



مهرجان عمان السينمائي الدولي
Amman International Film Festival

أول فيلم Awal Film

2024
5th Edition
الدورة الخامسة


**AMMAN FILM INDUSTRY DAYS
CATALOGUE 2024**

4-9/7/2024

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For full details
www.film.jo

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filminjordan@film.jo



RYM ALI
President & Co-Founder

Welcome to another content-filled fifth edition of the Amman Film Industry Days (AFID), with all the new projects, workshops, panels and masterclasses it brings to our participants and audiences.

The Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, said: "Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign. But stories can also be used to empower and to humanise. Stories can break the dignity of a people. But stories can also repair that broken dignity."

As Palestinians from Gaza and the neighbouring West Bank continue to suffer, whether we are professional filmmakers or not, most of us have felt a renewed sense of urgency in having our stories and narratives be told, thereby reminding the world of our common humanity - the hope being that powerful storytelling could indeed allow us to repair some dignity and be seen as equal human beings.

The projects selected this year are from Jordan, Egypt, Palestine, Algeria, Iraq and Yemen.

Our international jury of experts will be hearing from the filmmakers and exchanging with them to select the winners of the Film Industry Days and help them move forward. We hope that the support provided to those storytellers - whether cash or in-kind - will allow their stories to be heard far and wide.

Professional filmmakers or cinema lovers alike will find panels and masterclasses focused on deconstructing the idea of who owns the narrative and how to be true to our stories without limiting the creative process.

For professionals, the theme of reclaiming the narrative - in line with answering the prompt "ahkili," or literally, "tell me your story" - will be further developed through the various workshops offered by this edition's Industry Days.

We hope that you will leave the 2024 AFID programme having learned more about how to share our narratives to the world but also with the confirmation that our stories, as Arabs, matter to a great many people around the world.

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BASSAM ALASAD

Head of Industry

A Year for Amplifying Film Power and Impact

Early on, Amman Film Industry Days (AFID) established itself as a platform to amplify film's power, impact and role in advocating for causes as much as advocating for the film industry's growth. This year, we put our commitment to the festival's theme to the test, delving deep into the narrative's nuances. We aim to critically analyse the concept, ensuring individual and collective narratives are given importance.

We are thrilled to present a dynamic lineup at the pitching platforms and the Amman Projects Market, showcasing 16 films, including 5 narratives and 11 documentaries. After an intensive three-day pitching training with renowned expert Stefano Tealdi, these films will be judged by a distinguished jury of industry experts.

This year features the esteemed award-winning documentary filmmaker Hady Zaccak, who will explore the significance of archival documentaries in preserving and telling our stories. The renowned Pitch & Public Speaking Coach Bonnie Williams will impart her knowledge on networking and self-pitching at film festivals, while the experienced Thibaut Bracq, in partnership with EAVE, will discuss effective festival

strategies, ensuring a high-quality and insightful program.

We are proud to introduce new programs each year, and this year, we present "The Script Majlis", hosted by author and screenwriter Alexandra Viets. This program promises engaging insights and invaluable advice. Film critic and script editor Rasha Hosny, in collaboration with the Jordan Media Institute, leads a panel on film criticism. Additionally, Palestinian actor Ashraf Barhoum conducts an acting workshop for both actors and directors, focusing on effectively utilising the craft's tools.

This year's Industry Days also marks the debut of the AFID Incubator, a pilot program designed to support and inspire aspiring filmmakers. Participants will enjoy personalized and immersive experiences, meeting with industry experts who will offer invaluable guidance and insights, paving the way for their future success in the film industry.

Amman Film Industry Days continues to foster critical discussions and support filmmakers, ensuring that film remains a powerful tool for illuminating darkness, including the one shed by dogmas and lack of discernment.

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ABOUT THE AMMAN FILM INDUSTRY DAYS

The Amman Film Industry Days (AFID) offers a comprehensive program of masterclasses, workshops, panels, and networking opportunities to support filmmakers in Jordan and the region. It includes three pitching platforms for projects in development and post-production, with a jury awarding in-kind and cash awards to winning projects. The Amman Film Market provides a dedicated space to connect filmmakers with potential funders, partners, and distributors, acting as a launchpad for projects to reach audiences. The market partners offer additional in-kind and cash awards to selected projects.

This year, new programs such as The Script Majlis and AFID Incubator will be introduced. Script Majlis is an interactive workshop where experts provide feedback to writers after actors perform one of their scenes. AFID Incubator, a pilot program, offers aspiring filmmakers a personalized and immersive experience during the festival, curating specialized meetings with industry experts to address their unique questions and challenges.

**AFID will be held from
July 4th to July 9th, 2024,
marking our 5th edition.**



Jihan El-Tahri

Director, Writer, Visual Artist, and Producer
Egypt

Jihan El-Tahri is an award-winning director, writer, visual artist, and producer. In 2017, El-Tahri was invited to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (The Oscars) and has served on various selection committees, including those of the Locarno Film Festival, Jeune Création Francophone, Le Fonds Franco-Tunisien, and others. She has served on numerous juries, including as President of the Documentary Jury at FESPACO 2021. As a film mentor, she has worked with Focus Features (US), Documentary Campus (Germany), Ouaga Film Lab (Burkina Faso), Qumra (Qatar), Sud Écriture (Tunisia), and other training labs. As a visual artist, she has exhibited in international biennials. El-Tahri started her career as a foreign correspondent in the Middle East. Since 1990, she has directed and produced documentaries for the BBC, PBS, Arte, and other international broadcasters. Her award-winning documentaries include *Nasser*, which premiered in the official selection at the Toronto International Film Festival, *Behind the Rainbow*, *Cuba*, an African Odyssey, and the Emmy-nominated *House of Saud*. Her writings include *Les Sept Vies de Yasser Arafat* and *Israel and the Arabs: The 50 Years War*. El-Tahri is engaged in various associations and institutions working with African cinema. She served as treasurer of the Guild of African Filmmakers in the Diaspora, an advisor on Focus Features' Africa First Program, and as regional secretary of the Federation of Pan-African Cinema (FEPACI).



Alice Kharoubi

Director of Cinema Programming
France

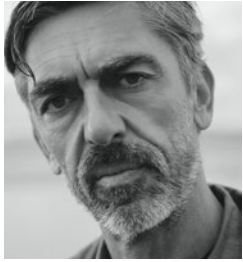
After completing her studies in France and the US, Alice Kharoubi joined the core team at the Festival de Cannes, where she managed Cannes Court Métrage. She later assumed the role of Short Film Programmer for the Abu Dhabi Film Festival and contributed to the programming team at the Festival Tous Écrans in Geneva. Currently, Alice serves as the Director of Cinema Programming at the Marché du Film and is a committee member for the Festival de Cannes Short Film Competition. Renowned for her mentorship of young filmmakers and project scouting, Alice also contributes to the Red Sea Film Festival as part of the programming team and as Head of Talent Days. In 2024, she was appointed as the Artistic Director for Meditalents.



Amin Matalqa

Director
Jordan

Amin Matalqa was born and raised in Jordan, then Ohio in the USA, and has been living in Los Angeles for the past 21 years. After graduating from the American Film Institute with an MFA in Directing in 2007, his first feature film *Captain Abu Raed* won the Sundance Film Festival World Audience Award in 2008 and became Jordan's first Oscar entry for Best Foreign Language Film. His next film was Walt Disney Studio's first Arabic language feature, the soccer drama, *The United* starring Farouk Al-Fishawy and Waleed Zuaiter. This was followed by the romantic comedy, *Strangely In Love* featuring Amanda Plummer (*Pulp Fiction*); and the action adventure, *The Rendezvous*, starring Stana Katic (*Castle*). In television, Amin wrote on and directed episodes of the Netflix supernatural show, *Jinn*. Most recently, he directed Sony's *5000 Blankets* starring Anna Camp (*Pitch Perfect*). Amin is an alumnus of the ABC/DGA TV Directors program and teaches directing at the American Film Institute and Elon University between films.



