



مهرجان البحر الأحمر السينمائي الدولي
RED SEA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
DECEMBER 1 ————— 10, 2022

سوق
البحر الأحمر
RED SEA
SOUK

SPON- SORS

FESTIVAL PARTNERS



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RED SEA SOUK MAP

WELCOME TO THE RED SEA SOUK

INTRODUCTION

The Red Sea International Film Festival welcomes you to the Red Sea Souk, a platform designed to discover the new Arab and African productions as well as detect the emerging rising talents. From December 3 – 6, the Souk will run alongside the screenings and the program at Saudi Arabia's first international film festival.

The Souk is a window into the Arab and African film industries that distributors, sales agents, festival programmers, and producers can look into for a network of talents. It is an opportunity to discover the new Saudi, Arab, and African film scenes, providing unbeatable access to the industry professionals making this scene a reality.

The organized events curated by the Souk will host a comprehensive program of meetings and discussions for industry attendees. These events are also an opportunity to forge networking links with talented professionals from the region.

Our industry program includes the second Red Sea Souk Selection of African and Arab Projects in development, production and post-production. Additionally, film industry leaders and emerging new industry players will share their insights on local and regional trends at panels and in conversation.

The Red Sea Souk Exhibitor Hall is the place to promote and sell films, host meetings, and start new collaborations to assist the growth of local and regional film industry and its ecosystem.

Being part of the Red Sea Souk, you can scope out the array of forthcoming titles from emerging and established filmmakers.

See you at the Red Sea Souk!

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STUNNING LOCATIONS

Sweeping deserts & dunes, mountains, pristine coastline & beaches, amazing rock formations and lush valleys



NEOM

NOTE FROM THE RED SEA SOUK MANAGER AND LEAD CONSULTANT

We feel incredibly fortunate and thrilled to be welcoming all our industry guests and films to another edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival, as well as the Red Sea Souk. After witnessing the success that the Red Sea Souk has had in its first edition, we are fueled with the motivation to cultivate a stronger program every year.

It brings us great honor to see that films from our first Red Sea Souk Selection of projects and rough cut films were presented in other international festival selection programs and to witness the filmmakers' growth in their careers. This is what inspires us to give more to support every talent with a passion for the arts, and to share their creative gifts and visions with the world.

We want nothing more than to offer the world a discovery of Saudi's emerging talents, as well as to present to the world the remarkable films created by Arab and African directors. We want to bring together regional and international players in the creative industry. And what better way to accomplish this than by offering a tailored industry platform to serve film production and distribution where creativity, projects, film, talents, and industry professionals converge, right here in the land of history and culture?

We would like to convey our sincerest gratitude and thanks to all our passionate and hardworking team members. We look forward to welcoming you all in making the second Red Sea Souk a success, nurturing a vital film marketplace in the region. We will celebrate talents and enjoy being at the heart of the Red Sea International Film Festival, where film is everything.

Together with our estimated Red Sea Souk Team, we are wishing you a fruitful, inspiring and friendly Souk experience.

Zain Zedan, Red Sea Souk Manager
Myriam Arab, Lead Consultant

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البحر الأحمر
RED SEA
SOUK

RISE OF THE WITCHES

قريباً ٢٠٢٣

mbc
STUDIOS

ناهد

RED SEA
SOUK
AWARDS

RED SEA FUND AWARDS



RED SEA FUND AWARDS

All selected projects will compete for six jury-granted awards offered by the **Red Sea Fund**. The awards are:

- Red Sea Souk Development Award**
35,000 USD cash prize (Souk Project)
- Red Sea Souk Jury Development Award**
35,000 USD cash prize (Souk Project)
- Red Sea Souk Production Award**
100,000 USD cash prize (Souk Project)
- Red Sea Souk Production Award** (Red Sea Lodge Saudi Project)
100,000 USD
- Red Sea Souk Production Award** (Red Sea Lodge Arab Project)
100,000 USD
- The Red Sea Souk Post-Production Award** (Souk Project)
30,000 USD

SPONSOR AWARDS



ARAB CINEMA CENTER (ACC)

An in-kind award will be granted by the Red Sea Jury for one Saudi and one Arab project in the development or production phase. It comprises participation – with all expenses paid – in the 2023 Rotterdam Lab, part of the Rotterdam International Film Festival.



ARAB RADIO AND TELEVISION NETWORK (ART)

Two cash awards will be granted by AMC/ART, with the acquisition of Arab World distribution rights, consisting of the following:

- 50,000 USD for one Saudi project in development or production.
- 50,000 USD for one Arab project in development or production.



CINEWAVES FILMS

One cash award will be granted by Cinewaves, with the acquisition of Arab World distribution rights, consisting of the following:

- 50,000 USD as a minimum guarantee to be recouped after the distribution of the film upon the detailed contract, to projects in development, production project, or post-production.



LEYTH PRODUCTION

Two in-kind awards will be granted by the Red Sea Souk Jury, consisting of the following:

- An in-kind award for a Work-In-Progress film for editing with Avid Nitris DX editing system equivalent to 50,000 USD.
- An in-kind award for a Work-In-Progress film for sound mixing in Auditorium 7.1 equivalent to 20,000 USD.



MAD SOLUTIONS

One cash award will be granted by Mad Solutions, with the acquisition of Arab World distribution rights, consisting of the following:

- 50,000 USD to either an in-development project, in-production project or an in-post-production project.



MBC ACADEMY / SHAHID

Three cash awards will be granted by MBC Academy/Shahid, with the acquisition of Arab World distribution rights, consisting of the following:

- 120,000 USD for a Saudi project in development or production.
- 70,000 USD for a Saudi project in development or production.
- 40,000 USD for an Arab project in development, production, or post-production.



OTICONS

Three in-kind awards to be granted by Oticons, consisting of the following:

- Original Film Score worth 10,000 USD for a Work-In-Progress film.
- Music License and Supervision worth 6,000 USD for a Work-In-Progress film.
- Music Consulting worth 2,000 USD for a Red Sea Souk Project.



THE CELL STUDIOS

Two in-kind awards will be granted by the Red Sea Souk Jury to films in post-production, consisting of the following:

- Two promotion packages worth 12,000 USD each, to be awarded to two different Work-In-Progress films.
- Full DCP package worth 8,000 USD to one Work-In-Progress film.



TITRAFILM

One in-kind award consisting of the following:

- Subtitling, DCP, or broadcasting worth 6,000 USD for either a Project Market or a Work-In-Progress film.



A financing solution **for your next film**

The Film Sector Financing Program aims to enable the local and international players in the Saudi film sector by offering a variety of financing packages for the development, production, and distribution of film content.

Visit our website to learn more
cdf.gov.sa

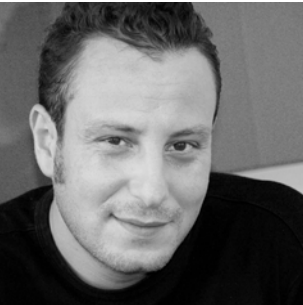
PROJECT MARKET JURY

AURÉLIEN BODINAUX PRODUCER & DIRECTOR



Aurélien Bodinaux was born and raised in Belgium. After graduating from the Superior National Institute of Performing Arts (INSAS) he obtains a Master in Fine Arts in Films at the University of New Orleans USA. He teaches film for over two years in the same university. Aurélien then worked as an entertainment financial consultant for Arthur Andersen in California. In 2002, he created an independent production company: Neon Rouge Production. Aurélien Bodinaux develops, produces and directs documentaries, fiction films. He focuses on world cinema. His films have been shown and won awards all over the world in festivals such as Locarno, FESPACO, Berlin, Fipa, Amiens, Kiev, IDFA Marrakesh, etc. He is an EAVE, EURODOC, Ties That Bind and AFRICADOC member. He has also been on the board of the Selection Committee for the Belgian Film Commission, the OIF Film Funds as well as the Fonds pour la Jeune Création Francophone Film Funds, and he is part of the Belgian feature film producer association (UPFF). Aurélien also frequently works as an expert and tutor for different international training programs such as APEFE, CIRTEF, Africalia, the FIFF, ZIFF, Africadoc, INSAS, ISIS, OuagaFilmLab, Brussels University, etc.

HABIB ATTIA PRODUCER



Tunis born, Cinema and TV producer, Habib ATTIA, is since 2007 managing director of CINETEFILMS, one of the leading production companies in Tunisia and the region. CINETEFILMS was founded in 1983 and has produced some of the biggest blockbusters in Tunisian and Arab cinema such as MAN OF ASHES, SILENCE OF THE PALACE, HALFAOUINE. True to his editorial line and philosophy, Habib focuses on fiction and documentary projects dealing mainly with contemporary sociocultural issues. His ventures as main producer are worldwide distributed, acclaimed and awarded in the most prestigious festivals like Cannes (in 2022, 2017, 2014 and 2011), Venice (in 2020, 2019 & 2012), San Sebastian, Toronto...Two times Oscars nominee with THE MAN WHO SOLD HIS SKIN in 2021 and BROTHERHOOD in 2020, Habib ATTIA received in 2021, as a recognition to his carrer, the prestigious rank of Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters of the French Republic.

RULA NASSER PRODUCER



An Independent Jordanian producer with an accumulated experience in different aspects of production. Started with the BBC and Discovery Channel projects in the Middle East, a journey that contained self-exploration of local stories and talents across Jordan, she joined Royal Film Commission in 2005 for developing the Filmmaker’s Support Program. Her first Jordanian film “TRANSIT CITIES “By Mo Hushki, was the start of a new independent cinema wave in Jordan and the region, In 2011, she established “THE IMAGINARIUM FILMS” focuses on discovering talents and with an aim to creating original audio-visual content that is captivating to audiences regionally and internationally.

Over the years, THE Imaginarium films developed, produced & line produced many award winning independent genuine films locally and internationally & teamed up with many European and regional producers around the world. Her latest Films were “The Alleys” by Bassel Ghandour from Jordan that premiered at Locarco film festival 2021, “ The Holly spider “ By Ali Abbasi that was nominated for Palme d’Or 2021 and won the best actress, and Rebel by Adil El Arabi and Bilal Fallah premiered in the midnight section at Cannes 2022.

RED SEA SOUK WORK-IN-PROGRESS JURY

GIONA A. NAZZARO DIRECTOR



Giona A. Nazzaro (Zurich, 1965). Artistic Director of Locarno Film Festival. Former General Delegate of Venice International Film Critic’s Week (2016-2020). Member of the Artistic Team of IFFR – International Film Festival Rotterdam (2019-2020). Programmer and curator for Visions du Réel, Nyon, Switzerland (2010-2019). Former member of the selection team of the Festa del cinema di Roma– Rome International Film Festival (2012-2015), Med Film Festival (2013-2019), Festival dei Popoli (2008-2011), Torino Film Festival (2003-2006). Professor of Media Design and Multimedia Arts at NABA - Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti (2018-2020). Member of the SNCCI (Union of Italian film critics), journalist and writer. Author of many books and essays on Hong Kong Cinema, postmodern action films and contemporary documentary, contributes regularly for the newspaper il manifesto and weekly Film Tv. Critic in chief for monthly music magazine Rumore. Curated the art exhibition Il di/segno del cinema – The De/Sign of Cinema (Cagliari, Italy) (2015). Author, his first collection of fiction short stories has been published in 2010.

HOUDA BENYAMINA DIRECTOR



With Divines, her first feature film, Houda Benyamina won the Caméra d’or at the Cannes Film Festival in 2016. The film was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the Golden Globes and won three César awards, including Best First Film in 2017. After spending some time in the United States where she directed a pilot for a series, she joined forces with Damien Chazelle and directed two episodes of the series The Eddy (Netflix). In 2022, Houda Benyamina presented Salam, which she co-directed with Diam’s and Anne Cissé, at the Cannes Film Festival as part of the Official Selection. She is currently in the midst of preparing the shoot for her second feature film.

YASMINE BENKIRAN DIRECTOR & SCREENWRITER



Yasmine Benkiran is a film director and a screenwriter who grew up on the Moroccan Atlantic coast. She studied philosophy and communication sciences in Paris and made her first experiences in Buenos Aires, San Francisco and London before entering French national film school La Femis in the screenwriting workshop (l’atelier scénario). As a screenwriter, Yasmine writes for both television and cinema. She also wrote two books about Morocco and a historical series of podcasts about Alice Guy, the world’s first female director. In 2018, Yasmine directed the short film, WINTER TIME (Tangier IFF, Off-courts Trouville). QUEENS, her debut feature film premiered at Venice Film Festival 2022 (International Film Critics’ Week).

RED SEA LODGE PROJECTS



NOTE FROM THE HEAD OF THE RED SEA LABS

Watching a film in the cinema was a chance to dream. Like the kid in Cinema Paradiso, our first love was the movies; it broadened our horizons, influencing how we see the world.

Filmmaking is a craft, and at the Red Sea Labs, we have opened a platform with multiple programs for the new generation of true filmmakers and storytellers to develop their craft of filmmaking.

One of our first programs, The Lodge, is once again coming to an end, but it is not over, as a new program will begin.

So, to all the participants and future filmmakers I say, “May the Force be with you!”

Ryan Ashore
Head of the Red Sea Labs

INTRODUCTION

The Filmmakers Residency Program

As part of the Red Sea Labs, and in cooperation with TorinoFilmLab, the Filmmakers Residency Program took 11 feature film projects for a 10-month intensive program.

Each project consisted of a writer, a director, and a producer. The Lodge gave them the opportunity to work with world-class instructors guiding them in developing their films and visions, enabling them to explore their projects’ full dramatic and production potential. Participants were mentored by a Head of Script Development and Head of Production, with guidance from specialists across the industry.

Alongside ongoing script development sessions, the program included a producer coaching program that covered professional development, production, financing, sales, and marketing. There were also opportunities to work with internationally experienced filmmakers in directing, cinematography, editing, sound, post-production, and sales.

Following development and meetings with industry professionals, two projects will each be awarded the annual Red Sea Lodge Production Prize, a 100,000 USD grant by the Red Sea Fund, in addition to the opportunity to have the Arab premiere of their films at the Red Sea International Film Festival.



AISHA CAN'T FLY AWAY ANYMORE

Genre(s): **Drama**
Country: **Egypt**
Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

Aisha, caregiver for the elderly, lives in Cairo where she discovers the underground African society, loaded with tensions between different groups. Stuck in a dead-end relationship; the routine, the pressure and her dreary work lead her to a dead end.

SYNOPSIS

Aisha; a Somali young woman of 26 works as a caregiver for elderly patients; she lives in a neighborhood of African migrants in the heart of Cairo where she witnesses the tension between different groups, She is uncomfortable with the drug dealing by an Egyptian gang, that happens just outside her house. The gang, which operates out of an abandoned microbus and blackmail her to steal her patients’ apartment keys so they can rob it moreover she is stuck in an undefined relationship with Abdoun; a young Egyptian cook.

Her routine is disrupted when she gets assigned to work in a new house where feels uncomfortable, then Abdoun shows suicidal tendencies and disappears. Aisha tries to cope with her fears and lost battles but when Abdoun appears after a while; married, the pressure she bears becomes unbearable and pushes her to the point of explosion.

INTENTION

The story I’m telling is in the place where I spent my childhood and early teenage years; when I returned after years for some visits, almost an African colony within the heart of Cairo was formed; many came from different countries looking for work, peace or asylum away from war and starvation. They formed their own world with their own terms and rules. Some work hard in under-paid jobs for a living but others rebelled against their inevitable fate of acquiescence; for both sides and their families just surviving the day is considered heroic.

While riding a microbus there; an African girl with a tired face sat beside me and slept; she woke up frightened and went into hysterical crying. I wondered a lot about her; then my character, Aisha; started to answer my questions; a lonely girl trapped between the two survival mechanisms of her society facing the same social pressure from a bigger universe, and despite living among people who resembles her in color; it isn’t enough to make her feel belonging, but it is possible to make her feel alienated, like the ostrich, which is a bird, but it cannot live with them and cannot fly one meter above the earth’s surface.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: MORAD MOSTAFA

Morad; an Egyptian Filmmaker, born in Cairo. He worked in several independent films; and collaborated as an Executive director in “Souad” feature film - official selection in Cannes Film Festival. He is a Berlin talents campus in Durban alumni. and wrote and directed three short films all of them selected in “Clermont-Ferrand” in three consecutive years and participated in other prestigious festivals as “BFI London - Palm Springs - Shanghai - Thessaloniki - Stockholm - Karlovy Vary - BAFICI Buenos Aires - FIFF Namur - Cinemed Montpellier - Durban - Cairo - EL Gouna – Carthage” and won more than 40 international awards. He is Currently developing his first feature film and selected at Rotterdam Lab IFFR, and La Fabrique Cinema in Festival de Cannes 2022.



WRITER-PRODUCER: SAWSAN YUSUF

Sawsan Yusuf; Egyptian producer; born in 1988; has a degree from Ain Shams University in Drama and Criticism and a Rotterdam lab 2022 Alumni. Started her career in the industry in 2009 as coordinator for several festivals and film markets in the middle east alongside working as line producer in independent cinema; in the documentaries and shorts. In 2019 established her company “Bonanza Films” and as a producer made the first short film “Henet Ward”; had its world premiere at “Clermont Ferrand” International competition and selected in 180 festivals worldwide such as BFI London, Palm Springs, Busan, Durban, Cairo and won 25 prizes, then she produced “Khadiga” with a French co-production and also selected at “Clermont Ferrand” International competition. She is working on other shorts and currently developing her first feature film and the project selected at LA Fabrique Cinema in Cannes film festival.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:
Bonanza films
No. 10 ahmed zaki st- Cairo
+201279877803
sawsan.yusuf@gmail.com

FINANCERS:
Film Clinic (Egypt); Red Star (Egypt)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:
\$663,734

FINANCING ACQUIRED:
\$155,000



A LAST ARGUMENT AGAINST YOUTH

Genre(s): **Coming of Age, Drama**
Country: **Saudi Arabia**
Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

During a time of social turbulence, Yasser and Bader, two teenage boys from different backgrounds, meet and form a strong friendship. Will it survive their colliding worlds?

