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# A Space for New Voices in Cinema

9-14 March, 2018

Published by  
**Doha Film Institute**  
PO Box 23473, Doha, Qatar

Editorial  
**Nicholas Davies**  
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Translation  
**Translation and Interpreting Institute**

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Printed by  
**Al Jazeera Printing Press Co. LLC**  
Doha, Qatar

Print run: **500 copies**

**Doha, Qatar, February 2018**

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In the eight years since it was launched, the Doha Film Institute has established a vibrant creative ecosystem for Arab and international filmmakers to engage audiences across the globe through compelling stories. The Institute has developed a blueprint for talent development, providing creative professionals from Qatar and beyond with a unique platform to develop their personal narratives and shed light on the human condition through the powerful medium of film.

In the current global climate of separation and mistrust, cinema has a more important purpose than ever. Not only can it entertain audiences, but it can also unite and facilitate understanding between people, cultures and nations. Films have the power to inspire us to think and dream without limits and contemplate notions of right and wrong, taking us beyond ourselves and highlighting the unlimited potential of humanity.

Furthermore, ambitious emerging filmmakers can also be a source of national pride, earning international acclaim whilst inspiring and encouraging others to pursue their hopes and dreams.

At the heart of this transformation is the Doha Film Institute's focus on film education and skills development. The Institute's year-round programmes offer advanced, hands-on training in all aspects of filmmaking.

Creative education is most effective when it encourages us to explore and attempt to make sense of many of the challenges and issues in the world today. Developing their creative visions, taking a project from concept to reality, and being given opportunities to hear from some of the finest film-makers in the world gives new talents the confidence to push boundaries and blaze new trails.

Mentorship from accomplished film luminaries who can share insights and expertise that is not available in textbooks can provide aspiring filmmakers with the foundations for success. Qumra is the platform that enables these talents to take their professional and creative development in cinema to the next level. It brings people together from around the world who share the same passion and ambition to create truly remarkable films.

Now in its fourth year, Qumra opens doors to insightful discussions and mentoring sessions with master filmmakers – the Qumra Masters – and provides networking opportunities with professionals representing the full spectrum of the film industry. This enables delegates to refine their approach to cinema and build long-term industry relationships that will catalyse their growth.

Once again this year, along with acclaimed works by Masters, we have a selection of promising projects by Qatari talents and filmmakers from the Arab world. I am exceptionally proud of their achievements to date and confident that Qumra will support them in turning their ideas into reality, help them to fulfil their potential and accelerate their journey towards gaining the international recognition they deserve.

We are honoured to host some of the world's foremost film professionals here in Qatar, and I welcome you all to Qumra 2018.



**H.E. Sheikha  
Al Mayassa Bint Hamad  
Bin Khalifa Al-Thani**  
**Chair,  
Doha Film Institute**



**Fatma Al Remaihi**  
**CEO,**  
**Doha Film Institute**  
**Director, Qumra**

Over the course of three editions of Qumra, the Doha Film Institute has maintained and expanded upon its unwavering commitment to emerging talents, providing a dedicated space to realise their creative ambitions.

Qumra brings together emerging and accomplished film professionals to exchange insights and provide mentorship to support the future of storytelling. It has become a unique and important platform and project incubator for new voices and compelling stories in Arab and world cinema.

As an industry-focused event, the remit of Qumra is much wider for us at the Doha Film Institute. There are few industry events globally, and arguably none in the region, that explicitly focus on providing first- and second-time filmmakers the opportunity to set up their projects for success with the guidance of global industry experts and masters of cinema craft.

Fuelled by the ambition to support filmmakers in furthering their career paths, and to equip them with the skills that will help them navigate the global film landscape with confidence, Qumra has profoundly advanced the evolution of a new generation of cinema professionals. As Qumra projects continue to garner international acclaim, it is a source of great pride for us to see our vision of a vibrant film industry in Qatar and the region realised.

To date, more than 90 projects by as many creative talents have participated at Qumra, guided by 15 Qumra Masters who define contemporary cinema. Qumra would not be possible without the commitment of these Masters to the development of future storytellers. We are extremely grateful to this year's six acclaimed creative leaders, each of whom brings a unique cinematic identity that will inspire and enlighten participants far beyond Qumra.

We also acknowledge the indispensable participation of the industry experts who so generously contribute to this creative network that is committed to supporting the growth of the film industry in Qatar and the region.

This fourth edition of Qumra presents 34 projects, including nine from Qatar, that represent excitingly diverse perspectives. I thank the filmmakers for trusting us to guide their creative journeys, and look forward to being part of their creative growth.

The Doha Film Institute is committed to investment in our emerging talents and in the future of our creative industries, and I thank all the participants for their contribution to making Qumra an important inspirational part of our commitment and vision.

The painful truth is that we are passing through a historical period in which current menaces to justice, declared and undeclared wars that criminalise the innocent, are derailing our common sense, which would normally guide us in understanding what is happening to our world. In present times, faith in truth is in the eye of a faceless storm engineered by ignorant powers who thrive on half-truths.

It is therefore necessary to keep on seeking alternative voices, those witnesses to reality, who can restore history, and rescue it by all the pacifist means; by culture, art, and poetry; and by the fierce urgency to sow the seeds of grassroots cinema.



**Elia Suleiman**  
**Artistic Advisor,**  
**Doha Film Institute**

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## CULTURAL PARTNERS

### Katara Cultural Village Foundation

Launched in 2010, the Katara Cultural Village Foundation is considered Doha's cultural hub, encompassing an open-air amphitheatre, an opera house, a drama theatre and a series of well-frequented international restaurants. Katara presents a varied range of regular performances and exhibitions by international and local artists, orchestras, and opera and theatre companies. Katara is home to the Doha Film Institute's year-round offices and many Qatari associations; as well, several important visual and performing arts organisations have their offices in Katara.

### Sarajevo Film Festival

In 1995, towards the end of the four-year-long Siege of Sarajevo, the Obala Art Centre initiated the Sarajevo Film Festival with the aim of helping to reconstruct civil society and retain the cosmopolitan spirit of its city. Today, over two decades later, it is a trailblazing film festival with a special focus on the region of Southeast Europe that shines an international spotlight on the region's talent, their current films and future projects.

High-quality programming, a strong industry segment, and an educational and networking platform for young filmmakers attract the international film industry, film authors and media representatives to the event, along with a public audience of more than 100,000. Together, this makes it a leading film festival in Southeast Europe

In a territory of more than 140 million inhabitants, the Sarajevo Film Festival serves as a common platform for film businesses, setting the future standards for festival organisation, film promotion and presentation in Southeast Europe.

By partnering with the Doha Film Institute, we are connecting our region to the Arab world and opening up new co-operation possibilities that will ultimately enhance creativity and intercultural dialogue.



# Qumra Screenings

# Modern Masters

Qumra is proud to present the Modern Masters Series – a showcase of films presented by Qumra 2018 Masters Bennett Miller, Sandy Powell, Gianfranco Rosi, Tilda Swinton, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, and Andrey Zvyagintsev.

## Qumra Master Classes

Qumra Master Classes are sessions with each of the Qumra Masters, where they share their professional experiences and offer guidance to the participants of the event.

### Moderator:



**PHILIPPE AZOURY** is a film critic and essayist based in Paris. For the past 15 years, he

has written for 'Libération', 'Cahiers du cinéma', 'Les Inrockuptibles', 'Le Nouvel Observateur', and 'Vogue'. Since 2015, he has also been the editor-in-chief for the cultural section of the fashion and culture weekly 'Grazia'. He teaches at ECAL in Lausanne, and has published 10 books, among them essays about Jean Cocteau, Antoine d'Agata, Philippe Garrel, Jim Jarmusch, and Werner Schroeter, as well as Japanese photography. He is currently working on a book about Jean Eustache, which will be published at the end of this year.



**CAMERON BAILEY** is Artistic Director of the Toronto International Film Festival and the

overall TIFF organisation. He has been responsible for the vision and programming of the festival since 2008, and was a programmer for the festival for 11 years prior to that. Born in London, Bailey grew up in England and Barbados before migrating to Canada. He has also worked as a film critic prior to taking up his current position. Bailey has served on festival awards juries around the world, including in Beijing, Locarno, Reykjavík, Tokyo, and Zanzibar.



**RICHARD PEÑA** was the Programme Director of the Film Society of Lincoln Center and the

Director of the New York Film Festival from 1988 until 2012. At the Film Society, Peña organised retrospectives of many film artists, as well as major film series devoted to numerous national cinemas. Together with Unifrance, in 1995 he created Rendez-Vous with French Cinema, the leading American showcase for new French cinema. He is Professor of Film Studies at Columbia University, where he specialises in film theory and international cinema, and has served as a Visiting Professor at the Sorbonne, Beijing University, UNAM-Mexico City and the University of São Paulo. He also currently hosts WNET/Channel 13's weekly 'Reel 13'.



**BENNETT MILLER** is an Academy Award-nominated film director best known for his narrative features 'Capote', 'Moneyball', and 'Foxcatcher'. Miller made his feature debut in 1998 with the critically acclaimed and award-winning documentary 'The Cruise'. In 2005, he earned an Academy Award nomination for Best Director for 'Capote', starring Philip Seymour Hoffman in his Oscar-winning performance as Truman Capote. Miller's 2011 feature 'Moneyball', starring Brad Pitt, was also praised by critics, and went on to receive six Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture. Miller was honoured at the Festival de Cannes in 2014 with the Best Director prize for his most recent feature film,

'Foxcatcher', starring Steve Carell, Channing Tatum, and Mark Ruffalo. 'Foxcatcher' was nominated for five Academy Awards, including Miller's second nomination for Best Director.

# Moneyball

USA / English / 2011  
126 mins / Colour / DCP



Those two all-American impulses – capitalism and the love of baseball – are at odds when the Oakland A's lose to the New York Yankees in the 2001 postseason. Why? The Yankees' spend is about \$75 million more than that of the A's – which is to say, "poor" teams simply cannot compete. When the loss on the field leads to the loss of key players, A's General Manager Billy Beane, whose measure of success is winning the championship, has to devise a way to build a competitive team despite the meagre budget he has available.

Enter Peter Brand, a Harvard grad in economics, whose statistics-based theorising Beane harnesses to come up with an affordable team of undervalued players – an approach that might not only send a team to the top, but also revolutionise the way the American national pastime works. At least, that's the plan.

With 'Moneyball', director Bennett Miller takes real-life events and brilliantly melds the adrenaline-fuelled tension of high-profile sports with the emotional wallop of rooting for the underdog, as Beane's new-fangled approach faces stony resistance from the game's establishment. As the pressure mounts and the stakes get higher, the chess game behind the ballgame reaches fever pitch.

Director  
**Bennett Miller**

Producer  
**Michael De Luca, Rachael Horovitz, Brad Pitt**

Screenwriter  
**Steven Zaillian, Aaron Sorkin, based on the book by Michael Lewis**

Cinematographer  
**Wally Pfister**

Editor  
**Christopher Tellefsen**

Music  
**Mychael Danna**

Cast  
**Brad Pitt, Jonah Hill, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Robin Wright, Chris Pratt**

Production: **Columbia Pictures, Scott Rudin Productions, Michael De Luca Productions, Sidney Kimmel Entertainment, Specialty Films**  
Sales: **Sony**  
Distribution: **Park Circus**



Costume designer **SANDY POWELL** has won three Academy Awards, for her work on Jean-Marc Vallée's 'The Young Victoria' (2009), Martin Scorsese's 'The Aviator' (2004), and John Madden's 'Shakespeare in Love' (1998). She has also been nominated for Oscars nine times: for Todd Haynes's 'Carol' (2015) and 'Velvet Goldmine' (1998); Kenneth Branagh's 'Cinderella' (2015); Scorsese's 'Hugo' (2011) and 'Gangs of New York' (2002); Julie Taymor's 'The Tempest' (2010); Stephen Frears's 'Mrs Henderson Presents' (2005); Iain Softley's 'The Wings of the Dove' (1997); and Sally Potter's 'Orlando' (1992).

Powell has collaborated numerous times with Neil Jordan, on 'The End

of the Affair' (1999), 'The Butcher Boy' (1997), 'Michael Collins' (1996), 'Interview with the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles' (1994), and 'The Crying Game' (1992). She worked extensively with Derek Jarman, on 'Wittgenstein' (1993), 'Edward II' (1991), 'The Last of England' (1987), and 'Caravaggio' (1986). Her work can also be seen in Justin Chadwick's 'The Other Boleyn Girl' (2008), Christine Jeffs's 'Sylvia' (2003), Haynes's 'Far from Heaven' (2002), Mike Figgis's 'Miss Julie' (1999), and Anand Tucker's 'Hilary & Jackie' (1998).

In 2011, Powell was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire for her services to the film industry. In 2016, along with

its Oscar nominations, her work on Branagh's 'Cinderella' and Haynes's 'Carol' was nominated for BAFTAs and Costume Designers Guild Awards. Her more recent credits include John Cameron Mitchell's 'How to Talk to Girls at Parties' (2017), for which she received a British Independent Film Award nomination, and Haynes's 'Wonderstruck' (also 2017).

Powell recently completed work on Rob Marshall's upcoming 'Mary Poppins Returns', and is currently working with Scorsese on 'The Irishman', marking her seventh collaboration with the director, with whom she also previously worked on 'The Wolf of Wall St' (2013), 'Shutter Island' (2010), and 'The Departed' (2006).

PHOTO: BRIGITTE LACOMBE

# The Young Victoria

UK, USA / English / 2009  
105 mins / Colour / DCP



Our immediate notion of Her Majesty Queen Victoria is that of a stern, possibly grumpy, woman, as she appears in photographs from her later years – the very image of the prudery of the era named for her. But every woman was a girl once, and Jean-Marc Vallée and screenwriter Julian Fellowes begin their film with Victoria in her final months as the bubbly and charming heir presumptive, brilliantly finding the period when she went from girl to woman, princess to queen – and from a pawn on the chessboard of 19th-century European politics to the girl who would one day oversee the golden apex of the British Empire. And all the while, she is living one of the great love stories of recent times, as she marries Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha and prepares to become a mother.

As befits the period, the film is a perpetual feast of grand opulence – the brand-new Buckingham Palace being the primary location of the drama – and nowhere is this more apparent than in costume designer Sandy Powell's dresses, uniforms, suits, and regalia. Demure yet lavish, pitch-perfect for the time, her costumes fill the screen, deftly charging ballrooms and privy councils with regal formality, and drawing rooms and boudoirs with casual dignity.

Director  
**Jean-Marc Vallée**

Producer  
**Graham King, Martin Scorsese, Tim Headington, Sarah Ferguson**

Screenwriter  
**Julian Fellowes**

Cinematographer  
**Hagen Bogdanski**

Editor  
**Jill Bilcock, Matt Garner**

Costume Designer  
**Sandy Powell**

Cast  
**Emily Blunt, Rupert Friend, Paul Bettany, Miranda Richardson, Jim Broadbent**

Production: **GK Films**  
Distribution: **Eagle Films**

**Jean-Marc Vallée** is a French Canadian film director, producer, and film editor. After studying film at the Université du Québec à Montréal, Vallée went on to make a number of acclaimed short films, including 'Stéréotypes' (1991), 'Les Fleurs magiques' (1995), and 'Les Mots magiques' (1998). His feature-length film 'The Young Victoria' (2009), received three Academy Award nominations, while 'Dallas Buyers Club' (2013), earned him an Oscar nomination in the category of Best Film Editing. In 2017, he directed and executive-produced the acclaimed HBO miniseries 'Big Little Lies', winning a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Directing for a Limited Series, Movie, or Dramatic Special.



**GIANFRANCO ROSI** was born in Asmara, Eritrea, and attended university in Italy before emigrating to the United States in 1985 to study Film at the New York University Tisch School of the Arts. Following a journey to India, he produced and directed his first documentary, 'Boatman' (1993), which was selected for film festivals including the Locarno Festival, the Sundance Film Festival, and the Toronto International Film Festival.

In 2008, his first feature-length documentary, 'Below Sea Level' won the Orizzonti Award at the Venice Film Festival, as well as the Grand Prix and the Prix des Jeunes at Cinéma du Réel, the prize for Best Documentary at the One World Film

Festival in Prague, and the Vittorio De Seta prize for Best Documentary at the Bari International Film Festival; it was also nominated for the European Film Award for Best Documentary.

In 2010, Rosi directed 'El Sicario, Room 164', a film-interview about a killer-turned-informer from a Mexican drug cartel. Despite contrasting reviews, it won the FIPRESCI Prize at the Venice Film Festival and the Doc/it Professional Award for Best Documentary, and was named Best Film at DocLisboa.

In 2013, 'Sacro Gra', won the Golden Lion at the 2016 Venice Film Festival, becoming the first documentary to ever land the prize.

His most recent documentary, 'Fire at Sea' (2016), won the Golden Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival, as well as the European Film Award for Best Documentary. The film was also nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature.

# Fire at Sea

'Fuocoammare' / Italy, France / English, Italian / 2016

109 mins / Colour / DCP



The tiny Italian island of Lampedusa lies in the Mediterranean Sea, about halfway between the east coast of Tunisia and the island of Malta. Lampedusa's official population is just over 6,000; over the past two decades, approximately 400,000 migrants have landed here en route from Africa to Europe. Estimates fix the number of those who have died trying to make this perilous sea crossing during that period at 15,000.

Director Gianfranco Rosi's camera observes the parallel lives of Lampedusa's inhabitants - among them Samuele, a charismatic and mischievous 12-year-old boy struggling with a lazy eye; and the island's only doctor, whose tasks include treating migrants rescued from capsized transport vessels - and those who have made it this far in their quest to find a better life on the European continent.

While the Golden Bear-winning film has wonderful moments of lightness - Samuele's visit to a doctor complaining of breathing problems is a delight - the forbidding dark shadow of the contemporary migration crisis hangs heavy as the viewer is presented with deeply troubling images of suffering that will not soon be forgotten. Necessary and urgent, in the words of Berlinale jury president Meryl Streep, 'Fire at Sea' "demands its place in front of our eyes and compels our engagement and action."

Director  
**Gianfranco Rosi**

Producer  
**Donatella Palermo, Gianfranco Rosi, Roberto Cicutto, Paolo Del Brocco, Serge Lalou, Camille Laemlé, Martine Saada, Olivier Père**

Cinematographer  
**Gianfranco Rosi**

Editor  
**Jacopo Quadri**

With  
**Samuele Pucillo, Mattias Cucina, Samuele Caruana, Pietro Bartolo, Giuseppe Fragapano**

Production: **21uno Film Srl**  
Sales: **Doc & Film International**  
Distribution: **MC Distribution**



**TILDA SWINTON** started making films with the English experimental director Derek Jarman in 1985, with 'Caravaggio'. They made seven more films together, including 'The Last of England' (1987), 'War Requiem' (1989), 'The Garden' (1990), 'Edward II' (1991) – for which she won the Best Actress award at the Venice International Film Festival – and 'Wittgenstein' (1993), before Jarman's death in 1994.