Nicolas Wadimoff

Director and Producer
Switzerland

Born in 1964 in Geneva, Switzerland, Nicolas Wadimoff studied cinema in Montreal before debuting his first film, "Le Bol," at Locarno in 1991. After The Golden Gloves of Akka, a portrait of a Palestinian boxer that premiered at Locarno and made the festival circuit in 1992, he directed the feature-length award-winning drama Clandestins in 1997. Since then, Wadimoff has been working as both director and producer, earning accolades at Cannes, Venice, Berlin, and Toronto. In 2003, he founded Akka Films. Noteworthy projects include the documentary "Aisheen: Still Alive in Gaza" in 2010 and the fiction "Opération Libertad" in 2012, premiered at Cannes. In 2015, his documentary "Spartiates" won the prestigious "Prix de Soleure," followed by "Jean Ziegler, l'optimisme de la volonté" in 2016, premiered at Locarno. His latest, "The Apollo of Gaza," opened the Critics' Week in Locarno in 2018. After leading the Film Department at HEAD-Geneva from 2019-2023, Wadimoff returns to directing, preparing his next feature in Marseille, while continuing his passion for producing meaningful projects.



Jana Wehbe

Film Maker and Producer
Lebanon

Jana Wehbe studied filmmaking at Université Saint-Joseph in Beirut and oriental modern singing at the Lebanese National Higher Conservatory of Music. Her producing career began with the film 2 1/2, which won the FIPRESCI Award at DIFF 2010. She went on to produce feature documentaries and fiction films, as well as line-produce several co-productions. In 2009, she co-founded 'The Attic,' a production boutique with like-minded film professionals. In 2011, Jana joined the Doha Film Institute as part of the institute's annual festivals team. She also served as a professor teaching film production and acted as the Arab Film Institute's representative in Lebanon. In addition to her expertise in music artist management, Jana has been diversifying her interests by bringing productions to theater and musical stages. Recently, she was selected among four other Arab female filmmakers to receive the inaugural AFAC-Netflix Equity Fund. She is currently serving as the Executive Director of the REEF Festival (Rural Encounters on Environment and Film).

AFID Experts

Pitching Trainers

Amman Film Industry Days



Stefano Tealdi

Pitching Trainer
South Africa

Born in Johannesburg (South Africa) in 1955, he 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: A Bastard and Pinochet's Legacy by Pepe Rovano (Special Mention, Sanfic 2023); Amor by Virginia Eleuteri Serpieri (Mostra del Cinema di Venezia 2023, IDFA Lumina 2023); Snajka: A Diary of Expectations by Tea Vidović Dalipi (Human Rights Day – Sarajevo FF 2023); Rispet 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), Wonderful Losers. 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 DOKLeipzig 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).

He directed: 24 episodes of the 52' series Food Markets. In the Belly of the City, nominated best international tv programme 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, ZELIG Film School.



Mervat Aksoy

Creative Producer
Jordan

Mervat Aksoy is a Creative Producer from Jordan. She works in the development of series and films, and in end-to-end production. Her career began at The Royal Film Commission - Jordan in 2003, which ignited her passion for the local and regional film industry. In 2010, she graduated with an MFA in Cinematic Arts from the Red Sea Institute of Cinematic Arts and went on to produce regional film, television, and web content. Since 2020, she has been working in the UAE, developing original content with studios and platforms based in the region.



Mehdi Hmili

Director, Screenwriter, and Producer
Tunisia

Mehdi Hmili, a Tunisian director, screenwriter, and producer, studied cinema in Paris. His early works include three short films shot in France: X-Moment, Li-La, and The Night of Badr, focusing on themes of love and exile. In 2016, he debuted with Thala Mon Amour, a love story set against the Tunisian revolution. Alongside Moufida Fedhila, he co-founded "Yol Film House" in Tunis, producing fiction films and documentaries showcased at international festivals. Hmili gained recognition at Cannes Film Festival's La Fabrique de Cinémas du Monde in 2019 with his documentary Fouledh. His second feature, Streams, premiered at the 74th Locarno Film Festival, garnering accolades such as Best Acting Performance at the Cairo International Film Festival and the Special Jury Award at the Kolkata International Film Festival. He further received Best Actress and Best Actor Awards at the Vues d'Afrique International Film Festival, and a Best Director Award at the Malmö Arab Film Festival. A pivotal figure in Tunisia's cinema, Hmili actively supports local talent through "Yol Film House", fostering coproduction and international distribution opportunities. He is an alumnus of Torino Film Lab and Film Independent, dividing his time between Tunisia and Paris.



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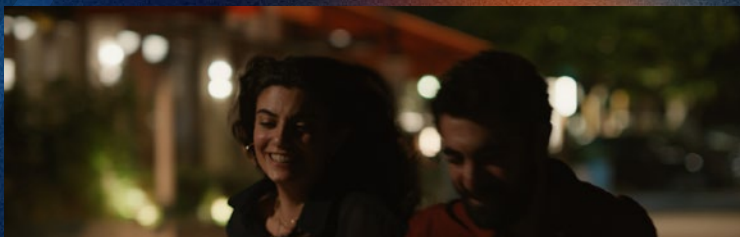


THE SETTLEMENT BY MOHAMED RASHAD



RED PATH BY LOTFI ACHOUR

UPCOMING FILMS



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IEFTA is honoured and proud to partner with Amman International Film Festival supporting this year's Amman Film Industry Days (AFID).

By joining forces we endeavour to identify and support filmmakers from around the world, and together, foster underrepresented perspectives to help them attain the know-how and recognition they deserve.

SUPPORT

We will be presenting a cash award worth €6,000 to a project in development at the Amman Film Industry Days Pitching Forum.

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SELECTED PROJECTS



**JORDANIAN AWAL-FILM
DEVELOPMENT CATEGORY**



AMAL

Director **Khaled Alkhalidi**

Producer **Rahmeh Al-Shmmas**

Jordan | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 230,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 5%

Contact Information

Rahmeh Al-Shmmas | amaldocfilm@gmail.com

Synopsis

A few days before the wedding, the groom, who came from Sweden to the Zaatari camp, cancels their marriage plans, shocking Amal. Amal faces threats of murder from her ex-husband. At the same time, her family is forced to leave the camp to a nearby village. Amal intervenes to protect her younger sister from a new child marriage. She seeks safety and security despite their harsh circumstances.



Director's
Biography
Khaled Alkhalidi

A Syrian cinematographer, he migrated to Jordan in 2011. With an early passion for cinema, he studied at the SAE Institute in Amman, earning a filmmaking diploma. Since 2021, he has worked as a cinematographer for documentary films like *The Harvesters' Moon* and *Concrete Land*. He also collaborated with the Royal Film Commission on *The Queen and the Deputy 2024*. His work has taken him across Jordan, from southern deserts to northern regions and refugee camps like Zaatari. He admires filmmakers such as Andrei Tarkovsky."

Director's Intention

In 2011, my family and I were displaced to Jordan due to the war. We settled in an urban village that suffered from drug abuse, violence, and child marriage. We decided to forcibly marry my underage sister to her cousin, who abused drugs. My sister divorced and returned with her children. I felt responsible for that. When I met Amal, I felt that her story reflect my sister's experience. It was my duty to support Amal in sharing her story to find safety and a future. I became deeply engaged with Amal's story and tried to build an impact campaign.



Producer's
Note
**Rahmeh
Al-Shmmas**

Despite no familial ties to "Amal," the main character, the director Khaled and writer Lujain share the same Syrian origin and a long-time friendship. This connection helped create a deep, authentic portrayal in the film. Despite challenges such as obtaining filming permits for the Zaatari camp, which usually take 21 days, and limited funding, filming has continued since December 2023. Our team believes in the importance of telling Amal's story, which reflects the lives of many girls and women in the Arab world.

Goals of Participating:

Our participation in the Amman Film Festival aims to build relationships with influential producers and highly experienced directors, exchanging expertise and knowledge. Additionally, we seek financial funding to cover production costs for the film and establish partnerships with media outlets specialized in distribution and promotion. We want to explore other opportunities offered by the festival.



