

**Film
Funding
Grants
Programme
2013**

Doha Film Institute established its Grants Programme with the vision of fostering creative talent in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. We are proud that over its first three-and-a-half years the programme supported the development of more than 137 projects from 14 countries.

In 2013, the Institute embarked on a new phase of the Grants Programme designed to further the goal of nurturing emerging talent. Projects from all over the world became eligible for funding, with a special focus on first- and second-time filmmakers.

Alongside this expansion, the Institute's commitment to talent from the MENA region remains strong, with specific categories and criteria in place. Our focus on first- and second-time filmmakers will greatly enhance our ability to discover and nurture new voices, both at home in Qatar and around the globe.

We contribute to films that have strong directorial vision and that are challenging, creative and thought-provoking. Support for grantees is holistic, with financial assistance bolstered by professional development, mentorship and creative development opportunities that are made available throughout a project's life cycle.

It is our hope that through the Grants Programme and the growing number of its alumni, we will continue to widen our flourishing community of filmmakers. As we extend our reach, we also enable professional, cultural and creative exchanges between our local talent and the wider international industry.

I am honoured to welcome our newest grant recipients to the Doha Film Institute family.

Abdulaziz Al-Khater
CEO, Doha Film Institute

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Production

Feature Narrative
Spring Grant 2013

Sherif Elbendary
Director



Mohamad Elazab
Screenwriter

Mohamed Hefzy, Racha Najdi
Producer



2 Rooms and a Parlor

'Oudtein W Sala' / Egypt, Qatar / Arabic / 2015

After his wife's death Khalil discovers that his routine life is about to end without exploring all its aspects, so he decides to take a trip to Panama.



Khalil Suleiman has always preferred to stay away from other people, but after his wife's death, he finds he is lonely. Realising his routine life is coming to its end before he has explored it fully, he decides to take a trip to Panama. His plans come up against many obstacles. He has no passport and only speaks Arabic – and his son disapproves of his plans. Solving these problems and making travel arrangements forces Khalil to revisit his complicated relationship with his son and to become involved in the lives of his neighbours – all of whom are people he has avoided in the past. As Khalil gets closer to each of his neighbours and his son, and his travel date looms on the horizon, he finds his old ways of thinking are changing.

Shooting Format: 35mm

Runtime: 105 min

Genre: Dark Comedy, Drama, Family

Contact

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Director's Note

My first short films grew out of an urge to reincarnate my close relationships. Then came 'At Day's End', in which I assess my relationship with my father. Then I came across one of a series of short stories by Ibrahim Aslan, in which the father-son relationship was the same as my experience. I decided it would be my next film. Aslan's stories portray the simple drama of daily life that I have always loved; his characters are carefully studied and alive. Reading Aslan, I felt there was someone in the world of literature speaking with my own tongue. In literature, Aslan sees things just as I see them in cinema. So, mindful of the drama of daily life that I love; of the tiny details that make up our lives; of father-son relationships, I make my first feature film: 'Two Rooms and a Parlor'.

Director's Biography

Sherif Elbendary graduated from the Faculty of Applied Arts at Helwan University and studied film directing at the High Institute of Cinema in Cairo. He has taught film directing since 2008. His first short, 'Rise & Shine' (2006), showed at 75 film festivals and won 15 awards. 'At Day's End' (2008), Elbendary's second short film and graduation project, participated in 50 film festivals and won 14 awards. His short 'Curfew' was part of the collective feature '18 Days', an official selection at the Cannes Film Festival in 2010.

Company Profile

Renowned producer and scriptwriter Mohamed Hefzy founded Film Clinic in 2006. Film Clinic is recognised as one of the leading production companies in the MENA region as a result of its creation of unique feature films and documentaries that tell unprecedented stories of people, places, and philosophies. In 2011, Film Clinic produced the award-winning films 'Asmaa' and 'Tahrir 2011', which had significant impact in the MENA region and touched audiences worldwide. Through its screenwriting workshops, Film Clinic also acts as a mentor to numerous aspiring filmmakers who seek inspiration and encouragement. Our philosophy is to blend the creative, vibrant ideas of the younger generation with the knowledge of top cinema experts, in an aim to present powerful films on the big screen.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$950,649

Secured Financing: \$610,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Cairo Film Connection, Egypt
- Arab Fund for Art and Culture, Lebanon

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors (Gulf, Arab World, Europe)
- Co-Producers (Arab World)
- Broadcasters (Worldwide except Arab World)
- Film Funds (USA, Europe)
- Post-Production Support
- Digital Partners

Production
Feature Narrative
Fall Grant 2013

Sanjeeva Pushpakumara
Director / Screenwriter / Producer



Antonin Dedet
Producer



Burning Birds

Sri Lanka, France, Qatar / Sinhalese / 2014

In a small village in eastern Sri Lanka, Kusum must fight to look after her eight children by herself after her husband is tortured and murdered by the state army.



1989. A small village in eastern Sri Lanka. After her husband is abducted, tortured and murdered by state army, Kusum must fight to look after her eight children and mother-in-law all by herself. After being physically and sexually abused, and working a number of odd jobs, Kusum falls into prostitution. The police arrest her while she is working in a brothel. Soon the news spreads throughout the village and her family's fate is turned upside down...

Shooting Format: HD
Runtime: 90 min
Genre: Drama, Family, War

Contact
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Director's Note

When I was nine years old, the state army killed my mathematics teacher. That was in 1989. I cannot forget how all the teachers and students at the school were aghast and worried. A year later, the army dragged my young uncle out behind the house and shot him in the head. That death left his family distraught and in poverty. Another year later, my father died suddenly. I was just 11. My mother was left alone to raise my seven siblings and me. There were days we spent in hunger; I still wonder at times how my mother managed to feed us all. 'Burning Birds' is a film that came out scratching my heart. It is a look through a microscope at myself, my mother and my country.

Director's Biography

Sanjeeva Pushpakumara's first feature film, 'Flying Fish' (2011), was supported by the Hubert Bals Fund. The film has been selected for more than 20 festivals around the world, including the International Film Festival Rotterdam. It has won numerous awards, among them the Best Director Award from the St. Petersburg International Film Festival, and Best Asian Cinematographer from the Asian Film Festival.

Company Profile

Neon Productions is a French production company founded in 2002 by Antonin Dedet. Since its creation, Neon has produced or coproduced 12 feature films, more than 40 short films and two feature-length documentaries. The company has co-produced work with more than a dozen countries around the world. Working with directors who have a singular viewpoint, the company aims to support ambitious and meaningful art-house cinema. Neon's latest feature, Algerian director Djamila Sahraoui's 'Yema', was selected for the Orizzonti competition at the 2012 Venice International Film Festival; it has since received more than a dozen awards, and has been selected for more than 70 festivals. Iranian director Maryam Keshavarz's 'Circumstance' won the Audience Award at Sundance and was released theatrically in numerous countries.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$688,444

Secured Financing: \$394,511

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- The Video Team Pvt Ltd, Sri Lanka
- Neocam, Sri Lanka

Current Status: Pre-Production

Looking For:

- Co-Producers
- Broadcasters
- Film Funds
- Additional Funding

Production
Feature Narrative
Fall Grant 2013

By the Time It Gets Dark

'Dao Khanong' / Thailand, Qatar / Thai / 2014

Secondhand memories, a film and a very blue mushroom.

Anocha Suwichakornpong
Director / Screenwriter



Soros Sukhum, Lee Chatametikool
Producer



'By the Time It Gets Dark' tells the interwoven stories of several characters: a film director and her muse; a waitress who keeps changing jobs; an actor; and an actress. Their lives are loosely connected by almost invisible threads. The narrative sheds its skin several times over the course of the film, to reveal layer upon layer of the complexities that make up our lives.

Contact

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Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 95 min

Genre: Animation, Docufiction, Drama, History, Women Interest

Director's Note

In one of my most memorable English lessons, I discovered the present perfect progressive tense, which is used for something that happened in the past and continues until now: 'I have been'. As a native speaker of a tenseless language, this was for me hugely interesting. Then I learned of the past perfect progressive tense: 'I had been'; a tense that signifies something that used to happen but finished. Or maybe it didn't finish. It just doesn't continue. Expiration. There are far too many actions, anecdotes, incidents, or events that take place in one's lifetime to absorb, personally, socially, and historically. Perhaps that is why we are bound to forget. For if we could remember everything, how could we ever get out of bed in the morning? 'By the Time It Gets Dark' is my attempt to deal with making a historical film in a place where there is no history.

Director's Biography

Anocha Suwichakornpong, also known as 'Mai', was born in Thailand and studied in the UK and the USA. Her thesis film, 'Graceland', became the first Thai short to be selected for the Cannes Film Festival (Cinéfondation). Her feature debut, 'Mundane History' has won several awards, including the Tiger Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2010.

Company Profile

Electric Eel Films is a production company based in Bangkok. Founded in 2006 by a group of up-and-coming and independent filmmakers, we are a small but high-quality production house specialising in independent films and other media productions. Electric Eel seeks to be a new force of independent cinema in Asia. Our main aim is to produce challenging films with high artistic value. Although we are a small company, we have a network of talented and experienced filmmakers working with us, including director-producer Anocha Suwichakornpong, director Wichanon Somumjarn, producers Soros Sukhum and Maenum Chagasik, cinematographer Leung Ming Kai and editor Machima Ungsriwong.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$500,000

Secured Financing: \$207,964

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Ministry of Culture of Thailand
- CineMart Prince Claus Film Award, The Netherlands
- Vertical Films, Thailand
- Hubert Bals Fund, The Netherlands

Current Status: Pre-Production

Looking For:

- Script Doctors
- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Co-Producers
- Broadcasters
- Film Funds
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support
- Digital Partners

Post-Production
Feature Narrative
Spring Grant 2013

Amin Dora
Director



Georges Khabbaz
Screenwriter



Gabriel Chamoun
Producer



Contact

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Ghadi

Lebanon / Arabic / 2013

Ghadi is different from the other kids. Might he be an angel? With the help of his teammates, Ghadi's father tricks the town into believing so.



In a small neighbourhood of a traditional Lebanese coastal town, Leba, a music instructor, marries his childhood sweetheart Lara. To the dismay of his family, neighbours and friends, their first child is a girl – and so is their second. Lara is pregnant for the third time and yes, it's a boy! However, medical tests show that he will have special needs. Will Leba and Lara keep the baby? Will little Ghadi become a burden on his family; or its pride and joy? Is he angel or demon? Strange phenomena, secretly staged by Leba, and the rejects of the Hay el Mchakal neighbourhood soon affect the behaviour and beliefs of the locals.

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 97 min

Genre: Family, Comedy, Social Issues

Exhibition Format: HDCAM

Director's Note

'Ghadi' is the intersection of a number of subjects that interest me. It is primarily a story of the struggle for acceptance. Leba, the film's protagonist, is a way to look at issues of ignorance and the fear of the unknown – reasons behind so many of the conflicts in the world. Leba's child is born with trisomy, a chromosomal abnormality that halts the normal evolution of the brain. Leba's struggle with getting people to accept his child highlights the role of ignorance. People refuse this child because they feel they are unable or unwilling to identify with him. Examining this social situation in a mode of black humour filters its difficult message; by laughing and looking at the bright side, we can come to accept difference.

Director's Biography

Amin Dora is the International Digital Emmy Award-winning director of 'Shankaboot' – the world's first Arabic web series. For years, Dora has worked on commercials that make use of humor, visual effects and mixed-media animation. As an actor, he has appeared in shorts and commercials. In 2007, he started a live visual performance collective under the name BeirutVisuals, which conducts VJ performances with local and international groups and at festivals including the Beirut Animated and 3D Mapping Animation.

Company Profile

The Talkies was established in 1988 in Beirut as a television commercial production company. Over the years, it has become one of the leading companies in the Arab world and a driving force in the audio-visual industry thanks to innovative management, talent development and creative thinking. Now with offices in Beirut, Cairo and Dubai, The Talkies produced award-winning commercials for major advertising agencies and marketers in the MENA region as well as for European, American and other markets. The Talkies has produced narrative films including Michel Kammoun's 'The Shower' (short, 2001), Ghassan Kotait and Wissam Smayra's 'Non Metrage Libanais' (short, 2003), Josef Fares's 'Serviced: Zozo' (feature, 2005) and Amin Dora's 'Ghadi' (a feature written by Georges Khabbaz, 2013).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$1,882,747

Secured Financing: \$1,275,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- SGBL, Lebanon
- J. Matta Holding, Lebanon
- Anthony and Celia Sakkal, Lebanon
- Samer Dadanian, Lebanon

Current Status: Complete

Looking For:

- Distributors

Post-Production
Feature Narrative
Spring Grant 2013

Uda Benyamina,
Guillaume Tordjman
Director / Screenwriter



Mathilde Le Ricque
Producer



Contact

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Ghetto Child

France, Qatar, Morocco, Tunisia / French / 2014

In a juvenile detention centre, some teenagers revolt daily against their educators. One night, they are forced to flee into the surrounding woods, where they get lost...



In a juvenile detention centre, Madi and his younger brother Bright try to fight the daily injustice perpetrated by their supervisors. One day Amel shows up and her mysterious behaviour and beauty have a significant impact on the brothers. After Bright is assaulted by a supervisor, he and some other inmates set a trap to get revenge. Madi arrives too late to prevent his brother and the youths from committing this act of violence, and the frightened teens disappear into the surrounding woods to escape further punishment. Left to their own devices, hungry and thirsty, they go further into the wilderness each day and are increasingly aware of the dangerous situation they are in. Will they find the strength to survive? What will this newfound freedom reveal about themselves?

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 70 min

Genre: Coming-of-Age, Docufiction, Drama

Director's Note

For us, 'Ghetto Child' portrays the lives of the "lost" youth who have somehow been abandoned by society and left to themselves. The context of imprisonment in the beginning of the film represents the space that society allocates for them, where they still express and work toward an identity of their own. When they escape from the camp into the surrounding woods, this metaphor extends further to reveal the mental and psychological barriers the teenagers are trapped in, and which prevent them to live up to their potential. In the end, confronted with nature itself and forced to survive, the youths will eventually overcome their fears and open up again to life, regaining an integral humanity that has been repressed over the past.

Director's Biography

Uda Benyamina is a French-Moroccan director, screenwriter and actor. A graduate of the École Régionale d'Acteurs de Cannes, she trained at the Academy of Minsk, the Ontological Theatre and the Actors' Studio. Her most recent film, a medium-length project entitled 'The Road to Paradise' (2011), was awarded numerous prizes at festivals. Benyamina founded the association 1000 Visages in February 2006.