SYNOPSIS

It is 2007. Yasser and Badr are two teenagers who live in Riyadh, in an infamous and overpopulated neighborhood called As-Swaidi. It's a place of two underground extremes, a religious one, and another where taboos are practiced – a daily reality for Yasser and Badr. The story sets out at the beginning of summer, when they meet in a phone shop where Yasser works. They find out that they live near each other and go to the same school. Badr, unlike Yasser, comes from a conservative family. They bond when Yasser joins Bader in Almarkas Alsaifi (similar to Summer Camp), where they participate in religious, cultural and sports activities. Bader also works with Yasser in his uncle phone's shop. They become more exposed to the different extremes in their neighborhood and continue their adventures throughout the summer. Some encounters and incidents happen and cause them great uncertainty and lead them to question themselves, their identity and their most deeply held beliefs. In that confused state of mind, their friendships get jeopardized and despite Yasser's attempts to save it, Bader drifts apart, causing a tragedy that changes their lives forever.

INTENTION

The story of Yasser and Badr is a coming-of-age story that explores friendship, identity and the messy exhilaration and anguish of being a teenager in Saudi. On another level it is a story that takes place in a very distinct period in Saudi society. In the 2000s, I was a teenager growing up in that neighbourhood, in an environment of extreme opposites and conflicting realities. We see this duality playing a huge part on both of our characters. My protagonists are struggling with their identity, being exposed to a constantly changing state of desires. Fulfilling one means losing out on the other. This duality has impacted me as well, being born and raised in Riyadh. But I believe the story transcends its place and its time. It resonates with us today in many ways. It is an experience that is understood among everyone who has gone through adolescence in Saudi society, and by telling it, I hope to explore and reconnect with our youth and make sense of confusing times.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: MOHAMMED ALGBREEN

Mohammed Algbreen, is a Saudi filmmaker who wrote and produced a couple of short films. The latest of them is “Merge”, a short drama that explores the turbulence and upheavals that Saudi youth are experiencing during times of huge and significant social changes. Mohammed attended many training and filmmaking courses. The latest is an intensive training program, presented by the university of south California (USC) which was about Directing. He also attended a 2-month program presented by British Film Institute (BFI) which was about every aspect of producing. He recently got funded by the Red Sea fund for his short film that he is writing and directing.



PRODUCER: RAGHAD BAJBAA

Raghada Bajaba is a cinematic arts graduate from Effat University, and has worked as a filmmaker since 2016 producing ,line-producing, and as an assistant director on more than 10 feature and short films, which have been screened and won awards in various film festivals inside and outside of the Middle East. Among her most prominent works is “The Girls Who Burned the Night” which won the Cina-promesse award at Carthage Film Festival 2021, and the two times recipient of special mentions in 42nd Cairo Film Festival, and Palm spring short fest 2021 as a co-producer and line producer. She also produced her first feature film “The physical properties of Coffee” which is now being distributed. She then produced her second feature “40 years and one night”, recipient of the Tamheed film grant from the Red Sea International Film Festival, which is now streaming on Netflix. Raghada Recently got funded by DFI for her short as a producer “Habibi and I in Eden”.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Kurnish production
Riyadh, KSA
+966568282567
Raghd.a.s.b@gmail.com

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$718,065.00



A QUARTER TO THURSDAY IN ALGIERS

Genre(s): **Satire**
Country: **France, Algeria, Belgium**
Language(s): **French, Algerian Arabic, Russian**

LOGLINE

A satirical fable in a country where the absurd is the law, through the eyes of three anti-heroes, coming from the awarded director Sofia Djama.

SYNOPSIS

Goussam is pregnant, she has to have a clandestine abortion. She is supposed to be helped by her two friends Cherifa Griffa, and Riad, who has to introduce her to an old alcoholic gynecologist who recently returned to Algeria after a long forced exile in Russia. In the meantime, Riad’s little dachshund, Trump, dies and upsets Goussam’s abortion project. Riad, an Algerian-Russian citizen who still cherishes the memories of the socialist era pre-1988, is some sort of an ontological, Bukowskian anti-hero of contemporary Algeria. He is also the owner of a dachshund. When the dog dies unexpectedly, its corpse is moved from one refrigerator to another, waiting to be stuffed and buried. Goussam is also closely acquainted with the extravagant Cherifa Griffa, a woman in her late forties who looks like a fallen marquise. Cherifa Griffa works occasionally as a revue singer in a vintage cabaret run by a bored colonel who has a thing for show business and nightlife. As she visits every gynecologist in Algiers and its surroundings, desperately looking for an understanding and, more importantly, not too expensive doctor, Goussam finds herself caught in extraordinary and hazardous situations.

INTENTION

Beyond the fact that satire can be used to point out the flaws of a society or a political system, it allows me as an Algerian author to distance myself from the seriousness of the subject. I needed lightness, especially after my experience with The Blessed, my first feature film. I also wanted to give my next film a funnier, even ubiquitous tone through the adventures of my characters, while still dealing with the political and social issues that are specific to my country and are so important to me. My intention is to help audiences, who only know my country through dramatic films, to discover an aspect of Algeria which they are not so familiar with. An aspect that deserves to be portrayed, derisively perhaps, but also affectionately whenever it is still possible to do so. I mention the Hirak in my script, but its place is necessarily remote, because our characters are disconnected from the upheavals taking place around them. They want to believe in it, but the many past failures have turned them into “ultra-normalized” subjects, on the verge of nihilism. They are at the margin of society and its demands, whether religious, ideological, political, or economic. They seem incapable of prioritizing values and appearing amoral and skeptical. My desire to add a vintage touch to the film will be expressed in different ways: through music, for instance, the Red Army Choir, through patriotic Algerian songs and traditional raï (guellal, bendir), all mixed with electro sounds.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: SOFIA DAJMA

Sofia Djama was born in Algeria and lives between Algiers and Paris. She studied literature at the university of Algiers. She began to write short stories, in which Algiers was to serve as the main protagonist of each plot. ‘Limply one Saturday morning’, an adaptation of one of them, was her first short film awarded at Clermont Ferrand Film Festival. From then on, she devoted herself to writing her first feature film, ‘The Blessed’, which won three awards at the Venice International Film Festival, with the Best Actress going to Lyna Khoudri at Orizzonti section. The film was released by BAC Films.



PRODUCER: AURÉLIE TURC

Founded in 2020 by Aurélie Turc & Chafik Laribia, K-Rec Films is a young production company that favors films and filmmakers with strong universes. Aurélie Turc worked in literary publishing and documentary filmmaking before becoming involved in production. Her associate, Chafik Laribia worked as a supervising producer on the multi-awarded director Abdellatif Kechiche Films, since 2016 (‘Mektoub My Love, Canto Uno & Canto Due ; and Intermezzo’); and executive producer on the first Feature directed from Hafsia Herzi, ‘You deserve a lover’.”

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

K-Rec Films
11 rue Pradier, 75019 Paris (France)
contact@krec-films.fr
+33 624 90 33 15

FINANCERS:

El Gouna Springboard (Egypt); CNC (France);
BAC Films (France); Zoudj Doro (Algeria)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$2,783,287

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$715,000



BUBBLEGUM BRIGADES

Genre(s): **Dark Comedy**
Country: **Lebanon**
Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

When 12-year-old Wael’s time travel fantasies are shattered by the unjust rules of his teachers, he forms a brigade with his classmates to rebel against their corrupt school system using bubblegum, pink paint and a donkey named BMW.

SYNOPSIS

Mount Lebanon 1999 - amidst the Y2K conspiracy theories, Wael and his 12-year-old friends play with a home-made time machine in and around their school. Their war-traumatized teachers shatter their fantasies forcing them to stay in line. That’s when the children realize that the end of the world is easy compared to the oppression they deal with at school. Wael responds by clogging up bus engines with gum, wetting up accounting books and leaking the math test answers. He quickly gains support that leads up to a protest at the administration gate where they voice their demands and call their teachers names. This complicates the situation for the principal, who’s invited the French Ambassador to the Christmas party in hopes of squeezing funds. The principal roughens up Wael and his friends in public to restore order. The kids form a brigade to sabotage his precious event by hijacking the show. Their take-over goes off the rails when the supervisor’s son steals a gun from a bus driver and shoots Jad, the most loyal brigade member. In retaliation, the brigades take some teachers hostage, demanding the adults to surrender Jad’s killer to them. The police and a TV reporter arrive to a full confrontation between the adults outside and the children inside. Amidst the chaos, a squad of bus drivers help the police break in from the back door, capturing the brigade’s stronghold. Wael gathers the few children left, they break the principal’s safe and burn the money on the rooftop before stealing a school bus to escape. They crash fast, so they run back to the bunker where their fantasies began. That’s where they make their last stand against their elders, showing them and the world a glimpse of their magic.

INTENTION

We do not intend to tell a cute tale of kids, that’s not us. This film is a protest against everything that stands between a person and their dream. The journey of making this film started back in 1999 when we actually formed the Bubblegum Brigades to rebel against our school. We kept rebelling until 2019, when the Lebanese revolution kicked in full force. This film is a culmination of these revolutions and everything in between. Mixing a sense of nihilistic reality with naive fantasy into a pot of dark comedy, is how we want to tell this story. After a few award-winning shorts dealing with the same theme, it’s time we defy our status quo and bring this feature film to life. We know the difference between rusty adulthood and the bubbly world of remaining a child; This is our Peter Pan syndrome. In the face of stray guns, unjust rules and a dull status quo, we’re armed with dreams, a donkey and bubblegum.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR: SAMAH EL KADI

Samah is an Emmy Nominated Director and Screenwriter, graduate of NYFA in Los Angeles, and has experience in directing short films, as well as commercial films for some of the region’s most prominent brands including Samsung, Mastercard, KFC and Vodafone. He co-founded Balkoon, which is a new age media company exploring uncensored ideas and art and has recently received an international Emmy nomination for his short film ‘Stardust’ among Shahid’s 6:07 series.



WRITER: RANI NASR

Rani is a Creative Director at a commercial agency serving Asian, European and African Markets. With a background in writing for lifestyle and cultural media, he got into screenwriting for commercial and entertainment purposes. Rani collaborated with Director Samah El Kadi on a line of commercial and film projects including Balkoon TV, Uber TVCs, and TV Series ‘607’ and ‘Awake - W’et’ on Shahid MBC.



PRODUCER: MICHELLE AYOUB

Michelle is a performance-driven producer with 14 years of experience in developing and producing high-end brand films for clients such as Cadillac, Nestle, Viva, Fendi, Cartier... in the region’s top film production houses and advertising agencies. After becoming the Executive Producer at Black Rhino Films, it was time to develop projects closest to her heart and the most representative of her artistic ambition by leveraging her expertise in the field, as well as an extensive network of various talents from around the world. Being known for producing challenging projects and for putting artistic vision and integrity at the forefront, Michelle aims to bring her skillset to make a mark in the film industry.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Black Rhino
Beirut Lebanon
009613931374
michelle.ayoub@blackrhino.tv
michelleayoub@gmail.com

FINANCERS:

Black Rhino In-Kinds and Investments
(Lebanon); Director Deferrals (Lebanon);
Producer Deferrals (Lebanon)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$740,000

FINANCIER ATTACHED:

Black Rhino - Lebanon; Director Samah El Kadi
- Lebanon; Producer Michelle Ayoub - Lebanon

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$85,000



DANCING ON FIRE

Genre(s): **Drama, Romance**
Country: **Saudi Arabia**
Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

In pre-oil Saudi Arabia, a girl and a merchant fall in love in a dance circle, only to find out later that what they loved most about each other is what is keeping them apart.

SYNOPSIS

In 1928, in a dance circle during the celebration of rainfall, Amoosh sees Nafla dancing and decides to marry her. Nafla, who admires Amoosh for preventing war between tribes over water, agrees despite her family’s disapproval. After their marriage, Amoosh gets annoyed by his family criticizing his wife’s control over him. To resist his strong emotions towards his wife, he escapes to the desert on long trading trips. During his absence, Nafla tries to fit in his family, but they are never satisfied. Meanwhile, Amoosh feels free in the desert, not being judged by others. He writes beautiful love poems about Nafla. When he comes home however, he is a different man. He even prevents her from dancing outside their room, ignoring that dancing is her only way of feeling alive and connected with herself. Soon Nafla gives birth to a baby girl and finds herself changing and looking at her husband differently. When her best friend gets married to Amoosh’s brother and is readily accepted in the family without any effort to please them, Nafla realises that no one will save her but herself.

INTENTION

Ever since I read the novel “Divers of the Desert” by Amal Alfaran, I decided to adopt it as my first feature. Even though the story is set a hundred years ago, the struggle still seems very familiar: relationship complications, the price we have to pay for our individual happiness or finding one’s own identity, especially as a woman. Trapped in a marriage where Nafla is denied to express herself resembles what I personally went through. Nafla’s key to liberty was her passion for dance. “Dancing on Fire” uses dance as an expression of pure passion and a metaphor for self-expression. The distinctive cultural Saudi music, dance, costumes, and the freedom of women in the pre-oil period has never been presented in a film before. In that sense, my film is also a story of our grandmothers passing the values of self-worth and liberty from one generation to the next. By doing this, I want to bring to the cinema this powerful portrait of a rich culture, a celebration of life embodied in a strong fascinating woman.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: HANA ALOMAIR

Hana Alomair is the writer/director of “The Complaint”, winner of the Best Short Film in Saudi Film Festival (2015), and “Swan Song”, winner of the Best Actor award in the same festival (2019). She is the co-writer and director of the first Saudi Netflix original mini-series “Whispers” (2020), and the screenwriter of “Sharshaf” by Saudi director Hind Al-Fahad, which won the Red Sea Lodge production grant (2020) and is currently being shot.



PRODUCER-WRITER: SOHA SAMIR

Soha Samir has worked for years at an American corporation, and as a social media manager for a major TV broadcaster in Egypt. There, she also collaborated in creating TV shows that involved working with new talents, who later became well-known actors. Having been in media production for years, she decided to study filmmaking at The High Cinema Institute in Cairo and earned her bachelor’s degree with honors in 2019. She is

gifted in project management, a dedicated screenwriter, and an aspiring filmmaker. She is currently developing various projects for film and TV.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Transit Films International
Schiedam, Netherlands
Cairo, Egypt
transitfilmsintl@gmail.com
+201114940004

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$4,215,000

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$30,000



DOGMAS

Genre(s): **Drama**
Country: **Algeria, France**
Language(s): **Algerian Arabic, Classical Arabic**

LOGLINE

Farid and Salim, two brothers who share one dream: joining the army. Growing up, Farid actually becomes an army officer while Salim joins the FIS, a political party that aims to establish the Islamic state. A situation that will turn the two brothers into enemies.

SYNOPSIS

Farid and Salim are two brothers born after the independence of Algeria. Very proud of the achievements of their father Said, hero of the war of liberation. They were meant to become the best snipers of the Algerian popular army. Farid pursues his dream and joins the army as an officer. While Salim takes another path: he travels to Afghanistan to fight the Soviet army. After the end of the war, Salim joins the ranks of FIS !the Islamic Salvation Front”, the most popular political party in Algeria. The FIS wins the elections but the army decides to stop the electoral process. A decision that divided the country, and lead the two brothers to become fierce enemies.

INTENTION

“Dogmas” deals with the historical drama of the Algerian black decade. A fratricidal civil war that tore a nation into two antagonistic camps: the nationalist and the religious extremism. Two irreconcilable ideologies that will oppose everything. The violence and misfortune that resulted from this period went beyond Algeria’s borders, affecting both its Arab and Western neighbors and making this tragedy universal. This story is not an autobiography. It is the product of my environment, my childhood, my experiences and those of my relatives. It is an objective testimony through fiction that rejects the concept of Manichaeism. I grew up during this period. I regularly witnessed acts of barbarism, revealing to me the true face of Men, what they are capable of doing for a “cause”, an “ideology” or a “dogma”. These atrocities will remain forever engraved in me. My memories are still vivid, I cultivate them, I recall them, not only in my memory, but especially through my camera. I chose to approach this period through the prism of a family drama, treating each character with his or her complexity and far from clichés.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER & PRODUCER: SALAH ISSAAD

Born in 1989 in Arris in Algeria, to an Algerian mother and Tunisian father, he was raised in a family of publishers. After a baccalaureate in letters and foreign languages in 2008, he entered the law school of Batna in Algeria, then emigrated to France where he studied film studies for two years at the University of Paris VIII. Alternating professional life and studies, he joined the ARFIS audiovisual school in Lyon, then he ended up joining the Eicar Lyon where he obtained his Cinema director diploma. He has made a feature film and several short films. He has always been pushed by the passion of telling stories where human relationships are honored. He explores different narrative forms and different film genres like drama, tragedy, stories inspired by real facts, and comedy. In 2021, he finished his first feature film Soula which had its world premiere in the official competition at the Red Sea Film Festival. The film was then able to participate in several festivals in which it won a dozen awards, including 8 awards for best film.