IN BETWEEN WOES

Director **Leen Ghassan**

Producer **Lina Khalid**

Jordan | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 54,657

Secured financing (\$ or %): 6,000 USD

Contact Information

Lina Khalid | lina.khalidsr@gmail.com

Synopsis

After reading a book by Iman Mersal, Leen and Lina are left with a burning question: what might an archive of mothering look like? Embarking on a quest to create such an archive, they turn to their mothers, Nabeela and Nahed. Quickly Leen and Lina realize that like most silenced narratives, mothering cannot be easily grasped. Embracing the contradictions that arise from intimate dialogues, they contemplate possible explanations. Traversing family

& official archives, media materials, and everyday conversations with mothers and one other, this documentary tells an intimate story of two friends trying to capture mothering in its fullness and complexity.



Director's Biography

Leen Ghassan

Born and raised in Amman, Leen is a visual and cultural anthropologist. Leen received her BA in Sociology and Gender Studies from New College of Florida, and her MA in Arab Studies from Georgetown University. Currently pursuing a PhD at George Washington University, Leen's research focuses on labor regimes, alienation, and intimacy using combined methods such as film and conventional ethnography. In addition to her academic career, Leen is part of Darkroom Amman, an analog photography space where she runs popular education programming.

Director's Intention

For someone who never desired motherhood, Nabeela still mothers poetically - a puzzle I'm not sure I will ever figure out. Neither will this documentary, which paradoxically is and is not about my mother. When Iman Mersal wrote of her mothering journey, she curiously named her book *HowtoMend:MotherhoodanditsGhosts*, intimating a spectral haunting that lives with and through the wounds of motherhood as ideal and mothering as experienced. Experiences with my mother, and the intimate history Mersal narrates, sparked my anthropological interest in the interior worlds of motherhood. This documentary seeks to explore them, portraying our mothers in their fullness and complexity.



Producer's Note

Lina Khalid

This film sheds light on the experience of motherhood from various perspectives, including my mother and Leen's mother's perspectives, exploring visual archives, and representations of motherhood in popular discourse. As a documentary photographer and archivist, I strive to bring a visual and archival aspect to any project I work on. I believe our constant return to archives, whether personal or public, helps us identify, correct, or affirm our identities and social realities. In this documentary film, my role is to assist Leen in weaving a unique narrative about motherhood that captures viewers' attention and sparks questions about experiences of mothering.

Goals of Participating:

We are participating in the pitching platform to secure potential funders and network with contacts from the film industry to promote our documentary.



SEARCHING FOR FAREED

Director **Yazan Taiseer**

Producer **Noor Arafah**

Jordan | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 60,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): -

Contact Information

Yazan Taiseer | yazantarawneh7@gmail.com

Synopsis

Months after the death of his father, Yazan, a filmmaker, begins to search for his father's favorite artist, Farid al-Atrash, who passed away 48 years ago. Through a cinematic journey, he explores spiritual cloning and life after death by searching for Farid himself in areas where the Druze sect is prevalent and replicating his father's personal story in a journey between Rome, Cairo, Karak, and Amman.



Director's Biography

Yazan Taiseer

Yazan Taiseer, a Jordanian-Palestinian visual artist and filmmaker based in Amman, was born in 1992 and pursued his studies in the College of Media at Petra University. Together with fellow artists, Yazan co-founded the artistic collective "Amman Films." Within this group, he has played a vital role in curating public film presentations and engaging in open cinematic discussions, all while producing several works with limited budgets. Currently, Yazan delves into various collective and individual projects that explore the intertwined and separate concepts of death, homeland, and memory.

Director's Intention

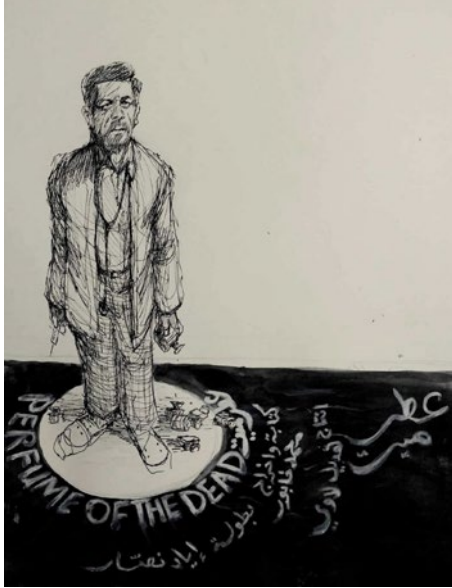
All films are love letters in one way or another, and this film is no different. When a person dies, their narrative loses control over their memory, and the narratives of others take over this memory. What could be a greater thing to send in your love letter to a deceased person than to restore their memory to them? Perhaps this brings them back to life, at least for the duration of this letter.



Producer's Note

Noor Arafah

I might have personal feelings connected to the subject of the film but looking beyond the specifics and the magic in viewing the work as a product, materially, this film constitutes a unique cinematic case in presenting works related to the filmmaker himself. Producing a documentary film with a cinematic language and a narrative that is almost magical and fantastical is what piques my greatest interest.



SCENT OF THE DEAD

Director **Mohammad Khabour**

Producer **Hadeel Lawi**

Jordan | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 600,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 40%

Contact Information

Hadeel Lawi | al.ay.hadeel@gmail.com

Synopsis

Anesthesiologist Tayseer, who adores his wife's perfume, loses his sense of smell after her passing. The scent of death becomes all he can perceive, pervading his life due to his neighbor's occupation washing the deceased in his apartment. The smell of death becomes a poignant reminder of his loss, grappling with the overwhelming scent while struggling to shield his young daughter from the truth of her mother's death. Tayseer's desperation

leads him towards thoughts of suicide, but his daughter's reminder of her own scent, reminiscent of her mother's, grounds him. With her help, he breaks free from the grip of the deathly perfume and embraces life. (Perfume of death : the scent sprayed on the deceased to mask any unpleasant odors.)



Director's
Biography
**Mohammad
Khabour**

Director's Intention

Mohammad Khabour heads the Performing Arts Department at the Institute of Fine Arts. He started in university theater, then wrote and directed short films. His latest, "Red Dish," screened at the Malmo Film Festival and competed in the Asia Festival in Yogyakarta. Khabour's debut TV series, "Led Jay," earned a development grant from the Film Support Fund and was part of the RFC series laboratory 'Moslstat'. He's also directed numerous short documentaries, including "Al-Manaih," which won 8 awards at festivals like Berlin Short Film Festival, Los Angeles Independent Film Awards, and Calcutta Festival.

Scents and their hidden meanings, along with their relationship to nostalgia for the past, the suffering of the present, and hope for the future, are the most important inspirations behind my writing of this film. Smell, being one of the most evocative and poignant products of the human imagination, holds immense significance. There is nothing in this universe without a scent. When I lost my friend, the artist Ashraf Talfah, and sat beside his body during the funeral, the fragrance of his perfume lingered in my memory from our last meeting. This experience made me realize that the scent of a deceased person's perfume is the most beautiful memory that can remind us of the presence of those we have lost. Let our imagination weave scents even for things we believe have no fragrance.



Producer's
Note
Hadeel Lawi

Goals of Participating:

We are seeking funding & finance as well as distribution deals within Arab world. Collaborations are welcomed to be discussed.

The uniqueness of our story is our focal point in bringing this film to the screen. It explores the profound experience of losing what connects us most to this world. It delves into the highly sensitive matter of loss and the emotional journey of finding hope to carry on despite feeling entirely stagnant, as if a part of our soul has departed. This tangible drama is infused with a sense of dry comedy that intertwines with the catastrophes, serving as a reminder that there is always a reason to persevere. Through our protagonist, portrayed by Eyad Nassar, we will uncover the resilience and determination to move forward.

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SELECTED PROJECTS



ARAB FILMS
DEVELOPMENT CATEGORY



A HOUSE FOR EXPATS

Director **Naji Ismail**

Producer **Omar Manjouneh**

Production Company **Rahala Production & Distribution**

Egypt | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 222,2000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 5,000

Contact Information

Naji Ismail | rahalapro@hotmail.com

Synopsis

A group of expats girls with supernatural power, find themselves as the last shield to defend a city from an evil soul that pushes people to make heinous crimes.