Born in Paris, Guillaume Tordjman trained as an actor at the Cours Florent, where he was coached by Sylvia Bergé and Jean-Pierre Garnier, among others. In 2009, he was taught directing by Uda Benyamina through 1000 Visages (Cinetalents), an association dedicated to teaching filmmaking and acting. In 2012, Guillaume co-wrote and co-directed his first feature film, 'Ghetto Child', with Benyamina.

Company Profile

For several years, 1000 VISAGES Productions has offered filmmaking workshops to youth living in the troubled suburbs of Paris. These teenagers are usually of an immigrant background, and are often stigmatised for their origins. They are introduced to the different aspects of filmmaking by professionals, who train them in all production positions. Part of our objective is to make films of high artistic ambition and to change the false image French society often has regarding these young people, and demonstrate that their neglected neighbourhoods are in fact a pool of talent. We also promote a cinema of real diversity, away from the prejudices and stereotypes that continue to stigmatize and alienate many people. This fresh production style brings back zest and authentic expression to the process of creating a film.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$466,198

Secured Financing: \$406,198

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Conseil Général de l'Essonne, Préfecture de l'Essonne, France
- Direction Regionale des affaires culturelles d'Île-de-France
- Fondation BNP Paribas, France
- Ville de Viry-Chatillon, France
- Mairie de Paris, France

- Cohésion SocialE de l'Essonne, France

- Fondation Orange, France

- Fondation WFS, France

- Fondation France Télévision

Current Status: Post-Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors (France, Germany, UK, USA, MENA)
- Broadcasters
- Additional Funding

Production

Feature Narrative

Fall Grant 2013

Mohamed Ben Attia

Director / Screenwriter



Dora Bouchoucha, Lina Chaabane

Producer



Hedi

'Inhabek Hedi' / Tunisia, Qatar / Arabic / 2014

Hedi's life is calm and uneventful, traced out for him by custom and values. But when he finds himself faced with love, he realises he can change things.



Hedi is a simple young man. He is not very talkative or reactive and does not expect much from the life that is traced for him. Indifferent to everything around him, he just takes life as it comes. He allows his authoritarian and overwhelming mother to organise his marriage to Khedija; lets his boss send him on a prospecting trip to Mahdia during the week of his wedding celebrations. In Mahdia, he meets Reem, who works as an activity leader in a seaside resort hotel that is losing its tourists. Intrigued by her insouciance and frivolity, Hedi gets involved in a passionate love relationship. Meanwhile, as the wedding preparations are going on, Hedi is finally forced to make a choice.

Contact

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Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 90 min

Genre: Romantic Comedy

Director's Note

For me, the most important thing that has changed in Tunisia since the revolution is that we have discovered who we are. After 14 January, I felt a veil was being lifted and we were discovering each other – but without accepting our social, religious and cultural differences. In this new context, my first wish was to tell a love story. But beyond the romantic ideal of a happy couple, I want to tell the story of a young man who abandons his dreams and slips into an uneventful life. Within his petit-bourgeois milieu, his journey takes a new tack thanks to Reem, a carefree woman who reveals Hedi to himself, offering him a different vision of the preconceived ideas of his existence. This is the story of the choice between passion and reason.

Director's Biography

Mohamed Ben Attia was born in Tunis in 1976. He studied Audiovisual Communication at the University of Valenciennes in France after graduating from the institut de Hautes Etudes Commerciales (IHEC) in Tunis in 1998. He has directed five short films including 'Kif Lokhrin' (Silver Award at FESPACO 2006), 'Mouja', 'Loi 76' and 'Selma', for which he received a grant from the Doha Film Institute, and which was selected for the Official International Competition at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival.

Company Profile

Nomadis Images is a Tunisian audiovisual production company. Its main activities include producing short and feature-length fiction films, documentaries and commercials; providing services; and training. The company's filmography includes Sami Tlili's 'Cursed Be the Phosphate' (2012), Hinde Boujemaa's 'It Was Better Tomorrow' (2012), Raja Amari's 'Buried Secrets' (2009) and 'Satin Rouge' (2002), and Djamila Saraoui's 'Barakat' (2006).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$775,000

Secured Financing: \$375,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Ministry of Culture of Tunisia
- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- Telzva TV, Tunisia

Current Status: Pre-Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors (France, Europe, Middle East)
- Co-Producers
- Broadcasters (Europe, Middle East)
- Film Funds (MENA)
- Private Investors (North Africa)
- Post-Production Support
- Additional Funding

Post-Production
Feature Narrative
Fall Grant 2013

Benjamín Naishtat
Director / Screenwriter



**Benjamin Domenech,
Santiago Galleli**
Producer



History of Fear

'Historia del miedo' / Argentina, Uruguay, Germany, France, Qatar / Spanish / 2014

In the dark, they appear.



Pola spends his days trimming grass and taking care of a football court in a gated community in the outer suburbs of Buenos Aires, not far from where the urban landscape gives way to wilderness. He despises the people he works for, yet adores the hypocritical way in which the inhabitants treat him with respectful indulgence. Furthermore, he loathes the people who have started setting up some sort of camp in the nearby wasteland, believing they have come to steal and ruin the peaceful environment of the community.

Shooting Format: HD
Runtime: 79 min
Genre: Drama, Suspense
Exhibition Format: HDCAM

Contact
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Director's Note

'History of Fear' is a film about frightened people. In the context of a chaotic summer in the suburbs, a social order reveals itself - fragile and about to give in. All the film's characters appear to have a motive to let instinct drive their decisions. The audience must join the characters in their uncertain drift, walk into the dark with them and project that which lies in the core of fear itself.

Director's Biography

Benjamín Naishtat was born in 1986 in Buenos Aires, where he currently lives and works. He studied at the Universidad del Cine in Buenos Aires and at Le Fresnoy - Studio National des Arts Contemporains. He has directed works of fiction including the short film 'El Juego' (2010), which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival, as well as more experimental work, such as the video piece 'Historia del mal' (2011), which premiered in Rotterdam and was shown internationally in several exhibitions. 'History of Fear' is his first feature film. He is currently developing his next project, entitled 'Fundamental Movement'.

Company Profile

Rei Cine was created to provide a creative platform for groundbreaking filmmakers in Buenos Aires. Completed films as main producer include Benjamin Naishtat's 'History of Fear' (2014), Jazmín López's 'Leones' (2012), Adrián Villar Rojas's 'What Fire Brought to Me' (2013) and Gonzalo Tobal's 'Villegas' (2012); all of these were successfully distributed worldwide and selected for major festivals in Berlin, Cannes, Venice, Rotterdam and Locarno, among many others. In 2013, we launched Rei Distribucion, a distribution label based in Argentina. Specialising in tailor-made releases of Latin American films, we handle titles like Dominga Sotomayor's 'Thursday Till Sunday' (2012), Carlos Reygadas's 'Post Tenebras Lux' (2012), and Ana Guevara and Leticia Jorge's 'So Much Water' (2013).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$400,000

Secured Financing: \$400,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- INCAA, Argentina
- Programa Ibermedia
- Berlinale World Cinema Fund, Germany
- Le Fresnoy - Studio National des Arts Contemporains, France

- Ecce Films SARL, France
- The Global Film Initiative, USA
- Centre National des Arts Plastiques, France

Current Status: Complete

Looking For:

- Distributors
- Broadcasters
- Private Investors

Development

Feature Narrative

Spring Grant 2013

Kamir Aïnouz

Director / Screenwriter



Honey Cigar

'Cigare au miel' / France, Algeria, Qatar / French / 2014

The coming-of-age story of a teenage Algerian girl born and raised in France, set against the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in Algeria in the 1990s.



France, 1993. Selma, a sharp, 18-year-old Algerian girl, lives in a mostly Catholic suburb of Paris. While her strict Algerian upbringing forces her to live in her own world of romantic daydreams, her parents are constantly tuned in to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in their home country. When Selma meets Julien, a handsome rebel in college, she throws herself into a liberated Western lifestyle, which drives a wedge between her and her parents. Meanwhile, civil war rages in Algeria, tearing her family apart even further. As the consequences of terrorism dawn on her, Selma develops a political conscience, finally earning the respect of her father and of the men in her family. Beyond the tale of a young Arab woman's tormented coming of age, 'Honey Cigar' is at its core a story of the universal quest for identity and a reflection on the unique role Westernised Arab women can play in the world.

Genre: Coming of age, Dramedy, Identity, Romance, War, Women

Contact

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Director's Note

How to go from being under absolute control to having complete freedom over the course of one day – every day? Selma, the French-Algerian protagonist of 'Honey Cigar', lives and breathes this constant, contradictory journey. What crystallises the pull between her different cultures, religions and societies, is her struggle to discover and control her adolescent impulses. Owning her body and what she does with it is Selma's key to playing a decisive role in her community. Just like Selma, I have struggled with my own body and identity, and have felt lonely in that struggle. With 'Honey Cigar', I want to tell a story of empowerment, of change, and of a meaningful, day-to-day revolution.

Director's Biography

Born and raised in Paris of Algerian parents, Kamir Aïnouz studied screenwriting at UCLA and attended directing workshops at USC. Since 2008, she has worked as a screenwriter on feature films including the American remake of the French comedy 'LOL' (2012) and the adaptation of Camilla Läckberg's bestselling Swedish novel 'The Ice Princess' for French studio UGC. 'Honey Cigar' is her first original script and her directorial debut.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$2,410,668

Secured Financing: \$8,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Current Status: Development

Looking For:

- Script Doctors
- Producers and Co-Producers
- Film Funds
- Private Investors

Production

Feature Narrative

Fall Grant 2013

Soleen Yusef

Director / Screenwriter



Mehmet Aktas

Producer



House Without Roof

'Haus ohne Dach' / Iraq, Germany, Qatar / German, Kurdish / 2015

Three siblings go on a road trip through the mountains to fulfill their mother's last wish in this tragicomic tale of a Kurdish family.



'House Without Roof' tells the journey of Alan, Jan and Liya, three siblings born in the Kurdish part of Iraq who grew up in Germany. The three must fulfill the last wishes of their late mother and bury her in their Kurdish home village next to their father, who fell in the battle against the regime of Saddam Hussein. On their nervewracking Kurdistan odyssey, they are not just confronted by their large Kurdish family, who do not want their mother to be buried next to her husband, but also by each other, since they have been emotionally separated over time. In their personal journeys, searching for homeland, identity and the road to that knowledge, they laugh, fight, lose their mother's coffin, hurt each other and cry – but at last they achieve their aim and come closer together as a family.

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 90 min

Genre: Dramedy, Identity, Immigration, Politics, Road Trip

Contact

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Director's Note

From one day to the next, you have to leave the place that you know as home. Your parents make decisions for you. They take you and your siblings by the hand and trot off into the distance. They didn't know themselves where they were going. They just wanted to leave – leave the war and the wreckage of life behind. You move on from everything: friends, family and the place of your childhood. You arrive at a place adopted as your new home. The years fly by, your parents get old and suddenly you are in your mid-20s, but you feel like 40 because you have the sense of having lived two lives. Two hearts beat within your breast: one with the past, the other with the present; the one quickly, the other more slowly.

Director's Biography

Soleen Yusef was born in Duhok, Iraq in 1987. At the age of nine, she and her family fled to Germany for political reasons. After graduating from high school, she attended the Academy of Stage Arts and was trained as a singer and actor. She worked as a production assistant and first assistant director for the production company mitosfilm. Since 2008, she has been studying feature film directing at the Baden-Württemberg Film Academy and has directed several short films, which have been screened at many renowned international film festivals. She lives and works between Kurdistan and Germany.

Company Profile

mitosfilm-iraq is an independent film production company founded in 2012 in Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan. Our aim is to support authentic storytelling by producing thought-provoking fiction and documentary films. Through international co-productions, we strive to reach audiences around the world, as well as develop local Kurdish cinema in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture of Kurdistan. As the first supporter of professional Kurdish filmmaking, author and producer Mehmet Aktas has actively pioneered the current Kurdish cinema movement. It is our aim to build an artistic and cultural bridge between Kurdistan and the rest of the world, and therefore bring about an understanding of the cultural past, present and future with the help of ambitious and entertaining cinema.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$975,000

Secured Financing: \$699,500

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Südwestrundfunk, Germany

Current Status: Pre-Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors (Worldwide except Germany and Iraq)
- Co-Producers (Worldwide except Germany and Iraq)
- Broadcasters
- Private Investors
- Digital Partners

Development
Feature Narrative
Spring Grant 2013

Sameh Zoabi
Director / Screenwriter



James Dean and Me

'James Dean Wa Ana' / Palestine, Qatar / Arabic / 2016

In the shadow of the impending 1967 Arab-Israeli War, a 14-year-old Palestinian boy discovers parallels between his own life and James Dean's in 'Rebel Without a Cause', and attempts to embody a similar character in his hometown.



In 1967, in the shadow of the looming Arab-Israeli War, a Palestinian teenager watches James Dean in a small local cinema. Although he and the movie star are from entirely different worlds, Yacoub discovers parallels between his own life and Dean's Jim Stark in 'Rebel Without a Cause', and attempts to embody a similar character in his own village, where he is an outcast.

Runtime: 90 min
Genre: Drama

Contact
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Director's Note

The reality I was born into was one of conflict and war. Others experience this as news headlines, political debates, negotiations. What people don't see are the human faces, the emotions and personal stories. Set in the hot summer a few days before the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, 'James Dean and Me' tells the story of a teenager named Yacoub. He lives in an Arab village bordered by olive groves and golden fields, nestled at the foot of a mountain in Galilee. Yacoub's vibrant, passionate, energetic spirit sets his story against the gloomy reality of war. Rather than placing a harsh, militarised reality in the foreground of the story, my interest is in the characters - their physical and emotional journeys reflected in the cinematic style and mode of the film. I want to revisit this period from a perspective that most have never seen - the personal; a point of view that, unfortunately, is still valid today.

Director's Biography

Sameh Zoabi is a Palestinian writer and film director. His short film 'Be Quiet' (2005) received an award from the Cinéfondation Selection at the Cannes Film Festival, while his feature debut, 'Man Without a Cell Phone' (2010), had its world premiere at DTF and received the Golden Antigone award at the 2011 Montpellier Film Festival. Zoabi studied film and English literature at Tel Aviv University and later graduated with an MFA in film from Columbia University in New York.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$800,000
Secured Financing: \$12,000
Confirmed Financial Partners:
• Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Current Status: Development
Looking For:
• Co-Producers (France, Germany)

Production

Feature Narrative

Fall Grant 2013

Yared Zeleke

Director / Screenwriter



Ama Ampadu, Laurent Lavolé

Producer



Lamb

Ethiopia, Qatar / Amharic / 2015

The story of an Ethiopian boy who, after losing his home and family due to famine, tries to save his only friend from becoming a feast.



