



مهرجان عمان السينمائي الدولي
Amman International Film Festival

أول فيلم Awal Film

2023

4 th Edition
الدورة الرابعة



AMMAN FILM INDUSTRY DAYS
CATALOGUE 2023

16-21/8/2023

FESTIVAL PARTNERS



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To fulfill its mission and develop the audiovisual industry in Jordan and the Arab region, The Royal Film Commission (RFC) has initiated the following:



20 Years
of Motion



Launched in 2005, the Lab offers independent Arab screenwriters the chance to develop their work in a unique environment under the guidance of internationally acclaimed screenwriters from all over the world.



The Lab helps professional Arab screenwriters develop their scripts for TV under the guidance of international accomplished screenwriters during an intensive three-day program.

Sardiyat

The Lab aims to support Jordanian and Arabs residing in Jordan to developing their first or second feature narrative film script, under the guidance of prominent Arab and Jordanian scriptwriters, over the course of five days.



Jordan Film Fund
صندوق الأردن لدعم الأفلام

The Jordan Film Fund supports feature and short narrative and documentary films, in addition to TV series, in the following phases: development, production and post-production. It offers Jordanian and Arab directors increased funding opportunities and shooting flexibility. The fund now also supports co-production between Arab and Jordanian filmmakers.



RYM ALI

President & Co-Founder

In this year's encounters with peers and experts in the film industry, 16 projects were selected out of 121. Most are from the Levant and North Africa, with one project from Yemen.

We all know the rule: you can never go wrong if you have a really good story. But how to make sure that your story gets the attention it deserves?

A huge part of whether or not your projects will materialize and make it to the silver screen or streaming platform of your dreams happens at the pitching stage: pitching training will help you hone those crucial skills to give you the edge you need.

To really stand out, though, your film must demonstrate quality work. The AIFF Industry Film Days proposes a series of workshops to help you do just that: the EAVE On Demand workshop, American Film Showcase, Film Independent and the opportunity to learn about archive restoration and colorization process with Rum Picture.

With industry classes open to the public, we hope you will be many to join our series of masterclasses with renowned professionals on directing, acting and film critique.

Last but not least, check out the Arab film panels series on ethics and filmmaking, with the directors entering the Arab competition in both the Narrative and Documentary sections.

Focusing on AI, like everyone else in the world, we ask: how will AI fit into our industry and, within that, into our region? Can the hard-earned rules of copyright be respected, including when showcasing original locations, with such a revolutionary technology at everyone's fingertips?

And given that AI draws its "intelligence" from platforms that overwhelmingly reflect Western culture and are in English, what does Arabic Cinema stand to gain by harnessing that technology, if our young storytellers wish to reflect our true cultures in all their diversity?

I hope this edition will leave you all, participants, trainers, and audience, with a useful, interactive learning experience, or simply with food for thought as you pursue your careers, projects and dreams.



IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE
THAT THE FILM

وَبَرَاءُ الْجَبَلِ
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THE
MOUNTAINS**

by MOHAMED BEN ATTIA

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OFFICIAL SECTION
ORIZZONTI
AT THE 80TH
MOSTRA DE VENEZIA



artonline.tv



MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2023
Official Selection



BASSAM ALASAD

Head of Industry

Imagine an industry that is creative, ethical, fair, and inclusive. This is not a fantasy but a sincere ambition for our sector, a vision we aspire for our Industry Days to embody. Current events unfolding in Hollywood, with writers and actors on strike, may seem distant and irrelevant to us. However, we can learn valuable lessons from the strike shaking the old industry if we delve deeper. As we strive to shape our own, it is crucial to analyse these messages and learn from them.

Our Industry Days serve as more than a mere event. They are intended to be lighthouses, illuminating the path forward, accelerators nurturing growth and launchpads for new ideas. Here, we foster our dreams and plant seeds in our collective reality, nurturing them into existence.

This year, our focus at the Amman Film Industry days is ethics. This subject connects the industry's various angles, from the role of artificial intelligence in film production to safeguarding the wellbeing of our invaluable cast and crew.

Ownership of our narrative is as vital as respecting the stories we tell in fiction and documentary films. We are not just creators but also guardians of tales, be they our own or others'. These discussions aim to

establish ethical boundaries and practices that honour our commitment to inclusivity, fairness, and creativity.

Our industry's strength lies in its ability to adapt, learn, and grow. By understanding the past and questioning the present, we can shape a future where our industry is not just a dream but a creative, ethical, fair, and inclusive reality. Let us make the Amman Film Industry days a stepping stone towards this shared vision!



مهرجان عمان السينمائي الدولي
Amman International Film Festival
أول فيلم Awal Film



Cairo - Abu Dhabi - Lisbon - New York

NARRATIVE COMPETITION

علم
ALAM

by FIRAS KHOURY
(PALESTINE) - JORDANIAN PREMIERE

RATHOLE
جحر الفندران

by MOHAMED EL SAMMAN
(EGYPT) - INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

LYD

by RAMI YOUNIS
& SARAH EMA FRIEDLAND
(PALESTINE) - WORLD PREMIERE

جولة ميم المملة
The Tedious Tour of M

by HEND BAKR
(EGYPT) - JORDANIAN PREMIERE

أجساد بطولية
HEROIC BODIES

by SARA SULIMAN
(SUDAN) - JORDANIAN PREMIERE

SHORTS COMPETITION

عبد
ABED

by ABEDALSALAM ALHAJ
(JORDAN)
JORDANIAN PREMIERE

ترينو
TRI NOU

by NEJIB KTHIRI
(TUNISIA)
JORDANIAN PREMIERE

HAMZA
Chasing the Ghosts Chasing Me

by WARD KAYYAL
(PALESTINE)
JORDANIAN PREMIERE

طريق الكفاف
ROAD TO EL KEF

by IHSEN KAMMOUN
(TUNISIA)
JORDANIAN PREMIERE

طنين
BuZZ

by IHSEN KAMMOUN
(TUNISIA)
JORDANIAN PREMIERE

FRANCO-ARAB RENDEZ-VOUS

NEZOUH
نزوح

by SOUDADE KAADAN
(SYRIA, FRANCE) - JORDANIAN PREMIERE

تحت
الشجرة
UNDER THE FIG TREES

by ERIGE SEHIRI
(TUNISIA, FRANCE) - JORDANIAN PREMIERE

SPOTLIGHT ON JORDANIAN SHORT FILMS

دعوة من البحر
A CALLING - FROM THE DESERT - TO THE SEA

by MURAD ABU EISHEH
JORDANIAN PREMIERE

MAD AWARD AT
Amman Film Industry Days (AFID)
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APRIL 22 - 28, 2024
14th Malmö
Arab Film Festival

APRIL 23 - 25, 2024

MAFF
Industry Days



14th Edition

Malmö Arab Film Festival

22-28 April, 2024

10th Edition

MAFF Industry Days

23-25 April, 2024



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ABOUT THE AMMAN FILM INDUSTRY DAYS

Amman Film Industry Days, aimed at industry professionals and film students, will be held from **16th to 21st August 2023**

Amman Film Industry Days host workshops, panels, and masterclasses with industry professionals focusing on current issues.

This year, we focus on filmmaking and ethics, where we navigate through a series of panels about different topics, including documentary filmmaking, Artificial Intelligence, wellbeing and safety.

Amman Film Industry Days continues to develop its Pitching Platforms for the fourth year. This year, we continue with the Amman Film Market. 16 projects are selected to compete at the platforms and the market to receive cash and in-kind awards.

The Awards ceremony will be held at the Royal Film Commission on August 21st.



JURY - INDUSTRY DAYS



Karim Aitouna

Film Producer

France - Morocco

Karim Aitouna is a film producer who works between France and Morocco. Aitouna has produced numerous films such as "I Am the People" (2014) by Anna Roussillon, presented at ACID at the Cannes Film Festival, "The Night and the Kid" (2015) by David Yon, selected at the Berlinale Forum, "Controfigura" by R   Di Martino, presented at the 74th Venice International Film Festival, "Poisonous Roses" by Ahmed Fawzi Saleh, in selection at the International Film Festival Rotterdam and recently the documentaries "Dans la maison" by Karima Saidi & "Gevard's Land" by Qutaiba Barhamji (presented at IDFA 2020) and "Europe" by Philip Scheffner, presented in 2022 at the Berlinale. Aitouna is a member of European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs and EURODOC and he is a consultant and speaker for numerous funds, labs and festivals.



Mehdi Hmili

Director, Producer and Screenwriter
Tunisia

Mehdi Hmili is a Tunisian director, producer and screenwriter. In 2019, Hmili participated in La Fabrique Cinéma du Monde at the Cannes Film Festival with the feature documentary "Fouledh." His feature film, "Streams," which he directed and co-produced, premiered at the 74th Locarno Film Festival and received widespread critical acclaim. The film garnered numerous accolades, including the Best Director Award at the 12th Malmö Arab Film Festival, Best Acting Performance at the 43rd Cairo International Film Festival and the Jury Award at the 27th Kolkata International Film Festival among others. Hmili is recognized as a prominent figure in the emerging generation of Tunisian producers and filmmakers. He plays a significant role in shaping the current Tunisian cinematographic landscape, actively supporting and promoting local talent through his company "Yol Film House". Hmili is an alumnus of Film Independent Global Media Makers and Torino Film Lab.