Director's
Biography
Naji Ismail

Director's
Intention

Naji Ismail, born in 1983 in Cairo's Ain Shams neighborhood, later moved to Upper Egypt before returning to Cairo to study at the Higher Cinema Institute. In 2010, he earned a documentary filmmaking scholarship from George Washington University. In 2012, he established "Rahala Production and Distribution". Naji's short documentary, "Om Amira," screened at Berlinale 2014, followed by his short fiction, "The Builders," at the Dubai Film Festival in 2016. His third short film, "Mama," premiered at the 44th Cairo International Film Festival in 2022. Currently, Naji is developing his debut feature film, "A House for Expats."

This film explores the darkness of Cairo against the pure souls trying to confront it. My interest in this theme led me to write the script and turn it into a film. Coming from Upper Egypt, I moved to Cairo for my filmmaking studies and struggled to adapt to the city's harshness. Growing up in rural Upper Egypt, where truth and myth blend seamlessly and spirituality permeates everyday life, has deeply influenced me. Fascinated by this world through my mother's and grandmother's stories, I chose women and girls as the film's heroes.



Producer's
Note
**Omar
Manjouneh**

I met Naji in 2014 and was immediately intrigued by his cinematic vision for modern Egyptian cinema. Drawing from his upbringing in Upper Egypt, Naji's storytelling passion is fueled by southern folklore and influenced by magic realism and arthouse horror. His vivid style is rooted in local heritage, as seen in his short films. "A House for Expats" is a horror film that goes beyond fear, probing the weaknesses in our collective mind and questioning how evil spreads in communities. I believe this film will inspire a new generation of Egyptian and Arab storytellers to create bold, independent films.

Goals of Participating:
Funders - co production.



AL-MADEENEH 2008

Director **Yousef Assabahi**

Producer **Ala'a Amer**

Yemen | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 722,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 60,000

Contact Information

Ala'a Amer | al.ay.hadeel@gmail.com

Synopsis

When Fuad, a middle-aged construction worker, loses yet another job in an already scarce market, he begins to contemplate leaving his hometown—a place he helped maintain with his late father for decades. Against the backdrop of social instability in the town, where people dream of finding uranium in lanterns and outsiders steal pieces of land with impunity, Al-Madeeneh is a portrait of a town and the daily lives of its cynical and superstitious characters. It

is, above all, a story of a disoriented man in uncertain times.



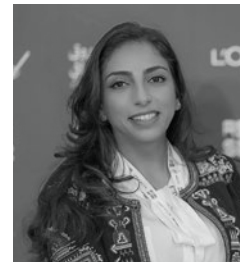
Director's Biography

Yousef Assabahi

Yousef Assabahi is a Yemeni writer and director currently based in Los Angeles. After completing his studies at UCLA's School of Theater, Film, and Television in 2018, Yousef has written and directed several short films and commercials that explore cultural identity and collective memory of Yemenis at home and abroad. His films have screened in international festivals, universities and cultural institutions. Yousef's recent short premiered at the Oscar-qualifying St. Louis International Film Festival, won Best Short at the Hollywood Arab Film Festival, and was shown at the Kennedy Center among others. Yousef is also a full-time Oral History producer for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and Academy Museum in LA.

Director's Intention

This story is a collage of real-life events that I piece together by fusing the past with my memories in my hometown, creating a time capsule of that period. The formative teenage years of my life were spent there, and I am still realizing how that period shaped my sense of fear and skepticism toward the world. It seemed to me, at the time, as if everything was soon coming to an end. The film unfolds in the span of five days, and the sense of real-time here is an important element not only because it aids my goal to make events feel incidental, but also because it allows me to show an anatomy of a Yemeni day with its unique structure and characters.



Producer's Note

Ala'a Amer

Set against the timeless face of an old Yemeni town, Al-Madeeneh does more than capture local color: it brings to life the universality of a tale that reaches out to call home the collective human experience. This drama interweaves satire with real-life struggles, echoing the people of Ibb with whom I connect deeply. There is no better time to tell this story than now. I am confident that with Yousef's talent, perspective, and sensibility, this film will connect not only with Yemeni audiences, but with everyone who have dealt with the prospect of leaving home. I am dedicated to bringing Al-Madeeneh to all markets in the region.

Goals of Participating:

Funds, partners, and to hone pitching skills.



AMERICAN DREAM

Director **Amir El-Shenawy**

Producer **Ahmed Abdelsalam**

Production Company **Digital Tales Productions**

Egypt, KSA | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 321,530

Secured financing (\$ or %): 70,000

Contact Information

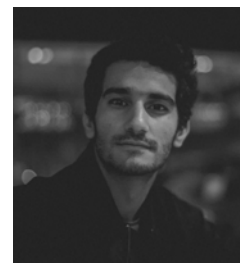
Ahmed Abdelsalam | a.fathy.abdelsalam@gmail.com

Synopsis

After founding Egypt's first wrestling entertainment team and rising as a local sensation to his small town, Kabonga confronts adversity amid the COVID pandemic and Egypt's economic downturn. Forced to sell the wrestling ring and having a time-out.

Three years later, fueled by a renewed sense of purpose, Kabonga embarks on a quest to reunite his team and reignite their

dream of staging shows. As Kabonga seeks to rebuild the team, questions arise about the risk of commitment in such time and age — is it a gamble of time and energy or is it worth the fame?



Director's Biography

Amir El-Shenawy

Amir El-Shenawy is a celebrated Egyptian documentary filmmaker, renowned for his award-winning work. His debut feature documentary, *Kilo 64*, premiered at the Cairo International Film Festival in 2018, earning nominations for Best Arab Film and Best Artistic Contribution, and winning the First Feature Film prize at the National Festival for Egyptian Cinema. His short documentary *EDRIS* received a Special Mention Award at the Carthage Film Festival in 2022.

Amir is currently working on his second feature documentary, *American Dream*. Supported by the Red Sea Fund, AFAC, Cairo International Film Festival, and IEFITA, it is set for release in 2025.

Director's Intention

As a child, I was captivated by American wrestling shows on Egyptian TV. Learning they were staged sparked my curiosity about the wrestlers' mindset, driving me to create *American Dream*. *American Dream* blends observational and performative styles, following Kabonga and his team as they prepare for a major show. Using a fly-on-the-wall approach, it explores their real and imaginary worlds, enhanced by dream sequences.

This project allows contributors to express their true selves within the wrestling ring, merging reality and imagination. I aim to push documentary filmmaking boundaries, departing from my previous work, *Kilo 64*, while exploring characters chasing their dreams.



Producer's Note

Ahmed Abdelsalam

In 2010, I began my filmmaking journey with a handy-cam at school, dreaming of becoming a filmmaker despite feeling like an outsider and facing ridicule. I believe seeking validation for our dreams and acceptance of our true selves is a fundamental human need. Learning about Kabonga and his fellow wrestlers, I was drawn to their world. Their struggle to reconcile dreams with reality resonated with me, as I faced a similar dilemma. This film is about resilience. El-Shenawy's approach, blending non-fiction and fiction, excites me as a fiction filmmaker and friend, seeing him explore new documentary filmmaking methods.

Goals of Participating:

We are looking for international co-producers to increase our probabilities for international grants and funds, funders, investors, and world sales opportunities.



LET'S WAIT AND SEE

Director **Mahdi Fleifel**

Producer **Geoff Arbourne**

Production Company **Nakba FilmWorks and Inside Out Films**

Denmark, UK | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 3,000,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): Red Sea Fund Development -

Contact Information

Geoff Arbourne | geoff@insideoutfilms.uk

Synopsis

An old Palestinian man's world is turned upside when he's suddenly granted the right to return.



Director's
Biography
Mahdi Fleifel

Director's Intention

Born in Dubai, Mahdi Fleifel lives and works between Denmark, England and Greece. A graduate of the UK's National Film & Television School, he studied Fiction directing under Stephen Frears and Pawel Pawlikowski. In 2010 he founded the company "Nakba FilmWorks".

With Let's Wait and See, I want to tell the story of the Palestinian refugees to explore what the concepts of 'home' and 'community', in all their contradictions, mean to those living in exile.