Swinton gained wider international recognition in 1992 with her portrayal of the titular character of 'Orlando', based on the novel by Virginia Woolf under the direction of Sally Potter. She has established rewarding ongoing filmmaking

relationships with directors including Wes Anderson, Joel and Ethan Coen, Jim Jarmusch, Lynn Hershman Leeson, John Maybury, and Luca Guadagnino, with whom she made 'The Love Factory' (2002), the widely applauded 'I Am Love' (2009), 'A Bigger Splash' (2015) and the soon-to-be-released 'Suspiria'.

She has also worked with Bong Joon-ho on the international hits 'Snowpiercer' (2013) and 'Okja' (2017), and has featured in the Judd Apatow's critically acclaimed comedy 'Trainwreck' (2015), written by Amy Schumer; Scott Derrickson's Marvel Studios blockbuster 'Doctor Strange' (2016), and David Michod's 'War Machine' (2017). She received both the BAFTA and the Academy

Award for Best Supporting Actress in 2008 for Tony Gilroy's 'Michael Clayton'.

Swinton starred in and executive-produced Lynne Ramsay's 'We Need to Talk About Kevin' (2011). The film debuted in the main competition at the Festival de Cannes to huge critical acclaim and garnered multiple honours, including Golden Globe and BAFTA nominations for Best Actress.

PHOTO: BRIGITTE LACOMBE

# Okja

South Korea, USA / English / 2017  
120 mins / Colour / DCP



With 'Okja', director Bong Joon-ho continues the scathing critique of contemporary globalised society that led to the immense popularity of his previous films like 'The Host' (2006) and 'Snowpiercer' (2013). Here, the story of a little girl and her (gargantuan, genetically designed) pet pig immerses the viewer in what seems like a pleasant fairy tale – but just as we become comfortable, we are plunged into an intricate, extremely dark world of unbridled capitalism, flagrant corporate irresponsibility, slavery, and the wilful depletion of the world's natural resources – all packaged up in an ego-driven personal vendetta.

As the epicentre of the greed that is destroying the Earth, human dignity, and any sense of justice offered by the social contract, Tilda Swinton provides an unnervingly canny performance – her Lucy Miranda is a twisted, roiling, yet delicate personality made up of the injury of past slights, a blinding need to succeed, and a narcissism that has no bounds, all these nuances somehow contained in a caricature-like being who responds to publicity like a moth racing toward a candle flame.

Swinton's role – and the film overall – offer a complexity to be contemplated long after viewing the film; its indictment of favouring avarice over compassion is a heady, topical, and necessary message in today's world.

Director  
**Bong Joon-ho**

Producer  
**Bong Joon-ho, Dooho Choi, Dede Gardner, Lewis Taewan Kim, Jeremy Kleiner, Ted Sarandos, Seo Woo-sik**

Screenwriter  
**Bong Joon-ho, Jon Ronson**

Cinematographer  
**Darius Khondji**

Editor  
**Yang Jin-mo**

Music  
**Jung Jae-il**

Cast  
**Tilda Swinton, Jake Gyllenhaal, Ahn Seo-hyun, Paul Dano, Steven Yeun**

Production: **Kate Street Picture Company, Lewis Pictures, Plan B Entertainment**  
Distribution: **Netflix**

**Bong Joon-ho** was born in Daegu, South Korea, in 1969 and studied Filmmaking at the Korean Academy of Film Arts. He came to international attention with his second feature-length film 'Memories of Murder' in 2003; his third feature, 'The Host' (2006), was a massive hit worldwide. His other films include 'Mother' (2009), 'Snowpiercer' (2013) and 'Haemoo' (2014).



## APICHATPONG

**WEERASETHAKUL** is recognised as one of the most original voices in contemporary cinema. His six feature-length films, short films, and installations have won him widespread international recognition and numerous awards, including the Palme d'Or at the Festival de Cannes in 2010 for 'Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives'.

In 2002, his 'Blissfully Yours' (2002) took the Un Certain Regard Award at Cannes; 'Tropical Malady' (2004) won the Jury Prize in the Cannes Official Competition, and 'Syndromes and a Century' (2006) was recognised as one

of the best films of the previous decade in several 2010 polls. Working independently of the Thai commercial film industry, Weerasethakul devotes himself to promoting experimental and independent filmmaking through his production company Kick the Machine Films.

Lyrical and often fascinatingly mysterious, Weerasethakul's film works are non-linear, dealing with memory, and subtly invoking personal politics and social issues. He has also mounted exhibitions and installations in many countries since 1998, and is now recognised as a major international visual artist. His accolades include the Sharjah

Biennial Prize (2013), and South Korea's prestigious Yanghyun Art Prize (2014).

His installations have included the multi-screen project 'Primitive' (2009), acquired for major museum collections (including the Tate Modern in London and the Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris), a major installation for Documenta 13 in Kassel, Germany, in 2012, and, most recently, the film installations 'Dilbar' (2013) and 'Fireworks (Archives)' (2014), variously presented in one-person exhibitions in galleries in Kyoto, London, Mexico City, and Oslo.

# Footprints of Apichatpong Weerasethakul

86 mins / DCP



Apichatpong Weerasethakul's unconventional approach to making films has seen him win numerous awards and international acclaim. In this survey of some of his short films, some considerations that imbue his work are evident, among them the persistence of memory and cinema itself.

In 'Footprints', the mechanics of making films are explored, as tracking shots are followed by shots that the camera team at work, generating an explosion in the viewer's mind as the implications of the construction-behind-the-construction become apparent. 'A Letter to Uncle Boonmee' demonstrates the creation of narrative, as a repeated voiceover is followed by a discussion of how that voiceover is to be written to tell its story.

'Boonmee' also invokes memory of place, as it points to the violence that took place in its locale in the past. 'Emerald', too, considers memory as three ghosts tell the stories that led them to Bangkok's now-decrepit Emerald Hotel, once a haven of refuge for escapees of violence in Cambodia.

Emotionally impactful, politically astute, and at times very funny, these films also evidence Weerasethakul's understanding of the specific aesthetics of cinema – light and movement, sound and silence, what is seen and what is not. All in all, an excellent introduction to the work of a true master.

Director  
**Apichatpong Weerasethakul**

**The Anthem**  
'Pleng Sansem'  
Thailand, UK / Thai / 2006  
5 mins / Colour

**Emerald**  
'Morakot'  
Thailand, Japan / Thai / 2007  
11 mins / Colour

**Footprints**  
Thailand, Mexico / No dialogue / 2014  
6 mins / Colour

**A Letter to Uncle Boonmee**  
'Jopdmai Tueng Loong Boonmee'  
Thailand, UK, Germany / Thai / 2009  
18 mins / Colour

**Monsoon**  
Thailand / Thai / 2011  
3 mins / Colour

**Worldly Desires**  
'Kwam Songjam Nai Pa'  
Thailand, South Korea / Thai / 2005  
43 mins / Colour



## ANDREY ZVYAGINTSEV

was born in 1964 in Novosibirsk, and graduated from the acting programme at the Russian University of Theatre Arts (GITIS) in 1999, under the tutelage of Evgeny Lazarev. He later went on to take part in independent theatre productions and had a few small parts in films and television programmes.

In 2003, Zvyagintsev shot his first feature-length film, 'The Return'. A debut not only for the director but for the majority of the crew as well, the film was accepted for the main competition at the Venice Film Festival, where it won the Golden Lion. It also took the Luigi de Laurentiis Lion of the Future

prize for best first work, with the commendation: "a sublime film about love, loss, and coming of age."

His second film, 'The Banishment', was presented at the Festival de Cannes in 2007, when Konstantin Lavronenko became the first Russian ever to receive the festival's Best Leading Actor award.

Cannes also presented the international premiere of Zvyagintsev's third film, 'Elena', which took the Special Jury Prize in the Un Certain Regard section.

'Leviathan' (2014) was selected for the Official Competition at Cannes, and won the award for Best Screenplay. 'Leviathan' also

became the first Russian film since 1969 to win the Golden Globe for Best Foreign-Language Film; it was nominated for the Academy Award in the same category, and took the Best Film award at the London Film Festival.

His most recent film, 'Loveless' (2017) has been nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, and was selected for the Cannes Official Competition, where it won the Jury Prize at Cannes. It also went on to be named Best Film at the London Film Festival, making Zvyagintsev only the second director to have won that award twice.

# The Return

'Vozvrashchenie' / Russian Federation / Russian / 2003

106 mins / Colour / DCP



Inseparable, if occasionally quarrelsome, young Ivan and his elder brother Andrei are shocked and excited when their father, who has not been home for 12 years and whom the boys only know from a faded photograph, returns out of the blue. The morning after his arrival, Dad takes his sons on a fishing trip, but what might be expected to be an epic bonding experience turns out to be anything but.

As though trying to make up for lost time, Dad seems to throw every paternal trick in the book at his boys – from fondly supportive mentorship to brutal emotional manipulation. While Andrei naturally looks up to his father, Ivan is unconvinced and suspicious, and the dynamic among the trio becomes increasingly taut until inevitably it reaches a breaking point.

Director Andrey Zvyagintsev structures his film with clever precision to explore the psychology of its three characters – as the tension mounts, the narrative slows its pace, allowing the uneasy emotions that seethe beneath the surface of the drama to expand, drawing us into the anger, pain, resentment, guilt, and love that are the tragic result of abandonment.

Director  
**Andrey Zvyagintsev**

Producer  
**Dmitry Lesnevsky**

Screenwriter  
**Vladimir Moiseenko,  
Alexander Novototsky**

Cinematographer  
**Mikhail Kritchman**

Editor  
**Vladimir Mogilevsky**

Music  
**Andrey Dergatchev**

Cast  
**Vladimir Garin, Ivan Dobronravov,  
Konstantin Lavronenko**

Production: **Ren Film**

Sales: **Intercinema**

Distribution: **Kino International**

# Qumra Screenings

# New Voices in Cinema

A selection of acclaimed films made with the support of the Doha Film Institute's Grants Programmes and Filmmaking Labs.





Director / Screenwriter

**Kaouther Ben Hania**

Producer

**Habib Attia, Nadim Cheikhrouha**

Cinematographer

**Johan Holmquist**

Editor

**Nadia Ben Rachid**

Music

**Amine Bouhafa**

Cast

**Meriam Al Ferjani, Ghanem Zrelli,**

**Noomane Hamda, Mohamed Akkari,**

**Chedly Arfaoui**

Production: **Cinétéléfilms, Tanit Films**

Distribution: **MC Distribution**



Tunisian director **Kaouther Ben Hania** studied cinema in Tunisia and in Paris at La Fémis and the Sorbonne.

She has directed

several short films, including 'Wooden Hand' (2013), which had a lengthy and successful run on the international festival circuit. Her documentary film 'Imams Go to School' had its premiere at the International Documentary Festival Amsterdam in 2010 and was selected for numerous prestigious film festivals. 'Challat of Tunis', her first feature film, opened the ACID section of the Festival de Cannes in 2014. Her most recent film, 'Zaineb Hates the Snow', shot over years in Canada and Tunisia, premiered in the Official Selection of the Festival del Film Locarno in 2016, won a Golden Tanit at the Carthage Film Festival, and was named Best Documentary at Cinémed.

# Beauty and the Dogs

'Aala Kef Ifrit' / Tunisia, France, Sweden, Norway, Lebanon, Switzerland, Germany, Qatar / Arabic / 2017

96 mins / Colour / DCP



Mariam wants to have a nice night out, so she takes to the dancefloor at the benefit she has organised. She makes friends with Youssef, and they go for a walk. Then, she is savagely attacked by some policemen. Despite the trauma she has experienced, she is determined to obtain the medical certificate needed to sue her attackers. With this goal in mind, she finds herself in the absurd and exasperating situation of needing to obtain documentation for her case.

It seems no one, from doctors and nurses to police officers and cab drivers, has any sympathy for another person who is in distress; neither are they willing to show her the simplest kindness. Mariam cannot even go home: she has lost her purse, Youssef has no cash, and besides, the curfew of the dorm where she lives has come and gone.

'Beauty and the Dogs' is a deeply moving tale of a woman who, in the most undignified of situations, insists on maintaining her dignity and demanding some of humanity's most basic rights: the right to be heard, to expose the truth, and to see justice served.

# City of the Sun

'Mzis Qalaqi' / Georgia, USA, The Netherlands, Qatar / Georgian / 2017 / WP in 2017 Berlinale

103 mins / Colour / DCP



Imagined as a city of the future during the Soviet era, the once-celebrated manganese-mining town of Chiatura in Georgia is now all but abandoned, crumbling around those who still inhabit it. The film's title is perhaps ironic - this is no Disneyland, the famed network of cable cars notwithstanding. And yet, as anywhere, people live their lives and go about their daily business. There is joy here, and there are the usual challenges.

Zurab is a music teacher by day; he spends his spare time dismantling - with his hands and a sledgehammer, mind you - disused and decaying concrete silos, in order to sell the rebar as scrap metal. Archil works in the still-operational mines, but he has fallen in love with the theatre and wonders whether he would be better off quitting his job to spend more time acting. And two young sisters, living in malnourished poverty, train for the Olympics, their daily runs cheered on by supportive fellow citizens.

Rati Oneli's 'City of the Sun' takes us on a languorous tour of this place of faded glory, building a portrait of a city and its people that is comfortably familiar at the same time that it verges on otherworldly.

Director

**Rati Oneli**

Screenwriter / Producer

**Rati Oneli, Dea Kulumbegashvili**

Producer

**Jim Stark**

Cinematographer

**Arseni Khachaturan**

Editor

**Ramiro Suarez**

Production: **Office of Film Architecture**



**Rati Oneli** was born in Tbilisi. He lived in New York City from 1999 to 2014, when he moved to Georgia in order to make his documentary 'City

of the Sun'. He specialised in Middle East Studies and International Affairs at the Free University of Tbilisi and at Columbia University in New York. Currently, he is pursuing his PhD in Philosophy at the European Graduate School. In 2014, he produced and co-edited Dea Kulumbegashvili's 'Invisible Spaces', a short film that premiered at the Festival de Cannes. In 2016, Rati Oneli produced Dea Kulumbegashvili's second short film, 'Lethe', which had its premiere in the Directors' Fortnight at Cannes.

Director / Screenwriter

**Natalia Garagiola**

Producer

**Matías Roveda, Santiago Gallelli,  
Benjamín Domenech, Gonzalo Tobal**

Cinematographer

**Fernando Lockett**

Editor

**Gonzalo Tobali**

Music

**Juan Tobal**

Cast

**Germán Palacios, Boy Olmi, Lautaro  
Bettoni, Rita Pauls, Pilar Benitez,  
Diana Szeinblum**

Production: **Rei Cine**

Sales: **AlphaViolet**



Born in Buenos Aires, **Natalia Garagiola** graduated from the Universidad del Cine, where she later taught.

In 2004, she

obtained an MA in Screenwriting from FIA-UIMP in Spain. She also took part in the Experimental Film Lab at the Universidad Di Tella in Buenos Aires. Her videos 'Track' (2007) and 'Square' (2008) were selected for Videoformes Video Art & Digital Cultures. She has written and directed three short films: 'Rincón de López' (2011), released at BAFICI; 'Mares and Parakeets' (2012), which premiered in the Cannes Critics' Week, and 'Sundays', which premiered in the 2014 Cannes Directors' Fortnight. 'Hunting Season' is her first feature-length film.

# Hunting Season

'Temporada de caza' / Argentina, France, Germany, USA, Qatar / Spanish / 2017

108 mins / Colour / DCP



After his mother dies, 17-year-old Nahuel is shipped from Buenos Aires to the south of Argentina to live with his estranged father Ernesto, whom he has not seen in over a decade, for the three months until he turns 18. Nahuel's response to the loss of his mother is one of arrogant, sometimes violent defiance; his already troubled relationship with his father leaves them at odds. A hunting guide, Ernesto takes Nahuel out with his team, teaching him how to use a rifle and survive in the wilderness. As the young man learns to fit in with the locals, the rancour between father and son begins to fade and Nahuel comes to understand the intricacies of mature relationships and adult emotions.

Sidestepping the standard tropes of back-to-roots tales, with 'Hunting Season', director Natalia Garagiola takes a city boy to the country, where the familiar – family and teenage excess – are made strange (Ernesto's five rambunctious young daughters in particular are a far cry from what Nahuel is accustomed to). The mountainous expanse of wintry Patagonia proves the perfect locale for coming of age, as Nahuel is faced with death and mourning, love and sorrow, regret and hope.

# Taste of Cement

'Ta'm Al Ismint' / Syria, Lebanon, Germany, UAE, Qatar / Arabic / 2017

85 mins / Colour / DCP



The Lebanese Civil War ended nearly a generation ago, but it remains far from forgotten, stamped in the memories of those who lived through it and those who have heard their tales, and perhaps indelibly inscribed on the city of Beirut, which to this day is repairing its destruction, even as it slowly heals its emotional scars. In one of the universe's twists of irony, many of the labourers rebuilding and renewing the city are Syrian; as they work to help Beirut reach the sky, their own villages, towns and cities are being razed, and their people dig frantically through rubble to find casualties they hope are still alive.

Laid over this is the prejudice to which these Syrian workers are subjected – they sleep underground among a building's foundations and face a curfew of 7:00PM; they are effectively disallowed from participating in the society they are helping to renew. With compelling camerawork and intimate stories from labourers, director Ziad Kalthoum captures the mind-numbing routine of climbing ever higher to pour concrete, only to return to the bowels of the Earth when the day is done. But more than this, and harsher, 'Taste of Cement' obliquely asks painfully melancholy questions: Who will rebuild Syria? And when?

Director

**Ziad Kalthoum**

Producer

**Tobias Siebert, Eva Kemme,**

**Ansgar Frerich**

Cinematographer

**Talal Khoury**

Editor

**Alex Bakri, Frank Brummundt**

Music

**Sebastian Tesch**

Production: **Biddayat for Audiovisual**

**Arts, Basis Berlin Filmproduktion**

Sales: **Syndicado Film Sales**



**Ziad Kalthoum** is a Syrian filmmaker currently living in Berlin. In his first documentary, 'Oh My Heart' (2009), he portrayed a group of Kurdish

women who have chosen to live in a society without men. In 2012, during the outbreak of the Syrian revolution, he began working on his first feature film, 'The Immortal Sergeant', which premiered at the Locarno Festival in 2014. His latest work, 'Taste of Cement' won the Golden Sesterce for Best Feature Documentary at Visions du Réel in 2017.

## 1001 Days



**'Alef Yom Wa Yom' / Qatar / Arabic / 2017**

10 mins / Colour / DCP

Director: **Aisha Al-Jaidah**  
Screenwriter: **Aisha Al-Jaidah, Latifa Al-Darwish**  
Producer: **Ben Robinson**  
Music: **Mohammed Al-Mulla, Greg Johnson**  
Production: **Doha Film Institute**

'1001 Days' tells the story of the life of Sheherazade, the creative and heroic storyteller. Within a traditional fairy-tale structure, this animated short addresses eternal issues like sacrifice, equality and bravery, and considers how today's women deserve equal treatment and privileges. Night after night, Sheherazade fought for her life by crafting stories for the King. '1001 Days' imagines a story behind the famous fable, and a strong woman who fights for her independence, dignity and freedom.

