. The arrival of Nadir, a young Sudanese businessman from abroad, threatens to change their way of life. Nafisa's parents are excited to arrange her marriage to Nadir, but Al-Sit has other plans. Because no one has asked Nafisa's opinion about her own future, the teenager decides to take things into her own hands.

Suzannah Mirghani



Suzannah Mirghani is a writer, researcher, and independent filmmaker, highlighting stories from

the Arab world. She is a media studies and museum studies graduate, and the author or editor of several academic books and articles. Being of multicultural Sudanese and Russian backgrounds, Suzannah is interested in stories that examine the complexity of identity. She is the writer, director, and producer of 'Al-Sit' (2020), a story about an arranged marriage in a cotton-farming village in Sudan. Her previous short films include 'Caravan' (2016) and 'Hind's Dream' (2014).

Director's Note

'Cotton Queen' is the story of a young Sudanese girl making her own choices. Teenagers like Nafisa watch helplessly as others in their family, especially their grandmothers, make important decisions on their behalf—including circumcision and marriage. Confronting these burdens becomes an act of civil disobedience, and so Nafisa's self-determination gives voice to her generation. I am always curious about what goes through the mind of a girl when her path is chosen by others: How does she feel about the situation? What does she truly desire? How is it that a young girl has no say and yet her grandmother is the decision-maker? How does one go from being voiceless and vulnerable to gaining power and prestige within her lifetime? These questions are at the core of this film as I explore the two ends of the female power spectrum

in Sudanese society. Al-Sit and Nafisa's struggles are mirrored across generations: Al-Sit had to survive the destruction of colonialism, and now Nafisa must confront neoliberal forces creeping into the village. Every generation of Sudanese girl must navigate her own path through the minefield of Sudanese social and cultural environments. Filmmaking in Sudan is finally flourishing after decades of prohibition. 'Cotton Queen' is based on my short film 'Al-Sit' (2020), which I made as a proof of concept, and which premiered internationally at the 2021 Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival. Through cinema, audiences around the world can glimpse some of the fascinating stories that make up Sudanese society and culture.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$450,000**
Secured Financing: **\$10,000**

Looking For:
• Producers
• Co-production Financing

Director / Screenwriter:

Kamal Lazraq

Producer:

Saïd Hamich

Sales:

Charades, France

Company Profile

Barney Production is an independent company created in 2010 by Saïd Hamich Benlarbi, a former student of the production department of La Fémis (Paris) and winner of the Film Producer prize from the Lagardère Foundation in 2012.

Contact:

Barney Production

contact@barneyproduction.com

Hounds

'Les Meutes' / Morocco, France, Belgium, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: **Drama**

Interests: **Social Issues, Family**

In the working-class suburbs of Casablanca, father and son Hassan and Issam, struggle to survive from day to day. They get by on small-time deals and running errands for local gangs until one night; they are asked to carry out an abduction.



In the working-class suburbs of Casablanca, father and son Hassan and Issam, struggle to survive from day to day. They get by on small-time deals and running errands for local gangs until one night; they are asked to carry out an abduction. Everything goes fine until their victim—an obese man—accidentally dies from a heart attack in the trunk of their car. Dib, who ordered the kidnapping, leaves Hassan and Issam no choice but to get rid of the body before dawn.

Kamal Lazraq



Kamal Lazraq is a Moroccan director born in 1984 in Casablanca. He graduated from La Fémis in Paris,

and his graduation film, 'Drari', won the second prize of the Cinéfondation of the Festival of Cannes, and the Grand Prix for short films at the Belfort Entrevues Festival (France). In 2014, Kamal Lazraq finished his award-winning short film 'The Man With a Dog', produced by Barney Production.

Saïd Hamich



A graduate from the production department of La Fémis, Saïd Hamich created Barney Production

with the ambition of producing popular and demanding auteur cinema. In 2012, he won the Lagardère foundation film producer prize. In 2013, he founded the Moroccan

company, Mont Fleuri Production.

After about twenty short films, Saïd Hamich produced 'Much Loved' by Nabil Ayouch, 'Northern Wind', the first feature film by Walid Mattar and 'Volubilis' by Faouzi Bensaïdi. He has also been line producer on several feature films including 'Hope' by Boris Lojkine, 'Neither Heaven nor Earth' by Clément Cogitore, 'Homefront' by Lucas Belvaux and 'Mon Legionnaire' by Rachel Lang.

Rym Hachimi



After ten years as Head of International Sales at The Bureau Sales, a sales arm of the Paris & London

production company The Bureau, Rym joined Saïd Hamich as Head of Productions at France-based Barney Production and Morocco-based Montfleuri Production.

Director's Note

'Hounds' tells the story of Hassan and Issam, father and son. Their assignment takes us on a desperate journey across the city in a sort of urban road movie. The action takes place over the course of one night, from sunset to sunrise, which makes it easier to enact absurd, excessive or dreamlike situations. Their oppressive nocturnal escapade depicts the world of the underprivileged, people living by their wits on the margins of society, sometimes alongside abundant wealth. Rejects, who, having nothing more to lose, at times resort to violence or even to a form of bestiality. The story is also that of a father-son relationship. Caught in an unfathomable spiral, Hassan and Issam confront one another but also become aware of the almost indestructible bond that unites them.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$1,950,000**
Secured Financing: **\$330,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Ad Vitam, France
- Charades, France
- CNC Aide aux Cinéma du Monde, France
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Financing
- Creative Consultation

Director / Screenwriter:

Remi Itani

Producer:

Michael Graf, Sara Bonakdar

Company Profile

London-based Makadam Films was founded in 2020 by Sara Bonakdar and Michael Graf after working together at the film financier Head Gear Films and international sales agent Bankside Films respectively. Bringing together their international market background and experience in creative development, financing and production, with a love for arthouse cinema, Makadam Films seeks to produce films with an inherent relevance and urgency that use the cinematic form in a daring and surprising way to resonate with audiences worldwide. The company's slate has naturally formed to consist of mostly female-led projects which shine a light on specific local experiences that can speak to people from anywhere. Apart from Remi Itani's film, Makadam is currently developing Shalini Adnani's India-set debut feature 'Kollam' together with Film4.

Contact:

Michael Graf

Makadam Films

michael@makadam-films.com

In a Dream You Saw a Way to Survive and You Were Full of Joy

Lebanon, UK, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: **Heightened Realism**

Interests: **Women's Issues, Social Issues, Tradition, Politics, Social Horror**

Faced with an unintended pregnancy, a young Lebanese woman's shame, fear and denial turn into a ghostly veil that haunts her, forcing her to redefine her relationship with men, her city and her oblivious mother.



Layal, 21, returns home one night after a sexual encounter and joins her mother Salma, who is unaware that her daughter is sexually active. The weeks pass as Layal roams the empty spaces around her house at night before taking a pregnancy test—it's positive. Avoiding her mother, she spends time with her best friend Dania and the pair go on a fruitless search for the father. Learning of a clandestine abortion clinic in the suburbs of Beirut, they venture there at night. After witnessing the mishandling of the procedure on a patient before her, Layal flees the clinic in fear of her life. She attempts to signal for help from her mother, whose attention is focused on her friend's daughter, who took her own life when faced with a similar situation to Layal's.

The man who impregnated Layal returns. Much older than Layal and well off, he pays for her to go to a better-equipped clinic. Layal spends the last days of her pregnancy contemplating motherhood, despite knowing that there is no place for single mothers in Lebanon. Assuming a pseudonym, she goes through with the procedure. After the abortion, Layal walks into her house, and she sits facing her mother, sharing a long silence between them. Layal shifts her gaze towards pictures of her and her mother hung on the wall, before breaking the silence with a mundane conversation.

Remi Itani



Remi Itani is a Lebanese film director and producer. Remi started her career as a documentary

director for Al Jazeera Documentary Channel. She is a graduate of the London Film School, obtaining an MA Filmmaking with distinction and has participated in numerous writing and directing workshops, including the Torino Next lab and a filmmaking workshop with Werner Herzog in Cuba. Her most recent short 'Drought' premiered at TIFF 2020, while the feature documentary 'A Long Breath' was selected for IDFA 2019 and El Gouna Film Festival 2020. Remi's documentary work has been featured on BBC Arabic, Al Arabiya, and Al Jazeera Documentary Channel. In 2020, Remi was awarded the prestigious Boghossian residency.

Michael Graf



Born in Switzerland, Michael Graf moved to the UK to study Filmmaking (MA) at the London

Film School and Script Development (Diploma) at the NFTS. He worked as an acquisitions & development executive for the international sales agent and financier Bankside Films, where he was involved in the acquisition of films like 'Ordinary Love' (starring Liam Neeson & Lesley Manville), Craig Roberts' 'Eternal Beauty' (starring Sally Hawkins) and the upcoming 'Wolf' (starring George MacKay and Lily Rose-Depp), which was sold to Focus Features. Michael is also co-producing the upcoming debut feature 'Something You Said Last Night' by Luis De Filippis, winner of the Sundance Jury Prize for her short film.

Director's Note

A pregnant single woman in Lebanon has two options—either to be criminalised by the law for having an illegal abortion, or to get crucified by society if she chooses to be a single mother. It took me over a decade to realise that the cycle of secrets, fear and denial I've witnessed wasn't an exception, but rather the norm. This film is an exploration of young women negotiating their place in a society that doesn't allow them to create genuine relationships with anyone around them, especially their mothers. A place where patriarchal impositions, built on archaic structures strip women from any agency. While making the horrific ordeal of a pregnant single woman palpable, my film also normalises the sexual experience for women, so that we are able to see beyond the act itself and allow us to examine women's position in society and the oppressive forces acting upon them. I hope young women will find solace in this film and in my attempt at portraying this visceral experience, that accentuates the internal realities of their clandestine lives.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$750,000**

Secured Financing: **\$8,000**

Looking For:

- Creative & Script Consultation
- Script Labs
- Arab & European Co-Producers
- Finance

Director:
Nadia Al-Khater

Producer:
Justin Kramer

Company Profile

The Film House is a Doha-based film, video, photography and multimedia production company. Its talented team of experienced and creative storytellers, documentarians, animators, photographers, and film directors cover all aspects of projects, from idea generation through post-production. Not a traditional production company, The Film House offers flexible production to facilitate a range of requirements. With a wealth of local knowledge and Qatar's community in mind, the company is primed to foster local talent and to redefine visual storytelling in the region. The Film House is a home for high-calibre international productions that want to come to town and place Qatar in the spotlight.

Contact:
Nadia Al-Khater
nadia.alkhater@gmail.com

Justin Kramer
justin@filmhouse.tv

My Classmate Ali for Supreme Leader

Qatar / English

Genre: **Elevated High School Comedy**

Interests: **Social Issues, Politics**

A class clown challenges the teacher's pet for the title of presidency in a sensational student election, while his little sister mounts her own humble campaign for secretary.



High school senior Natasha has all the qualities of the perfect student council president—a clean record, exemplary grades, and years of experience. Who would stand against her? Unfortunately for her, wild card Ali likes to prove people wrong. Especially his ex. Determined to hijack the election, he and Natasha plunge into a vicious battle for the prestigious title. Student journalists fan the flames of fact and fiction as Ali puts together an ambitious performance for the speeches. Meanwhile, his little sister Lulu tries desperately to escape his looming shadow while balancing her intensely close, and at times confusing, friendship with Jennifer. She mounts her own student council run; albeit for the unopposed position of secretary. Despite the conspiring administration, Ali wins the presidency in a landslide victory. Lulu, on the other hand, overcomes her many self-doubts and wins Jennifer back.

Nadia Al-Khater



Nadia Al-Khater is part of a new wave of Qatari filmmakers drawn to provocative, confrontational

storytelling. Her early passion for filmmaking inspired her to become extensively involved with Doha Film Institute since 2013. After studying international politics at Georgetown University, she wrote and directed the short film 'This Is Not a Drill' (2019) with The Film House. She is now in production for the short film 'A Proposal' (2021). She is also seeking financing and distribution for the feature-length high school comedy 'My Classmate Ali for Supreme Leader'.

Justin Kramer



Justin Kramer is an American filmmaker and artist. His career started in New York City where he

formed Elwood Gentry Productions and worked on projects for HBO,

MTV, CNN, VH1, and AMC among others. His producing, directing, and cinematography have been seen in numerous award-winning short films, television shows, feature documentaries, music videos and commercials. After moving to Qatar, Justin has developed The Film House. The Film House is a first of its kind in Qatar, producing documentaries, commercials and design at a world-class level for clients like VICE, DAZED, Levi's, Qatar Airways, Chevrolet, PBS and the BBC.

Director's Note

Between social cliques and class, high school is surprisingly political. Despite often being treated simply as petty teenage drama, the social environment is, in many ways, a microcosm of society at large. Many of the same psychological or social pressures from the adult world are also at play in high school. Based on a true story of a student election at a local international high school, this comedy follows a class clown as he overtakes the "institutional" figure in a whirlwind campaign season. Students and staff watch their "liberal democracy", the school government, caught in the throes of an "illiberal populist"

candidate whose humour wins over the lowest common denominator. The group psychology at play is followed as information ripples through the student body. The "establishment", teachers and administration, crumble at the mildest test of an "authoritarian" personality. Attempts at crushing that "populist" sentiment only fan the flames. As such, this story is a satirical political allegory for the global rise of populism. Although western democracies were taken for granted as mature systems of political governance, they have fallen prey to fascist populist movements running on platforms that appeal to the masses. Through the angle of students, who are seemingly divorced from wider political realities, we can watch how the same universal human psychology in there has littered the "real" world with autocratic figures. These political consequences which we now experience.

Financial Information

Looking For:

- Financing
- Distribution

Director / Screenwriter:

Noor Al-Nasr

Co-screenwriter:

Dana J. Atrach

Contact:

Noor Al-Nasr

nouriko@hotmail.com

The Pearl

Qatar / Arabic

Genre: **Family, Adventure**

interests: **Coming-of-Age, Middle East, History**

A tech-obsessed Qatari boy who is detached from his family travels back in time to an era before his beloved technology existed, when pearl diving was the primary source of income. Gaining his independence, he learns to communicate face-to-face, reconnecting with his family with a new-found sense of appreciation.



We live in a world where “social” technology can ironically disconnect us from our family and those around us. ‘The Pearl’ tells the story of a modern-day, tech-obsessed Qatari teenage boy that travels back in time to an era before his beloved technology existed in order to learn how to appreciate face-to-face communication and reconnect with his family. Ten-year-old Khalid takes his family, especially his grandfather, for granted. While at the beach, absorbed by his mobile screen, Khalid fails to notice his sister drowning until it’s too late. His attempt to rescue her finds him rescued instead by Qatari pearl divers in colonial Doha. The year is 1930. With none of the technological resources he’s accustomed to having at his fingertips, Khalid must learn how to communicate and rely on the kindness of other people to survive. He strikes up an unexpected relationship with a pearling captain who mentors him in the art of empathy and appreciating one’s family. Khalid’s compassion and appreciation for the Captain are put to the test when only he, with his modern knowledge, can help save the Captain’s family from financial ruin. In doing so, Khalid magically finds his way back home again—this time with a greater understanding of his roots, more appreciation for his family, and compassion for his grandfather.

Noor Al-Nasr



Noor Al-Nasr is a Qatari filmmaker who obtained her bachelor’s in graphic design at VCUQ and MA in SCAD university

in Atlanta, GA. She has always been interested in art, and has participated in numerous exhibitions, mainly focusing on the art of storytelling and filmmaking. Her shorts were part of many editions of Ajyal Film Festival in Doha and took part in the Cannes Film Festival in 2015. She also has an interest in shooting and producing music videos, one such video dedicated to the first anniversary of the blockade on Qatar went viral.

Dana J. Atrach



Dana J. Atrach is a Palestinian screenwriter who is fascinated by the world of untold stories.

She creates to raise awareness and inspire change. Atrach believes that every individual's story is worth telling and aspires to be the outlet that enlightens viewers

to see the enchantment behind every story. Atrach holds a BS in Communication and Media Studies from Northwestern University in Qatar and an MFA in Screenwriting from the University of California, Los Angeles. She has worked as an Assistant Professor in Residence at Northwestern University in Qatar, where she taught screenwriting. Atrach also freelances with Doha Film Institute as a Development Mentor. In 2014, Atrach’s first feature script, ‘Heeya How’, won “Best Unproduced Script Based on a Family Drama” at the St. Tropez International Film Festival. Her second feature script, ‘Alterations’, is currently under development. Atrach has also written, co-written and mentored several award-winning short films that have premiered in Doha and Los Angeles. She is presently co-writing Noor Al-Nasr’s ‘The Pearl’ and Jassim Al-Rumaihi’s ‘Our Legend’, while also working on her animated short, ‘Basreeli’.

Director’s Note

The story of ‘The Pearl’ is a reflection of what is happening today, as youth are becoming more tech-savvy and more invested in their smartphones than in their surroundings. Qatar is becoming a global destination, and

with that, the identity of its culture is being challenged, especially between generations. Before technology took over, we lived in simpler times when the moment was lived, and genuine relationships between people existed. I believe my generation is considered the last to have lived without technology, using our imagination to occupy our time as children. It saddens me to see the next generation growing up with technology that eliminates human contact. The story was inspired by my grandfather, who was a pearling captain. Unfortunately, I never met him because he passed away before I was born. Growing up, I heard many stories about what he was like, and I wondered how it would have been to have known him during that interesting period of time in our history. In the film, the main character goes on a journey to that time, where he learns how to understand and connect with people.

Financial Information

Looking For:

- Financing
- Producers
- Creative Advice

Director / Screenwriter:

Nadim Tabet

Co-screenwriter:

Antoine Waked

Producer:

Georges Schoucair

Company Profile

About Productions produces feature films and documentaries with a distinctly Arab voice, expressing the identity of the region. Since 1998, the company managed to bring together an important network of Arab and Lebanese filmmakers and artists and produced award-winning films. About Productions has enabled emerging talents to work with leading industry figures, often collaborates with international partners and receives support from international institutions. It has established close working relationships with leading sales agents and film distributors in Europe and has a strong partnership with MC Distribution, a distribution company dedicated to distributing independent films in the Middle East and North Africa along with priority access to the sole art-house theatre in Lebanon, Metropolis Cinema. About is one of the most ambitious production companies in the Middle East. Its main objective remains to help structure the Lebanese and Arab cinema craft into a solid industry.

Contact:

About Productions

contact@aboutproductions.com

Under Construction

Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: **Drama, Thriller, Fantasy**

Interests: **Social Issues, Racism, Ghost Story, Political Divide, Foreign**

Workers, Romance

Syrian workers mysteriously start disappearing from a construction site located near a Lebanese village. In the middle of this paranoid atmosphere, Tarek, a 30-year-old worker, is subject to strange visions. He slowly begins to realize that the site is haunted by the ghost of a woman who was allegedly murdered by a Syrian soldier in the 1990s, when the village was under Syrian military occupation.



Tarek, a 30-year-old Syrian, joins a construction site set in the middle of a forest. Immediately, Tarek is confronted with difficult work conditions plagued by the hostility of Lebanese villagers toward the Syrian workers because they suffered under Syrian military occupation in the 1990s. Despite this, construction on site continues until suddenly, workers start disappearing. In the middle of this paranoid atmosphere, Tarek is subject to strange visions. He slowly begins to realize that the site is haunted by the ghost of a woman who was allegedly murdered by a Syrian soldier. For Tarek, there is no doubt that she must be getting her revenge on the Syrians. He starts investigating and meets Rana, a local guide with whom a forbidden love story starts. But when the villagers also begin to disappear, Tarek realizes that the truth about the murder of this woman might not be what it seems.

Nadim Tabet



Nadim Tabet is a Lebanese director who directed several short films that screened internationally.

In 2001, he co-founded the Lebanese Film Festival and has worked as a film programmer for several European festivals. His first feature film 'One of These Days' (2017) premiered at Rome Film Fest and was sold by Celluloid Dreams. He is currently preparing his second feature, as well as a series titled 'Faraya'. Nadim Tabet also directs fashion films and music videos for several bands coming from Europe and the Arab world and gives conferences on cinema for various universities.

Georges Schoucair



Founder and CEO of About Productions, Georges Schoucair developed and produced

critically acclaimed and award-winning independent movies and has actively contributed to the establishment of an attractive and globally acknowledged environment for film investments in Lebanon and the development of the

Lebanese cinema, one of the most promising cinemas in the Middle East today. In parallel to About Productions, Georges co-founded MC Distribution, which releases independent films in the Middle East and North Africa, and since 2008 is the vice-president of Metropolis, the only art-house cinema in Beirut. His most recent endeavour is founding Schortcut Films in 2016 which has co-produced many acclaimed films like 'Félicité' (2017), 'Wajib' (2017), 'Rafiki' (2018), 'Beauty & The Dogs' (2018), 'It Must Be Heaven' (2019), and 'A Son' (2019). In 2019, Georges was invited as a member of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences in the Executive branch, from the Middle East.

Antoine Waked

Antoine Waked is the Development Executive at About Productions and Schortcut Films since 2010. He also teaches writing and directed at ALBA University since 2005. He wrote a segment of the anthology 'A Quintet' (2014) which premiered at the Sarajevo Film Festival and received the Special Jury Prize at the Chelsea Film Festival. He co-directed the feature documentary 'A Certain Nasser' (2017), a portrait of pioneer Lebanese filmmaker Georges Nasser that premiered in Festival Lumière in Lyon and won the Special Jury Award at the Cairo Film Festival. Antoine is also

the co-founder and artistic director of Maskoon, the first fantastic festival in the Arab world which was launched in 2016 and the Maskoon Fantastic Lab in 2020 which helps develop genre films from the Middle East.