Elias Khlat

Producer and Filmmaker
Lebanon

A producer and filmmaker, born in Tripoli – Lebanon in 1965, Elias Khlat introduced himself to the advertising and media field after studying Advertising Design. With Eklat, his signature name, he took on creative design, animation and post-production projects before settling into a fully-grown production house that specializes in corporate and documentary films. From his commitment to repositioning Tripoli on Lebanon's cultural scene, Khlat is involved in various civil initiatives organizing social and cultural events, empowering the youth, and fighting for the preservation of the city's cultural heritage. In 2013, he founded Tripoli Film Festival bringing international films and guests to a city recovering from the wounds of war. During the past years, Khlat was a Jury Member, Consultant or Programmer for many film festivals, and he had organized many events related to cinema in Lebanon and abroad.



Rula Nasser

Film Producer
Jordan

A Jordanian film producer with extensive experience in the industry. Rula Nasser worked on international productions for the BBC and Discovery before joining the Royal Film Commission - Jordan. Nasser has produced local films that have participated in prestigious festivals worldwide and has a strong development and production arm in the region. She has produced films in various countries and has line-produced for renowned directors, cementing her reputation as a skilled and successful film producer.



Angeliki Vergos

Head of Agora
Greece

Angeliki Vergos is the Head of Agora, the industry section for both Thessaloniki International Documentary Festival and Thessaloniki International Film Festival. The Agora focuses on the Southeastern Europe and Mediterranean regions and includes industry activities such as the "Crossroads Co-production Forum" and the "Thessaloniki Pitching Forum" for fiction films and documentaries in development, the "Agora Works in Progress" and the "Docs in Progress" for films in the post production stage, the "Film & Doc Market" and a variety of other exciting industry events aiming to connect and inspire documentary filmmakers while supporting them in their next steps. Vergos is a member in the Documentary Association of Europe (DAE) and an alumna of various storytelling training programs and more (MIDPOINT Institute, MFI Institute, Sources2, SOFA).



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EXPERTS - INDUSTRY DAYS



Stefano Tealdi

Pitching Trainer

Stefano Tealdi, born in Johannesburg (South Africa) in 1955. Tealdi established Stefilm in Torino, Italy in 1991 where he develops, produces and/or directs drama and documentary film features and series.

His recent productions are: "Rispet" a feature-length fiction film by Cecilia Bozza Wolf (Bolzano, Trento and Sestri Levante film festivals 2023). "When We Were Bullies" by Jay Rosenblatt (short doc, Academy Award nomination 2022). "Exemplary Behaviour" (Golden Dove DOK Leipzig, FIPRESCI and Interreligious Award 2019); "My Home, in Libya" (Locarno Film festival, DOK Leipzig, Chicago Int. Film Festival 2018, Premio Corso Salani - Trieste FF e Best Doc Glocal - Torino 2019). "A different world" (Best doc feature Warsaw FF 2017, Trieste FF 2018 and Lithuania's candidate to the Academy Awards 2019) and "The Strange Sound of Happiness" (special mention Next Masters DOK Leipzig 2017, Terra di Siena - Premio della Critica, Special mention In-Edit, Barcelona 2018). Other films include: "The Queen of Silence" (IDFA 2014, "Silver Horn", best feature-length doc Krakow FF 2015, Golden Nanook - Flahertiana IDF Perm 2015); "Char, no man's island" (Berlinale Forum 2013), Vinylmania (IFF Rotterdam 2012), Mostar United (IDFA 2009).



Maggie Morgan

Project Reader, Filmmaker, Festival
Programmer and Writer

He directed: 20 episodes of the 52' series Food Markets, "In the Belly of the City", nominated best international tv program at the 2014 American Taste Awards. He co-wrote "Food Makers Go Global" (5 x 26' series produced with mdr/arte, 2018), "Coffee Please and Tea For All" (2 episodes of the global drinks series co-produced with France 5) ; "Doctor Ice" (co-produced with zdf/arte), "A World of Pasta" (co-produced with artline films e France 5); "The Arrival of the Angel" (in the Piemonte Stories series) ; "Tougher Than The Rest"; Eritrea: The Red Land

He tutors on production, storytelling and pitching for: Biennale Cinema and VR College Venice, Amman Film Industry, Marchè du Film Cannes, Documentary Campus, ESoDoc, La Fabrique Cinémas - Institute Francais, Factory, Films de 3 Continents - Produire au Sud, Imagination - Arab Film Scriptwriting, Jump In - Poitiers FF, Ouga Film Lab, Red Sea Lodge, TFL-Torino Film Lab, Scuola Holden, ZagrebDox Pro, ZELIG Film School.

Maggie Morgan is an Egyptian filmmaker, festival programmer, writer, and teacher in the film faculty at the American University in Cairo. She has directed feature films and shorts, including "From Within Their Stories", "Asham" and "From Meir to Meir." "From Meir to Meir" garnered significant recognition, winning the Best Egyptian Film prize at the Aswan International Film Festival 2021, the Special Jury Prize at the National Film Festival 2021, amongst more. Presently, Morgan serves as the director of the Short Film Competition at the Cairo International Film Festival since 2022.



Zeina Shanaa

Head of Film Production at VOX Cinemas

Zeina Shanaa has diverse experience in both the corporate and academic worlds of media, specifically in the MENA region. With 18 years of immersion in content, culture, marketing and research, she holds a significant background. As the Head of Film Production at VOX Cinemas, Shanaa played a crucial role in co-building and curating the company's first film slate of Arabic feature films. Her responsibilities encompassed scouting, co-developing, and co-producing projects, while overseeing creative, financial, legal and distribution aspects.

Shanaa collaborated closely with prominent production houses across the MENA region, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Jordan, and Lebanon. Notably, she worked with esteemed writers and independent producers, fostering valuable connections. Her involvement with the VOX distribution and exhibition teams provided valuable insights into the MENA entertainment landscape and audience preferences.

Academically, Shanaa holds a Ph.D. in Film and Media Studies from SOAS University of London. Her thesis focused on qualitative interdisciplinary research, analyzing subversive cinematic techniques in more than fifty 21st-century Arabic films. The study highlighted the importance of

unconventional film forms in conveying meaning and provoking thought. Her contributions extend beyond her thesis, with an article published in The Middle East in London Magazine and occasional lectures at SOAS. Her passion and expertise continue to significantly impact the media landscape in the MENA region.

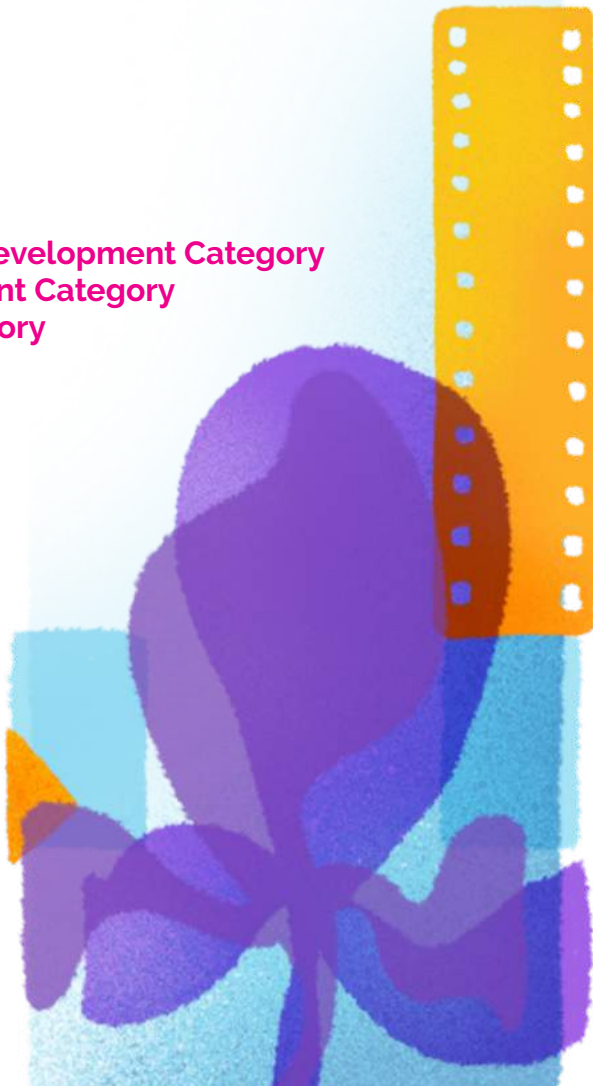
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والخيال العلمي في العالم العربي

SELECTED PROJECTS

- Jordanian Awal-Film Development Category
- Arab Films Development Category
- Post-Production Category





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Director **Amer Halasa**

Jordan | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): -

Secured financing (\$ or %): -

Contact Information

Amer Halasa | halasa.amer@gmail.com

Synopsis

After a young man with a yearning desire for intimacy is outed to his conservative Christian mother - shortly before her sudden death, he starts to confront feelings of shame and guilt as he tries to salvage what's left of their treasured bond. Yazeed lives a double life, one where he's just a guy looking for love and the other where he pretends to be "normal" in the eyes of society and his mother, Siham, who has a special relationship with her photo frames. One day, he gets outed to her, and his life changes forever.



Director's Biography **Amer Halasa**

Director's Intention

Amer Halasa, a talented Jordanian filmmaker, is a self-taught creative individual with a deep passion for film and the cinematic arts. He embarked on his professional journey in 2010 as a video editor and has since transitioned his focus towards screenwriting and directing. Notably, his debut short film, "Marimba," garnered attention when it participated in a short film competition at the Franco-Arab Film Festival in 2014. Amer's creative talents also shine in his screenplay, "Framed," which achieved recognition as a "Finalist" and "Semi-Finalist" in various screenplay competitions.

The idea of this film was born out of the need to create a story that touches me on a personal level and one that relates to so many people out there. It's now more than ever that a queer story needs to be told on screen, as the topic is hardly touched on in cinematic projects from the region and has yet to be seen in a Jordanian setting. Diverse representation in cinema is needed in this part of the world because all people need to be dignified with the right to be portrayed respectfully and authentically.