### Director

**Aisha Al-Jaidah** is an illustrator and animator. She began her career in 2010 as a motion graphics artist at Al Jazeera Children's Channel. As a senior animation producer, she developed the first animated children's series created by a Qatari. Al-Jaidah received a scholarship to study animation and graduated from Kingston University London, an achievement that motivated her to launch her own animation production company. She hopes Blue Penguin Animation will be one of the first companies in Qatar to fully produce animation locally.

## Chaos Antidote



**Qatar / No dialogue / 2017**

5 mins / Colour / DCP

Director: **Hadeer Omar, Idris Elhassan**  
Cinematographer: **Idris Elhassan, Hadeer Omar, Pablo Iraburu, Miguel García, Jaser Alagha**  
Editor: **Idris Elhassan, Hadeer Omar**  
Music: **Mikel Salas**  
Production: **Doha Film Institute**

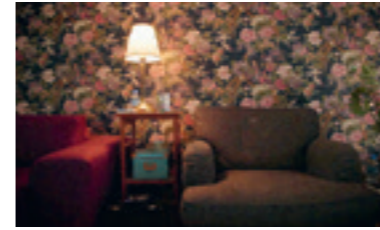
Through gorgeous superimposition, the ever-changing urban landscape of Doha under construction is dreamily contemplated in this wordless, wonderfully languid documentary essay. Images of cranes, rising towers and roadways in flux – constants in contemporary Doha's personality – create a striking, dynamic collage that is reminiscent of a day's wandering through Qatar's crown city. As morning becomes daytime and sunset leads to night, order is made of chaos and a sense of peace is imposed on the frenetic pace of progress.

### Director

**Hadeer Omar** is an Egyptian time-based media artist based in Qatar. Recently, her visual diaries were displayed at the 2020 exhibition at VCU Arts Qatar and at Calligraphies in Conversation 2017 at the San Francisco Public Library.

**Idris Elhassan** is an aspiring Sudanese filmmaker who has a passion for experimental and abstract material that explores domains such as value systems, science and spirituality, and is dedicated to making films that tackle these topics.

## Domestic Acoustics



**'Musiqa min Al Dakhal' / Qatar / Arabic, Malayalam / 2017**

13 mins / Colour / DCP

Director / Producer / Editor: **Majid Al-Remaihi**  
Cinematographer: **Hadeer Omar**  
Production: **Doha Film Institute**

'Domestic Acoustics' is an experimental endeavor that explores the overlap of domestic and creative spaces, and their relationship to the female artist. Portraits by Qatari artist Fatma Al-Remaihi are removed from storage; their movement and display, and oblique references to the artist through conversations with members of the household, quietly expose the layered relationship between artistic practice and life in the home.

### Director

**Majid Al-Remaihi** is a Qatari filmmaker and artist. He is interested in the practice of filmmaking as a tool for investigating the institutional and social purview of art in Qatar and the Gulf. He is also part of the artist collective Ab6al (with Abdullah Al Mutairi and Sarah AbuAbdallah), which explores the crossover of youth and ideas of development in the Gulf. He recently completed his first short film, 'Domestic Acoustics', through the DFI's Documentary Lab, mentored by award-winning filmmaker Pablo Iraburu; the film explores the scope of domesticity as a space for art and concealed life. Currently, he is working on another short documentary about the unravelling of art practices and their respective collections in Qatar.

## Embodiment



**'Tajseed' / Qatar / No dialogue / 2017**

5 mins / Colour / DCP

Director / Producer / Screenwriter / Editor: **Khalifa AlMarri**  
Cinematographer: **Khalifa AlMarri, Abdulaziz AlMarri**  
Music: **Chris Coleman**  
Cast: **Rawan Hussain**

In a desert where oil meets sand, a woman awakes at the top of a tangerine-hued dune. Rising, she gestures in the sunlight, as though inspiring the land about her to develop, grow and become all it can be. A poetic reflection of Qatar's becoming a sophisticated nation of wealth and influence while retaining its centuries-old traditions, 'Embodiment' journeys from ancient wilderness to contemporary metropolis, capturing the stunning beauty of both worlds.

### Director

**Khalifa AlMarri** was born in Qatar in 1992, where he has made several contributions to the fine art community. He is the director of 'Man of the House', which won a Made in Qatar Award at Ajyal in 2015 and was invited to the third GCC Film Festival in Abu Dhabi. AlMarri studied Mass Communications and International Affairs at Qatar University, and holds a diploma in Directing and Filmmaking from the New York Film Academy. He made 'Fragile' (2016) as part of a joint Doha Film Institute – La Fémis summer course in Paris.

## Language



**'Ma Ism hatha Al Lughah?'** / Iraq, Qatar / Arabic / 2017  
12 mins / Colour / DCP

Director / Producer / Screenwriter:  
**Mortada Gzar**  
Music: **Hussein Abdul Baqi, Ali Abdul Baqi**

Used to reading and printing Braille, a blind man in Baghdad becomes a giant and finds he can "read" the scars of his bombarded city just as he reads texts – and can send messages by creating scars of his own. Wonderfully detailed animation creates a strange, almost surreal world to house an elegant message of the need for communication to resolve conflict.

### Director

**Mortada Gzar** is an Iraqi novelist. His published novels include 'Paradise Broom' (2008) and 'Mr. Asgar & Akbar' (2011). 'God, Forgive Nadima!', his first short film, screened in competition at the Dubai International Film Festival in 2014.

## The President's Visit



**'Ziyarat Al Rais'** / Lebanon, USA, Qatar / Arabic / 2017  
19 mins / Colour / DCP

Director / Screenwriter: **Cyril Aris**  
Producer: **Valerie Martinez, Marc Fadel**  
Cinematographer: **Joe Saade**  
Editor: **Cyril Aris, Mounia Akl**  
Music: **Paul Tyan**

Cast: **Fouad Yammine, Nicolas Daniel, Najib Nassif, Walid Mounla, William Farhat, Mohammad Mounla, Mounia Akl, Siham Haddad**

In a small fishing town, Nino sells soap at his Sultan of Soap shop. When he received a highly confidential phone call informing him that the President of the Republic wants to visit to buy a lot of soap as part of his campaign to clean up the nation, he is not quite sure what to do... and lets the secret slip. With the cat out of the bag, the whole town gets involved in preparing for His Excellency's visit in this sly and clever satire.

### Director

Lebanese director and screenwriter **Cyril Aris** obtained an MFA from Columbia University. The last short film he produced, 'Submarine' (2016), was in the official selection of the Cinéfondation competition at the Festival de Cannes, as well as the Toronto International Film Festival, and won the Jury Prize at the Dubai International Film Festival. His short film 'Siham' (2013) won a Jury Award for Best Short at the Palm Springs International ShortFest. He is currently in post-production with his first feature-length documentary, 'The Swing'; his previous credits include the television series 'Beirut, I Love You' (2011–12) and the Yahoo web series 'Fasateen' (2012), as well as various other short films. Aris has taught Filmmaking and Film History classes at Columbia University, NHTI at Northwestern University, and Barnard College.

## Tshweesh



**Lebanon, Germany, Spain, Qatar / Arabic / 2017**  
27 mins / Colour / DCP

Director / Screenwriter:  
**Feyrouz Serhal**  
Producer: **Stefan Gieren, Felipe Lage Coro, Lara Abou Saifan**  
Cinematographer: **Bassem Fayes**  
Editor: **Maria Malek**  
Production: **Roummana**

Beirut, the day of the World Cup. A woman walks through the relatively quiet streets – people are indoors watching the game, or going about their domestic business. But there seems to be a disruption in the television signal, as isolated moments of mild chaos on the rooftops evidence. Then the still of the hot summer's day is torn apart by an air attack – another interruption to be absorbed, another minor irritation Beirutis refuse to allow to quash their spirits.

### Director

**Feyrouz Serhal** obtained her Master's degree in Film and Screen Studies from Goldsmiths College University of London, after having worked extensively as director and producer at some of the most prominent Arab television channels in the Middle East. She has also written and directed several independent short video works. Serhal is now the managing director of Roummana, a newly formed production boutique based in Beirut. She is currently developing 'I Am Here But You Can't See Me', her first feature film as a director.

## Qumra Projects

Twenty-four feature-length and eleven short film projects at various stages of production have been selected to benefit from the experience of the Qumra Masters, as well as bespoke mentorship and business meetings with international experts. The primary motive of this international gathering of creative film professionals is to contribute to the development of emerging voices in cinema, with a special focus on first- and second-time filmmakers.

## Development Feature Narrative

'Behind Closed Doors' by Hend Fakhroo

'Dead Dog' (working title) by Sarah Francis

'A Gaza Weekend' by Basil Khalil

'Khuzama' by A.J. Al Thani

'Noura Dreams' by Hinde Boujemaa

'The Unknown Saint' by Alaa Eddine Aljem

'The Voice of Amirah' by Khalifa Al-Thani

# Behind Closed Doors

Director / Screenwriter

**Hend Fakhroo**

**Contact**

Hend Fakhroo

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'Khalifa Labwab Lmoughlaka' / Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Drama

**Interests:** Coming of age, Mental Health, Social Issues, Women's Issues

**Six-year-old Leila wakes up one day to find her mother gone, with only her father to take care of her. After months of trying, the small family finally settles into an emotional equilibrium, only to have the mother suddenly return.**



Qatar. Six-year-old Leila wakes up one morning and finds out that her mother, Sara, has left. Leila becomes completely dependant on her father, Ali, especially for emotional support. Days turn into weeks, and Ali cannot take care of Leila by himself. He becomes compelled to hire Rosa as a live-in caretaker. Leila and Rosa quickly forge a strong bond, and the three fall into a comfortable routine, until one day Ali announces that his wife is coming back. When Sara left, she checked herself into a mental rehabilitation centre following a suicide attempt. Her return will threaten the well-being of the entire family.

**Hend Fakhroo**



**Hend Fakhroo** is a Qatari writer and director. She graduated with honours in 2005 from St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas. Her first short film, 'His Name' (2012), screened at various international festivals, including the Short Film Corner at the Festival de Cannes, the Doha Tribeca Film Festival, and the River Film Festival. Her second film, 'The Waiting Room' (2016), had its home premiere in two competitions at the Ajyal Youth Film Festival, and its international premiere, also in competition, at the Dubai International Film Festival. It was screened at the Festival de Cannes Short Film Corner, and was an official selection of the Beirut International Film Festival, as well as the Malmö Arab Film Festival. Fakhroo is currently developing her first feature-length film.

**Director's Note**

This film takes an intimate look at a family from three different female points of view, all centring around the father figure. It is important for me to show how different perceptions can affect a person's judgement, especially within an abusive marriage. The idea of making a film, and opening a discussion, about emotional and physical abuse is taboo in most of the world, let alone in Arab countries. It's time we took a closer look at our immediate surroundings.

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**FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

**Total Budget:** \$700,000

**Secured Financing:** nil

**Looking For:**

- Co-producers
- Funding advice
- Producers

# Dead Dog (working title)

Director / Screenwriter / Producer

**Sarah Francis**

## Company Profile

**Footnote Productions** was founded in Beirut in 2018, and is dedicated to producing films from the region that reflect the diversity of human experiences and explore the boundaries of cinematic language and craftsmanship. Among our first projects, currently in development, is the feature-length narrative 'Dead Dog' (working title).

## Contact

Sarah Francis  
Footnote Productions  
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'Al Kalbou Mat' / Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Drama, Romance

**Interests:** Family, Love, Migration

**When Farid, a 60-year-old man living abroad, visits his wife, he learns that his beloved dog has died. Tensions arise and Farid confesses he is returning home for good.**



When Farid, a 60-year-old man who lives abroad, visits his wife in their Lebanese mountain home, he learns that their 16-year-old dog has died – but no one informed him. When the couple visits the location where the dog was supposedly buried, they discover the hill has become a granite quarry. Tensions soon arise as the old dynamics of the couple resurface, and Farid confesses he is returning home for good. When a boy helps him find the remains of his dog, he buries them in the garden. In the following days, Aida learns that Farid is planning to sell their main residence in Beirut due to financial problems. The couple explores their relationship for the first time in years, and Aida confronts her husband, not intending to let their city house go.

## Sarah Francis



**Sarah Francis** grew up in Beirut and graduated from IESAV at Saint Joseph University. Since 2005, she has worked as a freelance director and has participated in several workshops and labs. Her feature-length documentary 'Birds of September' (2013) screened at numerous international festivals and museums, and won several awards. Her work also includes short videos. She is currently developing a project with the support of the Asian Cinema Fund. With 'Dead Dog', her upcoming fiction project, she was a participant of Cinephilia Bound in collaboration with La Maison des scénaristes at the Festival de Cannes in 2017, and is also attending other major film labs.

## Director's Note

Emigration has been the fate of many Lebanese families throughout generations. In many cases, the man works abroad, while the rest of the family stays in the country. As years go by, he often ends up living a strange double life; never really gone, never really here. I have been living with the characters in my mind for quite some time now; I have wondered how they experienced their successes and failures. To what extent are we capable of reinventing ourselves at their age, and what role does memory play in everyday life? What kinds of images, often fixed in time or preserved by distance, do we rely on to construct our lives? I am interested in observing areas of fragility and areas of strength, as well as in exploring the notion of identity in the broader sense.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$468,000

**Secured Financing:** \$67,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Footnote Productions, Lebanon
- Goethe-Institut, Lebanon

**Looking For:**

- Co-producers
- Distributors
- Funding
- Sales agents

# A Gaza Weekend

Director  
**Basil Khalil**  
Screenwriter  
**Basil Khalil, Daniel Chan Khalil**  
Producer  
**Amina Dasmal, Robin C. Fox**

'Osboo' Ghazaawi' / Palestine, UK, Qatar / Arabic, English, Hebrew

**Genre:** Comedy, Drama

Interests: Human Rights, Middle East, Politics

**When a viral epidemic consumes Israel, Gaza becomes the safest place in the region.**



The UN imposes an embargo on Israel following the outbreak of a deadly virus. However, due to its isolation, the only safe place is Gaza. Waleed, a wheeler-dealer from Gaza, accepts a fast-cash job smuggling a British man out of the country. Complications arise when the man's Israeli girlfriend tags along, and Waleed finds himself stuck with these fugitives hiding in his basement for longer than he'd hoped. Palestinian vigilantes, the Israeli army, and Waleed's prying neighbours are all after them. With all odds stacked against him, Waleed has to act fast to take advantage of any opportunity to get them out of Gaza.

## Company Profile

**Alcove Entertainment** is an independent film production company based in the UK and the UAE, founded by Amina Dasmal and Robin C. Fox in 2005. Alcove Entertainment produced 'The Double', a comedy written and directed by BAFTA-nominated Richard Ayoade, co-financed by the BFI and Film4, and starring Jesse Eisenberg and Mia Wasikowska. 'The Double' debuted at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2013, and was selected to screen in competition at both the London and Tokyo International Film Festivals. Alcove Entertainment's first feature-length Cochochi, co-produced with Gael García Bernal and Diego Luna's Canana, won the Discovery Award 2007 at TIFF and the Grand Jury Prize at the Miami International Film Festival in 2008. Other films include Harmony Korine's 'Trash Humpers', which took the Grand Jury Prize at CPH:DOX in 2009. 'The Caller', a supernatural thriller directed by Matthew Parkhill, was picked up by Sony Pictures for distribution after premiering at the 2011 European Film Market.

## Contact

Amina Dasmal  
Alcove Entertainment  
akd@alcoveentertainment.com

## Basil Khalil



Academy Award and Palme d'Or nominee **Basil Khalil** is a writer and director, born and raised in Nazareth to a Palestinian father and

British-Irish mother. After working on a number of television productions in London, Khalil directed his Oscar-nominated short film 'Ave Maria' (2015), which was described by the 'New York Times' as the "Middle Eastern answer to 'Curb Your Enthusiasm'". The film premiered in the Official Competition of the Festival de Cannes before going on to screen at more than 200 festivals and winning more than 35 awards. Khalil is a member of AMPAS and sits on the committees that nominate short films and feature-length animated films for the Academy Awards.

## Amina Dasmal



Born in the UAE, **Amina Dasmal** studied film in Los Angeles, and then established the London-based production company

Alcove Entertainment with Robin C. Fox in 2005. The company, which has satellite offices in Los Angeles and Dubai, has credits including 'Cochochi', co-produced with Gael García Bernal and Diego Luna's Canana; Harmony Korine's 2009 experimental drama 'Trash Humpers' (2009), and the UK indie horror movies 'Siren' (2010) and 'The Caller' (2013).

## Director's Note

I am very interested in telling stories in which people on opposite ends of a spectrum, who seem unlikely to get along, find themselves stuck with each other and having to figure out a way to achieve their personal goals. Over the decades I have seen how the Palestinians have learned to adapt to their absurd situation in order to survive. In this story, we see how Waleed is stuck with a fleeing British-Israeli couple in his basement, as what was supposed to be a fast-cash job becomes a disaster – something that could only happen in this bizarre setting, but that makes complete sense in the little world of Gaza.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$1.5 million

**Secured Financing:** \$330,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

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

**Looking For:**

- Financing
- Sales agents



# Khuzama

Director / Screenwriter

**A.J. Al Thani**

Producer

**Justin Kramer**

Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Action

**Interests:** Coming of age, Social Issues, Women's Issues

**A Bedouin girl dreams of exploring the desert - until she discovers it is not what she had imagined it to be.**

## Company Profile

Made up of talented, experienced and creative storytellers, producers, documentarians, animators, photographers, and filmmakers, **The Film House** is an award-winning, Doha-based film, video, and multi-media production company unlike any other in the region. With a wealth of local knowledge, and with Qatar's community in mind, the company is primed to foster local talent and to redefine visual storytelling in the region. The Film House is a home for high-calibre international and local productions; it has produced dozens of short films and is currently producing feature-length films and documentaries by Qatari filmmakers, as well as television series for the BBC, CNN, and PBS.

## Contact

Justin Kramer

The Film House

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Khuzama is a Bedouin girl who lives with her poet father in the desert, in complete isolation from civilisation. She takes care of her father, who is old and sick, and one night they run out of water. Khuzama sets out on a journey towards another well, where she gets into trouble with bandits. This is the first time Khuzama has strayed so far from home, and a new adventure awaits.

## A.J. Al Thani



**A.J. Al Thani** is a Qatar-born filmmaker. Her love for movies and moviemaking began at the age of six when she saw 'Star Wars' (1977) in

the cinema in 1999. She began to pursue her dream of being a filmmaker with the launch of the Doha Film Institute. Her relationship with the Institute began in 2010 when she participated in one of its first film workshops, which opened the door for many local filmmakers to pursue their passion.