'Lamb' is a coming-of-age drama about nine-year-old Ephraim and his constant companion, a sheep named Chuni, in Ethiopia. Ephraim's affection for Chuni deepened after he lost his mother to famine a year ago. Consequently, his beloved father sends him and Chuni far away from their drought-stricken homeland to live with distant relatives in a greener part of the country. Ephraim soon finds himself to be a homesick outcast who is always getting into trouble. When his uncle orders him to slaughter Chuni for the upcoming holiday feast, Ephraim devises a devious scheme to save the sheep and return to his home.

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 90 min

Genre: Drama

Contact

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Director's Note

'Lamb' is analogous to my life's journey in that it is deeply personal and inescapably political. It is a semi-autobiographical coming-of-age drama that incorporates the heart, heartache and humour of everyday life in my homeland. What is special about the film is its fairy-tale aspect: a pre-pubescent child searching for a way home, with his best friend – a sheep – pitted against his evil uncle, amid a strange mountainous landscape and a "forbidden forest." The story, however, is more realistic than a fable, as it takes place under the harsh conditions of hard-labour farm life in Ethiopia.

Director's Biography

Yared Zeleke holds a Masters of Fine Arts in Writing and Directing from New York University. He worked for various NGOs in the USA, Ethiopia, Namibia and Norway before pursuing filmmaking. Zeleke has written, produced, directed and edited several short documentary ('Allula') and fiction films ('Housewarming', 'Lottery Boy'). He is currently preparing 'Lamb', a feature-length fiction film for which he wrote the screenplay.

Company Profile

Slum Kid Films is an Ethiopia-based film production company co-founded by Ama Ampadu. It aims to discover and nurture emerging talent in Africa, and in Ethiopia in particular, as well as to support the development of Ethiopian filmmaking. The company is currently preparing the first feature-length fiction film by Ethiopian writer-director Yared Zeleke. Entitled 'Lamb', the film is being produced along with Gloria Films Production (France) and Heimatfilm (Germany). Films Distribution is acting as international sales agent, and the film will be distributed in France by Haut et Court. Other projects in development are 'Edna' and 'Ms Ethiopia', while 'Lottery Boy', an experimental short by Yared Zeleke, is currently in post-production.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$1,691,340,000

Secured Financing: \$1,138,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Slum Kid Films, Ethiopia
- Gloria Films, France
- Heimatfilm, Germany
- Centre Nationale du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée, France
- ACP-EU Support Programme
- Haut et Court, France
- Films Distribution, France
- EZEF/Brot für die Welt, Germany
- Amiens International Festival Screenplay

Development Fund, France

- Visions Sud Est, Switzerland
- ARTE (Das Kleine Fernsehspiel), Germany

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- Film Funds
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support
- Digital Partners
- Additional Funding
- Distributors
- Sales Agents

Production

Feature Narrative

Fall Grant 2013

Babak Jalali

Director / Screenwriter



Ginevra Elkann

Producer



Land

UK, Italy, France, Qatar / English / 2015

Set on the plains of the United States, 'Land' is a modern Western about Native Americans and whites, distance and longing, roadwork and abuse.



The Yellow Eagle family of the Lakota Sioux tribe lives on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. News reaches them that Floyd, the youngest son, has died during military service in Afghanistan. So begins the wait for his body to be returned for burial. Wesley, the youngest surviving son, is an alcoholic. His brother's death doesn't really hit him, as his only aim during the day is to get hold of beer. Wesley is in daily contact with the white people who run the liquor stores just off the reservation. This already uneasy relationship becomes unpleasant when acts of violence occur and Wesley is directly affected. Meanwhile, the eldest son, Raymond, is a recovering alcoholic who is withdrawn and keeps his worries to himself. Although he feels a sense of responsibility for the extended family, he feels too emasculated to do anything - until the troubles that have affected his brothers force him to be a man again.

Shooting Format: 35mm

Runtime: 100 min

Genre: Drama, Politics, Social Issues

Exhibition Format: 35mm

Contact

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Director's Note

I have always been interested in marginalised and forgotten communities and their relationships to their more dominant neighbours. The Lakota Sioux Indians, who live on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, are one such people, and the relationship between this tribe and the white people who live nearby plays a significant role in this film. I have been interested in the history of Pine Ridge for a long time and have in recent years become curious about the reportedly terrible living conditions there. I wondered about my legitimacy as an Iranian-born Briton writing a story about a people with whom I have no personal connection, but with every new draft of 'Land' I feel more at ease. I'm determined to do this and hope I do the place and its people justice.

Director's Biography

Babak Jalali was born in Iran in 1978 and has lived mainly in London since 1986. He received an MA in filmmaking from the London Film School in 2005. His graduation film, 'Heydar. An Afghan in Tehran', was screened at 60 film festivals worldwide and received a BAFTA nomination for Best Short Film. He developed his first feature, 'Frontier Blues', during his residence at the Cannes Film Festival Cinéfondation, and shot it in and around his hometown of Gorgan. The film premiered at the Locarno Film Festival in 2009.

Company Profile

Asmara Films is a production company established in 2010 by Ginevra Elkann. Our main goal is to foster the projects of young authors coming from anywhere around the world. Our prerogative is to work hand in hand with authors, connecting cinema with art and all domains of contemporary culture. The company is currently in production with Babak Jalali's 'Land', slated for release in 2015.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$2,143,162

Secured Financing: \$662,460

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Torino Film Lab Production Award, Italy
- MiBAC DGC, Italy
- Agence Nationale de Gestion des Œuvres Audiovisuelles - PROCIREP, France

Current Status: Pre-Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Broadcasters
- Film Funds
- Private Investors

Development
Feature Narrative
Fall Grant 2013

Mahdi Fleifel
Director / Screenwriter



**Patrick Campbell,
Signe Byrge Sorensen**
Producer



Men in the Sun

Palestine, Greece, UK, Denmark, Qatar / Arabic, Greek / 2015

An immigrant's tale set against the backdrop of social collapse in southern Europe.



'Men in the Sun' is the tragicomic story of Qassim and Abu Love, two Palestinian friends who escape a refugee camp in Lebanon in search of a better future in Europe. After a journey fraught with danger, they arrive in Athens and make contact with Shadi, Abu Love's cousin, who has been in Athens for years and knows his way around. After promising them a way out of Greece, Shadi disappears with their money instead, leaving Qassim and Abu Love to face a desperate fight for survival in a country that is undergoing economic and social collapse.

Runtime: 90 min
Genre: Crime, Dark Comedy, Docufiction, Drama, Immigration, Politics, Social Issues, Youth

Contact
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Director's Note

The portrayal of exile is my main concern when considering the cinematic language of my films; it is the prime motivator of my creative approach. The feeling of exile is one of solitude; it has a spiritual dimension to it, which only an exile knows, although he or she rarely has the ability to articulate it. I want to examine emotional isolation in a world where war, peace and God have become abstract notions. These characters are living at the end of the world. My practice is, in essence, a desire to tell stories in a different way, not as in a conventional film with standard action and plot. The film will have strong dialogue, but once the script is written I intend to strip things to a bare minimum, in the manner of a poem in which images replace words.

Director's Biography

Mahdi Fleifel is a Palestinian filmmaker based in London. He was born in Dubai and raised in the Ain El-Helweh refugee camp in Lebanon and later in Elsinore, Denmark. He graduated from the UK National Film and Television School in 2009. In 2010, Fleifel teamed up with Irish producer Patrick Campbell and together they set up the London-based production company Nakba Filmworks, through which they released 'A World Not Ours' (2012). Launched at the Toronto International Film Festival, the film opened to critical acclaim and has won several major awards.

Company Profile

Nakba FilmWorks is a London-based film production company primarily focused on the work of writer-director Mahdi Fleifel. Formed in 2010 by Fleifel and Irish-born producer Patrick Campbell, Nakba produced and released Fleifel's successful feature documentary 'A World Not Ours' (2013), and has now begun work on follow-up projects including 'Men in the Sun'.

Final Cut for Real is dedicated to high-end creative documentaries aimed at the international market. Our policy is to be curious and daring, and seek out directors with serious artistic ambitions. We do not from the outset set any limits on subjects or locations. We look for interesting stories, great characters and in-depth social analysis – and we also try to give the films a twist of humour.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$1,051,805

Secured Financing: \$40,300

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Screen Institute Beirut, Lebanon
- New Danish Screen
- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon

Current Status: Development

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors (Europe, North America)
- Co-Producers (Greece, Europe)
- Broadcasters
- Film Funds (Middle East, Europe)
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support
- Digital Partners
- Additional Funding

Production

Feature Narrative

Fall Grant 2013

João Salaviza

Director / Screenwriter



Francois D'Artemare, Maria João Mayer

Producer



Mountain

'Montanha' / Portugal, France, Qatar / Portuguese / 2014

A visually intense, poetic coming-of-age film in which 14-year-old Bruno is forced to become the man of the house while his grandfather lives out his last days in hospital.



Day breaks on the eighth floor in a suburban neighbourhood of Lisbon and 14-year-old Bruno's grandfather is still in hospital. Doctors give him only a few days to live. The imminence of death and the void that it will leave force Bruno to become the man of the house, where he lives with his mother Monica, who is in her 30s, and his three-year-old sister Erica.

Shooting Format: 35mm

Runtime: 100 min

Genre: Drama, Social Issues

Contact

Filmes do Tejo II Multimédia Lda

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Director's Note

My short film 'Arena', filmed in 2008, covers a day in the life of a young man under house arrest with no prospects and nowhere to go. That same year marks the start of an economic crisis that has hit Portugal particularly hard. In the intervening years everything has changed, and the generally held belief is that from now on nothing will ever be the same. The acute awareness that your dreams might never be realised, and the thought of being cloistered in a country that shrivels more and more each day is an anguish shared by an entire generation. Bruno, the main character in 'Mountain', has spent his adolescence in the midst of this historic upheaval. 'Mountain' is the story of this boy and the tough uphill journey he takes in a body that is changing as swiftly as the surroundings it inhabits.

Director's Biography

João Salaviza was born in Lisbon in 1984. He graduated in Cinema from the Escola Superior de Teatro e Cinema and Universidad del Cine in Buenos Aires. His short film 'Arena' won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival in 2009.

Company Profile

Established by Maria João Mayer and François d'Artemare, both of whom individually have solid experience in Portugal and France, Filmes do Tejo is an active production company that has been internationally recognized for having discovered numerous Portuguese talents, including João Salaviza, whose short 'Rafa' won a Golden Bear at the 2012 Berlinale. They seek to provide renowned directors (examples include Flora Gomes, Margarida Cardoso and Gabriel Abrantes) the opportunity to continue their work in complete freedom.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$1,940,554

Secured Financing: \$1,924,204

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- ICA / RTP
- Eurimages
- Les Films de l'Après-Midi, France

Current Status: Post-Production

Development
Feature Narrative
Spring Grant 2013

Nawara - The Light Blue Satin Robe

Egypt, Qatar / Arabic / 2014

Hala Khalil
Director / Screenwriter / Producer



Mohamed Hefzy
Producer



Nawara the maid stays alone in a villa owned by a rich man who fled from Egypt after the revolution for fear he would be arrested as a member of the old regime.



Nawara, a woman in her 20s, works as a housemaid in the home of Ossama Bey and his family, who are closely linked to the Mubarak regime. As the revolution unfolds, they decide to leave the country temporarily. They give Nawara some money and ask her to look after the house while they are away. Nawara calls her fiancé Mustafa and tells him to find a house, now that she can afford it. She takes to living in her employers' villas as though she were the owner. At Mustafa's insistence, Nawara lets him spend the night with her at the villa, and the pair discover what it's like to live like the rich. Because of a travel ban and property seizure order that has been issued against Ossama Bey, however, the police arrive at the villa and take Nawara's money because she can't prove it belongs to her. She and Mustafa are left with nothing.

Runtime: 100 min
Genre: Drama
Exhibition Format: 35mm

Contact
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Director's Note

The happiness invoked by the Arab revolutions has undergone a shift; its current presence and future have become plagued by ambiguity and doubt. Despite the fact that I was one of the Egyptian Revolution's patrons and participants, at present I am in the same boat as all of us. Many questions run through my mind: Was it really a revolution or just a ruse? Has it been successful, or has it been stolen? Is it still in process, as some of us imagine? What form will the near future in the Middle East take? Questions like these inspired me to write a trilogy of three self-contained films that look at the revolution from several angles. The first of these films, 'Nawara' considers how the masses view the revolution and what they expected it would do for them. Has it really benefited them? Will it be able to make their dreams come true?

Director's Biography

Hala Khalil obtained a degree in film directing in 1992 from the Cairo Film School and is a director and screenwriter. 'The Kite' (1997), her award-winning short film, was selected for many festivals and received international acclaim. Her critically praised feature films 'Best Times' (2004) and 'Cut and Paste' (2006) have been screened at numerous international film festivals and have won several awards.

Company Profile

Founded shortly after the Egyptian Revolution of 25 January, 2011, Nazrah Films defined a goal of supporting independent films and filmmakers. We seek to reach out to the world through cinema by encouraging authentic individual voices to make themselves heard. Based in a passion for democracy, equality and freedom of speech, we want to explore the shared initiatives of struggling Egyptian independent filmmakers. It also operates to counter the monopoly of commercial cinema, which does not represent the new generation of filmmakers or the new Egyptian society. We want to challenge the status quo, where independent cinema barely exists, as independent filmmakers, with new hope, ambition and vision, yearn for the opportunity to reach new and eager audiences.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$800,000

Secured Financing: \$500,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- SANAD, Abu Dhabi Film Festival, UAE

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors (Europe, Arab World, Middle East, etc.)

- Co-Producers (Europe, Arab World, Middle East, etc.)
- Broadcasters (Europe, Arab World, Middle East, etc.)
- Film Funds (Europe, Arab World, Middle East, etc.)
- Private Investors (Europe, Arab World, Middle East, etc.)
- Post-Production Support
- Digital Partners
- Additional Funding

Development
Feature Narrative
Fall Grant 2013

Ehab Tarabieh
Director / Screenwriter



Sol Goodman, Jonathan Doweck
Producer



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The Returning

'Al-A'aed' / Syria, Qatar / Arabic / 2015

Mustafa left his village and its secrets 45 years ago and has been a border smuggler ever since. Now, war and old age force him to return home.