SOON WE WILL BE HISTORY HERE

Director **Said Taji Farouki**

Producer **Maria Caruana Galizia**

Production Company **Candle and Bell Limited**

Jordan | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 720,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 20,000

Contact Information

Maria Carina Galizia | maria@candleandbell.com

Synopsis

When Suleiman, a quiet Gaza man, rescues an injured Peregrine falcon on his farm, he begins to believe it's the reincarnation of his sister. Hisham, a downhearted and lost teenager, becomes obsessed with the bird, and a power struggle begins. When Noreen, an ornithologist from Jerusalem, mysteriously arrives to study falcon migration, she and Suleiman find in each other a rare kinship that helps Suleiman process his grief and deal with the falcon's

tragic end at the hands of a vengeful Hisham.



Director's Biography

**Saeed Taji
Farouky**

Director's Intention

Saeed Taji Farouky has been creating work around themes of conflict, human rights, and colonialism since 2004. His documentary *A Thousand Fires* premiered at Locarno's Critics' Week where it won the Marco Zucchi Prize. It has screened in over 30 international festivals, nominated 7 times for Best Documentary. Farouky's short fiction *Strange Cities Are Familiar* (2019) was selected for 18 international festivals, winning Best Short Film twice. His short fiction *They Live in Forests, They Are Extremely Shy* (2016) was broadcast on Channel 4, and Best Short Drama at the Royal Television Society Awards (North East and Border).

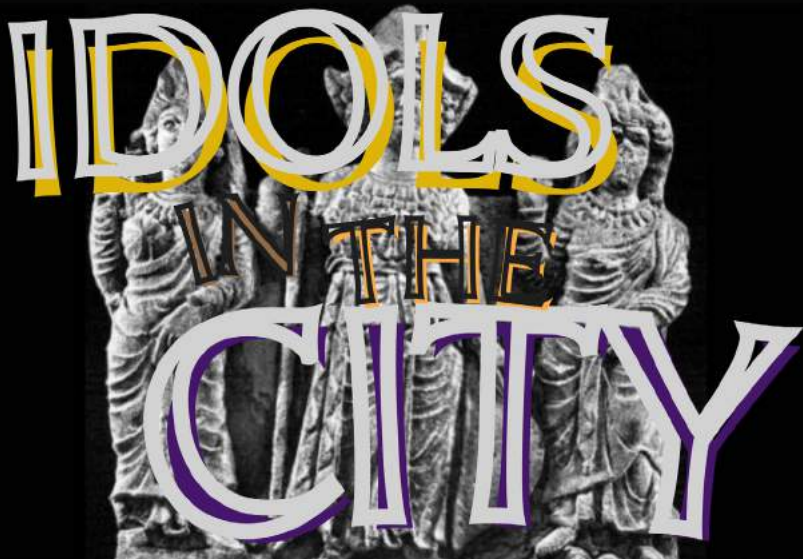
Soon We Will All Be History Here is an examination of grief, using imagination as a tool for healing, and finding consolation in others. Suleiman's relationship with the bird represents a challenge familiar to many of us: how can we process our grief without forgetting? This is a story that examines the layers of history in Palestine; a metaphysical tale of loss and comfort found through the everyday obsessions that connect us to the world despite the oppressive realities of our lives.



Producer's Note

**Maria Caruana
Galizia**

Soon We Will All Be History Here will be mine and Saeed's debut feature film together. There is a sense of urgency to make this film now, working with partners who will enhance the creative vision for the film, and help us reach audiences across the world. Like the central character of our film, Suleiman, our reality is fractured and uncertain. We are in a state of constant flux, caught between the mundane nature of everyday life and the ramifications of an ever-changing political landscape. Both myself and Saeed, along with our collaborators, are committed to creating cinema that reflects this critical juncture in history.



IDOLS IN THE CITY

Director **Karim Jawad Ariqat**

Producer **Leen Hamameh**

Production Company **Local Productions**

Jordan | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 380,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): -

Contact Information

Karim Ariqat | karim.ariqat@gmail.com

Synopsis

Sheikh Asad has a month to live. He becomes depressed and reclusive. His daughter drags him to Petra. During the trip he has an epiphany. He must worship Manat, the Nabatean Goddess of death. People take the news as a joke at first. But as he starts constructing a statue, his brother starts fighting against him. The media goes from laughter to uproar. But Sheikh Asad has found peace in his new faith and is gaining favor with his estranged family. After

everyone has failed to dissuade the Sheikh that has nothing to lose, he orchestrates a final supper, before the return of the full moon. His ex-wife comes, only to find that he has already left.



Director's
Biography
**Karim Jawad
Ariqat**

Director's Intention

Karim Ariqat (1992-) is a Jordanian writer and director. He has written podcasts (Al-Rasool, Tikriti), sketch shows (Fooq Al-Sada, First Channel, Jalta) and has participated in workshops like Rawi, MEMI, Halaqat, and Mosalsalat. Currently, he is developing a series under the "Netflix X MEMI" grant.

The personal clashes with the global in this dying person's quest to find peace before death causes the entire nation to fight against him, but his family to embrace him again. Zooming in on the simplicity of these personal dynamics unravels entire power structures and rules of modern society. Through Coenesque dry comedy that asks more questions than it answers, and long-simmering takes that show the smallness of people against an uncaring world.



Producer's
Note
Leen Hamarneh

Arabic cinematic industry.

This project is timely, and the time is now. This is a long overdue conversation that we need to have. The way it handles that conversation is both confrontational and poignant at the same time. Through the genre of dark humor, we pay respect to the subject at hand without lecturing, while still entertaining. This project seeks to look beyond and into the core of the struggle, moving past the controversies. At its core, it revolves around the crucial topic of free speech—an imperative conversation needed in our region. An imperative and crucial conversation that we need to have in the region as we stand on the precipice of the rebirth of a gigantic and beautiful



إخلاء البترا

Evacuation of Petra

EVACUATION OF PETRA

Director **Yazan Melhem**

Producer **Mohammed Ali Al Nablsea**

Production Company **Al Sarabast Studios**

Jordan | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 23,992

Secured financing (\$ or %): 1,412

Contact Information

Yazan Melhem | +972785973110

yazan.melhem@gmail.com

Synopsis

A feature documentary which traces the changes that occurred to the Bedul tribe; the natives of Petra. Since the city was discovered and until it has become an international heritage site. The contradictions that this discovery brought about at the level of life of this community, their identity, means of production, and how the state views them as a threat to the place they preserved for decades and helped in its discovery.



Director's
Biography
Yazan Melhem

Director's Intention

A feature documentary which traces the changes that occurred to the Bedul tribe; the natives of Petra. Since the city was discovered and until it has become an international heritage site. The contradictions that this discovery brought about at the level of life of this community, their identity, means of production, and how the state views them as a threat to the place they preserved for decades and helped in its discovery.

It might seem strange that a community chooses to leave their "modern" homes to live in remote caves. This is what happened with the members of the Bedul tribe, the original inhabitants of the ancient city of Petra, who had settled there for generations, and who are threatened with permanent eviction from their land. Although they are located in one of the most famous touristic places, and are supposed to live in material abundance, the Bedul community live in difficult social conditions.

I also sympathize with a society that has undergone harsh transformations due to the transformation of their land into an archaeological site, and the great and profound imbalances that this transformation left at the level of the social structure and the collective and individual identity of the tribe.



Producer's
Note
**Mohammed Ali
Al Nablsea**

For me, great documentaries are the ones that discuss a story that we think we've heard, and then uncover deeper stories and themes underlying it. The importance of the film "The Evacuation of Petra" lies in the fact that it first presents the story of Jordan's national icon, Petra. The more the film delves into the story, the more we find themes that reflect Jordanian policies and culture, such as development projects that come from above without considering the real life effects, which then causes greater harm than good. The impact of neoliberalism and the commodification of cultures on the structure of societies and their irreversible damage, self-

orientation with the arrival of tourists, and half-solutions that put us midway. To add that, all of this is covered under a tourism development project that is polished before the eyes of the world. We did not find a story that expresses Jordan more than the "Evacuation of Petra".



THE ABBAS RULE

Director **Meina Hawashin**

Producer **Laith Yaghmour**

Production Company **Al Shubbak**

Jordan | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 127,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 38,000

Contact Information

Meina Hawashin | meina.eyas@gmail.com

Synopsis

Zaid Abbas, hailing from vibrant Palestine, soared to remarkable heights in China's prestigious basketball league. "The Abbas Rule" explores his emotional retirement decision and the pursuit of a new chapter filled with family, stability, and coaching success. This documentary intertwines archived footage, thrilling matches, and intimate moments, offering viewers an immersive journey. Witness Zaid's unwavering determination, triumphs,

and battles with injuries. This captivating exploration captures the essence of a remarkable athlete, showcasing resilience, sacrifice, and greatness. As Zaid reflects on his career, memories of victory, camaraderie, and uncertain futures flood his mind, evoking profound emotions.



Director's Biography

Meina Hawashin

Since age 13, Meina's unwavering passion for film has driven her to pursue a career beyond being a mere viewer. After studying filmmaking at the SAE Institute in Amman, she specialized in writing, directing, and producing. Collaborating on music videos and intriguing short projects, she gained experience and recognition, including selection for The Canada Short festival. She has been working on short and feature documentaries including "The Abbas Rule". Meina aims to challenge stereotypes and enlighten through visually captivating storytelling across genres.