Producer's
Note
Geoff Arbourne

We're thrilled about Mahdi Fleifel's upcoming film, "Let's Wait and See." It's received fantastic feedback, and we believe it'll captivate audiences globally. The story follows an elderly Palestinian man whose life changes when he's granted the right to return home. It explores themes of identity, belonging and justice. With Fleifel's vision, Boulifa's writing, and our international team, backed by funding from the UK and Saudi Arabia and support from Salaud Morisset, we're confident in its success. As the producer, I'm excited about its potential. Looking forward to sharing it at the Amman International Film Festival.

Goals of Participating:
Development funding.



MY MOTHER & I

Director **Dilpak Majeed**

Producer **Marwa Tammam**

Production Company **Patchwork Productions**

Iraq, Egypt, Qatar | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 215,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 80,000

Contact Information

Marwa Tammam | Marwa.m.tammam@gmail.com

Synopsis

Huri has lived in isolation since childhood with her mother and her sheep in Iraqi Kurdistan. She is now confronted with the outside world and the possibilities for a new beginning.

« A coming of age story that begins at 70 years old »



Director's
Biography
Dilpak Majeed

Dilpak Majeed was born in Duhok, Iraq in 1994. She finished her studies at the University of Duhok in the department of chemistry. She has worked as a journalist, a director, camera, and an editor on many reports and features and worked as a costume designer. Dilpak also worked on some journalism websites that were focusing on Yazidi cases. She took several filmmaking workshops and wrote and directed Gado, Short Movie.

Director's Intention

I come from the same village as Huri and Shemi, where I found in Shemi a symbol of my own yearning for freedom from societal constraints. In Huri's quest for freedom, I recognized my own desire to break free from the restrictions imposed on women in our village. Our film aimed to illuminate the resilience of Yazidi women, transcending religious conflicts. In my dreams, Shemi visited me, she smiled and tried to show me her new teeth as evidence that she hadn't passed away. I realized that my curiosity was not a mere coincidence but a divine arrangement and destiny.



Producer's
Note
Marwa Tammam

The film sheds light on the invisible women living among us, capturing their untold stories and preserving their memory. It raises many questions about personal definitions of freedom, the complexities of motherhood, and whether solitude is a choice we make to protect ourselves against pain and disappointment or a gateway to peace and serenity. It manifests in our characters' journeys and extend to the larger context of the Yazidi community. The story of Huri and Shemi can bridge gaps and open important conversations.

Goals of Participating:

Funders, Partners, Broadcasters.



DWELLERS OF THE CABINS

Director **Hend Bakr**

Producer **Tamer Nady**

Egypt, Qatar | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 201,975.24

Secured financing (\$ or %): 10%

Contact Information

Tamer Nady | tamernady@gmail.com
bentelnilh@gmail.com

Synopsis

In the early 1920s, the flooding of the Nile submerged Nubian villages, pushing some Nubian families to relocate to the city of Alexandria to serve King Fuad. The King ordered for wooden cabins to be built on the outskirts of the royal palace as a dwelling for them. To protect their culture, language and purity of their race, they transformed the Cabins into a Nubian village nestled within the city. Hend, a fourth-generation dweller, grapples with

conflicting influences: her conservative aunt who staunchly guards Nubian culture and her father the rebellious musician who defied the Nubian community embracing notions of blending through his music band.



Director's
Biography
Hend Bakr

Hend Bakr is a director and producer, with Nubian origins, who graduated from the Faculty of Islamic and Arabic Studies at Al- Azhar University. She studied filmmaking at the Jesuit Cinema School in 2010 and participated in the Mediterranean Youth Biennale in Rome in 2011 with the project Halima. She co-founded "Rufy's Films", a major film production company based in Alexandria. Hend directed and produced her first feature documentary The Tedious Tour of M in 2023, which was officially selected in international film festivals in Aswan Women's, Amman International film festivals, and Gabes CinemaFen where it received a special mention from the jury.

Director's
Intention

I am the director and the main protagonist. The film documents the narrative of the Cabins, the place where I was born and raised. Within the insular world of the Cabins, like any minority group protecting its identity, everything took on a unique significance. The city's sun differed from that of the Cabins as if I was in a parallel world... When I stood before an experience of love with a boy who did not belong to my people, I could not understand myself. Are these feelings real? As if my genes were resisting this! Here I needed to deconstruct my confused feelings toward the world.



Producer's
Note
Tamer Nady

Through playful weaving of documentary realism, preplanned abstract scenes, and evocative archival footage, *Dwellers of the Cabins* delves deep into the human experience, exploring themes of displacement, cultural heritage, and the enduring quest for belonging. By spotlighting a culture often marginalized in mainstream narratives, the film challenges notions of identity and belonging among immigrant minorities. We believe its resonance extends beyond borders, particularly amid widespread global migration movements.

Goals of Participating:
Funders, Distributors, and Partners.



YUMNA

Director **Yahya Alabdallah**

Producer **Huda Al Kadhimi and Muna Al Kadhimi**

Production Company **Ishtar Iraq Film Production**

Jordan | Narrative, Comedy, Mystery

Total estimated budget (USD): 637,400

Secured financing (\$ or %): 22%

Contact Information

Huda Al Kadhimi | HudaKadhimi@ishtariraq.com

Synopsis

Young director, Yumna, is preparing for her first short film, which revolves around a Bedouin girl who steals the body of her lover to bury him near her tent. However, the customs confiscated the doll that Yumna had requested fearing that it might be used for sexual purposes.

On that day, the plumbing worker in Yumna's house died due to an accident, Yumna then had no choice but to use the

worker's body to make her short film before handing it over to his family. Will Yumna be able to hide the truth about the body while filming the movie?



Director's
Biography
**Yahya
Alabdallah**

Director's Intention

Yahya was born in Libya in 1978, and raised in Saudi Arabia. He is a writer and a director, with Masters in literature and Film from ECAIR Cinema School in Paris. His first feature, *The Last Friday*, was produced by the Royal Film Commission, and received the Cinema in Motion award at San Sebastian IFF. It became the first Jordanian film to be an official selection at the Berlinale Film Festival in 2012. The film also earned a Special Jury award at both the Dubai and Fribourg Film Festivals, with Ali Suliman winning Best Actor at the Dubai and Carthage Film Festivals. Additionally, it was honored as the Best Film at World Cinema Amsterdam. Currently, Yahya is actively engaged in the production of his second comedy feature film, YUMNA.

Yumna's desire to get rid of a previous relationship that she could not overcome with the cinematographer is her motivation to make the short film. She does everything to have him attached to the team, believing that his presence around her will restore her lost happiness. Yumna's limited opportunity to work with the cinematographer that day makes her accept the idea of using the worker's body. Through the events of the film, we discover that Yumna wants the cinematographer to see the loss she feels through the camera in which he captures the details of this loss.



Producer's Note

**Huda Al Kadhimi
Muna Al Kadhimi**

My collaboration with Yahya began during an RFC program and lasted five years. He supervised script and editing for my debut feature, "Hanging Gardens," inspired by the blend of black comedy and mystery in "Fargo" and "Mulholland Drive." The film's exploration of production challenges mirrors my own journey of leveraging my father's house for funding. This personal connection helps me empathize with Yumna's obstacles in bringing her short film to fruition. Lead roles will be portrayed by Yumna Marwan and Saleh Bakri.

Goals of Participating:

Funders, partners and distribution.

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
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50 METERS

Director **Yomna Khattab**

Producer **Ahmed Amer and Patricia Drati**

Egypt | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 180,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 75%

Contact Information

Yomna Khattab | yakhattab.85@gmail.com

Synopsis

When her father, who used to film her as a little girl with his VHS camera, turns 70, Yomna, who suffers from anxiety since childhood, starts to fear losing him. She decides to make her debut film about him and his water aerobics team, which consists of a group of men over 60. The confined pool provides a setting through which she will approach her father, where he is most himself, to understand her anxieties and overcome her fears.



Director's
Biography

Yomna Khattab

Yomna is a Filmmhouaker based in Cairo. She originally acquired an MA in economics from University of Paris1 Pantheon-Sorbonne. The script of her feature film Rokaya won best script for young scriptwriters for Sawiris Cultural Prize 2018. She wrote and produced the short film Let us Play Yesterday which was premiered at Gouna Film Festival 2023. She is currently developing her first feature documentary Fifty Meters which won IDFA Spotlight Award, participated at IDFA Project Space in 2023, and won several grants such as the Red Sea production fund, and the Danish Film Institute Fund.

