

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



# أيام عمان لصنّاع الأفلام Amman Film Industry Days

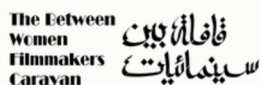
## FESTIVAL PARTNERS

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## AMMAN FILM INDUSTRY DAYS AWARDS PARTNERS



## INDUSTRY PARTNERS



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## About The Royal Film Commission – Jordan:

The Royal Film Commission – Jordan (RFC) is a public institution with administrative and financial autonomy established in 2003 with a mandate to promote for and contribute to the development of an internationally competitive Jordanian audio-visual industry. The RFC organizes training workshops, screenings and provides production support services.

## Film the World in Jordan

From ancient civilizations and breathtaking deserts to vibrant cities and lush valleys, Jordan offers filmmakers an extraordinary diversity of locations within just a few hours' drive. The Royal Film Commission – Jordan's Production Services Department is your trusted production partner, providing seamless support from permits and government coordination to location scouting, customs facilitation, and access to experienced local crews. Combined with a **cash rebate of up to 45%**, Jordan is where remarkable stories come to life.

## The Jordan Film Fund (JFF)

Founded and financed by The Royal Film Commission – Jordan (RFC) in 2011, the Jordan Film Fund (JFF) supports Jordanian and Arab filmmakers by funding cinematic projects across key stages of production. Through its annual call for applications, JFF offers support for Jordanian feature narrative and documentary projects in development, production, post-production, and marketing & distribution. It also supports Arab feature narratives through co-production, encourages regional collaboration, and funds Jordanian short films across narrative, documentary, experimental, and animation categories.

Rooted in a commitment to the Jordanian narrative, JFF champions local stories, cultural perspectives, and films created for children.

## The Regional Training Department (RTD)

The Regional Training Department (RTD) at the Royal Film Commission – Jordan designs and implements advanced project-development labs for Arab filmmakers, screenwriters, producers, and creative teams. Through programs focused on feature-narrative films and series development, producing, and post-production, RTD supports projects at different stages of its creative and professional journey, contributing to the growth of Arab storytelling and strengthening Jordan's role as a regional hub for film development and creative exchange.



مختبر المنتجين العرب  
Arab Producers Lab

## Jordan Cinema Academy (JCA)

The Jordan Cinema Academy (JCA), established by RFC in partnership with the German Jordanian University, is a specialised academy for cinematic arts education. Through its four-semester, 16-month diploma program, JCA combines hands-on training with theoretical education, covering many disciplines including screenwriting, directing, cinematography, editing, sound design, and production. The program culminates in a graduation short film, preparing aspiring filmmakers for careers in the local and international film and television industries.

## صوّر العالم في الأردن

من الحضارات العريقة والصحارى الخلابة إلى المدن النابضة بالحياة والوديان الخضراء، يقدم الأردن لضيّاع الأفلام تنوعاً استثنائياً في مواقع التصوير. يمكن الوصول إليه خلال ساعات قليلة فقط. ويُعدّ قسم خدمات الإنتاج في الهيئة الملكية الأردنية للأفلام شركتكم الموثوقة، حيث يوفر دعماً متكاملًا يشمل التصاريح والتنسيق مع الجهات الحكومية، واستكشاف المواقع، وتسهيل الإجراءات الجمركية، وريطكم بالكوادر المحلية ذات الخبرة. ومع برنامج الحوافز النقدية الذي يصل إلى ٤٥٪، يوفر الأردن البيئة المثالية لتحويل القصص الاستثنائية إلى واقع.

## صندوق الأردن لدعم الأفلام

تأسس صندوق الأردن لدعم الأفلام عام ٢٠١١ بمبادرة وتمويل من الهيئة الملكية الأردنية للأفلام، بهدف دعم المشاريع السينمائية وتمكين ضيّاع الأفلام الأردنيين والعرب. ومن خلال دعوته السنوية للتقديم، يقدم الصندوق الدعم للمشاريع الروائية والوثائقية الطويلة في مراحل التطوير والإنتاج وما بعد الإنتاج والتسويق والتوزيع. كما يدعم المشاريع العربية الروائية الطويلة ضمن فئة الإنتاج المشترك، بما يعزّز التعاون الإقليمي. إضافة إلى دعم إنتاج الأفلام الأردنية القصيرة بمختلف فئاتها، بما في ذلك الروائية والوثائقية والتجريبية والتحريرية. وانطلاقاً من التزامه بالسرديّة الأردنية، يدعم الصندوق القصص المحلية ووجهات النظر والسياسات الثقافية الأردنية، ويشجّع كذلك إنتاج الأفلام الموجهة للأطفال.

## قسم التدريب الإقليمي

قسم التدريب الإقليمي في الهيئة الملكية الأردنية للأفلام يقسم وينمّد مختبرات متقدمة لتطوير المشاريع، موجهة لصيّاع الأفلام العرب، وكتاب السيناريو، والمنتجين، والفرق الإنتاجية. ومن خلال برامج تركز على تطوير الأفلام الروائية الطويلة والمسلسلات، والإنتاج، ومرحلة ما بعد الإنتاج، يدعم القسم المشاريع في مراحل مختلفة من رحلتها الإنتاجية والمهنية، مساهماً في نمو السرد القصصي العربي وتعزيز دور الأردن كمركز إقليمي لتطوير الأفلام والتبادل الإبداعي.

**موزاييك**  
**MOSAIC**  
مختبر لما بعد الإنتاج  
POST-PRODUCTION LAB

## أكاديمية الأردن للسينما

تعد أكاديمية الأردن للسينما، التي أسست من خلال شراكة بين الهيئة الملكية الأردنية للأفلام والجامعة الألمانية الأردنية، أكاديمية متخصصة في تعليم الفنون السينمائية. ومن خلال برنامج دبلوم يمتد على أربعة فصول دراسية (١٦ شهراً)، تجمع الأكاديمية بين التدريب العملي والتعليم النظري، وتغطي العديد من تخصصات صناعة الأفلام، بما في ذلك كتابة السيناريو، والإخراج، والتصوير السينمائي، والمونتاج، وتصميم الصوت، والإنتاج. ويختتم البرنامج بتنفيذ فيلم قصير كمشروع تخرج. لإعداد صيّاع الأفلام الطموحين للانطلاق في مسيرتهم المهنية في قطاعي السينما والتلفزيون على المستويين المحلي والدولي.



## WELCOME NOTE

# RYM ALI

## PRESIDENT AND CO-FOUNDER



A home for both fiction and creative non-fiction for the Arab region and its wider diaspora, the 2026 Amman Film Industry Days this year brings together twenty projects - ten from each genre, narrative and documentary - forming a rich map of contemporary Arab storytelling. As every year, the selection spans three categories: Debut Jordanian projects, Arab projects in Development and Arab projects in post-production.

This year's filmmakers move through deeply personal terrain: home, exile, memory, family, women's agency, political violence, trauma, migration, citizenship and belonging. Many of these stories begin in intimate, specific places - a family home, an inherited object, a half-remembered voice - while speaking outward to wider regional and global realities. Across the selected projects, the family repeatedly emerges as a political space, where power, silence and inherited history are negotiated long before they reach a government or a border.

It is worth noting that the 2026 line-up includes notably 11 female producers, a meaningful indicator that women in our region are shaping these projects not only as authors, but as the producers driving access, financing and long-term sustainability.

Geographically, the selection reflects how Arab cinema is built today: across borders, through co-productions and within layered identities. The projects originate from Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria, Syria, Iraq and Yemen.

Rather than being single national stories, several of them also carry European co-production partners: projects shaped by movement, migration and the realities of transnational filmmaking. The also selection reveals a generation of filmmakers working beyond traditional realism on both genre and hybrid forms. They use psychological drama, horror, political thriller, desert survival, archive-based documentary, and documentary road movies not as escapism, but as sharper tools for confronting fear, control, memory and survival.

With these twenty projects, AFID's pitching platforms emerge increasingly as a regional space for ambitious Arab cinema; a space where bold, personal stories meet the creative, financial, and strategic support they need to reach the world. And for the first time this year, the Festival - in cooperation with the Royal Film Commission of Jordan, our long-standing partner - initiated a tailor-made development program for Jordanian shorts, contributing to the growth and expansion of the local film industry.

And as always, we look forward to seeing all these projects come to life!

### **Rym Ali**

President & Co-Founder

Amman International Film Festival - Awal Film

# BASSAM ALASAD

HEAD OF INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT,  
INNOVATION & STRATEGIC  
PARTNERSHIPS



Every year, while reading the applications submitted to Amman Film Industry Days, I am reminded that cinema begins before the camera, before the budget, and even before the pitch. It begins with a voice: uncertain, searching, sometimes fragile, but unmistakably human.

This year, that voice reached us in a new context. Artificial intelligence is no longer a distant conversation or a speculative future. It is already inside our process. It appears in treatments, log-lines, biographies, visual references, budgets, translations and pitch documents.

Sometimes it helps a filmmaker express an idea more clearly. Sometimes it flattens the idea until it no longer sounds like the person who wrote it.

This raises a question I do not yet know how to answer. If AI is used ethically, with no stolen work, no exploited artist, and no violated consent, is it simply another creative tool? Or is it fundamentally different because it does not only assist the hand, but also enters the imagination?

In sport, we understand why some performance-enhancing tools are prohibited. They can distort the meaning of the achievement itself. Should we think of AI in the same way? If a project becomes sharper, more polished, more fundable, or more articulate because of AI, are we seeing the filmmaker more clearly, or are we seeing an artificial advantage?

And if AI helps a filmmaker overcome language barriers, word limits, formatting demands, or the anxiety of presenting their work professionally, is that unfair, or is it democratising the process?

This year, we saw both sides. Some applications used AI mindlessly. They sounded correct, but empty. They had the rhythm of a funding application, but not the pulse of a film. Others seemed to use AI carefully: to tighten a text, clarify structure, respect a word limit, or translate an intention without erasing the filmmaker's voice. In those cases, the technology did not replace authorship. It served it.

At AIFF, we celebrate art, and we recognise that artists have always used technology. The question is not whether technology belongs in cinema. It always has. The question is where assistance ends and substitution begins.

This is also how we approached the selection process. Our task was not only to choose the most complete dossiers or the most polished pitches, but to listen for urgency, originality, cinematic instinct, emotional truth, and the possibility of growth.

In the end, technology may change the way applications are written, pitches are prepared, and projects are presented. But what we are looking for remains the same: the human presence behind the work. The filmmaker who has something to say. The story that insists on being told. The voice that survives the process and reaches us, not because it is perfect, but because it is alive.

# Seamless Sound, Seamless Story

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.