PRODUCER: TAQIYEDDINE ISSAAD

Born and raised in Algeria, He moves to France to study aeronautics and becomes an airline pilot. At the same time, He starts perusing his other passion: cinema, and produces several short film along with his brother Salah. In 2019, he coproduces his first feature film Soula. Now he fully dedicates himself to film making.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Issaad Film Productions Adresse :
Algeria & France
+33603712976
issaadfilmproductions@gmail.com

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$1,600,000



SCAPEGOAT

Genre(s): **Social Drama, Comedy**
Country: **Saudi Arabia, The Netherlands**
Language(s): **Arabic, English**

LOGLINE

Expelled by her superstitious village as a young child for being cursed. 15 years later, Dunia comes back to confront them.

SYNOPSIS

In Al-Hajar, a small forgotten village, a tribe lives under the leadership of Al-KABEIR (100) the old patriarch. DUNIA (5), a naughty human magnet of bad luck, is accused of being cursed by the villagers when her touch causes JAMELA (40)’s twenty goats to drop dead. To protect her from being harmed by her family’s evil-cleansing rituals her uncle Musleh took her far away and raised her. 15 years later, longing for her family, she disobeys Musleh and comes back, only to discover that her goat accident divided the village into two enemies with an imaginary wall running down in the middle between Jamela’s territory and her father’s and her story has turned into a fairytale defining her as a witch old women threaten their kids with. Empowered by her wits she challenges the village’s absurd and brutal purifying rituals and with the help of the village’s open-minded kids, she exposes Al-Kabeir’s extramarital affairs to keep his grip on the village by spreading superstition and dividing them. In the end, ignorance prevails and Dunia leaves Al-Hajar. However, she instills hope in the new generation by including them in her journey.

INTENTION

If you look at a picture of a black goat between a white herd; immediately our hero DUNIA stands out. However, if you look closer at the other goats you would see many colors, brown, gray hell even yellow ones covering themselves with white fur to hide their true identity, to be an ideal goat in an ideal society, ruled by a color-blinded goat setting the rules for a “unified community”. The story is set by our hero’s decision to be part of a society that vilifies what doesn’t look like them. In an era where superstitions and witchcraft are still a thing, we meet her extended family in a faraway village that is divided because of “Dunia’s curse” yet united in the attempt to “cure” her into a white goat. Our hero’s dilemma is a choice between what makes her special and the family’s containment. In an exaggerated story world that matches the absurdity of its events, Scapegoat is a quirky dark comedy that tells a tragedy about social conditioning and self-acceptance.

BIOGRAPHY



WRITER: TAQWA ALI

A Bahraini Filmmaker and Scriptwriter born in 1997 and got a BA in Cinematic Arts from Malaysia at MMU University in 2019. She has a dreamy thirsty soul that wants to shed light on strange ideas that create another dimension in life and pose essential and philosophical questions to a global audience. From 2016 until today Taqwa explores playing many different roles in her films, but she found herself in scriptwriting and directing. Currently, she is writing Films, and TV series for the Middle Eastern industry and also participating in many scriptwriting workshops across the globe, as lately (MEMI Program - LA - USA 2022). In 2019 Taqwa won the first prize for her short film “Wings Of The Dawn” at MMU University Festival, and in 2022 she won the second prize at Made With Passion Film festival in Bahrain, for “The shoes that get smaller every night” short film. Lately, she is working on her next short film “The Grocery List” which is funded by (Saudi Film Festival and Alliance française in Bahrain.



DIRECTOR: FERAS ALMUSHARRIE

Born in 1989; Feras is a Cinema programmer at Ithra and has been a self-taught Director and writer since pre-cinema Saudi 2010, writing and directing 13 one-man-crew shorts for experimental purposes before making his short films Break is left and Gas is right 2017 and featured in BBC Xtra and No Escape 2019 which was screened at various international film festivals and exhibition venues. Also, worked in the camera department for productions of shorts that won awards internationally Feras also wrote and directed commercials, YouTube sketches/mini-series, and travel artistic video content. As a writer, his feature film “Garbage Boy” was shortlisted at the RSIFF, and workshopped at FilmClinic. In 2021; his short film project “A Peaceful World” was selected by the Alliance Francaise for development and shortlisted for production and in 2022; his TV was awarded the MEMI (Middle East Media Initiative) residency at USC School of Cinematic Arts 2022.



PRODUCER: RAZAN ALSOGHAYER

Razan Alsoghayer is a Saudi filmmaker with a bachelor’s degree in media and communication from King Faisal University. She studied filmmaking in La Femis in Paris, and the British film institute in the UK. Her career started as a film editor. She currently works as a producer and a film director between Amsterdam and Saudi. Her short films were screened at international film festivals. such as the Lift-Off Session in Pinewoods and the Red Sea International Film Festival. She is currently working on developing her first feature film “Before You Leave”.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:
Fusfus Productions
Olaya st, Al Ahsa, Saudi Arabia
razanalsoghayer@gmail.com

ESTIMATED BUDGET:
\$1,538,414



TAHWEEDAH

Genre(s): **Documentary**
Country: **Saudi Arabia**
Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

A poetical journey of “Doha ya Doha”, a documentary about lullabies, in five regions of Saudi, uncovering the affection of melodies. Emotional stories told women in their homes.

SYNOPSIS

At night, stars are hanging in the sky sparkling. The baby is focused on his mothers voice, ignorant to his surroundings. , When she starts singing it’s the language that he understands, In Islam when a baby is born they whisper the Athan in its little ear to be the first rhythmic voice to the baby’s ear. And so the baby seems to be shaped by the voice first, before any other elements! In the biggest country of the Arab gulf, a vast variety of Terrain: mountains, seas, valleys, oases, and sands. Each is different, in what its people eat, what they wear, and how they communicate especially with their infants. For example we meet Grandma Om Saed, 70, in one street in Qatif, her soul still young, she wears old dresses. After her mom passed away; she kept singing her songs. She made a room preserving most of what she can collect that is related to her past, clothes, antiques, even a handmade baby crib using palms materials.Tahweedah“ portrays people and their lullabies in different regions in Saudi, showing the love and affection of the mother’s presence in the child’s life.

INTENTION

When I first heard the word Tahweedah, I went back to my childhood in our living room, a floor seated place where the sun sneaks through the window to create a painting on the moquette, my mom sings to my Little sister’s ear with her hand on her forehead and slowly closing her eyes, it was magic. I grew up in two cultures: Al-Dammam, and Al-Taif, Tahweedah is like the secret place that triggers childhood emotions, how mothers telepath emotions and songs. We hear the voices and the songs of our protagonists telling their intimate stories, their dreams and hopes and we see them in their daily life. In the research, we asked them about their Tahweedah and how it affected their lives. They opened their books and shared their stories, blessings and traumatizing events that shaped them. The different stories and Tahweedah poetically shape each place and region geographically and culturally. Saudi now is changing rapidly, it’s the perfect time to preserve this intangible heritage from fading, to take with us to the new generation the songs and lessons from the past.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR: OMAR AL OMIRAT

Omar Al Omirat, a filmmaker who won several of local awards at an early age, started professionally in high school, where he directed the first music video and thus led the media and theatrical activity in his school. First place in the Film Competition (SHOOF) MISK 2015. In 2016, he received a summer scholarship from the Misk Foundation at the New York film Academy, Hollywood After returning to his homeland, he made the first dramatic film at Taif University (Sarmadi), where he was completing his bachelor’s degree in marketing. In his last year at the university, he was assigned the position of director of the media club. in his graduation year he made a short film (Okaz) in 24 hours of total Production; experimenting with ideas for Tahweedah, and it won first place prize in Souk Okaz 2018. Founder at O2STUDIO, with existing and upcoming projects for creative artistic content, directed their latest film (Covida the-19th) the movie got premiered in 2021 in the first edition of RSFF, it’s available now on Netflix, Saudi New Voices.



PRODUCER: ASD AL KARIMI

Asd Al-Karimi was born in Taif in 1992, his life in its suburbs. His film career began early in high school as an independent filmmaker. His first film of his production was screened at the Saudi Film Festival in its third edition, “Cowardliness” 2016. He received a local award as the best film at “Okaz” with O2 Studio in 2018. He has produced many documentaries on different Saudi cultures and commercials with many, from companies, government institutions, and independent films such as “ETERNAL” 2017 “Safe Return” 2020”, he has experience in managing financial affairs in the production department with a number of governmental institutions. The last film produced “Covida the19th” 2021, which was screened at the Red Sea Festival in its first version as a world premiere, now it’s on Netflix.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

O2 STUDIO
Saudi Arabia.Riyadh, Al Wurud
0507666276 - Asad Alkarimi
hello@o2studio.me

FINANCERS:

Red Sea Fund 2021 (Saudi Arabia)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$449,650

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$20,000



THE SETTLEMENT

Genre(s): **Drama**

Country: **Egypt, France, Germany, Saudi Arabia**

Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

A factory witnessed the death of Sayed, father of Hossam (23). The only compensation offered to the family is to propose Hossam to work in the same position as his father, next to the person who caused his father’s accidental death.

SYNOPSIS

In a shanty town in Alexandria, lives Hossam (23) and Maro (12), two brothers. After their father Sayed gets killed accidentally in the factory by one of his colleagues Mostafa, the factory manager convinces Sayed’s family to relinquish their legal rights in exchange of hiring both Hossam and Maro in the factory. Hossam feels belittled, but he decides to accept the offer for his feeling of responsibility towards his family and because he is also aware that he has no skills that can make him eligible for any other job. Hossam and Maro receive their new jobs only a month after the accident and on their way to the factory, they know that they will have to work hand in hand with Mostafa, the person they know to be the cause of their fathers’ death. On day one, all workers are vigilant towards Hossam, especially Mostafa, they all know beforehand from his late father how hostile and misfit he is and all his friends are outlaws. Hossam on the other hand, acts quiet and reserved. Hossam realizes while dealing with his new co-workers that his father used to speak badly about him and this bad image made everyone await Hossam’s revenge.

INTENTION

I intend the plot to be captivating and engaging. This comes from the protagonist’s character development and the situation he is put into. As the story escalates, the tension rises. Will Hossam avenge his father’s death, or comply with working for the factory to sustain a stable life? While the plot follows a vengeance story, the result is not a typical revenge film but a one with a deeper layer and a different dimension. I personally find the industrial spaces to be full with cinematic elements and visually appealing details. These spaces are fresh and new as it’s very rare to see an Egyptian film that takes place in them. The film is shot in a factory, and in a neighborhood where the protagonist lives which is an industrial urban space itself, and the highway connecting them. These spaces reflect the roughness the workers endure in their everyday lives. The cinematic language of the film relies on static long takes. The characters are often suspended in the space in cinematic wide shots. They are not separated from these spaces where they were brought up, live, work, and interact with each other and with it. Like their scenes in the factory between the machines.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: MOHAMED RASHAD

Mohamed Rashad (Writer / Director / Producer), was born in Egypt, started working in filmmaking since 2005, wrote and directed two short fiction films “From afar “ , 2005, and “Maxim” , 2007, Afterwards, he worked as assistant director in a large number of films. With Hala Lotfy and some other filmmakers, they founded their own production company “Hassla Films’ ‘ which is an independent production house to produce long debut projects for talented young artists. In 2016, he finished his first feature documentary “Little Eagles” which had its premiere in “Dubai international film festival 2016-official selection”. In 2019 he produced a feature documentary “The profession” directed by “Ramez Youssef “, The film was screened in many Arab film festivals. In 2021 he co-produced “Behind a transparent cement Barrier “ By Amr Baiomy which screened in “Ismailia International Film Festival for Documentaries and shorts 2021 official selection. Rashad is currently working as a director on the development of his first feature fiction ‘The settlement ‘. He participated in lots of workshops and platforms such as DFMI Alumni Business lab and cinemart, he wrote articles about Egyptian cinema and gender which were published in many websites such as Jeem.



PRODUCER: HALA LOTFY

Director, producer, and the founder of Hassala Films. Her feature length debut ‘Coming Forth by Day’ was premiered in Abu Dhabi Film Festival 2012, its European premiere was in the FORUM- Berlinale 2013. As a Producer she produced her feature debut “Coming Forth by day”, and between 2013 and 2022, she produced “Little Eagles” which was an official selection in Dubai IFF Muhr competition in 2016, In 2018 she finished producing her second feature fiction “Ext . / Night” and premiered in TIFF, and in 2022 she produced the feature documentary “light upon light” which premiered in CPH dox.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Hassala Films
1st Hussein Hegazy street, Saad Zaghlol,
Downtwon, Cairo, Egypt
+201227418314
hala.samira.lotfy@gmail.com

FINANCERS:

HBF Script and Development Fund
(The Netherlands); AFAC (Lebanon); Red Sea
Development Fund (Saudi Arabia); World Cinema
Fund Classic (Germany); HBF+Europe Minority
Co-Production (The Netherlands); Hassla Films
(Egypt); Caracteres Productions (France)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$412,816

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$193,058



YAJUJ

Genre(s): **Elevated Horror**
Country: **Saudi Arabia**
Language(s): **Arabic, English, Hindi**

LOGLINE

Salma, an aspiring journalist, comes in contact with an ancient virus that turns people into zombies. She must uncover the truth to stop a world-ending pandemic.

SYNOPSIS

Salma, an aspiring journalist goes to an ancient excavation site, Iram of the Pillars, to uncover the truth behind the discovery of a mysterious sarcophagus. She meets up with Hatim, the lead archeologist, and her husband. The plan is to safely escort the priceless relic to the Advanced Research Center, ARC for examination. Out of the desert, they drive through open farmland and are joined by Maryem, Hatim’s other wife who is also a scientist at ARC. The convoy gets hijacked by bandits led by Habib Al-Tawaher, a psychopath, and Maryam’s nephew who forces everyone to a nearby abandoned farm. Habib orders Hatim to open the sarcophagus, hoping to find treasure. Nobody realizes that an ancient infarction is released that soon starts turning people into zombies. Salma tries to protect everyone from the “Yajuj” but the fighting turns inward. The mysteries surrounding the ancient artifact and the infection lead to mistrust amongst the survivors, who question each other’s motives and turn on one another. Can Salma unite with her husband and co-wife and put their differences aside to stop a world-ending pandemic, or is humanity destined to fall?

INTENTION

Yajuj, is an elevated horror film that takes place in Saudi Arabia and is the first of its kind in the region. The film brings diversity and a new cultural twist to the post-apocalyptic genre. Yajuj is inspired by the Muslim fear of Yajuj wa Majuj (Gog & Magog) as one billion people, around the world, believe in the prophecy that ushers the end of days or “The Hour” as we refer to it. The film fuses scientific and historical facts with well-established legends and lore rooted deeply in Arab and South Asian culture, along with contemporary social issues facing the region, and mixing in our own unique mythology to create a vast scope of conflicting beliefs and interests. Yajuj is not another zombie flick, it is about the monster in all of us. A critical look at the social dynamic between classes and ethnic groups of the Middle East as they witness the “signs of Judgment Day” unfold before them giving birth to three conflicting ideologies: Is this a natural phenomenon with scientific solutions? Is it the realization of divine prophecies and we must turn to faith? Or is it all caused by humanity and salvation lies within us?

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR: FAHMI FARAHAT

An experienced filmmaker who began his career in California, 2005. Throughout his journey as a storyteller, Farahat wrote, produced, directed, and edited multiple award-winning films. His first feature was Saudis in America (2008), a documentary that was available on Blockbuster, Amazon, and Netflix. He was an Assistant to the Producer of AmericanEast (2008) starring Tony Shalhoub (Monk) and a number of Arab-American stars. He wore multiple hats as Associate Producer, 1st AD, and editor on Three Veils (2011), an award-winning film about three Muslim women’s identity in America. Once back in Saudi Arabia, Farahat directed a TV mockumentary, entitled The Corporation (2011), an edgy depiction of gender segregation in the workplace. In 2018 he directed Rules of the Game, a critically acclaimed short film about a newlywed meeting for the first time, in a bedroom. He served as an Associate Producer on Bunuwirah (2020), the first Saudi horror film to hit local cinemas. Furthermore, on November 30th, 2020, he led a passionate team and directed Yajuj: Curse of Iram (2020) an online immersive play and interactive film that launched the Yajuj Franchise. Farahat is a co-founder of Dramaturgys, a production company specializing in training and development.



WRITER: MURAD AMAYREH

An award-winning writer, producer, and director with over 15 years of experience who has created an array of productions within different genres and formats. He consistently pushes boundaries by introducing new concepts and ideas with the intent of engaging the viewers and provoking thought and dialogue. Born and raised in Los Angeles by Jordanian partners, Murad has been writing stories since he was 6 years old. Through his teens, he was a part of countless theater productions and eventually graduated from CSULA film school with a BA in Film and Media Studies. Some of his accolades include Best Documentary titled, Last Refuge, at the Golden Eagle Film Festival and Scariest Film Jinn (2013) at Sacramento Horror Film Festival. He also wrote and directed many international TV shows, programs, and online content, including Yajuj: Curse of Iram (2020) an online immersive play and interactive film that was viewed live via seven Instagram accounts as the characters themselves interacted with the audiences. The live production received wide media coverage and a Global Media Maker Award nomination for its innovation.