Director's Intention

Capturing the triumphs and tribulations of Zaid Abbas, this basketball documentary immerses me in a sports world I never imagined embracing. From defying expectations as a Palestinian-Jordanian player to making history in China, his journey inspires hope and emphasizes the strength of family. As a filmmaker, I am driven to raise awareness for basketball communities in the Arab world sharing a heartwarming and mind-boggling story that highlights the enduring power of dreams and the ability to shape success. Join me on this emotional journey as we celebrate Zaid Abbas, the first Arab player to make history in China.



Producer's Note

Laith Yaghmour

We're driven to bring Zaid Abbas' life to the big screen in "The Abbas Rule," a groundbreaking basketball documentary. Led by director Meina Hawashin, we aim to make it the first MENA region cinematic basketball documentary. Through visual refinement, storytelling mentorship, and captivating footage, we're transitioning to early production. By securing grants and engaging sponsors, we'll obtain vital financial support. Our goal is to inspire youth, raise awareness of basketball communities, and share an extraordinary journey from Palestine to stardom in China and beyond. Ultimately, we strive to create a powerful film that leaves an

indelible mark on viewers worldwide.

24

October
تشرين الاول

01

November
تشرين الثاني



PALESTINE CINEMA DAYS

أَيَّامِ فَلَسْطِينِ السَّيْنَمَائِيَّةِ

10th Edition
النسخة العاشرة

2023



SCAN ME



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FILM PRODUCTION

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monetary award to support film projects in the
development and post-production phases

at



مهرجان عمان السينمائي الدولي
Amman International Film Festival

أول فيلم —————

About Lagoonie Film Production

Lagoonie Film Production is an Egyptian company founded by producer Shahinaz El-Akkad in 2017, which aims to create and distribute international films and TV series with unconventional concepts to advance the film and television industry in Egypt and the Arab world, and put Arab craftsmanship on the global map through. The company has worked on several highly successful films, including FEATHERS, THE ALLEYS, BARRA EL MANHAG, HUDA'S SALON, INSHALLAH A BOY, and ALAM, all of which have gone on to win more than 25 awards at several international film festivals such as Cannes, Carthage, Karlovy Vary, Toronto, Venice, the Red Sea, and Gouna. In addition to the company's support for talents and filmmakers in the Middle East by presenting and offering awards for film projects at international festivals, Lagoonie is currently working on a number of film projects, including A NOSE AND THREE EYES, which is based on the iconic novel of the same name by Ihsan Abdel Quddous.



DOGMAS

Director **Salah Issaad**

Producer **Taqiyeddine Issaad**

Production Company **Evidence Film**

Algeria | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 2,000,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 25%

Contact Information

Salah Issaad | issaad.salah@hotmail.fr

Synopsis

Farid and Salim, born post-Algerian independence, are proud of their father Said, a war hero. Destined to become top snipers in the Algerian army, Farid pursues his dream and joins as an officer. Meanwhile, Salim takes a different path, fighting the Soviet army in Afghanistan. Afterward, Salim aligns with the FIS, Algeria's popular political party. Despite winning elections, the army intervenes, causing division and turning the brothers into bitter foes.



Director's
Biography
Salah Issaad

Director's Intention

Born in 1989 in Algeria, the Algerian-Tunisian director grew up in a family of publishers. After completing his bachelor's degree in letters and foreign languages in 2008, he pursued law studies in Batna, Algeria. Later, he moved to France and studied film at the University of Paris VIII for two years. Balancing work and studies, he attended ARFIS audiovisual school in Lyon, then Eicar Lyon, where he earned his Cinema Director diploma. Passionate about storytelling and exploring diverse genres like drama, tragedy, real-inspired stories, and comedy, he directed a feature film and several shorts. His debut film, *Soula*, won multiple awards.

"Dogmas" depicts the Algerian black decade, a fratricidal civil war that divided the nation into nationalist and religious extremist factions. The violence and suffering extended beyond Algeria, affecting neighboring Arab and Western countries, making it a universal tragedy. While not an autobiography, this story is a fictional testimony shaped by my environment, childhood, and experiences, rejecting simplistic ideologies. Growing up during this period, I witnessed barbarism that revealed the true face of humanity, its capacity for atrocities in the name of "causes," "ideologies," or "dogmas." These memories, vividly captured through my camera, endure as a reminder. Through a family drama lens, I portray complex characters, steering clear of clichés.



Producer's
Note
**Taqiyyeddine
Issaad**

Dogmas shows great promise, blending art house and commercial cinema. With a belief in cinema's ability to convey universal experiences, I proudly support this project. The Algerian state and military have provided logistical support for location scouting and teaser shooting, while our dossier for the Algerian public support fund has been submitted, which could cover a significant portion of the budget. Given the sensitive nature of the theme, we approach organizations that trust us. Following the success of our first film, *Soula*, we have garnered attention from international productions and partners.



أيام العسل والجنون MADNESS AND HONEY DAYS

A FILM BY AHMED YASSIN AL-DARADJI

MADNESS AND HONEY DAYS

Director **Ahmed Yassin Al-Daradaji**

Producer **Maytham Jbara**

Production Company **Purattu Film Production**

Iraq | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 880,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 90,000

Contact Information

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Synopsis

After accidentally cursing at President Saddam on stage, theatre director Salem must convince Ba'athist court of his insanity to escape death. During the last months before Saddam's fall, he lives in Baghdad psychiatric hospital struggling to maintain his sanity, while the execution awaits him outside if the doctor announces his recovery.



Director's Biography

**Ahmed Yassin
Al-Daradji**

Director's Intention

Iraqi-UK writer-director Ahmed Yassin Al-Daradji is a graduate of Berlinale Talents 2018. The success of his short film "My Name Is Mohammed" earned him a place at London Film School, where he received an MA with distinction for his short "Children of God". Ahmed's debut feature film "Hanging Gardens" received recognition and support from the Royal Film Commission (Jordan) and won the Jury Prize for the Best Film in Post-Production at the Venice Film Festival's in 2021. The film then premiered at the Venice Film Festival in 2022 and received the best film and the cinematic achievement awards at the Red Sea Film Festival and many others.

The reality inside a mental institution is a fantasy devoid of truth. Therefore, I do not deny that the characters in this film may transcend imagination, granting them a significant degree of realism. This film is to confront the audience with the story of individuals who possess a heightened level of awareness, upon whom my characters are based. It treads a fine line between sanity and insanity. Amid chaos and sweetness, I strive to present a visual feast brimming with human feelings and examine the perspective of my protagonists within the hospital, imbued with the wisdom of social means. The film revolves around a triangle, posing the question: which is more frantic, Saddam Regime, the US occupation, or life inside the hospital?



Producer's Note

Maytham Jbara

Sometimes, madness lies in the mind's capacity to think in unconventional ways, where madness and genius blend together in a dance that surpasses the limits of intellect. This was my experience with Salem's journey in Madness and Honey Days. The film offers a completely new perspective on the tumultuous period in Iraq through its captivating characters that made me think unconventionally and can be attractive to a wide audience across cultures through its burning themes of freedom, love, life and death, authoritarian regime, politics, war, mental health, and the power of art in times of adversity.



WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES I SEE YOUR EYES

Director **Sameh Alaa**

Producer **Mark Lotfy**

Production Company **Figleaf Studios**

Egypt | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 570,100

Secured financing (\$ or %): 15%

Contact Information

Sameh Alaa | +201221172554

samehelrayani00@gmail.com

Synopsis

A woman living with her husband. He disappears one night, and she ventures out alone in the streets. Spending the night experiencing life. She returns home and stumbles upon her husband's body. The killer is a young man working for her husband. Surprisingly, the young man was in a relationship with the victim.

People refuse to carry the coffin to his distant village. The wife is helpless, but her

neighbour convinces a hearse-driver to transport the husband's body in exchange for her gold jewelry.

The car, carrying a socially rejected lady, a cold-hearted man, moves along the open road. The journey becomes an opportunity for them to open-up and discover each other as travel companions.



Director's
Biography
Sameh Alaa

Director's Intention

Sameh Alaa is an Egyptian director, producer, screenwriter. His first short film 'FIFTEEN' premiered at Toronto IFF-2017, won several awards in festivals around the world. His last short film 'I AM AFRAID TO FORGET YOUR FACE' became the first Egyptian film awarded 'Palme d'Or' in Cannes-FF Short Film Competition-2020. It continued its festival run at San Sebastian-FF, Cairo-FF, Clermont-Ferrand-ISFF, Palm Springs-FF, Moscow IFF, and many others. His films have been screened at MOMA, broadcast on different TV channels: Canal +, Arte, Shahid. Sameh is working on his feature film 'When I close my eyes I see your eyes.'

Women in our country still suffer from oppression and patriarchy, even their mobility is restricted to the husband's accompaniment or permission from him, and this matter shackles women's thoughts and makes them live without knowing their true selves and without having tools of expression. Our character is one of those women who only met herself after the death of her husband.



Producer's
Note
Mark Lotfy

I have witnessed ladies suffering from their husbands' abuse, it is always hidden behind the curtains and very sorrowful to see ladies confessing what was unrevealed for years. Being near some of them and supporting one process of liberation opened my eyes to the toxicity of our love relations in contemporary life. It was essential to understand that on the other side behind every abusive masculinity, there is unexpected fragility and stories of suffering. That is why when Sameh told me this story to formulate cinematically this complexity, it is a film that needs to be in the world.



AMARA

AMARA

Director **Michelle Keserwany**

Lebanon | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 1,500,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): -

Contact Information

Michelle Keserawy | keserwanymichelle@gmail.com

Synopsis

Darine, a vibrant woman in her thirties, works at a small radio station in Beirut. She hosts the morning show "Horoscopes_with_Darine" leading it with expertise given her humorous persona and her talent for creating lies. One day, Darine's life takes an unexpected turn when her boss asks her to replace the news anchor who was fired due to the country's economic crisis. Darine, who has always sought refuge in a deliberately fictional universe through horoscopes, should suddenly announce on air the grim reality of a country on the brink of collapse. A reality she is unprepared to confront.