GET IN  
TOUCH



[contact@unisonstudio.se](mailto:contact@unisonstudio.se)



[@unisonstudiosweden](https://www.facebook.com/unisonstudiosweden)



[@unisonstudioo](https://www.instagram.com/unisonstudioo)

## ALLURING motion pictures

Alluring Motion Pictures is an international production company operating between Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Netherlands. Credits include programs at Cannes Marché du Film, Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Market, IFFR, Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia, and the Red Sea International Film Festival.

The company focuses on genre cinema, real-event stories and underrepresented voices.

***Presenting an in-kind script consultancy award worth \$6,000 for a first-time Jordanian or Arab narrative project in development.***

[alluringmotion.com](https://alluringmotion.com)

[@alluringmotion](https://www.instagram.com/alluringmotion)

[info@alluringmotion.com](mailto:info@alluringmotion.com)



Amman Film Industry Days (AFID) offers a comprehensive program of networking opportunities, project support, masterclasses, workshops and panels designed to empower filmmakers in Jordan and the region.

AFID features three competitive pitching platforms for projects in development and post-production, with a professional jury granting cash and in-kind awards.

The Amman Film Market continues to connect filmmakers with funders, partners and distributors, while offering additional awards through strategic industry partners.

This year, in collaboration with the Royal Film Commission - Jordan, AFID introduces The Short Film Incubator, a new development program supporting Jordanian short film projects through mentorship, script development, dossier preparation and pitching training, culminating in a dedicated pitching session and development award during AFID.

Together, these platforms reflect AFID's ongoing commitment to nurturing creative talent and supporting the next generation of storytellers in Jordan and across the Arab region.





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SECTION 01

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# JURY

# AVELINA PRAT

SCRIPTWRITER AND DIRECTOR · SPAIN

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Avelina Prat has a degree in Architecture and began in cinema as a script supervisor alongside directors such as Fernando Trueba, Cesc Gay, David Trueba and Lucile Hadžihalilović. She directed several documentaries and short films that have been featured in festivals and worked as a programmer for Cinema Jove IFF. She is the scriptwriter and director of the feature films Vasil (2022) and The Portuguese House (2025), nominated for Best Original Screenplay at the 2026 Goya Awards.

# AYMAN EL AMIR

FILMMAKER AND SCRIPT CONSULTANT · EGYPT

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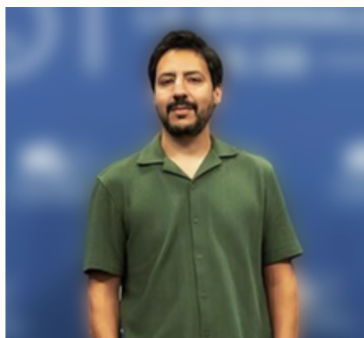


Ayman El Amir is an Egyptian filmmaker and script consultant. His work as a filmmaker includes directing and producing, with Nada Riyadh, the feature documentary, *The Brink of Dreams*, which premiered in Cannes' Semaine de la Critique and won L'Œil d'Or for the best documentary film at Festival de Cannes 2024. He also produced the fiction *Fakh (The Trap)*, screened at Cannes' Semaine de la Critique and TIFF 2019. He has worked as a script consultant, mentor and jury member for many programs, labs, funds and institutes including TorinoFilmLab, Cannes' La Fabrique, Doha Film Institute, IDFA Bertha Fund, EAVE, Marrakech Atlas Atelier, Full Circle Lab, Meditalents, Hot Docs Documentary Fund, Netflix MENA Accelerator Lab and DW Academy. Among the projects he has worked on as a consultant: *Goodbye Julia* (Sudan, Un Certain Regard, Cannes 2023), *The Settlers* (Chile, Un Certain Regard, Cannes 2023) and *Pierce* (Singapore, Karlovy Vary Film Festival 2024).

# MEHDI BARSAOUI

FILMMAKER · TUNISIA

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Born in 1984 in Tunis, Mehdi Barsaoui graduated in editing from the Higher Institute of Multimedia Arts in Tunis. He then went to Italy to complete his training and graduated as a director from DAMS in Bologna. He has directed three short films, which have received recognition and awards at several international festivals. His first feature film, *A Son* (2019), started its international career in the official selection at the 76th edition of the Venice Film Festival, where it received two awards. Distributed in twenty countries and winning multiple awards all over the world, *A Son*, was the first Tunisian film to win a French César Award. His latest film, *Aïcha* (2024), also premiered at the Venice International Film Festival, before going on to screen at numerous festivals and securing distribution in several countries.



# RAND BEIRUTY

WRITER, DIRECTOR, CREATIVE PRODUCER · JORDAN

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Rand Beiruty is a writer, director, creative producer and the co-founder of Shaghab Films. She holds a practice-based Ph.D. from Film University Babelsberg, where her research focused on questions of representation and participatory filmmaking. Her debut feature, *Tell Them About Us*, premiered at CPH:DOX and won the 2025 German Documentary Film Award. Her animated short, *Shadows*, premiered at the 81st Venice International Film Festival and went on to screen at 100+ festivals, winning over 20 awards including the World Animation Award at Leeds International Film Festival and the Grand Prize at Regard Saguenay International Short Film Festival.

# TALAL ALMUHANNA

FILM AND TELEVISION PRODUCER · KUWAIT

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Talal Al-Muhanna is a Kuwaiti film and television producer working across documentary and fiction with filmmakers from across the Arab world. His award-winning films, produced through his company, Linked Productions, have screened at major international festivals, including Amman IFF, Cairo IFF, Dubai IFF, New York Film Festival, and Directors' Fortnight in Cannes. He has received two awards at the BBC Arabic Film Festival, as well as a British Independent Film Award for Best Ensemble Performance for a Baghdad-set feature later acquired by Netflix. His work has been broadcast across the USA, Europe, and South America, and includes a Czech TV Prize-winning co-production with German broadcaster ZDF in collaboration with ARTE. Talal holds degrees in film production from Leeds Metropolitan University and has served on filmmaker selection committees and international juries, including the Jordan Film Fund and La Fémis Gulf Summer University in Paris. Since 2017, he has produced large-scale theatrical productions at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre in Kuwait.



IEFTF

INTERNATIONAL EMERGING  
FILM TALENT FUND

IEFTF, an Athens-based funding body is proud to support the Amman International Film Festival, presenting a cash award worth €5,000, to a project pitching at this year's Amman Film Industry Days (AFID) Pitching Forum.

**IEFTF.org**

Award funded by IEFTF, a Greek based entity funding cash awards in the film industry.

SECTION 02

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# INDUSTRY EXPERTS

# STEFANO TEALDI

PITCHING TRAINER · ITALY

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Stefano Tealdi was born in South Africa to Italian parents, he established Stefilm in Turin, Italy, where he develops, produces or directs documentary one-offs, doc series and feature-length dramas. Recently produced films: A Bastard and Pinochet's Legacy by Pepe Rovano; Amor by Virginia Eleuteri Serpieri; Snajka: A Diary of Expectations by Tea Vidović Dalipi; and Rispet by Cecilia Bozza Wolf. When We Were Bullies by Jay Rosenblatt received an Academy Award nomination in 2022. He directed In the Belly of the City (doc series). He tutors for Biennale Cinema and VR College Venice, Attagirl, Amman Film Industry Days, Cannes Docs, Documentary Campus, ESoDoc, La Fabrique Cinémas, Produire au Sud, Imagination - Arab Film Scriptwriting, Ouga Film Lab, Red Sea Lodge, RIDM Montreal, TorinoFilmLab, Scuola Holden and ZeLIG Film School.

# KINDA KURDI

PITCHING PLATFORM READER · FILMMAKER AND TV PRODUCER · JORDAN

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Kinda Kurdi is an award-winning filmmaker and TV producer with 16 years' experience creating documentaries and animation across multiple platforms. Her work has aired on the BBC, Cartoon Network, Channel 4, Ro'ya and KTV. Her latest documentary, Guns, Gangs and Second Chances, is currently streaming on Channel 4. Her previous short documentary, As Above So Below, won Best Documentary Short at EIFF and was shortlisted at festivals in London, Venice and the United States.



# LUBNA BAGSAIR

PITCHING PLATFORM READER · WRITER AND PRODUCER · SUDAN

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Lubna Bagsair is a Sudanese writer and producer based in Dubai. Her previous films have won awards and screened at festivals in the MENA region and abroad including Red Sea, DOC NYC and Al Ain FF. Previously, Lubna worked for 8 years at the leading UAE-based studio Image Nation Abu Dhabi, where she played a crucial role in developing narrative and documentary films. She also worked as a Creative Manager at MBC Studios, focusing on feature film and television development. She is an alum of Film Independent's Global Media Makers program and the Middle East Media Initiative. Lubna has a bachelor's degree in journalism and a master's degree in film, and spent the first year of her working life as a crime reporter.

# SAMI TLILI

PITCHING PLATFORM READER · FILMMAKER, PRODUCER, CURATOR · TUNISIA

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Sami Tlili holds a PhD in Modern Literature from Aix-Marseille University and an MA in Film Production from MetFilm School London, and trained in documentary filmmaking at Ateliers Varan Paris. He directed two award-winning documentaries, *Cursed Be the Phosphate* (2012) and *On the Crossbar* (2019). His short fiction, *Obvious Offside*, was selected for the International Competition at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival in 2021. He has collaborated on several feature films as a dialogue writer, script consultant, and development advisor. He served as artistic director and film selector for festivals including the Carthage Film Festival and co-founded Gabes Cinema Fen, where he was artistic director from 2018 to 2021. In 2022, Sight and Sound invited him to participate in its Directors' Poll of the Greatest Films of All Time.

# قافلة بين سينمائيات

BETWEEN WOMEN FILMMAKERS' CARAVAN SCREENINGS

2026



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is the Science of Funding



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SELECTED PROJECTS

10 PROJECTS

ARAB FILMS

# IN DEVELOPMENT

# ABOUT LOVE & SEPTEMBER LAWS

SUDAN, FRANCE, GERMANY, SWEDEN, SAUDI ARABIA, QATAR · FEATURE NARRATIVE



## DIRECTOR

**Mohamed Kordofani**

## PRODUCER

**Khalid Awad**

khalid.awad@klozium.com

## PRODUCTION

**Klozium Studios**

## BUDGET

**3,000,000 USD**

## SECURED

**447,000 USD**

## SYNOPSIS

As Jaafar Nimeiri imposes Sharia law across Sudan in 1983, Carter, a pragmatic African American journalist, arrives in Khartoum chasing a sellable story. He reconnects with Nouri, an idealistic doctor suspended for refusing a court-ordered amputation and unknowingly hires Nouri's ex-wife, Fatin, as his translator. As Carter and Fatin fall into a quiet, forbidden love, their work uncovers a covert operation that exposes the regime's deepest hypocrisy. When Nouri is arrested for heresy and refuses to repent, his execution becomes imminent. Carter holds the one story that could save him, but publishing it risks his career, his freedom and Fatin.