After spending 45 years as a smuggler on the border, war and old age force Mustafa down from the mountains and back to his hometown in the occupied Golan Heights. Living in his childhood home, he investigates the secrets he left behind when he fled 45 years ago – the secrets still seeping through homes, into the streets, through the roots of the trees and up the mountain. Assuming he is invincible, and that he knows his way around these secrets and through the night, unheard and unseen, he crosses forbidden lines – and will have to suffer the consequences.

Genre: Drama, Politics, Social Issues, Suspense, War

Director's Note

Ever since I can remember, Grandpa used to say: 'Even though the village is small, it has more secrets than the mountains can carry. We are cowards. We know everything, but refuse to speak about anything. One day, a man will come and he will try to unbalance the scales, to put the truth on one end and expose everything we've been hiding all these years. Because we are cowards, we will try with all our might to stop him, even by taking his life. More men will come to do the same, and because we are cowards, we will treat them the same, time and again.' In this film I will talk about current times, the times we Arabs are going through right now. I will talk about a particular time in which we do not want to expose our secrets – secrets that are no different to those of any other people in this world.

Director's Biography

Ehab Tarabieh was born in Majdel Shams, a small village in the Golan Heights. Growing up in a farming community under Israeli military occupation, Tarabieh was politically active at a very young age. At 19, he enrolled in the Conservatory for Classical Music in Damascus, studying classical violin for four years before relocating to the Czech Republic to study film. After graduating from his film studies, he made several award-winning short films while setting up the videography infrastructure for B'tzelem (The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories), documenting life under occupation in Palestine and bringing Palestinian realities to an until then uninformed world. 'The Forgotten', his latest short, received a grant from the Doha Film Institute and won the Best Short Film Award at DTFF 2012.

Company Profile

RailRoad Movies was established in Brooklyn in 2006 as RailRoad Media. Travelling long and far since then, RailRoad Movies focuses on films for cinema and printing fine literature, with an emphasis on work from the Middle East and Africa and with a strong client base in the USA.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$1,015,000
Secured Financing: \$15,000
Confirmed Financial Partners:
• Doha Film Institute, Qatar
Current Status: Development

Looking For:
• Co-Producers (Jordan, MENA, Arab World, Europe)
• Film Funds (MENA, Arab World, Europe)

Development
Feature Narrative
Spring Grant 2013

Alain Sauma
Director / Screenwriter



Son of a Dog

'Ibn Kalb' / Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic

Seventeen-year-old Nadim struggles to leave war-torn Beirut, but instead drifts into a life of petty crime. Meanwhile, his need to understand why his father abandoned his family becomes his rite of passage into adulthood.



Set against the backdrop of a never-ending war, 'Son of a Dog' is the coming-of-age story of 17-year-old Nadim, who is struggling with the absence of his father, who abandoned him at birth. His fragile safety net – his loving if egocentric mother and his close childhood friends – slowly comes undone as the surrounding violence drags on and relentlessly closes in on him. One by one, the people close to Nadim leave the country, exacerbating his feelings of abandonment and drifting. But his drive to leave the country and follow his friends is eventually eclipsed by the need to understand why his father abandoned his family. The journey toward meeting his father turns out to be his rite of passage into adulthood.

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Genre: Coming-of-Age, Drama, Identity

Director's Note

'Son of a Dog' stems from my personal experience, a recognition of the need to gain a better grasp over the impact generated by the absence of a father during the passage to adulthood, as well as the impact war has had on my generation, on those who grew up with war and became young adults during a time of violence. How do personal decisions, taken at the age of 16 or 17 as a direct consequence of political violence, affect entire life journeys? In developing the script, I kept in mind the symbolic parallels between the main character's abandonment by his father, a figure meant to represent protection and safety, and the abandonment of citizens by their disintegrated state, leaving them to themselves bereft of any protection. As such, it is not the violence itself that I want to revisit, but rather, the impact it has had on the everyday life of a young adult.

Director's Biography

After completing his studies at the Académie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts (ALBA) in 1992, Alain Sauma received a scholarship to train in scriptwriting, directing and editing at la FEMIS in Paris. Upon his return to Lebanon, he began teaching at ALBA, while pursuing a directing career in advertising. Over the past two decades, he has directed numerous nationwide corporate, tourism and awareness campaign films. In 2011, he directed 'Blue Line', a short film funded by the CNC and France 2. It was selected for more than a dozen festivals and won several awards.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: TBD

Secured Financing: \$8,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Current Status: Development

Looking For:

- Producers and Co-producers (Europe)

Post-Production
Feature Narrative
Spring Grant 2013

Naji Abu Nowar
Director / Screenwriter



Bassel Ghandour
Screenwriter / Producer



Rupert Lloyd
Producer



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Theeb

Jordan, Qatar, UAE, UK / Arabic / 2014

Wadi Rum, 1916. Theeb, a young Bedouin boy, embarks on a dangerous journey, only to discover his survival depends on the stranger who murdered his brother.



Hejaz Province, the Ottoman Empire, 1916. A Bedouin tribe roams the desert, unaware the world is at war. Theeb, a mischievous young boy, spends his days with his older brother Hussein, who tries to teach him to be a man. Their lives are interrupted by the arrival of Edward, a British Army officer, and his guide. They request to be taken to an ancient Roman well on the old pilgrimage route to Mecca, which is in perilous territory known as a raiders' hunting ground. A skilled navigator, Hussein volunteers to guide them. Jealous of his brother's adventure, Theeb chases after the party, but he has unwittingly embarked on a dangerous, life-altering journey. If he is to survive, he must find the skills and courage to overcome the desert, marauding raiders and a terrifying stranger.

Shooting Format: Super 16mm
Runtime: 95 min
Genre: Action, Adventure, Coming-of-Age, Drama, Historical Drama, History, Middle Eastern, Period Piece, Western
Exhibition Format: DCP

Director's Note

'Theeb' is not the vision of one director with a megaphone bellowing orders, but rather the result of a community coming together to create cinema. As director, my responsibility was to guide and unify a vision, but this is not 'my' film; it is 'our' film, and this "our" represents many people. One of the most important relationships in the film was with the Bedouin community who were present from inception through post-production. I lived with them during the research phase, and during eight months of acting workshops we developed a joint understanding of what the film should be. At each stage of production they helped shape the story, constantly adding new layers. If there is anything truly original about our film – and I hope there is – it is down to their contributions. For me, the process of creating cinema is an epic journey and I hope that is reflected in our film.

Director's Biography

Naji Abu Nowar lives and works in Jordan. His short film 'Death of a Boxer' (2009) played at numerous international film festivals, including the Palm Springs International Shortfest, the Dubai International Film Festival and the Miami Short Film Festival. It was a commercial success and was sold to many Internet and television channels around the world. 'Wolf', Abu Nowar's first feature-length fiction film, is currently in post-production.

Company Profile

Bayt Al Shawareb (formerly Fertile Crescent Film) is a production company that aims to develop and produce commercially viable Arab films and television programming for Middle Eastern audiences.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$879,152

Secured Financing: \$763,336

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- SANAD, Abu Dhabi Film Festival, UAE
- Visions Sud Est, Switzerland

Current Status: Complete

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors (except Switzerland)
- Additional Funding

Production

Feature Narrative
Spring Grant 2013

Vatche Boulghourjian
Director / Screenwriter



Caroline Oliveira
Producer



Tramontane

'Rabih' / Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic

Rabih, a young blind man, travels across rural Lebanon in search of a record of his birth and encounters a nation unable to recount his past – or its own.



Rabih, a young blind man, lives in a small village in Lebanon. He sings in a choir and edits Braille documents for an income. His life unravels when he applies for a passport and discovers that his identification card, which he has carried his entire life, is false. Travelling across rural Lebanon in search of a record of his own birth, he meets people on the far fringes of society who tell their own stories, raise further questions and give Rabih minor clues about his true identity. Descending into a void at the heart of his existence, Rabih encounters a nation incapable of telling his or its own narrative.

Contact

Rebus Film Production
Vatche Boulghourjian
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Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 100 min

Genre: Drama

Director's Note

A suspenseful drama and a meditation on a man's relationship to his homeland and its history, 'Tramontane' follows Rabih, a young blind man in search of a record of his own birth after discovering that his identity card is a forgery. A trail of stories takes Rabih across present-day rural Lebanon, and descends into a Kafkaesque encounter with a nation unable to retell his or its own past. Piecing together fragments of narratives, Rabih traces a web of real and invented memories and, at a devastating cost, nears an affirmation of himself. The film's production team is planning an ambitious audience-engagement plan that combines online presence with grassroots activities. Tangible events will give back to audiences who have given their emotional investment and indicate that this project is greater than the film itself: it is about narratives that unite individuals from a variety of backgrounds.

Director's Biography

Vatche Boulghourjian is from Lebanon and holds an MFA in film from New York University. Before attending NYU, Boulghourjian worked throughout the Middle East on documentaries for television networks while also making his independent shorts, experimental films, and documentaries. 'Fifth Column', his thesis film, received a production grant from the Hollywood Foreign Press Association and in 2010 had its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival as part of the Cinéfondation programme, where it won third prize. Boulghourjian is currently developing his first feature, 'Tramontane', which was selected by the Venice Biennale to take part in the inaugural edition of the Biennale College – Cinema.

Company Profile

Rebus Film Production champions films that communicate complex political and social subject matter, reflect bold authorial craftsmanship, and possess an empathy that can transcend borders and languages. We see films as a combination of images, sounds, and texts that together convey greater meaning and derive the name Rebus from this conviction. Established in 2001 in Beirut, Rebus has produced documentaries and video content for television networks; documentaries by independent filmmakers with projects in the Middle East; and independent works by Vatche Boulghourjian, including the critically acclaimed, award-winning experimental documentary 'Noble Sacrifice' (2002). Currently, Rebus focuses on producing feature-length films in Lebanon and beyond, and has several projects in development including 'Tramontane'.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$300,000

Secured Financing: \$150,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Rebus Film Production, Lebanon

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Co-Producers
- Film Funds
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support
- Additional Funding

Production

Feature Narrative
Spring Grant 2013

Alfouz Tanjour

Director / Screenwriter



Linda Zahra

Producer



Wooden Rifle

'Baroudeh Khasheb' / Syria, Qatar / Arabic

During the first few months of the popular uprising in Syria, 18-year-old Noor moves from his village to Damascus to live with his father.



During the first few months of the popular uprising in Syria, 18-year-old Noor comes to Damascus to live with his father, a lawyer who is separated from Noor's mother, who still lives in the distant border village Noor has travelled from. Noor is constantly thinking of his village and going back there, since he feels drowned in the crowds, noise and the mess of the city. Things go in another direction after the older man has an accident in his small red car, and the son finds himself obliged to take care of the father. 'Wooden Rifle' presents the stories of Syrian people, the details of their lives, the way they deal with a reality imposed upon them as fate, their battles with day-to-day life, their minor imaginary victories and their many defeats.

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 110 min

Genre: Drama

Contact

Alfouz Tanjour
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Director's Note

I love images, stories and dreams – this intellectual and imaginative combination that stems from the process of observing reality. I love making films and I love living them in life. Through cinema I can say what I want, create characters and events. The aim of all this is to solve the mystery of reality, to reveal the secrets, thoughts, dreams and lives of human beings, not to create a reality of unconnected symbols. Everything I say in my films is a personal story, something I have been through, read or heard. In narrative films, I build everything, re-creating everything to resemble the image of reality from a specific perspective. 'Wooden Rifle' is my first feature and with it I want to tell Syrian stories I have been through.

Director's Biography

Alfouz Tanjour was born in Salameih, Syria in 1975. He studied cinematography at the Academy of Fine Arts in the Republic of Moldova from 2000 to 2004. Since graduating, he has made several projects as director, director of photography, editor, or executive producer, including more than 15 documentaries for the Al Jazeera Documentary Channel. He made the long-form documentaries 'Wooden Rifle' (2012), about the Lebanese Civil War, and 'Rebellious Spirits, Jibran Khalil Jibran' (2013). Tanjour's short 'A Little Sun' (2007) won the Bronze Tanit at the Carthage Film Festival in 2008 and a Special Jury Mention at the Love International Film Festival in Mons, Belgium in 2009. 'Wooden Rifle' won the Public Liberties and Human Rights Award at the 9th Al Jazeera International Documentary Film Festival in 2013.

Company Profile

Cinemood Productions specialises in producing creative documentary and feature films. Between 2008 and 2012, it produced films including 'The End of a Red Balloon', and several documentaries for the Al Jazeera Documentary Channel, including 'Black Stone', 'Damascus City Symphony' and 'Cola Bridge', all by Alfouz Tanjour.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$286,000

Secured Financing: \$50,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Cinemood Productions, Syria
- Lais Art Productions, Syria

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- Co-Producers
- Film Funds
- Additional Funding

Production

Feature Narrative

Fall Grant 2013

Emir Baigazin

Director / Screenwriter



Anna Vilgelm

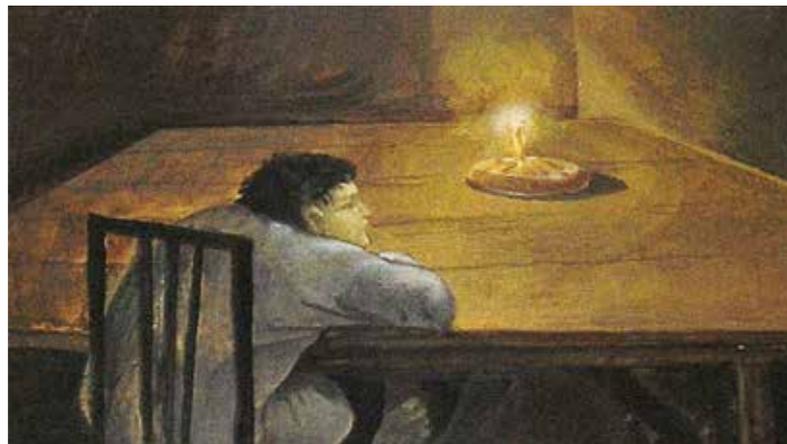
Producer



The Wounded Angel

'Ranenyi Angel: Svenlye Kanikuly' / Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Qatar / Kazakh, Russian / 2015

Four loosely connected tales about young 'fallen angels' in Kazakhstan who are unintelligible and occasionally irrational, and have not yet distinguished themselves through any significant actions.