## Justin Kramer



**Justin Kramer** is an American filmmaker and artist. His career started in New York City, where he formed Elwood Gentry

Productions and worked on projects for HBO, MTV, CNN, VH1, and AMC among others. His producing, directing, and cinematography have been seen in numerous award-winning short films, television shows, feature documentaries, music videos, and commercials. Kramer has displayed photography work at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and has lectured at Harvard University on documentary filmmaking. In 2009, he moved to Qatar to join the Doha Film Institute, where he produced and mentored numerous workshops and programmes that resulted in some of the first films and filmmakers from Qatar gaining international recognition. Since, Kramer has developed The Film House, the first company of its kind in Qatar, producing documentaries, commercials, and design at a world-class level for clients like 'VICE', Levi's, Al Jazeera and the BBC. Kramer's first feature-length documentary, 'Zabaleen' (2016), which was selected for several film festivals, is an intimate look at a family of garbage collectors in Egypt.

## Director's Note

This film is for women. It speaks poetically to the everyday lives of women today, even if it is set a long time ago in a fictional remote desert. Today, we are having big conversations about the struggles women face in their everyday lives. Female empowerment is at the forefront of contemporary issues, and I believe my film has the potential not just to continue the cause for these conversations, but to extend them to our part of the world. I believe that this film can communicate my message in any language, and might become the ultimate female empowerment film for the ages.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** TBD

### Confirmed Financial Partners:

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

### Looking For:

- Co-producers
- Funding
- Legal services

# Noura Dreams

Director / Screenwriter

**Hinde Boujemaa**

Producer

**Imed Marzouk**

## Company Profile

**Propaganda Production** is a Tunisian broadcasting company, created in 2002 by Imed Marzouk and Néjib Belkadhi. Its primary activities include the production of short and feature-length films, documentaries, broadcast series, and commercials. Notable projects include 'VHS-Kahloucha' (2006) and 'Bastardo' (2012), both by Néjib Belkadhi; 'And Romeo Married Juliet' (2014) by Hinde Boujemaa; and 'As I Open My Eyes' (2014) by Leyla Bouzid.

## Contact

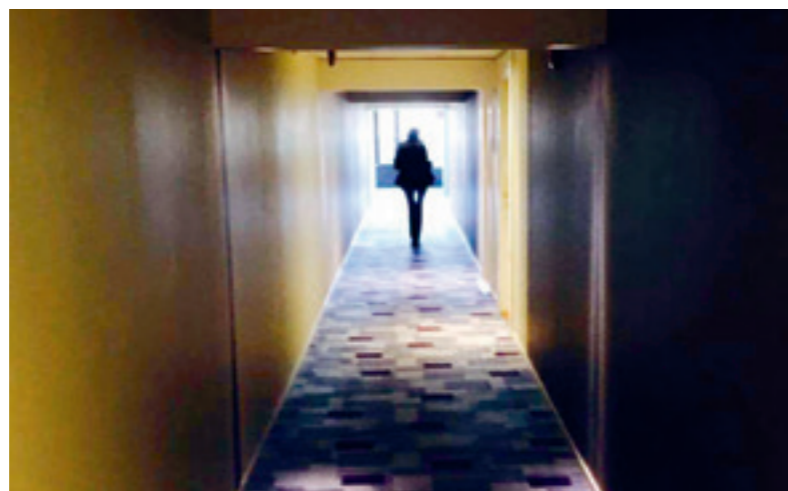
Imed Marzouk  
Propaganda Production  
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'Noura rêve' / Tunisia, France, Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Drama

**Interests:** Children, Social Issues, Women's Issues

**Noura struggles to raise her three children alone while her husband is in jail – until she meets Lassaad. Their plans to be together, however, are jeopardised by the impending release of her husband, and the two decide to flee.**



Noura meets the love of her life, Lassaad, while her husband, Sofiane, is in jail. She raises her three children alone and works in a laundry to make ends meet. A few days before the divorce Noura requested is granted, the new lovers' dream of living together is jeopardised by Sofiane's imminent release. Noura and Lassad decide to flee.

## Hinde Boujemaa



**Hinde Boujemaa** is a Tunisian director. In 2012, she directed her first feature-length documentary, 'It Was Better Tomorrow', which was selected for the Venice Film Festival, won the Muhr for Best Director at the Dubai International Film festival, and was named Best Documentary at Douz Doc Days. In 2014, her short fiction film 'And Romeo Married Juliet' won Best Short Film awards at Dubai, the Alexandria Film Festival, the Oran Film Festival, and the Verona Film Festival, where it also took an award for Best Actress. Boujemaa is now preparing the feature-length fiction film 'Noura Dreams'.

## Imed Marzouk



**Imed Marzouk** was born in 1973. After studying international commerce at HEC, he obtained a degree in marketing. In 2000, he joined Canal Horizon Tunis, where he was Production Manager. In 2002, he founded the production company Propaganda Production with Nejjib Belkadhi. He is now working on three features films: 'Vent du nord' by Walid Mattar; 'Regarde-moi' by Néjib Belkadhi; and 'Noura rêve' by Hinde Boujemaa.

## Director's Note

I see women, circulating in the popular districts of Tunis, with a personal 'lid' over their heads, a concrete topping, a bit like the famous wet cloud that follows certain cartoon characters. The lid wouldn't be made of cement or another material, but of looks, judgements, intolerance. And there, facing me, a woman in a pink velvet tracksuit, in a hurry, crosses the street, and in her eyes, there is a glimmer that gets to me. It's Noura. Instinctively, I decided to follow her. In the Arab world, we sing to love. Whether Om Kalthoum or Berber songs, men and women sing to love, to its pains, its jealousy, its emotions, its romanticism. But as soon as it gets to its reality, especially out of wedlock, taboo and duality settle in. Love becomes a 'sin'. Still, everyone has felt love, and it is this universal feeling that will allow the spectator to enter Noura's story.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$790,000

**Secured Financing:** \$409,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- CineGouna Platform, Egypt
- Doc & Film International, France
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Fonds Franco-Tunisien de coproductions (France/Tunisia)
- Hakka Distribution, Tunisia
- Propaganda Production, Tunisia
- Tunisian Ministry of Culture

**Looking For:**

- Distributors
- Festivals
- Funding

# The Unknown Saint

Director / Screenwriter

**Alaa Eddine Aljem**

Producer

**Francesca Duca, Alexa Rivero**

'Saint inconnu' / Morocco, France, Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Black Comedy

**Interests:** Materialism, Social Issues, Spirituality

**After years in captivity, a thief returns to retrieve the money he stole and discovers a mausoleum unexpectedly built on the site where he stashed the money.**



## Company Profile

**Le Moindre Geste Ltd.**, is an independent production company founded by director-producers Francesca Duca and Alaa Eddine Aljem in 2012. It is based in Marrakech and Casablanca. Le Moindre Geste offers authors a real context of coaching, mentoring and development of their projects while leaving them all the freedom to make their own film. Le Moindre Geste focuses on art films with a common denominator: start from the personal to reach the universal. A chance to explore places, people, stories and feelings.

## Contact

Francesca Duca  
Le Moindre Geste  
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Young Amine steals a large sum of money and escapes into the hills with the police hot on his trail. Before being arrested, he buries the cash and disguises it as a modest tomb. Ten years later, he is released from prison and sets off in search of his money. In the meantime, a shrine has been built on the place where he buried his stash to honour a saint who used to live in the region, and whose tomb was not found until 10 years ago. His name is lost; he is known as "the unknown saint". Down the hill from the shrine, a new village subsists mainly as a result of the economic activity generated by pilgrims who come from all over the country and even from abroad. Amine settles in the new village and tries desperately to get his money back.

## Alaa Eddine Aljem



Trained at ESAV Marrakech and INSAS in Brussels, **Alaa Eddine Aljem** directed several short films, among them 'The Desert Fish' (2015), which had great coverage in the film festival circuit and took the Critics, Screenwriting and Grand Prize at the Moroccan National Film Festival. 'The Unknown Saint' is Aljem's debut feature, currently in financing. With this project, he participated in the Open Doors Lab at the Locarno Festival, where it won the ICAM award. It was also selected for La Fabrique des Cinémas du Monde in Cannes in 2016, and took part in the Sundance Screenwriters Lab. In 2016, Alaa was named by 'Screen International' as one of the Five Arab Stars of Tomorrow.

## Francesca Duca



**Francesca Duca** was born in Italy in 1981. She studied Literature and Visual Anthropology at Università degli Studi in Perugia, ULB Université Libre de Bruxelles, and at the

University of California, Los Angeles. After conducting fieldwork in India, she wrote a thesis about Bollywood. She obtained an MA in Cinema Writing, Production and Direction from INSAS in Brussels, during which time she wrote and directed two short films. She has worked in the cinema and television industries in Berlin, Brussels and Rome, and is a co-creator of Casablanca-based Le Moindre Geste Film Company, which focuses on the promotion of independent authors.

## Alexa Rivero



**Alexa Rivero** is the founder and producer of Paris-based production company Altamar films. With over a decade of work experience with production, distribution, sales, and festivals, she has been involved in a broad range of films. Formerly an executive at Memento Films and production manager for several production companies, her past production credits include Asghar Farhadi's 'The Past' (2013), Rodrigo Plà's 'The Delay' (2012), and Nuri Bilge Ceylan's 'Winter Sleep' (2014).

## Director's Note

In all my works, I tend to start from an absurd situation. 'The Unknown Saint' starts with a fake mausoleum. A mausoleum, holy for the inhabitants of a village that lives off the activity generated by the fake saint even though the saint never existed and indeed was never buried there. The same mausoleum that was once a stash for stolen money. Nowadays, there is nothing as holy as money. The mausoleum where a bag of money is buried is the starting point of entangled stories, where spirituality and greed meet. In this film, I also wanted to work on rumours, how they quickly spread and can turn into legends. 'The Unknown Saint' will be shot in the vein of my previous films, in a simple and uncluttered staging that reveals the gravity of certain situations and also offers a space for the burlesque and the black comedy.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$1.4 million

**Secured Financing:** \$863,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Aide aux cinémas du monde, CNC, France
- Centre cinématographique marocain, Morocco
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Open Doors Lab, Locarno Festival, Switzerland
- Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, France
- Soread 2M, Morocco
- Sundance Institute, USA

**Looking For:**

- Distributors
- Funding
- Sales agents

# The Voice of Amirah

Director / Screenwriter  
**Khalifa Al-Thani**

Qatar / Arabic  
**Genre:** Drama

**Contact**  
Khalifa Al-Thani  
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**After Amirah's vengeful half-sister Assyah steals her private journal, secrets come out, and these began to jeopardize her freedom of pursuing an education. Amirah's relationship with her neglectful father is re-enacted once he begins to see the strength in her.**



In the 1970s in Qatar, adolescent Amirah grows up in an unconventional household in Doha. She lives with her overly cautious mother, a few streets away from her absent and neglectful father, who starts a new life with a malicious second wife. Her new half-sisters, consumed with jealousy, make Amirah's life psychologically difficult, and her life starts to unravel once her father decides to arrange a marriage for her. When she stands up for what she believes in, however, her life takes a wonderful turn.

## Khalifa Al-Thani



**Khalifa Al-Thani** is an independent filmmaker who holds a Bachelor's degree in Film and Video from the School of Visual Arts. He is in the final stages of development with both the short film 'Collect Your Belongings', and the feature-length 'The Voice of Amirah'. Al-Thani currently works on the development team at the Doha Film Institute.

## Director's Note

It all started when my colleagues in college knew little to nothing about Qatar. Either they flew Qatar Airways, had a layover in Hamad International Airport or heard that Qatar is hosting the World Cup in 2022, which is great in itself but doesn't offer much knowledge on the nation's culture or heritage, or provide any insight into the people of Qatar. In the coming years, my aim is to focus on creating content about issues that matter - narratively, and in new and inventive ways, so that the delivery can be entertaining and light-hearted, and yet carry a powerful message. The idea behind 'The Voice of Amirah', previously titled 'Land of the Brave', came to me when I was in my

senior year of college. I had the support of colleagues and my professor at the time, and have continued to work on developing the script through the Doha Film Institute's Hezayah Lab. The story identifies the importance of education in my country from the perspective of a young girl in 1976 who has a passion for agriculture, and looks at how far she will go to pursue a college education. During further research on the time period, I have discovered much about the unique history of Qatar, the generosity of its people, how united they were - and still are.

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## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$600,000  
**Secured Financing:** nil

### Looking For:

- Financing
- Producers

# Qumra Projects



## Development Feature Documentary

'Displaced in Heaven' by Khaled Jarrar

'Naz' (working title) by Omar El-Khairi, Ana Naomi de Sousa

'Suspended Wives' by Merieme Addou

## Development Feature Essay

'The Fifth Resurrection of Farid' by Khalid Youssef

# Displaced in Heaven

Director

**Khaled Jarrar**

Producer

**Khaled Jarrar, Thomas Kaske**

## Company Profile

**Kaske Film** produces creative essay and documentary films that express aesthetic, innovative, and experimental ways of storytelling. The company's various projects combine personal and critical approaches to historical, social, and political topics. As a cultural film production house, Kaske Film seeks German and international funding opportunities, and to establish international co-productions and creative partnerships, in order to realize and finance projects, and maintain the integrity of the author's vision.

## Contact

Thomas Kaske

Kaske Film

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'Laje' fi Mecca' / Palestine, Germany, Qatar / Arabic, English

**Genre:** Creative Documentary

**Interests:** History, Migration, War

**By following a family across the Balkan route, a Palestinian director plunges into the horror of exile in a desperate need to recover his lost memories.**



The repetition of history and the passing on of collective and individual traumas from generation to generation is what defines the Palestinian identity. In a journey across the Balkan route, director Khaled Jarrar follows an elderly Palestinian woman from Damascus to Europe in what marks her second displacement. Walking side by side with Nadeera and her family towards a utopian freedom, Jarrar asks himself about the meaning of home, belonging, and identity, while the memories of his childhood come back to life after many years of silence.

## Khaled Jarrar



Born in the occupied West Bank in 1976, **Khaled Jarrar** currently lives and works in Tucson, where he researches the potential

fallout of the proposed border wall between Mexico and the United States. He is also working on a film and multimedia series that documents his month-long journey with a group of migrants who travelled to Europe last year in order to draw attention to the plight of Syrian refugees.

## Thomas Kaske



**Thomas Kaske** was born in 1984. After living in Nairobi, he decided to study Social and Cultural Anthropology and Film Studies at the

Freie Universität Berlin. Since 2008, he has worked for the MA Visual and Media Anthropology there. In 2013, he began to study Media Art and Media Design at the Bauhaus University in Weimar. During his MFA studies, he directed and produced experimental short films. After obtaining his degree, he worked as a Junior Producer and Archive Researcher for the Berlin-based companies Ilanga Films and Molly Aida. Since 2016, he has worked as an independent producer.

## Director's Note

I became a protagonist of this film without expecting to. But, to be able to help Nadeera's family and bring them to Germany, I had no choice but to become a refugee. On the one hand, there is a distance with the reality I film; I am witnessing a historical moment - I observe. On the other, an intimate world grows in response to that: How do I perceive this reality? How is it affecting me? In the film, my presence appears to connect both journeys, or to express how I feel; how it feels to be a refugee. I will not assume facts in a judgmental way, but rather express ideas and thoughts through a shared experience of displacement. Although there is drama in this story, humour and lightness will also appear in the film, as they do in human nature.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$222,000

**Secured Financing:** \$80,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Jenin Films, Palestine
- Kaske Film, Germany

**Looking For:**

- Broadcasters
- Co-producers
- Funding
- Legal Advice
- Sales agents

# Naz (working title)

Director

**Omar El-Khairy,**

**Ana Naomi de Sousa**

Producer

**Elhum Shakerifar**

Palestine, UK, Qatar / Arabic, English

**Genre:** Creative Documentary

**Interests:** Biography, Diaspora, Fashion, Islam, Music, Popular Culture, Sports

**‘Naz’ is a feature-length documentary that explores the historical and cultural formations of the British Yemeni boxer Prince Naseem Hamed. It is a film that not only celebrates a forgotten era, but also sheds light on where we are now.**



One of the most successful and entertaining sporting icons of the 1990s, Naseem Hamed’s unique position as a second generation British Arab with mass appeal resonated deeply with an under-represented Arab community in Britain and beyond, as well as with a new generation in the Middle East, all coming of age at a similar time. ‘Naz’ explores the tension between Hamed’s near-cult status within certain communities, and the ambivalence of the British nation-at-large, which never really took him to heart.

## Company Profile

**Hakawati** was founded in 2017 to produce, distribute and curate films with the art of storytelling at their core. Set up by BAFTA-nominated producer Elhum Shakerifar, and building on her multi-award winning productions and curatorial work to date, Hakawati supports storytellers with distinctive vision and enables new talent to take creative risks. Hakawati is committed to the broader visibility of independent film, giving platforms to quieter voices and unique individual – often minority – perspectives in relation to a dominant whole. In making creatively bold films with integrity, representation and reframing narratives are at the heart of what we do. The company’s projects are all derived from the central tenet that a good story is in the telling, and that, after all, we are the stories we tell. Hakawati is supported by the prestigious BFI Vision Award – awarded once every three years to leading UK producers; Shakerifar was the only documentary producer among the 2016 recipients.

## Contact

Elhum Shakerifar

Hakawati

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## Omar El-Khairy



### Omar El-Khairy

is a playwright and screenwriter, and holds a Ph.D in Sociology from the London School of Economics and Political

Science. A former Leverhulme Associate Playwright at the Bush Theatre, his plays include ‘Burst’, ‘Sour Lips’, ‘The Keepers of Infinite Space’, ‘The Chaplain: or, a short tale of how we learned to love good Muslims whilst torturing bad ones’, and ‘Homegrown’. His work is published by Oberon Books. ‘No Exit’ (2014), his first short film, had its world premiere at the Dubai International Film Festival. His new short film, ‘White Girl’, is currently in production.

## Ana Naomi de Sousa



### Ana Naomi de Sousa

is a Peabody award-winning filmmaker and writer. Her work addresses history, architecture and identity.

She co-directed ‘Saydnaya - Inside a Syrian Torture Prison’, a collaboration between Forensic Architecture and Amnesty International that gained international media attention and was awarded a Peabody Award in 2017. She has directed several short documentaries for television, including ‘The Architecture of Violence’ and ‘Angola - Birth of a Movement’, both for Al Jazeera English.

## Elhum Shakerifar



### Elhum Shakerifar

is a BFI Vision Awardee and BAFTA-nominated producer whose productions have been broadcast internationally

and screened at festivals including the Berlin International Film Festival, the International Film Festival Rotterdam and the Dubai International Film Festival. Her credits include Carol Salter’s ‘Almost Heaven’ (2017), Sean McAllister’s ‘A Syrian Love Story’ (2015), and Saeed Taji Farouky’s ‘The Runner’ (2013). In 2017, she was awarded Women in Film and Television’s BBC News and Factual Award.