## DIRECTOR

**Mohamed Kordofani**

## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Mohamed Kordofani is a Sudanese aircraft engineer turned filmmaker. His shorts include *Nyer kuk*, which received the NAAS Award for Best Arab Film at the Carthage Film Festival in 2016. His debut feature, *Goodbye Julia*, executive produced by Academy Award winner Lupita Nyong'o, was the first Sudanese film to premiere at Cannes, where it won the Un Certain Regard Prix de la Liberté. The film went on to win 65 additional awards. Kordofani is co-founder of Klozium Studios, based between Khartoum and Nairobi.

## DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

After *Goodbye Julia*, I am continuing to explore Sudan's modern history through intimate human stories shaped by political rupture. Set in 1983, *About Love & September Laws*, revisits the enforcement of the September Laws and the execution of Mahmoud Mohamed Taha as a turning point in Sudan's collapse. Through a love triangle between an African-American journalist, a Sudanese translator and her ex-husband, the film examines freedom, sacrifice, faith, ambition and the cost of truth. It is the second chapter in a planned trilogy tracing how Sudan arrived at its current civil war.



## PRODUCER

**Khalid Awad**

## PRODUCER'S NOTE

*About Love & September Laws* reunites key members of the internationally acclaimed *Goodbye Julia* team, led by Mohamed Kordofani. The film carries both artistic and commercial ambition, combining a powerful Sudanese historical moment with an accessible emotional structure and significant English-language dialogue. With co-producers in France, Germany and Sweden, we aim to access European public funds, international equity and strategic casting opportunities. The project is designed for strong festival positioning and international distribution, while remaining rooted in Sudanese history and political urgency.

## LOOKING FOR

MENA funds, development labs, script and pitching feedback, industry guidance, as well as regional and international sales agents, platforms, broadcasters and distributors to secure future sales opportunities.

# DANCE WITH ME

CZECH REPUBLIC, LEBANON, GERMANY · DOCUMENTARY



## DIRECTOR

**Leila Basma**

## PRODUCERS

**Natalia Pavlove, Merisa Meier**

## BUDGET

**700,000 USD**

## PRODUCTION

**Other Stories · Intuition Club**

[natalia@otherstoriesfilms.com](mailto:natalia@otherstoriesfilms.com)

## SECURED

**70,000 USD**

## SYNOPSIS

When my uncle Adam fled our traditional Muslim Lebanese family during the civil war in the 1970s to become the first male solo belly dancer in Los Angeles, he became a mystery within our family. Years later, I set out to reconnect with him, bridging the distance between us and uncovering how his story intertwines with my own search for identity, belonging and acceptance.



**DIRECTOR****Leila Basma****DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

Leila is a Lebanese filmmaker and photographer based between Beirut and Prague. She holds a Master's degree in Film Directing from FAMU. Her FAMU graduation film, *Sea Salt*, premiered at the 80th Venice International Film Festival and is now streaming on HBO Max and Nowness. Her second-year FAMU short documentary, *The Adam Basma Project*, was short-listed for the 48th annual Student Academy Awards. Leila is currently developing her first feature film, *Running with Beasts*, and her first feature documentary, *Dance with Me*.

**DIRECTOR'S INTENTION**

"It's a country of contradictions" is how people describe Lebanon, and I grew up in the midst of contradictions, which made it a struggle to understand who I was. When I watched my uncle's belly dancing videos for the first time, while being aware of the shame and unacceptance my family held toward his career, I understood that he carries the contradictions of our society: the dancing, the music, the freedom on one side, the taboos and conservatism on the other. I hope that *Dance with Me* portrays a miniature of my family and society.

**PRODUCER****Natalia Pavlove****PRODUCER'S NOTE**

Leila and I met at film school in Prague and have since collaborated on several films. With *Dance with Me*, we are happy to continue this collaboration. I was immediately drawn to Adam's story, full of contrasts and contradictions. This is not merely a portrait of a charismatic man — it is a film about family relationships, emigration, belonging and the search for one's own identity. Through a deeply personal journey, enriched by music and dance, we hope to create a film with universal appeal that resonates across cultures.

**LOOKING FOR**

Funders, partners, distribution and festivals.

# I AM AFRAID TO MEET YOU SOMEDAY

EGYPT · NARRATIVE



**DIRECTOR**

**Khaled Mansour**

**PRODUCER**

**Rasha Hosny**

rasha.hosny2010@gmail.com

**PRODUCTION**

**Other Stories · Intuition Club**

**BUDGET**

**1,323,000 USD**

**SECURED**

**390,000 USD**

**SYNOPSIS**

When her father suddenly falls ill, 40-year-old Eman discovers that everything she knew about her late mother was a lie, pushing her to uncover the truth about her death and unknown family — truths that force her into life-changing decisions.



## DIRECTOR

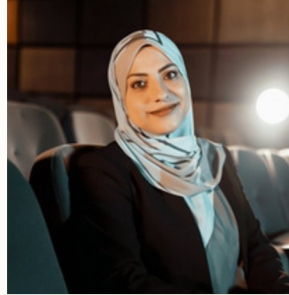
**Khaled Mansour**

## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Khaled Mansour, born in Cairo in 1991, graduated from Cairo University's History Department and pursued filmmaking independently, refining his craft through international workshops and festivals. His debut feature, *Seeking Haven for Mr. Rambo*, premiered at the 81st Venice International Film Festival, earning critical acclaim. It was also selected for the official competitions of the Red Sea International Film Festival and Carthage Film Days, establishing Mansour as an emerging voice in contemporary cinema.

## DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

In 2022, a news story about a daughter witnessing her mother's honour killing deeply affected me. It revealed not an isolated tragedy, but a reflection of a society shaped by fear, control and rigid expectations. Through this film, I explore a fragile line, where love becomes constraint and fear becomes violence. Rather than judging individuals, I seek to understand the systems that shape them. Ultimately, the film asks a universal question: how do we face the truth without losing our humanity?



## PRODUCER

**Rasha Hosny**

## PRODUCER'S NOTE

What draws me to a film is the emotional connection I feel with its characters. In *I Am Afraid to Meet You Someday*, I see reflections of both Eman and Camelia — two women representing the choices many Arab women face between conformity and freedom. This is my second collaboration with director Khaled Mansour after *Seeking Haven for Mr. Rambo*, which premiered in Venice. We believe in the power of Arab and international co-productions to bring this story to wider audiences and are actively seeking partners to join us.

## LOOKING FOR

Co-producers, distributors, funds, film festivals and sales agents.

# LA CHAMADE

TUNISIA, FRANCE, BELGIUM · NARRATIVE



## DIRECTOR

**Lotfi Achour**

## PRODUCERS

**Sébastien Hussenot, Lotfi Achour**  
sebastien@lunaprod.fr

## BUDGET

**2,200,000 USD**

## PRODUCTION

**La Luna Productions**

## SECURED

**40%**

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## SYNOPSIS

When Sonia (19) learns that her father, believed to have died in an accident, actually died under torture during Ben Ali's dictatorship, she travels to Tunis to uncover the truth about her family history. Through her father's story, Sonia comes to realise the sacrifices her mother, Alia, had to make twenty years earlier.



**DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER**  
**Lotfi Achour**

**DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

A filmmaker, stage director and theatre director based in Paris and Tunis, Lotfi Achour has created more than twenty-five plays and musicals performed across London, Paris, the Festival d'Avignon, Tunis, Lebanon, Egypt and beyond. His latest theatre production, Macbeth, was produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company for the London Olympics. Red Path, his second feature film, had its world premiere in competition at the 2024 Locarno Film Festival and has been selected for more than eighty festivals, winning over twenty awards to date.

**DIRECTOR'S INTENTION**

La Chamade is inspired by a true story. It is my second film dedicated to the memory of the Ben Ali dictatorship, following Angle mort, aiming to preserve through cinema fragments of a collective memory whose witnesses are disappearing. The narrative unfolds in two time periods: 1999, Alia's time, and 2019, her daughter Sonia's. This choice allows us to show the generational transmission of trauma. La Chamade sheds light on the persistence of traumas inherited from the past, prompting reflection on memory and the possibility of healing.



**PRODUCER**  
**Sébastien Hussenot**

**PRODUCER'S NOTE**

La Chamade is part of a genuine collaborative project involving APA (Tunisia) and La Luna Productions (France). The strength of the project lies notably in this interplay between the personal and the political, a true hallmark of our productions, in which we sacrifice neither the beauty of cinema nor our commitment. The screenplay explores the consequences for characters, across generations, of acts of senseless violence. We are convinced this will be a key driver of audience empathy and a foundation for the film's commercial success.

**LOOKING FOR**

Funders, distribution partners, international sales, festivals.

# LAST TRIP

SYRIA, GERMANY, FRANCE, POLAND, SAUDI ARABIA · NARRATIVE



## DIRECTOR

**Ziad Kalthoum**

## PRODUCERS

**May Odeh & Zorana Mušikić**  
may@mayana.film

## BUDGET

**1,903,000 USD**

## PRODUCTION

**Mayana Films**

## SECURED

**20.13%**

## SYNOPSIS

A former Syrian army photographer living as a refugee in Berlin is plunged into a psychological crisis when a bondage performance reawakens buried trauma. As nightmares and hallucinations blur the line between past and present, he retreats with his girlfriend to the Polish countryside in search of escape. But the further he runs, the more relentlessly the past pursues him. Haunted by the violence he witnessed during the war, he must finally confront what he has been trying to forget and reclaim agency over a past that has long held him captive.



## DIRECTOR

**Ziad Kalthoum**

## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Ziad Kalthoum is a Syrian filmmaker based in Berlin. Born in Homs in 1981, he studied film and began his career with *Oh My Heart* (2009), a documentary banned in Syria. During his compulsory military service, he made *The Immortal Sergeant*, which premiered at Locarno in 2014 and won the BBC Arabic Festival Award in 2015. After deserting the Syrian Army in 2013, he made *Taste of Cement*, an internationally acclaimed documentary. In 2022, he was awarded an artist residency at Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris.

## DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

As a child, I vowed never to use a weapon after my father gave me a gun to shoot a bird. Years later, during my compulsory military service in Syria, I refused orders to kill civilians and fled into exile. Since then, I have learned that war does not end — it follows us, changing shape across time and place. *Last Trip* explores this through Karim, a character inspired by my own experience. Haunted by the killing machine he was part of, he searches for a way to reclaim agency over his life.