Director's Biography

**Michelle
Keserwany**

Director's Intention

Michelle Keserwany is a Lebanese filmmaker, writer, and musician known for her satirical socio-political music videos created with her sister Noel since 2010. In 2014, she co-wrote the film "Capernaum" with director Nadine Labaki before embarking on her own film projects. Michelle's first short film "Les Chenilles", written by her and co-directed with her sister, was the first Arab film to receive the Golden Bear for Best Short Film at the 2023 Berlinale. Michelle was awarded the "Author's Fund" from the CNC France in 2021 for her upcoming live-action feature film "AMARA", a satirical drama that happens in Lebanon.

AMARA delves into the quest for happiness in an unstable and gloomy region. In it I explore the emotional and moral tensions experienced by people who are indirectly part of the long complex chain of political corruption in Lebanon, all while keeping a humorous touch. During my two-year research with CNC, I immersed myself in Lebanon's radio stations, forging intimate connections with workers, discovering their lifestyles and social circles. This enabled me to absorb details and build my story using real facts, locations, and potential cast members. Cinematographically AMARA is raw and realistic (aesthetic often found in Iranian films).

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Our quest to identify and support emerging film industry talent continues, creating opportunities for aspiring and worthy filmmakers.

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LET'S PLAY SOLDIERS

Director **Mariam Al-Dhubhani**

Producer **Mohammed Al-Jaberi**

Production Company **Meem Square Films LLC**

Yemen | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 399,565

Secured financing (\$ or %): 169,079

Contact Information

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Synopsis

In a small southern Yemeni village, Nasser, a 16-year-old former child soldier, returns from war. Enrollment is a rite of passage taken by his father and older brother before him, broken by the 8-year ongoing war. But Nasser knows there is little to gain in joining the armed groups. The pay is low, the job is hazardous, and only a few people respect such work, so he tries to find another way. Now, Nasser's mission is to stop his two younger brothers from dropping out of

school and picking up arms. The intimate film immerses us deep within Nasser's journey to build a different life for himself and his family as he exposes the impact of war and the glorified myth of child soldiers in Yemen.



Director's Biography

Mariam Al-Dhubhani

Mariam Al-Dhubhani is an award-winning Yemeni-Russian journalist, filmmaker, curator, and educator. She first pursued her passion in media during the Arab uprisings. A two-time TEDx speaker and one of the first directors to utilize virtual reality in Yemen. Through her work, she highlights the dangers of stereotyping the region and attempts to present a counter-narrative to show equality in humanity. Al-Dhubhani has provided mentorship and training to support young filmmakers in conflict areas, including Yemen, Libya, and Iraq. Currently, she is working on her feature debut, *Let's Play Soldiers*, highlighted at prestigious film festivals and markets such as Cannes, IDFA, and HotDocs.

Director's Intention

Let's Play Soldiers provides a chance to highlight the issue through a family impacted by child recruitment for two generations. It extends a platform for former and future child soldiers within the family to negotiate their drives and attempt to make sense of the complex façade that children assume their agency once they are forced to grow up very fast while remaining children. Nasser's story which takes place in a small village in the South of Yemen provides a spotlight on a very neglected part of the country due to root cause issues of poverty, race, and marginalization by historically central authorities in Yemen which tackles issues of representation for Yemeni viewers who are not used to see stories featured from places outside of the urban center. The film intends to steer away from typical child soldiers-themed films which show children as victims of a much larger war machine by providing a dramatic story buildup of resilience and hope despite extremely dehumanizing conditions.



Producer's Note

Mohammed Al-Jaberi

Growing up, Nasser's presence in my small village left lasting impressions as he ran freely, embodying the resilience that defined Yemenis amid the ongoing war. Now, as a local filmmaker, "*Let's Play Soldiers*" has become a personal project, highlighting Nasser's story while encompassing the experiences of my own war-affected relatives. Mainstream narratives often strip away Yemenis' dignity, prolonging the conflict. Through Nasser, we aim to reveal the strength Yemenis forge amidst adversity. As local filmmakers, we hold the authentic perspective to empower cultural operators and reclaim our narratives. Let us counter the

simplified depictions and bring forth a dignified lens to present the complex realities far from the frontlines and stereotypes.



WAITING FOR GEDDO

Director **Kawthar Younes**

Producer **Ahmed Amer**

Production Company **A.A.Films**

Egypt | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 160,760

Secured financing (\$ or %): 12%

Contact Information

Kawthar Younes | +201222110747

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Synopsis

Kawthar's lifelong fear of losing her aging father has now become an anticipated reality rather than a childhood woe; the film is the last attempt to accept the inevitable. She plans to have a child of her own and preserve her father in this film, gifting both a glimpse of the past and the future.



Director's
Biography
Kawthar Younes

Director's Intention

Born in 1993, Kawthar is a filmmaker based in Cairo, Egypt. Known for her film "A Present from the Past", which was the first of its kind to set a record for audience demand in the Egyptian market. She works as a producer for films, mini-series, and TV commercials. Her latest short film "Sahbety/My Girl Friend" is the first Egyptian film to officially participate in the short film competition at Venice International Film Festival. Kawthar is also the co-founder of the inaugural Rawiyat-Sisters in Film.

"Waiting For Geddo", my second feature documentary, explores my complex relationship with my father. It reveals how this relationship has taught me about the intertwining of love and trauma. With a 55-year age gap, my father's anxieties about leaving me too soon fueled my own psychological issues. Now married, I am eager to conceive so my 85-year-old father can meet his grandchild, but I fear the price I will have to pay, be it personal loss or professional hinderance. Through this film, I aim to capture the duality of existence, life and death and learning how to accept the unavoidable.



Producer's
Note
Ahmed Amer

When Kawthar approached me, I could easily empathize with the story and identify with it. The way she talks about her relationship with her father and how she has recently learned that it is abusive, her fear of bringing a child into this world and repeating history, and her path to healing and acceptance are all themes that I know too well, as well as would anyone who watches the film. Producing "Waiting for Geddo" is a continuation to what I am trying to achieve as a producer in the Egyptian film industry, which is supporting underrepresented female directors.



SOURAYA MON AMOUR

Director **Nicolas Khoury**

Producer **Jana Wehbe**

Production Company **The Attic**

Lebanon | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 210,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 7,500

Contact Information

Nicolas Khoury | +96170963855

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Synopsis

Excerpts from the film "Little Wars", and personal archives intertwine with virtual zoom meetings of the present to show the dynamics of the relationship between Souraya Baghdadi and her late husband, the famous Lebanese filmmaker Maroun Baghdadi through the presence of Maroun in her life but especially his absence. Thirty years after the director's mysterious death, this film dives into the hidden universe of Souraya and the special relationship she

has established with her body after years of dancing and meditation, to question the concept of mourning and resume her interrupted conversations with Maroun through her way of self-achievement.



Director's
Biography
Nicolas Khoury

Director's Intention

Nicolas Khoury, 2010 audiovisual studies graduate from Lebanese Academy of Fine-Arts, is an independent documentary filmmaker and film editor based in Beirut, Lebanon. His independent filmography includes three medium-length films, which have won awards amongst many film festivals. His short documentary "Resonances" won Best Short Documentary at the It's All True Film Festival in Brazil and the Tanit D'or at Carthage Cinema Days JCC in Tunis in 2018. Recently, his first feature film documentary, "Fiasco," premiered at CPH: DOX in 2021 and received two awards at Cairo International Film Festival.

What fascinated me the most in Souraya's unique experience and the complexity of her character was this intertwined relationship between cinema and life, myth, and reality, the real and the virtual. How virtual has our life become today? How truthful can these hours of discussion interposed by screens be to our reality and our loneliness? Can we evoke through this virtual texture and its failures our own inner ruptures related to love? How far can we push our "voyeuristic" side to penetrate the life of this woman and follow her journey? Souraya's story echoes many personal questions...



Producer's
Note
Jana Wehbe

Similarly, to Souraya, my mother was pregnant with me when my father passed away. Throughout her life, she somehow preserved my father's "legacy", another great man. Manifesting the "presence/absence" of the gone ones captivates me in this project. Nowadays, I find myself standing at a crossroads repositioning between my personal life and my vocation. Frequently, Souraya's life path and career choices come across my mind. Souraya's complexity calls for Nicolas' sensibility needed to achieve such a personal and profound film. "Souraya Mon Amour" is a complex tailored film fluctuating between unanswered interrogations

and existential questions that could be keys to unexplored doors.

شبكة الشاشات العربية البديلة

NAAS • ناس

شبكة الشاشات العربية البديلة
NETWORK OF ARAB ALTERNATIVE SCREENS

المشركون / MEMBERS



المهمة MISSION

تأسست شبكة الشاشات العربية البديلة «ناس» منذ أكثر من ١٠ سنوات، وهي شبكة تضم فضاءات سينمائية غير حكومية في المنطقة الناطقة باللغة العربية. تجمع الشبكة العديد من المبادرات التي تسعى من خلال برمجتها وفعاليتها ومساهماتها واستراتيجياتها تواصلها مع جمهورها لدعم ثقافة سينمائية حيوية ومستدامة بهدف تطوير تفاعل الجمهور مع الأفلام.

Established more than ten years ago, NAAS champions long-term collaboration and solidarity across a growing constellation of initiatives and spaces that maintain community around film. With a belief in the urgency of alternative narratives and the experience of watching film collectively, NAAS provides opportunities and resources for the cinema sector to cultivate critical thinking and dialogue among audiences across the Arabic-speaking region.