PRODUCER: JOMANA ALQURAISH

A former scientist with a background in event management. While a student in Ireland, Jomana co-founded a mental health awareness society and ran day-to-day operations, and managed events and fundraising. In 2019, she returned to Saudi Arabia and began working in the entertainment industry. She was hired as a development coordinator on multiple projects for TV and social media including the Yajuj project. Quickly she excelled in the field and produced a feature-length live immersive play and film entitled Yajuj: Curse of Iram (2020). The live production received wide media coverage and a Global Media Maker Award nomination for its innovation. Jomana is a co-founder and producer at Dramaturgys, a production company specializing in training and development with multiple films under her belt, including VHS Tape Replaced (2022) which is premiering at the Red Sea film Festival.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Dramaturgys
Al Hamra District, Khobar, KSA
Info@dramaturgys.com
+966 56 650 3233
www.dramaturgys.com

FINANCERS:

Al Ula Film (Saudi Arabia)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$2,800,000



YOU WERE THE POET AND I THOUGHT I EXISTED

Genre(s): **Drama**

Country: **Saudi Arabia**

Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

Tayf, a girl in her 20s works in a call center and secretly struggles to be a poet. One day, on a family camp by the seaside in Yanbu, she is shaken to the core, and nothing is ever the same anymore.

SYNOPSIS

Tayf, a young woman in her twenties who just graduated college, works in a call center but is completely rooted in poetry. She is violently passionate, struggles to find her own unique poetic voice and is searching for her own sense of belonging within herself. She is the daughter of a military man who taught her that there is no place for weakness and failure. One day she and her family visit distant relatives in another city for a family camping trip by the seaside on Eid Al-Adha. She meets two of her cousins who are quite different yet very similar. Tayf and her cousins venture out into a series of nocturnal adventures as they redefine the city around them through their eyes. The cousins accidentally reveal a family secret that shakes Tayf to her core, making her question everything she knows. Tayf goes through a lifetime of new experiences in search of her true self, her relationship to poetry, to the closest people around her, to the sea and city around her.

INTENTION

When I was much younger, my father would teach me how to recite poems. Yet, poetry, especially the ‘Nabatii’ type I grew up with, found its echo in mens’ rooms more than womens’. My father used to take me to gatherings with him and encourage me to recite - to stand amongst men and give life to certain poems. His eyes were full of pride. Only through poetry and for a short period of time, I was able to break the rules and merge the separated rooms into one. The older I grew, the wider apart these rooms became. I learnt that you are to be quieter in womens’ rooms. This complicated my relationship with poetry; what once was a vehicle for soulful expression and freedom, now represented the tribe, it’s arbitrary rules and how it all left me suffocated. Until I claimed it back my own way when I understood that, the silence in the women’s room was much louder. Which is what Tayf in the film tries to do, to claim it back in her own way. One of the important characteristics of my film is the world of the story. The contrast of being inside the old tent, facing the beautiful blue sea and behind it all, a city lost between modernization and immobility. It tries to visualize the changes the country goes through, its diverse characters, from the point of view of a woman who already has a stranger-like relationship with the idea of “place” whether it is a tent, family, society, street or city. Tayef’s relationship with herself, with poetry, her family, and the city changes as the country changes that builds the backdrop of my story.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: SARA MESFER

Sara Mesfer is a Saudi filmmaker who holds a bachelor degree in Cinematic Art from Effat university, Saudi Arabia. Her latest film “The Girls who Burned the Night” got the Special Mention Award at Palm Spring international ShortFest in 2021 and The Jury Special Mention award in Cairo International Film Festival’s 42nd edition in addition to The Ciné-Promesse Award at the 32nd edition of Carthage International Film Festival. Her Second film “AlDabah” is part of an omnibus feature film titled “Becoming” that had its World Premier in Cairo International Film Festival 43nd edition. In 2021, Sara was selected by Screen International to be one of the “Arab Stars of Tomorrow”.



PRODUCER: LUJAIN BAKHASHWAIN

Lujain Bakshawin is a Saudi filmmaker, who graduated from Effat University Cinematic Art track. She has been working in the film industry since 2016. Lujain has been exploring her potential in different departments such as producing, and directing. She wrote and directed her first short in 2019 “Lebsna Allelah”. She has been part of the production team as an Associate producer of the Omnibus feature “Anthology Becoming” directed by a group of female directors which premiered in Cairo IFF 43rd edition. Being the line producer of one of the most prominent feature films in Saudi Arabia in 2020 “The book Of Sun”. Moreover, she participated in Shahid Original series in 2021 as a Line producer “Alshak”. In 2022 she Co-produced “Quarer collective feature film” which got premiered in Red Sea IFF, and won the jury award in Aswan IFF and four palms awards in Saudi FF. Lujain is currently developing her second short as a Writer/Director, and her first feature as a producer “You Were The Poet And I Thought I Existed”.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Lam films
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
+966565620951
Lujainaba5@gmail.com

FINANCERS:

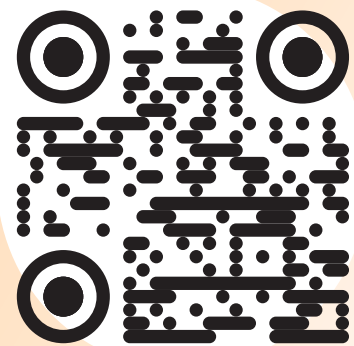
Red Sea Development Fund 2021
(Saudi Arabia)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$1,350,567

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$5,000



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BEHIND THE PALM TREES

Genre(s): **Fiction Drama**
Country: **France, Morocco, Belgium**
Language(s): **French, Arabic**

LOGLINE

Mehdi’s life is simple until he meets Marie, an expatriate with a glamorous social life.

SYNOPSIS

In Marrakech, Mehdi leads an exemplary life with his family and Selma, his new girlfriend. For the young couple, things are going smoothly until Mehdi meets Marie, a young French woman caught up in the social life of the expatriate community.

INTENTION

Behind the Palm Trees starts out as a romance, but gradually shifts to become a psychological thriller with a much darker atmosphere. My film is a love story, between Mehdi, a modest young Moroccan, and Marie, a young French expatriate with a luxurious life. But behind the palm trees, “History” inevitably played a part through the relationship of domination that still exists between Morocco and France.

With this film, I would like to follow a passion that will be consumed by cultural, economic and social differences. I would like to question our individual relationship to love and equality in a couple, but also to question love in its political dimension and to examine the way in which the family and, more broadly, society infiltrates the intimate. This film is above all the story of the failure of a man, who will have given everything for the illusion of a perfect happiness and social success, but who will be condemned to return to his family.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: MERYEM BENM’BAREK

Meryem Benm’Barek was born in Rabat, Morocco. She grew up between Morocco, France and Belgium. She started in 2010 in the Directing class at INSAS in Brussels, where she directed several short films including Jennah, selected in several international festivals and listed for the 2015 Oscars. In 2018, Sofia, her first feature film won the Best Screenplay Award at the Cannes Film Festival in the Un Certain Regard section, before winning several international awards.



PRODUCER: JEAN BRÉHAT

Jean Bréhat has produced 45 films with 11 official entries at the Oscars (best foreign language films) and 4 nominations, 12 awards at Cannes including 3 Palmes d’Or for Best actor and Best actress, 2 Grand Prix, 1 Silver Bear at Berlin and many other awards in major festivals. He produces the films of many directors such as Rachid Bouchared, Bruno Dumont, Roschdy Zem, Youssef Chahine, Ziad Doueri, Karim Dridi etc... And wants to produce new authors on current and societal themes. Jean Bréhat has the desire to produce international talents and films in international co-productions.



CO-PRODUCER: EMMA BINET

Emma BINET started in international sales at Doc & Film, in parallel with her university studies in Literature and Cinema. In 2012, she entered the INA Sup production Master. After an experience at Chi-fou-mi Productions, she works for UBBA artistic agency, before returning to film production by joining 3B PRODUCTIONS in 2016 and assisting Jean Bréhat, Muriel Merlin and Rachid Bouchareb on long feature films for 6 years. In 2020, she creates her own production company, Furyo Films with Adrien Barrouillet and Charles Meresse and now produces her projects in parallel with collaborations with Jean Bréhat and his production company Tessalit on French and international feature film projects such as Meryem Benm’Barek’s film.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Les Films du Veyrier
3 passage Gustave Lepeu
75011 Paris France
+33(0)6 68 03 54 54
ebinet@tessalit.com

CO-PRODUCERS:

Agora Films (Morocco);
Novak Prod (Belgium)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$2,614,911

FINANCERS:

Pyramide Films (France)



DARWIN IN TAIF

Genre(s): **Comedy, Drama**
Country: **Saudi Arabia, Canada**
Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

A biology teacher quits her job amidst evolution-related debate. She moves to her grandma’s old house in Taif, Saudi Arabia, where she becomes involved with the overpopulation of baboons in the mountains.

SYNOPSIS

In the wake of a renter’s suicide, Reem, a woman in her mid-30s returns to her great aunt’s old house in the mountainous town of Taif, Saudi Arabia, where her family used to reside. She is escaping a controversy caused by a discussion in her biology class regarding the theory of evolution. She uses the renovation of the historic house as an excuse to live in her grandmother’s old home. The property has been shunned after the death of the old woman. It was rented to an Afghan worker, who was later found after hanging himself. This led the family to shun the house they deemed ominous and a bearer of bad luck.

Being a rational woman, Reem is dismissive of superstitions, yet weary of the crazy cat lady stigma her grandmother had. Taif being a small town with many natural places unlike other Saudi cities offered them a place to hide from the prying eyes of others they knew in Jeddah. Originally not caring much for animals, and being more concerned about the stigma of becoming a “crazy cat lady” she soon develops a relation with the baboons overpopulating the mountainous area.

INTENTION

I was motivated by guilt to write this film, as I took in an abandoned kitten, nurtured him until he was older. A few months later, he caught a deadly virus from another rescue cat, and when I had to put him down, I felt that just as much as I gave him life, I gave him death. This film is a contemplation of life and death, although it will be laced with light moments to lessen the intensity of the subject matter in an absurd drama-comedy.

During a family gathering, a relative mentioned that the Afghan worker who had rented my late great Aunt’s house in Taif, Saudi Arabia, was found hanging from the ceiling, dead. They told us not to spread the “shameful” news, and that it would affect the property’s prospects of rental or sale. People take stories of haunted houses seriously in the Arab region. The film will be set in the mountainous city of Taif, Saudi Arabia, where my father grew up, and where his aunt, my great aunt, lived and died as a single woman. “Darwin in Taif” aims to shed light on the religious belief and the misinformation regarding animal rights in the region.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: MAHA AL-SAATI

Maha Al-Saati is a filmmaker interested in women’s stories in the Arab World. She is an alum of the TIFF Filmmaker Lab 2020, TIFF Writers’ Studio 2021, and received the Share Her Journey Award 2020/2021. Her shorts include “Hair: The Story of Grass” (2018), an official selection of Fantastic Fest 2018 and Slamdance 2019 and has won her The Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) residency 2021. Her feature project “Hajj to Disney” was developed with the Red Sea Lodge and TorinoFilmLab 2019, and won development awards from El-Gouna Film Festival 2020 and Red Sea Fund 2022.



PRODUCER: JOMANA ALQURAISH

A former scientist with a background in event management. While a student in Ireland, Jomana co-founded a mental health awareness society and ran day-to-day operations, and managed events and fundraising. In 2019, she returned to Saudi Arabia and began working in the entertainment industry. She was hired as a development coordinator on multiple projects for TV and social media including the Yajuj project. Quickly she excelled in the field and produced a feature-length live immersive play and film entitled Yajuj: Curse of Iram (2020). The live production received wide media coverage and a Global Media Maker Award nomination for its innovation. Jomana is a co-founder and producer at Dramaturgys, a production company specializing in training and development with multiple films under her belt, including VHS Tape Replaced (2022) which is premiering at the Red Sea film Festival.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Dramaturgys
Khobar, Saudi Arabia
Info@Dramaturgys.com
www.dramaturgys.com

CO-PRODUCER:

Nava Projects (Canada)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$2,150,000



GURA

Genre(s): **Historical Epic, War, Drama**
Country: **USA, Egypt**
Language(s): **English, Arabic**

LOGLINE

Following the American Civil war, soldier William Loring and a group of American officers are recruited by the Egyptian army to lead them in arms against the Ethiopian Empire, ending in the tragic battle of Gura.

SYNOPSIS

Gura is an epic historical drama, based on the true story of a group of American soldiers who traveled to Egypt in 1870, five years after the American civil war. The story centers on Colonel William Loring, a disgraced confederate soldier, who leaves behind his family in rural America in search for war and glory. He is hired among fifty American officers, union and confederate, as mercenaries to train and fight alongside the Egyptian Khedivate under the rule of Isma’il Pasha, an idealist bent on modernization and expanding into Africa by way of an Ethiopian conquest. He dreamt of building a prosperous, independent Egypt. This campaign into Ethiopia, known as the Egyptian-Ethiopian war, is the dramatic crux of the film. It was ultimately a tragic failure, and this period marks the end of Egypt’s independence. Within the story of Gura, the Suez Canal is unveiled, which triggered the British Empire’s interest in the country. These events paved the way for the British Empire to take over the country. By the end of the story, Egypt’s stake in the Suez Canal is sold to the British Empire. These are important political backdrops, which, within the genre of the epic, will be represented effectively and dramatically. The backdrop to this story paints a picture of post-Civil war America, with the story of Gura following war torn men who have spent their lives in combat (from the Mexican war to the civil war), yearning for another shot at victory on the battlefield, and travelling to an unknown land to find it. At this time in Egypt, there were tomb raiders among archeologists, American Christian missionaries, and European nations staking their lasting interests in Egypt and the stability of the region.

INTENTION

As an Egyptian living in the United States, I felt a great pull to this story. Aesthetically and creatively I see incredible opportunity in crafting this story as a marriage between two worlds, and opportunity to show the foundations being laid for the colonization of the region. Gura will be like a parable, a story of tremendous scope told through the perspective of a single character, William Loring, a confederate soldier who wrote a detailed, personal account of his experience in Egypt. This account is, effectively, a ‘fish out of water’ story, much like Lawrence of Arabia, which I take great inspiration for in the development of the script. I am interested in exploring this compelling (and little known) period of the first US military relation with Egypt as a means to draw direct parallels with modern time. The construction of the Suez canal was immediately followed by an imperative need by the British and the rest of Europe to protect their own interests in exploiting it. Gura is the backdrop for a pivotal period of time in which colonial interests were being set, strategized, and implemented in Egypt and throughout the region (again, much like Lawrence of Arabia, the strategy being set by the colony, behind closed doors, throughout the story will exist in Gura as well, setting the stage for the British occupation). Thematically, Gura will be a portrait of soldiers who find their purpose in life through war. Loring, our central character, lives for war having spent his entire life in the military. Gura explores the destructive path that those who are committed to war inevitably follow . Isma’il Pasha, Loring and the other American officers, are all after their own version of glory, and ultimately overrun by their own stubborn pride.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER & PRODUCER: LOTFY NATHAN

Lotfy Nathan’s first documentary film, 12 O’CLOCK BOYS, for which he was awarded the HBO emerging artist award, played over 50 film festivals worldwide, including SXSW, Sundance NEXT, Lincoln Center, Viennale, Hot Docs, London, and Copenhagen. 12 O’Clock Boys was distributed by Oscilloscope for a North American release in theaters, acquired by Showtime Amazon, and Criterion Channel, and remade as CHARM CITY KINGS with Sony Pictures. Lotfy is a grantee of the Creative Capital foundation, the Cinereach foundation, and a previous awardee of the Garrett Scott grant, the Peter Reed foundation, the Grainger Marburg grant, the IFP fellowship, the Red Sea Development Fund, and The Doha Film Fund. His first fiction feature, HARKA, premiered at Cannes Film Festival Un Certain Regard 2022 where it won best actor.



CO-PRODUCER: BASSEM NATHAN

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

ICB: International Cinema Bureau,
ICB - (Egypt)

CO-PRODUCER:

Shirley Oaks Pictures (USA)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$1,750,000

FINANCERS:

Shirley Oaks Pictures (USA);
International Cinema Bureau, ICB (Egypt)

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$160,000



I’M COMING FOR YOU

Genre(s): **Drama, Fantasy**
Country: **Cameroon**
Language(s): **Hausa, Mandara, French, English**

LOGLINE

Kaltoumi is a young mother and engineer, always wearing hijab and strangely riding a Bobber motorcycle in the Sahelian zone to trade with Boko Haram terrorists. Once exposed, she is cursed and banned from her village. Hence starts her journey to get back to her three-month-old baby.

SYNOPSIS

Kaltoumi 25, lives in Feshue, a conservative and patriarchal village with a strong belief in magic. Abandoned by her husband she is raising alone her baby. Away from prying eyes and riding a Bobber motorcycle, Kaltoumi is forced to traffic goods with Boko Haram terrorists. As her activity is criminal, she takes extreme precautions to navigate between these worlds. However, Modou the chief village has brought Kaltoumi’s criminal activities to light. To punish her, he “confiscates” her baby, expels her from Feshue and casts a spell on her. That spell makes her breasts swell day by day. Which causes her excruciating pain. To break the curse and be finally reunited with her baby, she must find a large quantity of rock salt. Rejected by her own family, she wanders in the Sahel until a group of margin women rescue her. Having been personally impacted by the atrocities of terrorists, they take badly Kaltoumi’s relationship with Boko Haram. They tolerate her presence only because she has made herself indispensable. Away from her baby with her breasts swelling more and more and hated by those she now lives with, Kaltoumi’s “punishment” is far from over.