## PRODUCERS

**May Odeh Zorana Mušikić**

may@mayana.film

## PRODUCERS' NOTE

*Last Trip* marks Ziad Kalthoum's first fiction feature after his acclaimed documentary work, transforming personal experiences of war, exile and trauma into a powerful cinematic narrative. Building on the poetic visual language of Ziad's previous films, *Last Trip* reunites him with cinematographer Talal Khoury. With a strong fifth draft of the screenplay completed and European partners attached, we are now seeking collaborators from the Middle East.

## LOOKING FOR

Co-production, financing, sales and festivals.



# MINA

LEBANON, FRANCE, ROMANIA · NARRATIVE



## DIRECTOR

**Marie-Rose Osta**

## PRODUCERS

**Ana-Maria Pirvan, Marie-Rose Osta**

## BUDGET

**1,706,627 USD**

## PRODUCTION

**Anchors Films · Les Flâneurs Films**

## SECURED

**44,250 USD**

## SYNOPSIS

In early 1990s Lebanon, beneath the weight of Syrian occupation, a 9-year-old girl believes everything her mother says becomes true. When those words suddenly stop working, Mina begins to suspect the power she trusted in her mother may have been her own.



DIRECTOR &amp; PRODUCER

**Marie-Rose Osta****DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

Marie-Rose Osta is a Lebanese screenwriter and director working across film, series and video essays. Her latest short film, *Someday, a Child* (2026), won the Golden Bear in Berlinale Shorts. Her previous short, *Then Came Dark* (2021), won the Special Jury Prize at the 43rd Cairo International Film Festival. She also took part in collective, filmmaker-led feature projects, including *Home Bitter Home* (IFFR) and *Letters* (Clermont-Ferrand). She is currently developing her debut feature, *Mina*, and her series, *Echoes*.

**DIRECTOR'S INTENTION**

Did the power of my mother's words shape my world, and if so, what remains of me? For an answer, I went back to my childhood. Set in a Lebanese village under Syrian occupation, *Mina* follows a girl who believes everything her mother says comes true. As adults hide behind silences and half-truths, *Mina* turns her mother's words into a map for understanding the world. *Mina*'s faith is born from love — a love that can turn a parent into a compass, a prophet, a world of her own. But when that belief cracks, the map leads *Mina* somewhere unexpected: towards herself.



PRODUCER

**Ana-Maria Pirvan****PRODUCER'S NOTE**

The most beautiful and challenging aspect of developing a debut feature is witnessing how, as the story takes shape, it becomes more than a script on paper. I strongly connect with *Mina*'s story and believe Marie-Rose's talent and determination will bring it to life with authenticity and power. Following our successful collaboration on *Someday, a Child* — winner of the Golden Bear for Best Short at Berlinale 2026 — we are now preparing *Mina* for financing as a MENA-France-Romania co-production, with production planned for late 2027 / early 2028.

**LOOKING FOR**

Co-producers, funders, investors and pre-sales.

# REMINDE ME TO FORGET

SAUDI ARABIA, QATAR · DOCUMENTARY



## DIRECTOR

**Lama Jamjoom**

Lama.Jamjoom@dardowar.com

## PRODUCERS

**Maryam Sindi & Mawadda Sallam**

## BUDGET

**218,511 USD**

## PRODUCTION

**Dar Dowar**

## SECURED

**26% — 56,500 USD**

## SYNOPSIS

In a communal home for divorced and widowed women in Jeddah, a young filmmaker searches for answers about her mother's divorce and what women can build for one another when family has failed them. There she meets the home's self-appointed guardian, a woman who has spent 25 years searching for her estranged sons. As the filmmaker follows her journey, she immerses herself in a community of women who have built a chosen family, finding love and belonging beyond traditional structures. But their home now faces an uncertain future, threatening everything the women have so carefully built.



**DIRECTOR**

**Lama Jamjoom**

### DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Lama Jamjoom is a Saudi filmmaker whose work explores personal and social narratives shaped by women's experiences in Saudi Arabia. A graduate of Effat University's Cinematic Arts program and an alumna of KDocs Academy and Souk Talents, her debut short documentary, *Mother Eve* (2023), screened internationally and received awards. She is currently developing her first feature documentary, *Remind Me to Forget*, supported through Doha Film Institute, CineGouna, and Storyhouse. Alongside filmmaking, she works in documentary photography, film archiving, and public film programming at Art Jameel.

### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

I grew up searching for a sense of family that disappeared after my parents' separation. My mother, who had tied her identity to her marriage, withdrew into her pain, leaving questions unanswered and shaping my understanding of love. That search for connection followed me into adulthood until it intersected with a community of divorced and widowed women living together in a home. I was drawn to the way they cared for one another. Through this film, I am documenting a space that is disappearing while also redefining my relationship with my mother.



**PRODUCERS**

**Maryam Sindi & Mawadda Sallam**

### PRODUCERS' NOTE

As producers, we were immediately drawn to this project for its ability to reveal stories within our community that often go unnoticed, while offering a deeply personal yet universal exploration of identity, belonging, and transformation. Our connection to the film grew through Lama's unique cultural perspective and the discovery of AlRibat's significance in Historic Jeddah. Through an observational approach, this film honours Hijazi heritage while exploring themes of sisterhood, love, community and belonging.

### LOOKING FOR

Production funding, co-production partners, and industry programs; connections with regional and international festivals, sales agents, distributors, and impact partners to support a strong festival run and wider community outreach.

# THE GUARDIAN

LIBYA, ALGERIA, CANADA, FRANCE · NARRATIVE



## DIRECTOR

**Muhannad Lamin**

## PRODUCER

**Lynda Belkhiria**

lyndaprod@gmail.com

## PRODUCTION

**N'dirou Film**

## BUDGET

**1,296,000 USD**

## SECURED

**97,000 USD**

## SYNOPSIS

In a remote wadi of the Libyan desert, two brothers arrive in search of the Waddan, a rare mountain sheep said to roam the surrounding cliffs. One brother, Qabeel, suffers from a mysterious illness that worsens by the day; the other is determined to save him. Their only hope lies with Assouf, a solitary shepherd who guards the ancient carvings of Wadi Matkhandoush and refuses to help them. As Qabeel's condition deteriorates, he threatens the shepherd's goats, forcing Assouf to lead them into the mountains, where desperation, survival, and violence become increasingly difficult to distinguish.



## DIRECTOR

**Muhannad Lamin**

## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Muhannad Lamin is a Libyan director, editor and producer. He graduated with a degree in directing and screenwriting from Tripoli's Art Institute. His short films, including *Prisoner and Jailer*, have been selected for festivals such as Clermont-Ferrand, Locarno, and Rhode Island. He has collaborated on acclaimed documentaries including *Freedom Fields* (TIFF, BFI, IDFA) and *After a Revolution* (IDFA). In 2023, his debut feature documentary *Donga* premiered at IDFA, where it was nominated for the Beeld & Geluid IDFA ReFrame Award for Creative Use of Archive.

## DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

As a child, I was captivated by the mythical worlds of *Kalila wa Dimna*, *One Thousand and One Nights*, and other stories that formed part of our cultural imagination. As I grew older, I felt that this tradition had become increasingly absent from the stories around me. Years later, discovering Ibrahim Al-Koni's work rekindled that connection. His writing revealed a world where myth, nature, and philosophy remain deeply intertwined, and where the Sahara is not simply a setting but a living presence. With *The Guardian*, I hope to explore that world cinematically.



## PRODUCER

**Lynda Belkhiria**

## PRODUCER'S NOTE

I was first drawn to *The Guardian* not only by its powerful source material, *The Bleeding of the Stone* by Ibrahim Al-Koni, but by director Muhannad Lamin's sensitivity and vision. I have followed his work since 2019 and witnessed firsthand his clarity, composure, and creative instinct during the post-production of *Donga*. Set in the sacred landscapes of the Sahara, the film explores humanity's relationship with nature, silence, and the consequences of our growing disconnection from the sacred. Selected for Durban FilmMart and the TIFF Filmmaker Lab.

## LOOKING FOR

Distributors, financing, script advice, TV broadcasters, and VOD platforms.

# UNDER HER EYE

FRANCE, JORDAN · NARRATIVE



## DIRECTOR

**Amjad AlRasheed**

## PRODUCERS

**Nicolas Leprêtre, Rula Nasser**

nicolas@georgesfilms.fr

## PRODUCTION

**Georges Films · The Imaginarium Films**

## BUDGET

**2,000,000 USD**

## SECURED

**100,000 USD**

## SYNOPSIS

Ten days before election day, Houria, a conservative Jordanian politician, is fighting for a women's quota seat in Parliament when her unmarried daughter, Jude, falls into a coma after a car accident. At the hospital, Houria learns her daughter's secret — one that could jeopardise their honour and Jude's life. Shaken, Houria sets out to uncover the truth about Jude's hidden life. But every clue reveals a daughter who had built a double life beyond her mother's control. As public pressure rises, Houria must confront the fragile line between love, fear, protection and possession.





DIRECTOR

**Amjad AlRasheed**

**DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

Amjad Al Rasheed is an award-winning Jordanian director and writer. His debut feature, *Inshallah a Boy*, premiered at La Semaine de la Critique, Cannes 2023, before representing Jordan at the Academy Awards. The film has screened at more than 140 international festivals, earned 40 awards and secured worldwide distribution. With his second feature, *Under Her Eye* (AFID 2026, Atlas Workshops 2025), Amjad continues to explore themes of gender, politics and the quiet struggles hidden within family dynamics.

**DIRECTOR'S INTENTION**

We all carry secrets — some to survive, others to protect the people we love. In our society, revealing certain truths can cost everything: safety, dignity, family, even love. *Under Her Eye* grew out of a haunting “what if.” What if something happened — an accident, an illness — that left the person you love unable to speak for themselves? What would be revealed? This is a social thriller about silence, shame, and the fragile line between love and control — a film that confronts questions of gender, power and justice in the Arab world.



PRODUCER

**Nicolas Leprêtre**

**PRODUCER'S NOTE**

Continuing to collaborate with Amjad Al Rasheed felt like a natural step following our fruitful partnership on his debut feature, *Inshallah a Boy*. We are drawn to projects that raise urgent questions and foster meaningful dialogue. *Under Her Eye*, stands out as a necessary film. Through its exploration of hidden truths, the film examines how secrecy can both protect and oppress — resonant themes that extend far beyond the Arab world and speak to a broad international audience.

**LOOKING FOR**

Funders, partners and festivals.