الرؤية VISION

تتوقع «ناس» إلى تمكين المجتمعات عبر المنطقة الناطقة باللغة العربية لتتولى بنفسها كيفية إدارة وتخصيص الموارد المتاحة لها. تكوّن الشبكة لهذه الغاية مبادئ الإدارة غير الهرمية، والمساءلة في قطاع الثقافة والفنون، والوصول غير المشروط للمعرفة والالتزام بالقيم والممارسات الراديكالية للعمل الجماعي.

NAAS envisions communities across the Arabic-speaking region taking ownership of their available resources and of the decision-making around their allocation. The network prioritizes horizontal governance and measures of accountability in the arts and culture sector to achieve an equitable distribution of these resources, unbridled access to knowledge, and commitment to the radical values and practices of working together.



Sound Post Production For Motion Pictures



CINEMA KAWAKEB

Director **Mahmoud Massad**

Producer **Omar Massad**

Production Company **Jo Image Productions**

Jordan | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 280,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 172,000

Contact Information

Mahmoud Massad | almassad2020@gmail.com

Synopsis

An unpaid loan taken out by a cinema owner to help revive his business during the pandemic leaves Ali and Youssef in a dilemma as they cannot reopen the cinema they have run for years unless the loan is repaid. For the past two years, they have gathered daily at cinemas in an attempt to find a solution. Yet, they only have one visitor, Hussien, a homeless scrap collector, plagued with OCD. He is concerned of selling enough to afford to eat, take a

shower and watching a classical film at this cinema kawakeb- the last remaining old cinema at downtown Amman.



Director's Biography

**Mahmoud
Massad**

Director's Intention

Jordanian director, writer, and producer. He received acclaim for his feature documentaries "Shatter Hassan", "Recycle" and "THIS IS MY PICTURE WHEN I WAS DEAD", reaching audiences worldwide. "Recycle" was awarded the World Best Cinematography Award at Sundance in 2008, screened at over 130 international film festivals and was theatrically released in several countries. "Blessed Benefit" is a narrative feature, which premiered in 2016 at Toronto International Film Festival and won the NETPAC jury award for Best Asian Film as well as the Special Jury award for best acting at Warsaw Film Festival. The film was featured exclusively on Netflix.

Cinema Kawakeb is reflecting our daily life in many aspect throughout the two main characters, Ali and Youssef not only lost their jobs at cinema Kawakeb but throughout the story we discover that they have also lost a big part of their identity due to this new world of media that hypnotized us into mechanical beings with an addiction to what we're exposed to. With no choice but to follow the herd.



Producer's Note

Omar Massad

I believe the significance of "Cinema Kawakeb" project lies in the importance of presenting our culture and identity through one of the oldest cinemas in Amman, Cinema Kawakeb as a witness of our cultural history and how it drifted from its golden age of Egyptian cinema that was based on great novels at that time into a pure commercial industry. We seek funding to clear archive footage rights and work on postproduction such as editing, sound and color.



THE LAST PROJECTIONIST

Director **Alex Bakri**

Producer **May Odeh**

Production Company **Odeh Films**

Palestine | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 184,500

Secured financing (\$ or %): 140,000

Contact Information

Alex Bakri | alexbakri1@yahoo.com

Synopsis

Hussein Darby stands on the ruins of the cinema in his hometown Jenin, which he used to be the projectionist of. Ten years before, a German NGO arrived and renovated it. Hussein tries everything to convince the new bosses that he is a professional projectionist. His efforts go unnoticed as the NGO grows bigger. The film questions the meaning of development aid and pays homage to a perished era of cinema culture in Palestine.



Director's
Biography
Alex Bakri

Director's Intention

Alex Bakri was born in 1978 in the Palestinian village Beane in the Galilee. He has worked in many departments of film, as an actor (The Time That Remains, 2009), an editor (Taste Of Cement, 2017), DOP (Cinema Jenin, 2011) and a writer (Mossoulini's sister, 2018). He is currently working on his first feature documentary as a director.

My primary concern as I started filming was to search for a narrative and visual style that can breathe life into a cinematic world. This world would derive drama from the inner life of its characters, rather than relying on their ongoing national tragedy to evoke sympathy. However, I aim to portray it without overlooking the brutality of the occupation under which they live. At the time, I was filming for the cinema Jenin project, all pieces fell into place when I met Hussein. His conduct determined the visual aesthetic of the film. As if years of projecting films, printed in him the natural feel for the lens. He had an immense passion for cinema, and there was more hunger in him for self-realization than for bread. It was only natural to tell the story of the cinema through the eyes of its last projectionist, as he was its beating heart. With this film, I wish to immortalize him on screen, in a final act of transcendence into the world he loved.



Producer's
Note
May Odeh

The last projectionist is not only a film, but also a movement against lots of wrong things happening around us, and finally Alex Bakri was brave enough to follow this story. The film is in the post-production phase. Alex, the director, took more than 10 years filming, the process of renovating the old Cinema in Jenin, and how it became a cultural centre through the eyes of Hussein until it was demolished in 2017. Alex kept the footage, and after the demolition of Cinema Jenin, he wanted to raise a big question using the story of Hussien. The film questions the meaning of development aid in general and who exactly it serves and pays homage to a perished era of

cinema culture in Palestine. Being a producer in Palestine and watching how there is no plan for the Cinema industry, and how we are losing an old cinema theatre yearly, without any promise from the government for alternatives. The Last Projectionist is a tribute for the cinema, which is in danger not only in Palestine, but worldwide.



THE SILENCE OF THE PLAIN

Director **Zeina Sfeir**

Producer **The Zarazir Brothers**

Production Company **Company: Madame Le Tapis**

Lebanon | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 90,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 70%

Contact Information

Gaby Zarazir and Michel Zarazir

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Synopsis

The story of a country with a vicious circle of injustice and unresolved crimes. The story of a family still grieving their loved ones for more than four decades. The Silence of the Plain addresses a difficult and complex question: has the past truly passed?



Director's
Biography
Zeina Sfeir

Director's Intention

Zeina Sfeir, a Lebanese documentary filmmaker, has won awards for her work. She studied cinema at USJ in Beirut, receiving her first award for the documentary "Inspite of War" in 2001. Sfeir has directed documentaries for Al Arabia, Al Jazeera, and Al Hurra TV. Her films have been screened at renowned festivals in Locarno and Dubai. She has also directed documentaries for the UN, the Swiss Agency for Development, and other educational institutions. Sfeir co-founded the "Beirut DC Association" and the "Metropolis Association" and served as the artistic director of Beirut Cinema Days. She currently works as an Arab media consultant and manages the Arab press office at the Red Sea IFF and the Marrakech International Film Festival.

Uninvited death shattered our lives. In 1976, four members of my family were decapitated in Rayak. After four decades of silence and fear, the massacre remains unresolved. For 47 years, we wept and discussed it, desperate for understanding. To bring closure to our mourning, I felt compelled to create a film that unravels the story. Tragically, the MENA region drowns in escalating violence, reminiscent of our civil war's painful repetition. The 2020 Beirut Blast surpassed the horrors of war, leaving me pondering the victims' families. They too will join our vicious cycle, forever deprived of the truth.



Producer's
Note
**The Zarazir
Brothers**

Our documentary is produced by Madame Le Tapis and supported by Beirut DC. This film has received generous support from the CNC, CineGouna Platform, the Lebanese Ministry of Culture, and Beirut Screen Institute. Currently in the editing phase, we are excited to bring this captivating story to life. The film is aimed at an international audience, so that they can see us as human beings and not under the labels that have been attached to us. Simultaneously, we aim to engage the Lebanese and Arab audience, igniting discussions on memory and its significance. We hope that this film will push society towards a certain awakening and that the

plains will never remain silent again.



AL BASEER - THE BLIND FERRYMAN

Director **Ali Toffan Al-Fatlawi**

Producer **Samir**

Co-Producer **Ali Al-Fatlawi**

Production Company **DSCHOINT VENTSCHR FILMPRODUKTION**
(Switzerland), **KARADAFILMS FILMPRODUKTION (Iraq)**

Iraq | Switzerland | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 2,476,339

Secured financing (\$ or %): 2,075,020

Contact Information

Ali Toffan Al-Fatlawi | ali@karadafilms.com

Synopsis

In the endless Iraqi Marshes, Ayoub, the blind ferryman, navigates the waters with ease, despite his lack of sight. His passengers are captivated by his beautiful voice and captivating stories. One fateful night, after a fire attack, Ayoub is rescued by a mysterious woman. A deep love blossoms between them, but no one believes she exists. This challenges Ayoub's reality. Determined to prove his

love, he embarks on a journey that blurs the boundaries of perception. As doubts and rumors swirl, Ayoub's quest for truth leads him into a realm where reality and imagination intertwine, ultimately vanishing into the night.



Director's Biography

**Ali Toffan
Al-Fatlawi**

Director's Intention

Ali Toffan Al-Fatlawi, an Iraqi-Swiss-Italian citizen, grew up in Baghdad before being forced to leave in 1994. He completed his studies in Zurich, earning a Bachelor of Media and Arts from F&F. He co-founded Urakypost in 2013 and Karadafilms in 2022. His directorial and production achievements include selection for the Qumra Producer Lab 2022 and the Hazaya Film Script Lab by the Doha Film Institute in 2021. Ali's project, "The Blind Ferryman - Al Baseer," received an invitation to Cannes' L'Atelier in 2022. He is also recognized for his contributions to contemporary and performance art, winning the prestigious Swiss Art Award in 2012.