Four loosely connected stories set in a small town in Kazakhstan at the beginning of the 90s, a time of transition from the Soviet era to a new state inscribed with emotional and economic depression. Each of the four main characters, all of whom are 13 years old, must go through a painful transition themselves; this presents them with a moral dilemma. They turn from being children – or 'angels' – to grown-ups, and are wounded along the way.

Contact

Kazakhfilm Studios

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Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 145 min

Genre: Drama

Director's Note

'The Wounded Angel' is the second film in a trilogy about a teenager and his complex relationship to the world. Where 'Harmony Lessons', the first film of the series, focused more on intelligence and cold mathematics, this second concentrates on feelings. What exactly is adolescence? It is a critical period for a man, when something in his mind snaps and is lost forever. I am extremely interested in whether I can find that taut string in a teenager – the string that is destined soon to tear. The aftermath is a readjustment of values – harsh, brutal and ravenous, but somehow right in its way.

Director's Biography

Emir Baigazin was born in Kazakhstan in 1984, and studied film directing at the Kazakh National Academy of Arts. His debut feature 'Harmony Lessons' had its premiere in the Competition of the Berlin International Film Festival in 2013, where it won the Silver Bear for an Outstanding Artistic Contribution. Among nearly 20 recognitions worldwide, Emir Baigazin was awarded a prize at the Tribeca Film Festival, won the Grand Jury Prizes at the Sao Paolo and Seattle Film Festivals, and a Special Mention in Directing Achievement at the Asia-Pacific Screen Awards in Brisbane, Australia.

Company Profile

Located in Almaty, Kazakhfilm Studios is the national film studio of Kazakhstan. The Alma-Aty newsreel studio was begun in 1934; 1938 saw the making of 'Amangeldy', the first Kazakh film. The Alma-Aty Film Studio (for feature films) was organised in 1941. Since then, several hundred feature and documentary films have been produced. 'The End of Ataman' (1972) and 'Mysteries of Madam Wong' (1986) both had more than 30 million viewers, while 'The Needle' (1989) – had admissions of more than 15 million. More recently, the studio has seen success with 'Shizo', which was in the Official Competition at the Festival de Cannes in 2004; 'Ironia Liuvbi' (2010); and 'Harmony Lessons', which won a Silver Bear at the Berlinale in 2013.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$1,500,000

Secured Financing: \$975,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Kazakhfilm Studios

Current Status: Pre-Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Film Funds
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support

Feature Documentary

Ahmed in Wonderland

The Coming Attraction

Egyptian Jeanne d'Arc

Executioners Never Tell Their Stories

The Foreign Son

Holy Cow

Invasion

Memory Exercises

My Uncle the "Terrorist"

Out / In the Streets

The Rise of the Gulf / Beyond Black Gold

Sidi Amar

The Siren of Faso Fani

The Stopover

Development
Feature Documentary
Spring Grant 2013

Ahmed in Wonderland

'Sur la voie normale' / Tunisia, France, Qatar / Arabic / 2014

Erige Sehiri
Director / Screenwriter



Palmyre Badinier
Producer



Upon leaving the classy neighbourhoods of Tunis, 30-year-old Ahmed, a train driver, recounts his winter trip, his desire to become someone else, his escape.



In this road movie set to the rock tunes of Pink Floyd and the jazzy sounds of Anouar Brahem intertwined with constant train noise, 30-year-old Ahmed, a train driver, tells us of his winter trip, his desire to become someone else, his escape. As we leave the classy neighbourhoods of Tunis and head toward the Algerian border, we get to know his companions, friends lost after the revolution, and a Tunisia facing itself. In a tone that is neither too serious nor too dramatic, yet steeped in social criticism, 'Ahmed in Wonderland' takes a look at a generation on the go.

Contact
Les Films de Zayna
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Shooting Format: HD
Runtime: 70 min
Genre: Documentary

Director's Note

I met Ahmad one summer in Tunis. He was 12. He already wanted to be an artist, like his maternal family, who were painters and musicians. We ran into each other again 15 years later, the year before the Tunisian revolution. The child had become a rebellious and dishevelled man; a railroader. For me, Ahmad embodies a certain truth of what Tunisia is going through in the aftermath of a state of euphoria. He struggles to find his place. Like Ahmad, I ask myself about the future of this country and how I can take part in it. I try to settle here while he tries to flee; I manage to stay positive while he is in the doldrums. In the media, we are constantly discussing the revolution, the hope, the new Tunisia. What I portray with the death train is a Tunisia waiting to be reborn but haunted by its demons.

Director's Biography

Tunisian-French director and journalist Erige Sehiri trained as a documentary filmmaker in Montreal. In France, she has directed several short documentaries and has worked on a regular basis from Jerusalem as an independent journalist for France 24, France 3 and Radio-Canada. 'My Father's Facebook', her first creative documentary, was her contribution to the award-winning collective documentary 'Family Albums' (2012). Since 2011, she has actively contributed to the structuring of the citizen journalism with Canal France International and the Nawaat Website in Tunisia. Sehiri is developing her first fiction project through her selection in the Méditalents programme.

Company Profile

After 10 years of production experience in the Middle East with the Ramallah-based production company Dar Films, Palmyre Badinier and Raed Andoni established Les Films de Zayna in Paris in 2008. Zayna develops drama and documentary projects for cinema, television and new media based on a close collaboration between the Arab world and Europe. Beyond geography, our source of inspiration is an openness to the world and its diversity of sensibilities. Zayna's documentary filmography includes Nassim Amaouche's 'En terrain connu' (2013), 'Family Albums' (multiple directors, 2012) and Andoni's 'Fix Me' (2009).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$380,000

Secured Financing: \$80,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- SOREAD 2M, Morocco

Current Status: Development

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors (Europe, Canada)
- Co-Producers (Europe, Canada)
- Broadcasters (Europe, North America, Arab World)
- Film Funds (Europe, North America, Arab World)
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support
- Digital Partners
- Additional Funding

Production

Feature Documentary
Spring Grant 2013

Nidal Al Dibs

Director / Screenwriter



Mostafa Youssef

Producer



The Coming Attraction

'Al 'ard Al Kadem' / Egypt, Qatar, Syria / Arabic / 2014

Some spaces befit the testimony of time, place... and events. Some spaces die like humans. They fall ill, collapse suddenly... or are assassinated. They grieve, or they are killed by sadness and longing. Some cities are like an abandoned movie theatre.



An abandoned movie theatre. Sound and image buried in dust. A waft of light spills over broken seats in front of a disintegrated screen, as though waiting for the film to begin. Hidden on their armrests are the engraved initials of a first love. Once-colourful curtains drift in the empty space, torn and dirty. Cracked walls. Broken lights. A quarter of a century ago, the Wahbi Cinema in Cairo was closed down. The nearby falafel shops closed; so did the ice cream and candy kiosks. All that remains near the abandoned hall is one stubborn café. The revolutionary youths of Tahrir Square broke through the steel door of the cinema to sweep away the dust of the old days, hoping to restore a space of freedom and creativity. Will they succeed?

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 70 min

Genre: Documentary, Politics, Social Issues, Youth

Exhibition Format: DCP

Contact

Seen Films
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Director's Note

When I first entered the Wahbi Cinema in Cairo, I felt silence. An abandoned movie theatre; sound and image buried in dust. A shaft of light over broken seats in front of a disintegrated screen, as though still waiting for the film to begin. Faded curtains, rotting and desiccated, look like ghosts escaped from the last horror film screened here. The theatre drowns in darkness. A space made idle – but its history boils beneath the dust. There is no sound here; no picture – except in memory. A quarter of a century ago, this cinema was closed down. The youth of Tahrir Square raided it; they broke the steel locks and witnessed the magnitude of the decay. The cinema, like the city, became the project of youth: the restoration of a dream, and spaces for freedom and creativity. They begin to draw the dream. 'The Coming Attraction' is a film about hope.

Director's Biography

Nidal Al Dibs was born in Syria in 1960. An architect and director, he graduated from the Moscow VGIK Film Institute in 1995. Many of his films have received international acclaim, including the short 'Ya Leil Ya Ein' (1999), which was selected for the Official Competition at Clermont-Ferrand; 'Under the Ceiling' (2005), which screened at the Montreal World Film Festival, and won the Jury Prize at Salla Film Festival as well as the Best Actress prize at the Wahran Film Festival; and 'Black Stone' (2006), a documentary film that received a special mention at the Ismailia Film Festival. His latest film, 'Taming' (2010), had its premiere at the Abu Dhabi Film Festival.

Company Profile

Based in Cairo, Seen Films produces and supports film and media work that fulfills an active role in ongoing social and political discourse. Seen endeavours to work for the full representation, self-realization, and positive engagement of all marginalised groups. Seen works in the fields of development, implementation, presentation and distribution of creative projects that reach beyond the common aesthetics and confinements of the moving image. Seen aims to open up cinema and filmmaking to innovative forms of interaction with the public, and to dealing with necessary and topical subjects. We believe that cinema is the art of the visual story, and devote our attention to promoting such stories with aesthetic quality.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$150,000

Secured Financing: \$40,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Hassala Productions, Egypt

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Broadcasters (Europe)
- Film Funds (MENA)

Production

Feature Documentary
Spring 2013

Iman Kamel

Director / Screenwriter



Klaus Freund

Screenwriter



Talal Al-Muhanna

Producer



Contact

Linked Productions
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Egyptian Jeanne d'Arc

'Jeanne d'Arc Masriya' / Kuwait, Egypt, Germany, Qatar / Arabic, English / 2014

An exiled Egyptian filmmaker returns to her homeland to reflect, through expressive movement and dance, on her right to be free in Egypt without fear of oppression or reprisals.



'Egyptian Jeanne d'Arc' is a creative documentary that explores issues of female emancipation in 'post post-revolutionary' Egypt. Beginning with the return journey to Cairo of a filmmaker long absent from her own country, the film weaves a series of intimate portraits composed of interviews, poetic voice-over and dance; exploring themes of oppression, guilt and faith with Egyptian women, many of them artists. Reflecting on Carl Theodor Dreyer's 1928 film 'The Passion of Joan of Arc' – in which the female figure is martyred by the patriarchal forces surrounding her – 'Jeanne' is a contemporary commentary that melds documentary and dance with poetic storytelling and myth to arrive at the core of the filmmaker's enquiries into the circumstances of women in Egypt today.

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 70 min

Genre: Arthouse, Biography, Docufiction, Documentary, Identity, Middle Eastern, Poetic Documentary, Social Issues, Women's Interest

Exhibition Format: DCP

Director's Note

Working with Egyptian women on this project is a form of empowerment and represents an act of creative resistance. Since the uprisings in Egypt in 2011, many women have been subjected to discrimination and abuse at the hands of successive regimes. It is now more urgent than ever to reflect deeply on those issues for women that have not been resolved over the past three years. I wish to express this in a contemplative manner, away from the chaos, violence and noise of the streets.

Director's Biography

Egyptian filmmaker Iman Kamel is always on the move and has travelled extensively in China and in countries in the south of Africa. She followed interdisciplinary studies in art, dance and film at the Berlin School of Arts and, since 1995, has directed five short films including 'Hologram' (2004), which received an award from Euromed. Her debut feature documentary, 'Nomad's Home' (2010) received a special mention at the Dubai International Film Festival, and won the awards for Best Director and Best Cinematography at Cairo's 11th Independent Film Festival.

Company Profile

Working closely with filmmakers of Asian, Middle Eastern and African descent, Linked Productions seeks to bring bold, imaginative and fresh projects to the international marketplace through the development of original works of fiction and documentaries of exceptional artistic quality. Documentary co-productions include Damien Ounouri's 'Fida'i' (Jury Special Mention, Doha Tribeca Film Festival 2012), 'The Man Inside' (Official Selection, Dubai International Film Festival 2012) and 'Whose Country?'. Fiction projects include Maysoon Pachachi's 'Nothing Doing in Baghdad' (winner of the 2012 IWC Schaffhausen Award) and 'My Pink Room', a short highlighting the continuing Syrian refugee crisis. The company's current slate includes the Russian dance documentary 'The New Czar'.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$111,400

Secured Financing: \$50,400

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- City of Berlin Artist's Grant, Germany
- Linked Productions, Kuwait
- Nomads Home Production, Egypt / Germany
- Goethe Institut, UAE

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Co-Producers (France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, UK)
- Broadcasters
- Film Funds
- Additional Funding

Production

Feature Documentary
Spring Grant 2013

Ali Essafi

Director / Screenwriter / Producer



Executioners Never Tell Their Stories

'Al Jalladeen La Yahkoun Qessatuhoum Abadan' / Morocco, Qatar / Arabic / 2014

'Executioners Never Tell Their Stories' uses archival film material to showcase the artistic creativity of Morocco in the 70s.



'Executioners Never Tell Their Stories' is an archival footage project that uncovers the artistic creativity of Morocco's 70s. This is sustained by three victims' accounts from this period's repression known as the 'Years of Lead'. Stories about activism, torture and resistance are told by two former political prisoners and the mother of a missing person. Through a collage technique, the film unearths the mood and creativity of an era that has long been censored.

Contact

Cinemaat Production
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Shooting Format: DigiBeta

Runtime: 75 min

Genre: Based on a True Story, Violence

Exhibition Format: HDCAM

Director's Note

The term 'archive' has no equivalent in Arabic. Perhaps this signifies a cause of the decline of Arab art over the last centuries. Without memory, it is difficult to interpret the present or anticipate what lies ahead. No memory, no future! A bill stipulating the creation of the Archives of Morocco was passed in 2003, but this institution remains an empty shell. Thus, from one generation to the next, amnesia persists and creativity fades. In 2010, I started an archival film project about the seventies in Morocco, to rescue from oblivion the memory of a period when the struggle for change was alive, and when Morocco saw its best artistic and cultural production. They are also known as the 'Years of Lead' because of the violent repression that came along with them. I intend to recall the creativity this atmosphere of revolt set free – a creativity that is lacking today.

Director's Biography

Born in Morocco in 1963, Ali Essafi studied psychology in France then entered the world of filmmaking. His works as a director include 'Général, nous voilà' (1997), 'The Silence of the Root Fields' (1998), 'Ouarzazate Movie' (2001) and 'Shikhate's Blues' (2005), which have won awards and were praised on the international circuit. In 2002, Essafi was back in Morocco, where he became involved in public television for three years as an art direction advisor. His last film, 'Wanted!', commissioned by the 10th Sharjah Biennial in 2011, was selected for MoMA's Mapping Subjectivity: Experimentation in Arab Cinema from the 1960s to Now series.