Director's
Intention

When I turned 35 years old, I faced this critical phase of 'making choices'. I decided to step into my father's niche only male world to spend more time with him once he turned seventy years old in the same year. I turn roles by standing behind the camera as he used to film me as a kid with his own camera when he was exactly my age. My intention is to approach him, overcome my fears that are holding me from moving forward with my life. I trap myself in this confined pool to find answers and acceptance.



Producer's
Note

**Ahmed Amer
Patricia Drati**

I am taken by Yomna striking cinematic concept in 50 Meters. Her hard work and sincerity bring a poetic sensibility to this documentary project. Telling a story about older men in her milieu incorporating a female gaze into a male world intrigued me. The complexity of relationships between fathers and daughters/sons is something that I try to explore and follow in most of my work whether as a scriptwriter, director and now as a producer. The archival material used in the film is a treasure and represents the internal voice of Yomna in a cinematic way.

Goals of Participating:

Secure part of the non-covered budget financing through cash prizes. Find distributors at this stage of the film Exposure to festivals programmers.



DONKEY BOYS

Director **Ahmad Al Bazz**

Producer **Ameen Nayfeh**

Palestine | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 147,367

Secured financing (\$ or %): 110,000

Contact Information

Ameen Nayfeh | ameen.nayfeh@gmail.com

Synopsis

Donkey Boys is a humorous, intimate look at daily life in the West Bank, seen through the eyes of Mounes, a young activist and veterinary student. Mounes and his rag tag gang of friends are on a mission to create the greatest donkey tour that Palestine has ever seen. It's a terrible business idea and destined for failure, but, like their stubborn donkeys, our heroes defiantly persevere in the face of insurmountable economic and occupation obstacles.



Director's
Biography
Ahmad Al Bazz

Director's Intention

Ahmad Al-Bazz, born in 1993, is an award-winning video-journalist, photographer and documentary filmmaker based in the West Bank city of Nablus in the Palestine region. Ahmad holds an MA degree in Film and Television Studies and Creative Practice from the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom, and a BA degree in Media and Mass Communication from An-Najah National University in Palestine. Since 2012, Ahmad has been a member of the Activestills documentary photography collective.

Coming from a journalistic background, I was accustomed to covering news stories in a country where colonialism is a daily reality. However, with this film, my goal was to document the simple daily lives of Palestinians facing various challenges. I wanted to showcase a side of rural life that is often overlooked by the media and to break the stereotypes about life in Palestine.



Producer's
Note
Ameen Nayfeh

Donkey Boys is an unconventional Palestinian documentary that humorously and warmly tells the story of young entrepreneurs and their donkeys, viewed through the lens of the youth. Avoiding stereotypical depictions of Palestine, it combines elements of countryside life, animal rights, and apartheid with a fresh, funny, and intimate approach. The current rough cut has received mixed feedback, with suggestions for improvement. We plan to use our participation in the AFID program to refine the film further, aiming for larger festivals and a broader release.

Goals of Participating:
Festivals, Funds, Mentorship.



SEEKING HAVEN FOR MR. RAMBO

Director **Khaled Mansour**

Producer **Rasha Hosny and Mohamed Hefzy**

Production Company **Film Clinic**

Egypt, Saudi Arabia | Narrative

Total estimated budget (USD): 624,000

Secured financing (\$ or %): 503,000

Contact Information

Rasha Hosny | rasha.hosny2010@gmail.com

Synopsis

On a quest to save Rambo, his dog and best friend, Hassan rediscovers himself and is forced to confront the fears of his past.



Director's
Biography
Khaled Mansour

Mansour was born in Cairo in 1991 and has a degree in history from the Faculty of Arts at Cairo University, but his deep love for storytelling led him to study cinema independently. Throughout his journey, Mansour has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to honing his craft. He actively engaged in esteemed film labs and markets, eagerly seizing every opportunity to connect with influential filmmakers and mentors. These encounters enriched his artistic vision and contributed to his overall growth as a filmmaker. Khaled has crafted numerous short documentaries and commercials. Seeking Haven for Mr. Rambo is his feature directorial debut.

Director's Intention

For years, I've seen a young man alone on a dark sidewalk at night, hugging his dog in the cold. This image reflects my own loneliness. Seeking Haven for Mr. Rambo isn't about extreme violence against dogs; it's about my generation's complex relationship with society. This paradoxical bond mixes intense love and fear, wrapped in hate, making us feel like stray dogs in our city. We're constantly chased but don't know any other place to belong. This film explores that deep, conflicting sense of belonging and alienation, mirroring our search for a haven in a familiar yet unwelcoming world.



Producer's
Note
**Rasha Hosny
Mohamed Hefzy**

I wish I were Rambo! This was my first thought after reading Seeking Haven for Mr. Rambo. Who wouldn't want someone to care for them like Hassan cares for Rambo? This unique relationship, helping Hassan overcome his low self-esteem and become a rebel, motivated me to work on this film. The script's originality and the complex relationships—Hassan's parental bond with Rambo and his conflicted feelings toward his parents—make it relatable internationally. Having worked with director Khaled Mansour on previous projects, I believe in his talent and am excited to bring this story to a global audience.

Goals of Participating:

We are looking to complete the post-production process and screening opportunities in film festivals.



SON OF THE STREETS

Director **Mohammed Almughanni**

Producer **Glib Lukianets**

Production Company **Gogol film, Gaza Films, Made in Palestine Project**

Palestine, Poland, Qatar | Feature Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 392,438.88

Secured financing (\$ or %): 362,438.88

Contact Information

Mohammed Almughanni | mohamugha@gmail.com

Synopsis

Against all odds, a stateless Palestinian child in a Beirut refugee camp embarks on a courageous journey for recognition, education, and a brighter future in Son of the Streets.



Director's Biography
Mohammed Almughanni

Director's Intention

Born in Gaza in 1994, Mohammed Almughanni is a film director and screenwriter. He earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Film Directing from Łódź Film School in Poland. His films, focusing on racial justice and socio-political life amid wars, have garnered awards at festivals including Ji.hlava (2020), IDFA (2023) and Clermont-Ferrand (2024).

This project is mainly to help Khodor get his ID and raise awareness on people who are unregistered as citizens, refugees, or humans of any community. I want the audience to relate to Khodor and grasp the tragic situation that he is in. Thanks to the inclusion of black humor throughout the documentary, even the most tragic moments in their lives are transformed into moments of levity. This approach compels the audience to engage more deeply, as it transcends the typical narrative of sorrow and suffering often associated with documentaries featuring crying and starving children.

Almughanni raises awareness about collateral issues faced by innocent civilians in war, including national identity and unregistered children.



Producer's Note
Glib Lukianets

We want to get feedback from the industry about the project, its strengths and weaknesses, the possibilities of world premiere and distribution. Having on board recognized sales agent Mediawan we want to set up the most efficient strategy of utilisation of the film after its completion late 2024.

Goals of Participating:
Festivals, distribution.



THE NABLUS RUNNER

Director **Haïcha Ladrouz**

Producer **Rachid Bouchareb**

Production Company **3B Production FR/ with the coproduction Palosanto Film (ITA) and Eurofilms (ITA)**

France, Italy | Documentary

Total estimated budget (USD): 775,580

Secured financing (\$ or %): 381,180

Contact Information

Haïcha Ladrouz | ladrouz.haicha@orange.fr

Rachid Bouchareb | rbouchareb1@gmail.com

Synopsis

Deya has always dreamed of participating in international marathons. However, in the occupied West Bank, running a 42 km race seems nearly impossible. A 900 km wall and the constantly expanding Israeli settlements reduce his running and living space. Since October 7th and the war in Gaza, another war has been silently unfolding in the occupied territories, where army raids and armed settlers sow terror.

Despite this, Deya has not given up on running. His dream of participating in the Olympics is improbable, but he continues to run wherever he can, as the territory shrinks day by day. Supported by his family and friends from the Nur Shams refugee camp, he clings to a buried dream: to participate in the New York marathon by any means.