The essence of THE BLIND FERRYMAN lies in the "inside view" of the blind protagonist, blurring reality, and imagination. Through a subjective lens, we delve into characters' depths against the backdrop of beautiful marshlands. Inspired by my blind aunts' unique perspective, the film reveals truths hidden from the sighted. It explores the thin line between reality and fantasy, offering hope and showcasing the human spirit's resilience. THE BLIND FERRYMAN aims to inspire viewers to perceive the world differently and believe in the power of their imagination.



Producer's Note

Samir

When Ali shared his concept of a fable about a blind ferryman intertwining with the recent history of Iraq, I was captivated. As a producer, I offered my support to delve into the critical examination of Iraqi society. The juxtaposition of an imaginative utopian world set amidst conflict-ridden Iraq intrigued me, having experienced life in the diaspora. The motif of the enchanting Genya, leading wanderers to ruin, echoes across swamp regions and mythologies worldwide. This film has the potential to tell a universally resonant tale against an uncommon backdrop.



AFID AWARDS

- Development Category
- Post-Production Category
- Market Awards Category

Creative Media Solutions

Provided creative Services for:
 200m: khatalkan 106, khatalkan 2, You will die at twenty, give up the ghost, Beirut Eye, of the Storm, Room 308,
 Jokes, Sam a King, Champions, Alhadi MMA show season 2, Alghed Amshing TV, Hahain TV, Alanyen TV,
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مهرجان عمان السينمائي الدولي
Amman International Film Festival
أول فيلم —————

Amman International Film Festival

Cash award for a film in development with the value of US\$5000



IEFTA

Cash award for a film in development with the value of €5000



Lagoonie Film Production

Cash award for a film in the development phase with the value of US\$5000



Slate Film Services

In-kind award for lighting and grip equipment rental services for a Jordanian film in development with the value of USD\$15,000



Creative
Media Solutions

Creative Media Solutions

In-kind award for packaging services for a documentary film in development with the value of US\$10,000



Malmo Arab Film Festival

Invitation to attend MAFF Industry Days 2024 for a Jordanian film in development



NAAS Network

In-kind award for distribution and marketing strategy consultancy award for a film in development or post-production

POST-PRODUCTION CATEGORY



The Royal Film Commission

Cash award for a film in post-production with the value of US\$5000



Film Lab Palestine

In-kind award for coloring services for a documentary film in post-production with the value of USD\$15,000

Unison Studio

Unison Studio

In-kind award for sound design and mixing for a film in post-production with the value of US\$13,000



Jordan Pioneers

In-kind award for post-production services for a film in the post-production phase with the value of USD\$10,000

Daniel Almasadeh

In-kind award for sound design and surround mixing for a narrative film in post-production with the value of US\$11,000

MARKET AWARDS

CATEGORY



ART

Cash award for a narrative film in development with the value of US\$10,000



The Imaginarium Films

Cash award for a film in development with the value of JOD5,000



MAD Solutions

Minimum guarantee in exchange for the distribution and sales rights in the Arab world worth US\$20,000



Cinewaves Films

In-kind marketing and distribution award for a film in post-production with the value of US\$10,000



Rowad Media

In-kind award for distribution services for a film in post-production with the value of US\$10,000



Maskoon Fantastic Film Festival

In-kind award of a narrative film to participate in Maskoon Fantastic Lab in the Spring of 2024

Alexandra Viets

In-kind consultation award for a narrative film in the development stage

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WORKSHOPS

- Restoration and Colourising
- Crafting Impactful Media: Ethics and Narrative Strategies
- Visual Effects in Storytelling: A Workshop for Independent Filmmakers
- Crossing Borders: A Producers' Guide to International Co-Production and Creative Producing
- Creative Producing

مهرجان عمان السينمائي الدولي
Amman International Film Festival
أول فيلم Awal Film



كاي و بديا stories & beginnings

الدورة الرابعة 4th Edition
15-22/8/2023





RUM PICTURES

Workshop **Restoration and Colourising**

Date(s) **16th August 2023**

Duration **All Day**

About the Workshop

Restoration and colourising black and white archives is a new movement that historians and filmmakers are heading towards; to save classical movies in an attempt to preserve art and history. These include footage of current affairs and real historic events captured on film.

This workshop focuses on the technical and theory aspects of restoration and colourisation, explaining the stages of it, from research on paper until the very final quality check and delivery, while walking through the challenges that the team faces, as well as what part Artificial Intelligence occupy in this project. This workshop will be a master class that will introduce the entirety of the colourisation technology covering its workflow and stages, as well as hurdles that come along the way.



ABOUT THE EXPERT(S)



Roman Peregon

Senior Colourist with over 15 years of experience in a wide range of projects, including TV shows, films, and documentaries. Peregon has both a strong artistic vision and a solid technical knowledge background, enabling him to effectively supervise and enhance the quality of his work, particularly in grading, from every angle and at all levels.

Peregon's strong creative abilities, combined with his technical expertise, made him the ideal choice to lead the colourising process in the innovative docu-series "Coloured Memories." Through his efforts, the series successfully brought black and white archives to life in the region.



Saif Abu Rabea

Saif Abu Rabea holds over 10 years of experience as a Director of Photography (DOP). He is also a certified user for colour grading with DaVinci Resolve and is currently expanding his knowledge by working as a junior colourist and digital imaging technician (DIT) at Rum Pictures. His journey in the film industry started after completing a bachelor's degree in visual arts from University of Jordan.

In the docu-series "Coloured Memories," Abu Rabea took the lead in one of the colourizing teams and has played a significant role in the AI implementation needed for the project.



ABOUT THE EXPERT(S)



Hasan Ameen

Hasan Ameen's career in the film industry took off in 2008, and he currently holds the position of Head of Post-Production at Rum Pictures. With a diverse skill set, Ameen's expertise spans from Pre-Production to Post-Production, including audio production, video production, and he is certified in Avid Pro Tools for audio engineering. He has earned his bachelor's degree in Audio Engineering from Middlesex University London – Amman, a diploma in Audio Engineering from SAE institute – Amman, and an Art of Animation Diploma from Al Quds College.

Ameen's extensive and diverse experience led him to take the role as the Colourising Supervisor in the remarkable project "Coloured Memories," where he carefully oversaw every step of the process, from start to finish.

تحت رعاية صاحبة السمو الملكي الأميرة ريم علي
Under the Patronage of HRH Princess RYM ALI

الدورة الـ

35TH

EUROPEAN
FILM FESTIVAL

JORDAN

٢٩ أيلول - ١٣ تشرين الأول، ٢٠٢٣
September 29 - October 13, 2023

الأفلام الأوروبية

الأردن

The launch event will be held at the Royal Film Commission
Jordan and films will be screened at the Haya Cultural Centre.

The European Film Festival (EUFF) is the longest-running foreign
film festival in Jordan, celebrating its 35th edition this year.
A variety of films will be screened, all with English and Arabic
subtitles.

سيقام حفل الإطلاق في الهيئة الملكية الأردنية للأفلام،
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AMERICAN FILM SHOWCASE

Workshop **Crafting Impactful Media: Ethics and Narrative Strategies**

Date(s) **17th August 2023**

Day 1: "Making Your Media Matter: Ethics and Narrative Strategies"

18th August 2023

Day 2: "Community Storytelling, Leadership, and Systems Change"

About the Workshop

Join Lina Srivastava, AFS cultural envoy and Founder of the Center for Transformational Change, for discussion, case study presentations and live inquiries on the use of documentary and media to tell ethical stories and engage people towards social justice and equality.

Day 1 - 17th August 2023

Making Your Media Matter: Ethics and Narrative Strategies

In this session, Srivastava maps out her theory of narrative strategy for social change, including case studies on her social impact projects and lead a discussion on ethical narrative, voice and representation in film and creative projects.

Day 2 - 18th August 2023

Community Storytelling, Leadership, and Systems Change

In this session, Srivastava takes participants deeper into the topic of community voice to effect social change through storytelling and cultural expression and the role that documentary, narrative films and other forms of media can play in transformational change and strengthening community leadership.

ABOUT THE EXPERT(S)



Lina Srivastava

Lina Srivastava is a strategist, advocate and producer who catalyses systems change by combining technology, culture, and art. She creates cultural and narrative-based social change initiatives with NGOs, global institutions, artists, and independent media creators. Srivastava is the founder of the Center for Transformational Change, a global impact platform to cultivate community power to build just futures. She previously founded CIEL | Creative Impact and Experience Lab, an innovation studio working at the intersection of human rights, international development, and narrative strategies. A former attorney and former non-profit executive director, she has collaborated with organizations such as the ICRC, UNICEF, UNESCO, the IRC, the World Bank, The New Humanitarian and FilmAid.

Srivastava has designed and supported social engagement campaigns for several award-winning documentaries, including the Oscar-winning "Born into Brothels" and "Inocente", Sundance-award winning "Who Is Dayani Cristal?", Emmy-nominated "The Devil Came on Horseback" and "Call Me Ganda"; and for immersive media and arts projects, such as the UN-award winning "Priya's Shakti", Emmy-nominated "Traveling While Black", ArtNews-named "Defining Works of 2020" In Plain Sight, The Enemy and My City Istanbul.

Srivastava is a Fulbright Specialist, on the US State Department's American Film Showcase roster, faculty-at-large in the Masters of Design for Social Innovation Program and faculty in the Masters of Products of Design Program at SVA. She has been a Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center Fellow, a recipient of a Rockefeller Foundation leadership grant, a Rockwood Institute/JustFilms Fellow, a Boehm Media Fellow, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. She is a graduate of New York University School of Law.