## Directors’ Note

Through rare archive material and found footage, this film will excavate a unique and abandoned moment in the history of multicultural Britain; a time when it was still possible for a British sportsman to proudly recite the Takbir at his weigh-ins, and enter the arena on a flying carpet against backdrops emblazoned with Islamic scripture, in front of adoring crowds – an image that seems inconceivable nowadays. Raising challenging questions around nationalism and sports – and who gets to create the stories that bind the two – the narrative arc of ‘Naz’ will be shaped by the counterpoints between Naseem’s achievements, both in and outside the ring, and disruptive moments in British socio-political life.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** TBD

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

**Looking For:**

- Broadcasters
- Co-producers
- Distributors
- Funding
- Sales agents

# Suspended Wives

Director / Producer  
**Merieme Addou**

## Company Profile

Based in Rabat, **IrisProd** is an established video and film production company that produces and co-produces documentaries that are auteur-driven and produced creatively.

## Contact

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IrisProd  
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'Moalakat' / Morocco, Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Creative Documentary

**Interests:** Social Issues, Women's Issues

**'Suspended Wives' follows three women who were abandoned by their husbands, and their lengthy battle to obtain divorces.**



After waiting for many years, Ghita, Latifa, and Karima decide to turn to the courts in order to obtain divorces. The procedure turns out to be not only lengthy, but also quite absurd. During their lonely struggle against the law and its harshness, bureaucracy, and society's prejudices, the three women are assisted by other women who meet every day in a city park. This is the only peaceful place where the trio can share intimacies, and particularly their hope to put an end to their hellish situation, and find their rightful freedom and dignity.

## Merieme Addou



Born in Morocco, **Merieme Addou** graduated from Mohammed V University with a degree in Law, and a Master's degree in Documentary Film. She has been a freelance producer for ADTV, Qatar TV, BBC 2, Radio 4, BBC World, and SABC, among other outlets, and has worked as a freelance correspondent for Radio D-W.

## Director's Note

Among my strongest childhood memories are nice evenings shared with my parents, sitting around the radio. Our favourite programme was on every day at six o'clock, when a serious voice went on reading a litany of women's calls in search of their husbands: "Marrakesh Court President announces that Alami Khadija is looking for her husband, Mohamed Sabir, who has disappeared". I still remember, sharing my dad's laughter, and his jokes with my mum saying, 'Who knows? Maybe one day you will make this sort of announcement on the radio' Later, when I became a law student, I realised that the radio programme was in fact satisfying an obligatory step in divorce procedures in cases of a husband's extended absence. In 'Suspended Wives', I will accompany women in their daily struggle to regain their dignity.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$123,000

**Secured Financing:** \$68,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

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

**Looking For:**

- Broadcasters
- Co-producers
- Distributors
- Funding
- Sales agents



# The Fifth Resurrection of Farid

Director / Screenwriter / Producer  
**Khalid Youssef**

Egypt, Qatar / Arabic, English  
**Genre:** Creative Documentary, Docufiction  
**Interests:** Based on a True Story, History, Identity, Immigration

**Contact**  
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**In Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, a new life is awarded to Olympic champion, pilot, Hollywood actor, war hero, and all-around professional hell-raiser Farid Semeka.**



Little Tokyo, Los Angeles. An old man comes across an odd collection of film reels, vinyl records, and VHS tapes hidden in the confines of his basement. He quickly discovers that they embody the strange story of a largely forgotten renaissance man from the 1920s and 30s with a funny name: Farid Semeka.

## Khalid Youssef



Born in Cairo in 1978, **Khalid Youssef** is a filmmaker, screenwriter, editor, and actor. After finishing university studies in Egypt, he travelled to study filmmaking, theatre, and photography in Madrid, for well over a decade. He finished his first film, 'Zero in Conduct', in 2007, and it travelled to various film festivals, including the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. He also shot, produced, directed, edited, and wrote the feature-length film 'Overground' (2015), in addition to 10 other short films. Among them is '1995', which was selected for five festivals, among them the Göttingen International Ethnographic Film Festival.

## Director's Note

Farid Semeka's story represents the profound alienation that comes with migrating to a foreign land, creating a new identity, and the collective need to obliterate our national heroes while creating new ones. Given that I have lived abroad for many years, this story is rather personal, and I would like to explore the dichotomies in Semeka's life. The term 'documentary' can sometimes be misleading, as verisimilitude is a given, and it connotes a stylistically straightforward type of cinema filled with talking heads. However, there have been recent experiments that allow for dynamic storytelling and the intertwining of fictional elements within the framework of verifiable facts. My work is an exploration of the experimental documentary genre, and I hope to expand upon this by continuing to play with aesthetics, devising an essayistic approach to telling Farid Semeka's story, one of the most enigmatic and forgotten figures of the 20th century.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$123,000

**Secured Financing:** \$45,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

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

**Looking For:**

- Broadcasters
- Co-producers
- Distributors
- Financing
- Marketing advice
- Transmedia experts

# Qumra Projects



# Works-in-Progress Feature Narrative

'1982' by Oualid Mouaness

'A Kasha' by hajooj kuka

'Sofia' by Meryem Benm'Barek

# 1982

Director / Screenwriter

**Oualid Mouaness**

Producer

**Georges Schoucair,  
Oualid Mouaness, Alix Madigan,  
Myriam Sassine,  
Christopher Tricarico**

## Company Profile

**About Productions** produces feature films and documentaries with a distinctly Arab voice, expressing the identity of the region. Since 1998, the company has managed to bring together an important network of Arab and Lebanese artists, and produced numerous award-winning films. About Productions has a strong partnership with MC Distribution, a company dedicated to promoting new films from the Middle East along with direct and priority access to the sole art-house theatre in Lebanon, Metropolis Cinema. The company's main objective remains to help structure Lebanese and Arab cinema craft into a solid industry.

**Tricycle** (Lebanon), a recently formed production entity, is a subsidiary of Tricycle Logic (US), which has been in operation since 2000. Oualid Mouaness, the principal of Tricycle, has a track record of producing award-winning, socially conscious films, as well as high-profile commercials, music videos and live events. Tricycle's main objective in establishing a presence in the Middle East is to embark on facilitating Levant-centric projects, with the belief that the best way to effect positive change in the world is through storytelling and the arts.

## Contact

Myriam Sassine  
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Lebanon, USA, Qatar / Arabic / 2018 / 100 mins

**Genre:** Drama

**Interests:** Children, Coming of age, History, Politics, War

**When 11-year-old Wissam decides to tell a classmate that he loves her, his will is challenged, his courage falters and an impending war threatens to separate them permanently.**



Summer, 1982. Wissam, an 11-year-old boy, is determined to tell Joanna, a girl in his class, that he loves her. Final exams are underway in their school, tucked safely in the mountains overlooking Beirut. As Wissam yearns to express himself, an air invasion reaches the capital. The students are sent home, and Wissam's determination grows as it becomes clear to him that no one knows what tomorrow will bring. This story of first love portrays a day the kids will never forget.

## Oualid Mouaness



**Oualid Mouaness**, a Sundance Screenwriting Fellow, grew up between Lebanon and Liberia. After receiving his undergraduate degree with honours from the Lebanese American University in Beirut, Mouaness acquired an MFA in Writing and Directing from Florida State University. He went onto a dense producing career in narrative and documentary films, videos and commercials, most notably David LaChapelle's 'Rize' (2005), Mari Kornhauser's 'Kitchen Privileges' (2000), and Adria Petty's 'Paris, Not France' (2008). He has directed several short films, the last of which, 'The Rifle, the Jackal, the Wolf and the Boy', was shortlisted for an Academy Award.

## Georges Schoucair



A Lebanese producer and the CEO of About Productions, **Georges Schoucair** has developed and produced critically acclaimed films and has contributed to the establishment of an attractive and globally acknowledged environment for film investments in Lebanon and to the development of Lebanese cinema.

In parallel with About Productions, Schoucair founded MC Distribution, a distribution company that releases Arab and international films in the Middle East, and has since 2008 been the acting vice-president of Metropolis, an art-house cinema venture in Beirut. His most recent endeavour is Schortcut Films, whose objective is to identify and invest in high-quality international independent films.

## Myriam Sassine



**Myriam Sassine** majored in Cinema Studies, and received her MA in Cinema Research in 2009. Since 2010, Sassine has worked with About Productions in Lebanon, and produced several feature documentary and fiction films, such as Corine Shawi's 'e muet' (2013), Myriam El Hajj's 'A Time to Rest' (2015), Vatche Boulghourjian's 'Tramontane' (2016), and Rana Eid's 'Panoptic' (2017). She has been a participant of DocMed 2011, the Torino Film Lab Interchange programme in 2012, and in Berlinale Talents in 2014. She is the COO of Schortcut Films, a company dedicated to co-producing international features, and the director of the Maskoon Fantastic Film Festival.

## Director's Note

I wrote '1982' with an absolute disdain for war. I chose to tell its story through the eyes of an 11-year-old boy as he experiences love – and a dramatic separation from it. The story takes place at a time of profound change. While it is a seemingly simple story about the tender experience of first love and the notion that love trumps war, it is grounded in a specific moment – one that irrevocably changed life in Lebanon and that represents a turning point in Middle Eastern and international politics. With '1982', I am telling everyone's story. It is about a love we have all felt. It is about the fact that no matter where we are in the world, when we are 11, nothing matters except the girl or boy we desire – an age when the world can be whatever we imagine it to be. It is time this story was told, in its simplicity and in its loudness.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$1.1 million

**Secured Financing:** \$892,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Fond Images Francophonie, France
- Mad Dog Films, USA
- Sørfond+ Europe, Norway
- Sundance Film Institute, USA

## Looking For:

- Distributors
- Festivals
- Finishing funds
- Marketing strategy
- Post-production partners
- Sales agents

# A Kasha

Director / Screenwriter

**hajooj kuka**

Producer

**Steven Markovitz, hajooj kuka**

Sudan, South Africa, Qatar / Arabic / 2018 / 80 mins

**Genre:** Satire

**Interests:** Politics, War

**An offbeat Sudanese love story set in a time of civil war.**



Adnan is a revolutionary war hero whose love for fighting and his AK-47 are rivalled only by his feelings for Lina, his long-suffering sweetheart. When Adnan is late to return to his military unit after leave, the army commander launches a “kasha” to round up truant soldiers. Distracted by Lina, Adnan is caught off guard and makes a run for it. He joins up with Absi, a lover-not-a-fighter type who is dodging the kasha. Together, these two unlikely friends plot ways to reunite Adnan with his gun – and with Lina. Through a series of wry and humorous incidents over 24 hours, ‘A Kasha’ explores life and love in rebel-held areas of Sudan.

## Company Profile

Led by Steven Markovitz, **Big World Cinema** was established in 1994 and has produced, co-produced and executive-produced short and feature-length fiction and documentary films. The company’s award-winning projects include ‘Stories of Our Lives’ (winner of the Teddy Award at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2015); ‘Beats of the Antonov’ (winner, Toronto International Film Festival People’s Choice Documentary Award in 2014); ‘Viva Riva!’, which was selected for the Berlin and Toronto International Film Festivals; and ‘Congo in Four Acts’, which was selected for the Berlinale, the International Documentary Festival Amsterdam and the Hot Docs Canadian International Film Festival. The company has an extensive production and distribution network across Africa.

## Contact

Steven Markovitz

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## hajooj kuka



**hajooj kuka** is a filmmaker from Sudan. kuka’s 2014 feature documentary, ‘Beats of the Antonov’, had its premiere at the Toronto

International Film Festival, where it won the People’s Choice Documentary Award. The film has been broadcast on POV, screened at more than 60 festivals and won seven international awards. kuka also trains and works with young filmmakers across Sudan.

## Steven Markovitz



**Steven Markovitz** is one of Africa’s most pioneering producers, with 20 years’ experience on some of the continent’s important

features and documentaries. Steven co-produced the Congolese thriller ‘Viva Riva!’ (2010), which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and won MTV’s Best African Movie and a record six African Movie Academy Awards. He also produced Wanuri Kahiu’s award-winning Kenyan science fiction short film ‘Pumzi’ (2009), which was selected for the Sundance Film Festival. In addition to ‘Logs of War’, Markovitz is currently producing ‘Rollaball’, a documentary set in Ghana, and ‘African Metropolis’, a series of short fiction films in seven African cities, and an eight-part documentary series for Al Jazeera.

## Director’s Note

‘A Kasha’ is an offbeat and humorous love story set in a time of war – but the war is in Sudan and it is happening right now. In the Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile region, our lives are saturated with the rhetoric and ideology of war and revolution. But the people here are also trying to live normal lives – there are gatherings and music, romance and laughter. I find the juxtaposition of big philosophical ideas around revolution with peoples’ simple lives very compelling; I want to explore the collision of these two worlds.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$330,000

**Secured Financing:** \$176,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Nuba Reports, Sudan
- World Cinema Fund, Germany

**Looking For:**

- Distributors
- Festivals
- Finishing funds
- Sales agents

# Sofia

Director / Screenwriter

**Meryem Benm'Barek**

Producer

**Olivier Delbosc**

Artistic Producer

**Lisa Verhaverbeke**

Morocco, France, Qatar / Arabic, French / 2018 / 90 mins

**Genre:** Drama

**Interests:** Social Issues, Women's Issues

**Casablanca. At 22, Sofia is the only daughter in a rather traditional family. While having dinner with her family, she discovers she is about to give birth.**



## Company Profile

**Curiosa Films** was born from Olivier Delbosc's desire to build a new production structure after almost 20 years at the helm of Fidélité Films with Marc Missonnier. Strengthened by his experience as a producer, which includes the production of more than 70 feature films of all genres in less than 20 years, Delbosc, with Emilien Bignon by his side, wishes to promote auteur films, both demanding and popular. He thus continues to collaborate with renowned authors such as Xavier Giannoli, André Téchiné and Bertrand Blier, while also developing new relationships with directors including Claire Denis, Martin Provost and Erick Zonca, among others, and producing first feature films by such new directors as Étienne Comar and Lou Jeunet.

## Contact

Lisa Verhaverbeke

Curiosa Films

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Sofia lives with her parents in a modest apartment in Casablanca. While having lunch with her family one day, she is suddenly stricken with violent abdominal pain. Her cousin Lena, a medical student, is feeling her belly when water starts running down her thighs: Sofia is about to give birth. On the pretext of Sofia's having overeaten, the two women head to the hospital. Reluctant at first, the personnel eventually agree to take Sofia in, on the condition that she provide her marriage certificate before the next morning; otherwise they will alert the authorities. After Sofia gives birth, she and Lena immediately leave the hospital in search of the child's father, launching themselves into a frantic nocturnal quest.

## Meryem Benm'Barek



**Meryem Benm'Barek** was born in 1984 in Rabat. She studied Arabic Languages and Civilisations at the National Institute of

Oriental Languages and Civilizations in Paris before entering the directing department at INSAS in Brussels in 2010. There, she directed five short films, notably 'Nor' (2013) and 'Jennah' (2014), which was selected for numerous international film festivals, and was considered for submission for an Academy Award in 2015. She also creates sound design art and has had regular exhibitions at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. She is currently finalizing her first feature-length film, 'Sofia'.

## Lisa Verhaverbeke



After completing her production studies at La Fémis, **Lisa Verhaverbeke** worked as a documentary production manager,

while keeping a foot in fiction as a script reader, in particular for Fidélité Films, whose ranks she joined in 2014 in the

capacity of Head of Development. She is currently acting as Artistic Producer on Meryem Benm'Barek's 'Sofia'.

## Olivier Delbosc



After almost 20 years at the head of Fidélité Films with Marc Missonnier, **Olivier Delbosc** created Curiosa Films with Emilien Bignon, a

new structure born from Delbosc's desire for a new direction, breaking with the lines and reflexes built by the force of habit. Since his first feature as producer in 1998, Delbosc has built a filmography in less than 20 years that includes the production of nearly 70 feature films, among them numerous international co-productions. His aim has always been to develop and produce a variety of projects in terms of genre, budget or world. Through Curiosa Films, Delbosc hopes to continue to accompany authors with whom he has developed strong ties (Emmanuelle Bercot, Bertrand Blier, Xavier Giannoli, André Téchiné), while paving the way for new relationships (Claire Denis, Martin Provost, Erick Zonca), and allowing for the discovery of talents in France and

abroad in order to produce daring first films (Meryem Benm'Barek, Étienne Comar, Lou Jeunet).

## Director's Note

Through Sofia and Lena's journey, I seek to raise questions that to me are urgent in a society where social uprisings proliferate, and isolation is becoming the norm. This film seeks to go beyond simplistic interpretation: everyone takes turns at being victim and perpetrator; women are not subject to male domination, but rather to the socio-economic reality of the country. Throughout this project, I intend to offer a complex interpretation of a Moroccan society torn apart by a profound conflict between social classes.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$1 million

**Secured Financing:** \$1 million

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Canal+. France
- Centre national de la cinématographie, France
- Ciné+, France
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Fondation Gan pour le cinéma, France
- Memento Films Distribution, France
- Playtime, France

**Looking For:**

- Broadcasters
- Distributors
- Festivals
- VOD platform

# Qumra Projects



# Works-in-Progress Feature Documentary

'Batata' by Noura Kevorkian

'Chaos' by Sara Fattahi

'Tiny Souls' by Dina Naser

'Underdown' by Sarah Kaskas

# Batata

Director

**Noura Kevorkian**

Producer

**Paul Scherzer, Noura Kevorkian**

## Company Profile

Based in Toronto and founded by Noura Kevorkian, **Saaren Films** has produced several award-winning feature and short documentary films, including Kevorkian's 'ANJAR: Flowers, Goats and Heroes' (2009), and 'Veils Uncovered' (2002). Saaren mostly works with Arab filmmakers and routinely co-produces with companies in Canada and Lebanon. The company's latest production is Kevorkian's '23 Kilometres' (2015), an Official Competition entry in the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. Saaren's slate currently includes the feature-length documentary 'Batata', as well as several other films at various stages of development.

**Six Island** is a Toronto-based independent film, television and digital media production company that specialises in internationally appealing drama, comedy, documentary, and transmedia. Founded by producer Paul Scherzer in 1998, Six Island has produced numerous award-winning feature-length films, among them Kaouther Ben Hania's 'Challatt of Tunis', Asghar Massombagi's 'Khaled' (2001), Jennifer Baichwal's 'Manufactured Landscapes' (2006), Simon El Habre's 'Gate #5' (2011), and Noura Kevorkian's 'ANJAR: Flowers, Goats and Heroes' (2009).

## Contact

Noura Kevorkian

Saaren Films

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Lebanon, Canada, Qatar / Arabic / 2018 / 80 mins

**Genre:** Creative Documentary

**Interests:** Identity, Immigration, Social Issues

**Filmed over an eight-year period, 'Batata' documents the life of a charismatic Syrian migrant worker Maria. An intimate story of love, friendship and perseverance set to the back-drop of an age-old conflict between Syria and Lebanon.**



The story of 'Batata' starts in the year 2009, in the beautiful fields of Lebanon's Beqaa Valley, where colourfully dressed Syrian migrant workers plant and harvest potatoes. Through Maria, the main subject of the film, we meet her extended migrant worker family and experience the rhythm of their daily lives. With every potato-planting season, political events affect their lives. But when the Syrian revolution begins in March 2011, everything changes. The story takes a darker turn as the civil war accelerates and the crisis intensifies, with hundreds of thousands of refugees flooding into Lebanon. The tent villages soon grow into tent cities, and the future for Maria and her countrymen looks ever bleaker. Shot over an astounding eight years, this epic documentary offers for the first time a view into the life of a strong, charismatic Syrian woman set against the backdrop of war and refugees.