# WHERE DO I BELONG?

SUDAN, LEBANON, SRI LANKA, KENYA · CREATIVE DOCUMENTARY



## DIRECTOR

**Ibrahim "Snoopy" Ahmed**

## PRODUCER

**Talal Afifi**

[talal@sudanfilmfactory.com](mailto:talal@sudanfilmfactory.com)

## PRODUCTION

**Sudan Film Factory ·  
In Deep Visions Films**

## BUDGET

**181,830 USD**

## SECURED

**12,500 USD (6.9%)**

## SYNOPSIS

Born between wars and borders, Ibrahim "Snoopy" Ahmed has never fully belonged anywhere. The son of a Sudanese father and a Sri Lankan Tamil mother who met while fleeing civil wars, he was raised in Lebanon without citizenship, then moved to Sudan after his father's deportation. When Sudan's 2023 war erupts, Ibrahim flees to East Africa while his parents remain trapped in Khartoum. Risking return, he retraces the migrations that shaped his family. Through archive, animation, home video and vérité, *Where Do I Belong?* becomes an intimate road movie about inherited displacement, family and the search for home.



## DIRECTOR

**Ibrahim "Snoopy" Ahmed**

## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Ibrahim "Snoopy" Ahmed is a Sudanese filmmaker, cinematographer and storyteller whose work explores identity, displacement and resilience. A third-culture Sudanese-Sri Lankan raised between Lebanon and Sudan, he brings an embodied perspective to stories of migration and conflict. He is co-director of *Khartoum* (2025), which premiered at Sundance and screened at Berlinale, winning the Berlinale Peace Film Prize. His credits include *Serotonin* (2018), *Khartoum Offside* (2019), *Journey to Kenya* (2020), *The Salon* (2023) and *Sudan, Remember Us* (2024).

## DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

I make this film to understand why home has always felt provisional. By returning to Sudan and facing my parents' fractured journeys, I want to connect the intimate wounds of one family with the wider condition of millions who live between documents, wars and temporary shelters. The film will not offer a simple answer to belonging; it will follow memory, sound, absence and movement as evidence. I am searching for a cinematic language where archive, animation and present-tense risk can hold what official histories erase.



## PRODUCER

**Talal Afifi**

## PRODUCER'S NOTE

Sudan Film Factory is committed to backing authored Sudanese cinema that transforms lived experience into urgent, internationally resonant filmmaking. *Where Do I Belong?* arrives at a crucial moment: it speaks from the Sudanese war but reaches beyond it to questions of migration, statelessness and intergenerational survival. Our role is to protect the director's access and vulnerability, build a rigorous international financing structure, and secure the editorial and safety conditions needed for a hybrid documentary of ambition and intimacy.

## LOOKING FOR

Regional and international funds, an aligned co-producer, broadcaster/streamer interest, sales and festival strategy guidance, and impact partners to support a 2026 production launch and 2027 festival release.

## AWAL FILM

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# JORDANIAN PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT



**JORDAN OFFERS UP TO  
45% REBATE**



# BETWEEN TWO HOUSES

JORDAN · DOCUMENTARY



## DIRECTOR & PRODUCER

**Raya Shaban**

raya.shaban@gmail.com

## BUDGET

**16,340 USD**

## SECURED

—

## SYNOPSIS

"Between Two Houses" chronicles my grandmother's life through two homes: the house in Nazareth she was forced to leave during the Nakba and the house in Amman where she spent her final decades. After her passing, the film returns to the Amman house, where silence bears witness to her absence; archival footage layered over still images, voiceover recalling the arches, the jasmine tree, the dinner table. The film then travels to Nazareth, where her sisters' live: a house alive with memory, century-old floors and frescoes intact. One house holds her absence in silence; the other tells her story out loud.



DIRECTOR &amp; PRODUCER

**Raya Shaban****DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

Raya Shaban is an architect and filmmaker who received her degree from the Architectural Association in London. Her films engage questions of memory, storytelling, and the afterlife of spaces. More recently, her work has expanded toward observational documentary, exploring diverse narratives through architecture, art and design. One of her latest films follows a fashion collective in Ramallah, Palestine, capturing the duality of life in the West Bank. Across her practice, Raya uses film as a tool to observe how spaces and rituals quietly hold cultural memory.

**DIRECTOR'S INTENTION**

I never filmed my grandmother moving between the arches, sitting in the kitchen with her cup of coffee. The first time I entered her house in Amman after her passing, I was taken by how personified it felt; the house had missed her. Her cat still shows up, asking for her. The house became a witness to her life and memory. I am an architect approaching film through space, and a granddaughter puzzling together the archives of a beloved grandmother. With this film, I'd like to explore how a home is shaped as much by absence as by what remains.

**LOOKING FOR**

Between Two Houses is a feature documentary currently in development. Participating in AFID represents an opportunity to secure funding, connect with regional co-producers who share a sensitivity to stories rooted in place, memory, and the Arab world, and establish the film's presence within the Arab festival circuit.



# CLOSE ROSE CLOSE

SAUDI ARABIA, JORDAN · NARRATIVE



## DIRECTOR

**Rulan Hassan**

## PRODUCER

**Fahad Samman**  
fahadsamman@gmail.com

## BUDGET

**1,344,304 USD**

## PRODUCTION

**RightersHouse**

## SECURED

**213,250 USD**

## SYNOPSIS

Rawan, a young Saudi woman, enters a traditional marriage hoping for a new beginning, but faints on her wedding night. She wakes to a haunting shadow and eerie chants of "open, rose, close, rose," spiralling into deep paranoia. Her family, obsessed with appearances, dismisses her suffering, leaving her completely isolated. Through fragmented visions, Rawan recovers repressed memories of severe childhood abuse committed by a trusted relative. This dark revelation shatters her world and threatens her marriage to Faisal. Ultimately, Rawan bravely confronts the shadow — the true manifestation of her abuser — breaking free from trauma and embracing truth and deep healing.



DIRECTOR

**Rulan Hassan**

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Rulan is a Jordanian screenwriter, director, and music creative director from Jeddah who began her career in 2016. Her writing credits include Doon, Whispers, Bashar, and Takki, plus Fates Hotel and Akher Riyal. She helmed the winning short film, The Wishlist, and contributed to the feature film, Abd. An advocate for regional talent, she supported Sunflower Seed for female filmmakers and managed Rights House, transforming it from a writing hub into a production company supporting emerging creators. She recently completed the United States IVLP program. Her work is showcased on platforms including Netflix and MBC.

DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

As the director of Close Rose Close, I focus deeply on Rawan's intense psychological journey. The film explores how buried trauma, specifically childhood sexual abuse, severely distorts reality and transforms safe, familiar spaces into terrifying environments. The haunting shadow Rawan faces directly represents her suppressed memories, compelling her to confront an unbearable truth. Inspired by Ingmar Bergman, I use minimalism, symbolism, silence, and light to emphasise psychological disintegration. Ultimately, this story celebrates the courage to confront silenced trauma and achieve profound and lasting healing.



PRODUCER

**Fahad Samman**

PRODUCER'S NOTE

Close Rose Close is a psychological horror film exploring the devastating impact of repressed trauma and the restrictive power of silence within a conservative society. By blending haunting imagery with universal themes of survival, identity and healing, we aim to inspire dialogue around hidden traumas. To maximise our global impact, we are pursuing a strategic hybrid funding model — combining Saudi financing with European joint-production partnerships, specifically targeting Spain because of our Spanish cinematographer and his horror expertise. We also seek alliances in France for festival representation.

LOOKING FOR

Sales agents to build a global distribution and festival plan; cash and in-kind awards (such as post-production services) to support the film's next stages; international funders, grant representatives, and co-producers to secure additional financing.

# HUSH, HUSH

JORDAN · NARRATIVE



## DIRECTOR

**Hayat Abu Samra**

hayat.abu.samra@gmail.com

## PRODUCER

**Badih Fatouh**

## BUDGET

**500,000 USD**

## SECURED

**25,000 USD**

## SYNOPSIS

When her wealthy husband is imprisoned for fraud, Mariam, a sheltered socialite, is left with mounting debt and no idea how to support herself. In a prison waiting room, she meets hustler Hanadi, who sells everything from viagra to fake designer bags while fighting for custody of her son. An unlikely friendship forms when the two women begin selling sex toys to make ends meet. What begins as a desperate attempt to make money evolves into a thriving secret business that exposes them to hidden worlds and unexpected freedoms. As their operation expands, both women are forced to confront the lives they have been living and the women they want to become.



## DIRECTOR

**Hayat Abu Samra**

## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Hayat Abu Samra is a Jordanian-Palestinian writer and actress. She holds an M.A. from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. She started as a production assistant on the Jordanian film, Daughters of Abdulrahman, then worked as a writing assistant on the second season of Al Rawabi School for Girls and consulted on The Vagrant Trilogy, the first Lebanese-Palestinian play produced at The Public Theater. She co-wrote For Good Luck, recipient of the Sunbird Grant and FilmLab Palestine, which premiered at the Cairo International Film Festival. She co-directed and produced Rajieen.

## DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

Hush, Hush was born during a period when my own life was upended. As I watched my mother hustle and rebuild, I became fascinated by the women around me and the different ways they survive, reinvent themselves and carry on when life does not go according to plan. For me, the sex toys are less the subject of the film than a window into the lives of women in my community: their desires, disappointments, fears, compromises and contradictions. At its heart, the film asks: what becomes possible when a woman gets a second chance at herself?



## PRODUCER

**Badih Fatouh**

## PRODUCER'S NOTE

When I first heard Hayat pitch Hush, Hush, I was drawn to its irresistible premise: two women selling sex toys in Amman. But beneath its humour and novelty is a deeply human story about resilience, friendship, and reinvention. Through Mariam and Hanadi's unlikely partnership, the film explores class divides, social expectations and the lives women build for themselves when circumstances force them to start over. Hayat brings a fresh and authentic voice to this world, combining sharp humour with emotional honesty.

## LOOKING FOR

Development grants, visibility, festivals, co-productions, partners and mentorship.

# REST IN PROCESS

LEBANON, JORDAN · NARRATIVE



## DIRECTOR

**Fatma Racha Shehadeh**

## PRODUCERS

**Samer Z. M. Battikhi and  
Louay Khraish**

## BUDGET

**270,000 USD**

## PRODUCTION

**Otouro Media and Roarpark**  
roarparkfilms@gmail.com

## SECURED

**87,300 USD**

## SYNOPSIS

Amid a fragile ceasefire and the constant hum of drones, three estranged siblings reunite after their father's death. Honouring his final wish, Nazih, Mustapha and Sarah transport his body from Beirut to their village near the southern Lebanese border. Along the journey, old resentments surface over sacrifice, absence and belonging. With access to the village restricted by ongoing security tensions, they are forced to wait for authorization to enter and bury their father. As delays stretch on, family tensions and long-buried secrets emerge, forcing the siblings to confront their shared past, unresolved grief and the fragile bond that still holds them together.



