

## RED SEA FUND ANNOUNCES SELECTED PROJECTS FOR ITS FIRST CYCLE

- *MORE THAN 90 PROJECTS FROM OVER 50 COUNTRIES WILL RECEIVE FUNDING*
- *THE RED SEA FUND WILL SUPPORT 26 SAUDI PROJECTS*

**Jeddah, Saudi Arabia – 30 November 2021**

The Red Sea Fund announced today its final selection of the much-anticipated projects that will receive the support of the Fund. The fund will support over 90 carefully selected projects from Saudi Arabia, the Arab World and Africa following over 650 submissions. Of these selected projects, grants will be given to 37 projects in development, 33 projects in production, and 28 projects in post-production; a line up supported by the Red Sea Fund that aims to create a game changing generation of filmmakers.

The selected projects consist of 11 projects from Africa, 60 from the Arab region, and 26 from Saudi Arabia. The total 97 winner projects are distributed across an exciting and unique selection of 59 feature fictions, 18 feature documentaries, 10 short fictions, 5 feature animations, 3 episodic series, and 2 short animations. The support will further back more than 28 talented Saudi film directors, 54 percent of which are Saudi female filmmakers. The Red Sea Fund's support of national talents is prevalent with 11 Saudi projects securing funding for development across a range of themes, 13 Saudi projects receiving funding for production and 2 Saudi projects receiving funding for post-production.

Three committees of industry professionals were formed for each section of the funding, including a committee to award development funding, a committee to select projects destined for production funding, and a committee to award post-production funding. The committee awarding funds for post-production is headed by Edouard Waintrop, Artistic Director of the Red Sea International Film Festival.

“There is a wealth of undiscovered talent in Saudi Arabia and across the Arab world. As pioneers and believers in the importance of cinema and film in driving inspiration, creativity, and innovation, we are very proud to enable these brilliant artists to showcase their work by investing in their talents and empowering them to realize their dreams through the Red Sea Fund. These exceptional cinematic works will challenge people's perceptions of traditional cinema and revive the film industry in KSA and the region.” said Edouard Waintrop, Red Sea International Film Festival Artistic Director, and head of the committee for post-production funding. He continued, “We truly cannot wait to see these selections come to fruition and find their way to the big screen.”

The Red Sea Film Festival Foundation established the Red Sea Fund to back 100 feature and short projects as well as episodic with directors from the Arab World and Africa. Earlier this year the fund was boosted by

the Saudi Film Commission in an effort to help a larger pool of talented filmmakers from Saudi Arabia and the region bring their work from script to screen. The fund has been designed to accelerate the growth of the flourishing industry and launch a new generation of filmmakers alongside assistance for established creatives.

For more information on the selected projects, please check the attached Annex.

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For further press information:

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#### **Editors Notes:**

#### **Red Sea International Film Festival**

The inaugural edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival in partnership with the MBC GROUP, Saudia Airlines and VOX Cinemas is set to bring the best in Arab and World Cinema to the UNESCO world heritage site of Jeddah Old Town from December 6-15, 2021.

The Festival will showcase a compelling slate of new and diverse films, alongside a retrospective programme celebrating the masters of cinema as well as introducing audiences to exciting new voices from the region and beyond. The Festival will provide a platform for Arab filmmakers and industry professionals from around the world to connect, host feature and short film competitions, and present a series of events, masterclasses, and workshops to support emerging talent.

#### **About MBC GROUP:**

**MBC GROUP** is the largest and leading media company in the Middle East & North Africa region that enriches people's lives through information, interaction and entertainment. In 2002, nearly a decade after the launch of MBC1 in London, in 1991, **MBC GROUP** moved its headquarters to Dubai Media City, United Arab Emirates.