## Noura Kevorkian



**Noura Kevorkian** is a Lebanese-Canadian filmmaker. Along with her film studies, Kevorkian holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Toronto, specialising in Economics and Middle East Studies. She made her filmmaking debut with the multi-award winning short 'Veils Uncovered' (2002), which was followed by her feature-length debut 'ANJAR: Flowers, Goats and Heroes' (2009). Her '23 Kilometres' (2015) was selected for the Official Competition at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. Kevorkian is currently directing 'Batata', her second feature-length documentary.

## Paul Scherzer



**Paul Scherzer** is a Canadian producer. Over the past 15 years, he has produced dramatic and documentary films, television series, and digital media that has played from Toronto to Cannes, Sundance to Dubai, and has sold into all markets. Recently, he has been focusing on working with Arab filmmakers in the MENA region. Collaborations include Simon El Habre's 'Gate #5' (2011); and, among other feature-length documentaries, '23 Kilometres' (2015), by Noura Kevorkian, and 'Challatt of Tunis' (2013) and 'Zeinab Hates the Snow' (2016), both by Kaouther Ben Hania. Scherzer is a member of ACE, the Canadian Media Producers Association, and a graduate of the Canadian Film Centre. He also teaches at film festivals and schools.

## Director's Note

As a filmmaker from the Beqaa Valley, I am naturally drawn to stories about my region. I am Lebanese, but also Syrian. My mother is Syrian, my father Lebanese. I was born in Aleppo, but I grew up in Lebanon. All my life I have felt the political, social and cultural attraction/repulsion between my two countries, and I wanted to find an innovative way to document it. 'Batata' is an amazing human story focused on the invisible population of Syrians who dot the fields of Lebanon, working all day, planting and harvesting food that will feed not only Lebanon, but also their own country and other parts of the Middle East. Beneath the surface of this idyllic pastoral setting lie deep-rooted issues that form the backdrop of the daily existence of these migrant workers.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$232,000

**Secured Financing:** \$200,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Canada Council for the Arts
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Dubai International Film Festival, UAE
- Musa Dagh Productions, Lebanon
- Ontario Arts Council, Canada

**Looking For:**

- Broadcasters
- Distributors
- Festivals
- Finishing funds
- Sales agents
- VOD platform

# Chaos

Director

**Sara Fattahi**

Producer

**Paolo Calamita**

Editor

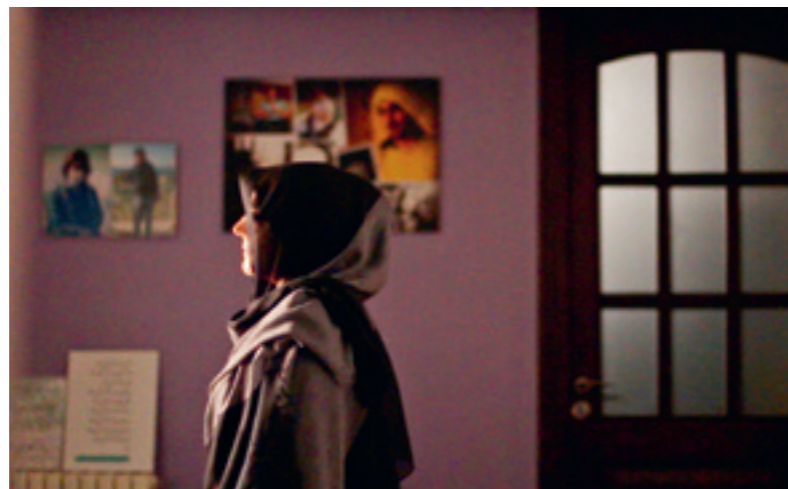
**Raya Yamisha**

Syria Austria, Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic, German / 2018 / 90 mins

**Genre:** Creative Documentary

**Interests:** Biography, History, Identity, Immigration, Politics, Social Issues, War, Women's Issues

**The story of three Syrian women, each living in a different time and place, separated by the very things that unite them - fear and trauma.**



## Company Profile

**Little Magnet Films** (LMF) is a Vienna-based production company that focuses on projects with high artistic value. LMF's first production was Jem Cohen's acclaimed feature film 'Museum Hours' (2012), which screened at numerous film festivals and received many awards and nominations, among them nominations for an Independent Spirit Awards (Best Editing) and the John Cassavetes Award (Best Feature under \$500,000). Apart from the production of 'Chaos' by Sara Fattahi, LMF is currently developing the documentaries 'Epicentro' by Academy Award nominee Hubert Sauper, and 'Tyrolean Meditation' by Academy Award nominee Debra Granik.

## Contact

Paolo Calamita

Little Magnet Films

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'Chaos' narrates the story of three women in three cities - three women who have given up on life. One lives in Damascus. She has stopped speaking to others entirely, seeking refuge in silence since the death of her son in the war. The other has left Damascus as a result of the war there, hiding herself in Sweden. The third ended up in Vienna and faces an unknown future. The film is a discussion among one woman stuck in Damascus, a second stuck in exile, and a third who has recently left. It is a conversation between the interior and exterior - which is also an impossible conversation.

## Sara Fattahi



**Sara Fattahi** was born in Damascus in 1983. In 2010, she started to produce and direct her own documentary films independently. She

finished her first short documentary '27 Metres' in 2013. Since 2014, she has collaborated in researching and writing independent short film projects. 'Coma' (2015), her first feature-length documentary, was granted the Regard Neuf Award for Best First Feature Film at Visions du Réel and took the FIPRESCI Award at the Viennale Film Festival in 2015, and has been screened in numerous festivals, such as MoMA's Doc Fortnight, the Berlin International Film Festival, and the São Paulo Film Festival.

## Paolo Calamita



**Paolo Calamita** was born in 1979 in Tirol, Austria, and moved to Vienna in 1998, where he studied Communications and

Drama and Film Studies, graduating in 2009. Since 2002, he has worked for the Vienna International Film Festival, where from 2006 he has been Head of Communications and Marketing. Since 2006, Calamita has been involved in various film projects as a production manager and producer. In 2012, he established Little Magnet Films to produce high-quality cinema. Little Magnet's first feature-length production, Jem Cohen's 'Museum Hours' (2012), was a worldwide success on the festival circuit. Calamita is affiliated as a producer with the Austrian Production company Kranzelbinder Gabriele Production.

## Director's Note

In the shadow of an unending war, or perhaps wars, we are blind in the face of a future we cannot see completely, a future we are almost entirely unable to read or make sense of. Wars that have viciously dug in their claws, blinding our sight without mercy, leaving us begging for forgiveness. How can our humanity persevere in the shadow of a war that has brought out the viciousness of aggrieved social classes, which was until now buried in our midst? How can people protect themselves from hatred when there is so much loss and pain surrounding them?

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$207,000

**Secured Financing:** \$160,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- Austrian Federal Chancellery
- Bidayyat for Audiovisual Arts, Syria/Lebanon
- City of Vienna, Austria
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar

**Looking For:**

- Distributors
- Sales agents



# Tiny Souls

Director / Producer

**Dina Naser**

Co-producer

**Palmyre Badinier**

## Company Profile

Founded in 2001, **Jordan Pioneers Multimedia Production Company** is a content-based production company based in Amman that seeks to create media that inspires critical and creative thought, thereby initiating beneficial changes in our global community.

Founded in 2011 by Frédéric Corvez, joined in 2017 by Palmyre Badinier and Julien Russo, independent French production company **Urban Factory (UF)** is the sister company of Urban Distribution International (UDI). UF has always been driven by the same goal: to make quality cinema and bring it to the largest audience possible on every continent. UF has produced and co-produced 11 art-house films by promising young filmmakers and renowned directors, all distinguished by their innovation and originality. Recent titles include the Brazilian genre film 'Good Manners' (2017) by Juliana Rojas and Marco Dutra, which won the Special Jury Prize at the Locarno Festival. UF is a member of the Syndicat des producteurs indépendants, UniFrance, and the EAVE Network.

## Contact

Dina Naser

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'Arwah Saghirah' / Jordan, France, Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic / 2018 / 75 mins

**Genre:** Documentary

**Interests:** Children, Immigration, War, Youth

**A documentary film that portrays the changes in Marwa's life, as she goes from childhood to adolescence within the walls of the Al Zaatari Refugee Camp in Jordan, reflecting its effect on her reality and future.**



Marwa is nine and stranded in Al Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan. Studying is her greatest worry, while playing is her greatest enjoyment. She says she has been there for four months with her mother and siblings, adding they will probably stay for another week... "maybe two". Over the ensuing four years, the director follows Marwa's life in the camp, where she blossoms from being a child to becoming a young woman. Sometimes, she still dreams of being one of the pigeons whose freedom is not surrounded by the high walls and barbed wire of the camp. Until one day, a rumour spreads, one which is wild enough to jeopardise Marwa and her family's life. From facing authorities, to reported associations with militant extremists, their existence has taken tremendous turns.

## Dina Naser



A Jordanian director, writer, and producer with Palestinian roots, **Dina Naser** holds a BA in Art and Graphic Design. Following her passion for filmmaking, she was granted the scholarship for DOCNOMADS Mobile Documentary School for a two-year MA programme in Lisbon, Budapest, and Brussels. She worked her way through a variety of television and film productions, until she began to direct and produce independently. Her first works are inspired by stories from her homeland. Her short documentary film 'Shamieh' (2011) portrays an aging Palestinian woman living in the Zizya refugee camp in Jordan. Her award-winning 'One Minute' (2015) tells the story of a woman living in Gaza while it was under attack in 2014. 'Sea Wash' (co-director, 2016), a short experimental film, pictures refugees who lost their lives at sea. 'Tiny Souls', a documentary project first realized in a nine-minute format, will be Naser's first feature length film.

## Palmyre Badinier



**Palmyre Badinier** studied Arabic Literature and International Relations and holds a master's degree in Law and Management for the Audiovisual Industry. She has worked in the fields of journalism, diplomacy, and international artistic exchanges. Her career in the film industry began in 2006, when she was an associate producer with the Palestinian production company Dar Films. In 2008, she co-founded Paris-based Les Films de Zayna, an independent production company with a strong focus on stories and talents from the Arab world. Through European and international co-productions, Badinier executive-produced the documentary collection Family Albums (2011), Nassim Amaouche's 'Terra cognita' (2012); Syrian directors Rana Kazkaz and Anas Khalaf's 'Deaf Day' (2011); and Raed Andoni's feature-length films 'Fix Me' (2009), which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and was selected for the Festival de Cannes, and 'Ghost Hunting' (2017), which was named Best Documentary at the Berlin International Film Festival. Since 2017, Badinier has produced her film projects through Urban Factory (France) and Akka Films (Switzerland). She is a member of the EAVE network.

## Director's Note

Over the past six years, the war in Syria has affected the lives of millions of people, and it has become crucial for me to give a voice to the children among them. The story of Marwa, Ayah, and Mahmoud; three siblings living in the Al Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, is told through their eyes. Being part of their lives for four years made me experience their reality as it unfolded day-by-day, and as they are coming of age. In telling this story, I am not trying to leave the audience with a single dominant thought or emotion. In fact, viewers will experience the conflicted collection of emotions that the children of Syria go through every day. In a conflict dominated by decisions made by adults, these children have been left out of the conversation – but they have a great deal to say. More than anything, I hope this film can be a moment that allows us to reflect on the world we live in today – and on the future of these "tiny souls".

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$197,000

**Secured Financing:** \$112,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- IDFA Bertha Foundation, The Netherlands
- Screen Institute Beirut, Lebanon
- Women in Film Finishing Fund, USA

**Looking For:**

- Broadcasters
- Distributors
- Funding
- Sales agents

# Underdown

Director

**Sarah Kaskas**

Producer

**Liliane Rahal, Ines Meier**

## Company Profile

**Karaaj Films** produces independent fiction and non-fiction films and web series. The company is run by Lebanese producer Liliane Rahal and director Sarah Kaskas, an eclectic team who bridge their passion for storytelling with their technical skills. Keeping in line with their organic and independent filmmaking approach, the team recently produced the award-winning short documentary 'Bread and Tea', which to date has appeared at 12 festivals in under a year. The team has also secured a production grant from the Doha Film Institute for their upcoming feature documentary 'Underdown', which will be released in 2019.

## Contact

Liliane Rahal

Karaaj Films

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'Taht Al Taht' / Lebanon, Germany, Qatar / Arabic / 2019 / 90 mins

**Genre:** Creative Documentary

**Interests:** Children, Identity, Immigration, Social Issues, Women's Issues

**'Underdown' is the pulsating journey of three unbreakable characters struggling to live below the poverty line in the chaos of Beirut.**



Moving to Beirut's anarchic rhythm, 'Underdown' follows the struggles of a Palestinian cab driver who lives in his car, a homeless Syrian kid, and a Lebanese woman and her family. Through a pulsating journey full of harsh realities and an unbreakable sense of humour, the film's subjects convey glimmers of hope in the darkest of places.

## Sarah Kaskas



**Sarah Kaskas** received her MFA in Cinematic Arts in 2011. Her thesis film, 'Fugue' (2011), toured to several festivals before being sold to BBC Arabic's 'Alternative Cinema'. In 2013, her animated short film 'Wanderland' won an award at the Co-Production Forum at the Stuttgart International Animation Festival, and was nominated for the Robert Bosch Film Prize in 2014. In 2016, Kaskas co-directed 'Bread and Tea', which was named Best Short Documentary at Iran's Cinéma Vérité. Her upcoming feature documentary was nominated for the Robert Bosch Film Prize 2017 and received a production grant from the Doha Film Institute. She resides in Beirut and is an Assistant Professor of Film at the Lebanese American University.

## Liliane Rahal



**Liliane Rahal** is a Lebanese producer who has more than 10 years of experience in film production in Beirut and the region. Her work includes award winning television commercials, corporate films and documentaries. In 2013, Rahal pursued her love for photography by teaching a year-long workshop to incarcerated women in Lebanon. She produced and co-directed 'Bread and Tea' (2016), a short film revolving around the life of a Syrian child in a refugee camp, which won best short documentary at Cinéma Vérité 2016 in Iran. Rahal recently executed the production of the sci-fi web series 'Arabs in Space, a first of its genre in the region.

## Director's Note

I am not alone when it comes to feeling both love and hate towards Beirut and its beautiful mess. With all the current uproar against a corrupt government and a crumbling infrastructure, it becomes difficult to be grateful for what little we may have. The protagonists in 'Underdown' are living in poverty and facing conflicts most of us are lucky never to experience. To the outsider, they are pariahs, cast aside as "drunks", "beggars", or "dirty people". What is overlooked is their resilience, humour, and the overwhelming hope that drives them forward. Capturing the essence of these characters requires trust, respect, and honesty. My approach is to observe their truths openly, and to develop with the protagonists at their own pace. As a Lebanese filmmaker, I believe the amount of twisted and corrupt stories at our disposal are limitless, but stories of how to endure this darkness are essential.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$105,000

**Secured Financing:** \$35,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Karaaj Films, Lebanon
- Pong Films, Germany

**Looking For:**

- Distributors
- Funding
- Legal advice
- Marketing strategy

# Qumra Projects



# Picture Lock Feature Narrative

'Late to Die Young' by Dominga Sotomayor

'The Load' by Ognjen Glavonić

'Weldi' by Mohamed Ben Attia

Twenty-minute excerpts of Picture Lock features will be presented to selected festival programmers, sales agents and distributors during Qumra sessions.

# Late to Die Young

Director / Screenwriter

**Dominga Sotomayor**

Producer

**Rodrigo Teixeira,**

**Dominga Sotomayor, Omar Zúñiga,**

**Sophie Mas**

## Company Profile

**Cinestación** is a creative platform for auteur filmmaking in Latin America. With a growing catalogue of films and directors, we tell stories with strong points of view, collaborating with global partners and supporting audacity and quality. Among other films, Cinestación produced Dominga Sotomayor's Rotterdam Tiger Award-winning 'Thursday Till Sunday' (2012), and her medium-length 'Mar' (2015), which premiered in the Forum section of the Berlin International Film Festival. Our work has been recognised by world-class film festivals, including the Berlinale, the Festival de Cannes, the International Film Festival Rotterdam, the Valdivia International Film Festival and the Sundance Film Festival. In 2018, we will shoot Omar Zúñiga's feature debut, 'Los Fuertes', and premiere two films as minority co-producers, 'Die Monster Die' by Alejandro Fadel, from Argentina, and 'Cascos Indomables' by Neto Villalobos, from Costa Rica.

## Contact

Omar Zúñiga

Cinestación

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'Tarde para morir joven' / Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Netherlands, Qatar / Spanish / 2018 / 110 mins

**Genre:** Drama

**Interests:** Coming of age

**In an isolated community, Sofía, Clara, and Lucas prepare for New Year's Eve. They may live far from the dangers of the city, but not from those of nature.**



The summer of 1990 in Chile. A small group of families lives in an isolated community right below the Andes, among dry dirt roads and dusty trees, building a new world away from the excesses of the distant city. Sixteen-year-old Sofía and Lucas, and 10-year-old Clara struggle with parents, first loves, and fears, while they prepare a big party for New Year's Eve with the hope of some new beginnings. 'Late to Die Young' is a portrait of a group of people who try to isolate themselves from the dangers of the city, but are instead confronted by those of nature.

## Dominga Sotomayor



**Dominga Sotomayor** was born in Santiago de Chile in 1985. Her first feature film, 'Thursday Till Sunday' (2012), was developed

at the Cinéfondation Résidence at the Festival de Cannes, won the Tiger Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam, and was named best film at IndieLisboa, New Horizons, and the Valdivia International Film Festival. She co-directed 'The Island' (2013), which also claimed a Tiger Award. In 2015, her medium-length film 'Mar' had its premiere in the Forum section at the Berlin International Film Festival, and she also released 'Aqui, Em Lisboa', a collective film directed with Gabriel Abrantes, Denis Côté, and Marie Losier.

## Omar Zúñiga



**Omar Zúñiga** graduated with an MFA from New York University's Graduate Film Programme in 2014, which he attended on

scholarships from Fulbright, the Chilean Ministry of Education, and the Tisch School of the Arts. He directed Academy

Award nominee James Franco and Zach Braff in a segment of the feature film 'The Color of Time'. His short film 'San Cristóbal' won an award at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2015. He is now preparing to shoot his first feature-length work, 'Los Fuertes', while producing various films for Cinestación.