DIRECTOR

**Fatma Racha Shehadeh**

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Fatma Racha Shehadeh is a director, producer and cinematographer based between Beirut and Amman. Her work spans fiction, documentary and television, with a focus on character-driven stories that explore identity, memory and everyday life. Her films have screened internationally and received several awards. As a cinematographer, she has shot over 28 short films, two feature films, and television series. Her recent directing work includes *Ya Ghayeb*, a docu-drama series produced by MBC and streaming on MBC Shahid.



PRODUCERS

**Louay Khraish & Samer M. Z. Battihki**

DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

This film is not about death, but about what remains when systems, families and certainties begin to unravel. Growing up in Lebanon, I witnessed how war, bureaucracy and daily life constantly overlap, often creating situations that are both tragic and absurd. In a place where people rarely have time to process loss before the next crisis arrives, humour becomes a survival instinct. Through deadpan humour and intimate family dynamics, the story explores grief, love and resilience.

LOOKING FOR

Funders, investors, distributors and sales agents.

# UM AL ABED

JORDAN · FEATURE DOCUMENTARY



**DIRECTOR**  
**Hamza Hamideh**

**PRODUCER**  
**Widad Shafakoj**  
widad.shafakoj@gmail.com

**BUDGET**  
**300,000 USD**

**SECURED**  
**35,000 USD**

## SYNOPSIS

In alleys filled with scavenging and survival, Um Al Abed lives, a woman who raised her family alone in a harsh environment, carrying years of struggle on her shoulders. At the centre of her life is her adopted son, who carries the weight of long gratitude toward her. The film explores the invisible emotional bond between them. This fragile balance shifts when he plans to leave for a new life, while she considers a long-delayed divorce to reclaim her freedom. Inside her room, she hides a private world of cheap makeup and perfumes collected from waste, using small rituals to feel like herself again. The house becomes a silent space of tension between duty and desire.





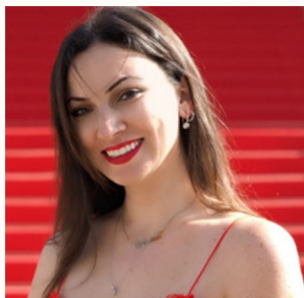
DIRECTOR

**Hamza Hamideh****DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

A documentary filmmaker whose passion for filmmaking started at a young age in his neighbourhood in Hashmi Shamali, Jordan, where he began taking videos and photos of his surroundings. He received his first grant from the U.S. Embassy in Jordan and the Royal Film Commission to create his first short documentary, Mahareb. He took part in several workshops organised by the U.S. Embassy, Al Jazeera, and the Royal Film Commission. His latest documentary, Asphalt, was selected for the Cannes Film Festival Docs-in-Progress section and won three awards.

**DIRECTOR'S INTENTION**

I began filming this family in 2016 without a clear plan to make a documentary. The project grew from long proximity to their daily life in my neighbourhood. I first met Um Al Abed during a conflict involving her children, and her strong way of protecting them stayed with me. Later, she asked me to film her life, which gave the project an ethical responsibility. The camera slowly became part of the environment. I observe life from inside, without interviews or narration. Over ten years, the family changed while the house stayed the same, shaping a story about care, duty and unresolved decisions.



PRODUCER

**Widad Shafakoj****PRODUCER'S NOTE**

I am constantly drawn to personal stories and lived experiences. Umm Al Abed is no different. I joined a few years into Hamza's filming journey and from the moment I encountered the material I felt strongly that this was a story worth supporting. What captivated me was not only Umm Al Abed herself, but the world surrounding her, an immersive environment populated by compelling characters whose relationships reveal layers of complexity, humour and tension. While deeply rooted in its Jordanian context, the film invites viewers everywhere to connect with a life rarely presented with such intimacy and honesty on screen.

**LOOKING FOR**

Funders, international partners and film festivals.



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# A SAD AND BEAUTIFUL WORLD

A film by **CYRIL ARIS**

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SELECTED PROJECTS

05 PROJECTS

PROJECTS IN

# POST- PRODUCTION

# AFTER THREE YEARS OF GREEN

SYRIA · DOCUMENTARY



## DIRECTORS

**Alayham Ali & Amr Alshashou**  
alayhamali98@gmail.com

## PRODUCER

**Sasha Ayoub**

## BUDGET

**169,112 USD**

## SECURED

**99,841 USD**

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## SYNOPSIS

In the heart of Damascus, as the city crumbles under the weight of war and political upheaval, Amr and Alayham, two young filmmakers, share a relationship caught between fear and hope. Between one's desire to leave and the other's determination to stay, the camera becomes a mirror reflecting the fragility of identity and belonging — documenting a deeply human journey where family, love, and homeland intertwine as everything else falls apart.



**DIRECTOR****Alayham Ali & Amr Alshashou****DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHY**

**Alayham Ali** is an independent filmmaker and Biomedical Engineering graduate. He made his first stop-motion short, *Fed Up*, in 2019. His second short fiction, *The Barn*, won the Gasp Prize at Bracciano International Film Exhibition (Italy, 2024) and the jury prize at Backstage Film Festival (Kuwait, 2025).

**Amr Alshashou** is an independent filmmaker and Pharmacy graduate who worked in content creation, writing and translation, and currently works with the Cinema Alhamra platform interviewing independent Arab filmmakers.

**DIRECTOR'S INTENTION**

*After Three Years of Green* is an intimate documentary born from our need to preserve a fragile reality rarely seen from within Syria. Through our daily lives in Damascus, the film explores belonging, family, memory and the emotional impact of living through profound political and social change. Rather than observing from a distance, we film from within our own experience, documenting how history enters private spaces and shapes personal choices. Our intention is to create a deeply human portrait of a generation navigating uncertainty.

**PRODUCER****Sasha Ayoub****PRODUCER'S NOTE**

I joined this project after accompanying the directors during the development process at Stories Film Lab and witnessing their exceptional commitment. Despite the challenges of producing an independent documentary in Syria, they have continued filming with remarkable sensitivity, honesty and resilience. I believe the film offers a rare and intimate perspective on contemporary Damascus. As a producer, I am committed to supporting the project's artistic vision while ensuring the safety of everyone involved.

**LOOKING FOR**

Co-producers, post-production partners, sales agents, festival programmers, broadcasters, and distributors to support the completion and circulation of the film.

# BETWEEN US TWO

LEBANON, FRANCE, GERMANY · DOCUMENTARY



DIRECTOR

**Dima Al-Joundi**

PRODUCER

**Marine Vaillant**

BUDGET

**313,066 USD**

PRODUCTION

**Special Touch Studios**

SECURED

**80%**

SYNOPSIS

Two sisters, two mirrors, between the two shores of the Mediterranean — between Beirut and Marseille. Dima is once again forced to leave her deteriorating Lebanon, leaving behind her aging mother and her sister, to find refuge in Marseille. She questions her identity and her sense of belonging to her hometown by confronting her sister, her mother, but also other exiles in France. Will this be the end of her exile journey?





DIRECTOR

**Dima Al-Joundi****DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

Born in Lebanon, Dima Al-Joundi left for Brussels in 1984, where she graduated from INSAS in Script & Film Editing with distinction and worked as a film editor on features and documentaries. In 1994, she directed her first docu-fiction, *Between Us Two... Beirut*. She moved to Paris in 1995, then worked in Sri Lanka as a producer-director for Young Asia TV. In 1998 she returned to Lebanon and established Crystal Films, a production and distribution company and the first Europa Cinemas theatre in the MENA region. In 2022, she left Lebanon again, for Marseille.

**DIRECTOR'S INTENTION**

I decided to write a story and tell it from my new departure from Lebanon to Marseille, which awakened in me the importance of constantly making a cinematic back-and-forth between the two countries. *Between Us Two* is a total immersion in the subjects of exile, war, uncertain returns and the quest for one's own identity and the meaning of belonging — where one becomes from everywhere and nowhere. My desire is to draw on my personal experience to nourish a more universal and collective reflection on these themes.

Contact · [crystalfbis@gmail.com](mailto:crystalfbis@gmail.com)



PRODUCER

**Marine Vaillant****PRODUCER'S NOTE**

The footage Dima gathered from 1993 until today offers unique testimony to understand the terrible fall faced by Lebanon. As a mirror, Dima's journey reflects the way institutions deal with "displaced" human beings in Europe, where safety ends up rhyming with precarity. Showcasing a personal experience, her film shines a light on the invisible, to empower and amplify silent voices. It is an international co-production between Crystal Films (Lebanon), Special Touch Studios (France), and Playtime Films (Belgium).

**LOOKING FOR**

Distribution, festivals, funders.

# I AM COMING, IMAM

IRAQ · DOCUMENTARY



**DIRECTOR**

**Hassan Sabri**

hassansabre1996@gmail.com

**PRODUCER**

**Murtada Alwaelly**

**BUDGET**

**35,000 USD**

**SECURED**

**20,000 USD (57%)**

---

**SYNOPSIS**

As Muharram begins in Basra, a veteran mourner devotes his entire life to rituals commemorating Imam Hussein, while a young boy grows up within this world, embracing it as a natural part of everyday life. Over ten days of mourning ceremonies, both become increasingly immersed in a collective experience shaped by grief, loyalty and belonging. Between a generation that lived through years of restriction and another raised amid the growing visibility of these rituals, memories and practices are passed from one generation to the next, moving toward a future whose direction remains uncertain.

**DIRECTOR****Hassan Sabri****DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

Hassan Sabri is an Iraqi filmmaker born in Basra in 1996. Since entering the film industry in 2019, he has worked as a screenwriter and assistant director on several projects. He wrote and directed his first short film, Watermelon Nights (2022), which won Best Film at the Iraq Youth Film Festival and was nominated at several international festivals. His filmography includes Tribal Justice (short documentary for Al Arabiya, 2023) and The Road of Teals (producer and director, in post-production).

**DIRECTOR'S INTENTION**

Having grown up alongside the expansion of Shia mourning rituals in southern Iraq after 2003, I became fascinated by the emotional intensity and transformation that take place within these spaces. Through intimate access to one of the region's major mourning centres, the film follows two characters from different generations to explore how grief, devotion and identity are inherited and embodied. Rather than explaining or judging these rituals, I seek to observe them from within and reveal the human experiences behind them.

**PRODUCER****Murtada Alwaely****PRODUCER'S NOTE**

The film explores how Ashura rituals shape identity, belonging and faith across generations in southern Iraq through the stories of Sajjad and Baraq. Principal photography was completed in 2025, allowing rare and intimate access to spaces seldom documented from within. The film is currently in post-production and we are seeking funding to complete this stage.

**LOOKING FOR**

Funding, partners and distribution opportunities.