Company Profile

Cinemaat Prod was created in 2006 by Ali Essafi and Hakim Belabbes, two directors with a common background in non-fiction film production and an interest in the preservation of memory. Cinemaat was created to address the lack of production structures that support research into new cinematic languages in Morocco. This structure allows us to produce our own projects, and also serves as a platform for young artists in training and production to realise their early works.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$239,213

Secured Financing: \$95,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Sharjah Art Foundation, UAE
- Cinemaat Production, Morocco
- Conseil Consultatif des Droits de l'Homme, Morocco
- Francophone Fund

Current Status: Post-Production

Looking For:

- Distributors
- Co-Producers
- Film Funds
- Post-Production Support
- Additional Funding

Production

Feature Documentary
Spring Grant 2013

Abdallah Badis

Director / Screenwriter / Producer



The Foreign Son

'Le Fils étranger' / France, Qatar, Algeria / Arabic, French / 2013

Answering the call of his homeland, 50-year-old Omar returns to his native Algeria after many years. Paradoxically, this uncanny trip will lead him to connect with a land he hardly knows.



Answering the call of his homeland, of which he retains only childhood memories, 50-year-old Omar returns to his native Algeria. There seems to be a path unfolding in front of him, and it is tortuous. Providence provides a child to guide him. The apparently pristine wilderness is heavy with the history of the land. Along a fine line between reality and fantasy, this past surfaces through archive footage. Strangely, the uncanny trip will lead Omar to connect with a landscape he hardly knows, and allow his intimate reunion with an estranged family.

Contact

Cactusco Films
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Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 90 min

Genre: Animation, Based on a True Story, Biography, Docufiction, Documentary, Family, History, Immigration

Director's Note

We, the 'French of Algerian stock', are the sons of an Empire long lauded by France. We are the outcome of a historical process which has left a myriad of marks on us - marks that are unaccounted for. Travelling to one's native country is not the easiest of trips: it is not tourism; rather, one must tear oneself away from home to cross over. In 'The Foreign Son', Algeria will be haunted by France, being, as it were, the other side of the looking-glass. Is this strange journey the only way for Omar to regain his Algerian identity, to become a 'native son' again?

Director's Biography

After graduating from high school in 1971, Abdallah Badis was employed as a steelworker. A chance encounter in 1973 with filmmaker René Allio turned out to be life-changing. Badis began working as an actor and discovered films. Whether in the theatre or the cinema, Badis has always tried to lend a voice to unnamed people, the world he comes from, staging common folks and their special ways: gestures at work and in daily life, ordinary words and silences. He strives to be a witness to the lives, mutations and upheavals of our times.

Company Profile

The cactus is noted for its strength, its spines, the strange beauty of its flowers. It is a water tank in the most arid of environments. It needs only touch the ground to reproduce. Born in 2012, our company consists of four people, among them a filmmaker whose skills are already well known. We are located in Moselle, a French region that shares a border with Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg; hence, we pay great attention to the pace of the world. We are in love with Cinema, when it offers new perspectives, when it pushes us, moves us and opens us up to others. We are dedicated to films produced with consistence, enthusiasm and requirement. Producing a film means enabling art to emerge, and enabling authors to share their work. We commit ourselves to discovering young filmmakers and supporting more experienced ones in their endeavours.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$642,448

Secured Financing: \$425,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée, France
- Institut National de l'Audiovisuel, France
- Region Lorraine, France
- Vosges TV, France
- French Embassy in Algeria

Current Status: Complete

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors (Canada)
- Co-Producers (Europe, MENA, Canada)
- Broadcasters
- Film Funds
- Private Investors
- Animation Support

Production

Feature Documentary
Fall Grant 2013

Imamaddin Hasanov
Director / Screenwriter



Stefan Kloos, Andra Popescu
Producer



Holy Cow

Azerbaijan, Germany, Qatar / Azerbaijani, Farsi / 2015

One man's dream of bringing a European cow to his picturesque hometown in Azerbaijan unsettles the village's conservative community, who want to keep their traditions intact.



In the Caucasus Mountains, one can find one of the most beautiful and ancient settlements in Azerbaijan: the village of Lahyc. Here, time stands still; ancient traditions are still preserved. In this conservative Muslim community lives Tapdyq and he has a dream: to buy a cow from Europe to improve living conditions for his poor family. He finds out that a European cow can provide up to 40 litres of milk per day – four times more than a local cow. But his wife won't allow it – she is jealous. The Old Men rule the village and they don't want such a cow, because its milk is full of chemicals and harmful for them. This creates a dramatic tension in the community, with conflicts that lead to hilarious situations. 'Holy Cow' is about the confrontation of two cultures and world outlooks; about innovation and the old ways; about evolution, change and the freedom of the human spirit.

Shooting Format: XDCAM

Runtime: 80 min

Genre: Documentary, Religion, Social Issues

Exhibition Format: HDCAM

Contact

Free Art
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Director's Note

I heard of this story while making a documentary for television about the ancient customs and traditions of the mountain village of Lahic in Azerbaijan. It was obvious that Tapdyq's individualistic decision to overcome his situation was offensive to the values of others in his community and challenged the power balance of a solidly established socio-ecological system. I realised that what is happening in Lahic is globally relevant: closed systems are forced to open themselves towards moral and economical paradigm shifts and, in this process, an array of conflicts emerges.

Director's Biography

Born in 1980, Imamaddin Hasanov holds a degree in Film and Theatre Directing. He emerged as a director staging several plays in Baku Camera Theatre. In 2006, after a Studio Ateliers Varan Course on Documentary Film in Tbilisi, he started working as a director on several short TV documentaries. His first short observational documentary, 'The Virgin's Happiness or the Invisible Side' is currently in post-production. Through his films, Hasanov sheds lights on the lives of the less privileged, emphasising their internal conflicts in a society that imports values that are not always in accordance with the established local norms.

Company Profile

Free Art Production is an independent film production company founded by Imamaddin Hasanov in 2009 and based in Baku, Azerbaijan. Until 2011, the company focused mainly on music videos production and TV commercials. In 2012, Free Art produced its first short documentary film, Imameddin Gasanov's 'The Virgin's Happiness or the Invisible Side', which is currently in post-production. Free Art envisions auteur-driven art-house films and creative documentaries that have local impact and global relevance.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$299,935

Secured Financing: \$64,017

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- European Cultural Foundation
- Georgian National Film Centre
- People in Need (Caucadoc), Czech Republic
- Robert Bosch (GoEast Workshop), Germany
- Free Art Azerbaijan
- Kloos & Co, Germany

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- Script Doctors
- Distributors (France)
- Co-Producers (Nordic Countries)
- Broadcasters (Europe, Arab World, Russian Federation, USA)
- Film Funds (Nordic Countries)
- Private Investors
- Digital Partners

Post-Production

Feature Documentary

Fall Grant 2013

Abner Benaim

Director / Screenwriter / Producer



Alejandro Israel

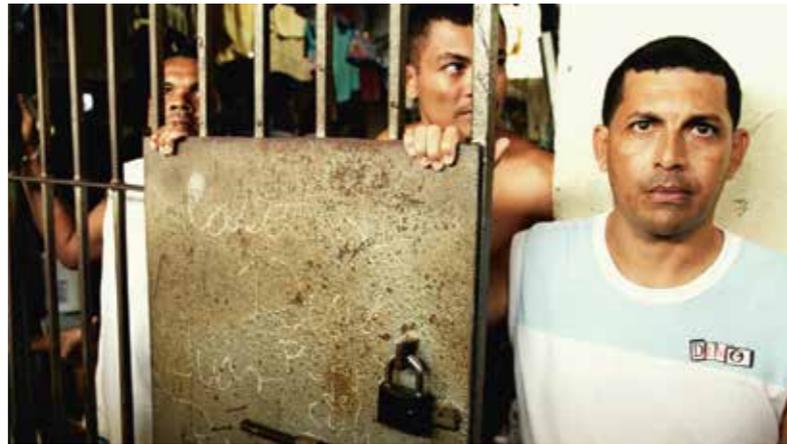
Producer



Invasion

'Invasión' / Panama, Argentina, Qatar / Spanish / 2014

An exploration of memories of the 1989 US invasion of Panama through people whose lives were deeply shaken by it.



On the night of 20 December, 1989, the USA launched a massive invasion of otherwise peaceful Panama. George Bush made it clear he wanted General Noriega – an ex-CIA friend turned rogue – out of power. The Panama Canal, a strategic asset for the USA, seemed to be at risk. For two weeks, Panama's tropical backdrop became the testing ground for new weapons. Noriega handed himself over and was convicted for drug trafficking and jailed in the States, and later served another sentence in France. 'Invasion' is a documentary portrait of the collective memory of a country and its people through characters whose lives were greatly shaken by the invasion; each of them takes us on a journey through their past and present.

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 95 min

Genre: Documentary, History, Social Issues

Contact

Apertura Films
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Director's Note

I'm always surprised by the small number of artistic works that have drawn on the US invasion of Panama, as though the collective memory of that conflict has been shut away. This documentary is an opportunity to look at an unresolved collective trauma, and analyze why so little has been said about it. Historically, Panama is a strategic centre for commerce, and most people come here looking for riches; their attitude has been to come, exploit and leave. Panamanians have learned from these alien cultures, and it seems we have inherited the notion that ideas are worthless unless they can generate a profit. Most Panamanians have chosen not to look back at the moments that define us, preferring to move on without digesting what has taken place. This documentary is an exercise of memory. I want to dig for stories like an archaeologist and build an arena to talk about Panama today.

Director's Biography

Born in 1971 and raised in Panama City, Abner Benaim works as a producer and director. He studied Cinema and International Relations in Pennsylvania, and Art in Florence. As a director, he has made the feature fiction film 'Chance' (2009) and the documentary 'Maids and Bosses' (2010). He directed the series 'El Otro Lado 2006', awarded as Best TV series at the New York Television Film Festival. Benaim is based in Panama, where he runs the production company Apertura Films.

Company Profile

Apertura Films is an independent production company that specialises in the production of auteur films. Founded by Abner Benaim in Panama City in 2004, Apertura develops projects for national and international markets. Apertura's productions have been selected for the Sundance Independent Producers Conference, Docs Barcelona, the Producers Network of the Guadalajara International Film Festival, Morellia Docu Lab and the Production Conference of the International Film Festival of Cartagena de Indias. They have also been selected and received awards at film festivals including IDFA and HotDocs, and international festivals in Moscow, Cairo, Havana and many others. Recent productions include the feature film 'Chance' and the feature documentary 'Maids and Bosses', which has been selected for documentary festivals around the world.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$270,000

Secured Financing: \$270,000

Current Status: Complete

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Broadcasters
- Film Funds
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support
- Digital Partners
- Additional Funding

Production

Feature Documentary
Fall Grant 2013

Paz Encina

Director / Screenwriter



Constanza Sanz Palacios

Producer



Memory Exercises

'Ejercicios de memoria' / Paraguay, Argentina, Qatar / Spanish / 2014

The story of people who need to remember a specific last moment from their childhood in Paraguay in order to understand the political context of one of Latin America's longest dictatorships.



Between 1954 and 1989, Paraguay suffered one of the longest dictatorships in Latin America: 35 years of repression, silence, torture, exile, fear and disappearing. To remember that era would be a determining factor for the future of the country. It would mean an end to the system of corruption. Memory is the only thing that might save the Paraguayan people. 'Memory Exercises' is a documentary film about the story of people who need to remember specific moments – to recollect everything. It is also the story of a childhood in exile and the always-present question of returning to one's homeland.

Contact

Constanza Sanz Palacios Films
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Shooting Format: 35mm

Runtime: 80 min

Genre: Docufiction, Social Issues

Director's Note

I believe in memory. Perhaps that is why I make films: to build a history. I remember my fascination as a child with the images my mother filmed with a Super-8 camera. To see them was to live an experience again. The first memory I have is the birth of my brother, in the time of Stroessner's dictatorship. I was three years old. My father was politically opposed to the regime, so the police often searched our home. Their procedure was always the same and it always came in the evening. This made nighttime terrifying for our family. I remember these as encounters with terror, but this was at the same time our everyday life. A date with memory is always a date with destiny and with one's identity. To answer the call of memory is what I am seeking with 'Memory Exercises'.

Director's Biography

Paz Encina was born in 1971 in Asunción, Paraguay. She obtained a Masters degree in Cinematography in 2001 from the Universidad del Cine (FUC). Her first film, 'Hamaca Paraguaya', won several awards, including the FIPRESCI prize at the Cannes Film Festival in 2006 (Un Certain Regard Competition), the Luis Buñuel Award and the Ficco prize, both for Best Latin American Film. The film was commercially released in several countries, and was sold to Arte France and Encuentro in Argentina. In 2010 she made the short films 'Rio Paraguay (Three Movements)' and 'Viento Sur', which premiered at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2012. 'Memory Exercises' is her second feature film.

Company Profile

Constanza Sanz Palacios Films began in 2005 as an independent production company focused on auteur films, developing works that seek innovation in cinematographic language for release and distribution locally and internationally. The company's productions include Edgardo Cozarinsky's 'Letter to a Father' (2013), 'Nocturnos' (2011) and 'Notes for an Imaginary Biography' (2010); Inés de Oliveira Cézár's 'Cassandra' (2012), Homero Cirelli's 'Sado' (2012) and Ernesto Baca's 'Vrindavana' (2010).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$400,107

Secured Financing: \$350,107

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Hubert Bals Fund, The Netherlands
- FONDEC, Paraguay
- Parliament Fund, Paraguay
- Aide aux Cinémas du Monde, France
- Berlinale World Cinema Fund, Germany
- INCAA, Argentina

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- Script Doctors
- Distributors (Asia, Africa, USA)
- Broadcasters
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support
- Digital Partners
- Additional Funding

Production

Feature Documentary
Spring Grant 2013

Elias Moubarak

Director / Screenwriter



Bashar Abu Saifan

Producer



My Uncle the “Terrorist”

‘Aami “Al-Erhabi”’ / Lebanon, Germany, Qatar / Arabic, French / 2015

I discovered that I had an uncle who was a founder of the militant Black September organisation, and one of the perpetrators of the Munich massacre.



I grew up with the portrait of a man hanging in our house. As a child, I never knew who he was; nobody spoke much about him in my family. Eventually, I discovered he was my uncle Fouad Chemali, and that he was a poet. Later, I found out Uncle Fouad was one of the founders of the Black September Organisation, and one of the organisers of the Munich massacre of 1972. This documentary is about my investigation to find out my uncle’s true identity. Did the cause he believed in justify the means he chose?