AMERICAN FILM SHOWCASE

Workshop **Visual Effects in Storytelling: A Workshop for Independent Filmmakers**

Date(s) **17th and 18th August 2023**

About the Workshop

Visual Effects is an integral part of visual storytelling; therefore, this workshop focuses on how to best prepare and plan for visual effects in a film by examining the story and ideas behind the visual narrative of one's film, focusing on smaller and independent scale productions. Day one begins with a look into how VFX has evolved over the years in smaller budget projects, and how VFX could be used to help tell the story. Day one starts with exploring the evolution of VFX in smaller-budget projects and its role in enhancing storytelling. The first day ends with a discussion and an exchange of project ideas and pitches among the attendees. Day two builds on this momentum, fostering peer-supported group discussions aimed to help develop and delve deeper into each participant's project ideas. The primary objective of this workshop is to equip participants with essential practices, terminology, and workflows that can significantly benefit their films, fostering a profound understanding and application of VFX techniques.

ABOUT THE EXPERT(S)



Dariush Derakhshani

Dariush Derakhshani is an award-winning VFX supervisor, producer and educator in Los Angeles, California. He has been an animator and supervisor on countless commercials, television shows, and feature films for over 25 years at places such as Digital Domain, Pixomondo, Zoic Studios, Radium|ReelFX, Café FX, Rhythm and Hues, Sight Effects, as well as consulting for studios such as Unity, JibJab Studios,

Square Enix, Mandoo Pictures, and Digital Frontier (Tokyo).

Derakhshani earned a BA from Lehigh University in Architecture and Theatre and an MFA in Film, TV and Computer Animation from USC School of Cinematic Arts and has been teaching in the field for over twenty years. He is also the author of several 3ds Max and Maya books and numerous video training programs for LinkedIn, fxphd, and Pluralsight. Derakhshani has also been a Film Expert Envoy for the US State Department's American Film Showcase program, where he has led educational programs in Armenia.

In 2020, he joined the John Hughes Institute as its Academic Dean, responsible for creating and delivering bespoke curricula for film and animation programs for clients such as Arizona State University, York University in Canada, and The One Academy in Malaysia.

Derakhshani is a long-time member of the Visual Effects Society and has most recently won honours for his work in VFX at the Sitges Film Festival, as well as a London Advertising Award, multiple Telly and Addy Awards, the Bronze Plaque from the Columbus Film Festival for his animation and has been nominated for the VES Award.



EUROPEAN AUDIOVISUAL ENTREPRENEURS

Workshop **Crossing Borders: A Producers' Guide to International Co-Production and Creative Producing**

Date(s) **19th and 20th August 2023**

About the Workshop

Immerse yourself in a riveting two-day workshop designed and led by esteemed film producer Titus Kreyenberg. This workshop offers an invaluable opportunity for producers working on their feature film project.

Day 1 - 19th August 2023

Offers an insightful journey into the realm of international co-production. Participants are introduced to its vast opportunities, valuable benefits, and potential hurdles. Prepare to gain enlightening insights that will sharpen your understanding of the global film production landscape.

Day 2 - 20th August 2023

We pivot our focus to the integral role of the creative producer. Experience a comprehensive exploration of the process behind the development, production, and delivery of a feature-length film. This knowledge-intensive day aims to empower attendees with the expertise required to shape cinematic masterpieces. Set your sights on this unprecedented workshop to refine your skills and fuel your cinematic journey in an increasingly globalized industry.

EUROPEAN AUDIOVISUAL ENTREPRENEURS



Titus Kreyenberg

Titus Kreyenberg worked as an executive producer for film and television for many years before he founded his own production company unafilm in 2004. The company has produced and coproduced well over 35 films that compete in A-festivals around the world. In 2013 "Heli" won the award for Best Director in competition in Cannes. The 2014 "Bridges of Sarajevo" was shown in the Sélection Officelle in Cannes. "I am not a Witch" premiered at Director's Fortnight and the 2019 Berlinale showed 4 films produced by unafilm. Titus Kreyenberg is an active member of ACE, EAVE, EPC, and EFA. Titus also teaches at EAVE, Torino Film Lab and the Biennale Cinema College.



GLOBAL MEDIA MAKERS

Workshop **Creative Producing**
Date(s) **17th - 21th August 2023**

About the Workshop

Global Media Makers, Film Independent's flagship international program, in partnership with the Amman International Film Festival and the Amman Industry Days, will present a variety of programs that reflect our mission of championing creative independence in visual storytelling in all its forms, and fostering a culture of inclusion. We support a global community of artists and audiences who embody diversity, innovation, curiosity and uniqueness of vision.

The workshop is designed for mid-career filmmakers with a feature film in development, the workshop will be led by award-winning US producers, Ron Najor (Short Term 12), Kelly Thomas (Spa Night), and David Ariniello (Stay Awake). Participants will further develop their projects through a pitching clinic that teaches them how to present their projects, and themselves, to find funding, collaborators, and distribution in the international marketplace.

GLOBAL MEDIA MAKERS



David Ariniello / Producer

David Ariniello is a filmmaker and co-founder of Extraordinary Renditions, a media development and production company. Most recently, Ariniello produced Jamie Sisley's "Stay Awake", which premiered at Berlinale in 2022. He also produced Andrew Ahn's "Spa Night", which premiered in Dramatic Competition at Sundance Film Festival and received the John Cassavetes Award at the 2017 Film

Independent Spirit Awards. Ariniello wrote and co-produced "Arcadia Lost" starring Nick Nolte and Haley Bennett, which premiered at the Oldenburg Film Festival in 2010. Winner of a 50th Annual Samuel Goldwyn Screenwriting Award, Ariniello also wrote and co-directed "The Incident," a branded entertainment short for Lincoln motors and Vanity Fair. A member of the WGA, SAG, and IATSE, Ariniello holds a BA from Columbia University and a PhD in English Literature from the University of California at Irvine.

GLOBAL MEDIA MAKERS



Ron Najor / Producer

Ron Najor is a first generation Iraqi-American filmmaker. He strives to tell stories with authenticity and to portray the diversity of the human experience. His Iraqi American background has played a strong role in shaping who he is and often finds its way into his creative work.

Najor's first produced independent feature film "I Am Not a Hipster" was an official selection of the Sundance Film Festival in 2012. "Short Term 12", which won both the Grand Jury Prize and the Audience Award at SXSW in 2013, was his follow up feature and marks his second collaboration with writer/director Destin Cretton. "Short Term 12" was selected to be on over 30 top-ten lists for 2013 and garnered a Gotham Award for Best Actress for Brie Larson and an Independent Spirit Award for Best Editing. "Short Term 12" was also given the prestigious distinction of being awarded "The Golden Tomato Award" for being the highest critically rated theatrical movie in limited release in 2013 by Rotten Tomatoes.

GLOBAL MEDIA MAKERS



Kelly Thomas / Co-Founder, Extraordinary Renditions

Kelly Thomas is an independent producer, writer and educator. Thomas received a 2017 Film Independent Spirit Award as a producer for Andrew Ahn's "Spa Night", a feature that premiered in Dramatic Competition at Sundance Film Festival and was presented at festivals worldwide. Her latest film, "Stay Awake", premiered at Berlinale in 2022. Thomas's other producing credits include films with acclaimed

directors including Rodrigo Garcia, Phedon Papamichael, Robin Swicord, and Brad Silberling.

Previously, Thomas was the Producer-in-Residence for Film Independent's Artist Development programs where she produced branded entertainment for Vanity Fair and Lincoln Motors and managed labs for writers, directors, producers, and documentary filmmakers. In addition to producing, Thomas is an Adjunct Associate Professor at Temple University's Los Angeles Study-Away Program and Affiliated Faculty at Emerson College and Chapman University. She is a member of the Producers Guild of America.

GLOBAL MEDIA MAKERS



Louay Khraish / Associate Director, International Programs

Louay Khraish is the Associate Director of International Programs at Film Independent. He oversees a number of international programs with global partners. Khraish is also a writer and producer, currently working on the post-production of his feature film, "Arzé." In addition to his filmmaking pursuits, Khraish has contributed as a story consultant to award-winning films such as "Solitaire", a female-centric Lebanese feature, and "Peace by Chocolate," a Canadian film. In 2018, he produced the Global Media Makers Summit in Cairo and created the educational web-series, "Film Arabi", aimed at empowering aspiring Arab filmmakers with the tools to tell their own stories.

Prior to his role at Film Independent, Khraish served as the Director of Digital Media at Baynounah Media Group in Abu Dhabi. In this position, he played a key role in creating content for the digital platforms of the group's television stations. Khraish's educational background includes a master's in media studies from the New School in New York. He pursued his Ph.D. in Humanities at the University of Texas at Dallas, where he focused on creative writing and explored feminine voices in film and literature. Born in Lebanon and raised in Beirut and Dallas, he is fluent in English, Arabic and French, which enables him to connect with diverse audiences and work effectively on international projects.

GLOBAL MEDIA MAKERS



Jeremy Aguilera-Gaudette / Hospitality and Events Producer, International Programs

Jeremy Aguilera-Gaudette is the hospitality and events producer at Film Independent. For 15 years, he has managed movie theaters across Los Angeles County, which includes the highest grossing theatre in the country. In 2018, he joined Film Independent as the Ticketing Manager and Feature Film Programmer for the LA Film Festival. Since then, Aguilera-

Gaudette has worked on the International Programs team, supporting Film Independent's year-round international education initiatives, including Global Media Makers, spearheading virtual and in-person events, assisting with filmmaker residencies, and overseeing travel and hospitality for mentors and fellows. In addition to his work at Film Independent, Aguilera-Gaudette is also a feature film programmer for the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival.

PANELS AND MASTERCLASSES SCHEDULE

Join us from the
16th to the 21st of August 2023