Today, **MBC GROUP** includes over 17 leading TV channels: **MBC1** (general family entertainment); **MBC2 & MBC MAX** (24-hour western movies); **MBC3** (children's edutainment with a mix of both local productions and western acquisitions); **MBC4** (entertainment for young families with a female-focus); **MBC ACTION** (an indigenous adrenaline-packed channel targeting young males with local and homegrown productions); **MBC VARIETY** (Western films and general entertainment with uninterrupted broadcasting); **MBC DRAMA** (24/7 Arabic drama) & **MBC+ DRAMA** (a joint pay-

TV channel between MBC and OSN); **MBC PERSIA** (general family entertainment dubbed and subtitled in Farsi); **WANASAH** (24-hour Arabic music channel); **MBC MASR & MBC MASR2** (general family entertainment geared towards the Egyptian family); **MBC BOLLYWOOD** (delivering the freshest in Bollywood content geared towards the region via an Arabized interface); **MBC USA** (on “Dish Network” in the US); **MBC IRAQ** (a premium channel aimed at the entire Iraqi family), **MBC5** (new satellite channel dedicated to the Maghreb); all of them benefit from **MBC STUDIOS** which produces the region’s most compelling premium content for cinema, television and on-demand platforms. **MBC GROUP** also includes two FM radio stations: **MBC FM** (Gulf music) and **Panorama FM** (contemporary Arabic hit music).

Furthermore, part of **MBC GROUP** is **Shahid** and its premium subscription-based service **Shahid VIP**, the world’s leading Arabic streaming platform, home to highly rated original productions from the Arab world, a wide range of exclusive movies and premieres, as well as the top watched live Arab TV channels.

## About Majid Al Futtaim

Founded in 1992, Majid Al Futtaim is the leading shopping mall, communities, retail and leisure pioneer across the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

A remarkable business success story, Majid Al Futtaim started from one man’s vision to transform the face of shopping, entertainment and leisure to ‘create great moments for everyone, every day’. It has since grown into one of the United Arab Emirates’ most respected and successful businesses spanning 17 international markets, employing more than 43,000 people, and obtaining the highest credit rating (BBB) among privately-held corporates in the region.

Majid Al Futtaim owns and operates 29 shopping malls, 13 hotels and four mixed-use communities, with further developments underway in the region. The shopping malls portfolio includes Mall of the Emirates, Mall of Egypt, Mall of Oman, City Centre malls, My City Centre neighbourhood centres, and five community malls which are in joint venture with the Government of Sharjah. The Company is the exclusive franchisee for Carrefour in over 30 markets across the Middle East, Africa and Asia, operating a portfolio of more than 375 outlets including City+, the region’s first checkout-free store, and an online store.

Majid Al Futtaim operates more than 600 VOX Cinemas screens as well as a portfolio of world-class leisure and entertainment experiences across the region including Ski Dubai, Ski Egypt, Dreamscape, Magic Planet, Little Explorers and iFLY Dubai. The Company is parent to a Fashion, Home and Specialty retail business representing international brands such as Abercrombie & Fitch, Hollister, AllSaints, lululemon athletica, Crate & Barrel, Maisons du Monde, LEGO and THAT, a Majid Al Futtaim fashion concept store and app. In addition, Majid Al Futtaim operates Enova, a facility and energy management company, through a joint venture operation with Veolia, a global leader in optimised environment resource management.

[www.majidalfuttaim.com](http://www.majidalfuttaim.com)

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### **About Saudi Arabian Airlines (SAUDIA):**

Saudi Arabian Airlines (SAUDIA) is the national flag carrier of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Established in 1945, the company is one of the Middle East's largest airlines.

SAUDIA is a member of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the Arab Air Carriers Organization (AACO). It has been one of the 19 member airlines of the SkyTeam alliance since 2012.

SAUDIA has received many prestigious industry awards and recognitions. Most recently, it was ranked a Global Five-Star Major Airline by the Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX) and the carrier was awarded the Diamond status by APEX Health Safety powered by SimpliFlying.

For further information on Saudi Arabian Airlines, please visit [www.saudia.com](http://www.saudia.com)

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