INTENTION

“I’m coming for you” is a story that raises the issue of women’s freedom by highlighting the notion of sisterhood, all in a Sahelian land with a war as background, but also an underlying question of maternal love: how far can it go? Kaltoumi, is both light and shadow. As much as she loves her baby and her family with a sincere and deep love, she is also involved in trafficking with terrorists. Her journey of initiation, like Ulysses in Greek mythology, allows her at the end to combine these two sides of herself. Isn’t the human being both shadow and light? I have a desire, through this film, to explore subjects that are very much rooted in reality in a fantastic way. Where I come from, it doesn’t matter if you are a Muslim, Christian or atheist, we all believe in the existence of a higher mystical entity. In this space, the perception and interpretation of a certain reality remains strongly influenced by the relationship people have with nature and the elements: air, fire, earth...

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR: CYRIELLE RAINGOU

Cyrielle Raingou is a Cameroonian filmmaker passionate about African cultural identity, its promotion on an international scale and the economic interest it raises. She very often uses legends, metaphor, the symbolism of animals to unearth the complexity and mystery within human. She is currently working on her first feature length documentary “Le Spectre de Boko Haram”, focused on the life in a war zone from children perspective. She has directed short films such as “Challenge”, “Les voisins”, “Requiem prologue”, “the lamb”, “Parallèle” or “Mother just a smile”. She holds master’s degrees in law and in documentary film directing.



PRODUCER: ALICE ABAH

Alice Abah is a Cameroonian producer. Trained as an actress and comedian, she made her debut in the theater where she won the prize for the best actress of the French-speaking theater scenes in 2010. She started working in cinema in 2006 where she played roles in short films. She continues with feature films such as “Lex Nostra” by Gérard Nguele, “Cité Campus” by Vincent Ndoumbe, “Zoombie à Yaoundé” by Elena Cerna. Alice Abah and

Cyrielle Raingou studied film production together in University of Yaoundé 1 and became very close collaborators. Alice Abah holds master degree in film production.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:
Je Capture Ma Réalité (JCMR)
PO BOX 1466 Koutaba,
Cameroon
jcmrproduction@gmail.com
+237696678923

ESTIMATED BUDGET:
\$957,760

FINANCING ACQUIRED:
\$30,000



MEN IN THE SUN

Genre(s): **Crime Thriller**
Country: **Greece, Palestine, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Denmark**
Language(s): **Arabic, Greek, English**

LOGLINE

A Palestinian refugee living on the fringes of society in Athens gets ripped off by smuggler and sets out to seek revenge.

SYNOPSIS

When Palestinian refugees, Chatila and Fatah are offered €4,000 to smuggle Chatila’s nephew out of Athens, they see an opportunity to escape the country they’ve been trapped in for several years. But when they succeed in getting his nephew out, the reward fails to materialise and the middleman, Jihad, disappears with the money. Consumed with rage, Chatila and Fatah wind up kidnapping Jihad, but he ultimately escapes, leaving the two friends back where they started.

Caught in despair they quickly fall back into their old routines until they unexpectedly discover that Jihad’s uncle, Marwan, is helping smugglers transport newly arrived migrants to Europe. They convince Marwan that they can provide ‘safe passage’ to Italy. He buys it and sends them two unsuspecting refugees. But instead of shipping them off, they take them hostage and force them to call Marwan and tell him they have arrived in Italy, which results in Marwan releasing the money reward.

But now, Athens is no longer safe for Chatila and Fatah. Rich but wanted men, they have to skip town immediately. The prospect of escape proves elusive for Fatah, however, and Chatila is forced, once again, to choose between his friend and freedom.

INTENTION

The condition of exile and how to portray it on the screen is my main objective with MEN IN THE SUN.

Throughout the last decade of documenting the streets of Athens, and especially with my short films XENOS and A DROWNING MAN, I’ve become intimately close with the universe of my characters; the basement flats, the squats, the crowded streets. To this day, Athens - the cradle of western civilisation - remains an unruly city, full of chaotic energy and visual noise, which makes it a fascinating setting to film in. It’s an urban pressure cooker where these young men hustle to survive in the underbelly. It’s the exiles and the unwanted against the natives, the nationalists and the fascists in present-day Europe. It’s that never-ending frequency of anxiety vibrating through every living cell that fascinates me about these characters and their world. This is our world, the universe of MEN IN THE SUN.

Though I’d like to think that, despite what seems to be an eternity of hopelessness my characters face, there is a sense of humor. These young men are full of life, and they possess playful energy that insists on living. Without this, how else could they survive?

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: MAHDI FLEIFEL

Born in Dubai, Mahdi Fleifel lives and works between Denmark, England and Greece. A graduate of the British National Film & Television School, he studied Fiction Directing under Stephen Frears and Pawel Pawlikowski. In 2010 he founded the London based production company Nakba FilmWorks with Irish producer Patrick Campbell. Fleifel’s critically acclaimed debut feature, A WORLD NOT OURS, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and received over 30 awards, including the Berlinale Peace Prize, and the Edinburgh, Yamagata and DOC:NYC Grand Jury Prizes. He was named Best New Nordic Voice at Nordisk Panorama, and received the New Talent Award at CPH:DOX in 2013.

In 2016 Fleifel won a Silver Bear for A MAN RETURNED. His follow up, A DROWNING MAN, was selected in the Official Competition at Cannes, and was nominated for a BAFTA. I SIGNED THE PETITION won Best Documentary Short at IDFA and was nominated for the 2018 European Film Awards. His last film, 3 LOGICAL EXITS, premiered in the Tiger Competition at the 2020 Rotterdam Film Festival. All of his works were acquired by Netflix in 2021, and are available globally.



WRITER: JASON MCCOLGAN

Jason initially studied film at the Welsh International Film School, before going on to work in film and television for over 20 years, primarily producing commercials, promos and branded content. In addition to his production work, he has also written and directed a number of short films, including the ‘The Wait’, which played at film festivals around the world, won a number of awards and received a Vimeo Staff Pick. He also recently co-wrote BIFA nominated feature film, ‘Kindred’, starring Tamara Lawrence, Jack Lowden and Fiona Shaw, which had a theatrical release and was distributed around the world.



PRODUCER: GEOFF ARBOURNE

is an Emmy award-winning producer and founder of Inside Out Films. An independent production company built around a global community of filmmakers operating out of the U.K. and South Africa. A recurring theme with directors - Maya Zinshtein, Rob Lemkin, Gordon Main, Mahdi Fleifel, Brett Wallace, Ali Al-arian - is focusing on the visionary in cinema. Often controversial, always provocative, our films stand as our statement of intent (London Recruits 2023 | African Apocalypse 2020 | Forever Pure 2016). Geoff continues collaborating successfully with the talent he has worked with and welcomes new relationships by celebrating international stories and independent voices.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Inside Out Films
13 Southdown Close
The Willows/Beer/Devon
EX123AN, SOUTH AFRICA
+44-7432156147
geoff@insideoutfilms.uk

Nakba filmworks, UK

CO-PRODUCER:

Homemade Films (Greece) ; Studio Ruba
(The Netherlands)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$1,028,583

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$504,924

FINANCERS:

Arab Culture Fund (UK); Doha Film Institute (UK); HBF Post Production Prize (UK); IMS Fund (UK); Danish Film Institute (UK); UK Tax Credit (UK); Private Equity (UK); Greek Tax Credit (Greece); Greek Film Centre (Greece); Greek Television Presale (Greece); NFF+HBF Co-Production Support (The Netherlands); Red Sea Fund (Saudi Arabia)



SHE WAS NOT ALONE

Genre(s): **Documentary**
Country: **Iraq**
Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

Fatima, a nomadic woman, lives with her animals in the Iraqi marshes. Climate change has jeopardized her future. As she fights for her home, our collective fates become intertwined with hers: Will she stay or lose everything she loves?

SYNOPSIS

She Was Not Alone (2020) narrates the ongoing story of climate change in Iraq through the life of Fatima, an inspiring and independent 60-year-old Iraqi woman who has chosen to remain in Iraq’s southeastern marshlands alone with her beloved animals in her private enclave of reed-mat and mudbrick dwellings. The film follows Fatima for an entire year as she faces obstacles produced by the prolonged seasons of drought and flooding, which are troubling markers of climate change in the delicate wetland ecosystem she inhabits. It visually narrates her quotidian rhythms as she navigates this thick, lush waterscape populated by islands of reed, migratory birds, and buffalo herds to conduct her rhythms of care, stewardship, and play with her non-human kin, which immediately endear her to the viewer. While her community has faced countless challenges over the past century due to military occupation, nearby oil refineries and gas flares, the draining of the marshes, and political persecution, Fatima fights to hold on to her life and her buffaloes amidst the existential threat posed by climate change. But she may have to migrate to the city and lose her dearest possessions: her animals and her independence.

INTENTION

Iraq is presently the fifth most vulnerable country in the world for leading factors of climate change, such as decreased water, food security, and extreme temperatures according to a recent report by the United Nations Environmental Programme. Fatima’s story, through its unspoken, direct approach, puts viewers in her place to demand more urgent action. The three goals that our film has is to urgently advocate for wetland preservation, fossil fuel divestment and ending gas flares, and prohibiting the dumping of pollutants and toxic sludge into water systems in Iraq. Marshlands account for 12% of natural carbon sinks on Earth according to the IPCC’s calculations in 1996. The film shows that it is imperative to preserve marshlands and their unique ecosystems not only for the living beings, but also for their essential role in the global carbon cycle. Moreover, marshes function as critical buffer zones in regional water cycles through their absorption of floodwaters and curtailment of droughts.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER & PRODUCER: HUSSEIN AL ASADI

Hussein al-Asadi (b. 1997) is an emerging director, producer, and cinematographer from Basra, Iraq. He began his career working as the Director of Photography for several short films. Soon after, he began to write, direct, and produce his own films. His first short film Eye of the Mountain was released in 2019 and premiered at the Ismailia International Film Festival in Egypt. In 2020, he produced and directed his second short documentary film – She Was Not Alone. The film won several international awards and awards in the Arab world for the best documentary short film. In 2020, al-Asadi participated in the Close-Up Documentary Film Development Workshop for his feature length film project (tentatively titled She Was Not Alone), which will be the first feature documentary of his career as a director.



PRODUCER: HUDA AL KADHIMI

Huda al-Kadhimi is an Iraqi film producer and the founder of Ishtar Iraq Film Production Company, which is based in Iraq and Jordan. Her company aims to support local talent which reflects the reality of the Arab World. Al-Kadhimi has produced several films that have been showcased at prestigious film festivals around the world. Her films include “MOSUL 980,” which was selected for the Generation Competition of the 69th Berlin International Film Festival (2019); “QADR,” which was selected for the LA Shorts International Film Festival (2021); “HANGING GARDENS,” currently in post-production, “DOOR OF THE EAST, TABOO” currently in production.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Ishtar Iraq Film Production
Duwwar Abdoun, Abdun Al Shmali,
Amman 11189, Jordan
hudakadhimi@gmail.com
+ 964 781 278 1414
www.ishtariraq.com

FINANCERS:

AFAC (France); Hussein Al-Asadi; Ishtar
Iraq Film Production (Iraq); Culture
Resource (Lebanon)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$200,000

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$66,000



TIGRIS

Genre(s): **Drama, Coming of Age, Thriller**
Country: **Iraq, Italy**
Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

As their love grows through dance as an act of resistance, the lives of Adam and Layla, young breakdancers in Baghdad’s underground Hip-hop scene, spiral into a triangle of revenge, while under threat of disappearances enforced by obscurantist militias.

SYNOPSIS

Baghdad, today. When Ali (22), a Hip-hop DJ, is kidnapped by obscurantist militias during an underground breakdance battle, his friend Adam (23) considers giving up dancing. But meeting Layla (23), a breakdancer and law student, who recently moved with her mother and sister from Basra, sparks his love for dance back. Once Ali’s dead body is found, Adam, Layla and their crew decide to come out of the underground and throw a public Hip-hop party, to commemorate their murdered friend and protest enforced disappearances. But as Adam and Layla’s relationship grows, Layla’s cousin Malek (26), a car repairman turned small-time robber, wants to marry her and pull her away from breakdance, despite her dislike of him. His obsessive behaviour turns the relationship between Adam, Layla and Malek into a violent triangle of pain and revenge, as the date of the party draws closer, and violent obscurantist forces circle tighter around them.

INTENTION

In October 2019 a series of protests led by the youth took ahold of Iraq to oppose lack of basic services and safety, corruption and obscurantism often enforced by foreign-backed militias operating a de-facto rule of law. 60% of the Iraqi population are under 25, born just before or after the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq. It’s a generation with no fault, no responsibility, no power and no political representation, except the one the streets call for, stuck between the tragedies of the past and the swamp of the present, yet somehow still able to dream. The film aims to take an intimate, immersive and unfiltered look at their lives, as we also become witnesses to an impressionistic portrait of Baghdad, a bustling city of eight million people. Like many young Iraqis, Adam and Layla are independent, radical minds; meeting and seducing each other through dance, they each push the other to be better and stronger, in life and dance, as their bodies find ways to express their innermost feelings, building a bond that goes beyond words. We will flow to the beat with them, immersed in the perception of their complex, resilient and vibrant youth.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER & PRODUCER: HAIDER RASHID

Haider Rashid is a writer, director and producer born in 1985 of mixed Iraqi and Italian origins. He has directed features TANGLED UP IN BLUE, SILENCE: ALL ROADS LEAD TO MUSIC, IT’S ABOUT TO RAIN and STREET OPERA, the short film THE DEEP, and the VR documentary NO BORDERS. His films have won awards at Venice International Film Festival, Dubai International Film Festival, the Nastro d’Argento (Silver Ribbons). His latest film EUROPA, was selected at the 2021 Cannes Film Festival, in the Quinzaine des Réalisateurs (Directors’ Fortnight) section, where it won the Independent Critics’ Prize “Beatrice Sartori Award”. The film also won Best Director and Best Actor at the inaugural edition of Red Sea International Film Festival, awarded by a jury presided by Academy Award® winner Giuseppe Tornatore, and an Italian Golden Globe, and was selected as Iraq’s Official Entry for the 94th Oscars®.



WRITER-CREATIVE PRODUCER: SONIA GIANNETTO

Sonia Giannetto is a writer, director and creative producer of Sicilian and Arbëreshë origins. She has worked in visual and performance arts, and as a hyperrealist painter in the Florentine atelier Arcimboldo. In 2016, she graduated in Film Directing at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Rome, with the thesis film “Episodio”, which won awards at international film festivals, including Chicago, and was screened in galleries throughout Europe by Videokanava. In 2019, she worked as a co-writer, co-editor and first assistant director on the feature film “Europa”, directed by Haider Rashid, selected at the 2021 Cannes Film Festival

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Radical Plans
VIA PANCIATICHI 32
50127 FIRENZE, ITALY
HAIDER@RADICALPLANS.COM

FINANCERS:

Radical Plans (Italy); Red Sea
Development Fund (Saudi Arabia)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$3,027,910

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$75,000



TRIP TO JERUSALEM

Genre(s): **Dark Comedy**
Country: **Lebanon, France**
Language(s): **Arabic, French, Syriac**

LOGLINE

1941 - Far away from the barbarity of the War, in Lebanon. Following a Sunday lunch that goes sour, Matile, mother of eleven, imposes her laws on both the General of the French Mandate and the Head of the Church, by shaking the established customs.

SYNOPSIS

Sunday in 1941 – Beirut.

Matile, a mother of eleven, prepares a family lunch to commemorate the death of her husband. The Head of the Church is coming for lunch.

This is the moment when the French army decided to confiscate the house to build military baths. Matile does not tolerate this inappropriate interruption. She refuses and resists...

INTENTION

Trip to Jerusalem is a feature film that questions women’s position in patriarchal society. Unlike other women empowerment films, our project is a dark comedy coming from a conflict-ridden Middle East in which a widowed mother of eleven becomes a supreme leader. While some of our protagonists are “men of God,” the tone of this film is the opposite of pious. Our comedy is sly, slightly farcical, zany, but grounded in the reality of our characters’ lives. And yet we are convinced that comedy is the best way to make ourselves heard about subjects that otherwise wouldn’t be.

In our film, Matile is the leader of her household. A leader in a society where this was an exclusively masculine prerogative, at the time but today still. There are no giant posters or statues to her effigy. And yet it is this woman, to whom power is forbidden outside of her house, who will supplant the Head of the Church and oppose the General of the French Mandate. She will become a heroine, but she knows that in the world she lives in, there is only space for male heroes...

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER & PRODUCER: GABY ZARAZIR

Gaby studied Cinema with the life goal of holding strong behind the camera when turning 140 years old (or the camera holding him, perhaps). He is a Lebanese filmmaker. He also works as a producer, executing projects from A to Z, defying obstacles and meeting deadlines. Gaby strives to reduce the production’s negative environmental impact while maintaining the creative quality of the projects.



DIRECTOR-WRITER & PRODUCER: MICHEL ZARAZIR

Having obtained a master’s degree in cinema, Michel is a Lebanese filmmaker who writes and directs films. Michel’s films have been screened in all continents except Antarctica. Comedy and madness, his original cinema mocks the most serious things.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:
Madame Le Tapis
P.O.Box: 60-78, Jal El Dib,
Metn, Lebanon
info@madameletapis.com
www.madameletapis.com

CO-PRODUCER:
Easy Riders Films (France)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:
\$1,078,309

FINANCERS:
In-kind contribution (directors),
actors deferrals, and private
investment.