Director's Note

In times where walls are built everywhere around the world, 'Under Construction' reflects on how we keep blaming the other for our problems whereas we are responsible for our own ghosts. Whether in Lebanon or in other countries, the best way to avoid confronting our history has often been to accuse the "other" of being at the root of all misfortunes. The questions of the Other, the endless repetition of our historical mistakes, the love and hate relation with Syria, the forbidden loves, are all important themes that are essential to tackle for me as they're present in our everyday society. I believe that using the "ghost story" genre can be a good way to address all these questions especially at this distressing time where the entire country has collapsed and is about to vanish like a lone ghost lost in time.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$692,137**
Secured Financing: **\$271,637**

Confirmed Financial Partners:
• Cairo Film Connection Prize, Egypt
• Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:
• Financing
• Co-Producers
• Work-In-Progress Labs
• Festivals
• Sales and Distribution

Qumra Projects

Development Feature Documentary

- 'The Camera Never Cries' by Abuzar Adam and Elsadig Abdelgayoum
- 'Companions of the White Arc' by Elia Youssef and Mohammed Al Thani
- 'Handala, the Boy Without a Face' by Mahmoud Kaabour
- 'Jodari Meno' by Jamal Al-Khanji and David Ochoa
- 'My Father's House' by Mahdi Fleifel
- 'Theft of Fire' by Amer Shomali
- 'The Wall of Death' by Amine Sabir

The Camera Never Cries

Director / Screenwriter:

Abuzar Adam

Elsadig Abdelgayoum

Producer / Co-screenwriter:

Alyaa Musa

Company Profile

Black Balance is a Sudanese independent film production company based in Khartoum, Sudan. The company produces and co-produces documentary films, feature and short fiction and non-fiction films, with a focus on Sudan-based stories and young directors. The company's founders, producers and filmmakers; Alyaa Sirelkhatim Musa, Mia Bittar and Mohamad Hanafi, have a long, rich experience making films in Sudan and internationally, individually and collectively since the early 2000s. Their work has been screened at international festivals such as Rotterdam, London Africa, Aljazeera, NY and Texas plus a wide range of regional broadcast channels. Black Balance was established in March 2016 with a vision to support young talented Sudanese directors to visualize their cinematic vision despite lacking cinema culture, basic film education and freedom of speech.

Contact:

Alyaa Musa

Black Balance Artistic Production

Blackbalance.sd@gmail.com

Sudan, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: **Creative Documentary**

Interests: **Human Rights, Middle East, Africa, Politics, Art**

Driven by their passion for change, two filmmakers encounter death to document the 2019 Sudanese revolution. A year later, during the Covid-19 lockdown, they re-examine their personal intentions and political drives as they explore the story of the revolution and their growing friendship.



From the beginning of the film, we land in an intimate space with two friends trying to revisit their memories of the revolution through their extensive collection of footage. While commenting on their different filming approaches, Elsadig and Abuzar begin to recall their first encounter with a camera and how it affected their life choices. The self-isolation of Covid-19 contrasts the images of Khartoum during the revolution of the year before. The calmness of self-isolation is a ripe time for self-reflection and brings the two friends closer to their unresolved questions and traumas of the past year. They interview each other about their personal expectations and disappointments as the story of the revolution unfolds. From January to April 2019, the Sudanese protest was in full swing; people protested peacefully even as violence against them escalated. On April 6, 2019, millions of Sudanese marched through teargas and bullets and occupied the area around the military headquarters in the capital Khartoum. The Albashir regime fell, but a sit-in ensued to ensure the people's demands were met. After two months, the sit-in was brutally attacked, leaving hundreds dead, and a nation traumatised. While navigating through the footage, Abuzar and Alsadig realise that all the stories they captured are really just reflections of their own story—two artists seeing their dreams, fears and disappointments coming to life through the characters they filmed.

Abuzar Adam



In 2012, Abuzar Adam graduated from the telecommunication engineering college at the University of Al-

Neelain, Khartoum Sudan. His passion for classic photography was encouraged by his father, who used to collect old vintage cameras to document their life in rural Darfur.

Elsadig Abdelgayoum



Elsadig Abdelgayoum is a Sudanese photographer and filmmaker. He was born and grew up

in Omdurman, Sudan. From 2005 - 2008, he studied Multimedia. Elsadig employs filmmaking and photography as tools to tell stories. He is interested in researching and developing further understandings of his own reality through his work.

Alyaa Musa



Alyaa Musa is an independent producer, writer, director and visual artist. Alyaa has two higher degrees in

filmmaking from the UK; PGD London Film School 2012 and an MA with distinction in Cinematography and Post-Production from the University of Greenwich 2014.

Director's Note

We decided to make this film to tell the story of our generation with our own voices and lenses. Right away, we agreed to move in together. As flatmates, we would immerse ourselves in continuous discussions and breakdowns, echoed by the walls of our shared shelter. Today we are filming our daily life observing how our city, our families and friends were transforming and responding to the so-called "New Sudan". The story we are trying to tell is alive and being played out now. Keen to keep an open mind and heart, as we are making this film, hoping that we can connect with audiences from all over the world.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$120,000**

Secured Financing: **\$15,500**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Mawred Cultural Resource, Lebanon

Looking For:

- Financing
- Co-Producers
- Creative Consultation

Director :
Elia Youssef
Mohammed Al Thani

Screenwriter:
Elia Youssef

Producer:
Ghouna Jaber

Company Profile

Altitude Productions is an independent film company based in Qatar and was founded by Moe Al Thani in 2016. Altitude Productions produced its first feature documentary 'The Seventh Summit' in 2017. Through its success, it was featured in film festivals around the world, broadcast on Amazon Prime and on Qatar Airways flights. In 2018, another feature documentary 'Seal Of Approval' was produced, and their most recent short documentary, 'Amadablam, in its own silence' was completed in February 2021.

Contact:
Elia Youssef
me@eliayoussef.com

Ghouna Jaber
ghounajaberfilm@gmail.com

Companions of the White Arc

Qatar, Jordan, Lebanon, Romania, Norway / Arabic, English
Genre: **Adventure, Docufiction**
Interests: **Sports, Nature**

After a long and arduous journey, Moe Al Thani attempts his last climb solo in an effort to become the first Qatari to achieve mountaineering's coveted "Grand Slam" title. His North Pole expedition pushes him far beyond his comfort zone, allowing him to truly discover his inner voice and deep connection with nature.



After conquering the majestic seven summits and the South Pole in 2014, Moe Al Thani is on his way to the North Pole to earn mountaineering's coveted "Grand Slam" title. This is the last leg of a long and arduous journey and will make Moe one of only 50 people in history, and the first Qatari, to ever achieve this incredible feat. This film, however, goes beyond the Grand Slam—it is a tale of evolution, transformation and finding truth. The call of the Mountain was a life changer for Moe and allowed him to grow and become the person he is today, with newfound perspectives and values. We are but the sum of our experiences and Moe's experiences have so far been extraordinary. From inspiration to summit, from summit to adventure, and from adventure to inspiring others, we learn all about the core values our protagonist has gained and strongly lives by today—the impact of purpose, the drive of passion, the strength of belief, the virtue of patience, the hold of persistence, the radiance of humility, and the joy of appreciation. Moe's story is one of defiance, grit and motivation.

Moe Al Thani



Moe Al Thani is a Qatari entrepreneur / mountaineer / philanthropist / photographer / sportsman and

co-founder of the travel portal Musafir.com, who set himself a dedicated mission to push his limits by scaling the Seven Highest Summits of the Seven Continents of the World.

Elia Youssef



Elia Youssef is a multi-award-winning, Lebanese filmmaker that strives to create groundbreaking

documentaries which push through cultural boundaries. This mindset continues to fuel his desire to create thought-provoking work that touches the soul of humanity. Elia is a firm believer in the resurgence of nonfiction storytelling. He utilizes all the available tools of his trade to convey to audiences that truth is often stranger and more entertaining than fiction. This

is very evident in his 2016 documentary film, 'The Seventh Summit', which won Elia numerous awards and international recognition.

Ghouna Jaber



Ghouna Jaber is a Palestinian producer based in Qatar. She has a broad experience from producing films,

documentaries, commercials, music videos, TV shows and education films to being part of local film festivals. Her journey started in production in 2004 when she worked in Al Jazeera Children for five years and then joined Doha Film Institute until 2019. Ghouna enjoys working in a multicultural environment. In her produced work, she focuses on various subjects such as women empowerment, human survival and devotion. She believes that inspiration, faith and harmony are key for human existence.

Director's Note

My goal is to inspire others and help them appreciate the environment we share. I want the audience to experience this film as a mystical journey of self-discovery. Life experiences will be told, adventures from the seven summits of the world will be shared, and from all these will emerge seven core values. These seven values are the pillars along the earth's axis from the North Pole to the South Pole. Directing Moe as the protagonist and co-directing the film with him is a unique experience that will fuse both our love of humanity with our love of nature, and I look forward to bringing this story to life.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$1,279,182**
Secured Financing: **\$160,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Katara Studios, Qatar
- Private Investment
- Rambunctious TV, Romania
- Writers' Cell, Jordan

Looking For:

- Creative Feedback
- Financing
- Sales Agents
- Distribution

Director:
Mahmoud Kaabour

Contact:
Mahmoud Kaabour
mahmoud@kaabour.com

Handala, the Boy Without a Face

Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: **Creative Documentary, History**

Interests: : **Refugee Crisis, Child Migration, Illustrative Design**

A treasure hunt, emanating from a sketch of a young refugee that has been circulating around the world for over fifty years.



Handala, the Palestinian refugee child, appeared in thousands of political caricatures to shed light on the Palestinian condition. He remained on his feet as the Middle East was engulfed with wars, becoming a hero for an entire Arab generation. As a child of the Lebanese Civil War and once a refugee myself, I always looked up to Handala and the stories of his resilience. Today, Handala has been making new appearances. As I chase his manifestations worldwide, I encounter fascinating stories of refuge, triumph, and artistry. I wonder, what is Handala trying to draw our attention to today?

Mahmoud Kaabour



Mahmoud Kaabour is a Lebanese filmmaker, content strategist, and the founder of

Veritas Films. He graduated in Film Production from Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema in Montreal before working for the National Film Board of Canada and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. His films 'Being Osama', 'Grandma, a Thousand Times' and 'Champ of the Camp' won top awards at festivals like Doha Tribeca, London International Doc Fest, DocsDF, Taiwan International Doc Fest and Dox Box, and were all broadcast internationally. In 2015, he was named on the Arabian Business "100 Most Powerful Arabs Under 40" list. He is currently based in Berlin.

Director's Note

Handala, the homeless Palestinian ten-year-old, was my personal superhero growing up in the Lebanese Civil war. I aspired to be resilient like him, while my childhood was engulfed in physical and human losses. When I became a refugee at age 10, I innocently believed that Handala's life and mine had gotten intertwined. For the following three decades, Handala would appear in most places I have lived in, like a watchful friend, and a reminder of the tragic childhood of my generation. Handala has appeared worldwide along with a worsening global refugee crisis. He carries with him a Palestine that has captured the imagination of the world, while a Palestinian state struggles to be born. Many others have felt the deeply-reaching affinity I felt to him. I find it phenomenal that this graphic icon would become a popular design to embody suffering. This is a film about an icon that transcended the Arab world it was born in. I want to tell it amid the present crisis, with the heart of the child who always adored him.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$650,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Co-Financiers
- Animators
- Arab Co-Producer
- Producers

Director:
Jamal Al-Khanji

Screenwriter:
Ricardo A. Nascimento

Co-director / Producer:
David Ochoa

Contact:
Jamal Al-Khanji
jamal@al-khanji.com

Jodari Meno

Italy, Zanzibar, Qatar / English

Genre: **Action, Sports, Creative Documentary**

Interests: : **Adventure, Diving**

A Qatari spearfisherman embarks on a journey of self-exploration by chasing his dream of catching a once in a lifetime fish. This is the story of how passion helps shape his world and the life of those around him in a way he never thought possible.



Born and raised in Qatar—a small middle eastern country that developed from a fishing village that depended on pearl diving—into an international powerhouse with an ambition to be at the forefront of international politics, health, education, and sport. Those hopes and aspirations brought about many challenges and unique circumstances that tested the country’s capabilities and perseverance. The lead character talks about his homeland, the culture, its ambition and reflects on how this has shaped his life starting from his passion for the ocean where his ancestors made their living, to his pursuit of self-improvement and ability to overcome significant challenges. The sport of spearfishing is one of the most dangerous extreme sports in the world and the “Jodari Meno” is its most valued prize. Along the way, he sheds light on the spearfishing lifestyle and the amazing community of mentors and friends that helped him along his journey. He travels to different countries pursuing the wisdom and knowledge of the sports’ legends and goes on to create his own epic story.

Jamal Al-Khanji



Dr. Jamal Rashid Al-Khanji is a physician and entrepreneur, as well as an adventurer that has travelled

the globe in the pursuit of his passion for spearfishing. He created the first accredited spearfishing academy in the world with courses taught across five continents and hundreds of graduates from all nationalities. He is passionate about underwater videography, and his Instagram account is followed by thousands of spearfishing enthusiasts. He is considered one of the best middle eastern Spearos, constantly in pursuit of the dogtooth tuna (Jodari Meno) the most sought-after game fish in the sport with his current personal best of 75.9 kg considered the 2nd best Arabic record for that fish and broken only by another Qatari. He is a graduate of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and holds a Master of Business Administration and a Juris Doctor law degree from Hamad Bin Khalifa University. He was contracted to film a national day documentary by AIKASS sports channel in 2018 which aired on all Qatari TV Channels.

David Ochoa



David Ochoa is a director specialising in underwater sports and wildlife. David started diving at

a very young age in the Azores Islands and naturally throughout the years he developed the skills needed to capture amazing images when freediving, allowing him to travel around the world shooting underwater in the most challenging scenarios. David is currently directing documentaries for TV stations in different parts of the globe while shooting branded content.

Director’s Note

‘Jodari Meno’ is a story of passion, pain and perseverance. At 47, competing with the younger guys in their 20’s is always a challenge. But competing with myself, challenging my fears and overcoming my weaknesses is more challenging and much more important. A constant fight with my demons. Why are you doing this? Why are you risking everything? Why are you jeopardising your career? You have a family, a great job making a good living. Slow down,

don’t risk it all. The usual thoughts that come to mind every time I have a new idea, think of starting a new business, and want to participate in a new challenge. I always wondered how some people do it—home to work and work to home and maybe a little gym on the side. Being a Qatari naturally pushes you to do more. A small country that makes a big statement. Brave, ambitious, stubborn, always trying to punch over its weight, always pushing the limits. Spearfishing represents all this to me. Every time I hold my breath and dive searching for that monster fish, I start fighting all my demons, gathering all my courage, pushing myself to go deeper, stay longer and fighting the thought that I might not be able to see my kids again. A passion that forces your life to pass in front of your eyes for a few seconds every time your head submerges underwater. Those mixed feelings that make your heart race against your will. To the ultimate feeling you get when you’re back on the surface taking a deep inhale and knowing that you are—alive.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$150,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Creative Consultation
- Financing
- Distribution

Director / Screenwriter/ Producer:
Mahdi Fleifel

Company Profile

Nakba FilmWorks is a London based production company primarily focused on the work of writer/director Mahdi Fleifel. Formed in 2010 by Fleifel and Irish producer Patrick Campbell, Nakba FilmWorks released the feature documentary 'A World Not Ours' in 2012. The film went on to screen at over 100 festivals worldwide, collecting over 30 awards including the Yamagata Grand Prix and the Berlinale Peace Prize. Their 2016 short documentary, 'A Man Returned', had its international premiere at the 2016 Berlinale where it won the Silver Bear and their short film 'A Drowning Man' premiered in competition at the Cannes Film Festival in 2017 and was nominated for a BAFTA in 2018. Fleifel's most recent release 'I Signed the Petition' has screened at over 70 festivals picking up a European Film Awards nomination and winning the Best Short Film prize at IDFA in 2018.

Contact:

Mahdi Fleifel
Nakba FilmWorks
mahdi@nakbafilmworks.com

My Father's House

Denmark, UK, Palestine, Qatar / Arabic, Danish, English

Genre: **Biography, Creative Documentary**

Interests: : **Immigration, Identity, Cinemoetry**

A personal story about memory, exile, and a father and his son.



In 2012, two weeks after 'A World Not Ours' was completed, my father died at the age of 59. He didn't leave much behind—only a rusty Mercedes and a few thousand dollars in a bank account in Lebanon. But he did leave behind an old Samsonite full of photographs from his youth, and boxes filled with videotapes from the past 11 years of his life. In 2009, my father went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, apparently on a spiritual journey, though he was mostly interested in filming. Eventually, someone had had enough and confronted my father, "Do you think you're on a safari trip?"— "No", my father had replied, "This is footage for my son". What did my father want to tell me with his recordings? And who was my father, really, in the time before I was born in Dubai, and after my parents' divorce in Denmark? This is a personal story about memory, exile, about a father and his son, and a family bond through three generations. An expansion of the universe from my first feature, 'A World Not Ours'.

Mahdi Fleifel



A graduate of the UK National Film & Television School, Mahdi Fleifel lives and works between Denmark,

England and Greece. Fleifel's critically acclaimed debut, 'A World Not Ours', premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and received over 30 awards. In 2016 Fleifel won a Silver Bear for 'A Man Returned'. His follow up, 'A Drowning Man', was selected in the Official Competition at Cannes, and was nominated for a BAFTA. 'I Signed the Petition', won Best Documentary Short at IDFA and was nominated for the 2018 European Film Awards. His most recent piece, 3 LOGICAL EXITS, premiered in the Tiger Shorts Competition in Rotterdam 2020.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$400,000**

Secured Financing: **\$65,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Danish Film Directors, Denmark
- Danish Film Institute, Denmark
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Financing
- Creative Consultation
- Sales Agent

Theft of Fire

Director:
Amer Shomali

Producers:
**Rashid Abdelhamid,
Ina Fichman**

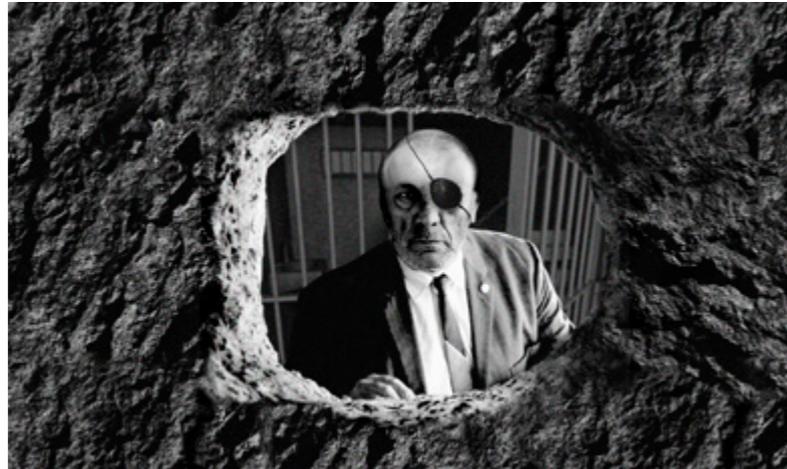
Company Profile

Made in Palestine Project is an independent arts initiative to create and promote contemporary visual art and culture with a focus on Palestine. We seek to create a collaborative environment that supports the creativity of emerging visual artists who share in our vision. Our company is committed to reaching new audiences and improving understanding through a variety of platforms, including exhibitions, publications and particularly films.

Contact:
Rashid Abdelhamid
Made in Palestine
madeinpal.project@gmail.com

Palestine, Canada, Qatar / Arabic
Genre: **Animation, Action, Thriller, Based on a True Story, Creative Documentary**
Interests: **Human Rights, Palestine, Politics**

A lonely Palestinian artist hatches a daring plot to break into a secret Israeli prison and steal back a trove of looted antiquities from a legendary general in this hybrid documentary based on a true story.



A failing museum and a career hampered by the Israeli Occupation push Naji, a struggling Palestinian artist, to undertake a daring heist inside a prison in the Negev Desert. Inside, Naji must outwit Moshe Dayan, an Israeli military legend, who has hidden away a massive collection of stolen Palestinian archaeology. Naji carefully executes his heist as he deals with mistrust from his fellow inmates. Ultimately, Naji is faced with a decision—choose his own personal revenge or help his fellow inmates in the Palestinian resistance. As Naji gets closer to finding the artefacts, he also must come to terms with a tragic loss that has been haunting him since childhood. Shifting between documentary and narrative, 'Theft of Fire' is a heist film where the audience becomes part of the robbery. At its core, the film questions how a people can tell their narrative when history is being stolen out from under their feet.

Amer Shomali



Amer Shomali is a Palestinian multidisciplinary artist, using painting, films, digital media, installations

and comics as tools to explore and interact with the sociopolitical scene in Palestine. Much of Shomali's work examines the creation and the use of the Palestinian revolution's iconography. Shomali co-directed an award-winning animated documentary, 'The Wanted 18', which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2014. The film was awarded the best documentary award in Abu Dhabi, Carthage, Traverse City, and Al-Jazeera Film Festivals. 'The Wanted 18' was in the official submission lists for the foreign language and documentary categories of the 88th Oscars.

Rashid Abdelhamid



Rashid Abdelhamid founded the Made in Palestine Project, an independent arts initiative

to create and promote contemporary visual art with a focus on Palestine in 2013. Also in 2013, he produced and

acted in the short film 'Condom Lead', which made the official selection of the Cannes Film Festival, the first time a Palestinian short film was selected in this category. In 2015, Made in Palestine Project's first feature film 'Dégradé' was selected at La Semaine de la Critique at the Cannes Film Festival. Rashid Abdelhamid is the co-founder of the Palestine Film Institute that aims to promote film art and film culture in Palestine.