Director's
Biography
**Haïcha
Ladrouz**

Director's Intention

After studying cinema, Haïcha started as a senior reporter for ARTE, Canal+, France 2, and Al Jazeera, covering conflict zones like Algeria, Palestine, Syria, and the former Yugoslavia. In 2000, she directed her first documentary, "Steps Without Her." In 2009 and 2012, she returned to the West Bank for "Hope in the Bottle," winning multiple awards. In 2018, she earned a master's in screenwriting from La Femis with honors. Currently, she's working on a documentary about a Palestinian marathon runner and balances fiction writing with filmmaking.

This story moved me because it seemed so improbable, but mostly because it resonates with my vision of Palestine, where everything seems impossible, but sometimes dreams can break down walls when fueled by passion. For Deya, running is a human right. Deya's love for running is a sort of peaceful reaction to human rights being disrespected or freedoms being violated. Running is like a metaphor for life, an ultimate way to break away from an established order, to not give in, to allow oneself to create their own inner and outer space. Symbolically, Deya is re-establishing the borders of his country through the paths he chooses to take, while creating his own running space.



Producer's
Note
**Rachid
Bouchareb**

It's always a powerful feeling for a producer to sense that they're faced with a major project. With this portrait of Deya, a young marathon runner "hindered," Haïcha Ladrouz presents us with a magnificent proposal. There is this incredible paradox, attempting to run 42 km in a territory that doesn't have them... But above all, there is an innovative approach from the director to take stock of a situation and an endless conflict, with a truly human approach of a man clinging to his dream of running. Haïcha's project is an essential film even more today than yesterday. We hope you will share our "sporty" enthusiasm and our cinematic commitment to making this unique documentary.

Goals of Participating:

We are looking for funding and partners to accompany us and help the film go as far as possible.

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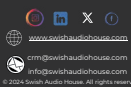
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DEVELOPMENT CATEGORY



The Royal Film Commission - Jordan

\$5,000 cash award for an Arab project in development



IEFTA

\$6,500 cash award for a project in development

مؤسسة غياث و ناديه سختيار
GHIATH & NADIA SUKHTIAN FOUNDATION

Ghiath and Nadia Sukhtian Foundation

\$5,000 cash award for a Jordanian Awal Film project in development



Slate Film Services

In-kind production services award for a Jordanian film in development worth \$30,000

POST-PRODUCTION CATEGORY

Unison Studio

Unison Studio

In-kind sound design and mixing award for a project in post-production worth \$15,000



DOCUMENTARY ASSOCIATION OF EUROPE

In-kind award of bespoke consultation sessions and two free memberships for one year for a documentary project in post-production



Creative Media Solutions

In-kind packaging and DCP services award for a project in post-production worth \$7,000



DTS

In-kind sound editing award for a project in post-production worth \$20,000



The Royal Film Commission - Jordan

\$5,000 cash award for a project in post-production

MARKET AWARDS CATEGORY



ART

\$10,000 cash award for a project in development



CineVida

In-kind art direction pre-production consultancy award for a project in development worth \$15,000



El Gouna Film Festival

In-kind award for a project to participate in CineGouna Platform 2024



Swish Audio House

- In-kind audio post-production award for a project in post-production worth \$13,000
- In-kind original film score award for a project in post-production worth \$20,000



RUM Pictures

In-kind coloring, VFX and DCP award for a project in post-production worth \$39,000



RFC Post-Production Lab

In-kind award for a project in post-production to participate in Mosaic Post-Production Lab

MARKET AWARDS CATEGORY



Film Lab Palestine

In-kind color grading award for a project worth \$15,000



Sard

In-kind screenwriting consultation award for a project in development



Franco Arabe

In-kind award for a Jordanian project in development to travel to France to attend Noisy-le-sec 2024.



Oticons

In-kind music consultancy award for a project in development or post-production worth \$6,000



Rowad Media

In-kind project development services award for a project in development worth \$10,000

Alexandra Viets

In-kind consultation award for a project in development

 Unison Studio

Seamless Sound, Seamless Story

FROM RAW FOOTAGE TO OSCAR-WORTHY SOUNDTRACKS

Unison Studio is a leading audio post-production studio based in Malmö, Sweden. We are steadfastly committed to excellence and specialise in delivering top-notch sound solutions for film and media projects. We understand the vital role that sound plays in enhancing the storytelling experience. Our dedicated team combines artistic creativity with technical expertise to bring projects to life through immersive soundscapes.

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"Sard" provides a unique model in the Middle East, it was established as a writing room and developed to be a content creation company for originals and adaptations (novels- international formats) for cinema and TV. Additionally, it expanded to coproduction.

"Sard" is the first kind of incubator for both talents and great ideas in the MENA region market. It has a team of 9 writers, and many freelancers and researchers.

Get to know them more on-screen and at the Amman Film Festival.

"Sard" was founded by the Egyptian Scriptwriter Mariam Naoum in 2016. The word "Sard" is an Arabic word that means storytelling.

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Screenwriter

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WORKSHOPS

FILM CRITICS

ACTING FOR A REASON

FILM FESTIVAL STRATEGY

MASTERING THE ART OF FESTIVAL NETWORKING

SCRIPT MAJLIS

ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTARIES

Workshop **FILM CRITICS**

Date(s) 6th, 7th, 8th of June 2024 (online)
1st and 2nd of July 2024

Duration 10:00 AM - 05:00 PM

Location RFC Multipurpose Room

About the Workshop

A comprehensive workshop on film criticism and analysis offers an enlightening journey into the world of cinema, tailored for professional and young journalists eager to delve deeper into the art and technique of film critique. Spanning two dynamic sessions, the online workshop, where participants are introduced to the fundamentals of film criticism, the language of cinema, and essential analysis techniques through engaging discussions and practical exercises. The physical second part is where participants apply their skills in a practical setting, exploring different film genres and refining their critique through writing and group discussions.

ABOUT THE EXPERT(S)



Rasha Hosny

Rasha, is an Egyptian film critic, programmer, script editor and producer. She is a key programmer at Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF). Also, she is an associate programmer at Tribeca Film Festival (TFF). Rasha studied Egyptology, then she obtained a Film Criticism Diploma in 2018. Rasha has been a Golden Globe Awards international voter since 2022, also she has served on the FIPRESCI jury for the 2023 Locarno International Film Festival, 2022 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, the 2017 Berlin International Film Festival, and the 2019 Rotterdam International Film Festival, where she was also a part of the Critics' Choice Program in 2020. As a producer, She produced her first short film, "Two Strangers, A Night," while simultaneously working on her first feature film, "Seeking Haven For Mr. Rambo," which has participated in many renowned development labs and financing forums and is currently in the post-production phase.

Workshop **ACTING FOR A REASON**
Date(s) **4th - 7th July 2024**
Duration **10:00 AM - 05:30 PM**
Location **French Institute**

About the Workshop

"Acting for a Reason" is a four-day workshop experience, offering a complete package of tools, exercises, and information that assist talents and performers - in cinema and theatre - to initiate and develop their careers and make stronger influences in their work achievements. The masterclass experience focuses on three significant goals. The first goal is to assist participant talents in establishing a profound relationship with the origins of acting and performance, meeting them with the essences and dimensions of the craft and improving their awareness of themselves and their creative self-abilities. The second goal is to improve the professional abilities of talents, assist them in knowing better the essential tools of acting and using them properly, and master the work process to reach efficient and engaging results in acting performance. The third goal is to guide the talents to manage their careers in the cinema and performance arts industry, strengthen their mental approach, and raise their awareness of the multiple challenges they might face through their careers, even assisting them in allocating work opportunities and making successful auditions.