FINANCING ACQUIRED:
\$245,000



VAGABONDS

Genre(s): **Drama, Coming of Age**
Country: **Ghana, France**
Language(s): **Twi, Pidgin**

LOGLINE

Two orphaned brothers threatened with separation, flee to Accra in search of freedom and a family to call their own.

SYNOPSIS

Ghana - Owusu and Gyasi, two orphaned brothers threatened with separation, flee to Accra in search of freedom and a family to call their own. The journey to find this family will be fraught with obstacles and mirages.

INTENTION

This film resides in the coming-of-age genre, which is a spiritual rite of passage that we all can relate to. While Vagabonds will most certainly take its place in the halls of Italian neorealist cinema, we wish to give it a mystical African twist. One that allows the African view of art and spirituality to permeate through and invoke a spiritual participation with the audience rather than simply create a critical or analytical attitude towards a relevant social issue. At the heart of Ghanaian culture, there are mystical undertones that also exist within the margins and we feel this journey is the perfect narrative vehicle to allow that style to flourish. For now, we’ve branded it as Afro-mystic realism. It is a style, which presupposes that beyond this visible world, there is an invisible world striving to manifest itself. Furthermore, that nature, cultish remnants of the past, and a radical youth carry with them an energy that can transcend mundane economic realities, national borders, and various colors of the skin to become something more and to impose an ideology that captures a truth of the human condition: that we are all Vagabonds.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: AMARTEI ARMAR

The product of a Ghanaian father and an American mother, Amartei Armar is a writer/director who gravitates towards topics surrounding identity, immigration, and the human need to feel a sense of belonging having spent most of his life moving back and forth between the two countries and cultures. He is currently based in Accra, Ghana.



PRODUCER: SÉBASTIEN HUSSENOT

Sébastien founded LA LUNA PRODUCTIONS in 1994 and produced more than 90 films (shorts, documentaries and features) screened worldwide, winning over 600 awards, with an Oscar nomination. Recently, Tsutsue (directed by Amartei Armar) a coproduction with AKA Entertainment (Ghana) was in Cannes Official Competition in 2022, America (directed by Giacomo Abbruzzese) was nominated to the french Academy Cesars award 2022.

During the last years, Sébastien made mostly international coproductions (with Tunisia, Lebanon, Italy, Iran, Ghana, etc.). Sébastien Hussenot received the Producer Award of the Procirep at the Clermont Ferrand Festival in 2018.



PRODUCER: YEMOH IKE

Yemoh Ike is a Ghanaian film producer who started as a coordinator and premiere developer. Few months after completing G.I.A, where he studied marketing, he established a brand agency firm that scouts and manages talent. With a dream to innovate Ghanaian produced films to unlock the potentials as Ghanaians to the global film industry, Yemoh teamed up with Amartei Armar to change the narrative; “The Ghana Film Industry is

Dead” because to him the industry is yet to be born. Having worked in Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Liberia, Ike has a good network within the West Africa region.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

La Luna Productions
2 rue navoiseau 93100 Montreuil
FRANCE
sebastien@lunaprod.fr
+33 6 08 45 56 42

AKA Entertainment
8A 3rd Dade Link –CT6769 Labone Accra
Ghana
nexmed@ymail.com
+233 54 470 8525

FINANCERS:

Red Sea Fund – Development (Saudi Arabia)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$912,829

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$25,000



WHERE IS THE HEALER?

Genre(s): **Drama, Surreal Comedy**
Country: **South Africa, USA**
Language(s): **English, Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho**

LOGLINE

Ayanda is taken on a surreal odyssey as she attempts to find the perfect cast for the remake of a forgotten film.

SYNOPSIS

Ayanda, an assistant, is sent around South Africa to find people for a demanding director’s film. Like many creatives in countries that were previously disadvantaged, she wonders about longevity in this career and what it takes to reimagine the ways our stories have been told.

With the nature of South Africa being such a vast and in many ways disjointed country, many of the people she meets will live in cosmopolitan areas as well as remote parts of the nation. She has been tasked with finding the perfect cast in a place where people can be hard to find, and she gets taken on a journey where she learns as much about herself as she does about her country.

INTENTION

As I began to research for my next film, I realized I did not know much about what had shaped my own country’s cinema. As a result, I became less focused in the typical canon of films and found myself on a journey of rediscovery. The process for our film Where is the Healer? will involve referencing and highlighting some of the forgotten filmmakers in our country, and I wish to reclaim a moment in our country’s history and, through these characters, begin to reshape the canon of South African cinema for myself, and hopefully many more.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER & PRODUCER: TEBOGO MALEBOGO

Tebogo Malebogo is a South African writer-director who studied in NYU’s Graduate Film Program, where he was a BAFTA Scholar and supported with the Purin Foundation Scholarship. His first short, Mthunzi, screened at Locarno Film Festival, New York Film Festival, and SXSW, and was awarded the Special Jury Prize at AFI Fest. His second film, Heaven Reaches Down to Earth, screened at New Directors/New Films, Clermont-Ferrand, Frameline, and Blackstar. His films have been curated on Le Cinéma Club, Vimeo Staff Picks, One Story Up, and MUBI.

Tebogo is an alumnus of Berlinale Talents, Atlas Workshops, and New York University’s Hear Us initiative. In 2022, he was selected as a recipient of San Francisco Film Festival’s Rainin Screenwriting Grant for his feature film debut, currently in development.

He is passionate about narratives that reimagine and expand on South African cinema and its possibilities.



PRODUCER: PETRUS VAN STADEN

Petrus van Staden is a South African filmmaker that has worked between New York, Cape Town and Dar es Salaam. In 2019 he co-founded Vanishing Elephant driven by a desire to find a way to tell meaningful stories. Since then, he has produced films that have travelled to over 200 festivals, including Locarno, SXSW, Carthage, New Directors New Films and Clermont-Ferrand. He has also been part of projects selected for Sundance, IFFR, Rainin Film Grant and the Atlas Workshops, and he recently produced a project for UNESCO & Netflix.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Vanishing Elephant
Cape Town, South Africa
Info@theelephantvanished.com
www.theelephantvanished.com

FINANCERS:

SFFILM Rainin Film
Screenwriting Grant
(Development) - (United States)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$741,000



WOLFMOTHER

Genre(s): **Thriller, Drama**
Country: **France, Morocco**
Language(s): **French, Arabic, Berber**

LOGLINE

In the North of Morocco, Tangiers smuggler Amira sees the rise of the most violent of her two sons, Assil, in the world of cannabis drug lords throw her family in the pits of tragedy.

SYNOPSIS

Amira Ouazzani, a cigarette smuggler, is the mother of inseparable brothers Assil and Dollar. Assil draws the attention of Mountassir, a cannabis drug lord: he brings the Ouazzanis to the Rif Mountains where they discover his feudal and violent world. Assil quickly becomes close friends with the baron’s Spanish partner Saval. The Spaniard meets Amira, a love is born... but Assil’s hubris his gets violently punished by Mountassir. Vexed, Amira hatches a plan to replace the old baron: the Ouazzanis raise an army of cannabis peasants, the Hashishins, and take the Rif an epic assault that costs Dollar’s life. Broken by his brother’s death, hunted by the law and exiled in Marbella, the new Emir of the Rif plummets into anger and isolation. Assil opposes Amira’s marriage to Saval: invited to their wedding, he unexpectedly kills the groom before his mother’s eyes, shooting the Hashishin’s female leader Batoul in the process. In prison, Assil is given an emperor’s welcome by the other inmates. But his former close guard surround him in the crowd: Assil dies a Caesar’s death, stabbed by his Hashishins. Heartbroken, unbroken, Amira outlives all of her men and takes over the direction of the traffic.

INTENTION

Morocco’s number one industry is illegal. Cannabis trafficking is nonetheless a daily reality and for many Moroccans, the only refuge of a scorned ambition, often the only way of reaching that Spanish shore taunting you only 14 km away.

WOLFMOTHER is equally inspired by actual Tangerine drug lords and by ancient Greek tragedies. Like my first feature and short films, my aim here is to channel Moroccan realities into universal stories in a cinematic and subversive way: my filmmaker’s gesture is claiming my right to mythology, imagination and style. Not describing reality. I believe in fiction, in composing new object and modernizing ancient ones like izran, the Rif’s old war poem art form. My Mohawk- wearing Hashishins are equally the children of Michael Mann’s Mohicans and of Abdelkrim’s Riffian freedom fighters. My Morocco is a land of fiction filled with visions of cinema: everything screams western in the Rif, from the kif fields hidden in the mountains to the weathered faces of shotgun-bearing peasants. Tangiers is haunted by films noirs from its dark, yellowy-lit alleys and dive bars to the double-edged humor of its crooked cops. Tragedy always looms in the background, and that is the reality I most want to capture.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR: ISMAËL EL IRAKI

Born in Morocco in 1983, Ismaël EL IRAKI started directing at La Fémis with his short films CARCASSE, an Afrofuturist political tale (Short Film Corner Award, Cannes) and HARASH, a Casablanca-set thriller (Directing and Jury Award, Clermont-Ferrand). From his early work he claims the right to imagination and style as a North-African filmmaker, far from the naturalistic treatment of social issues that often characterizes the cinema of the region.

El Iraki started a live music filming company in Paris, made cover art for rock bands as well as a video installation for the Venice Art Biennale. His first feature ZANKA CONTACT premiered in the 2020 Venice Mostra’s Official Selection: it’s a genres movie (plural) set in Casablanca that mixes rock flick, love story, western and neo-noir which won its lead Khansa Batma the Orizzonti best actress Lion. The film opened in France in 2021 after a long festival career: Cinemed Montpellier (Jury Prize), London, Busan, Geneva, Karlovy-Vary, Louxor (Best Film), Sao Paulo, Sarlat, Music & Cinema Aubagne (Director’s Prize), Shanghai, Cabourg, Annonay (Best Film)... and most recently the Grand Prix and best actress awards at the 2022 Tangiers National Film Festival.



PRODUCER: DAVID GRUMBACH

David Grumbach is an entrepreneur and veteran film producer with over 15 years’ experience specializing in European co-productions and distribution. He owns BAC Films since 2013, one of the leading French sales agents, financiers, & distributors which has won 10 prestigious Palme d’Or awards from the Cannes Film Festival. He is financing as producer or distributor or sales agent around 12 films per year.



PRODUCER: ALEXIS HOFMANN

Alexis Hofmann is gratued in Modern Literature, History of Cinema and from La Fémis. After working for the Centre National de la Cinematographie (CNC), he joined Haut et Court, and then Memento Films, working in the programming and marketing departments for each. He joined BAC FILMS in 2006, as a programmer and then became marketing project manager for the company. Alexis oversees acquisitions for BAC FILMS since 2014. Since 2020 is developing several productions (feature films and tv series) beside David Grumbach.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

BAC Films Production
9 rue Pierre Dupont
75010 PARIS, France
+33(0)6.88.06.86.30
a.hofmann@bacfilms.fr

FINANCERS:

BAC Films (France); Centre du Cinéma Marocain (Morocco); Instituto de la cinematografia y de las artes audiovisuales (ICAA) and Tax Credit (Spain); Screen Flanders and Tax Credit (Belgium); Red Sea Fund (Saudi Arabia)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$3,646,589

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$500,000



YUNAN

Genre(s): **Drama**
Country: **Syria, Palestine, Germany, France, Italy**
Language(s): **German, Arabic**

LOGLINE

An exiled Arab author travels to a remote island in Germany to commit suicide. There he meets an old lady who incites a reawakening of his desire in life..

SYNOPSIS

After being granted asylum in Germany, a renowned Arab author is not allowed to return home. Tired and embittered of his life in exile, he sets off in search of a place to kill himself. And when he rumbles into a remote Island deep in the North Sea, Valeska, the kindly older woman who takes him in, is quick to tell that he intends to commit suicide. Yet, as days roll by, he finds himself drawn out of his depression due to Valeska’s unexpected motherly care and the nature of the island which reawakens his desires and inspire him to give life a second chance.

INTENTION

Yunan is not only a story of an individual sentimental longing or a subsequent return home, but a fable about human fate. The film will expand on the theme of estrangement of the individual, dealing with the distances that open up relentlessly as we exile. Between the unforgettable past and the unattainable future, about loneliness and depression, and particularly the kind of depression suffered by those who choose feelings they cannot bear and get stuck in the depths of their despair.

I have in mind an unconventional, visually striking film shot between Hamburg, Langeneß island (Schleswig-Holstein) and a valley somewhere in the Middle East (We believe it could be found in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). The cinematic approach will essentially deal with the value of space within time, showing a courageous, non-conformist hero who’s experiencing an existential crisis, thus hopelessly overwhelms his surroundings. A man possessed by nostalgia that he forgets his actual past.

The film strives to anatomize the untold perspective about life in transit and the refugee situation in modern Europe. Grappling with its allegorical nature, the aim is to balance these two impulses in telling a story with an existential, theological layer that mimics the course of the human soul.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR: AMEER FAKHER ELDIN

Ameer Fakher Eldin is a Syrian writer and director based in Germany. He was born in Kyiv, Ukraine, in 1991 to Syrian parents from the occupied Golan Heights. His debut film ‘The Stranger’ premiered at the 78th Venice International Film Festival (Giornate Degli Autori), where it won the Edipo Re Award and was selected as Palestine’s official entry for Best International Feature Film at the 94th Academy Awards, followed by great acclaim at 43rd Cairo International Film Festival receiving two awards: The Prize for Best Arab Film in the festival and the Shadi Abd El Salam Prize for Best Film in the International Critics Week Competition.



PRODUCER: DOROTHE BEINEMEIER

Red Balloon Film/Dorothe Beinemeier produces children and family entertainment and international arthouse films and drama series, focusing on emerging talent. Dorothe is the German co-producer of FRANCE by Bruno Dumont, starring Lea Séydoux which unspooled in Cannes Festival, Official competition 2021. Together with Palestinian production company Fresco Films she is producer of Palestinian Academy Awards entry THE STRANGER by Ameer Fakher Eldin which premiered in Venice at Giornate degli Autori 2021 and won Best Director and Best Film at Cairo Internal Film Festival 2021.

Her drama series “Sunshine Eyes”, by Maria von Heland, was entirely produced during the pandemic in 2020 , premiered in March 2022 in the Panorama Competition during acclaimed series festival SERIESMANIA in Lille and was awarded with the Jury Price. Dorothe is member of Ateliers du Cinéma Européen (ACE 21) and EAVE (2017) both training programmes for selected European producers.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Red Balloon Film GmbH
Behringstraße 16B
22765 Hamburg, Germany
+49 40 500 90 808
hello@redballoon-film.de

CO-PRODUCER:

Les Films du Veyrier (France);
Intramovies (Italy); Fresco Films
(Palestine)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$3,291,300

FINANCERS:

Red Balloon Film Own Investment (Germany); Les Films du Veyrier, Own Investment (France); MOIN Film Fund Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein (Germany); MFA+FilmDistribution e.K. (Germany); Intramovies Worldsales (Italy); MAD Sales and Distribution (Egypt)

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$659,264



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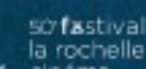
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BANEL E ADAMA

Genre(s): **Drama**
Country: **France, Senegal, Mali**
Language(s): **Peul**

LOGLINE

Banel and Adama live in a remote village in northern Senegal, and they are destined to love each other with an absolute love. But where they live, there is no room for passion, even less for chaos.

SYNOPSIS

Banel (19) and Adama (17) live in Fouta, an isolated region in the north of Senegal. This is the only world they know: the sweltering sun, the stifling heat, the burning sand beneath their feet, but also their family - with its traditions and customs. Outside, nothing exists. To love, to live, to want: these feelings don't count where they're from. Fallen from the sky in the wrong place, these two exceptional beings are, however, destined to love each other with an absolute love.

They have a dream: to leave the family home and live in abandoned houses located on the outskirts of the village. But the elders don't agree: Adama must become the village chief and stay with his family. So this dream becomes their fight. The fight of a lifetime.

INTENTION

My stories often revolve around the same theme: heroines in search of a world where it would be possible to be themselves. But how to assert one's individuality in a society that never stops crushing us?
With Banel e Adama, I wish to stimulate the imagination and offer another view of Africa. I want to stage a passionate and tragic love story full of references to African legends, to the apocalypse, to religions... While writing, I understood that this story had to unravel in a mystical chaos provoked by the resistance of the young couple. This is how the codes of magic realism imposed themselves on me.

I imagine a rather short film, carried by a mise en scène that evolves with the characters. In the first part, longshots constructed like paintings that underline the languor of the bodies and the ambient harmony. But the more Banel's madness grows, the more nature is disrupted, the more we evolve towards sharp shots.
If I want Banel e Adama to be a timeless tale, it is also a tragedy anchored in a real society: its two heroes will try to live the way they want to... until their loss.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: RAMATA-TOULAYE SY

After completing a Master's degree in Performing Arts with a specialization in Cinema at Paris Nanterre University and a year at the French Cinema Conservatoire Libre, Ramata-Toulaye Sy joined the Screenwriting Department in 2011, from which she graduated in 2015. She has worked as a screenwriter on various feature films, including Sibel, released in March 2019 and directed by Cagla Zencirci and Guillaume Giovanetti (Locarno Film Festival 2018) and on Notre-Dame du Nil by Atiq Rahimi (Crystal Bear Award at the 2020 Berlinale, selected at Toronto 2019).