Ina Fichman



For more than twenty-five years, Ina Fichman has been producing award-winning documentary and fiction films

and interactive projects. Many of her creative documentaries have been released in theatres in Canada and abroad. They have played at festivals including Sundance, Berlin, Hot Docs, SXSW, RIDM, CPHDOX, Tribeca, TIFF and others. Award-winning productions include Amer Shomali's 'The Wanted 18', 'Monsoon' (Canada's Top 10) and 'Vita Activa: The Spirit of Hannah Arendt'. Recent productions include 'Stray', 'The Gig Is Up', 'Once Upon a Sea', 'The Oslo Diaries', 'Inside Lehman Brothers', 'Gift' and 'Laila at the Bridge'. In 2018, Ina was the recipient of the Don Haig Award from

Hot Docs which recognizes the work of a Canadian independent producer. Ina is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Director's Note

Frank Stokes once said: "You can wipe out an entire generation, you can burn their homes to the ground, and somehow, they'll still find their way back. But if you destroy their history, you destroy their achievements, and it's as if they never existed". In this film, I want to examine how history works to shape the future and how what exists underground has the power to legitimize what is over it. It's a documentary about a fictional story. Every character in the film is based on an actual character in real life. But the film combines all these true elements and juxtaposes them at the same time and place to produce a dramatized story that is not real. It's a multiple timelines film, one line will follow the interviews with the real characters, while the other constructs a fictional story. The two lines intersect every now and then with a real character confirming an event in the fictional line. While commenting on the Israeli attempts to edit history, I am doing it myself. It will provoke curiosity, spark heated discussions, test realities, and question the ethics of manipulating the past, whether in this film or in a museum.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$47,530**
Secured Financing: **\$25,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Jordanian Film Fund (RFC), Jordan

Looking For:

- Financing
- Sales Agents
- Distributors

The Wall of Death

Director:
Amine Sabir

Producers:
Nadège Labé
Alexis Taillant
Merièm Addou

Company Profile

Iris Prod is a Moroccan audiovisual production company whose mission is the audiovisual production and provision of services for the benefit of the audiovisual press. It is in charge of the shooting of reports, news, documentaries, magazines, TV shows, institutional films, and event reports.

Wendigo Films is a French company founded in 2006, dedicated to the production of creative documentaries and fiction films. Wendigo Films brings together three producers, Alexis Taillant, Nadège Labé and Nicolas Lheureux. Their catalogue contains approximately thirty films carried by a new generation of French directors as well as international talents.

Contact:
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Wendigo Films
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IrisProd
admerieme@gmail.com

'Le Mur De La Mort' / Morocco, France, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: **Creative Documentary**

Interests: **Social Issues, Women's Emancipation, Family, Tradition, Legacy**

Hassan and Khadra have been performing the motorcycle acrobatics show "The Wall of Death" for four decades. But they refuse to let their daughter Zahra, a young woman passionate about football and motorcycles, take over. At 27 years of age, Zahra is torn between solidarity with her family and the desire to assert her personality by choosing another path.



The Ennassiri family are starting a fortieth consecutive year of "The Wall of Death", a fairground show that can be found in Morocco during the summer rural festivals. Nicknamed "champion", Hassan is the centre of the show in which he performs impressive acrobatics on his motorbike. During summer, he has to earn enough money for the family to survive for the rest of the year. Khadra has always been by his side; she manages the staff when he is away, takes care of the household, of her cat and chases away evil spirits. Zahra, a 27-year-old woman, with short hair and loose-fitting clothes, participates in the show by performing simple acrobatics on her motorcycle. Despite her age and experience, Hassan refuses to let Zahra take over the show, which he believes is too precarious, risky and not suitable for a young woman. Khadra dreams of seeing Zahra married and encourages her to be more feminine. The film shows the difficulty of communication between parents and their daughter despite the probable disappearance of their show—and on the other hand, the problematic emancipation of a young woman who is seeking her place in a conservative society.

Amine Sabir



Amine Sabir is a Moroccan writer-director. He graduated in film directing from the University of Corsica. In

2014, he directed his second short film, 'Sending Saïd Home' (Le Voyage Dans la Boite), selected at the Clermont-Ferrand short film festival and winner in 2015 of five prizes, including the jury prize at Tangier National Film festival. The film has been broadcasted on France Televisions, Moroccan 2M TV, and screened at festivals in France, Morocco, Algeria, Lebanon, Jordan, Mauritania, Côte d'Ivoire, Italy, Sweden, and Costa Rica. In 2015, the film represented Morocco in the competition for the best French-language film.

Merièm Addou



Merièm Addou holds a degree in private law and a master's degree in documentary cinema. She began her

career in cinema and television as a production manager and has worked as a producer for several international channels such as Bloomberg, Fox

News, Radio Canada, Channel 4, Dubai Tv, and Aljazeera English. Between 2006 and 2011, she worked as a correspondent for German Radio DW and Kuwaiti Television, as well as a producer for the BBC.

Nadège Labé



After studying documentary, Nadège Labé joined the production company Wendigo

Films. Impassioned by creative documentaries, she develops international co-productions (Italy, Belgium, Brazil, Morocco) allowing a free and innovative cinema, carried by a young generation of directors to emerge. Since 2011, she has produced approximately ten documentaries.

Alexis Taillant



In 2006, Alexis Taillant created the company Wendigo Films, in which he mainly develops creative

documentaries and short films as a producer. Over the past ten years, he has produced some 20 films for TV broadcasters, festivals and more recently for the cinema.

Director's Note

I want to tell the epic story of an atypical family, the union of a motorcycle "Champion" and an adventuress who for love, has swapped the comfort of her middle-class background for a precarious life on the road—and their youngest daughter Zahra, who has been immersed in the fairground world since she was a child. By taking over the family business, Zahra could ensure the continuity of the show, threatened with extinction by its logistical heaviness, the more modern attractions, and its dangerousness. But without the hoped-for handover, I am witnessing a generation conflict where the parents prefer to see their show and way of life disappear rather than confronting the eyes of the others by going against tradition and passing on their heritage to their daughter. Through the Ennassiri family, the portrait of a country in transition emerges, between an old world subject to social norms on the one hand and a new world, that of Zahra permanently connected to social networks and her modern look that clashes with her traditional social environment.

Financial Information

Total Budget: \$166,384
Secured Financing: \$26,724

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Procirep Angola, France
- SCAM-Brouillon d'un Rêve, France
- 2M TV, Morocco

Looking For:

- Financing
- Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Creative Consultations

Qumra Projects

Work-in-Progress Feature Narrative

'Costa Brava Lebanon' by Mounia Akl

Work-in-Progress Feature Documentary

'5 Seasons of Revolution' by Lina

'Fragments from Heaven' by Adnane Baraka

'The Miracle of Almería' by Moon Blaisse

Costa Brava Lebanon

Director:
Mounia Akl

Screenwriters:
Mounia Akl
Clara Roquet

Producers:
Georges Schoucair
Myriam Sassine

Co-producers:
Cinéma Defacto (France)
Lastor Media (Spain)
Fox in the Snow Films (Sweden)
Snowglobe Film (Denmark)
Barentsfilm (Norway)

Sales:
Mk2 (France)

Company Profile

About Productions produces feature films and documentaries with a distinctly Arab voice, expressing the identity of the region. Since 1998, the company has brought together an important network of Arab and Lebanese artists, producing award-winning films such as Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige's 'A Perfect Day' (2005), 'I Want to See' (2008), 'The Lebanese Rocket Society' (2012) and 'Memory Box' (2020); Ghassan Salhab's 'The Last Man' (2006) and 'The Valley' (2014); Georges Hashem's 'Stray Bullet' (2010); Mohamad Malas's 'Ladder to Damascus' (2013); Vatche Boulghourjian's 'Tramontane' (2016); Rana Eid's 'Panoptic' (2017); Mohamed Siam's 'Amal' (2017); Oualid Mouannes' '1982' (2019), Ahmad Ghossein's 'All This Victory' (2019).

Contact:
Myriam Sassine
About Productions
myriam@aboutproductions.com

Lebanon, France, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Qatar / Arabic / 2022 / 100 min
Genre: **Drama, Comedy, Social Issues**
Interests: **Environmental Issues, Family Dynamics**

The Badri family lives in isolation in Lebanon's mountains. When the government inaugurates a landfill outside their fence, everything they escaped catches up with them.



The free-spirited Badri family have escaped the toxic pollution of Beirut by seeking refuge in the utopic mountain home they have built. But unexpectedly, a garbage landfill is built right outside their fence, bringing the trash and corruption of a whole country to their doorstep. As the trash rises, so do tensions between leaving or resisting—threatening their idyllic home and family unity.

Film still and director's photo: Rudy Bou Chebel

Mounia Akl



Mounia Akl is a Lebanese filmmaker with an architecture degree and a master's degree in directing

and screenwriting from Columbia University, New York. In 2016, her short film 'Submarine' was presented in the official selection at the Cannes Film Festival (Cinéfondation) and was selected to compete at the festivals of Toronto and Dubai. In 2017, 'El Gran Libano' which she co-directed with Neto Villalobos screened at Cannes Directors' Fortnight part of Lebanon Factory.

Clara Roquet

Clara Roquet is a Spanish writer and director who graduated with an MFA in Screenwriting from Columbia University. Her first film as a screenwriter was '10.000 KM' by Carlos Marques-Macet, winner of a Goya award, Gaudí Award for Best Screenplay and Silver Biznaga for Best Screenplay. She is currently co-writing Carlos Marques' third feature 'La Bona Espera'. She was also the co-writer of 'Petra' by Jaime Rosales which

had its premiere at the 71st Cannes Film Festival.

Myriam Sassine



Myriam Sassine majored in Cinema Studies and received her MA in Cinema Research in 2009. Since

2010, Sassine worked with About Productions in Lebanon, and produced feature films and documentaries, such as Myriam El Hajj's 'A Time to Rest' (2015), Rana Eid's 'Panoptic' (2017), Mohamed Siam's 'Amal' (2017), Oualid Mouannes' '1982' (2019) and Ahmad Ghossein's 'All This Victory' (2019).

Georges Schoucair



Founder and CEO of About Productions, Georges Schoucair developed and produced

critically acclaimed and award-winning independent movies. In parallel to About Productions, Georges co-founded MC Distribution, which releases independent films in the

Middle East and North Africa. His most recent endeavour is founding Schortcut Films in 2016 which has co-produced many acclaimed films like 'Félicité' (2017), 'Wajib' (2017), 'Rafiki' (2018), 'Beauty & The Dogs' (2018), 'It Must Be Heaven' (2019), and 'A Son' (2019).

Director's Note:

I was born the year the Lebanese civil war ended. In these post-war years, I observed the trauma of my parents' generation, their desire to dissociate, making my sister and I feel the only safe place was home. However, when their marriage crumbled, our safe place exploded driving us to reinvent our home and enter the real world. Since these times, Lebanon has struggled to find its balance. Grudges, corruption, culminating in the irreversible garbage crisis that peaked in 2015. Ironically, as a child, I kept creating parallels between the country and my home. Every time Lebanon suffered, my family suffered. My home was a microcosm of Lebanon. In 'Costa Brava Lebanon', when the Badris' utopia is broken, the invasion will drive its members to extreme versions of themselves, awakening repressed feelings, making them realize the rot was also inside their home.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$1,904,835**
Secured Financing: **\$1,829,835**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC), Lebanon
- Beirut DC, Lebanon
- Boo Pictures, USA
- Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée (CNC), France
- Danish Film Institute, Denmark

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Film Clinic Indie Distribution, Egypt
- Film I Skåne, Sweden
- Fonds Images Francophones (OIF), France
- Institut Català de les Empreses Culturals (ICEC), Spain
- Instituto de la Cinematografía y de las Artes Audiovisuales (ICAA), Spain
- Région Ile-de-France, France

- Sørfond / The Norwegian South Film Fund, Norway
- Sundance Institute, USA
- Swedish Film Institute, Sweden
- Torino Film Lab, Italy
- Visions Sud Est, Switzerland

Looking For:

- Creative Feedback
- Festivals
- Distribution
- Outreach Partners

Director:
Lina

Producers:
Diana El Jeiroudi
Orwa Nyrabia
Torstein Grude

Company Profile

No Nation Films was founded in Berlin in 2014 by Diana El Jeiroudi and Orwa Nyrabia, to continue their previous work as 'Proaction Film', which they founded in Syria in 2002 and then in Egypt in 2013. No Nation Films include award-winning films released theatrically in France, Japan, Austria, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the UK, screened in numerous festivals, including Cannes, Venice, Amsterdam, Busan, Locarno, London, New York, Sundance and Toronto, on TV worldwide and via premium VOD platforms. No Nation Films' latest co-production 'Notturmo' by Gian Franco Rossi and a co-production of Doha Film Institute was premiered in Venice 2020 and is currently running for the Oscars in 2021.

Contact:
No Nation Films
info@no-nation.de
www.no-nation.de

5 Seasons of Revolution

Syria, Germany, Norway, Qatar / Arabic / 2022 / 75 min

Genre: Creative Documentary, War and Conflict

Interests: Civil Movement, Filmmaking, Exile, Refugees, Women's Issues, Syria

Lina wanted to become simply a camerawoman. But after the uprising in Syria, it didn't take long until events escalated, and arrests, torture, and potentially life-threatening situations became a reality for Lina to negotiate as a new norm.



Lina's plan was simple. She wanted to become a camerawoman. She liked filming details of life and people around her, mainly during a bright sunny day in Damascus. But with the uprising in Syria, Lina was slowly absorbed into documenting the impact on people's lives. It didn't take long before events escalated, and arrests, torture, and potentially life-threatening situations became a reality for Lina to negotiate on a daily basis. She had to adapt. She invented personas and aliases. They each helped her navigate life under a new norm. What was a simple plan, turned into a complex web of identities, which seemed then a small price in exchange for her liberty to continue to hold the camera.

Lina

Born in Damascus 1983, Lina is a documentary filmmaker and journalist who has made short and medium-length documentaries. Her most recent short documentary, 'Letters to S', premiered in IDFA. She holds a master's degree in Documentary Filmmaking from Essex University. As a camerawoman, she has been documenting events in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey over the past ten years.

Torstein Grude



Torstein Grude is a film writer, director, cinematographer, creative producer, producer, co-producer and executive producer dedicated to the creation of films deeply infused with the real. His creative documentaries are most often political and/or philosophical and deal with human rights or gender-related issues as well as spiritual, physical and cognitive liberties.

Diana El Jeiroudi



A Syrian filmmaker and screenwriter whose films encapsulate socio-political tensions and contradictions and extend well over time, Diana is best known for her films 'Dolls: A Woman from Damascus' (2007) and 'Morning Fears, Night Chants' (2012). She recently finished her long-term feature-length documentary 'Republic of Silence' expected for release at the end of 2021. As a producer, her filmography includes award-winning films such as 'Silvered Water – Syria Autoportrait' (Cannes 2014), and 'The Mulberry House' (IDFA 2013). Her efforts in supporting the documentary community and culture, notably through founding DOX BOX as Syria's first documentary film festival, has earned her various awards, including the EDN Award, The Katrin Cartlidge Award, and The Heart of Sarajevo. She is a member of the American Academy of Motion Pictures, the Deutsche Filmakademie, and the Asia-Pacific Screen Academy. She serves on several committees and juries and has supported many careers and tutored talents through

the professional training initiatives and workshops of DOX BOX, EuroDoc, Ex Oriente, IDFA, Circle Women Doc Accelerator and Story Doc.

Director's Note

Each time I look for motivation by the obvious such as success, impact, fame, completion, I fail. I feel that I am taking a challenge in completing this film. The challenge being not to quit, to face the consequences. Today as I look back, I can see a version of me which I would probably not remember had I not taken that challenge: A young woman driving around with her camera trying to poke at her bubble. Deprived of having a say and learning how to deal with its consequences, I see how she was enthused by the call for change. I see how she was summoned to chase the dream of democracy, justice and freedom. I see her ask, and I find myself still echoing her questions: Should I have cut her out of the frame? Should I have filmed him more? How do you unite a mass movement of individuals longing for their freedoms? Can you make one film of all their stories? I edited what I filmed; I cut out what I dismissed. I told what I felt. Making this film is my attempt to survive and conclude.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$517,228**
Secured Financing: **\$388,608**

- Confirmed Financial Partners:
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
 - Filmkraft Rogaland, Norway
 - Fritt Ord, Norway
 - Heinrich Boell Foundation, Germany

- IDFA Bertha Fund, The Netherlands
- International Media Support, Denmark
- Sanad Abu Dhabi Film Fund, UAE
- The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- Vestnorsk Filmsenter, Norway

- Looking For:
- Finishing Funds and Financing
 - International Sales Representative
 - Creative Feedback

Fragments from Heaven

Director/Producer:

Adnane Baraka

Producer:

Jean-Pierre Lagrange

Production Manager:

Morgane Ivanoff

Company Profile

Alpha Ursae Minoris Productions was founded in 2016 by Adnane Baraka and Salma Zdaik, who share an avid eye for the new and vibrant originality in the films and art sphere: "As the reality of the cinema and audiovisual environment in Morocco dictates—from the complication of administrative procedures to the lack of financial resources to produce films—we strongly felt the necessity to handle our own destiny through a production company. The genesis of Alpha Ursae Minoris productions came to help us to be able to carry out our documentary and fiction projects within a professional framework." Projects on the way include the feature-length documentaries 'Fragments from Heaven', 'Wandering Stars' and 'Signs of Existence'.

Founded in 2006 by Jean-Pierre Lagrange, JPL productions has built a reputation for quality in films with a unique vision. JPL's editorial line alternates between creative documentaries for independent cinema, and TV documentaries. Recent work includes: 'The Cemetery of Cinema' by Souleymane Diallo, 'Douce France' by Rachid and 'Make Yourself God' by Anne-Lise Michoud.

Contact:

Adnane Baraka

Alpha Ursae Minoris Productions
adnanebaraka@gmail.com

Morocco, France, Qatar / Arabic, Berber / 2022 / 82 min

Genre: **Creative Documentary**

Interests: **Road Trip**

Looking for stones in the desert of Morocco might seem ludicrous unless those stones are celestial and able to change one's life forever. That's the story of nomad Mohamed, scientist Abderrahmane, and other Bedouins. They all search for the same stone, but each one has his own reasons. Their search merges into an inherent quest that resonates with that of all the others.



The deserts of the east and the south of Morocco are famed for meteor showers, and their arid lands are the perfect location to find these celestial stones. 'Fragments from Heaven' tells the story of Mohamed, a nomad in his fifties who lives with his family in a tent in a remote area of the eastern Moroccan desert. In order to improve his family's harsh living conditions, he decides to go searching for these objects. For him, they represent an opportunity to change his life, and that of his family, forever. The film also tells the story of Abderrahmane, a renowned Moroccan scientist. Meteorites further his research into the origins of Earth and of life itself. He believes the celestial detritus may reveal some answers to his existential questions. The nomad and the scientist never cross paths in the film—it is the language of cinema that allows their connection.

Adnane Baraka



An independent filmmaker born and living in Marrakech, Adnane Baraka studied Directing at the ESAV film

school in Marrakech and graduated in 2011. In 2010, he directed his first short documentary, 'Talbanine', about a remote and isolated school in the mountains. In 2019, he completed his first full-length documentary, 'Wandering Stars', which was a portrait of three blind young Moroccans. Since 2014, Baraka has been working on the film 'Fragments from Heaven', which has been shot over several periods between 2017 and 2019. He is also a musician, conducting research into sound through the InCave and SENT projects.

Morgane Ivanoff



After completing her master's in TV and Cinema production at the Complutense University of Madrid, Morgane

Ivanoff started her career in Spain with scriptwriter Lola Salvador and working on TV fictions in France as a production assistant. She has specialised in creative documentaries production since 2014, working with several production companies in Lyon. In 2018, she joined JPL Productions as a development and production manager.

Director's Note

In 'Fragments from Heaven', I delve into questions of the origin of life. However, when it comes to this question, answers continually drift away into an abyss, always leaving behind a new enigma to be solved. For me, confronting these conundrums through a quest is an intimate way to exorcise the anguish they bring about. By wandering in search of meteorites in the company of nomads and a scientist, we grasp the meaning of the quest and that, in the end, it is the path that makes sense, not the destination. It is through cinema that this quest crystallizes, by gathering the nomads and the scientist together with all of us. As well, cinema helps us to dig into emotion when the intellect is arid. For these reasons, for me this film is a journey during which I no longer force myself to find answers, which are unreachable. Nevertheless, I focus with gratitude on humans and environments with all their complexities, while honouring what unites us with each other, with the Earth, and ultimately with the universe. It is all about diving into the world of the subtle to touch a chord of sensibility, and to transcend.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **€225,757**

Secured Financing: **€173,157**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- 2M TV, Morocco
- AFAC, Lebanon
- CNC, France
- Doha film Institute, Qatar
- Lyon Capitale TV, France
- MedFilm Festival, Italy
- Procirep-Angoa, France
- Région Rhône-Alpes, France

Looking For:

- Co-Producers
- Funding
- International Broadcasters
- Distributors
- Sale Agents

The Miracle of Almería

Director / Screenwriter:
Moon Blaisse

Co-Screenwriter:
Thomas Bellinck

Co-Directors:
Souleymane Coulibaly
Sidi Yaya Konaté
Antonio Miras
Paco Vizcaino Cid

Producers:
Emmy Oost
Louis Mataré
David Fonjallaz
Katja Draaijer

Company Profile

Cassette for Timescapes produces films and cross-media projects that combine innovative vision and social or political engagement. The company has successfully co-produced with the US, UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands and aims at distributing its films worldwide, often through a tailor-made impact strategy. A selection of projects produced include 'All-In' by Volkan Üce (2021, CPH:Dox), 'Glad That I Came, Not Sorry to Depart' by Azam Masoumzadeh (2020, VR), 'Dad Magnet' by Daphne van den Blink (2020, Dok Leipzig), 'Mars, Oman' by Vanessa del Campo (2019, Visions du Réel), 'Barber Shop' by Luc Vrydaghs (2017, tv series), 'The Invisible City [Kakuma]' by Lieven Corthouts (2016, FIFDH), 'Problemski Hotel' by Manu Riche (2015, IFFR) 'No Man Is an Island' by Tim De Keersmaecker (2015, HotDocs) and 'Double Take' by Johan Grimonprez (2009, Berlin FF).

Contact:
Emmy Oost
Cassette for Timescapes
emmy@timescapes.be

'Het Mirakel Van Almería' / Belgium, Switzerland, Netherlands, Qatar / Arabic, Bambara, Spanish / 2022 / 90 min and series

Genre: **Creative Documentary, Docufiction**

Interests: **Environmental, Immigration, Food Production**

The legal and illegalised inhabitants of Almeria, the biggest vegetable garden in Europe, cooperate to reveal the system of violence behind our tomatoes.