# I AM ONE OF THEM

POLAND, SAUDI ARABIA, QATAR · FEATURE DOCUMENTARY



## DIRECTOR

**Nadim Suleiman**

nadimsuleimanjr@gmail.com

## PRODUCER

**Halim Suleiman**

## PRODUCTION

**Palmyra Films Ltd.**

## BUDGET

**316,931 USD**

## SECURED

**229,438 USD (72.39%)**

## SYNOPSIS

In 2017, Nadim, a Syrian filmmaker living in Poland, begins filming Grzesiek, a Polish nationalist and boat captain, for a student project. What starts as an observation gradually evolves into an unlikely friendship spanning nearly a decade. As political tensions rise and their lives take unexpected turns, the two men confront each other's beliefs, fears and assumptions. Through moments of conflict, intimacy and mutual vulnerability, the film explores identity, belonging and the possibility of connection across deep ideological divides — a personal story about friendship in an increasingly polarized world.



DIRECTOR

**Nadim Suleiman****DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY**

Nadim Suleiman is a graduate of the Łódź Film School. His short films include *Dollar or Egyptian Pound?* (37th Kurzfilm Festival Hamburg) and *A Short Film About War* (66th Krakow Film Festival). He worked as an assistant director on productions such as *Bread and Salt* by Damian Kocur (Special Orizzonti Jury Prize, Venice 2022), *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes*, and *Green Border* by Agnieszka Holland (Special Jury Prize, Venice 2023). In 2020, he co-founded Palmyra Films with Giovanni Cimarosti.

**DIRECTOR'S INTENTION**

In 2012, I fled Syria and settled in Poland. After the 2015 refugee crisis, I watched fear of people like me grow all around and became obsessed with understanding where it came from. Then I met Grzesiek, a Polish nationalist. Through our unlikely friendship, I confronted not only his prejudices but also my own assumptions. Building trust took years and required patience, vulnerability and a willingness to remain together despite deep disagreements. This film does not seek simple answers.



PRODUCER

**Halim Suleiman****PRODUCER'S NOTE**

As producer of *I Am One of Them*, I am committed to bringing this timely and emotionally complex documentary to international audiences. The project has secured more than 70% of its financing through partners including AFAC, DFI, The Red Sea Film Festival Foundation, and PISF. With a strong funding base, extensive access and years of production behind it, the project is well positioned for a major festival premiere and broad international circulation in 2027.

**LOOKING FOR**

A co-producer, gap financing and strategic partners to complete post-production; sales agents, distributors, broadcasters and festival representatives to support the film's premiere strategy and long-term circulation.

# NO PASSPORTS IN PARADISE

QATAR, PALESTINE · DOCUMENTARY



DIRECTORS

**Mayar Hamdan & Shaima Al-Tamimi**  
iamshaima84@gmail.com

PRODUCERS

**Shaima Al-Tamimi & Mohamed Fakhro**

BUDGET

**400,000 USD**

PRODUCTION

**Y2P Studios**

SECURED

**83.53%**

SYNOPSIS

After 60 years of making Doha their home, a Palestinian family is once again grappling with leaving — this time because their late patriarch and official sponsor, Mahmoud, is gone. Leading the charge, whether she likes it or not, is Amal, a sarcastic architect on the brink of retirement, and Teta, a selectively forgetful grandmother who remembers when it suits her. With a camera in hand and an inheritance that mostly consists of bottles of olive oil and a house bursting with hoarded memorabilia, Mayar attempts to piece together their past, present and uncertain future in this absurdly funny, painfully true documentary about a family that's always packing but never arriving.



DIRECTOR

**Mayar Hamdan**



PRODUCER & DIRECTOR

**Shaima Al-Tamimi**

**DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHY**

**Mayar Hamdan** is a Palestinian multi-platform writer, director, producer and designer whose visual approach is rooted in colour theory. She has a BS in Media Industries and Technology from Northwestern University and an MFA in Art and Technology from CalArts.

**Shaima Al-Tamimi** is a Yemeni-East African photographer and filmmaker based in Doha. In 2024, she was named an Emerging Producer by Jihlava International Film Festival. Her award-winning film *Don't Get Too Comfortable* premiered at the Venice International Film Festival and screened at over 40 festivals globally.

**LOOKING FOR**

Funders, distribution, and festivals (in order of importance).

**DIRECTORS' INTENTION**

Two third-culture kids — Mayar, a Palestinian, and Shaima, a Yemeni — both grew up in the GCC. Over the years, they've collaborated on projects that orbit themes of migration, memory and generational chaos. Their co-directing approach is built on deep trust and a shared desire to unearth the emotional logic of displacement. With complementary skill sets — Shaima's photography and archival eye and Mayar's technical background and colour-driven design — they attempt, project by project, to make sense of the humour and heaviness of inherited exile.





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SECTION 03

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# AWARDS

# THE AWARDS

## JURY AWARDS

### ■ The Royal Film Commission – Jordan

\$7,000 cash award for a Jordanian Awal Project in development

### ■ The Royal Film Commission – Jordan

\$7,000 cash award for a project in development

### ■ Eklat

In-kind script consultation award for a project in development

### ■ Caravan

In-kind story consultation award for a project in development or post-production

### ■ IEFTF

€5,000 cash award for an Arab project in post-production

### ■ The Royal Film Commission – Jordan

\$7,000 cash award for a project in post-production

### ■ Ghiath & Nadia Sukhtian Foundation

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

### ■ Slate

In-kind production services award for a Jordanian Awal project in development

### ■ Documentary Association of Europe

Bespoke consultation sessions and two one-year memberships for a documentary project

### ■ Olivewood

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

### ■ Jordan Kuwait Bank

\$7,000 cash award for a project in development or post-production (TBD)

### ■ Unison Studio

In-kind sound design and mixing award for a project in post-production

### ■ Rum Pictures

In-kind colour grading and DCP award for a project in post-production

## MARKET AWARDS CATEGORY

### ■ ART

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

### ■ Red Sea Fund

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

### ■ Alexandra Viets

In-kind consultation award for a project in development

### ■ Alluring Motion

In-kind award for script consultation for a project in development

### ■ French Institute

In-kind award to attend CINEMED festival for a Jordanian project in development

### ■ MASNA3

In-kind award for scriptwriting residency in Tunisia and script development consultancy for a project in development

### ■ Acousmatics

In-kind sound design and mixing award for a project in post-production



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# SHORT FILM INCUBATOR JURY

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ROYAL FILM COMMISSION - JORDAN

## TAREQ ABU LUGHOD

MEDIA EXECUTIVE, ENTREPRENEUR AND PRODUCER · JORDAN



Tareq Abu Lughod is a Jordanian media executive, entrepreneur, and producer. He is the Founder and CEO of Arab Media Network (AMN), which operates media, entertainment, and cultural ventures including AL Studios, Mazaj FM, The Rainbow Theater, and Istikana. With extensive experience in film, television, radio, digital media, and live events, he specializes in content development, media strategy, and creative business growth. Abu Lughod is also a frequent speaker, mentor, and jury member at film festivals and entrepreneurship competitions, supporting the advancement of Jordan's creative industries.

## SAJA KILANI

ACTRESS AND POET · JORDAN, PALESTINE, CANADA



Saja Kilani is a Jordanian/Palestinian/Canadian actress and poet. Her first feature film performance, *Simsim*, earned her the Best First Time Lead Actress Award at the 6th edition of Amman International Film Festival. She starred in her debut international film, *The Voice of Hind Rajab*, which premiered at the Venice Film Festival and earned her the Best Actress Award at the 36th edition of the Carthage Film Festival. Saja is also a member of the European Film Academy. Beyond film, she performs her poetry internationally, most recently at TEDxIE Madrid.



# MARCO ORSINI

DIRECTOR, PRODUCER AND WRITER · PUERTO RICO



Marco Orsini is a writer, director, producer, and mentor who views audio-visual storytelling as a powerful tool to educate, advocate, and inspire. Puerto Rican by birth and a world citizen by conviction, Marco has spent more than two decades working at the intersection of filmmaking, humanitarian advocacy, and emerging talent development. Marco began his career in U.S. television, producing more than 60 hours of prime-time programming for networks including Fox Family, WB, Sony, Telemundo, and PAX TV before transitioning into documentary filmmaking. His award-winning films - including *Gray Matters* (2014), *Beyond the Raging Sea* (2019), and *Latin Four Plus* - have screened at major festivals worldwide, aired on television and VOD platforms, and been translated into multiple languages.





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# SHORT FILM INCUBATOR PROJECTS

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ROYAL FILM COMMISSION - JORDAN



## 01 INTO HIDING

ZAID BAQAEEN · NARRATIVE · 35,000 USD

### SYNOPSIS

Under the constant hum of a surveillance drone, an innocent game of hide-and-seek becomes a fatal trap. When exhausted mother Mona loses patience with her mischievous child Laila, who secretly hides in the building's pitch-black basement, Mona receives a terrifying immediate evacuation warning on her phone. A tragic misunderstanding sends the panicked mother sprinting toward the fully exposed rooftop just as a missile strikes.

### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

Into Hiding is not a traditional war film; it is a clinical observation of collateral damage. My directorial approach is anchored in the "apathy of the lens." By rejecting shaky cameras, musical scores, and emotional close-ups, the camera functions like the military drone hovering above: cold, unblinking, and entirely indifferent. I want to trap the audience within the terrifying geometry of modern warfare.



## 02 ZERO PERCENT

ASHRAF MOHAMMAD AWWAD ALABBADI ·  
NARRATIVE · 20,000 USD

### SYNOPSIS

After receiving an urgent evacuation warning ahead of an imminent airstrike, a terrified mother rushes back home, having left her young daughter alone. When the first explosion strikes, the power goes out, leaving the girl trapped in the darkness she fears as the sounds of war intensify. Communication is severed amid the chaos, and fear deepens when a stranger enters the house seeking shelter. As her phone battery drains in the final moments, hope slowly fades, culminating in a heartbreaking tragedy that reveals the devastating impact of war on innocent lives.

### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

My directorial vision is to portray war through the perspective of an isolated child. Rather than showing violence directly, the film conveys its presence through sound, darkness, and empty spaces. The mobile phone becomes a central visual and dramatic device, its fading battery reflecting the passage of time and the fragility of life. The film explores how war steals childhood and forces premature maturity upon the innocent.



### 03 TRAVEL DOCUMENT

HAMZA ALKHATIB · NARRATIVE · 39,000 USD

#### SYNOPSIS

After the sudden death of her Jordanian husband, Khadija arrives at Queen Alia International Airport with her infant son, hoping to start a new life with her late husband's family. Instead, she discovers that while her son can enter Jordan, she cannot. As a Palestinian refugee carrying only a travel document, she is denied entry without special authorization. Over the course of a single night, Khadija navigates grief, uncertainty, and mounting pressure as bureaucracy threatens to separate her from her child.

#### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

Travel Document explores the human cost of living without the freedom of movement. Inspired by the reality of thousands of Palestinian refugees who travel on refugee documents rather than national passports, the film examines questions of identity, belonging, and dignity. Set entirely within the liminal space of an airport, it is a story about motherhood, displacement, and the universal search for safety, home, and the right to belong.



### 04 MONOMANIA

MOHAMED SALHI · NARRATIVE · 9,000 USD

#### SYNOPSIS

Dr. Eyad awakens with amnesia in the sterile Room 313, a cyclical hospital purgatory following a fatal crash. Guided by a cold, enigmatic doctor, Eyad tries to piece together his past, fuelled by the agonizing belief that his wife, Deema, betrayed him. The horrifying truth unfolds: driven by toxic, obsessive possession, Eyad forced Deema into drug dependency to control her before brutally murdering her. Trapped in an eternal loop orchestrated by supernatural captors, Eyad is forced to discover his own dead body, doomed to relive his guilt forever.

#### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

My intention is to anatomize a guilty conscience through psychological and metaphysical surrealism. By trapping Eyad in a clinical purgatory, I subvert his perceived victimization to expose his "protective love" as a predatory prison of forced addiction. Visually, the film strips away dialogue, favouring raw, hyper-stylized expression — chiefly Eyad's unblinking "manic gaze." The absolute silence of the climax delivers a devastating chill.



## 05 SPAGHETTI PROLETARIAT

ABDULLAH ALONQY · NARRATIVE · 91,680 USD

### SYNOPSIS

Inside a prestigious restaurant that functions like its own small state, power belongs to those seated at the central table — Mr. Black and his wife, who enjoy a luxurious dish reserved only for them. John, the restaurant's head waiter, secretly pulls strings to overthrow Mr. Black. His campaign begins with attempts to expose the ruler's true nature and gain public support. As tensions rise, John unleashes chaos into the restaurant, forcing the kitchen — the source of the state's power — into disarray. But behind his claims lies a secret ambition: to take power for himself.

### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

The film takes place inside a prestigious restaurant that functions like its own small state, with clear systems of power and control. At the centre, a wealthy couple enjoys a special dish reserved only for them, while a poor and hungry family sits beneath their table. Through this surreal setting, the film explores class inequality, political ambition, and the abuse of power, as the head waiter's promises of change slowly reveal his own desire to take control.



## 06 WHEN DID THE WORLD LOSE ITS COLOURS?

RAWAN HAMMAD · ANIMATION · 63,000 USD

### SYNOPSIS

The film follows a small girl who awakens in a home devastated by war, finding herself alone amid the ruins. Determined to rebuild what has been lost, she gathers fragments of the past to restore forgotten memories. Along the way, she befriends a small dog who helps her collect the scattered pieces. Together, they face creatures made from the ashes of exploded shells — monsters that steal colours from the ruined landscape. After a final confrontation, the girl succeeds in rebuilding a large toy, only to reveal that the heroine who restored colour and memory to the place is herself the toy of the child who lost her life to the war.

### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

Farah is a call to recognize the immense suffering endured by children affected by war. Through the journey of a young girl who loses her family and home, the film highlights the devastating physical and psychological impact of conflict. At its core, Farah is a story of resilience and hope. The film also seeks to contribute to the development of animation in Jordan and the Arab world by using this powerful medium to address urgent humanitarian issues.



## 07 THE LAST ROUND

TAIMAA AL TWAISSI · NARRATIVE · 65,000 USD

### SYNOPSIS

After moving to a refugee camp with his mother, eight-year-old Ali tries to integrate with the other boys through the game of marbles, a skill he has mastered. But his talent makes him a target for Jaafar, the older boy who dominates the neighbourhood. Between deception, bullying, and his constant attempts to recover his stolen marbles, Ali finds himself facing a world where power and authority prevail over justice. As events unfold, the simple game transforms into a journey that draws him into a major conflict with a heavy price to pay.

### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

In the camp where I grew up, I witnessed the alleys turn into battlegrounds over the game of marbles. I've always questioned the importance of marbles and their ability to build friendships or create enemies between children. Later, I understood that marbles were never just something to play with; they were a valued currency, and whoever held the most held the power. Through The Last Round, we explore how a divided system operates in the children's world.



## 08 A KITE

AREEB ZUAITER · NARRATIVE · 50,000 USD

### SYNOPSIS

Behind an enormous wall, a community lives without questions. Kites are forbidden. The word itself does not exist. Four kids find one that has crossed over to their side. It is broken. They are determined to fix it. What follows is the story of four children who do everything right and discover, too late, that the wall did not only keep the kites out.

### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

A Kite is inspired by my interest in how children make sense of worlds informed by boundaries they did not choose. As a mother of two children the age of the protagonists, I am inspired by their curiosity and instinct to imagine what lies beyond the limits of their own circle. Drawing from my experiences of growing up with social and geopolitical restrictions, I approach this story not as a portrait of a specific place, but as a universal reflection on longing, separation, and the human desire to reach beyond what confines us.





## 09 THE WRIST TIE

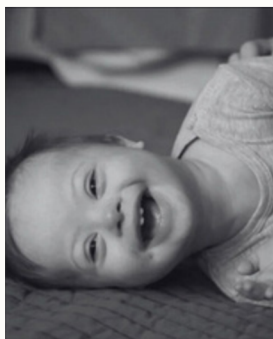
MARAH SUHAIB · NARRATIVE · 35,000 USD

### SYNOPSIS

Within the Frame is an intimate story about Laila, a twenty-year-old who fights to save the only home she has ever known — the old family apartment where she cares for her grandmother Aziza, who is slipping into Alzheimer's. Between the tender rituals of their days together — feeding, washing, the small ceremonies of Ramadan — Laila sabotages her uncle's attempts to sell the home, scaring off every buyer who comes to see it. A quiet, observational portrait of the grief of mourning someone who is still alive.

### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

Within the Frame comes from a question I've always carried: why does the bond with a grandmother shape us so differently than our parents do? The film stays close to that bond: long, patient shots, the daily rituals of care, what is felt rather than spoken. It grew from my own experience of loving my grandmother as she slipped away while still beside me. I want the audience to feel that warmth and the quiet grief of holding on to someone you are already losing.



## 10 IMAGE NO. 20

MOTASEM SUMAIRAT · NARRATIVE · 27,153 USD

### SYNOPSIS

Inspired by a true story, the film follows Islam, whose birth in 2001 was clouded by critical health risks. Twenty years later, despite her survival, her family faces severe financial and psychological exhaustion following the shutdown of her rehabilitation program. On her twentieth birthday, Islam and her sister confront the harsh reality of societal ignorance, prejudice, and intrusive bullying during a rare outing. After a profound emotional breakdown, her family rallies to comfort her, restoring joy through a warm birthday celebration and a snapshot of genuine solidarity.

### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

This film aims to transcend conventional cinematic representations of disability by questioning the fine line where family resilience ends and institutional responsibility begins. My directorial approach centres on the stark clash between the family's fiercely protective "safe bubble" and a harsh external environment fuelled by societal ignorance. Through the motif of recurring family photographs, the narrative charts a raw emotional trajectory from chaos to momentary triumph, concluding in a powerful, dialogue-free silence.





## 11 COASTER

ALA' MOHAMMAD ABDEL-AZIZ · NARRATIVE · 25,000-30,000 USD

### SYNOPSIS

While riding a coaster bus on her way to a decisive exam that could either save her academic year or force her to repeat it, Noor finds herself trapped in a journey of chaos and fleeting encounters that push her toward the question she has been avoiding for years: is she truly living her dream?

### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

Coaster is a film about the moment a person realizes that the life they are living may not truly be their own. What resonates with me most in Noor's journey is that her conflict is not with a visible antagonist, but with years of expectations, with love that sometimes disguises itself as pressure, and with a path drawn for her before she had the chance to draw it herself. Through an exhausting journey across the city, I explore identity, independence, and the quiet rebellion that begins when one chooses to listen to their inner voice.



## 12 NORMAL DAY

AMIMA NAKHLEH · NARRATIVE · 58,000 USD

### SYNOPSIS

After discovering that Gaza's only fertility clinic has been destroyed under the rubble of war, Samar and Ahmed face a desperate struggle to obtain insulin for their young daughter, Nawar, who has Type 1 diabetes. With her life at risk, Samar sets out with Nawar on a perilous journey through the night amid ongoing bombardment. Their search leads them through abandoned homes and encounters with loss, deception, and moral compromise — revealing the human cost of war and the lengths a parent will go to save a child.

### DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

This film is deeply personal to me, as it is inspired by my own daughter. The difference is that the child in the story lives with Type 1 diabetes while enduring the realities of war in Gaza. During the writing process, I paid close attention to the film's feasibility, focusing on interior locations and confined exterior spaces that could be recreated in Jordan while resembling parts of Gaza. Setting the story entirely at night allows light and darkness to become powerful dramatic elements.



# 13 PLEASURE TO MEET YOU

EZZ RIZIQ · NARRATIVE · 20,000 USD

## SYNOPSIS

Sara has lived with a stutter since childhood, hiding it from others to avoid judgment. On the day of her traditional engagement, her family carefully prepares for the groom's visit, hoping everything will go smoothly. As the conversation unfolds and the pressure mounts, her speech difficulty becomes apparent, turning a simple family gathering into an unspoken trial of her worth. While everyone around her debates her future, Sara is forced to confront the fear that has shaped her life and find the courage to speak for herself.

## DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

What interests me most about this story is not the stutter itself, but the way people are often reduced to a single trait while everything else about them is overlooked. Through Sara, I want to explore the quiet pressure of being judged in moments that can define a person's future. The engagement setting allows us to witness how fear, shame, love, and social expectations collide in one room. I hope the film encourages audiences to look beyond first impressions.

# WORKSHOP

## The Script Majlis

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Abdali Boulevard Hotel      27 to 29 July, 2026      11AM - 4PM

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**Three-day immersive workshop** will focus on examining crucial elements of the short script: a singular, uncompromising focus, an immediate dilemma and an emotional pivot. Participants will work alongside professional actors to examine story structure, character development and dialogue. Using in-class exercises and improvisation to expose backstory, character motivation and dramatic arc, participants will work in a collaborative, laboratory setting to explore what can be strengthened and refined in their scripts.



### About The Instructor:

Alexandra Viets

A writer/screenwriter and journalist specialising in women and displacement, she won a New York Foundation for the Arts award for her feature-length screenplay, *Cotton Mary*, and the Best Screenplay Award at the Auckland International Film Festival for *Ask Me No Questions*. Awarded a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities in South Asia, she has taught screenwriting internationally, particularly in India. Her international work includes collaboration on the award-winning *White Sun*, a feature drama produced in Nepal. Currently, she teaches writing in the MA in Writing Program at Johns Hopkins University and is the author of the forthcoming memoir, *After the War: Maryna, a Memoir*.

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