French Senegalese, Ramata-Toulaye works between Dakar and Paris. In 2020, she directed her first short-film, Astel, which was awarded in Toronto, FIFF Namur, Dakar Court, Odense, Clermont-Ferrand, and selected in more than 50 festivals including the Red Sea Film Festival. Astel is part of the César Official Selection 2023.

Banel e Adama is her first feature film.



PRODUCER: MARGAUX JUVÉNAL

Margaux Juvénal is a graduate of Sciences-Po Paris and of French film school La fémis. She has produced around twenty shorts, presented at Locarno, Berlinale, Clermont-Ferrand, Premiers Plans Angers, New Directors/ New Films... She worked as a production manager and junior producer for several years before creating the company Take Shelter with Simon Bleuzé and Alexis Genauzeau in 2020, thanks to the Lagardère Foundation Producer Grant. There, she produces and co-produces several films, including Ramata-Toulaye Sy's and Halima Ouadiri's first feature films.



PRODUCER: MAUD LECLAIR-NÉVÉ

Maud Leclair Névé is a graduate of the ESCP Business School and has been working in film and audiovisual financing for 25 years. After building her experience in different SOFICA and specialized credit institutions, she created Roscoff, a financial and strategic consulting firm specialized in cultural industries, in 2012. At the same time, she collaborated with her husband Éric Névé in the development of La Chauve-Souris and in the creation of their production company in Senegal, Astou Films, and then Astou Production with Souleymane Kébé. Since Éric Névé passed away, she keeps on carrying projects and productions in their different companies.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

LA CHAUVE-SOURIS
32 rue Washington
75008 PARIS , France
info@lachauvesouris.eu
+33 1 44 83 02 27

TAKE SHELTER
1 boulevard de Châteaudun
45000 ORLÉANS, France
margaux@takeshelter.eu
+33 6 20 25 04 67

CO-PRODUCER:

Astou Production (Senegal); Astou Films (Senegal);
DS Productions (Mali)

FINANCERS:

CNC (France); ARTE France Cinéma (France); Canal + (France);
Ciné + (France); Canal+ International (France); TV5 Monde (France);
Cinémage (France); OIF (France); Jeune Création Francophone
(Burkina Fasso); FOPICA (Senegal); Tandem (France); BFF (Belgium)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$1,948,514

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$1,572,600



CONCRETE LAND

Genre(s): **Observational Documentary**
Country: **Jordan**
Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

An intimate portrait of Bedouin family of three generations, in its struggle to hold on to its traditional life under the pressures of urbanization. Their only wish is to stay together, with their loyal yet eccentric pet sheep, Badrya, firmly by their side.

SYNOPSIS

The Palestinian Bedouins, Al Najar family, have lived as Bedouins for three generations in exile in the outskirts of Amman City, Jordan. For 30 years, they have lived in makeshift tents with their different animals on land they don’t own.

Abuawad is the family’s shepherd grandfather. His son, Awad, is the family’s breadwinner and a loving father to his daughter, Eman, who is a sweet young girl coming of age. In recent years, the area has transformed into a high-class neighborhood. Their quiet Bedouin life is turned upside down when construction starts to creep up on them.

Their new neighbors are focused on kicking them out of the area in order to “clean up” the neighborhood. When one neighbor files a complaint against the family with the local government, the threat becomes a reality.

The Najars are in a dire situation. They have conflicting inner desires, and the tension between them and their new neighbors is rising. With no governmental policies to protect them, now Awad faces the reality of having to move to a new area away from urbanization, restarting their bedouin life and sacrificing Eman’s future.

INTENTION

For hundreds of years, Bedouin nomads have lived and prospered in Jordan. Due to the inevitability of urban life and the lack of laws that protect indigenous communities, nomadism is in constant decline all over the world. That way of living is on a steady path toward extinction. Concrete Land, is an intimate look into the complex dynamics of a close-knit Bedouin family and their pet sheep as they navigate the increasing hostility they face from their non-nomadic neighbors. I intend to allow audiences to connect with characters who, at first glance, may seem very unfamiliar and show that there’s a universal inevitable human need for one another, regardless of cultural differences.

This is a film about the loss of identity, familial bonds, coming of age, racism, and gentrification. These issues are highlighted through the intersection of all of these themes, through the family’s interaction with themselves and with their surrounding society..

The central dilemma of the film’s characters is one we can all relate to. How much do we hold on to our traditions and how much do we engage in the modern world? It’s a universal aspect that we can all recognize and identify with.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-PRODUCER: ASMAHAN BKERAT

Asmahan Bkerat is a Palestinian-Jordanian documentary filmmaker. Bkerat’s first short documentary “Badrya” won the Jury Prize for Best MiniDoc at the Sebastopol Documentary Film Festival. She is currently working on her first feature-length documentary “CONCRETE LAND”. She is an alumnus of Sundance, IDFA, DFI, SDI, The Whickers, The American Film Showcase, Cannes Docs in progress, Hot Docs, Doc Edge, AIDC and the RFC.



WRITER-PRODUCER: BAN MARAQA

Ban Maraqa is a Palestinian and Jordanian documentary filmmaker. She began her career with a bachelor’s degree in animation and computer graphics, working on Disney’s “Alladin” and other films. She was the art director of i-Mystro educational platform, but after attending the Scottish Documentary Institute’s documentary seminars, she decided to pursue a career as a documentary writer/producer. She is now working on the feature-length documentary “Concrete Land”.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Kayan productions
Dejlah St. Bldg. No.3,
Amman, Jordan
+962 799331449

FINANCERS:

IDFA Bertha Fund (The Netherlands); Jordan Film Fund (Jordan); Doha Film Institute (Qatar); AFAC (Lebanon); HotDocs Cross Currents (Canada); Sundance Documentary Fund (USA); INMAT Foundation (USA); Al-Mawared (Lebanon)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$380,400

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$186,900



HOUNDS

Genre(s): **Drama**
Country: **France, Morocco, Belgium**
Language(s): **Darija (Moroccan Arabic)**

LOGLINE

In the working-class suburbs of Casablanca, father and son Hassan and Issam, struggle to survive from day to day. They get by on small-time deals and running errands for local gangs until one night; they are asked to carry out an abduction.

SYNOPSIS

In the working-class suburbs of Casablanca, Hassan and Issam, father and son, are trying to make ends meet, doing odd jobs for a local mobster.

One night, a man they were meant to kidnap accidentally dies in the trunk of their car. Hassan and Issam find themselves with a corpse to dispose of. Thereby begins a long night roaming the seedier parts of the city.

INTENTION

HOUNDS tells the story of Hassan and Issam, father and son. Their assignment takes us on a desperate journey across the city in a sort of urban road movie. The action takes place over the course of one night, from sunset to sunrise, which makes it easier to enact absurd, excessive or dreamlike situations. Their oppressive nocturnal escapade depicts the world of the underprivileged, people living by their wits on the margins of society, sometimes alongside abundant wealth. Rejects, who, having nothing more to lose, at times resort to violence or even to a form of bestiality. The story is also that of a father-son relationship. Caught in an unfathomable spiral, Hassan and Issam confront one another but also become aware of the almost indestructible bond that unites them.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: KAMAL LAZRAQ

Kamal Lazraq is a Moroccan director born in 1984 in Casablanca. He graduated from La Femis in Paris and his graduation film, DRARI, won the second prize of the Cinefondation at the Cannes Film Festival, and the Grand Prize for short films at the Entrevues Festival in Belfort (France). In 2014, his short film THE MAN WITH A DOG, produced by Barney Production, was awarded worldwide. HOUNDS is his first feature film.



PRODUCER: SAÏD HAMICH BENLARBI

Graduate from La Femis and winner of the Lagardère Foundation Prize, Saïd Hamich Benlarbi is a French-Moroccan director and producer. He founded Barney Production in Paris in 2009 and Mont Fleuri Production in Casablanca in 2013. Saïd Hamich Benlarbi collaborated with filmmakers such as Philippe Faucon (Harkis), Nabil Ayouch (Much Loved), Meriem Ben’Mbarek (Sofia), Clément Cogitore (The Wakhan Front) or Faouzi Bensaïdi (Volubilis, Deserts). He is currently producing the first films of Steve Achiepo (Slumlord: release in 2023), Kamal Lazraq (Hounds: in shooting) and Camille Lugan (The Book of Joy: in preparation).

PRODUCTION COMPANY:
MONT FLEURI PRODUCTION
23 rue Jean Jaures Gauthier
Casablanca, Morocco

CO-PRODUCER:
Barney Production (France);
Beluga Tree (Belgium)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:
\$1,650,000

FINANCERS:
Aide aux cinémas du monde du CNC et de l'Institut Français (France); Fondation GAN (France); Fonds images de la Francophonie de L'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (France); Doha Film Institute (Qatar); AFAC - Arab Fund For Arts And Culture (Lebanon); Sofica Cinémages 17 (France); Ad Vitam (France); Charades (France for France, Morocco and Belgium); Fonds Wallonie Bruxelles (Belgium); Tax Shelter (Belgium); Avance sur recettes du Centre Cinématographique Marocain (Morocco)

FINANCING ACQUIRED:
\$1,135,000



JEWFRO

Genre(s): **Dark Comedy**
Country: **South Africa**
Language(s): **English**

LOGLINE

Toxic masculinity meets cultural appropriation in a parable of South Africa today.

SYNOPSIS

Barney, a Jewish Gen Z, lives alone in his dead Granny’s flat in Hillbrow, Johannesburg. He yearns for a friend or companion. When Barney discovers a young influencer on the internet, he dreams of being her boyfriend. Desperate for a connection, Barney begins to appropriate her culture in an attempt to make her fall in love with him. In his world, he’s popular and on track to becoming an internet sensation, but in reality his fixations take a disturbing turn. Through Barney’s journey we explore the confused, humorous and dangerous ways white South Africans deal with their racial insecurities.

INTENTION

JEWFRO is personal to me as a white Jew living in Africa. It is part of a lifelong fascination with the perplexing ways we play out our cultural insecurities by trying to be included in the African narrative. Barney’s presence is a last vestige. His decision to shed his cultural skin and assimilate to what he perceives as Black culture explores a desperate shift I have noticed in my generation. JEWFRO is the story of where we are headed.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER: JACK MARKOVITZ

Jack Markovitz (Born 1999) is a writer/director living in Johannesburg. He started directing films at the age of 13, editing documentaries about the nature of the country he was raised in, South Africa. The focus of his work is on identifying a new commonality and beauty in South Africa’s changing social framework. In 2014, he directed his first short film I’M NOT HERE (Winner Best Short Film in FutureWave shorts competition, Seattle International Film Festival). The film explored the loneliness and lack of identity of a young man obsessed with a girl he knows through the internet. In 2016, Markovitz directed his second short film, HIPHOPSTAR37 (Seattle International Film Festival, Durban International Film Festival). The film is about a young man that goes viral online after posting a video of himself dancing, in the hope of achieving fame and success as a hip hop dancer.

In 2022, Markovitz released his short documentary DARK SILENCE ON SPORTS AVENUE which portrays the life of Ian Barker, an elderly white man living in a working class neighbourhood. The film was nominated for a Cannes Lions Young Director Award and screened at the Encounters South African Documentary Festival.



PRODUCER: TAMSIN RANGER

Tamsin joined Big World Cinema in 2011, producing several independent features, documentaries, and television series, including Amil Shivji’s TUG OF WAR (TIFF 2021); hajooj kuka’s AKASHA (Venice Critics’ Week, TIFF 2018); Wanuri Kahiu’s RAFIKI (Cannes – Un Certain Regard, TIFF 2018); and Jenna Bass’ HIGH FANTASY (TIFF 2017). In documentary she co-produced Khalid Shamis’ THE COLONEL’S STRAY DOGS (Hot Docs, Durban 2021) and SILAS (TIFF, IDFA 2017) by Anjali Nayar & Hawa Essuman. Tamsin is an EAVE Producer’s Workshop graduate (2022) and Berlinale Talents Alumna (2019).



PRODUCER: STEVEN MARKOVITZ

Steven Markovitz has 25 years’ experience producing feature films, documentaries, short films, distribution and festivals. He co-founded Big World Cinema in 1994. He produced Wanuri Kahiu’s Rafiki (Cannes - Un Certain Regard, TIFF); hajooj kuka’s aKasha (Venice Critics’ Week, TIFF); Jenna Bass’ High Fantasy (TIFF, Berlinale); Winnie by Pascale Lamche (winner of Sundance Directing Award) and Silas (TIFF, IDFA). He also executive-produced the award-winning LGBTI Kenyan feature film, Stories of Our Lives (TIFF 2014, Berlinale Panorama 2015). He is the co-founder of Encounters South African International Documentary Festival, he founded the immersive media non-profit, Electric South and the pan-African documentary fund DocA.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Big World Cinema
76 Arnold Street,
Cape Town, South Africa
info@bigworld.co.za
+27 21 4220330

FINANCERS:

National Film and Video Foundation (South Africa); Private Investors (South Africa)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$90,500

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$60,500



THE BURDENED

Genre(s): **Drama**
Country: **Yemen, Sudan, Saudi Arabia**
Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

An average Yemeni family suffers from financial problems amid the economic collapse of Yemen due to the war. The family discovers that the mother is carrying a fourth child, and their lives turn into hell because of this news.

SYNOPSIS

The movie depicts the real story of a young couple, Ahmed and Isra’a, and their 3 children in Yemen, Aden, 2019. They lose their jobs and suffer from the economic crisis in Yemen. The movie starts with Isra’a finding out about her pregnancy which is shocking news to them as they opt to abort in a society condemning the act culturally and religiously. The parents can’t find medical assistance as a number of doctors turn them down, and they avoid the traditional way since Isra’a is Anemic which can pose a threat to her life. Ahmed asks Isra’a to seek the help of her close friend Dr. Muna. The parents meet with Muna who refuses to help out and warns Isra’a about committing the forbidden. As they reach a dead end, Ahmed manages to get a traditional midwife who can perform the abortion at home. Muna finds out and stops the action at the right moment, and decides to perform the surgery herself. The film ends while the family is on the way to the children’s school, and on the faces of the parents, there are features mixed between relief and fear of the upcoming burden.

INTENTION

Through our film, we intend to reflect the deteriorating economic situation in Yemen and the painful sacrifices that Yemeni families make daily to fight for survival.

The family in our movie represents a model for thousands of average Yemeni families that have fallen due to the war and its consequences to the poverty line. The film presents the daily suffering of Yemenis with poverty, lack of basic services and corruption through a true story that took place in Aden 2019.

Our film leaves the audience with a number of questions about the difficult decisions and the great sacrifices that harsh financial conditions impose on us. Is it cruel to sacrifice a fetus in the womb of its mother just because with his arrival the family will collapse economically in exceptional circumstances such as the one that Yemen suffers from?

Is fear for the existing children and concern for their future sufficient reason to sacrifice a fetus that has not yet formed? We were also keen, through our film, to document a number of important historical buildings, some of which are more than 100 years old, and which suffer from neglect and random demolition due to the absence of state control.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER & PRODUCER: AMR GAMAL

Amr Gamal (b.1983, Poland) is an independent Yemeni film and theater director. In 2003, he received the President’s Award in playwriting. In 2005, Gamal established Khaleej Aden Theatre Troupe, he has written and directed all the theater productions by the troupe since 2005. His play ‘Ma’k Nazel’ became the first Yemeni play to be performed in Europe (Berlin) after its big success in Yemen. In spring 2018, production began for his first feature film ‘10 days before the wedding’, the film premiered in Aden during the summer, becoming the first film to open commercially in Yemen since the last three decades. The film continued to be screened for over 8 months and became Yemen’s official submission to the Oscar in 2018. Amr Gamal lives and works in Aden, Yemen.



WRITER: MAZEN REFA’AT

Mazen Refa’at (b.1981, Russia), In 1999 Mazen joined the Faculty of Media, and he specialized in journalism. He worked as TV and News Editor for the Aden national TV channel until the channel was closed due to the war of 2015. His first short story was published in a local magazine in 2000, then his short stories continued to spread in a number of Local and Arab magazines and websites. His first screenplay was the TV series (The Fun Avenue) 2012 and then a year later he participated in writing the award winning TV series (Last Chance), in 2018 he co-wrote the movie (10 days before the wedding) with the director Amr Gamal, which both received the prize for the best screenplay in Casablanca Arab Film Festival 2019. The film itself became Yemen’s official selection for the Oscars 2018.



PRODUCER: MOHSEN ALKHALIFI

Mohsen Alkhalifi is a Yemeni-American Producer and TV Presenter. After becoming one of the first Yemeni influencers on Youtube in 2012, he began his professional career as a TV Presenter with a well-known Yemeni TV channel in 2016. Since then, he has presented and produced hundreds of episodes which gained him recognition in the media scene. In 2018, he collaborated with his friend ‘Amr Gamal’ to create the first Yemeni commercial movie to be shown in theaters: 10 Days Before the Wedding (Yemen’s official submission to the 91st Oscars 2018). The film was met with incredible public acclaim, consequently opening the door to the movie-making industry in Yemen.