At the far end of Europe, on the southern border of Spain, lies Almería. It is a huge province completely covered with white plastic, harbouring Europe's largest vegetable garden. It is the place where our tomatoes come from, even in winter. But under all the plastic, strange things happen. Today, Almería's freshwater resources are nearly exhausted, pesticides and large quantities of plastic have irreversibly contaminated the soil. Supermarkets yearly decrease the price they are willing to pay for their tomatoes. Vegetable cultivation moves inevitably to Poland and Africa. Spanish farmers dive well under their prices to keep in the race. 120,000 migrants work in slave-like conditions on the plantations. In this film the inhabitants of Almeria work together to reveal how Almeria grew from an empty desert in the 1950s, into a white, plastic kingdom in the 1980s—and finally into an exhausted wasteland today. With the use of their imagination, we try to find out the blind spots of our capitalist system.

Moon Blaisse



Moon Blaisse is Dutch, living in Belgium. She is an award-winning director who graduated with a Master

in Audiovisual Arts in 2010. Moon was awarded multiple times internationally with her short film 'Sometime later' (2011). With the short film 'Guest' (2015), she went on to receive the press prize by l'union de la critique de cinéma de Belgique. Moon Blaisse is a Sundance grantee and has also been selected for the Berlinale Talent Campus in 2013 and the IDFA-Mediafund Script development lab in 2014. For 'The Miracle of Almeria', she participated in the EDN Docs in Thessaloniki workshop and pitched at CPH:Forum, Dok Leipzig, Visions du réel and the Venice Production Bridge. 'The Miracle of Almeria' will be the result of a co-creation process with the inhabitants of Almeria and will be Moon's feature film debut.

Emmy Oost



Emmy Oost studied Germanic Literature & Linguistics and started working as a film

producer for Johan Grimonpez, an internationally acclaimed filmmaker and artist from Belgium who directed 'Double Take' which premiered in Berlinale & Sundance. She founded the company Cassette for Timescapes in 2010. As a film producer, she received the Flanders Cultural Prize for Film in 2015 for a slate of migration films and her work on interactive documentaries. She is part of the Doc Society impact community and the EAVE, Eurodoc and ACE producers' networks. Since 2014, she has taught Production Studies as a guest lecturer at LUCA, school of arts. In 2019 she started FilmImpact, an organisation that implements impact producing in Flanders.

Director's Note

About seven years ago, while researching places that were completely transformed by

globalization, I discovered the extensive vegetable garden in Almería, Spain. My challenge as a filmmaker was to avoid a single-view-story, and certainly my version of the story, and to empower the different social classes in Almeria to present their perspective freely. Working with their imagination and with fantasy scenes, we discovered, made it much easier to understand what people had really suffered and what made them so powerless to react to it. Instead of thinking by the rules that are written for them right now—the rules of what a black person can do, or what a poor farmer or an uneducated woman in the South of Spain can do—they start to think within a reality where these rules would be different. And suppose they start to talk about their reality from this other role. In that case, people can more easily talk about the invisible power structures of oppression, discrimination and sexism, that are often not very easy to prove but are a very vivid reality for them. Together with the people of Almeria and with this film, I want to offer different perspectives on what should change in our big vegetable production sites worldwide.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **€513,577**
Secured Financing: **€513,577**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Belgian Development Cooperation, Belgium
- Belgian Tax Shelter, Belgium
- Bern Film Fund, Switzerland
- Creative Europe, Belgium
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Dutch Film Fund (NFF), The Netherlands

- Dutch Media Fund LEF, The Netherlands
- Eurimages, France
- Flanders Audiovisual Fund (VAF), Belgium
- Journalism Fund Pascal Decroos, Belgium
- SRF, Switzerland
- Sundance Institute Documentary Fund, USA
- Swiss Federal Office of Culture, Switzerland
- VRT-Canvas, Belgium

Looking For:

- Creative Feedback
- Sales
- Distributors
- Festivals
- Impact Funding

Qumra Projects

Picture Lock Feature Narrative

'El Gran Movimiento' by Kiro Russo

'The Exam' by Shawkat Amin Korki

'Orca' by Sahar Mossayebi

'The Sea Ahead' by Ely Dagher

'Tug of War' by Amil Shivji

'Whether the Weather is Fine' by Carlo Francisco Manatad

'White Building' by Kavich Neang

Picture Lock Feature Documentary

'Atlantide' by Yuri Ancarani

'Children of the Enemy' by Gorki Glaser-Müller

'Les Enfants Terribles' by Ahmet Necdet Cupur

'Our Little Palestine' by Abdullah Al Khateeb

Director / Screenwriter:

Kiro Russo

Producer:

Kiro Russo

Pablo Paniagua

Alexa Rivero

Company Profile

Socavón was established in 2009 in La Paz by a community of filmmakers interested in supporting fresh looks, new narrative forms and experimental cinema in Bolivia. In recent years Socavón has supported the most celebrated productions of Bolivia, including 'New Life' (2015) and 'Dark Skull' (2016) by Kiro Russo both award-winning films at Locarno Film Festival and San Sebastian Film Festival, the documentary by Miguel Hilari 'The Corral and the Wind' presented at Cinéma du Réel in 2014, and 'Sirena' by Carlos Piñeiro premiered at Mar del Plata Film Festival in 2019.

Altamar Films was founded by Alexa Rivero after nearly two decades of work experience in distribution, sales and production. The Paris-based film production company focuses on discovering and supporting international directors with a strong signature whose films can connect with audiences and film critics on the festival circuit and among independent distributors.

Contact:

Socavón

socavoncine@gmail.com

El Gran Movimiento

Bolivia, France, Qatar, Switzerland / Spanish / 2021 / 85 min

Genre: **Drama**

A worker falls ill upon his arrival to the city of La Paz, and his godmother attempts to save him through a healer.



After a seven-day walk with his companions, young Elder arrives in the big city seeking to be reinstated in his work at the mine. The city is overwhelming, and Elder begins to feel sick. But quickly the drinks make him forget his pain and, together with his friends, he decides to stay and take a chance. Thanks to the old woman Mama Pancha, they get a job in the market. But Elder starts to get worse, choking and struggling for breath. His friends chip in to help him, but the doctor says there is no cure. Mama Pancha, very worried about the dying Elder, connects him to Max—a witch doctor, hermit, and clown—who will try to bring the young man back to life.

Kiro Russo



Born in La Paz, Kiro Russo is a director and producer. Trained at FUC Buenos Aires, he directed and

produced three short films which got significant exposure on the festivals circuit. In 2016, Kiro completed his first feature, 'Dark Skull', selected at 80 festivals and winning 23 awards, including at Locarno FF. Developed with the support of writing residencies (Tabakalera, Moulin d'Andé), film markets and labs (LoboLab, Ciné Latino, BRLab, Fabrique des Cinémas, Artist with bright future), his second feature, 'El Gran Movimiento', was shot in La Paz and is currently in post-production. It will be completed in the first semester of 2021.

Pablo Paniagua



Pablo Paniagua is a Bolivian cinematographer and producer who attended the Universidad del Cine in

Buenos Aires. He has worked making films in Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil and Peru. His short film 'Despedida' won

the jury mention at BAFICI XVII. His first feature film as a producer and cinematographer 'Dark Skull' was selected at 80 festivals and won 23 awards such as Best Cinematography ADF at the International Competition in BAFICI XIX, Best Cinematography at Riverrun Film Festival and a nomination for Best Cinematography at Fénix awards in Mexico City. In 2009 he co-founded Socavón, and currently works in La Paz, Bolivia.

Alexa Rivero



Born in Paris, French-Bolivian by origin, Alexa has been working in the film business in France in

production, distribution, sales and festivals for nearly two decades. A festival programmer at the Biarritz Latin American Film Festival, Alexa then shifted to film production working as a production manager for several Paris-based production companies. She joined Memento Films in 2009 as an executive, spreading her activity between international sales, French distribution and their production arm. In 2015, Alexa launched Altamar Films, a production company focusing on the discovery of filmmakers with daring directorial styles.

Director's Note

La Paz is the least western capital of the Americas. Located at more than 3,600 meters above sea level, the city spreads like a sea of bricks, stones and concrete in the canyons that precede the Altiplano. The strong indigenous presence gives the city a unique character where different ways of seeing and understanding the world meet. I wanted to make a film about La Paz in the style of the urban symphonies of the 1920s, with characters who could provide singular points of view upon the city. I found these characters in Elder Mamani, a young miner from Huanuni who came to La Paz after losing his job in the mine, and in Max, a tramp whose peculiar position in the society allowed me to observe the city, to see its systems, its architecture and its developments. I've known Elder and Max for many years. Max is a celestial tramp who spends his life between the heights of La Paz and central market where he is known for his tricks but also his healing skills. With 'El Gran Movimiento', I wanted to explore new territories in the mise en scène, blending different kinds of materials. A plurality of approach to provide several prisms to represent the diversity of Bolivian reality.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$494,757**

Secured Financing: **\$428,045**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Bord Cadre Films, Switzerland
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

• Focuart, Bolivia

• Institut Français-CNC, France

• PIU, Bolivia

• Sovereign Films, UK

• Universal Brokers, Bolivia

Looking For:

• Festivals

• Distributors

• Sales Agents

Director / Screenwriter:
Shawkat Amin Korki

Co-Screenwriter:
Mohamed Reza Gohari

Producers:
Mehmet Aktas
Danar Omer Faris

Company Profile

mitosfilm is an independent production company based in Berlin and Duhok (Kurdistan Regional Government, Iraq) which aims to support authentic storytelling and produces thought-provoking features and documentary films. Through our international co-productions, we strive to reach audiences around the world, as well as develop local Kurdish cinema in cooperation with the Cultural Ministry of Kurdistan. It's our aim to build an artistic and cultural bridge and therefore raise an understanding of the cultural past, present and future.

Contact:
Lea Drescher
mitosfilm
lea@mitosfilm.comMain

Sales / Festivals:
Alexander Masche
Arthood Entertainment
masche@arthoodentertainment.com

The Exam

Iraq, Germany, Qatar / Arabic, Kurdish / 2021 / 89 min

Genre: **Drama**

Interests: **Emancipation, Corruption, Social Issues, Women's Rights**

Rojin and her sister Shilan know that starting university is Rojin's only way to avoid a forced marriage. So, they plan to cheat on the admission exam by buying the correct answers.



Rojin is about to sit her university entrance exam. If she fails, her father will force her to marry. Rojin's older sister Shilan knows what's at stake since she is married to Sardar who has broken his promise to let her continue her studies after their marriage. Rojin, with the support of Shilan, decides to put all her effort into the exam. However, this decision only drags both sisters into new difficulties and even illegality. Rojin and Shilan find themselves entangled in a vast network of corruption, facing financial hardships and moral concerns. What seems to be a minor situation at first holds direct consequences that will determine the future of both women.

Shawkat Amin Korkiis



Shawkat Amin Korkiis is a Kurdish director and producer living and working in Iraqi Kurdistan. Korki gained

international recognition in 2006 with his debut feature film 'Crossing the Dust'. 'Memories on Stone' has been Korki's greatest success till now being the official Oscar entry from Iraq. The film was awarded the UNESCO Prize at Asia Pacific Screen Awards and Best Film of the Arab World at Abu Dhabi Film Festival.

Mehmet Aktas



Mehmet Aktas is a scriptwriter and producer. Born in Turkey, he moved to Berlin in 1995 where he founded

the film distribution and production company mitosfilm which specializes in international co-productions. Mehmet Aktas has received several awards at recognized festivals for his productions and screenplays.

Director's Note

'The Exam' is a suspenseful drama displaying the reality of two young women living in today's Iraqi Kurdistan. The region has long suffered from tragic wars, misery, and constant crisis in seeking to become an independent state. The repercussions from these events are beginning to unfold further threats within the society. Conflicts arise when the questions of what a successful democratic way of living together looks like and how it can be accomplished. I have intended to focus on two female protagonists to address the certain kinds of pressures that young women in Kurdistan experience. The balance between marriage and motherhood on one side and education on the other, is a constant battle and sacrifice for women, especially in this region. Frustrated by her own life situation, Shilan fights for a better life for her younger sister Rojin. Shilan herself experiences a sense of empowerment facing her unlucky marriage and her lost dreams. The title 'The Exam' is hence figuratively referring to Shilan's personal examination of her own life situation.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$660,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Cultural Ministry City of Slemani, Iraq
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- KRG, Iraq
- WaarTV, Iraq

Looking For:

- Festivals
- Buyers
- Distribution

Director:
Sahar Mossayebi

Screenwriter:
Tala Motazedi

Producers:
Ahmed Al Baker
Tahoora Abolghassemi
Mahtab Keramati Sheikholeslami

Company Profile

Katara Studios is a Qatar-based full-service independent studio specializing in the financing, development and production of premium content in music, film and television.

Contact:
Luca Bercovici
Katara Studio
lucabercovici@katarastudios.com

Orca

Qatar, Iran / Farsi / 2021 / 90 min

Genre: **Drama, Biography**

Interests: **Women's Rights, Sports, Endurance Swimming, Overcoming Hardship**

The dark waters you fear to enter holds the salvation that you seek.



Elham, a young divorced Iranian woman, seeks to find herself after being nearly beaten to death by her husband. She discovers solace and salvation in the water, and soon makes her mark as a formidable endurance swimmer. In the fight of her life, Elham faces political, religious, and personal obstacles in search of her goal—the Guinness World record for swimming the longest distance with her hands bound.

Sahar Mossayebi



Sahar Mossayebi was born in Tehran on May 4th, 1975. She graduated in Theatre with a BA from The

Azad University of Art and Architecture and started her career in 1996 as an actor in a performance by Davoud Mirbagheri called 'Eshgh Abad'. She has worked in different positions in cinema including as a production manager, planner, script supervisor, and assistant director.

Ahmed Al Baker



'From Dream to Reality' was the title of Ahmed Al Baker's TED speech back in 2010, in which he spoke about

changing his career from oil and gas to the film industry. Now, a decade later, Ahmed has worked on two Sci-Fi shows ('The Pact' and 'Medinah') as a showrunner and produced several feature films, shorts, documentaries, and TV programs. Ahmed is currently an executive producer and board member at Katara Studios.

Tahoora Abolghassemi



Tahoora Abolghassemi was born in Tehran, and received her Bachelor's degree in

Management and her Master's degree in Accounting from the Azad University of Tehran. After university, Tahoora began her career in cinema in 1993, initially serving as a production coordinator and production manager. She has since produced many feature film and television projects in Iran, including the award-winning films 'Niloofer' (2008), on which she served as a line producer, and 'The Alien' (2020).

Mahtab Keramati Sheikholeslami



Mahtab Keramati Sheikholeslami was born in 1970 in Hamedan, Iran. She was taking acting courses when she was

chosen for the role of Helen in "The Men of Angeles" series (1977) which garnered her national recognition. She later went on to appear in films such as 'Mummy III' and 'Rain Man' for which she

was nominated for a Fajr International Film Festival Crystal Simorgh. She won a Crystal Simorgh for the Best Actress in a Supporting Role for 'Twenty' (directed by Abdolrasool Kahani). She then appeared in dramas such as 'Saint Mary', 'Crimson Soil' and the films 'Hell, Purgatory, Heaven', 'There are Things You Don't Know', 'Alzheimer's', and 'The Private Life of Mr. and Mrs. M.'. She won a Crystal Simorgh for the Best Actress in a Supporting Role for 'Twenty' (directed by Abdolrasool Kahani). In 2015 She was the winner of the Best Actor Award at the Imagine India Film Festival. She was also featured in Dhaka Film Festival Jury in 2017. In 2006 she was appointed as UNICEF National Ambassador in Iran. Mahtab is one of the partners in Andisheh Pardis Jam production company (alongside Tahoora Abolghassemi) serving as co-founders and producers.

Director's Note

Have you ever arrived at your life's zero-point? What decision have you made? This lowest point might mark the miracle of your life. 'Orca' is the true story of a young woman, Elham, reaching the lowest point in her life; how she fought back her way back from the abyss, and turned the darkness into a miracle.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$1,500,000**
Secured Financing: **\$1,500,000**

Looking For:
• Distribution

Confirmed Financial Partners:
• Doha Film Institute, Qatar
• Katara Studios, Qatar

Director/ Screenwriter:
Ely Dagher

Producer:
Arnaud Dommerc

Sales:
The Party Film Sales
MAD Solutions (MENA Territories)

Company Profile

Andolfi is an independent production company lead by Arnaud Dommerc. The company produces authors from every nationality, willing to explore new narrative and cinematographic aspects. Andolfi intends to claim a production eclecticism that allows their different projects to communicate and embrace the complete field of cinema, including live-action, experimental, and documentary. Some of the company's latest work includes 'Félicité' by Alain Gomis (Silver Bear Grand Jury Prize at Berlin Film Festival 2017) and the documentary 'The Competition' by Claire Simon (Best documentary on cinema - Venice Classics Awards, Venice Film Festival 2016).

Contact:
Arnaud Dommerc
Andolfi Production
production@andolfi.fr

The Sea Ahead

Lebanon, France, Belgium, USA, Qatar / Arabic / 2021 / 110 min
Genre: **Psychological Drama**
Interests: **Identity**

A young woman suddenly returns home after a long absence and finds herself reconnecting with the familiar, yet strange life she had once left.



A young woman walks out of the Beirut airport alone and makes her way back home to her parents' house in the middle of the night. Having been abroad and out of touch for a while, Jana seems to be leaving a bad experience behind and taking refuge. Haunting pressures to fit back into the family dynamics as well as revealing details of her life abroad weigh heavy on her. Feeling cornered, her fears and anxieties resurface, leading her to reconnect and find solace in another part of her Beirut life that she had forsaken. A life that is for her as familiar and foreign now as it ever was.

Ely Dagher



Ely Dagher is an artist and filmmaker born and raised in Lebanon. He graduated with an MA in New

Media and Contemporary Art Studies from Goldsmiths College in London. His work explores the correlation and possibilities created through the play between cultures, histories and fiction. In 2015, his film 'Waves '98' was awarded the short film Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

Arnaud Dommerc



Arnaud Dommerc is head of the independent production company Andolfi. He produces authors from

every nationality, willing to explore new narrative and cinematographic aspects. He aims for a production eclecticism that allows the various projects to communicate and embrace the complete field of the cinema from fiction and experimental, to documentary. A few of the company's latest examples include 'You will die at Twenty' by Amjad Abu Alala (Lion of the Future - Venice 2019), 'Félicité' by Alain Gomis (Silver Bear - Grand Jury Prize Berlinale 2017), and 'The Competition' by Claire Simon (Best documentary on cinema - Venice Film Festival 2016).

Director's Note

'The Sea Ahead' is based on themes previously treated in my short film 'Waves'98'. It follows Jana's return home after years abroad. Through her, we draw a portrait of a generation and the story of Beirut. Identity and its construction via history, memory and fiction have been a driving theme in my work since the first time I travelled outside of Lebanon in 2007 and encountered immigrant populations in Europe, witnessing what they chose to construct their identities with. This film is not about that construct, but it is very much about identity and the refusal of the status that is projected on you, be it by others or yourself, and the subsequent loss of self when things fall apart. It is an exploration of the human condition that is not only outwardly psychological, but also told through expressing the inner thoughts of the characters.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$700,000**
Secured Financing: **\$580,000**

Looking For:
• Financing

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- AFAC, Lebanon
- Beachside Films LLC, USA
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Hubert Bals Fund. The Netherlands
- Proximus, Belgium
- Shelter Prod, Belgium

Director / Screenwriter:

Amil Shivji

Co-Screenwriter:

Jenna Bass

Producers:

Steven Markovitz, Amil Shivji

Company Profile

Big World Cinema, established in 1994 in South Africa, has produced feature films, documentaries, TV series and shorts, many of which have screened at festivals such as Cannes, Sundance, Berlinale, Venice and Toronto. Over the past twelve years, Big World Cinema has focused on producing and distributing content across the continent of Africa and has produced in over 20 African countries. Recent films include 'Rafiki', 'aKasha', 'High Fantasy', 'Silas' and 'Winnie'. Big World has worked with over 100 African directors and produced a number of projects with directors such as Wanuri Kahiu, Hajooj Kuka, Jihan El-Tahri, Brian Tilley and Jim Chuchu.

Kijiweni Productions is an independent Tanzanian film production house that is focused on producing socially conscious films. Our films include 'Shoeshine' (2013, Tampere, Durban), 'Samaki Mchangani' (2014, Film Africa, FESPACO), 'Aisha' (2015, Seattle, Cinemas D'afrique), 'T-Junction' (2017 FESPACO, ZIFF) and 'Wahenga' (2018, Film Africa, ZIFF). Apart from making films, Kijiweni is involved in film training & mentorship and exhibitions.

Contact:

Steven Markovitz

Big World Cinema

steven@bigworld.co.za

Tug of War

'Vuta N'Kuvute' / Tanzania, South Africa, Germany, Qatar / 2021 / 90 min

Genre: **Drama**

Interests: **History, Politics**

A runaway Indian-Zanzibari bride forms a strong bond with a young communist in the winding alleyways of 1950s British colonial Zanzibar. Love and resistance escalate.



Denge, a frustrated and rebellious young man meets Yasmin, a young Indian-Zanzibari girl in the middle of the night as she is on her way to be betrothed to a man three times her age. This sparks a series of missed opportunities for the forlorn lovers. Yasmin escapes her oppressive marriage and returns to Zanzibar, where she faces rejection from her own family. She seeks refuge at Mwajuma's house in the Swahili quarters of the segregated island, submerging herself in an oppressed yet effervescent culture that she had always been secluded from. Here Yasmin meets Denge who is deeply immersed in the independence struggle against British rule, busy translating and distributing Soviet propaganda. She is pulled towards his ideals of independence as he feels free around her. When Denge's recklessness lands him behind bars, it's up to Yasmin to be part of the larger struggle and free the one she loves.

Amil Shivji



Amil Shivji is based in Tanzania as a filmmaker and lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam. He

believes in using images to challenge the powers that be, in particular, deconstructing urban facades of development and emphasizing the strength and struggles of marginalized communities. Amil has written, directed and produced short fiction films that have participated in Rotterdam and FESPACO as well as winning the People's Choice Award in Zanzibar and Best Director and Best Short film in Africa. His feature directorial debut 'T-Junction' (2017) opened Zanzibar International Film Festival and won three awards. He has a master's in Fine Arts from York University in Toronto, Canada.