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 90 min

Genre: Based on a True Story, Biography, Documentary, History, Politics, Social Issues, Violence

Contact

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Director’s Note

The aim of this film is to portray my personal discovery of my uncle, while discreetly visiting the corridors of politics. I do not seek to deliver conclusions; spontaneous investigation into my uncle’s history will be the key to revelation. The subject I am exploring is taboo, and I recognise that the search for truth will be far from effortless. Some individuals have declined to be part of this documentary because of its content and the risks involved. I respect their choices. But, with the help of others, I intend to break the silence of my uncle and others who lived in a period when a noble cause was disfigured. Categorising people as terrorists is an old, complex matter that is taking an absurd turn in our time. I will rummage through a decades-old conflict that is vital to understanding our time. It will also help me understand my uncle, my family and, perhaps, myself.

Director’s Biography

Born in 1985, Elias Moubarak is a Lebanese filmmaker and professional photographer. He graduated from the Lebanese American University, where he majored in communication arts, specialising in radio, film and television. He has directed several short films, including ‘Baghdad 64’ (2008) which was selected for a number of film festivals. He has worked as a director of photography and editor; since 2009, his photography has been published in numerous books and magazines, and has been exhibited on several occasions, including in a solo photography exhibition entitled ‘Rust Never Sleeps’.

Company Profile

RedLine is a Beirut-based media production company. Launched in 2008, its profile is focused on the areas of new media, film and television production.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$246,000

Secured Financing: \$45,622

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- Goethe-Institut, Lebanon
- Ashkal Alwan, Lebanon

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Co-Producers
- Film Funds
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support

Production

Feature Documentary
Spring Grant 2013

Jasmina Metwaly, Philip Rizk
Director / Screenwriter



Mostafa Youssef
Producer



Out / In the Streets

'Barra Fi Al Shari' / Egypt, Qatar / Arabic / 2014

'Out/In the Streets' is a hybrid documentary and theatre film. Against the backdrop of revolutionary Egypt, unemployed workers of a shutdown factory stage a performance inspired by their struggles.



This is a film about a community in revolt. 'Out/In the Streets' will feature workers of the shut-down Glucose and Starch Factory in Cairo staging a performance inspired by their struggles and stories. The film will interlace documentary and theatre to approach revolutionary Egypt from the precarious perspective of workers, beyond the factory's heavy gates, frozen assembly lines and rusty machines. Yet, this is not only a film. Through public performance in the neighbourhoods of the workers, we will open up a new public space for discourse, for engagement with the issues that plague a community struggling under the policies of capitalism that exclude people for the sake of the bosses, banks and rulers.

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 70 min

Genre: Docufiction, Documentary, Politics, Social Issues

Exhibition Format: DCP

Contact

Seen Films
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Director's Note

Since 2011, we have filmed at marches and sit-ins across Egypt. We try to understand the different dimensions of protests, unseen battles that are not just about pay or working conditions, but about exploitation and corruption – the effects of capitalism creeping deeper into people's lives. Over time, we realised that merely posting our material online or screening it in neighbourhoods has limited reach and impact. We knew there was more our images could do. Staying behind our cameras while reality for people remains as it is not enough for us. We don't want to make a film that turns harsh reality into a spectacle or an occasion for entertainment; instead, we seek a re-evaluation of the past and an imagining of what the future could hold.

Director's Biography

Jasmina Metwaly is an artist and filmmaker based in Cairo, and a co-founder of the Mosireen video collective. She studied painting in Poznan, Poland. She is interested in the points of intersection and division among single-channel image, video and documentary filmmaking. Since January, 2011, Metwaly and Philip Rizk have been working together on a series of short documentaries about the January 25 Egyptian Revolution.

Philip Rizk is a filmmaker and activist based in Cairo. He has been involved in Egypt's labour struggle since 2008. From July 2010 until August 2011, Rizk carried out a research project with workers in the industrial city of Mahalla al-Kobra, where he interviewed workers about their narrative of the events of the 2006 uprising. His two-part video 'Sturm' (2010) was screened at the International Film Festival Rotterdam.

Company Profile

Based in Cairo, Seen Films produces and supports film and media work that fulfills an active role in ongoing social and political discourse. Seen endeavours to work for the full representation, self-realization, and positive engagement of all marginalised groups. Seen works in the fields of development, implementation, presentation and distribution of creative projects that reach beyond the common aesthetics and confinements of the moving image. Seen aims to open up cinema and filmmaking to innovative forms of interaction with the public, and to dealing with necessary and topical subjects. We believe that cinema is the art of the visual story, and devote our attention to promoting such stories with aesthetic quality.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$155,820

Secured Financing: \$65,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Co-Producers
- Film Funds
- Post-Production Support

Production

Feature Documentary
Spring Grant 2013

The Rise of the Gulf / Beyond Black Gold

France, Qatar, Kuwait / Arabic, English, French / 2014

Frédéric Compain

Director / Screenwriter



Talal Al-Muhanna, Olivier Mille

Producer



Two films to uncover how three coastal villages of the Gulf became world-class hubs for finance, culture, and diplomacy. Abu Dhabi, Doha, Dubai: the Middle East's success stories.



Two films to tell the incredible tale of the metamorphosis of the Gulf's emirates over the course of the last century. Once villages, Abu Dhabi, Doha and Dubai have quickly hoisted themselves into the highest ranks of international finance, culture, education and diplomacy, and have become the Middle East's most dynamic centres. Their vision of the post-oil era has been shaped by a previous, difficult transition – the collapse of pearl trade, for centuries the main source of prosperity. But the discovery of oil opened up a whole new era, and with economic growth came political independence. A new generation of rulers appeared, with a vision for the Gulf's future. Their ambition is to achieve sustainable growth without relying only on hydrocarbon reserves – and they have considered the post-oil era more thoughtfully than most of their foreign customers.

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 104 min

Genre: Documentary, History

Contact

Artline Films
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Director's Note

In the Arabian Gulf, a handful of states took note long ago that a time would come when their power would no longer be measured in barrels. Abu Dhabi, Doha and Dubai have undergone spectacular transformations, their hustle and bustle in stark contrast with the situation in the rest of the Arabian Peninsula. These wealthy city-states are determined to join the ranks of the most influential countries and, with their feet firmly planted in the sand, their rulers have thoughtfully considered the post-oil era. Two documentaries to explain how and why three coastal Gulf cities have hoisted themselves into the highest ranks of international finance, transportation and diplomacy. Two documentaries to penetrate the secret of a five-century-old dream, cherished by an entire people, and made to come true by the most modern of standards.

Director's Biography

Since 1974, award-winning filmmaker Frédéric Compain has directed many documentary and fiction films for cinema and television. He had previously made documentaries in collaboration with major cultural institutions, including 'Delacroix: My Last Years' (1998) and 'The Battle of the Pyramid' (1999) with the Louvre; 'Casa Mila' (2003) with the Musée d'Orsay and 'Iris Time' (2003) with the Centre Georges Pompidou. His interests range from architecture ('The Alhambra of Granada', 2006) to history ('Louis XVI', 2011; 'Versailles, the Golden Years', 2009) and international economic issues ('Airbus-EADS', 2009).

Company Profile

For 25 years, Artline Films has been among the top French production companies, co-producing documentaries and feature films with all the major national channels. Thanks to its lengthy experience in international broadcasting, Artline Films has worked with foreign partners in Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Finland, Germany, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, South Korea, Switzerland and the USA, among others. Artline's films cover a wide range of subjects, including current affairs, history, art, culture, science, social issues and adventure. Artline is particularly known for producing films concerning historical, geopolitical, cultural and sociological topics with a strong international potential. Artline's catalogue of more than 150 documentaries, fiction and feature films, has won prestigious awards from many festivals around the world.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$998,193

Secured Financing: \$636,513

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Arte France
- Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée, France
- RTS, Switzerland
- TV 2M, Morocco
- TV5 Monde, France

Current Status: Post-Production

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- Film Funds
- Post-Production Support
- Additional Funding

Production

Feature Documentary
Fall Grant 2013

Mohamed Ouzine

Director / Screenwriter



Maud Martin

Producer



Sidi Amar

Algeria, France, Qatar / Arabic, French / 2015

A somewhat fantastical portrait of a territory in the northwest of Algeria drawn by a man who rediscovers the land of his parents.



It is a small cemetery, bordering the valley that separates Algeria from Morocco. It is called the cemetery of Sidi Amar, because it is where the marabout has been laid to rest in some miserable barrack, in the form of a mausoleum. It is here that he perished at the beginning of the 20th century. He was smart, this Sidi Amar: as his final resting place, he chose a true paradise, with a view on the foothills of the Atlas Mountains on one side, and fantastic arid hills on the other. I think that this is the least he deserves, for he has become the confidant of the population of a whole territory: regularly, families come to ask him to intercede in their favour, such that one woman may find a husband, or a man might succeed in the perilous crossing of the Mediterranean.

Shooting Format: HDV

Runtime: 75 min

Genre: Creative Documentary, Identity, Poetic Documentary, Social Issues

Contact

L'image d'après
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Director's Note

The definition of documentary films is increasingly imprecise and ambivalent. The freedom this affords can become a chasm where I can no longer comprehend the subjects I want to film. Today, I'm returning to documentary in a different frame of mind. I have experimented with a form of writing that has led me to commit myself more visibly and to find a balance between merely capturing 'reality' and my desire to direct the people I film. I started to write this film in 2009. I had time to imagine it 10 times. But the same images keep coming back to me: the top of a hill struck by the sun, a thin edge of greenery bordering the meanderings of a river, and stones that seem to have grown there. This is the cemetery of Sidi Amar.

Director's Biography

Mohamed Ouzine was born in France in 1972, of an Algerian father and a Moroccan mother. He studied history and photography. He rediscovered the land of his parents during his father's funeral, and has since not ceased questioning his origins. His documentary film 'Commonplaces' won an award at the Panorama of the Cinemas of the Maghreb Festival, in Saint-Denis, France. His script for 'The War of Tarik' won several awards: Trophées du Premier Scénario, promesses de nouveaux talents from the CNC, the Beaumarchais Foundation, and the Festival Cinemed in Montpellier.

Company Profile

Founded in January 2008 in Tours, France, L'image d'après produces documentaries and short films. We support filmmakers who take risks to continue devising bold and unusual films in a cinema and an audiovisual landscape that is less and less surprising. Production for us includes accompanying writers and directors throughout their work, from draft to broadcast. We try to develop an inventive production structure that allows each director to imagine a unique work environment where we reflect together on the artistic consistency of the project and the resources that allow it to be carried out.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$139,429

Secured Financing: \$48,237

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Agence Nationale de Gestion des Œuvres Audiovisuelles - PROCIREP, France
- L'image d'après, France
- Une chambre à soi, Algeria

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- Distributors (France, MENA)
- Film Funds (France, MENA)

Production

Feature Documentary

Fall Grant 2013

Michel K. Zongo

Director / Screenwriter / Producer



Christophe Cognet

Screenwriter



Christian Lelong

Producer



Contact

Diam Production sarl
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The Siren of Faso Fani

'La Sirène de Faso Fani' / Burkina Faso, France, Qatar / Moore / 2014

Conversations with the ex-employees of the famous Faso Fani textile factory in Burkina Faso reveal the disastrous consequences of a global economic policy that is blind to local realities.



Through the eyes of former workers at the once-famous cotton factory in Burkina Faso, 'The Siren of Faso Fani' explores the disastrous consequences of global economic policies that are blind to local realities. The shutdown of the factory in 2001 put hundreds out of work, plunged thousands into poverty and left an entire city reeling: Koudougou, where I was born 40 years ago. A decade after this economic and social disaster, I return to a city that is now a shadow of its former self, and to the silent factory that was so central to my childhood. But most of all I come to see the workers. Stripped of their livelihood and of their pride, they remain convinced that reviving the cotton industry can offer a viable future for the whole community.

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 90 min

Genre: Social Issues

Director's Note

This film is not about challenging the World Bank. It is about telling a story from the point of view of some ordinary people I have known since I was a child. I am clearly on their side. I want to recreate the pride and joy that we experienced together. I will not relate the story of Faso Fani from a distance; I will not be neutral nor impartial. There will not be interviews with experts or representatives of governments or the World Bank. Yet all the facts that will be represented are true and authenticated. Film is never impartial; it is all about engagement. 'The Siren of Faso Fani' is an attempt to bring together elements of a collective memory in order to make it visible, to give it flesh and a voice.

Director's Biography

Born in 1974 in Koudougou, Burkina Faso, Michel K. Zongo is a director, cameraman and scriptwriter. After working as cameraman and assistant director on many films with various producers (including Christian Lelong, who has been involved in all his films since 2002), Zongo wrote and directed his first documentary, 'Sibi, l'âme du violon'; 'Ti-tiimou' followed. In 2010, he and a partner launched the firm Diam Production, a structure for documentary film production that co-produced, with Cinédoc Films, 'Espoir-Voyage', his full-length documentary.

Company Profile

Diam Production sarl is a film and video production company based in Ouagadougou. Its activities include the production of creative documentaries, fiction films, animation and training. It also acts as executive producer on foreign productions that select Burkina Faso as a shooting location. Diam has received several grants for its coproduction work, from bodies including the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Burkina Faso and the Semfilms Association. With its various activities, Diam has gained extensive experience and skills to work with a project from initial idea through all stages of production and promotion. In an increasingly difficult production environment in the South, Diam develops its strategies for co- and executive production based on its considerable experience.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$750,312

Secured Financing: \$750,312

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée, France
- Rhône Alpes, France
- Festival del film Locarno Co-Production Lab, Switzerland
- Agence Nationale de Gestion des Œuvres Audiovisuelles - PROCIREP, France

- Cinédoc Films, France
- Lyon Capitale TV, TLP, Télé Paese, France
- Nour Films, France

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Co-Producers
- Film Funds
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support

Production

Feature Documentary
Fall Grant 2013

Laurent Aït Benalla
Director / Screenwriter



Pierre-Yves Cruaud
Producer



The Stopover

'L'Escale' / Morocco, France, Qatar / Arabic, English, French, Russian / 2015

A stopover of a few hours, a few days, or a few years, in the French port of Sète.



Boats from all over the world enter the port of Sète, in the south of France, to stop over for a few days, or a few hours. Meanwhile, their cargo is taken care of by the dockworkers, while Moroccan sailors are on standby to discover the fate that awaits them, almost two years after the seizure of their boats. Observed from the quays, during a stopover intended to load or to unload passengers like thousands of cars, mountains of coal or hundreds of cows, this composite space, often kept out of sight, reveals human trajectories and economic struggles.