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Adenium Productions,
Aden, Yemen
film@adeniumproduction.com

CO-PRODUCER:

Station Films (Sudan); Red Sea
International Film Festival (Saudi Arabia)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$500,000

FINANCERS:

President of Yemen Office / Prime Minister’s Office / Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Southern Transitional Council / The Local Council of the Governorate of Aden / Hayel Saeed Anam Group / Ministry of Culture / Ministry of Oil and Minerals / Ministry of Youth and Sports / Yemen Petroleum Company / Aden Independent Channel / Petromasila / Hadramout Culture Foundation /U.S. Embassy in Yemen / Bin Dowal Trading Group /Al-Ikhwah Engineering and Construction Co. Ltd. (Yemen); Council of American Overseas Research Centers (USA); Red Sea Fund (Saudi Arabia); Adenium Productions (Yemen); Station Films (Sudan); Karlovy Vary International Film Festival (Czech Republic); Malmo Arab Film Festival (Sweden); Culture Resource (Lebanon)

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$450,000



THE MOTHER OF ALL LIES

Genre(s): **Feature Documentary**

Country: **Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Egypt**

Language(s): **Arabic**

LOGLINE

A young Moroccan woman’s search for truth tangles with a web of lies in her family’s history. As a daughter and filmmaker, Asmae fuses personal and national history as she reflects on the 1981 Bread Riots, drawing out connections to contemporary Morocco.

SYNOPSIS

A young Moroccan director Asmae goes to her parents’ place in Casablanca to help them move out. Back in her family house, she starts to sort out all the objects of her childhood. At some point, she sees a photograph: children smiling in a kindergarten playground. On the edge of the frame, there is a little girl sitting on a bench, looking shyly at the camera. This picture is the only image of her childhood, the only memory her mother could give to her. But Asmae is convinced that she’s not the child on this picture. Hoping to make her parents talk, Asmae introduces her camera and plays with this intimate incident to talk about other memories that she doesn’t trust either. This photo becomes the starting point of an investigation during which the director questions all the little lies told by her family. Behind the walls of the house, there is also the neighbourhood. The local politician, Sir Abdelkader: is he the generous man offering hammam, meat and plums to the neighbourhood or a corrupt politician? Little by little, Asmae explores the memory of her own people – either real or surreal – together with the memory of her neighbourhood and country.

INTENTION

As a young moroccan director, I carry with me many unsolved questions. Some are personal, some are political and I want to ask them now, as both a filmmaker and a daughter, interacting with the closest people around me: my family. From these family relationships, I create a common space for the film, our house in Casablanca. A space full of complicity, love, hostilities and objections.

Investigating my childhood’s stories, I interact with my mother, my father and my grandmother. It allows me to question my memories, stuck between fiction and reality, between truth and lies. And I show how difficult it is to build one’s identity when every memory we own is doubtful. Little by little, this narrative choice will give me the opportunity to ask my parents about the 1981 “Bread Riots” and how they lived through this dark and unknown event of Moroccan History. In this sense, my goal is not so much to try to document the real story but rather to make a film about the multiplicity of points of view and plurality of interpretations that coexist within the same intimate space, regarding family and national history.

BIOGRAPHY



DIRECTOR-WRITER & PRODUCER: ASMAE EL MOUDIR

Asmae Elmoudir is a Moroccan director, screenwriter and producer, graduate of the Moroccan Film Academy and the French film school La Fémis. In 2020, she directed her first feature film, La Carte postale (IDFA, Durban Int. Film Festival, FIDADOC, etc.). In 2022, she was awarded the Netflix Equity Fund for her project The Mother of All Lies, currently in post-production; and was able to participate in numerous festivals and co-production markets with her projects and films (Venice Film Festival, Cannes Film Market, IDFA academy, IDFA summer school, IDFA project space, Hot doc’s Lab, Medimed Barcelona, Red Sea Souk, Doha lab producers, Pitching du Réel, Atlas workshops, JCC chabaka, etc.).

PRODUCTION COMPANY:

INSIGHTFILMS
15 Avenue ALABTAL N4,
Rabat Agdal, Morocco
+212661579359

CO-PRODUCER:

Figleaf Studios (Egypt); Aljazeera
Documentary (Qatar)

ESTIMATED BUDGET:

\$399,340

FINANCERS:

AFAC (Lebanon); IDFA Bertha Fund (The Netherlands); Hot Docs-Blue Ice Docs Fund (Canada); Doha Film Institute (Qatar); Atlas Workshops Prize (Morocco); International Media Support (Denmark); CNC Development Support FAIA (France); La Scam (France); Netflix Equity Fund (USA); Red Sea Fund (Saudi Arabia)

FINANCING ACQUIRED:

\$289,340

FEATURES



NEW SAUDI/NEW CINEMA (SHORT FILM SELECTION)



PROJECT MARKET



سوق
البحر الأحمر
RED SEA
SOUK

RED SEA
SOUK
TEAMS



ZAIN ZEDAN
SOUK MANAGER



MYRIAM ARAB
SOUK LEAD CONSULTANT

PROJECT MARKET TEAM



LICIA EMINENTI
HEAD OF SELECTION COMMITTEE,
CONSULTANT



SIZA ZAYED
PROJECT MARKET MANAGER



NADINE ARAB
PROJECT MARKET COORDINATOR



YOUSRA BANJABI
PROJECT MARKET ASSISTANT

WORK-IN-PROGRESS SHOWCASE TEAM



WIM VANACKER
HEAD OF SELECTION COMMITTEE,
CONSULTANT



MARIJA FRIDINOVAITE
WORK-IN-PROGRESS MANAGER



MAWADA SALLAM
WORK-IN-PROGRESS COORDINATOR

RED SEA LABS TEAM



RYAN ASHORE
HEAD OF RED SEA LABS



HANIA BAKHASHWAIN
RED SEA LABS OFFICER



RENAD ALLAF
RED SEA LABS COORDINATOR



KHAWLAH ALHALAWANI
RED SEA LABS COORDINATOR

TORINOFILMLAB TEAM



COSTANZA FIORE
TORINOFILMLAB PROJECT
MANAGER



VIOLETA BAVA
HEAD OF STUDIES



MICHEL KAMMOUN
HEAD OF SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT



TITUS KREYENBERG
HEAD OF PRODUCTION



Watch Out For Zuzu



Love in Karnak



REDISCOVER CINEMA GEMS IN A BRAND NEW GLOW

Cinematic troves from the Arab golden age of cinema have been restored for the Red Sea International Film Festival's audiences.

Watch Out for ZouZou (1972), starring the iconic Soad Hosny and Love in Karnak (1965), directed by the acclaimed Aly Reda are two films that have been recently restored by the Festival in collaboration with Arab Radio and Television Network (ART), the Egyptian Ministry of Culture's investment holding company for cinema, and the Media Production City in Egypt.

سوق
البحر الأحمر
RED SEA
SOUK

RED SEA SOUK SCHEDULE

PROJECT MARKET PITCHING SESSION
WIP SHOWCASE SCREENINGS

LOCATION:
RED SEA CINEMA

	SAT, 03 DECEMBER	SUN, 04 DECEMBER	MON, 5 DECEMBER	TUE, 6 DECEMBER
9:00 - 9:30				
9:30 - 10:00				
10:00 - 10:30	10:00 - 12:00 PITCHING SESSION LODGE PROJECTS	10:00 - 12:00 CONCRETE LAND by Asmahan Bkerat	10:00 - 11:30 JEWFRO by Jack Markovitz	
10:30 - 11:00				
11:00 - 11:30				
11:30 - 12:00			SOUK BADGES ONLY	
	SOUK BADGES ONLY	SOUK BADGES ONLY		
12:00 - 12:30			11:45 - 12:30 HOUNDS by Kamal Lazraq SOUK BADGES ONLY	
12:30 - 13:00				
13:00 - 13:30		13:00 - 14:00 BANEL E ADAMA by Ramata-Toulaye Sy		
13:30 - 14:00			13:30 - 15:00 THE MOTHER OF ALL LIES by Asmae El Moudir	
14:00 - 14:30				
14:30 - 15:00	14:30 - 16:30 VIDEO PITCHING SESSION SOUK PROJECTS	14:30 - 15:30 THE BURDENED by Amr Gamal	SOUK BADGES ONLY	
15:00 - 15:30				
15:30 - 16:00				
16:00 - 16:30				
16:30 - 17:00				
17:00 - 17:30				17:00 - 18:00 RED SEA SOUK AWARDS CEREMONY LOCATION SOUK CONFERENCE ROOM
17:30 - 18:00				
18:00 - 18:30				

PROJECT MARKET /WIP SHOWCASE
ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS

LOCATION:
SOUK INDUSTRY ROOM

	SAT, 03 DECEMBER	SUN, 04 DECEMBER	MON, 5 DECEMBER	TUE, 6 DECEMBER
9:00 - 9:30				
9:30 - 10:00				
10:00 - 10:30		10:00 - 12:00 ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS SOUK & LODGE PROJECTS	10:00 - 12:00 ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS SOUK, LODGE & WIP PROJECTS	10:00 - 12:00 ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS SOUK, LODGE & WIP PROJECTS
10:30 - 11:00				
11:00 - 11:30				
11:30 - 12:00				
12:00 - 12:30				
12:30 - 13:00				
13:00 - 13:30				
13:30 - 14:00				
14:00 - 14:30		14:00 - 16:00 ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS SOUK, LODGE & WIP PROJECTS	14:00 - 16:00 ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS SOUK, LODGE & WIP PROJECTS	14:00 - 16:00 ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS SOUK, LODGE & WIP PROJECTS
14:30 - 15:00				
15:00 - 15:30				
15:30 - 16:00				
16:00 - 16:30				
16:30 - 17:00				
17:00 - 17:30				
17:30 - 18:00				
18:00 - 18:30				

RED SEA 360°

IN ASSOCIATION WITH WINSTON BAKER

LOCATION:
SOUK CONFERENCE ROOM

	SAT, 03 DECEMBER	SUN, 04 DECEMBER	MON, 5 DECEMBER	TUE, 6 DECEMBER
9:00 - 9:30				
9:30 - 10:00			9:30 - 11:00 Post-Production At Netflix: A Case Study On Editing And The Power Of Sound And Music In Film	
10:00 - 10:30				10:00 - 11:00 Episodic Content: Changing The Game
10:30 - 11:00				
11:00 - 11:30				
11:30 - 12:00			11:30 - 12:30 The Business Of Investing, Funding, And Financing Into Content	11:30 - 12:30 Writing To The Budget Workshop By Netflix
12:00 - 12:30	12:00 - 13:00 Sales & Distribution: The Ever Evolving Landscape	12:00 - 13:00 Music, The Soundtrack Of Our Lives: Storytelling Across Multiple Platforms		
12:30 - 13:00				
13:00 - 13:30				
13:30 - 14:00				
14:00 - 14:30	14:15 - 15:15 Script To Screen How to Make High Quality Content in a Rapidly Changing Media Ecosystem; The Need to Diversify Content Genres and Platforms	14:15 - 15:15 International Co-production Strategies For Independent And Commercial Projects Discussing the Relationships Between Arab Countries, the US, and the European Union	14:15 - 15:15 Streaming Challenges: The Evolving Digital Landscape And What Is Next For Streaming Exploring the New Platforms that Are Making an Impact and How the Veterans are Competing	14:00 - 15:00 Storytelling In The Metaverse
14:30 - 15:00				
15:00 - 15:30				
15:30 - 16:00	15:45 - 16:45 A Special Presentation By Michael Uslan The Man Who Changed the Landscape of the Comic Book to Film Genre As We Know It	16:00 - 17:00 A Region Full Of Opportunities Dicussing The Postive Impact and Opportunities in The Arab Region and How to Build Your Team; Including Casting, Location, Crew, Funds, Commissions and More	15:45 - 16:45 Show Me The Soft Money: Incentives To Explore There Are Mulples Avenues to Subsidize Your Budget Through Funds, Rebates, Development and Support Programs	
16:00 - 16:30				
16:30 - 17:00				
17:00 - 17:30				
17:30 - 18:00				
18:00 - 18:30				

NETWORKING SESSIONS

LOCATION:
SOUK INDUSTRY ROOM

	SAT, 03 DECEMBER	SUN, 04 DECEMBER	MON, 5 DECEMBER	TUE, 6 DECEMBER
9:00 - 9:30				
9:30 - 10:00				
10:00 - 10:30				
10:30 - 11:00				
11:00 - 11:30				
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15:00 - 15:30				
15:30 - 16:00				
16:00 - 16:30				
16:30 - 17:00				
17:00 - 17:30	17:00 - 18:30 DEVELOPMENT	17:00 - 18:30 PRODUCTION	17:00 - 18:30 DISTRIBUTION	
17:30 - 18:00				
18:00 - 18:30				

VR PANEL

LOCATION:
RED SEA CINEMA

	SAT, 03 DECEMBER	SUN, 04 DECEMBER	MON, 5 DECEMBER	TUE, 6 DECEMBER
9:00 - 9:30				
9:30 - 10:00				
10:00 - 10:30				
10:30 - 11:00				
11:00 - 11:30				
11:30 - 12:00				
12:00 - 12:30				
12:30 - 13:00				
13:00 - 13:30				
13:30 - 14:00				
14:00 - 14:30				14:15 - 15:45 MEET WITH RED SEA VR DIRECTORS
14:30 - 15:00				
15:00 - 15:30				
15:30 - 16:00				
16:00 - 16:30				
16:30 - 17:00				
17:00 - 17:30				
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18:00 - 18:30				





THE RED SEA FUND: YOUR PARTNER FROM SCRIPT TO SCREEN

Visit our Booth [No. 1-7] and Learn
How the Red Sea Fund Can Help Your Film.

fund@redseafilmfest.com

Emad Eskander
Head of Fund

Salman Almusaad
Cycle Manager

Watch these films at RedSeaIFF22,
Book your ticket via www.redseafilmfest.com

ALAM

Director: Firas Khoury
Producers: Marie-Pierre Macia, Claire Gadéa, Naomie Lagadec

ASHKAL

Director: Youssef Chebi
Producers: Fares Ladjimi

DIRTY DIFFICULT DANGEROUS

Director: Wissam Charaf
Producers: Charlotte Vincent, Pierre Sarraf, Ziad Jallad,
Darina Al Joundi, Rifaat Tarabay

FRAGMENTS FROM HEAVEN

Director: Adnane Baraka
Producers: Adnane Baraka, Jean Pierre Lagrange

HANGING GARDENS

Director: Ahmed Yassin Al Daradji
Producers: Huda Al Kadhimi, May Odeh, Margaret Glover,
Mohamed Hefzy, Daniel Ziskind

HARKA

Director: Lotfy Nathan
Producers: Julie Viez, Alex Hugues, Riccardo Maddalosso,
Eugene Kotlyarenko, Lotfy Nathan, Tariq Merhab, Nicole
Romano, Maurice Fadida

OCTOPUS

Director: Karim Kassem
Producers: Karim Kassem, Johan Matton, Linnea Larsdotter

QUEENS

Director: Yasmine Benkiran
Producers: Amelie Jacquis, Jean Des Forets

SLAVE

Director: Mansour Assad
Producers: Lina Abdulaziz, Faisal Baltyuor, Abdulaziz Almowani,
Mansour Assad

THE LAST QUEEN

Director: Damien Ounouri, Adila Bendimerad
Producers: Adila Bendimerad, Patrick Sobelman

YALLAH, YALLAH, BEENAH!

Director: Mohammed Hammad
Producers: Nouhad Hachicho, Mohammad Jastaniah,
Mohammed Hammad

NOTE DOWN.

NOTE DOWN.

NOTE
DOWN.

قاعاتي العارضين في السوق مفتوحة من 10 صباحاً، وحتى 6 مساءً
SOUK EXHIBITOR HALLS OPEN FROM 10AM - 6PM



قاعة العارضين 1
EXHIBITOR HALL 1

قاعة العارضين 2
EXHIBITOR HALL 2

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1-1: ART | 1-15,16: NSTARS | 1-28: NEEDAFIXER | 2-1: RUM PICTURES |
| 1-2: CINEWAVES | 1-17: ROTANA | 1-29: MBC | 2-2: SAUDI AUTHORITY FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY |
| 1-3: HECATSTUDIO | 1-18: CINECREW | 1-30: VOX | 2-3: BLACKLIGHT |
| 1-4: ITHRA | 1-19: U TURN | 1-31: FILM ALULA | 2-4: ARABSTOCK |
| 1-5: NEW BLACK | 1-20: ARAB CINEMA CENTER | | 2-5: AMCHAM |
| 1-6: ROWAD MEDIA | 1-21: ADVANCERS | | 2-6,7,8,9: NETFLIX / BECAUSE SHE CREATED |
| 1-7: RED SEA SIGNATURE PROGRAMS | 1-22: AFRICAN CULTURAL AGENCY | | 2-10,11: TWOATOMS |
| 1-8: ARABIA PICTURES | 1-23: RAYS3D | | 2-12: KUT THE CRAB |
| 1-9: VIU | 1-24: CTRL PRODUCTION SERVICE | | 2-13: HAKAWATI |
| 1-10: TELFAZ 11 | 1-25: TREND VFX & POST-PRODUCTION | | 2-14: MANGA PRODUCTIONS |
| 1-11: MILLIMETER PRODUCTIONS | 1-26: MAD SOLUTIONS | | 2-15: THE SAUDI FILM COMMISSION |
| 1-12: BRITISH COUNCIL | 1-27: MUVI STUDIOS | | 2-16: FRENCH CONSULATE |
| 1-13: FULL SCREEN | | | 2-17: CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND |
| 1-14: NEOM | | | |