Steven Markovitz



Steven Markovitz has 25 years' experience producing feature films, documentaries, short films,

distribution and festivals. Steven co-founded the production company Big World Cinema in 1994. He recently produced Wanuri Kahiu's 'Rafiki' (Cannes - Un Certain Regard, TIFF) and Hajooj Kuka's 'aKasha' (Venice Critics' Week, TIFF). In 2017 he produced Jenna Bass' body-swap comedy 'High Fantasy' (TIFF, Berlinale), 'Winnie' by Pascale Lamche (winner of Sundance Documentary World Cinema Directing Award) and 'Silas' (TIFF, IDFA). He also executive-produced the award-winning Kenyan feature film, 'Stories of Our Lives' (TIFF 2014, Berlinale Panorama 2015), directed by Jim Chuchu, which won Berlinale's Teddy Special Jury Award. He is the co-founder of Encounters South African International Documentary Festival. He also co-founded the immersive media non-profit, Electric South and the pan African documentary fund DocA. Steven is a member of the Academy of Motion Pictures, Arts and Sciences.

Director's Note

As a Tanzanian filmmaker, I do not see my realities, nor my histories portrayed on screen. I have always been committed to telling stories that highlight narratives from my country and elevate them for local and international audiences. To tell a multidimensional, non-binary narrative in Africa is a political act, and I seek to implement it in the most revolutionary medium—cinema. In my previous five films, presentations and university lectures, I have focused on stories of the working people to expose social contradictions within society. Zanzibar is more than a tourist destination, and I strive to explore its character in my film 'Vuta N'Kuvute' (Tug of War). Set in the 1950s, love becomes political as star-crossed lovers attempt to be together and be free against the backdrop of British colonialism. I worked alongside local historians in the research phase of the film visiting archives and museums on the mainland and Zanzibar to provide historical context, accuracy, and justice to the ideological calling and paraphernalia of the time. In addition, the visual approach offers a perspective that brings out Zanzibar's timeless architecture and the film's revolutionary plot while putting Tanzanian history on the map.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$849,000**
Secured Financing: **\$708,731**

- Confirmed Financial Partners:
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
 - Equity Investors
 - M-Net, South Africa
 - Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Germany
 - Visions Sud Est, Switzerland
 - World Cinema Fund, Germany

Looking For:

- Financing
- Sales
- Festivals

Director / Screenwriter :
Carlo Francisco Manatad

Co-screenwriters:
Giancarlo Abrahan V
Jeremie Dubois

Producer:
Armi Rae Cacanindin

Company Profile

Cinematografica Films is a Philippine-based production company founded in 2005 by leading Filipino producers Arleen Cuevas, Armi Rae Cacanindin and Raya Martin. It aims to craft innovative local stories with emerging and established voices, while also promoting a fresh new way of seeing them at home and abroad. Cinematografica is committed to exploring different visions from all over the world. It specializes in international co-productions with several productions/co-productions made from the past ten years, premiering in A-list festivals such as Cannes, Berlin, Toronto, Locarno, and Rotterdam. 'Aswang', a creative documentary, had its world premiere at IDFA 2019 where it won the FIPRESCI Award, and went to different festivals and won the Amnesty Int'l Award at Thessaloniki and the White Goose Award at the DMZ Docs. 'Window Boy Would Also Like To Have A Submarine', our Uruguay, Brazil, Netherlands, Argentina, and Philippine co-production had its world premiere in the 2020 Berlinale Forum.

Contact:
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ACC Cinematografica Films
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Whether the Weather is Fine

'Kun Maupay Man It Panahon' / Philippines, France, Singapore, Germany, Indonesia, Qatar / Waray / 2021 / 112 min

Genre: **Drama**

Interests: **Absurd Drama, Catastrophe, True Events**

'Whether the Weather is Fine' follows Miguel after he wakes up in the chaos of Typhoon Haiyan, which destroyed Tacloban—a coastal city in the Philippines, in November 2013.



'Whether the Weather is Fine' follows Miguel after he wakes up in the chaos of Typhoon Haiyan, which destroyed Tacloban—a coastal city in the Philippines, in November 2013. Rumours of another incoming storm are spreading like wildfire, and Miguel roams the ravaged city with the two women in his life, his mother Norma, and his friend Andrea. As a rescue ship bound for Manila docks at the port, Miguel must decide whether to stay home with the only people he has ever truly known or evacuate and leave his past behind.

Carlo Francisco Manatad



Carlo Francisco Manatad is a Filipino film director and editor based in Manila. He is a graduate of

the University of the Philippines Film Institute. His films have been selected and screened at major international film festivals including Cannes, Toronto, Locarno, Busan, and Clermont Ferrand, to name a few. Manatad is also an alumnus of the Asian Film Academy, the Berlinale Talent Campus, the Docnet Campus Project, Tokyo Talents and the Locarno Filmmakers Academy. He is currently working on his first feature film, 'Whether the Weather is Fine'. The project is supported by the Asian Cinema Fund, Globe Studios and the Talents Tokyo Fellowship Fund, Aide des Cinema du Monde, Vision Sud Est and the World Cinema Fund. It has also participated at the EAVE Ties That Bind, La Fabrique Des Cinema du Monde – Cannes, Torino Film Lab – FeatureLab360 and the Cinefondation L'Atelier in Cannes.

Armi Rae Cacanindin



Armi Rae Cacanindin is a Filipina producer who has completed several international

co-productions in the Philippines. An alumna of Busan's Asian Film Academy, Berlinale Talents, Talents Tokyo and IDFAcademy she has pitched projects at La Fabrique des Cinema du Monde, TorinoFilmLab, Cannes Cinefondation's L'Atelier, IDFA Forum and Hongkong Asian Film Financing Forum. She has received funding for her feature films from IDFA Bertha Fund, Aide aux Cinéma du Monde, World Cinema Fund, Sundance Film Institute, Doha Film Institute, Purin Pictures, Asian Cinema Fund, Hubert Bals Fund, Vision Sud-Est, and Singapore IFF. One of these is 'Aswang', directed by Alyx Arumpac. It won the International Critics Prize at the 2019 IDFA First Appearance and the White Goose Award from DMZ Docs and is an entry to the Oscars' Best Documentary Feature Category.

Director's Note

In November 2013, the strongest typhoon ever recorded made landfall in the Philippines, destroying most of my hometown, Tacloban. My city's terrible loss collided with my personal demons, and I decided to make a film set in the aftermath of the typhoon. The film unfolds like a dream—following the strange trajectory of my life and my hometown's destruction through the story of a son, his mother, and their community. After the senselessness of having lost so much to nature for no reason, the characters inescapably lose their own sense of justice. In the desperate struggle for survival, all sense of humanity and morality are eroded, and to save oneself, one must destroy another. No one can stay innocent. The understanding of a devastation has not only changed a "community" but also humanity as a whole. Stripping them bare of everything they have—defining the true essence of love, hope, dreams and survival and how the darkest of happenstance transforms to what humanity really is. And finally, it speaks of a commentary of the absurdist generation we are in today.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$1,198,745**
Secured Financing: **\$1,145,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- AAND, Singapore
- Black Sheep, Philippines
- Dreamscape, Philippines
- Globe Studios, Philippines
- House on Fire, France
- Kawankawan Media, Indonesia
- Quantum Films, Philippines
- Weydemann Bros, Germany

Looking For:

- Investors
- Co-Producers
- Sales
- Distribution

White Building

Director / Screenwriter :

Kavich Neang

Co-Screenwriter:

Daniel Mattes

Producers:

Davy Chou

Marine Arrighi de Casanova

Sales:

Les Films du Losange

Company Profile

Anti-Archive is a Cambodian film production company created in 2014 by filmmakers Davy Chou, Steve Chen, and Kavich Neang, with Park Sungho and Daniel Mattes joining in 2016 and 2019. Anti-Archive produces and co-produces fiction and documentary films by the emerging Cambodian filmmakers, as well as international, independent directors shooting in Cambodia and Southeast Asia. The films produced under Anti-Archive have subsequently premiered around the world, including Cannes, Locarno, Busan, Torino, and IFFR.

Apsara Films, a French company created in 2013 by Marine Arrighi de Casanova alongside Isabelle Tillou and Lucie Borleteau, is co-producing 'White Building'. Apsara Films has already produced three feature films: 'Fidelio, Alice's Journey' (2014), which was selected in competition at Locarno Film Festival in 2015 and won Special Jury Mention at the Palm Springs Film Festival before being released in French theatres; 'Whatever Happened to My Revolution' (2019) and 'Into the World' (2020).

Contact:

Daniel Mattes

Anti-Archive

daniel.mattes@antiarchive.com

'Bodeng Sar' / Cambodia, France, China, Qatar / Khmer / 2021 / 90 min

Genre: **Drama, Based on a True Story**

Interests: **Youth, Politics, Social Issues**

Samnang faces the demolition of his lifelong home in Phnom Penh coupled with pressures from family, friends, and neighbours—which all arise and intersect at this moment of sudden change.



20-year-old Samnang and two of his friends live in the White Building, a landmark tenement in Phnom Penh. In this fast-changing city, the three boys practice their dance routine dreaming of television talent contests while their parents lead a traditional lifestyle, all of them living in harmony. But the White Building is to be demolished. Samnang sees his father unsuccessfully attempting to bring together his divided neighbours on the government's compensation offers for residents to move out, and has to face his best friend's departure from Cambodia. Samnang understands that the stable environment he has always called home is now on shaky ground...

Kavich Neang



Kavich Neang was born in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in 1987. He has directed five short films since

2011. He first studied under Rithy Panh, and in 2013, he joined Busan's Asian Film Academy. In 2014, he co-founded Cambodian production company Anti-Archive. He joined Cannes Cinéfondation's Residency in 2017-18. His 2019 documentary 'Last Night I Saw You Smiling' won the NETPAC Award at IFFR, the Special Jury Prize at Jeonju, Best Image at Janela de Cinema and two awards at Tokyo FilmEx. 'White Building' is his first narrative feature.

Davy Chou



Davy Chou is a Khmer-French filmmaker and producer. In 2009, he created French production

company Vycky Films. In 2014, he co-founded Cambodian production company Anti-Archive. Davy Chou gained attention with his 2011

documentary 'Golden Slumbers'. His 2016 feature, 'Diamond Island' (DFI recipient, 2016), premiered and was awarded at Cannes Critics' Week. With Anti-Archive, he has produced Kavich Neang's films, Danech San's 2018 short, 'A Million Years', Sreylin Meas' 2019 short, 'California Dreaming', and Adrien Genoudet's 2017 documentary, 'Waxing Moon'.

Marine Arrighi de Casanova



Marine Arrighi de Casanova graduated from La Fémis in 2010 and created French production

company Apsara Films in 2013 after having worked at Les Films du Lendemain. Marine received a Cinema Producer's grant from Fondation Jean-Luc Lagardère in 2014. Since then, she produced several features: 'Fidelio, Alice's Journey' by Lucie Borleteau, 'Whatever happened to my revolution', by Judith Davis, 'Into the World' by Marion Laine. She is currently producing: 'White Building' by Kavich Neang, 'My Only Desire' by Lucie Borleteau, and 'I Love Greece' by Nafsika Guerry-Karamaounas.

Director's Note

Sometimes I don't know whether I live in my dreams or in reality. I have a recurring dream about the White Building, the place where I grew up. My own family's eviction in 2017 from the White Building occurred with disturbing calm, but the fear we internalized that day never left us. The place has become a memory. My film's protagonist, Samnang, is a passive, dreamy 20-year-old. Like myself, Samnang is confused by surreal images of Cambodia's recent development around him. He dreams of things he does not understand. Samnang's father, in contrast, tries to unite the residents. But he fails. He is also so wedded to tradition that he cannot heal his foot infection. His challenges symbolize the entrenched trauma of Cambodia's older generation. Samnang and his family must grapple with the conflicts which the modern Cambodian social context often uncovers and exacerbates. But Samnang is not trapped by a traumatic past. He dares to believe again in his own future and take a chance on himself, even as he grieves over losing his home. Is that hope enough to heal the wounds of the past or the divisions within families—to allow the possibility of a different future?

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$567,255**

Secured Financing: **\$490,953**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Anti-Archive, Cambodia
- Apsara Films, France
- Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum
- Asian Project Market and Busan International Film Festival, Korea
- Berlinale - WCF Europe, Germany
- CNC Aide aux Cinémas du Monde, France

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Fond Images de la Francophonie, France

- Kongchak Pictures, Cambodia
- Les Films du Losange, France
- Mr. Brandon Hashimoto, USA
- Mr. Rotha Moeng, Cambodia
- Next Masters Support Program - Talents Tokyo 2017
- PSE - Pour un Sourire d'Enfant, Cambodia
- Torino Film Lab Audience Design Fund, Italy

- Visions Sud Est, Switzerland
- Xstream Pictures, China

Looking For:

- Distributors
- Exhibitors
- Film Festivals
- Industry Networks,
- Creative Feedback
- Marketing Advice

Director / Screenwriter :

Yuri Ancarani

Producers:

Marco Alessi

Fiorella Moretti

Sales:

Luxbox

Company Profile

Dugong Films is a Rome-based film production company focused on exploring the blurred line between fiction and documentary, developing experimental films in an international framework. Dugong's work has been shown in international festivals such as Cannes Film Festival ('Samouni Road' by Stefano Savona, premiered at Director's Fortnight and winner of the prestigious Oeil D'Or Award as Best Documentary) Venice Film Festival ('Controfigura' by Ra di Martino, winner of Eurimages Lab Project Award) and Toronto Film Festival ('Mon Amour Mon Ami').

Luxbox is a Paris-based company, dedicated to international sales and co-production of selected projects. With a complementary industry knowledge built on experience in production, distribution, acquisitions, sales and festival programming, Fiorella Moretti and Hedi Zardi, start with a solid film catalogue and a passionate pool of world cinema directors such as Lisandro Alonso, Bruno Dumont, Amat Escalante, Carlos Reygadas and Jonas Carpignano.

Contact:

Marco Alessi

Dugong Films

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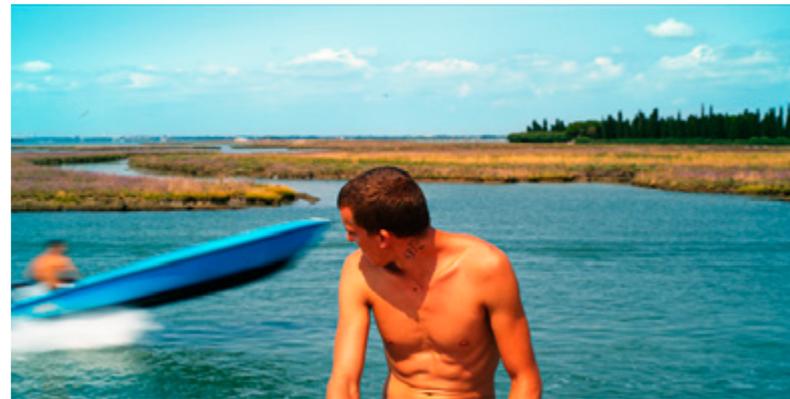
Atlantide

Italy, France, Qatar / Italian / 2022 / 90 min

Genre: **Creative Documentary**

Interests: **Social Issues, Coming of Age, Experimental Film**

Among the gondolas, canals, and palaces of the Venetian lagoon—tourists have replaced inhabitants. Behind this sobering reality, some locals have formed a resistance movement. At the heart of this alternative society is a group of teenagers seeking their way to adulthood on their powerboats called "Barchini".



In Venice between the gondolas, canals and palaces, tourists pour in as residents head out. Local population has fallen to fewer than 50,000 inhabitants, less than the daily tourist visits. However, next to the historical centre, there's a hidden and silent lagoon surrounded by small invisible villages. A parallel world where residents resist, living a unique life, just in front of Venice. It's here that young guys bump into little boats running at full speed with their bows rising up into the sky. They call them "Barchini"—small, colourful, fast with souped-up engines, driven by Venetian teenagers as if these motorboats were motorbikes. They take care of the boat's aesthetic and accessories, they make them fancy through Hi-Fi, coloured LEDs, and light decorations, they work hard to pimp the engine or the stereo system. The cooler and more equipped with options the boat is, the cooler is the guy. And at the end of the day, after the usual party on a deserted island, here they are, challenging each other in dangerous illegal races to win girls' hearts. Without lights to avoid the police, pointing their bows and wildly heading towards the Serenissima. Daniele, Luca, Alberto—our main characters—will drive us into their summer made by dreams and nightmares of a generation running at full speed.

Yuri Ancarani



Yuri Ancarani is an Italian video artist and filmmaker. His works come from a continuous mingling

of documentary cinema and contemporary art. They are the result of a research aimed to explore regions which are not very visible in daily life, realities in which the artist delves in first-person. He has won several awards such as Locarno FF Jury Special Prize, Talent Prize 2012, nominated for "Nonfiction Feature Filmmaking", Cinema Eye Honors (Museum of Moving Image, New York); "Grand Prix in Lab Competition", Clermont-Ferrand Film Festival (France); "Honorable Mention", Dokufest (Kosovo); and "Best Documentary", New Horizon I.F.F. (Poland).

Fiorella Moretti



Paris-based Fiorella Moretti was born in Lima and studied communication in Mexico. After directing the

communication department of the

Cultural Center PUCP in Lima, she joined Mantarraya, one of the leading independent production companies in Latin America. For nine years as head of production, Moretti collaborated with filmmakers Carlos Reygadas and Amat Escalante. In 2007, she took over as head of distribution at Mantarraya, building one of the most important art house distribution companies in Mexico. In 2015, along with Hedi Zardi, she launched Luxbox, a production and sales company based in Paris.

Marco Alessi



Marco Alessi began his career in the film industry in 1998 as an assistant directing and producing music

clips and documentaries. Since 2001 he has also worked as a writer and creative producer for several major production companies and Italian broadcasters. His screen credits include successful TV-series and cinema box office hits. In 2010 he established his own company, Dugong Films. They aim to produce engaging films on the blurred line between fiction and reality. Its productions have won major awards and have been selected in festivals such as Venice, Toronto, Locarno, Rotterdam, New York.

Director's Note

I'm not a writer. I come from visual art, and it's not easy for me to explain by words what I see and what I show through my camera. What I know is that in my films, using a purely observational approach, I talk about things that everyone can understand and in which everyone can identify oneself. In this case, I think there is something deeply human and universally comprehensible in the image of a sixteen-year-old boy speeding across the lagoon with full volume music on his small boat. His girlfriend at his side and a bunch of friends behind, ready to shout, laugh, fool around, despite a magnificent and ancient world that is literally collapsing. Teenage-hood is for me an imaginary picture that, in the scenic space of the Venetian lagoon, so visible yet invisible in its deep truth—comes as a shock wave in the desert, an element of resistance on the Canal Grande, a destructive element of the Porto Maghera petrochemical plant built during the sixties in front of Venice, a dangerous explosion of life on those touristic canals wrapped today by an oppressive exploitation scheme.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$1,000,000**
Secured Financing: **\$850,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- CNC, France
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Emilia Romagna Film Commission, Italy
- Eurimages Lab

Project Award, Norway

- MiBACT, Italy
- Rai Cinema, Italy
- Unbranded Pictures, USA

Looking For:

- Equity Partners
- Distributors
- Broadcasters

Children of the Enemy

Director:
Gorki Glaser-Müller

Producers:
Kristofer Henell
Erika Malmgren

Company Profile

Cinenic Film is a production company based in Gothenburg, Sweden. The company produces and co-produces high-quality drama, documentaries and animations aimed at theatrical distribution and TV. Titles include 'Beyond Dreams' (2017), 'Flocking' (Berlinale Crystal Bear winner 2015), 'Underdog' (2014) and co-productions 'And Breathe Normally' (Sundance best directing 2018), feature animation 'The Tower' (over 100 festivals 2018-19), 'Phoenix' (Toronto 2018), 'Hacker' (winner Chicago Int'l Children's FF, Cinekid, Stockholm Junior FF 2019) and 'Daniel' (2019).

Contact:
Erika Malmgren
Cinenic Film
erika@cinenicfilm.se

Sweden, Denmark, Qatar / English, Spanish, Swedish / 2021 / 97 min
Genre: **Documentary**
Interests: **Human Rights, Social Issues, Family**

He lost his daughter to Islamic State. Can he save his grandchildren?



'Children of the Enemy' is the story of bohemian musician Patricio whose daughter married one of Europe's most notorious ISIS terrorists. They left for Syria in 2014, and as the caliphate crumbles five years later, both are killed. Their seven small children miraculously survive and are placed in the monstrous camp al-Hol. When the Swedish authorities neglect to act on behalf of the children, Grandpa Patricio is forced to take it upon himself to try to get them out.

Gorki Glaser-Müller



Gorki Glaser-Müller is a filmmaker, writer for film, tv and radio and a multi-artist working with

experimental formats such as VR. He was born in Santiago, Chile in 1973 and came to Sweden as a 13-year-old. Since graduating from Valand Academy in Gothenburg, Sweden, he has experimented with audiovisual storytelling in various forms. His first feature film was the critically acclaimed 'Once a Year' (2013). 'Children of the Enemy' is Gorki's feature documentary debut.

Kristofer Henell



Kristofer Henell is the producer of the Gorki Glaser-Müller's feature debut 'Once a Year' (2013) and many award-

winning shorts. He is the founder of production company One Night Picture and a member of EAVE.

Erika Malmgren



Erika Malmgren is a producer at Cinenic Film and has previously produced Gorki Glaser-Müller's feature debut

'Once a Year'. She is the producer of upcoming 'Just So-o Easy Going' (Christoffer Sandler, 2021) and the co-producer of 'Daniel' (Niels Arden Oplev, Anders W. Berthelsen, 2019), 'Hacker' (Poul Berg, 2019) and 'Phoenix' (Camilla Strøm Henriksen, 2018). Erika also has a long-standing career as a line producer, working with directors like Thomas Vinterberg, Per Fly and Gabriela Pichler.