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 75 min

Genre: Creative Documentary, Documentary, History, Immigration, Poetic Documentary, Social Issues, Youth

Contact

Heolfilms
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Director's Note

I want to tell a contemporary story that takes place in a constantly changing industrial landscape. This is the place I saw the first time I arrived in France as a child, on one of those Moroccan boats that have been rusting alongside the quays for the last two years. Like a man on a dock who sees the multiple life of a port, I would like to reach a point of view that would allow me to go back and forth between the ability to empathize with human trajectories and clinically observe the functioning of this place.

Director's Biography

Laurent Aït Benalla was born in 1976 to a Moroccan father and a French mother. At 17, he spent a year in Russia and went on to study film theory and Russian at the University of Montpellier, where he obtained a Masters degree. He started working as a cameraman and sound operator, then directed several medium-length documentaries, including 'The Girls of the Moon' (2003), 'Marcel Hanoun chemin faisant' (2010) and 'English Suite' (2011), which screened on television and at festivals. 'O My Body!', his first feature-length film, received a grant from the Doha Film Institute.

Company Profile

Founded in 2012, Heolfilms is a French production company created for the development and production of art-house projects. It seeks to work with authors and filmmakers who are developing innovative cinematographic language. Films currently in development include Nora Martirosyan's 'Territoria' (supported by Fabrique des Cinémas du Monde, Open Doors, the Hubert Bals Fund, Villa Medici and Directors Across Borders 2013) and Laurent Aït Benalla's 'The Stopover' (supported by France Television, Region Languedoc-Roussillon, CNC and the Doha Film Institute).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$212,542

Secured Financing: \$182,262

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- France Televisions
- Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée, France
- Région Languedoc-Roussillon, France
- Heolfilms, France

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors (Europe, MENA)
- Broadcasters
- Post-Production Support

Short Narrative

Mariam

The Servants

Survival Visa

Production

Short Narrative

Spring Grant 2013

Faiza Ambah

Director / Screenwriter



Jérôme Bleitrach

Producer



Contact

Bizibi

Jérôme Bleitrach

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Mariam

France, Qatar, Saudi Arabia / Arabic, French / 2014

When France passes a law banning the wearing of the hijab in public schools, 13-year-old Mariam must decide whether to remove hers or face expulsion.



The year is 2004. France has passed a law banning religious symbols in public schools. Mariam, born in France to Arab parents, recently began to wear the hijab after performing the hajj with her grandmother. At the start of the academic year, she pretends the new law does not exist, as she does not want to acknowledge it and so be forced to make a decision. To complicate matters, Sami, a popular young Arab boy in school, starts paying attention to her and she develops a powerful crush on him. While her fellow veiled classmates argue with teachers about their desire to keep wearing the hijab, and her parents argue about her wearing hers, Mariam dreams of Sami, despite her best friend Sophia's warning that he is not serious. Things come to a head when the deadline for removing the hijab or facing expulsion falls the same week Mariam sees Sami with another girl.

Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 21 min

Genre: Drama, Drame, Immigration, Religion, Social Issues, Women, Youth

Director's Note

I was born in the USA to Saudi parents. I felt more of a stranger in Saudi Arabia than I did in the West. Questions of identity and belonging have always captivated me. Was I American because of my passport, or Arab because of my parents? How are these things decided, and who makes the decisions? As a journalist in Saudi Arabia, I was obliged to wear a hijab. Despite my American education and European upbringing, during interviews with Western journalists, I saw how that piece of cloth on my head coloured their opinions of me. My words, my work, my views became hostage to their version of who I am. They couldn't hear me; they only heard what they saw. I went from being one of "us" to being one of "them". This film explores this vertiginous sensation of being caught between two cultural ideals.

Director's Biography

After years of reporting on the Arab world, Faiza Ambah sought a larger canvas on which to paint the fascinating stories she finds. In 2009, she left her job as Persian Gulf Correspondent for the 'Washington Post' to focus on filmmaking. Her screenplays have been supported by the Sundance Institute, the Doha Film Institute, the RAWI Screenwriters Lab in Jordan, and the Dubai International Film Festival. Ambah has a certificate in feature film writing from UCLA and has taken filmmaking courses at USC and the New York Film Academy.

Company Profile

Established in 1998, Bizibi is a French production company run by Jérôme Bleitrach and Emmanuel Agneray. Bizibi has produced eight features films, which have been selected for major festivals. The company's debut feature 'Or mon trésor' won the Caméra d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival in 2004. Talents are developed through making short films, of which the company has produced more than 40 in the past 15 years. They include Ahd's 'Sanctity', which was in competition at the Berlinale last year. The company also produces documentaries.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$190,672

Secured Financing: \$151,672

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Enjaaz Production Agreement, UAE
- Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée, France

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- Broadcasters
- Film Funds (outside France)
- Private Investors

Production

Short Narrative

Fall Grant 2013

Marwan Khneisser

Director / Screenwriter / Producer



Naja Achkar

Producer



The Servants

'Al Khadam' / Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic / 2015

A family of servants faces troubling events during a party organised by their employers.



Nabil is the guard of an old villa located by the mouth of a river. Sayed Walid, an influential lord, and his friends come to the villa for a day of partying and debauchery. Nabil's son, Moussa, befriends Zaher, a guest's son, and together they get away from the party to go swimming. But Nabil and Sayed Walid's common past soon re-emerges and tragically comes to disrupt the day's enjoyment.

Contact

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Shooting Format: HDV

Runtime: 20 min

Genre: Drama, Social Issues, Thriller, Violence

Exhibition Format: HDCAM

Director's Note

I once spent a week in an old villa that was located by the mouth of a river and surrounded by a vast and labyrinthine banana-tree field. Isolated from the urban world, marked by an eclectic mix of Roman, Ottoman and contemporary architecture styles, the villa is a mystifying place that contains the traces of two worlds violently opposed in the past: an ancient pagan world and a monotheistic contemporary world. I wanted to illustrate the conflict between these two worlds by placing in opposition a group of dominant hedonistic people and a family of austere farmers - the guardians of the villa. Through this conflict, I plan to explore the tensions, feelings and impulses that drive them: pleasure, humiliation, resentment, and the desire for revenge.

Director's Biography

Marwan Khneisser studied Anthropological Cinema in Paris, and attended the Berlinale Talent Campus in 2012. He has written, directed and produced two short fiction films and two documentaries. His films have been screened in more than 40 international film festivals and won several awards.

Company Profile

Founded in 1998 by Naha Achkar, Nadi Lekol Nas is a Lebanese cultural association created to preserve and promote Lebanese and Arab artistic production. The association has restored, screened and distributed the work of many Arab filmmakers including Maroun Baghdadi, Burhan Alawiah, Jean Chamoun and Mohammad Malas. Driven by 10 years of experience in film distribution, Nadi Lekol Nas has begun to produce short film and documentaries. We cover all aspects of film production, from pre- to post-production. We are dedicated to producing intriguing and original films that resonate with audiences both in the Arab world and across the globe.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$25,902

Secured Financing: \$25,902

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Fondation Liban Cinéma, Lebanon
- Lebanese Ministry of Culture
- Association Nadi Lekol Nas, Lebanon

Current Status: Pre-Production

Looking For:

- Script Doctors
- Broadcasters
- Film Funds
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support

Production

Short Narrative

Spring Grant 2013

Nadia Rais

Director / Screenwriter



Imed Marzouk

Producer



Survival Visa

'Visa de survie' / Tunisia, Qatar / Arabic / 2014

We are sorry to inform you that the end of the world is scheduled for the month of December, 2012.



TV presenter: 'We regret to inform you that the end of the world is scheduled for the month of December 2012. This unfortunate event will be brought about by an asteroid colliding with Earth. The National Agency for World Survival (NAWS) is organising auditions, to be broadcast on TV, for those wishing to obtain a visa for survival.' This humorous animated short film tells how some will manage to obtain a visa for survival on the eve of doomsday, while others are granted free counselling on how to make it into paradise.

Contact

Propaganda Productions

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Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 10 min

Genre: Animation

Director's Note

The choice of an apocalyptic theme is a way to try to describe the current situation in Tunisia, a place between reason and base impulses like survival, fear or power. But this is not the end of the world but rather the end of a world. After a year of revolution, I'm concerned that Tunisians might succumb to fear and lose their ability to think rationally. Currently, Tunisians are living in doubt, a result of a lack of information and transparency in both local and foreign channels, which broadcast a lot of clichés and very little analysis. Further, Tunisia has encountered several difficult moments, like the economic crisis and repeated strikes. But we must be vigilant, and fear should not compromise what we have accomplished. We must live up to the words of our national anthem, which says that when it is the people's will to live, destiny must surely respond.

Director's Biography

Nadia Raïs was born in Tunis in 1967. She has a Masters degree in art science and techniques, specialising in graphic design. She worked for two years on a feature-length animated film as an animator and illustrator, then spent several years working in advertising, on campaigns and animated films. She is a founding member of the Tunisian Association for Animated Movies. Recently, Raïs began exhibiting her paintings. Her short films are 'L'Ambouba' (2009) and 'L'Mrayet' (2011).

Company Profile

Propaganda Production was founded in 2002 by Imed Marzouk and Nejib Belkadhi. Propaganda produces short, feature and documentary films. These have included Belkadhi's 'VHS Kahloucha' (2006), which was an Official Selection at the Cannes Film Festival, screened in competition at Sundance and won a Gold Muhr at the Dubai International Film Festival. Short films include Belkadhi's 'Tsawer' (2005), Walid Mattar's 'Condemnations' (2010) and 'Offerings' (2011), Malik Amara's 'Linge Sale' (2010) and Nadia Raïs's 'L'Mrayet' (2011).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$97,000

Secured Financing: \$45,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Ministry of Culture of Tunisia

Current Status: Post-Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Broadcasters
- Post-Production Support

Experimental / Essay

Beirut of the Balkans

Off Frame

Production / Post-Production
Short Experimental or Essay
Fall Grant 2013

Nicolas Khoury
Director / Screenwriter / Producer



Beirut of the Balkans

Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic, Croatian, English / 2014

Beirut and Sarajevo have lived through parallel experiences in their postwar periods. 'Beirut of the Balkans' imagines and tries to understand Beirut by filming Sarajevo.



Sarajevo has gone through historical stages that parallel those of Beirut: the old town, the hell city, the ghost town and the new city. This film highlights the similar phases the two cities have lived through before and during the Lebanese Civil War and the Bosnian War, via the citizens of Sarajevo and the Lebanese people who live there, in order to underline the current relationship between the citizens and their new city rebuilt. Like Beirut, Sarajevo after the war is a city that has started from zero, not only in its material and visual appearance, but also in restoring its relationship with its population, who now have a new vision of their city.

Contact

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Shooting Format: HD

Runtime: 30 min

Genre: Creative Documentary, Poetic Documentary, Social Issues

Director's Note

I'm a stranger in my own city. A stranger is a person in a city he or she visits for the first time. This is my relationship with my city, because all the time I discover a new "Beirut." This vision of my city is the same I had of Sarajevo, where I was a true stranger. Then, the same relationship is found between me and both cities: I'm a stranger in both "Beiruts." Beirut refuses to communicate with me: I cannot have a true and fair view of my city, which undergoes constant transformation in my eyes. Sarajevo, the 'new Beirut' I have discovered, can be used to portray Beirut, which I have never managed to do. I shall finally express the distance between me and my city, telling Beirut's story while filming Sarajevo, and show in a tangible way why Beirut has become a foreign city for me.

Director's Biography

Nicolas Khoury was born in Beirut and obtained his BA in Audiovisual Directing in 2010 from the Academie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts (University of Balamand - Lebanon). He works as an editor, and 'Al Hara' was his first documentary film. It won the Special Jury Award in Mediteran Film Festival in 2012, and was selected for the Ismailia International Film Festival and Ayam Beirut Al Cinema'iya in 2013.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$44,625

Secured Financing: \$20,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

Current Status: Production

Looking For:

- Script doctors
- Distributors (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Film Funds (Europe, Arab World)
- Post-Production Support
- Additional Funding (\$25,000)

Production/Post-Production
Feature Experimental or Essay
Fall Grant 2013

Mohanad Yaqubi
Director / Screenwriter



Sami Said, Delphine Landes
Producer



Off Frame

'Kharej Al Itar' / Palestine, France, Qatar / Arabic, English, French, Italian / 2014

A tale from Palestine, a homeland that only exists in cinema. The heroes of this story are the filmmakers who believed they could change the world with a 16mm camera.



What is left today from the Palestinian revolution are some images and sounds, pieces of film scattered around the world and preserved in tins categorised by other people. These films record the life of people who are no longer on Earth; places that have changed; a history that doesn't have a place in memory. 'Off Frame' narrates the story of Palestinian revolutionary cinema by following the life of the Palestine Film Unit, a film group that was established in 1968 and that developed with the revolution until the Israeli invasion of Beirut in 1982.

Shooting Format: HD
Runtime: 90 min
Genre: Documentary, History
Exhibition Format: HDCAM

Contact
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Director's Note

With questions about the real in cinematic composition, I am trying to trace the relationship between my personal imagination of a period and the collective memory of a people by examining modes of film production within a revolution and following the life and work of the Palestine Film Unit. Searching for a homeland I only know in cinema. I didn't live in the era of the 70s; I was born when the Palestinian revolution left the shores of Beirut. I grew up in a small flat in Kuwait. My world bounced back and forth between watching 'Alice in Wonderland' and walking on the beach. There, I once saw a sort of a military performance by a bunch of kids my age, wearing camouflage uniforms and jumping through rings of fire. Fascinated, I looked at my dad and told him I wanted to join this group. His answer: 'Don't be an idiot.'

Director's Biography

Mohanad Yaqubi is a filmmaker and one of the founders of Idioms Film. He teaches Film Studies at the International Art Academy - Palestine, and is part of Subversive Films, a curatorial and research collective that focuses on militant film practice.

Company Profile

Idioms Film was established in 2004 by a group of filmmakers based in Ramallah. The company aims to encourage alternative and artistic cinema production within Palestine. Since its inception, its production team has been involved in numerous film productions throughout the Middle East. Idioms productions include feature films such as Cherien Dabis's 'Amreeka' (2009), Susan Youcif's 'Habibi Rasak Kharban' (2010) and Khaled Jarrar's 'Infiltrators' (2012).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total Budget: \$309,000

Secured Financing: \$223,000

Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Eurimages
- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- Region Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, France
- Dubai Film Connection, UAE

Current Status: Production/Post-Production

Looking For:

- World Sales Agents
- Distributors
- Broadcasters
- Private Investors
- Post-Production Support
- Digital Partners

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COLOPHON

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