ABOUT THE EXPERT(S)



Ashraf Barhoum

Ashraf Barhoum is a well-known actor, born and raised in Galilee, originally a Palestinian. After graduating from theater study at Haifa University in 1999, he started his successful career. He appeared in *The Syrian Bride* (2004); *In Paradise Now* (2005), by EFA winner Hany Abu Assad, and in *Lebanon* (2009) by EFA winner Samuel Maoz. Barhom had much attention for his performance as Colonel Faris Al Ghazi in *The Kingdom* (2007), alongside Oscar-winning Jamie Fox, directed by Peter Berg. Another notable work was his role as the monk Ammonius in *Agora* (2009), directed by Alejandro Amenábar, as Cassius in *Coriolanus* (2011) with Ralph Fiennes. Ashraf has won two awards as best actor for his role of Radi in *The Curve* (2015) by Rifqi Assaf at Malmo's Arab Film Festival and Tiburon Film Festival. He played in the TV series *Tyrant* of FX as President Jamal, which had a significant success; other important projects to be mentioned are *Scales*, *Farha*, and *The Stranger*. His most recent work is *Exodus*, a thriller bringing the journey of a smuggler and a refugee child, and *Passing Dreams* with Rashid Masharawi. Besides his work as an Actor, Ashraf is working as a director, and soon, his new Documentary Film *Tell Me Tarshiha* will be released. Furthermore, he is developing various projects as a producer and scriptwriter.

Workshop **FILM FESTIVAL STRATEGY**
Date(s) 7th - 8th July 2024
Duration 10:00 AM - 05:30 PM
Location Abdali (Boulevard) Workshop Room

About the Workshop

The workshop will draw a map of major film festivals in the world for short films and long features (Fiction, documentary, animation). We will raise many topics and questions: how to develop a strategy to attend them with or without a film, the question of world and international premiere, how to work with or without a sales agent attached, how festival programmers work. Then, we will draw a regional and worldwide map of film markets, workshops and labs, and will answer some questions: why they have been created, why those events are important in producers and filmmakers' carrier developments, which strategy to develop, do and don't. Throughout the workshop, we will detail many concrete examples of festivals and international markets' programs.

ABOUT THE EXPERT(S)

Thibaut Bracq



Thibaut Bracq holds degrees in Literature, Philosophy, and Cinema, along with a master's in Cultural Management from Dauphine School University in Paris. He's deeply experienced in supporting emerging directors and producers. He coordinated and later led Paris Project at Paris Cinema IFF (2007-2012), then served for 13 years as a film programmer at Angers Premiers Plans Film Festival (2007-2019), and 7 years as Angers Workshops coordinator (2012-2018). He worked as Project Manager for Alliance for development at Locarno IFF (2018-2019) and as Open Doors Extended Coordinator (October 2019 – March 2020). Bracq headed the Atlas Workshops (2019-2023) at Marrakech IFF, focusing on fostering a new generation of Arab and African filmmakers. He has worked as a program consultant at La Fabrique Cinéma in Cannes (2012-2018) before becoming program coordinator in 2023. He's been the international film programmer at Ulaanbaatar IFF in Mongolia since 2013 and a member of the film selection committee at Poitiers IFF since 2020. He is an industry consultant for training programs (Jump in at Poitiers IFF, Focus Copro at Cannes IFF, Talent Village at Les Arcs Film Festival...), and has been regularly involved as a reader/member of film funds and commissions (Aide aux cinémas du monde, Open Doors Consultancy, Fondation Gan, French regions commissions, Cinéforum, La Fabrique Cinéma, Purin Pictures...).

Workshop **MASTERING THE ART OF FESTIVAL NETWORKING**
Date(s) **4th - 5th July 2024**
Duration **10:00 AM - 05:30 PM**
Location **Abdali (Boulevard) Workshop Room**

About the Workshop

We all acknowledge the value of creating relationships for a sustainable career in the industry, but networking, especially at international festivals, can be quite challenging for even the most talented and experienced professionals. How do you position yourself confidently, connect with ease and keep the conversation going? From introducing yourself to a stranger at the coffee bar, to cocktail pitching and presenting your project at 1:1 meetings, what do you really need to know - and do - to set yourself up for success? In this dynamic interactive workshop, we'll look at what comes into play during different types of encounters and give tips and tools to help you start to build relationships that carry on beyond the festival. And you'll have the chance to practice it right away!

ABOUT THE EXPERT(S)



Bonnie Williams

Bonnie Williams is a Pitch & Public Speaking Coach & Consultant for industry professionals. She specializes in supporting international speakers in finding their own voice and speaking with impact. She consults & mentors on pitching, presenting, networking & interview techniques for filmmakers, creatives, heads of industry, moderators & experts. She also runs workshops and panels on the Human Side of International Co-production: Communicating with Impact. A returning consultant at SeriesManiaInst & Forum; IDFA Forum; IFFR; TIFF & TIDFAgoraDocs; Movies that Matter; New Producers Academy (Netflix supported); CEE Animation Forum; HFM/NFF. She works with TAICCA; Conecta; Midpoint Inst.; WEMW; SerialKiller; EAVETiesThatBind; etc. An Amsterdam-based, American-born (former) actress and stage director, Bonnie also coaches and advises documentary filmmakers on their personal voiceovers.

Workshop **SCRIPT MAJLIS**
Date(s) **8th July 2024**
Duration **10:00 AM - 05:30 PM**
Location **Abdali Executive Meeting Room**

About the Workshop

This one-day intensive workshop will examine the process of consulting for locally based scriptwriters with existing projects in development. Leading with a particular emphasis on incorporating actors as a critical part of a project's development, the workshop will feature a case-study highlight to encourage an in-depth look at the rewriting and revision process---and to ask, what changes for the writer when work is read aloud? Examining techniques to approach broad-based issues such as character veracity, scene building, and dialogue, the workshop will enable participants to experience their work anew.

ABOUT THE EXPERT(S)



Alexandra Viets

Alexandra Anastasia Viets is a writer/screenwriter and journalist whose work focuses on women and displacement. Her first feature-length screenplay, *Cotton Mary*, won a New York Foundation for the Arts award and was produced by Merchant Ivory. Her most recent screenplay, *Ask Me No Questions*, received the award for best screenplay at the Auckland International Film Festival in 2018. Awarded a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities in South Asia, she has taught screenwriting internationally with a focus in India, where she grew up. Her international work includes collaboration on the award-winning *White Sun*, a feature drama produced in Nepal. Currently, Viets teaches writing in the MA in Writing Program at Johns Hopkins University. She is the author of the forthcoming memoir, *After the War, Maryna A Memoir*.

Workshop ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTARIES

Date(s) 4th - 5th July 2024

Duration 10:00 AM - 05:30 PM

Location RFC Multipurpose Room

About the Workshop

This two-day workshop addresses the use of archives in documentary cinema. We start from the research phase, exploring all types of materials such as photographs, newspapers, documents (letters, memoirs), paintings, news footage, home movies, and fictional films... as well as the process of audio research: oral memory, news, songs, voice messages. Then, we move on to how to write and integrate these materials into the film's composition, considering the context of the materials used, the adopted perspective, and the historical role. We reach the final product where creative, ethical, and production choices also intertwine. The workshop is based on Hady Zaccak's personal experience, allowing an insight into the backstage of research, usage choices, and the use of different examples and varied approaches, as well as a self-review process. In this context, specific film models with archival content are deconstructed. Thus, we gradually delve into the various forms of using archives, leading up to the archive film itself.

ABOUT THE EXPERT(S)



Hady Zaccak

Hady Zaccak is a Lebanese award-winning filmmaker and a lecturer-researcher at IESAV Film School, Saint-Joseph University, Beirut. He is the author of more than 20 socio-political documentaries about Lebanon and the Arab world. His selective filmography includes Ya Omri ("104 wrinkles") (2017) (Jury Award Malmo Arab Film Festival, Sweden, 2017), Kamal Joumlatt, Witness and Martyr (2015) (Francophone Trophy for the best documentary 2016), Mercedes (2011) (FIPRESCI Award - Dubai International Film Festival 2011), A History Lesson (2009) (1st prize Arab Film Festival-Rotterdam 2010), The War of Peace (2007), Refugees for Life (2006) ...In addition to his films, Zaccak is the author of two books on cinema: The Last Film Screening, a biography of Cilama Tripoli (2021) and Lebanese Cinema, an itinerary of a cinema heading for the unknown (1929-1996)" (1997). In 2022, Zaccak presented the exhibition: In this place: Reels of Beirut (2022) at Mina Image Centre in Beirut. This year, he will be presenting his new feature film, Cilama.

PANELS AND MASTERCLASSES SCHEDULE

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4th to the 9th of July 2024