Director's Note

On the one hand, 'Children of the Enemy' tells the story of how Patricio Galvez step by step struggles to save his grandchildren. On the other hand, this is a story about being human today. The world is polarized, more extreme. In the political climate of today, these children are not valued as innocent Swedish children. In social media, they are referred to as ISIS-children and even terrorist-children. This lack of civilization drives me to make this film. Also, in the old Greek tales from the Iliad, the fate of the defeated enemy is applied to its children. Beyond the news value of Patricio's great deed is a universal story of David against Goliath, of the little man against a system that doesn't want to help the children of the enemy. But at its deepest level, this is a story about the loss of a child, the greatest pain for a parent. When Amanda dies, Patricio makes a pledge to save his grandchildren, no matter the risks. The story about the children of war turns into the children of love.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$740,000**
Secured Financing: **\$685,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Danish Film Institute, Denmark
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- DR, Denmark
- Film i Väst, Sweden
- Göteborg City Culture Committee, Sweden
- Malik Bendjelloul Memorial

Foundation, Sweden

- Nordisk Film & TV Fond, Norway
- NRK, Norway
- SVT, Sweden
- Swedish Film Institute, Sweden
- YLE, Finland

Looking For:

- Financing
- Festivals
- Distribution

Les Enfants Terribles

Director:
Ahmet Necdet Çupur

Producers:
Delphine Morel
Anke Petersen
Nadir Öperli

Company Profile

Producing fiction and documentary films since 1986, TS Productions (Paris) has a slate of over 50 documentaries. Two of its productions, 'Home Sweet Home' and 'De Cendres et de Braises', were recently screened at the Visions du Réel.

With an aim to shed light on untold stories, Jyoti Films (Hamburg) tries to produce films that open new perspectives on internationally relevant topics and improve understanding of the unfamiliar.

Founded by Nadir Öperli, Liman Film (İstanbul) produces films with directors' labels. The company also offers consultancy and line production services. Their recent titles include 'A Tale of Three Sisters' (2019), and 'My Favorite Fabric' (2018).

Contact:
Deckert Distribution
info@deckert-distribution.com

France, Germany, Turkey, Qatar / Arabic, Turkish / 2021 / 92 min & 52 min
Genre: **Creative Documentary, Family**
Interests: **Psychological Drama, Tradition, Patriarchy, Underage Marriage, Gender Inequality, Young Women's Access to Education**

In a village near the Syrian border of Turkey, a young man, Mahmut wants to divorce his newly-wed wife. At the same time, his sister Zeynep, an adolescent girl, decides to get a factory job and starts studying by distance learning. Their idea is regarded as a sin, and an impossible battle begins.



In Keskindik, a village situated near the Syrian border of Turkey, a young man, Mahmut wishes to divorce his newly-wed wife. Guilt-ridden, he doesn't know how to end the marriage. Recently, Mahmut's sister Zeynep has ended her engagement as well. Resolute to quit the village, Zeynep enrolls in an open high school and finds a job in a factory. Against her father's wishes, Zeynep hopes to leave the village and study at a university. Mahmut and Zeynep become the centre of a genuine conflict in their family and community. As resentments and dilemmas come to light, the film aims to magnify this upcoming generation as they try to escape child marriages and create a new way of life for themselves.

Ahmet Necdet Çupur



Ahmet Necdet Çupur worked for three years in Iraq and Afghanistan during the war as a civil engineer.

He had a growing interest in cinema, so he decided to be a filmmaker and moved to Paris. Two years after his arrival, he got funding from CNC for his short film 'Latin Babylon'. The year he completed his film, he returned to his village, after twenty years, with an idea of shooting a documentary about his family. His filmography includes 'Latin Babylon' (2018), 'Boy and Bicycle' (2015), 'Experience' (2014), and 'Alley Dancer' (2014).

Delphine Morel



Delphine Morel studied political sciences at the I.E.P of Paris and screenwriting in Los Angeles at UCLA. A

producer and filmmaker since 1997, Delphine has a track record for universal stories told by foreign

directors. She has produced over 35 documentaries for TV and Cinema and directed 5 documentaries and two radio programs.

Anke Petersen



Anke Petersen used to work as an executive producer for commercials. For over 17 years, she was an inherent

part of Tony Petersen Film. Through her work in commercials, Anke keeps up-to-date with technology and enjoys transferring her knowledge to digital and documentary-based projects with a cause. In 2013 she established Jyoti Film, which is focused on international documentary co-productions, short films and digital projects. Anke is an alumna of Documentary Campus.

Nadir Öperli



Nadir Öperli has produced and co-produced successful feature films since 2007. His recent

titles include 'A Tale of Three Sisters' (2019, Berlinale Competition) and 'My Favorite Fabric' (2018, Cannes Un Certain Regard). In 2017, he joined the board of management of SEYAP (Film Producers' Association of Turkey). He is a member of ACE and the European Film Academy.

Director's Note

In this documentary, I try to be more observant of the situations; however, gradually, I include myself in the story and try to set my role as a filmmaker directly linked to the characters. I do not cast any moral judgment; instead, I wish to let the events reveal their own meanings. Principally, I try to film my siblings, Mahmut and Zeynep's point of views on their lives, how they seek a solution while still keeping the family ties intact. My family ties are felt either by me being present in front of the camera or by my voice behind the camera. I try to achieve a narration that unfolds as the younger generation gather together in solidarity against their parents and the community elders to see the transformation of old values into new ones.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **€382,936**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Al Jazeera Documentary TV, Qatar
- Antalya Film Forum, Turkey
- CNC, France
- Deckert Distribution, Germany
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- France TV, France
- Hamburg Film Fund, Germany

- Heinrich Boll Foundation, Turkey
- Procirep-Angoa, France
- Région Île de France
- Sundance, USA
- The German-Turkish Co-Production Development Fund
- World Cinema Fund, Germany

Looking For:

- Festivals
- Distributors
- TV and VOD Sales
- TV Sales
- Creative Feedback
- Impact Campaign Advice

Our Little Palestine

Director / Screenwriter:
Abdullah Al Khateeb

Producers:
Mohammad Ali Atassi
Jean-Laurent Csinidis

Company Profile

Bidayyat for Audiovisual Arts was launched in Beirut in early 2013, with the aim to support and produce documentaries, short and experimental films, and to organise specialised training courses on documentary filmmaking. Bidayyat envisions a creative, independent, open and interactive cinematic and audiovisual culture that is influential in our societies and open to other societies.

Films de Force Majeure is a production company based in Marseille, France. Since its creation in 2010, our activity has mainly focused on art-house films, with a particular interest in documentaries and international collaborations. We are keen on strongly committed projects that transcend boundaries. Films de Force Majeure is part of several European networks such as EAVE and EURODOC.

Contact:
Abdullah Al Khateeb
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Mohammad Ali Atassi
director@bidayyat.org

Jean-Laurent Csinidis
production@fils-de-force-majeure.com

Lebanon, France, Syria, Qatar / Arabic / 2021 / 90 min

Genre: **Creative Documentary**

Interests: **Identity, Immigration, Social Issues, War, Women's Issues, Youth**

The story of a group of Palestinian civilian activists from the Yarmouk refugee camp near Damascus. Defying bombings, displacement and hunger that has hit their small community, they turn it into a small besieged ghetto, by doing civil work, practising agriculture, studying and spreading music, theatre, love and joy.



The district of Yarmouk in Damascus, Syria, sheltered the largest Palestinian refugee camp in the world from 1957 to 2018. When the Syrian revolution broke out, Bashar Al-Assad's regime saw Yarmouk as a refuge of rebels and resistance, and besieged the camp from 2013 onwards. Gradually deprived of food, medicine and electricity, Yarmouk was cut off from the rest of the world. Abdallah Al-Khatib, the director of this film, was born in Yarmouk and lived there until his expulsion by Daesh in 2015. Between 2011 and 2015, he documented the besieged inhabitants' daily lives, who decided to face bombing, displacement and hunger with rallying, study, music, love and joy. Hundreds of lives that were irremediably transformed by war and siege—from Abdallah's mother who became a nurse taking care of the elders of the camp, to the fiercest activists whose passion for Palestine became gradually undermined by hunger.

Abdullah Al Khateeb



Abdullah Al Khateeb studied sociology at the University of Damascus. Prior to the Syrian revolution, he

worked as an activity and volunteer coordinator at UNRWA and was the coordinator of the Youth Support Center in Yarmouk. He founded a social association with friends that is active in the field of humanitarian relief and carries out dozens of projects in several Syrian areas, most notably in the Yarmouk camp. He has participated in directing and filming short films that depict camp life. German magazine Peace Green selected him as a peacemaker in 2014, and he received the Per Anger Human Rights Award in Sweden in 2016.

Mohammad Ali Atassi



Mohammad Ali Atassi is a journalist, producer, and documentary filmmaker. He was born in

Damascus, Syria and obtained a diploma in civil engineering from

Damascus University in 1992 and a DEA in history from the Sorbonne Paris 4 in 1996. Since 2000, he has been writing for several Arab and international newspapers on political and cultural topics. He has directed two short documentary films and two feature documentaries, as well as producing several short and documentary films. His films have been shown in numerous festivals worldwide and have gained several awards. He is also the founder and the director of Bidayyat for Audio-Visual Art.

Jean Laurent Csinidis



Jean-Laurent Csinidis is a producer and CEO of Films de Force Majeure (France). He has produced or co-

produced 22 films shown at Berlinale, Locarno, Venice, Lussas, Cinéma du Réel, FID, Annecy, and Clermont-Ferrand. Among his latest productions are 'A Land Imagined' (Golden Leopard Locarno 2018, sold by Visit Films), 'Still Recording' (5 awards at Venice Critics' Week), and 'Game Girls' (Berlinale 2018). He is the treasurer of LPA, the association of producers of Region Sud, and is a member of the Short Film board of the SPI.

Director's Note

Some like to call the Yarmouk Camp the "capital of the Palestinian diaspora". But this so-called camp, stretching south of the Syrian capital of Damascus, does not come down only to stones or tents. It was and still remains the concrete manifestation of an idea that is almost impossible to explain. The introduction of the film will nevertheless try to make this clear to the audience. Before the Syrian revolution, the Yarmouk camp was a place of creativity and love, a storehouse for human energy. It was the largest concentration of Palestinians outside Palestine. When the Syrian revolution began in 2011, the camp sheltered thousands of displaced Syrians. In 2012, the Syrian regime began bombing the camp and besieged what was left. The siege lasted three and a half years until the camp's inhabitants were displaced by ISIS and the Syrian regime. In 2018, a campaign of intensive bombing completely destroyed the camp in an attempt to eradicate the Islamic state. Today, all that is left of the camp is a pile of rubble, made of debris and shattered dreams of besieged inhabitants who were forcibly displaced from their second homeland. In both the camp inhabitants' opinion and my own, the Yarmouk camp will remain "our little Palestine" until Palestine is reborn.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$476,514**
Secured Financing: **\$425,264**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- AFAC, Lebanon
- Al Jazeera Doc, Qatar
- Bidayyat for Audiovisual Arts, Lebanon
- CNC Cinémas du Monde, France

- CNC FAIA, France
- Culture Resource (Al-Mawred Al-Thaqafy), Lebanon
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Films de Force Majeure, France
- MEDIA / Creative Europe, Belgium
- Procirep-Angoa, France
- Région SUD, France

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- International Sales
- Distributors
- International Funding
- Festivals

Qumra Projects

Development TV & Web Series

'Jet Set Arabia' by Abdulla Al-Abdulla and Basel Owies

'Locals. Qatar.' by Saud Al-Thani and Stephen Ochsner

'Mornings in Jenin' by Annemarie Jacir

'Oddity Tales from a Strange Land' by Ahmad Samara

'Rise of the Mad Cat' by Meshaal Al Abdulla and Ibrahim Al Abdulla

'TCA186: The Tarmac Year' by Mohamed Berro

Directors:
Abdulla Al Abdulla, Basel Owies

Executive Producers:
Basel Owies, Abdulla Al Abdulla

Contact:
Basel Owies
bowies@dohafilminstitute.com

Jet Set Arabia

Qatar / English, Arabic / 43 mins (8 episodes)

Genre: **Unscripted TV Series**

Interests: **Reality TV, Social Media**

A glimpse into the glamorous exploits of celebrity Khaleeji social media influencers Fatima Al Momen, Ascia Farraj, Abdulla Al Abdulla, Reem Al Sanea and Rawan Bin Hussain—who juggle their unconventional modern lifestyles under the microscopes of their families and traditional cultures of the Middle East.



In 'Jet Set Arabia', we will follow along on the journey of what it takes to become a contemporary social media influencer in the traditional Middle East. This contrast takes us on an exciting and entertaining ride where societal norms are challenged, and where controversies are a daily struggle. With a combined total of over 15 million followers, our dynamic ensemble cast will shed light on various facets of Middle Eastern culture, giving us exclusive access to their lavish lifestyles, entrepreneurial ventures, and adventurous personal lives. Through our cast we'll see high-end editorial photoshoots, international fashion shows, brands being launched, friendships forming and relationships falling apart, all the while posting and sharing these experiences with the world. In this competitive and cut-throat influencer industry, it's hard work to avoid being wrapped up in the haters of social media and in living up to the demands of their conservative cultures and families. And although the influencers indulge in luxurious lifestyles, this series will also show how each of them is a down-to-earth human being that's struggling with the same issues that are relatable to many millennials today. We get to see the dirt under the carpet and see the reality of what goes on behind the scenes, including the stress, humour, heartbreak, disappointment, and joy of the influencer industry.

Abdulla Al-Abdulla



As the son of an ambassador, Abdulla Al-Abdulla grew up travelling the globe and developed a

keen interest in the fashion industry. As a Qatari native, Abdulla's style has a quintessential Middle Eastern touch, but still incorporates a vast Western flare. He is a regular at the London, Paris, New York and Milan Fashion Weeks, and has been featured in various publications like Harper's Bazaar, Grazia, Ahlan Magazine and Glam. As a high-profile influencer, Abdulla has collaborated with countless brands such as Louis Vuitton, Dior, Balmain, Etro and Chaumet—where he stands at the crossroads between Middle Eastern and Western culture.

Basel Owies



Born in the USA, Basel Owies studied film at the Dodge College of Media Arts in Orange, CA and has

worked in film, TV, commercial, music video and web. He went on to direct and co-produce his first feature film entitled 'The Barber' (2014) starring Scott Glenn ('Silverado', 'Silence of the Lambs') and Chris Coy ('The Deuce', 'The Killing of Two Lovers'). He is currently a full-time producer with the Qatari Film Fund at the Doha Film Institute in Qatar.

Producer's Note

In a world filled with stereotypes and clichés about the Middle East, I wanted to bring the reality of this society into the mainstream global consciousness. I wanted to authentically portray the real Arabia and the real people within. People that are playing a major role in shaping the modern-day world: Influencers. We are young, well-educated socialites from families of means and much like in the West, we use social media as a tool to build our personal brands and promote our lifestyles. This unscripted series seeks to tear down these distorted notions by giving an exclusive all-access pass into the lives of the next generation of fashionable Middle Eastern youth. But unlike other reality shows, we don't want to create a low-brow forced drama type of experience. Instead, we want to showcase the power of friendships across borders, the desire to be ambitious, driven and business-oriented, and to share our microcosm with the world at large. I want to paint this journey through my life, along with the lives of my closest friends who are making an impact with social media, fashion and self-expression. We are the new faces of Arabia.

Financial Information

Looking For:

- Funding
- Distribution
- Broadcast

Locals. Qatar.

Director:
Saud Al-Thani

Co-Director / Screenwriter:
Stephen Ochsner

Producers:
Fahad Al-Attiya
Julia Shaginurova
Galina Bott

Company Profile

Caravane Earth is an international foundation, whose mission is to practice and promote ethical entrepreneurship and wellbeing through art, craft, architecture, agriculture, and education. We work towards positive systemic impact in social, cultural, and ecological realms. Our team is a global fellowship of artists, tutors, thought leaders, diplomats, film & theatre makers and experts in water, agriculture, green energy, and architecture. The ultimate purpose of our activity is to empower local communities by reviving artisanship and vernacular architecture, as well as revitalising local ecosystems. Caravane Foundation's creative divisions produce theatre, film, performance, architecture, and events. Our artistic endeavours are driven by ethical principles that prioritise human relationships rather than expressions of individual ego.

Contact:
Julia Shaginurova
Caravane Earth Ltd.
julia_s@caravane.earth

Qatar / Arabic, English

Genre: **Creative Documentary**

Interests: **Immigration, Identity, Tradition**

A hyper-inclusive look into what responsibility and sense of belonging mean in a place where 90% of the population are guests.



In this web series that underlines unity between people, five radically inclusive episodes feature expatriates alongside prominent Qatari public figures, reflecting the day-to-day reality of diversity. By inviting guests of the country to speak as locals, we are promoting a sense of belonging that is unique to the world.

Saud Al-Thani



Saud Al-Thani graduated from Princeton University with honours concentrating in Near Eastern

Studies and receiving certificates (minors) in Medieval Studies and Translation and Intercultural Communication. He has subsequently worked to serve the country in varying capacities, ranging from a researcher in solar energy, to an analyst in smart cities. 'Locals. Qatar.' is his debut work in film.

Stephen Ochsner



Stephen Ochsner is a screenwriter, actor, film and theatre director born in Colorado, USA. Captivated by Russian

theatrical heritage at the age of nineteen, Stephen moved to Moscow to study acting and work in theatre. There he took up a multifaceted creative career sharing his time between acting, developing artistic projects, directing and writing.

Fahad Al-Attiya



Born in Doha, Fahad Al-Attiya belongs to a family of nomads. He studied at the Royal Military Academy

Sandhurst, Westminster, and the School of Oriental and African Studies. As Executive Chairman to the Qatar National Food Security Programme, he set out to make Qatar more food and resource independent, executing logistics for the UN COP12 in Doha. Currently, Fahad serves as Ambassador of Qatar to the Russian Federation, Estonia, and Finland, working tirelessly to strengthen understanding and partnership between countries. Along with his main occupation, Fahad is producing films and artistic projects.

Julia Shaginurova



Julia Shaginurova started her career in Moscow, Russia as a journalist and critic. After

ten years of writing and organizing cultural events, she turned to the film industry. In 2005 she joined

TVINDIE Film Company as the head of development and creative producer. Since 2015, Julia Shaginurova has been based in Berlin, where she founded Einbahnstraße Productions, a company focusing on fiction films and creative documentaries with a strong social impact. Julia also works as a film producer for Caravane Earth foundation.

Director's Note

The series underlines stark contrasts between the skyscrapers of Doha and the desert grasses of Al Aamriya. It is not shy in displaying all that has been gained in Qatar over the past 70 years, nor does it refrain from reflecting on that which is being lost. Locals of all professions, genders and backgrounds talk about dreams, responsibility, depression, anger, tradition, and progress. Five radically inclusive episodes feature expatriates alongside prominent Qatari figures to reveal diversity while preserving a unified voice. Interviews are shot where each person feels at home. Natural lighting allows us to capture essential beauty in each face, and our questions provoke a conversation from the heart. The term "locals" carries a meaning of belonging. When non-nationals speak as locals in Qatar, the majority of today's population (guests) become part of the national discourse.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$130,000**
Secured Financing: **\$91,500**

Confirmed Financial Partners:
• Caravane Earth Foundation, The Netherlands
• Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:
• Financing
• Sales Agents
• Creative Consultation

Director:
Annemarie Jacir

Screenwriters:
Ismail Khalidi
Naomi Wallace

Producer:
Alison Sterling

Company Profile

Ignition Films is a UK-based production company founded and run by independent film and television producer Alison Sterling. Credits include 'Flying Blind' and a host of award-winning short films. Other development projects include 'Burnt Grass' with Katarzyna Klimkiewicz, a co-production with Metro Films in Poland with development finance from the Polish Film Institute.

Contact:
Alison Sterling
alison@ignitionfilms.org

Mornings in Jenin

Palestine, USA, UK, Qatar / Arabic, English

Genre: **Drama**

Interests: **Palestine, Family, Politics**

Beginning in Palestine in 1947, 'Mornings in Jenin' centres on the intertwining lives of three siblings who make starkly different choices in the face of turmoil and conflict. This deeply human chronicle is a searing exploration of friendship, love, courage, and hope.



Philadelphia 2001. Amal lives an unremarkable life with her daughter, Sara, but mother and daughter are becoming estranged through Amal's attempts to bury the past. Then Amal receives a phone call, a call that she has been both dreading and anticipating for the last 30 years. The next day a man arrives at the house, a 50-year-old Israeli named David. This encounter forms the framework to go back to the Nakba of 1948, where the lives of Amal and Yousef are torn apart when their brother Ismail is snatched by an Israeli soldier (and is brought up as David). Over the course of the following 50 years in Palestine, Lebanon, and the USA we see how the paths of the three siblings intertwine and collide in painful and dramatic ways—the painful exodus from their home near Haifa; the growing closeness of Amal and Yousef as they suffer the loss of both parents; in Shatila camp in Lebanon when Amal loses her husband; at an Israeli checkpoint when David the IDF soldier encounters his brother Yousef; and ultimately on Amal's return to Palestine, and the refugee camp in Jenin, some 30 years after her departure. Amal finds a final moment of redemption and acknowledgement, as well as a rekindling of the love and understanding between her and her daughter.

Annemarie Jacir



Annemarie has written, directed and produced over sixteen films. Two of her films have premiered as

Official Selections in Cannes, one in Berlin and in Venice, Locarno, and Telluride. All three of her feature films were Palestine's official Oscar entries. Her short film 'Like Twenty Impossibles' (2003) was the first Arab short film in history to be an official selection of the Cannes Film Festival and continued to break ground when it went on to be a finalist for the Academy Awards. Her second work to debut in Cannes, the critically acclaimed 'Salt of this Sea' (2008), went on to win the FIPRESCI Critics Award, and garnered fourteen other international awards including Best Film in Milan. Her second feature 'When I Saw You' won Best Asian Film at the Berlin Intl. Festival, Best Arab Film in Abu Dhabi and Best Film in Amiens, Phoenix, and Olympia, and garnered a nomination at the Asian Pacific Screen Awards. Her most recent film 'Wajib' (2017) won 36 international awards including Best Film in Mar Del Plata, Dubai, Amiens, DC Film Festival, Kosovo and Kerala and Jury Mention at the London BFI Festival.