## Sophie Mas



**Sophie Mas** was born in Paris in 1980. She joined RT Features in 2012. Since then, she has been working with

Luourenço Sant'Anna to scout projects, and develop and produce both emerging and established talented directors. Her filmography includes: Robert Eggers's 'The Witch' (2015), Jonas Carpignano's 'A Ciambra' (2017), Ira Sachs's 'Love is Strange' (2014) and 'Little Men' (2016), Jeremy Jasper's 'Patti Cake\$', Luca Guadagnino's 'Call Me By Your Name' (2017), Crystal Moselle's 'Skate Kitchen' (2018) and James Gray's 'Ad Astra', which will be released in 2019.

## Director's Note

'Late to Die Young' is a coming-of-age story inspired by the loss of innocence, both in the kids and their community, in a country that was aching after dictatorship. The film portrays a group of families who have chosen to live away from the city in a natural environment, but are simultaneously threatened by it. They are confined in this self-imposed exile, where they are faced by their own fragility. I want to explore the uneasy relationship between generations, between classes, to capture the wisdom of children and the foolishness of adults, the strange melancholy of growing up. I'm interested in how what is familiar can become threatening and foreign at the same time. I am also interested in the sense of belonging, and the illusion of property we have over relationships, people, and nature itself. The story puts this under the spotlight, casting doubt over everything, reminding us that nothing really belongs to anyone.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$790,000

**Secured Financing:** \$764,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Hubert Bals Fund, The Netherlands
- National Council of Culture and the Arts, Chile
- National Institute of Cinema and Audiovisual Arts, Argentina
- RT Features, Brazil
- Sundance Feature Film Programme Grant, USA

**Looking For:**

- Festivals

# The Load

Director / Screenwriter

**Ognjen Glavonić**

Producer

**Stefan Ivančić, Dragana Jovović,  
Ognjen Glavonić**

## Company Profile

Founded by young directors Ognjen Glavonić and Stefan Ivančić, together with producer Dragana Jovović, **Non-Aligned Films** is a production company based in Belgrade. The idea behind the company is to act as a platform for producing the films of an upcoming generation of Serbian filmmakers. The company's first production was the documentary 'Zivan Makes a Punk Festival' (2014) directed by Glavonić. Its international premiere was at Cinéma du Réel in Paris, and to date it has been screened at more than 45 international film festivals, including the International Film Festival Rotterdam. Non-Aligned Films produced three short films in 2014: Stefan Ivančić's documentary '1973' and his fictional 'Moonless Summer'; as well as the experimental documentary 'Heavens', directed by Jelena Maksimović and Ivan Salatić. 'Depth Two', a documentary by Glavonić, had its world premiere in the Forum section at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2016. 'The Load' is the company's debut feature-length fiction film.

## Contact

Stefan Ivančić

Non-Aligned Films

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'Teret' / Serbia, France, Croatia, Iran, Qatar / Serbian / 2018 / 90 mins

**Genre:** Drama

**Interests:** Based on a True Story, Politics, War

**During the NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999, Vlada is driving a truck. He does not know what the load is, but his cargo slowly becomes his burden.**



Vlada works as a truck driver during the NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999. Tasked with transporting a mysterious load from Kosovo to Belgrade, he drives through unfamiliar territory, surrounded by the ravages of the war. When his mission is over, Vlada will need to face the consequences of his actions.

## Ognjen Glavonić



**Ognjen Glavonić** was born in 1985 in Pančevo in the former Yugoslavia. His short films have been selected for more than 50 international

film festivals. 'Zivan Makes a Punk Festival', (2014), his first medium-length documentary, had its premiere at Cinéma du Réel and has been screened at more than 40 international film festivals, among them the International Film Festival Rotterdam, CPH:DOX, and IndieLisboa. His feature-length documentary 'Depth Two' (2016) had its premiere in the Forum section at the Berlin International Film Festival, and was named best film at DokuFest Prizren, Message to Man St. Petersburg, OpenCity Docs London, the Festival dei Popoli Firenze, and Kassel Dokfest, among others. 'The Load' is his feature-length narrative debut.

## Stefan Ivančić



A film director, producer and film programmer, **Stefan Ivančić** was born in the former Yugoslavia in 1985. His short films have been

shown at festivals including the Festival de Cannes, the International Film Festival Rotterdam, Visions du Réel, the Torino Film Festival, the San Sebastián Film Festival and FIDMarseille. Ivančić is a producer of Ognjen Glavonić's feature 'The Load', which is supported by the CNC, visions sud est, the Hubert Bals Fund and Eurimages. He is currently co-producing Ivan Salatić's 'Sailor Girl', among other films. He works at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade and is a member of the selection committee of Pardi di Domani at the Locarno Festival.

## Director's Note

In 2001, on the outskirts of Belgrade, several mass graves were discovered, containing the bodies of more than 700 Kosovo-Albanian civilians. They were transported there using refrigerated trucks during the NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999. This was a state-organised operation, one that included the participation of the army, the police, and regular citizens. 'The Load' follows Vlada on his new job, driving such truck through Serbia, but it also tracks a journey through the darkness of a society at a specific moment in its decay. This film is not an attempt to explain the atrocities of the conflict in question; rather, I am interested in the position of the Everyman within such events – his intimacy and his self-doubt, not his heroics. A man whose decisions will prove to be his burden for many years, but which will also reverberate through his surroundings and his family.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$594,000

**Secured Financing:** \$594,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- AP Vojvodina, Serbia
- Centre national de la cinématographie, France
- Croatian Audiovisual Centre
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Eurimages, EU
- Film Centre Serbia
- Hubert Bals Fund, The Netherlands
- visions sud est, Switzerland

**Looking For:**

- Distributors
- Festivals

# Weldi

Director / Screenwriter

**Mohamed Ben Attia**

Producer

**Dora Bouchoucha,**

**Jean-Pierre Dardenne,**

**Luc Dardenne, Nadim Cheikhrouha**

## Company Profile

**Nomadis Images** is a Tunisian audiovisual production company. Its main activities include producing short and feature-length fiction films, documentaries and commercials, and providing services and training to filmmakers. The company's filmography includes Sami Tlili's 'Cursed Be the Phosphate' (2012); Hinde Boujemaa's 'It Was Better Tomorrow' (2012); Raja Amari's 'Buried Secrets' (2009) 'Satin Rouge' (2002) and 'Foreign Body' (2016); and Mohamed Ben Attia's 'Hedi' (2016).

## Contact

Dora Bouchoucha

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Tunisia, France, Belgium, Qatar / Arabic / 2018 / 90 mins

**Genre:** Drama

**Interests:** Social Issues

**A father is confronted by his own reality and has to question himself and his choices.**



Riadh and Nazli are in their sixties and have an only son, Sami, who is preparing to sit for his baccalaureate. He is often prone to migraine crises, and his worried parents take him to see specialists, then a psychiatrist. It seems Sami is getting better. Riadh works at the port and is soon to retire, a change in the couple's life that does not help their financial situation. One day Sami disappears. At first Riadh is lost. He goes through several absurd initiatives before deciding to leave for Turkey in search of his son.

## Mohamed Ben Attia



**Mohamed Ben Attia** was born in Tunis in 1976. He studied Audiovisual Communication at the University of Valenciennes in France

after graduating from the Institut de Hautes Études Commerciales (IHEC) in Tunis in 1998. He has directed five short films. 'Hedi', his feature-film debut, had its world premiere at the 2016 Berlin International Film Festival, where it won the Best First Film Award and the Silver Bear for Best Actor. The film has been released in more than 20 countries, has taken part in numerous festivals around the world, and has won many awards.

## Dora Bouchoucha



**Dora Bouchoucha** has been a film producer since 1994. Through her company Nomadis Images, she has produced and

co-produced several Tunisian and international documentary, short and feature-length films. Bouchoucha founded the Carthage Film Festival Projects Workshop in 1992, and

Takmil in 2014. She founded the Sud Écriture workshops in 1997, which she continues to run, and is actively involved in training and promoting southern cinema. In 2012, she became President of the CNC Aide aux cinémas du monde. She headed the Carthage Film Festival. At the 2015 Festival de Cannes, she was named Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres by the French Minister of Culture. The most recent film she produced, Mohamed Ben Attia's 'Hedi', was selected for the Official Competition of the 2016 Berlin International Film Festival, where it took the Silver Bear for best actor as well as the Best First Feature prize.

## Nadim Cheikhrouha



**Nadim Cheikhrouha** graduated from HEC in 1998. After a year at TF1 Films Production, he moved to presales at TPS Cinema. In 2002, he

joined Mandarin Films, where he held the position of CEO for four years before producing on his own several feature films and documentaries, such as Mohamed ben Attia's 'Hedi' (2016) and Kaouther Ben Hania's 'Beauty and the Dogs' (2017).

## Director's Note

'Weldi' is the story of 60-year-old Riadh, 60, who, when confronted to a painful ordeal, accepts the inevitable and becomes aware of the inanity of his own life, and of the one he dreamt of for his child. By losing his job first, as he is at the age of retirement, and then his son, who disappears to join a world which is odious to Riadh, and opposed to his beliefs and principles, he loses his anchors and is revealed to himself: a lucidity on his own fate, which could be perceived as weakness, but which is more like a capitulation. This revelation comes to him through a dream/nightmare, after an initial trip in search of his son. This dream will lead him to understand the uselessness of his quest.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$923,000

**Secured Financing:** \$923,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon
- ARTE, France
- BAC Films, France
- BE TV Belgique, Belgium
- Centre national de la cinématographie, France

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Luxbox, France
- RTBF, Belgium
- Tunisian Ministry of Culture
- TV5 Monde, France
- World Cinema Fund, Germany

# Qumra Projects

# Picture Lock Feature Documentary

'Constructions' by Fernando Martín Restelli

'Nine Months War' by László Csujá



Twenty-minute excerpts of Picture Lock features will be presented to selected festival programmers, sales agents and distributors during Qumra sessions.

# Constructions

Director

**Fernando Martín Restelli**

Producer

**Milagros Cabral Montejano,  
Pablo Cruceño**

## Company Profile

**Periferia Cine** is a young production company based in Córdoba, Argentina, that generates committed, creative documentaries and non-fiction films for an international audience, helping filmmakers explore and shape their own personal voices, with a special focus on fresh and new talent and contemporary social issues. Periferia's films have participated and received awards and recognition in various film festivals, including Visions du Réel, the International Documentary Festival Amsterdam, MDQFilmFest, the Valdivia International Film Festival, the Transcinema International Film Festival, and DocMontevideo.

## Contact

Milagros Cabral Montejano

Periferia Cine

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'Construcciones' / Argentina, Qatar / Spanish / 2018 / 75 mins

**Genre:** Creative Documentary

**Interests:** Family, Social Issues

**A 60-year-old watchman of buildings under construction has a second chance in life to become a father.**



Sixty-year-old Pedro watches over the quiet corridors of a building that is undergoing construction. In spite of the difficulties he has to face as a single father, he constantly looks for ways to stay close to his seven-year-old son, Juampi. A young couple who are building a home of their own, Jesi and Lucas, take care of the boy while his father works. Over time, Juampi grows close to the couple and comes to see in Jesi the figure of his absent mother. In an attempt to deepen his relationship with his son, Pedro brings Juampi on a camping trip, hoping that their experience together will help them reconnect.

## Fernando Martín Restelli



**Fernando Martín Restelli** was born in 1991, and currently lives and works in Córdoba, Argentina. A filmmaker, editor and

cinematographer, he studied at the Universidad de Córdoba. His short film 'Merodeo' (2016) received the Special Jury Prize at the Valdivia International Film Festival, and was selected for several other festivals. 'Constructions', his first feature-length film, is currently in progress; with it, he participated in the Rough Cut Lab at Visions du Réel, the Mar del Plata International Film Festival, pitch sessions at DocMontevideo and TransLAB at the Transcinema Festival Internacional de Cine. In 2016, he received a scholarship to attend the IDFAcademy in Amsterdam.

## Milagros Cabral Montejano



**Milagros Cabral Montejano** was born in 1990 in Posadas, Misiones, Argentina. In 2009, she began her BA studies in

the arts, and then began working in audiovisual production in 2013. She produces the web magazine [www.publacionemergente.com](http://www.publacionemergente.com), which combines visual arts, design, and photography. Since 2015, she has been part of Periferia Cine, an independent film production company. Cabral Montejano is currently producing 'Constructions' and 'La Yunga'. In 2016, she received a scholarship to attend to the IDFAcademy programme. In 2017, she participated in the Talents BA programme at BAFICI.

## Director's Note

At night, lights from buildings under construction illuminate flat areas where many stories begin. Through slits in construction hoarding, which jealously guards the buildings, and beneath the fluorescent light from inside, we can make out human figures moving slowly from one place to another, amid the construction materials. Who are these guardians wandering around those corridors while the city sleeps? Where do they go when the morning clatter of the cement mixer starts once again? For sleepless Pedro, guardian of inanimate objects, always carrying a radio, his only companion, work time is leisure time. 'Constructions', like a family album, aims to portray the many changes over time each character goes through while they build a sense of belonging regarding both spatial and personal relationships. The film seeks to observe and disclose the ways in which the property-development business affects the daily life of construction workers.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$130,000

**Secured Financing:** \$114,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Cinecolor Argentina
- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- Municipality of Córdoba, Argentina

**Looking For:**

- Co-producers
- Distributors
- Festivals
- Sales agents



# Nine Months War

Director

**László Csujá**

Producer

**Ágnes Horváth-Szabó,**

**András Pires Muhi**

## Company Profile

**ELF Pictures**, run by former freelance producers Ágnes Horváth-Szabó and András Pires Muhi, is a Budapest-based production company. The two producers fused in 2016 to provide a hub for filmmakers of their generation to grow together. ELF Pictures produces feature documentaries with a human, political, art, and sports focus. Since 2018, ELF also functions as a theatrical distributor, bringing international and domestic fictions and documentaries to screens across Hungary.

## Contact

Ágnes Horváth-Szabó

ELF Pictures

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'Kilenc hónap háború' / Hungary, Qatar / Hungarian / 2018 / 75 mins

**Genre:** Creative Documentary

**Interests:** Coming of age, History, Identity, Social Issues, War

**Jani has left his family to serve in the Ukrainian Army for nine months. His mother wants her son back. Jani just wants independence.**



Twenty-four-year-old Jani lives in a small town in Western Ukraine, part of the minority Hungarian community. An only child whose father died five years ago, Jani is fed up with the boring life in his hometown, and drowning in the love of his mother, Erzsike. When he is drafted by Ukrainian Army, called up to fight the separatists, he could sneak out of the country to escape the military service just like his fellows did, but instead he chooses to go to the war 1,500 kilometres away. But why? He is not a patriot; he is not even Ukrainian. Combining visuals of cinema verité and mobile footage of war, Jani's coming-of-age story unfolds over the nine months of his military service and the time after his discharge.

## László Csujá



**László Csujá** was born in 1984. He graduated in Scriptwriting from the Hungarian Academy of Film and Drama.

His short films have

been screened at film festivals across Europe, among them the Tampere and Edinburgh International Film Festivals. He attended, among others, Talents Sarajevo, the Berlinale Talent Campus, and the Aristoteles Documentary Workshop. Csujá's first feature-length fiction film, supported by the Hungarian Film Fund, is currently in post-production.

## Ágnes Horváth-Szabó



In 2011 **Ágnes Horváth-Szabó** debuted as a producer with a short film that had its premiere at the Berlin International Film

Festival in the Short Film Competition. Since then, she has contributed to award-winning art-house films, documentaries and shorts as a freelance producer, associate producer, and production manager. She began producing documentaries in 2015, and is an Ex Oriente Film workshop graduate, a EURODOC Training Programme alumna, and participated in the Emerging Producers Programme in 2017. Her first feature-length documentary as a producer is expected this year.

## Director's Note

'Nine Months War' is a close-up on an ordinary family whose story introduces today's Ukraine in the shadow of its war with separatists. We witness life from a naive soldier's point of view, seeing Jani in his two different worlds: the provincial boredom of his hometown, and the extremes of war. Jani is caught between the two while he strives to find his identity. The film investigates whether military service can transform a boy into a man, as Jani and most of us might think. The visual styling of the war zone and the hometown serve to capture the scantiness of Jani's world, and show the limitations of his fight for independence and adulthood.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**Total Budget:** \$154,000

**Secured Financing:** \$154,000

**Confirmed Financial Partners:**

- Doha Film Institute, Qatar
- MTVA, Hungary
- Creative Europe MEDIA Development Fund, EU

## Looking For:

- Audience development strategy
- Festivals
- Marketing strategy

# Qumra Projects



## Development Short Narrative

'Bandits' by Sara Al Obaidly

'Connect' by Maha Al-Jefairi

'Hatshepsut in the Box' by Hadeer Omar

'Al Sit' by Suzannah Mirghani

## Development Short Documentary

'Pastimes' by Majid Al Remailhi

# Bandits

Director / Screenwriter  
**Sara Al Obaidly**

Qatar / English  
**Genre:** Adventure Drama

**Contact**  
Sara Al Obaidly  
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**Two young rebels leave behind their London lives for dreams of the Middle East, but when reality sets in they realize they have taken on more than they bargained for....**



Mo and Sherry are two rebellious British teenagers on a quest to reach the Arabian Gulf coastline, travelling by foot across Iraq's unforgiving desert terrain. When they arrive at a remote village, the elders warn them that it is unsafe for two young women to travel alone. To solve this dilemma, they are given two donkeys, and a pair of reluctant chaperones to guide them. Now they are burdened with unwanted allies, but this is only the beginning of their troubles....

## Sara Al Obaidly



**Sara Al Obaidly** is a photographer and director living between London and Doha. She studied Art Foundation at the Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication, and graduated in 2010 with a BA and an MA in Sustainable Design from the University of Brighton. While studying at La Fémis during the Gulf Summer University programme, she had the opportunity to direct a short film project. She is currently in development of her first full-length feature 'Hitch 60', which was awarded a development grant by the Doha Film Institute, and with which she participated in Qumra 2017. In parallel, she is also writing her first short, based on an excerpt from 'Hitch 60'. The project was selected for DFI's Short Scriptwriting Lab this year. Additionally, Al Obaidly was a Doha Fire Station Artist in Resident (2015-16), with her photographic work, which was exhibited in the National Portrait Gallery, London in 2014 and 2016, selected by 'TIME' magazine's Lightbox for the Best Portraits of 2014, and gained an Honorary Mention in the Life Framer Awards, in the Youthhood category in 2016.

## Director's Note

I want to tell a story that captures the essence of the real-life experiences of my British mother, who, in 1962 at the age of 17 decided to go hitchhiking with her best friend from the UK all the way to the Middle East. The story concentrates on the London mod subculture of the 1960s, a post-war non-conformist group of young adults who sought to exert their independence and identity through fashion, music and scooters. This wasn't just a cultural phase, but also an attitude the youth adopted that made anything seem possible for both men and women. Both my feature and the accompanying short aim to investigate themes of family, rebellion, and a young woman's drive for independence – celebrating a unique moment in history, igniting a passion for cultural exploration, and exploring the recklessness of youth in all its glory.