Alison Sterling



Alison is a producer and line producer with credits in television and film. She is currently

producing 'Close to Me', a 6 part psychological thriller, for ViaPlay and Channel4. Other recent credits: 'The Windermere Children' (Wall to Wall for BBC2); 'Is This Sexual Harassment?' (BBC3); The 'Interrogation of Tony Martin' (as LP) (Story Films for Channel 4); 'Eric Ernie and Me' (Objective Fiction for BBC4), 'Unspeakable' (as LP) (Story Films for Channel 4) and 'We Can Be Heroes' (as LP) (feature film). Through her own company Ignition Films, she previously produced 'Flying Blind', a feature film directed by Katarzyna Klimkiewicz, which premiered at the Edinburgh Film Festival and was released by Soda Pictures. She is developing a slate of feature film projects with female talent, including 'Burnt Grass', written by Bruce McLeod, directed by Katarzyna Klimkiewicz, with funding from the Polish Film Institute. She previously produced numerous short films funded by BBC, Film4, Creative England and BFI, including 'Turning' (BAFTA-nominated 2011) and 'Flytopia', which have screened at dozens of

festivals and won many awards. She is an ACE producer, sits on the Board of Encounters Short Film Festival, and is one of the organisers of the Bristol Palestine Film Festival. She is represented by Independent Talent.

Director's Note

'Mornings in Jenin' appealed to me instantly as a Palestinian story told on both an epic and a human scale. But, equally importantly, I was drawn to the story of three siblings, flawed and real, whose lives have been formed by the reality of our existence - all the cruel moments and the beautiful ones. From the beginning of our exile in 1948, and in each and every country we have ever lived, we have been suffering a collective trauma and a great pain, yet also nurturing a tradition and spirit of revolt. This is a story that resonates with me because of the insistence that even at the most defeated and desperate moments in our lives, there is hope. Working on this project with two writers I greatly admire - Ismail Khalidi and Naomi Wallace - is very exciting to me. It made sense to imagine Mornings in Jenin as a multi-episodic series as it allows the freedom to move through the decades, as every generation inherits something from the past, and also moves forward forging something totally new.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$10,700,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Ignition Films, UK

Looking For:

- Financing
- Co-producers

Director:
Ahmad Samara

Screenwriters:
Ahmad Samara
Alaa Alhussan
Alaadin Qaraqish

Producer:
Alaa Alhussan

Contact:
Alaa Alhussan
alhusanala@gmail.com

Oddity Tales from a Strange Land

Jordan, Qatar / Arabic

Genre: **Fantasy, Adventure**

Interests: **Middle East, Politics, Psychology**

A coming-of-age story, following a girl named Aya, through which we explore a collection of stories that share with us the diverse ancient historical tales and mythologies spread throughout the Arab world.



Set in the MENA region, 'Oddity Tales from a Strange Land' is an episodic TV series, where human behaviour is explored, such as denial, love, gluttony, revenge, greed, and bravery, all while following the adventures of our protagonist, Aya. A coming-of-age girl who is born in a small village in the Upper Galilee of Palestine. Aya's youth was stolen when her mother passed away when she was seven years old, and she had to take care of her father and little brother. In this series, the line between realism and fantasy is blurred, with magical realism and the escapist narrative spread throughout and exhibited in the contemporary Middle Eastern context. The series is composed of six stories/episodes: 'The Green Bird', which is the pilot episode, and talks about the bird that comes back to the village where Aya lives to take its revenge. 'Rum' is when Aya gets involved in a war between the Jinn and the humans in order to save the world. 'Al Rasad' which is the monitoring or the finding of hidden gold by using the Jinn. 'Al Rasd' which is the monitoring or the finding of hidden gold by using Jinn. 'The Fennec', which is the white Arabian fox that helps Aya find water for her village. 'Al Zar', a festival in Egypt that opens the door to the world of the dead. And 'Nos Nsais', the half-crippled human who kills the Ghoul.

Ahmad Samara



Ahmad Samara is an independent filmmaker who fell in love with the magical world of filmmaking and music during an

uncertain time in his life. For years he felt that the cinema was a place where you can revive things you love and would like to immortalize. Ahmad has now more than ten years of experience in directing, writing and producing commercials and music videos, as well as fiction and non-fiction films. He continues to work towards putting Jordan and the Middle East on the map of the film industry worldwide.

Alaa Alhussan



Born and bred in Saudi Arabia, Alaa Alhussan is a Jordanian anthropologist and filmmaker. Her work

focuses on the relationship between memory and place and her films pivot upon the themes of identity, feminism, gender, faith and politics in the Middle East. She has always loved storytelling; discovering the best ways to communicate across various media. In 2017, she received her master's degree in Ethnographic and Documentary film from UCL, Graduate School of Anthropology. She also has a B.Sc from PSUT in Computer Graphics and Animation. She's currently exploring digital innovation and the future of storytelling to find ways of raising awareness and empathy in the modern world.

Director's Note

Since 2003, with the war on Iraq, and many other downfalls (such as economic disparity and lack of political liberty) happening in the Arab world, we have lost every sense of life. In this context, the entertainment industry has also focused on these events, with an almost exclusive industry focus on politics and war. The main purpose of this TV series stems from my belief that we can, and should, be telling more stories that tackle politics, religion, love, philosophy and psychology, while reviving and bringing back all the bedtime stories, tales and mythologies we used to hear when we were younger—creating this fantasy world for both adults and children equally—a spark for a cultural rebirth in our region. The different stories in this series will involve multinationals, and will be based in different countries within the Arab region, showing the different cultures and background for each one of them.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$9,000,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Financing.
- Co-Producers/Partners
- Distributors
- VOD/Streaming platforms
- Writers
- Creative Consultants

Director/ Screenwriter/ Producer:
Meshaal Al Abdulla
Ibrahim Al Abdulla

Company Profile

Digit Ink W.L.L is a gaming and animation studio founded in the state of Qatar in 2018. Their vision is to become a Qatari ambassador in the international video games development and animation industry. The company aims to craft high-quality games and animation for various media and gaming platforms under the motto “combining minds together shapes greatness”. Currently, working on a mobile video game for iOS/Android platforms as well as ‘Rise of the Mad Cat’ an animated series inspired by the game’s story.

Contact:
Meshaal Al Abdulla
Ibrahim Al Abdulla
Digit Ink W.L.L
info@digitink.net

Rise of the Mad Cat

Qatar / English

Genre: **3D Animation**

Interests: **Comedy, Fantasy**

The adventures of a stray cat named Chimbir and Casper the goldfish as they team up and take on the world in an effort to establish their scientific tech empire!



In a wasteland, Chimbir the stray cat walks through garbage-filled alleyways, one of many hungry cats trying to fill their bellies with a decent meal. Suddenly, a sparkle from afar catches his eye, and upon following it, he finds an abandoned mansion. Venturing inside, Chimbir discovers what seems to be a laboratory. While roaming through the scientific equipment, he spots a cure for his hunger—a little fish swimming in a bowl. In anticipation of his newfound feast, Chimbir takes out his knife and fork, but just before he can tuck in, the goldfish abruptly introduces himself as Casper!

Meshaal Al Abdulla & Ibrahim Al Abdulla



Meshaal Al Abdulla and Ibrahim Al Abdulla are Qatari entrepreneurs who graduated from business school in the U.K. They began writing video games and animation content in 2015, as well as scouting team members and participating in various international conferences related to the entertainment industry. In 2018, they founded Digit Ink studio.

Director's Note

This series is a side story derived from a mobile video game project 'To Meteora'. The story is created for an international audience by Qatari entrepreneurs. The aim is to expand the web series into many seasons to reach various media channels and penetrate the US box office as a movie. 'Rise of the Mad Cat' is a reflection of various human talents and potential that are living in the wrong time or place—however, certain events can be life-changing.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$113,000**

Director/ Screenwriter:
Mohamed Berro

Co-writer:
Fuad Halwani

Executive Producer:
Said Serhan

Contact:
Mohamed A. Berro
mohamed.berro.mb@gmail.com

TCA186: The Tarmac Year

Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic
Genre: **TV Series**
Interests: **History, War**

Set in an alternative timeline of the 1980s, two Lebanese cousins hijack a plane demanding the release of political prisoners. They land the plane in Strovia, a Soviet-backed island state in the Mediterranean. Negotiations get tangled up with cold war politics, and the hijackers and passengers alike find themselves attempting to survive the longest hijacking in history.



Ahmad and Mourad, two Lebanese cousins, hijack a plane en route from Athens to Beirut. When things don't turn out as expected, they decide to land it in Strovia, a Soviet-backed Arab island state off the coast of Lebanon. The people's republic of Strovia was founded in the 1960s after a successful social uprising. It has since garnered both the interest and backing of the USSR. As the hijack situation gets pulled into the escalating cold war between the USSR and USA, negotiations enter limbo. Passengers and hijackers alike have to learn to coexist in order to survive the longest plane hijack in history. As time passes, Ahmad and Mourad's visions of the hijack diverge, and a slowly simmering mini cold war starts manifesting on board the TCA186.

Mohamed Berro



Born in 1989, Mohamed Berro is a Lebanese artist-filmmaker working and residing around Beirut. He

graduated with a BA in filmmaking in 2014 and was part of Ashkal Alwan's HWP post-graduate program in 2015. His work has been shown in venues such as Beirut Art Center, Videoworks 2015, Longue Vue Sur Les Courts Canada, Lebanese Film Festival, VideoEx 2016, SeriesMania and Geneva International Film Festival.

Fuad Halwani



Fuad Halwani is a Lebanese scriptwriter and former film, TV, and theatre instructor.

From 2011-2017 Halwani worked in Beirut as a theatre lighting designer, director, and writer. After working at Scenario Beirut on web-dramas for three years, Halwani wrote the mini-series 'RabihTV' (2018), produced by Cinemoz and directed by Mohamed A. Berro (official selection at Series Mania Festival 2018). In 2019 Halwani earned his

MA in Screenwriting from KinoEyes, an Erasmus+ joint master's degree where completed his graduation short film 'BRUXA' along with his dissertation on the contemporary TV anti-hero. With supported projects currently in development in Lebanon and the MENA region, Halwani is a freelance scriptwriter and PhD in Media Arts candidate at Lusofona University currently residing between Lisbon and Beirut.

Said Serhan



Said Serhan is a Lebanese actor, writer, and producer. He holds a Diploma from the Lebanese

University, Faculty of Fine Arts & School of Drama. To date, he has featured in four theatrical titles, three TV series, one web series, and five feature films. He received worldwide recognition by winning a best-actor award for his role in 'Tombe du Ciel' at Cannes in 2016, and various nominations for his outstanding performance in 'Raining Dogs', 'The Donkey', and 'The Good Shepherd'. His latest role was in the hit TV Series aired on major Arabian TV channels during the month of Ramadan 'Al Hayba: The Harvest', where he played "Ali Sheikh Al Jabal".

Director's Note

A quick rundown of mainstream popular culture being produced on a global level reveals a haunting dominant wave of revivalism(s), reboots saturated with nostalgia-inducing aesthetics. Notably, the 1980s have, in the last few years, been constantly present in our daily consumption of entertainment. So, what does producing a "historical" show set in the 80s entail while we're deep in this current trend of remakes and reboots of present-day culture production? Plane hijackings gained popularity during the 1960s and 1970s and were often tied to world crises, armed struggles and resistance movements with demands ranging from the delivery of a sum of money to the release of political prisoners. These hijacks immediately caught western media's attention. The choice of hijackings allows for the inclusion of grand political and social thematic in the show. Giving us the chance to offer a critique of the media's portrayal of political violence and its subsequent influence on our understanding of history. Our satire takes on plane hijackings and cold war geopolitics and offers a reading that emphasizes the underlying social realities haunting these events.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$50,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Co-Producers
- Development Producer
- Financing

Qumra Projects

Development Short Narrative

'A Simple Cut' by Maha Al-Jefairi

'Al Fanar' by Aisha Al-Muhannadi

'The Experiment' by Abdulla Alhor

'Kinship' by Ali Alhajri

Work-in-Progress Short Narrative

'Revenge Knows Nothing' by Abdulla Al-Janahi and Abdulaziz Khashabi

Director/ Screenwriter:
Maha Al-Jefairi

Producer:
Jawaher AIMoawda

Co-producer:
Ghouna Jaber

Contact:
Maha Al-Jefairi
mahaaljefairi@gmail.com

A Simple Cut

Qatar / Arabic / 15 min

Genre: **Comedy**

Interests: **Coming-of-age**

A young girl goes to ridiculous lengths to hide her haircut from her overbearing mother.



After 14-year-old Kholoud rebels and cuts her hair without her mother's approval, what should be a minor disagreement between mother and daughter turns into a series of mishaps and unfortunate mistakes that end up changing the relationship unexpectedly.

Maha Al-Jefairi



Maha Al-Jefairi is a Qatari filmmaker that is passionate about telling stories which reflect modern Qatari

society. She believes in films' power to bring people together. She has worked on several short film projects since her university days. Her debut short film 'Me, Myself & A.I.' (2018) examined a person's relationship with technology. 'A Simple Cut' would be her second short film, shedding light on the societal and cultural pressures a young girl faces during her formative teenage years.

Jawaher AIMoawda



Jawaher AIMoawda is a Qatari-Bahraini producer based in Doha. She is a two-time Northwestern

Media & Research Awards nominee for Script and Documentary. During her time as a student at Northwestern University in Qatar, Jawaher served

as Script Development & Production chairperson for Studio 20Q, where she shepherded six fully-funded short films from development through premiere. Jawaher has developed creative, logistical, and technical production expertise from working on 14+ film sets with the Doha Film Institute, the Film House, and Studio 20Q.

Ghouna Jaber



Ghouna Jaber is a Palestinian producer based in Qatar. She has a broad experience from producing films,

documentaries, commercials, music videos, TV shows and education films to being part of local film festivals. Her journey started in production in 2004; she worked in Al Jazeera Children for five years and then joined Doha Film Institute until 2019. Ghouna enjoys working in a multicultural environment. In her produced work, she focuses on the various subjects such as female empowerment, human survival and devotion. She believes that inspiration, faith and harmony are essential for human existence.

Director's Note

No one wants to disappoint their mother. But eventually, in every young girl's life comes a time where a girl craves more control over the life they're living. Haircuts are a symbol of independence and freedom. But a haircut is never simple. In the Arab world, long hair on women symbolizes beauty and femininity, while short hair masculinity and tomboyishness. Almost always, going up against such beauty standards evokes backlash and unacceptance, especially from mothers. Mothers tend to be very adamant about not letting their daughters cut their hair. I wanted to tell this story because every Arab girl can relate to this story one way or another. Every Arab girl has a story about the first time they cut their hair short. Every cut and every strand feel like an act of defiance against our mothers. Doing such a thing fuels many mixed emotions, as it makes you question yourself, leaving you to wonder if you made the right decision or not. 'A Simple Cut' examines the complicated dynamic between Arab mothers and their daughters.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$30,000**

Looking For:

- Post-production Funding
- Festival Strategy
- Distribution

Director:
Aisha Al-Muhannadi

Contact:
Aisha Al-Muhannadi
aisha.almuhannadi@gmail.com

Al Fanar

Qatar / Arabic
Genre: **Short Narrative**
Interests: **Social Issues**

When a young woman is left alone in her neighbourhood after her father ventures to sea, her life suddenly takes a tragic turn.



In 1960s' Qatar, a young woman named Wadha lives with her fisherman father in an upper-class house next to the village cripple Abdullatif. One day her father embarks on one of his endless sea trips and leaves his daughter alone. A simple act of kindness from Wadha towards Abdullatif is wrongly interpreted, leading to a tragic consequence.

Aisha Al-Muhannadi



Aisha Al-Muhannadi is a filmmaker whose work is influenced by cultural experiences, nature, and the people around her. She received a Bachelor of Science in Media Industries & Technologies from Northwestern University in Qatar. Her documentaries focus on art, culture, and her family.

Director's Note

Al Fanar is a reflection of how societal morals silence the victims and create the aggressors. In my short film, I want to address the issues of victims who live in a lonely society. My main character Wadha lives with her father. At an early age, she took on the role of mother, wife, and daughter as her father continues to work. She has sacrificed her youth to look after her only family member. On the other hand, Abdullatif is a cripple, and because of his deformity has become a mockery of society as he is seen as inferior. Wadha's kindness towards Abdullatif gets misinterpreted into a tragedy. This film amplifies the issues of victims of abuse that are silenced by cultural morals and codes.

Financial Information

Looking For:

- Script Development
- Producer
- Creative Mentorship
- Funding

Director:
Abdulla Alhor

Contact:
Abdulla Alhor
abdullaalhor2019@u.northwestern.edu

The Experiment

Qatar / Arabic
Genre: **Short Narrative**
Interests: **Rehabilitation, Prison**

A bullied 30-year-old researcher must prove that his prisoner rehabilitation experiment works—or risk being fired and losing face to his nemesis.



Set in present-day Doha, Rashid, a 36-year-old PhD student, is placed at a prison to conduct his final graduation project. His mission is to prove that his rehabilitation techniques apply to any prisoner. But upon arrival, he is introduced to his supervisor Dr Fahad, a 37-year-old psychiatrist and an old rival from high school. Fahad introduces Rashid to a life-sentenced prisoner called Saeed—a giant moving body with no emotions or expressions—the perfect candidate for the experiment's failure. Rashid has no choice but to give it a shot and work on improving Saeed's behaviour to prepare him for the final task. Both Rashid and Dr Fahad are aware that he isn't going to pass, yet they all gather to see his performance. To everyone's surprise, Saeed performs well and passes the final task. Whether he understood the instructions or not is an entirely different question.

Abdulla Alhor



Abdulla Alhor is a Qatari filmmaker who graduated from Northwestern University, where he practised various filmmaking roles. His focus has been mainly on screenwriting and script development, and his contribution to films has been primarily as a camera operator. 'The Experiment' would be his debut film as a director outside of an educational environment.

Director's Note

When I wrote the experiment, I wanted to focus on the struggle of a hard-working person who doesn't necessarily get rewarded for his hard work, but eventually finds his way through. This person is not just Rashid, but is anyone who has experienced a situation where everything wasn't working, and then suddenly it did. It could be narrowed down to the idea of doing your best and hoping for the best results, even if some factors are against you. The story went through many changes, and the lockdown period has undoubtedly helped me come up with a precise setting for the story to take place in. Having Rashid apply to a research facility that belongs to a local prison allowed me to add more details, and to shape each character's personality based on their role in the story and their position in the research facility. What I hope to show through Rashid's encounter with Fahad is that after all, no matter how hard someone can try, they'll never be able to change what's destined to happen to you.

Financial Information

Looking For:

- Mentorship
- Festival Strategy

Director:
Ali Alhajri

Contact:
Ali Alhajri
abmbh95@outlook.com

Kinship

Qatar / Arabic (Qatari Bedouin)

Genre: **Horror**

Interests: **Internal Conflict, Guilt, Fatherhood**

When a shadow emerges with the birth of his newborn, Khalid must come face to face with his past in order to live his future.



Khalid and Noura are in the delivery room, expecting their first newborn. Instead of being overcome with joy, Khalid finds himself awash with unsettling fear and uncertainty. When Khalid tries to get closer to his newborn, he is revisited by those same nightmares within himself. One day, Noura leaves Khalid alone with the baby and what he hopes is an opportunity to feel connected with his son turns into much more of a struggle for clarity. Can Khalid face his inner demons and reconcile with these apparitions in his head?

Ali Alhajri



Ali Alhajri is a Qatari filmmaker. He graduated from Drexel University with a degree in TV Production

and Media Management. Alhajri is interested in genre films that blur the line between fantasy and realism. He hopes to continue exploring ways of telling stories born out of inner conflicts. Professionally, he works at Qatar Foundation, under which he produces/directs short documentaries. He is currently in development with his project 'kinship', a film exploring tensions within father-son bonds.

Director's Note

In a contemporary setting, the film explores the fear of a man's newfound responsibility as a father and how he struggles to connect with his newborn. It also forces him to face demons from his past that he has kept hidden. At its core, Khalid must find ways to make peace with his own father's abuse to become a better one for his son. He struggles to connect with his son since he never learned or lived in a way where a father was emotional and loving, but he was instead abusive and cold. It's a story that addresses the idea of how someone's past can a lot of times dictate how they go into their future. As someone interested in genre films, I chose horror to tell this story because I wanted to texturize and materialize this internal conflict into something that felt so real to the protagonist and brings to life what many of us often experience on our own.

Financial Information

Looking For:

- Script Development Mentorship
- Directing Mentorship
- Funding
- Producers

Directors:
Abdulla Al-Janahi
Abdulaziz Khashabi

Screenwriters:
Abdulla Al-Janahi
Omar Ashour

Producer:
Abdulla Al-Janahi

Company Profile:

GreenTree Production is an animation company based in Doha, Qatar. Founded in 2017 by Abdulaziz Khashabi and Abdulla Al Janahi, GreenTree specializes in creative, magical, and meaningful films, by bringing imagination to life. The company has worked on several projects including a feature film, short films and a traditional Qatari series consisting of 15 episodes.

Contact:
Abdulla Al Janahi
abdulla_mohd94@hotmail.com

Revenge Knows Nothing

Qatar / English / 2021 / 4 min

Genre: **Animation, Action, Drama**

Interests: **Conflict, Animal Welfare**

'Revenge Knows Nothing' combines two stories in a creative manner showcasing the horrific effects of human injustice and selfish actions on its victims—human or otherwise.



Unfortunately, we live in a world filled with injustice and selfish human actions. 'Revenge Knows Nothing' combines two stories in a creative manner showcasing the effects of these actions on its victims—human or otherwise. A helpless child witnesses the horrific actions of war criminals as they destroy his village and kill his beloved family. At the same time, a baby elephant enjoys his last moments before animal poachers attack his mother and kill her for her valuable tusks in front of him. Witnessing these horrific life-changing actions, both the child and baby elephant lose their inner peace and childhood, which is replaced with hate and anger they must carry for the rest of their lives.

Abdulla Al-Janahi



Abdulla Mohammed Al-Janahi is a Qatari filmmaker with a passion for making a difference

through his unique work. He firmly believes that through the power of creativity and animation, a person can do magical things. He has written several scripts for feature and short films and has worked on a traditional Qatari series consisting of 15 episodes. He is the writer and director of the short film 'Hope', which won the best short film award at the Ajyal Film Festival 2020. In addition, he was the producer of the short film 'The Unlucky Hamster', which won the Made in Qatar Special Jury Award at the Ajyal Film Festival 2019. He is currently working on several upcoming projects for 2021.

Abdulaziz Khashabi



Abdulaziz Mohammed Khashabi is a Qatari engineer and filmmaker. He graduated from the

University of Portsmouth in the UK and holds a bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering. He has a passion for animation films, ever since he grew up watching cartoons and Disney classics. Abdulaziz aims to become one of the best-known animation filmmakers in the region. He has written numerous scripts including a feature film, several short films, and a 15-episode traditional Qatari series. He is known for his short film 'The Unlucky Hamster', which won the Made in Qatar Special Jury Award at the Ajyal Film Festival 2019. In addition, he has directed and produced other short animated films such as; 'Hope', which won the best short film award in Ajyal Film Festival 2020, and 'Revenge Knows Nothing'.

Director's Note:

We always aim to be different and to have a unique edge to our work, something that you won't usually see. In addition, we aim to teach a lesson or send a message to our audience through our work. In 'Revenge Knows Nothing', we tried to showcase a serious message in today's world. Unfortunately, we live in a world filled with injustice and selfish human actions. We creatively combined two stories showing the effects of these actions on its victims: being human or not.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$35,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Funding
- Film Marketing and Packaging Advice
- Festival Strategy

Qumra Projects

Work in Progress Short Documentary

'Fever Dream' by Ania Hendryx Wójtowicz
'Let's Play Soldiers' by Mariam Al-Dhubhani
'Ode to Loneliness' by Rawane Nassif

Picture Lock Short Documentary

'...And I Was Left Behind' by Maysaa Almumin
'And Then They Burn the Sea' by Majid Al-Remaihi
'Don't Get Too Comfortable' by Shaima Al-Tamimi
'Virtual Voice' by Suzannah Mirghani

Director:
Ania Hendryx Wójtowicz

Contact:
Ania Hendryx Wójtowicz
a.h.wojtowicz@icloud.com

Fever Dream

Created in DFI's Short Documentary Lab with Rithy Panh

Qatar / English / 2021 / 10 mins

Genre: **Creative Documentary**

Interests: **COVID-19 Pandemic, Surveillance, Isolation, Power(lessness), Human Connection, Globalization, Fear**

When dreams overtake waking life and reality masquerades as fiction—"Do Not Leave the House".



A documentary about a reality that is stranger than fiction; the subjects are neither free nor imprisoned, neither lucid nor insane. Sick with the highly infectious coronavirus, a young couple films themselves as they are transported to a Qatar government quarantine facility; a five-star hotel. A nurse dressed like an astronaut checks in the new guests and directs them to their isolation chambers—a 20th-floor suite with sea view and sealed windows. From this gilded (and hermetically sealed) cage, the married couple look down on the livestream of cars and people below them, boats and planes on the horizon, the sun rising and falling. Suspended between heaven and earth, they film the feeling of sunshine, imagine the smell of fresh air, and pretend to participate in the passing of time as everyone's fate hangs in the balance.

Ania Hendryx Wójtowicz



Ania Hendryx Wójtowicz is a Polish/American creative producer and artist whose work emphasizes

cultural hybridity, blurring the lines between genres and exploring the intersections of film with other creative fields such as architecture, fashion, and the fine arts. She has produced video/multimedia performance installation artworks for the British Council exhibition 'The Place I Call Home' (2019), 'Qatar Foundation' (2018), 'Kuwait Pavilion at the Venice Biennale' (2016), and the 'Oslo Architecture Triennale' (2016). Since 2015, Ania has worked full-time with the Doha Film Institute where she has played a key role in the production of nearly 40 short films and organizes the annual Qumra Shorts film industry programme. Prior to this, Ania worked for several years producing or directing cultural and commercial commissioned films in the Gulf region. Ania grew up between Simsbury, CT, U.S.A. and Kraków, Poland, and holds a degree in Film & Media Studies / Latin American Studies from Washington University in St. Louis. She currently lives in Doha, Qatar with her Colombian spouse, who is an artist and frequent collaborator.

Director's Note

In late 2020, my team and I at Doha Film Institute were engaged in running our annual Documentary Lab led by Cambodian filmmaker Rithy Panh. The coronavirus pandemic forced us to stay home, and we adapted to a virtual format. Very quickly, the lines between work and life became blurred. Halfway through the workshop, my husband and I contracted the virus. We were transported to a Qatar government isolation facility. The fact that it was a five-star hotel further confused our sense of reality. At first, we filmed things just to process the strange experience and to share it with our families. As we became accustomed to cohabitating with the virus, the quarantine hotel suite became my office and conversations with Rithy, my team, and the participating filmmakers encouraged us to turn our everyday experience into a documentary. In this way, 'Fever Dream' became a de facto Doc Lab project—like much of 2020, unplanned and unexpected. What surprised us most about our time in quarantine was that we never really felt alone—only confined. By enforcing separation, COVID-19 democratized the distance between all our loved ones and us; everyone became equally inaccessible. Every

in-person interaction, even with strangers, became precious; cultural and socioeconomic barriers softened with our shared fear over this virus and its invasion of our bodies. Making this film has been a reflection on intimacy and power, and how they relate to our deepest fears/needs.

Financial Information

Looking For:

- Marketing and Packaging Advice
- Film Festival Strategy
- Sales and Distribution
- Editing Advice

Director:
Mariam Al-Dhubhani

Producer:
Mohammed Al-Jaberi

Contact:
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maa6294@u.northwestern.edu

Mohammed Al-Jaberi
maa365@georgetown.edu

Let's Play Soldiers

Yemen, Qatar / Arabic / 2021 / 25 minutes

Genre: **Documentary**

Interests: **Coming-Of-Age, War, Identity, Youth**

Nasser is a sixteen-year-old child soldier who follows in his older brother's footsteps, Adham, to provide for their family. Their younger sibling, Ahmed, who is in the fifth grade, is fascinated by the manhood appeal of becoming a child soldier and plans to leave school to join once he becomes 16. A story of three generations lost in the war cycle in Yemen.



War does not only destroy livelihoods and infrastructure, but it also affects the upcoming generations who feel forced to leave school to join the frontlines. 'Let's Play Soldiers' provides an intimate insight into the life of three brothers who can only find a sufficient source of income to support the family by becoming soldiers. The middle brother, sixteen-year-old Nasser, who left school in the sixth grade, is now working between the frontlines and selling fish. Nasser could end up like his older brother, Adham, 21—who also joined the army when he was 16 and now suffers from PTSD and depression. Whereas ten-year-old Ahmed, the younger sibling, looks up to his older brothers and wants to leave school and become a soldier.

Mariam Al-Dhubhani



Mariam Al-Dhubhani is a Yemeni-Russian award-winning journalist, filmmaker, and curator. She

first pursued her passion for media during the 2011 Arab uprisings and co-founded her first media production. Her films have been screened globally in festivals such as Carthage, Interfilm, and Oaxaca. She also utilizes Virtual Reality in highlighting stories from Yemen.

Mohammed Al-Jaberi



Mohammed Al-Jaberi is the culture program and communication officer at the UNESCO

regional office for the GCC and Yemen. Besides his daily job, Mohammed is an awarded filmmaker focusing on stories from/about Yemen. He holds a bachelor's degree from Georgetown University in International Politics and is currently concluding his master's degree in Management of Sustainable Development Goals from LUMSA University.

Director's Note:

The war in Yemen has produced a massive war-machine affecting millions of lives in the country. Political commentators tend to monopolize any relevant narratives marginalizing the voices of different groups of the Yemeni society, including children. Nasser's story is an active effort to restore a much-neglected narrative in times of war. His experience navigating a life filled with hardship, life-saving decisions, and misery is in his ability to remain alive. My personal interest in telling his story comes from my personal roots and upbringing in Yemen. I have a little brother back home, and I fear for him every day. In this film, I want to tell the story of Nasser and his siblings through a lens of understanding with no judgment.

Financial Information

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Editing mentorship
- Festival Strategy
- Distribution
- Creative Mentorship

Director:
Rawane Nassif

Contact:
Rawane Nassif
rawane.nassif@gmail.com

Ode to Loneliness

Created in DFI's Short Documentary Lab with Rithy Panh

Qatar, Lebanon / No Dialogue / 2021 / 12 mins
Genre: **Short Experimental Documentary**

A woman lives alone in a cubical hotel room with a view of the city. She films herself, the city, and her dreams for a month. This is a journey from loneliness to aloneness.



Dreaming of the city, she gets lost in intricate geometries. Sharp edges of buildings etch her skin silently, chiselling the limits of her consciousness, altering her perception of distance and scale, redefining intimacy and sensuality. Rhythms, towers, workers, sunsets, sunrises, night-time and dream-time alternate and repeat and get lost one in another endlessly. Slowly, she becomes an image of her former self. Slowly she grows older. She once wanted something, but she forgot what it was. Trapped in time, she waits and watches life pass by below her feet, lest some of it visits her abode. Housed in aloneness, in the perimeter of a cube, the architects build memories that only boredom could destroy. The city enters the house in all its details. From macro to micro, a constant flow of adaptation has to happen. The limit between the house and the city, the city and the body, the body and the dream, the dream and her, gets blurred. Nothing is real, yet all is artificial. From her window, from her house with a view, with some clothes, some objects, a routine, and a deep desire to feel, she escapes. The night comes, silently a door opens, and she walks away. The house is a body that flies.

Rawane Nassif



Born in Beirut in 1983, Rawane Nassif is a Lebanese-Canadian filmmaker and anthropologist.

She works in research and films often addressing subjects such as space, identities, displacement and memory. She collaborated on several documentaries in Lebanon, wrote a book on the politics of memory in the reconstruction of downtown Beirut, worked with immigrants and indigenous people in Canada, conducted visual research on nomadic traditions in Kyrgyzstan, taught anthropological courses in Tajikistan, wrote children's books based on collected oral histories in Honduras and worked as a senior researcher on art films commissioned by the National Museum of Qatar and produced by the Doha Film Institute. Her latest short 'Turtles are Always Home' screened at the Berlinale and TIFF and won international awards including the best new vision short at the San Francisco International Film Festival, and the best experimental at the New Orleans Film Festival.

Director's Note

When does a film start and when does it end? This film started years ago when I first left Lebanon and got attached to mundane objects that filled my ever-changing spaces ever since. This film started when I lived alone in a hotel room for a year and experienced loneliness for the first time. This film started when my friend passed by to drop me a darbuka, crossed the street, and passed away. This film started when I locked myself voluntarily in the house, for a month, to write my reflections, only to find out that loneliness has been there all along. This film started when I decided to leave, and began to film the space, lest I find bits of myself scattered in it. And it transformed me. Loneliness became aloneness, and in my solitude, I met myself in the editing room. This film got interrupted and became completely irrelevant, a faint distant memory, when I returned to Lebanon to join the collective shared euphoric dream known as revolution. This film got shattered into a million pieces in the Beirut explosion, alongside my prospective house. This film started again when I found myself again alone, stuck in a borrowed house, in a small village, in the Covid-19 lockdown. This time I was involuntarily locked in a

house, and only then I could finish the edit, and only then I could realize that I will leave, again. This film has no end.

Financial Information

Looking For:

- Festival Strategy
- Distribution
- Mentorship

Director:
Maysaa Almumin

Contact:
Maysaa Almumin
maysaaalmumin@gmail.com

...And I Was Left Behind

Created in DFI's Short Documentary Lab with Rithy Panh

Qatar, Kuwait / Arabic / 2021 / 7 mins

Genre: **Short Documentary**

Interests: **Women's Issues, Saudade, Memory, Longing for Home**

When I was a child, my grandmother would tell me stories of longing and loss of relatives during desert travels and sea voyages. Now I am an adult, her words finally make sense to me.



At a time when we are separated by COVID-19 travel restrictions, a memory of my grandmother's words becomes redefined. She spoke of travel as loss and longing for loved ones, and now I am far away from family and unable to travel to see them, her words start to have direct meaning on my feeling of isolation. Reenacting my childhood moments, when I sat in her room as she made dresses on her sewing machine, I become both my grandmother and my child self. I think back to old songs that speak of my displacement, and I dream of moments when I can travel to the ones I love.

Maysaa Almumin



Maysaa Almumin was born in Kuwait, lived in the UK, and currently resides in Qatar. She is the writer,

director, and producer of several short films, including '...And I Am Left Behind', which was made in participation with Rithy Panh's Doha Film Institute Documentary Lab in 2021, and 'J'ai le Cafard' (Bint Werdan), which was awarded production grants from the Arab Fund for Art and Culture and the Doha Film Institute, premiering at the 2020 Malmö Arab Film Festival in Sweden. Maysaa is also an actor and has performed in numerous short films made by up-and-coming Arab directors, including the award-winning 'Sh'hab' and 'Black Veil'. Maysaa is currently developing her first feature film, 'Good Grief', which follows the story of a middle-aged unmarried Arab woman, attempting to exist on the margins of a conservative Arab society.

Director's Note

Having family in different parts of the world has always meant that travel was a necessity to see each other. During the time of COVID-19, and its ensuing global travel ban, physical distance became unbearable, as was the uncertainty of when and if we would ever see each other again. Unable to bid goodbye to relatives who succumbed to the coronavirus brought back memories of my grandmother telling us stories of family members who travelled, never to be seen again, the perils of travel and the emotional pain she endured. I am now the same age my grandmother was when I was a child, listening to her stories as she made dresses on her sewing machine. It is now that her words begin to resonate, more than forty years later.

Financial Information

Looking For:

- Festival Strategy
- Distribution and Sales Advice
- Networking Opportunities.

Director:
Majid Al-Remaihi

Contact:
Majid Al-Remaihi
Majid.alremaihi@gmail.com

And Then They Burn the Sea

Created in DFI's Short Documentary Lab with Rithy Panh

Qatar / Arabic, English / 2021 / 19 mins

Genre: **Short Documentary**

Interests: **Memory, Heritage, Personal, Dreams, Nostalgia**

'And Then They Burn the Sea' is an elegy to the filmmaker's mother. Weaving through images, personal archives, and cultural motifs, the film is a meditation on ambiguous loss, the sea, and dreams.



Filmed on an abandoned fishermen village of Northern Qatar, 'And Then They Burn the Sea' is an ode to the filmmaker's living mother whose memories abruptly left her during the making of the film. Al-Remaihi ruminates on an experience of familial loss of that which cannot be defined but is deeply felt by pairing existing family archives with reenacted dreams. Weaving a myriad of poetry, folk history, and personal archives, the film mirrors a history of maternal mourning rituals that lament their loved ones who may never be returned by the sea.

Majid Al-Remaihi



Majid Al-Remaihi is a Qatari filmmaker and artist. He completed his first short film, 'Domestic

Acoustics' (2017), through the Doha Film Institute's Documentary Lab. Currently, he's in post-production with his film which he produced under the mentorship of Oscar-nominated director Rithy Panh and the support of the Qatari Film Fund. Professionally, he is part of the Film Programming team at the Doha Film Institute.

Director's Note

Parents diagnosed with dementia can have an almost permanent impact on their family members. The loss which governs their new relationship is simply never definable; it doesn't begin nor end with the closure of passing. The stages of grief, mourning, and the actualization of the person all become deregulated because the person may be present and healthy, but ultimately not who they've been known as. Historically, people of various histories and practices have adopted rituals of mourning losses which aren't easy to reconcile with or define. From the 19th century until the early 20th century, mothers and wives of pearl divers ritualized ways of dealing with the imminent passing of their loved ones through songs, poetry, and community. These generational losses aren't fully erased albeit uncommon in general culture today. This space of dislocation which underpins this film is ongoing, continuous, and part of a practice that I deem connected to a specific position in the world that binds me to different histories, places, time, and others.

Financial Information

Looking For:

- Programming Advice
- Distribution

Director / Screenwriter / Producer:
Shaima Al-Tamimi

Producer / Editor / Animator:
Mayar Hamdan

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iamshaima84@gmail.com

Mayar Hamdan
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Don't Get Too Comfortable

Yemen, USA, The Netherlands, Qatar, UAE / Arabic, English, Swahili / 2022 / 9 min

Genre: **Creative Documentary**

Interests: **History, Social Issues, Immigration, Based on a True Story**

More than fifty years after his death, Shaima Al-Tamimi shares a heartfelt multimedia letter addressed to her paternal grandfather reflecting on her family's journey of migration and resettlement—while examining the intergenerational burden of relocation impacting Yemeni migrants and their descendants for decades to come.



When Shaima Al-Tamimi's paternal grandfather migrated from Yemen to Zanzibar half a century ago to find work, little did he know that migration would continue as a pattern for later generations of his family. Having lived through a deadly revolution in the early 1960s powered by British colonialism, he fled back to Yemen with members of the family, including Shaima's father. Fast forward 55 years and five countries later, she is a member of a generation of Yemenis who have grown up confused, marginalised and deprived of opportunities to thrive due to the limitations of being a Yemeni passport holder even while living outside their homeland. 'Don't Get Too Comfortable' fuses archival images, found footage, parallax animation and sound design to create a multimedia letter to the director's paternal grandfather, reflecting on the migration and resettlement of her family following his death over fifty years ago. Family photos, archival materials, and self-portraits by the director place the viewer in-between time and space, calling attention to the collective feeling of statelessness and sense of being, felt by Yemeni migrants and their descendants. This introspection attempts to heal intergenerational trauma, creating space for a new and more nuanced narrative of Yemeni migration.

Shaima Al-Tamimi



Shaima Al-Tamimi is a Yemeni-Kenyan visual storyteller based in the GCC. Her work explores themes

such as migration, identity, and social issues through introspection and a deeply-rooted documentary approach. Using photography, film, audio and writing as mediums, she merges historical and family archives with present-day portraits and visuals to create vivid narratives. Challenging mainstream and linear notions of identity, her work offers unique perspectives into the lives of her subjects and calls for a more nuanced understanding of native experiences. Shaima is a 2020 Social Justice & Photography fellow with Magnum Foundation, which resulted in the multimedia video film 'Don't Get Too comfortable' and a former participant of the Arab Documentary Photography program through which she completed her project 'As If We Never Came' in 2019. She was also one of the forces behind the 2020 global 'Prints for Yemen' sale with Inti Bint, collaborating with 14 Yemeni Female artists to raise funds for farmer families to grow crops

sustainably in the rural parts of Yemen. Shaima is also a long-term contributing member to Everyday Middle East.

Mayar Hamdan



A Palestinian multimedia storyteller, filmmaker and visual artist, Mayar Hamdan has

worked on a variety of projects, ranging from video games to films. Hamdan's work is defined as the interdisciplinary exploration of immigration, displacement and feminist themes. Hamdan attained a BS in Media Industries and Technology at Northwestern University and is currently pursuing an MFA in Art and Technology at CalArts. She worked for multiple mobile gaming companies as an interactive story developer and animator in Barcelona, Spain. Additionally, she worked on the Doha Film Institute's Film Training and Development team. During that time, Hamdan directed, wrote and produced several independent projects. She is currently Creative Director of FilmMENA and Studio 20Q's Industry Advisor.

Director's Note

'Don't Get Too Comfortable' is a continuation of a long-term photo project that acknowledges and appreciates legacies rooted in a painful past felt by Yemeni migrants and its implications for a new generation of Yemenis living outside of their homeland. My approach to this work has been largely informed by archival materials and photographs. Objects such as my grandfather's expired British passport also connect to the collective experience, speaking to the hopes and dreams of all Yemenis with shared migration histories. Documenting the stories of new Yemeni migrants is critical to ensuring their visibility in their new host countries and guaranteeing their access to essential support and services. Understanding their stories within the larger historical context of Yemeni migration opens opportunities to collectively discuss issues of identity and trauma associated with voluntary and/or forced relocation. Through this work, I hope to draw attention to ongoing Yemeni migration, encouraging greater recognition of our stories and fostering space for collective healing among our community. It is important for our voices to be heard, and more important for us to be in control of our own narrative.

Financial Information

Total Budget: **\$10,000**

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Looking For:

- Funding (For Future Expansion of The Project)
- Festival Strategy
- Film Marketing and Packaging Advice / Press Kit Feedback
- Programming Advice
- Online Distribution Opportunities
- Alternative Screening Opportunities (Museums, Initiatives, Fellowships, etc.)

Director / Screenwriter / Producer:
Suzannah Mirghani

Contact:
Suzannah Mirghani
suzannahmirghan@gmail.com

Virtual Voice

Created in DFI's Short Documentary Lab with Rithy Panh

Qatar, Sudan / English / 2021 / 7 mins

Genre: **Experimental Documentary**

Interests: **Social Media, Activism, Satire, Humanity vs Technology**

Suzi is the voice of her generation...the virtual voice of her generation.



In this digital satire, Suzi doll is an ego-warrior. A next-generation activist avatar, marching to the algorithms of social media. She is lit by temporary outrage. A trending indignation. A passion that is fashion. A politics of the popular. Suzi doll is wickedly woke. She copies and pastes and forwards blame. Sometimes uplifting, sometimes bandwagon bullying. We know many girls like Suzi, and often we are her. Vacuous virtual voices, echoing injustices.

Suzannah Mirghani



Suzannah Mirghani is a writer, researcher, and independent filmmaker. She is a media studies and museum

studies graduate, and the author or editor of several academic books and articles. Being of multicultural Sudanese and Russian backgrounds, Suzannah is interested in stories that examine the complexity of identity. She is the writer, director, and producer of 'Al-Sit' (2020), a story about an arranged marriage in a cotton-farming village in Sudan. Her previous short films include 'Caravan' (2016) and 'Hind's Dream' (2014).

Director's Note

This film was shot entirely on a mobile phone, or through Zoom. This is an experimental documentary in which I present a particular side effect of the 2020 coronavirus pandemic. In a socially distanced society, what does it mean to be human? This film is a satirical review of our times. In an age of information, we are only too aware of the world around us. We know too much. We say too much. Our activism is abstract. Our help is hypothetical. We protest through posturing. Suzi doll is my ultra alter-ego. The worst digital version of myself. Through verbal irony, Suzi doll exposes everyday contradictions in what we tell ourselves—and others—to pretend that everything is alright in a world that is falling apart.

Financial Information

Looking For:

- Film Festival Strategy
- Sales and Distribution Advice

Qumra Team 2021

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi
Chief Executive Officer, Qumra Director

Hanaa Issa
Director of Strategy and Development,
Qumra Deputy Director

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