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## ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

### Looking For:

- Financing advice
- Mentorship
- Promotion and placement advice
- Script consultation

# Connect

Director / Screenwriter

**Maha Al-Jefairi**

Producer

**Jemina Legaspi**

## Contact

Maha Al-Jefairi

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Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Science Fiction

**A young mother dies and is brought back to life in a robotic body - and must confront her new reality, in which her six-year-old son is afraid of her.**



Noor wakes up in a procedure room. A company doctor explains that her physical self has died, but, as per her contract, her consciousness has been copied into a high-end robotic body. She reunites with her family. While she is still trying to accept her new body, her son's growing suspicion becomes of concern to her, and so she tries to act more "human". Tension between mother and son escalates when an accident occurs at the beach. Will Noor regain her son's trust?

## Maha Al-Jefairi



**Maha Al-Jefairi** is a Qatari director and writer, and holds a degree in Communications from Northwestern University in Qatar. She is deeply interested in storytelling, which has helped shape her worldview and identity. Often, she is drawn to stories that are the polar opposite of her own life and reality, which is why she favours science fiction, which for her provides the most honest portrayal of the human experience because its stories never limit how they explore those concepts. Currently, Al-Jefairi is going into production on her first short film, 'Me, Myself and A.I.'. 'Connect' is her second film.

## Jemina Legaspi



**Jemina Legaspi** is a Filipina filmmaker based in Doha. She has produced short films including Omar Khalifa's 'Aqila' (2017), Dimirti Salomao's 'Confessions' (2017) and 'Somewhere, Sometime' (2017), and Nissryne Dib's 'Upon the Death of a Nation' (2015). In 2016, she received a grant to direct her own film, 'Key Hole'. Legaspi is fond of using her passion for storytelling to show the struggles of children worldwide, and is now focusing on working in animation. She is currently a junior producer at The Film House, and works on various productions related to short films and commercials.

## Director's Note

We do not think about what makes us physically human that often. We take it for granted every single day - by not acknowledging how the sun feels on our skin, or how hugging a loved one is filled with warmth. All these little tactile things that make us human; what if we lose that and are left with just our mind? Is that enough? What happens if it is not? Our relationships to our bodies are very complicated, but one thing is certain: we are all judged by them. People often misguidedly shape their own feelings towards their bodies by how others look and perceive them. 'Connect' explores the journey of physical acceptance by focusing on the relationship between a mother and her son.

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## ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

### Looking For:

- Funding
- Mentorship
- Promotion and placement advice
- Script Consultation

# Hatshepsut in the Box

Director / Screenwriter

**Hadeer Omar**

**Contact**

Hadeer Omar

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'Hatshepsut fi Al Sunduq' / Egypt, Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Experimental

**In a world where people wear transparent boxes on their heads to reveal their identities, 14-year-old Leila goes rogue and divides the materials in her box to become more like the Pharaoh Hatshepsut.**



In Spring 2007, the Egyptian Museum allows the public to see Pharaoh Hatshepsut's body for the first time. Leila hears the news, but fails to convince her parents and friends to travel to the exhibition with her. She fills the transparent box she wears on her head with items related to her obsession with the Pharaoh Hatshepsut's box, wanting to discover the ruler's secret of dominance. Fed up with her parents rejecting the idea of her being the new Hatshepsut, Leila decides to use a divider in her box to separate her obsession from the rest of her life items, in order to gain power like her role model. She goes on a journey and discovers the power within her.

**Hadeer Omar**



**Hadeer Omar** is an Egyptian visual communicator and time-based media artist based in Qatar. After receiving her BFA in

Graphic Design, she returned to Egypt to apply visual arts to her practice. Omar attained an MFA in Design Studies from Virginia Commonwealth University Arts in Qatar. She crosses disciplines and mediums within art, design, and film, presenting her identity through her work, which showcases her interest in the concept of hacking cultures visually. Omar was awarded an honorary mention for her concept 'zarabizi Keyboard' at the STARTS Prize - Grand Prize of the European Commission honoring Innovation in Technology, Industry and Society Stimulated by the Arts. The project was exhibited at the Ars Electronica festival in Linz, Austria, and the Drive: Volkswagen Group Forum in Berlin, Germany. Recently, her visual diaries were displayed at the 2020 exhibition at VCU Arts Qatar's gallery and at the Calligraphies in Conversation 2017 Exhibition at the San Francisco Public Library. Currently, she works as a teacher assistant at the Art Foundation Department at VCU Arts Qatar.

**Director's Note**

Being an artist and researcher leads me to translate what I see around me into visuals and narratives. As a young Egyptian girl, I grew up hearing stories about Egyptian women who ruled the country a long time ago, but now women are struggling to have the bare minimum: a voice. Through my experimentation of objects, I stumbled upon a box and from there came the idea behind 'Hatshepsut in the Box', which attempts to show the struggle that a young girl experiences in the MENA region when dreaming about power or becoming a leader. Leila feels that Hatshepsut - the first female ruler of Ancient Egypt - is growing inside her, both literally and metaphorically. Ultimately, instead of choosing to go down her own path and finding her own way to lead, she tries to follow in the footsteps of the only woman she knows has succeeded in a similar journey. Leila must learn that she cannot simply follow; she must also incorporate her own unique experiences. Only then can she truly lead.

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**ONGOING REQUIREMENTS**

**Looking For:**

- Festival strategy
- Funding
- Mentorship
- Promotion and placement advice
- Script Consultation
- Workshops and labs

# Al Sit

Director / Screenwriter

**Suzannah Mirghani**

Producer

**Eiman Mirghani**

## Contact

Suzannah Mirghani

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Sudan, Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Drama

**In a Sudanese farming village, old Al Sit must be consulted for her blessings ahead of any wedding. But in a modernising world, does the matriarch's word hold any power?**



In a Sudanese farming village, the old matriarch, Al Sit, must be consulted for her blessing ahead of any wedding. Nadir is a hopeful groom with a hidden agenda. He tries to impress Al-Sit with his wealth, but, although she is half blind, Al-Sit senses his ulterior motives. But in a modernizing world, does the matriarch's word hold any power?

## Suzannah Mirghani



**Suzannah Mirghani** is a Communication and Media Studies graduate and independent filmmaker working on highlighting stories from

the Gulf region, with a focus on Qatar. Being of multicultural background, Mirghani is interested in stories that examine the interconnectedness of multiple –sometimes seemingly opposed – ethnicities and identities. She is especially interested in exploring the wealth of multicultural encounters that occur in a traditionally cosmopolitan place like Qatar. She is the writer and director of several short films, including, *Hind's Dream* (2014) and *Caravan* (2016).

## Eiman Mirghani



**Eiman Mirghani** is an independent Sudanese filmmaker based in Doha. After graduating with a BA in Media and Film Studies from

the University of Nottingham in 2015, Mirghani began her career working in the Doha film scene as an assistant director, art director, and production coordinator. In 2017, she produced two art films directed by Kuwaiti artist and filmmaker Maysaa Al Mumin, and shot and directed her own short narrative film 'Is That All There Is?'

## Director's Note

In some Sudanese farming villages, it is still the tradition that the matriarch must be consulted for her blessing ahead of any wedding. She is both revered and feared, because she is the holder of all knowledge of the village's heritage, and can remember long-forgotten stories – both the good and the bad – and she knows everything about everyone. But what happens when the matriarch slowly begins to lose her mind? At what point do pragmatism and realism take over from tradition? This film explores these questions, setting up a scenario in which tradition and modernity battle over the right to dictate who oversees wedding contracts. This clash takes the form of Al-Sit in her handmade cotton thobe on the one side, and young Nadir in his shiny polyester suit on the other. Will Al-Sit find she must concede that she is the last of the matriarchs?

## ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

### Looking For:

- Financing advice
- Mentorship
- Promotion and placement advice
- Script consultation

# Pastimes

Director

**Majid Al Remeihi**

Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Documentary

**Contact**

Majid Al-Remeihi

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**'Pastimes' interrogates the repetition of traditional scenery in painting practice in Doha, and the factors that sustain as well as complicate it.**



'Pastimes' follows the director as he explores spaces in Doha where public art works can be seen. His journey brings him to modern spaces, for example a correctional facility, and introduces him to different practitioners, such as art collectors and artists. Complemented by a variety of points-of-view, the documentary finds itself intertwining between the past, present and future of the young metropolis, its newly emerging art scene and the projections of a timeless past.

**Majid Al Remeihi**



**Majid Al Remeihi** is a Qatari filmmaker and artist. He is interested in the practice of filmmaking as a tool for investigating the institutional and social purview of art in Qatar and the Gulf region. He is also part of the artist collective Ab6al (with Abdullah Al Mutairi and Sarah AbuAbdallah), which explores the crossover of youth and ideas of development in the Gulf. He recently completed his first short film, 'Domestic Acoustics' (2017), through the Doha Film Institute's Documentary Lab, which was mentored by award-winning filmmaker Pablo Iraburu; the film explores the scope of domesticity as a space for art and concealed life. Currently, Al Remeihi is working on another short documentary about the unravelling of art practices and their respective collections in Qatar.

**Director's Note**

Through rapidly changing times in Doha, both institutionally and culturally, I developed an interest in discovering more about the past through various means, some of which are paintings of the city in the past. Paying attention to those paintings as though they were specters of the past became my "pastime". My curiosity made me wonder, what is that one thing (or many things) that sustains the creation of these paintings through shifting times? In 'Pastimes', I set out to visually explore those questions by visiting the locations of these paintings, and the individuals who play a part in sustaining them. Through a variety of lenses, I hope to make sense of the past, present, and future of the city.

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**ONGOING REQUIREMENTS**

**Looking For:**

- Documentary development
- Mentorship
- Promotion and placement advice

# Qumra Projects



## Work-in-Progress Short Narrative

'Amphitheatre' by Mahdi Ali Ali

'Burn the Bird' by Zahed Bata

'Chained Prey' by Mohammed Refaat

'Gubgub' by Noof Al-Sulaiti

'Sh'hab' by Amal Al-Muftah

## Work-in-Progress Short Documentary

'Okht Rjal' by Obada Yousef Jarbi



Work-in-Progress / Short Narrative

# Amphitheatre

Director / Screenwriter

**Mahdi Ali Ali**

'Al Masrah Al Makshouf' / Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Black Comedy

**A young girl rebels against her family's traditions in front of a professional photographer's lens.**

## Contact

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A professional Qatari photographer is surprised by the rebelliousness of a teenage girl from a conservative family who takes pictures of the frescoes in a cultural village. The photographer pursues documenting the teenager's rebellion until her family rebukes her, and she escapes and hides in the corridors of the village. After discovering the girl's hideout, the photographer follows her further in an amphitheatre, where she expresses her inner voice.

## Mahdi Ali Ali



**Mahdi Ali Ali** is a Qatari filmmaker and the Gulf Development Manager at the Doha Film Institute. Through the years, he has successfully worked with major industry players in providing filmmakers in Qatar with comprehensive learning initiatives. Mahdi has contributed as Executive Producer and supervisor on more than 30 short films produced by the Institute. He holds an MFA from EICAR, the International Film School of Paris, and has made short films including 'Champs Elysées, I Love You' (2009) and 'The Gulf Habibi' (2011), as well as other shorts for Al Jazeera Documentary and Al Jazeera Children's Channels.

## Director's Note

What kind of impact do the artworks of artists in Qatar have on our society? This question echoes in my mind whenever I see paintings or sculptures around the Cultural Village. From my perspective, the core objective of meaningful art is to enrich debate, generating a diversity of opinions leading to evolving healthy attitudes. If the only objective of these artworks is beautification, then they do not fulfil their true function in the community.

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## ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

### Looking For:

- Festival strategy
- Promotion and placement advice

# Burn the Bird

Director / Screenwriter

**Zahed Bata**

Producer

**Nouf Al Sulaiti, Mayar Hamdan**

## Contact

Zahed Bata

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'Teer Ya Teir' / Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Drama. Dark Comedy

**Samaa and her son Sari drive out in the dead of night to bury Naghnoosh, their pet parrot. Ultimately, they realise the only way to set him free is to set him on fire.**



Very late in the night in a deserted Doha neighborhood, 56-year-old Samaa and her son Sari find themselves in search of a proper burial spot for Naghnoosh, Samaa's pet parrot. After attempts to dig a hole in the rocky barren land fail, Samaa realises that the only way to have peace of mind is to cremate Naghnoosh in the dead of night. Upon getting caught by police patrol, the suspicious duo is stopped from starting a fire in the residential area.

## Zahed Bata



**Zahed Bata** is a Qatar-based Palestinian filmmaker. He has worked on a variety of film projects, including documentaries, narrative and experimental films such as Jaser Al-Agha's 'Good as New' (2014), Nissryne Dib's 'Upon the Death of a Nation' (2015), Layan Abdulshakoor's 'The Dog's Children' (2016), and Bayan Dahdah's 'Shishbarak' (2016), as well as advertisements for clients including Al Jazeera, Ooredoo, Barwa, and Al Bandari Real Estate, among others. He has worked on more than 30 projects, among them 13 short films, as a director of photography and gaffer. Two years ago, Zahed wrote the first draft of his own first short film, 'Burn the Bird.'

## Nouf Al Sulaiti



**Nouf Al Sulaiti** is a Qatari filmmaker. Now in her final year at Northwestern University in Qatar, she has worked on numerous film projects, both fiction and documentary, including Yassine Ouahrani's 'Noor' (2017), Zaki Hussain's 'How to Get Over a Heartbreak' (2017), and her own 'Outdated' (2016) and 'Papers' (2016), both of which she also produced. Al Sulaiti has received grants to make Zaki Hussain's 'Terima Kasih', which she is producing, and her

own current short project, 'Gubgub'. She has worked on projects with both the Doha Film Institute and the Film House, where she worked on short films, and on commercials for clients including Ooredoo and Silatech. She is currently a teaching assistant in Documentary Production and previously for Media Construction at Northwestern University in Qatar.

## Mayar Hamdan



A storyteller and filmmaker, **Mayar Hamdan** graduated from Northwestern University in Qatar with a degree in Media Industries and Technology. During her studies, Mayar was president of Studio20Q and founded Not Another Film Club. She was awarded Studio20Q grants for her films 'Asfoora' (2014) and 'Man Down' (2015). 'Asfoora' won the Best Short Narrative Award at the Ajyal Youth Film Festival, and the Audience Choice Award at the Washington Arab Film Festival, and screened at the Chicago Palestinian Film Festival, among others. More recently, Hamdan has worked on numerous projects as a script editor, producer and art director. She currently works at the Doha Film Institute as a Film Training and Development Assistant.

## Director's Note

After practising many forms of denial over the 22 years since my father's death, the absurd story of our pet's death and burial gave birth to 'Burn the Bird'. At the core of the issue were two forces – my disconnection to the death of my father and my expectation that my mother would simply "get over it", and her long-lived attachment to her husband and his demise. It took me 24 years to come to understand that her attachment is a result of her continuous struggle with the consequences of her loss. It took the experience of my mother and I burying our pet for me to understand that it takes both strength and a son who will help her fill the void for her to overcome her ordeal. Ultimately, death is the only fact of life. While facing this fact is difficult, it is also imperative. 'Burn the Bird' explores dark topics: death, burial and an unsettled mother-son relationship. Nonetheless, it is about moving on from dark, often life-consuming thoughts.

## ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

### Looking For:

- Distributors
- Festival strategy
- Promotion and placement advice
- Rough-cut consultation
- Sales agents

# Chained Prey

Director / Screenwriter  
**Muhammad Refaat**

Qatar / Arabic  
**Genre:** Animation

**A domestic falcon who lives a life of prestige at his falconer's house in Doha faces the threat of losing his secure lifestyle forever.**



Batistuta, an Argentinian domestic falcon, lives in Doha with Sultan, his young Qatari falconer. Batistuta has the luxury of being taken out to the desert by Sultan to hunt his prey. One day, Sultan decides to release Batistuta into the desert to live like a wild bird. But Batistuta faces a moment of insecurity he never expected. 'Chained Prey' is a story about the dilemma of choosing between security and freedom.

## Contact

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## Muhammad Refaat



In 2006, **Muhammad Refaat** left the faculty of engineering to study Television and Cinema Directing at Cairo University. For his graduation project, he wrote and directed his debut short documentary, 'The Kingdom' (2010), which was named Best Foreign-Language Film at the International Student Film Festival Hollywood. In 2010, he received a scholarship to study Film Production in the Netherlands, where he participated in making a feature-length documentary about the experiences of international students abroad. In 2014, Refaat moved to Doha to join the Al Jazeera Documentary production team. There, he has worked as a commissioning producer on several films around the MENA region. In 2017, he wrote the short film 'Chained Prey' at the Doha Film Institute-Torino Film Lab's Short Scriptwriting Narrative Scriptwriting Lab. The screenplay went on to win the Best Screenplay award at the Cinephilia screenwriting lab at the Arab Film Festival in Rotterdam.

## Director's Note

My whole life, I have lived in Cairo. I never expected I would ever live elsewhere. Three years ago, however, I moved from my hometown to Doha. Here, it feels like the years have gone by so fast – too fast for me to really feel it. It feels like I, along with the city's residents, are constantly in a state of transit. Maybe no one here intended to stay for long, but eventually, everyone does. I keep asking myself: Are we here because Doha is a generous city? Are people only here because they have a more secure lifestyle? Does life outside this place still carry a wide range of opportunities? Is it time to leave? Or would one more year not hurt? In this film, I seek to reflect this hesitation and anxiety by telling the story of others who live in the same city. They are not my friends or relatives... in fact, they are not even human. They are a group of animals who were gathered from all over the globe to be in the same place: Doha's old Souq Waqif. Destiny has brought them together. At the end of the day, they are stuck here in one of the hottest cities in the world. The hot summer that seems to last forever is pushing them to ask the same single question: Should we stay? Or should we go?

## ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

### Looking For:

- Animation consultation
- Festival strategy
- Financing advice
- Promotion and placement advice
- Rough-cut consultation

# Gubgub

Director / Screenwriter

**Nouf Al Sulaiti**

Producer

**Justin Kramer**

Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Drama

**Interests:** Culture, Identity, Women's Issues

**An adventurous young girl goes crab-hunting with her father and brother. Discouraged when her father undervalues her accomplishments compared to her brother's, she sets out to win her father's approval.**



After getting her first catch of the day while crab-hunting with her father and brother, bright-eyed Jawaher, shows it to her father. He dismisses her, but goes on to praise her brother's catch. Determined to win her father's approval, Jawaher shrugs off his hurtful reaction, and sets out to catch 10 crabs. On her quest, she finds herself battling for a catch with Nawaf, a boy who shares her goal.

## Company Profile

Made up of talented, experienced and creative storytellers, producers, documentarians, animators, photographers, and filmmakers, **The Film House** is an award-winning, Doha-based film, video, and multi-media production company unlike any other in the region. With a wealth of local knowledge, and with Qatar's community in mind, the company is primed to foster local talent and to redefine visual storytelling in the region. The Film House is a home for high-calibre international and local productions; it has produced dozens of short films and is currently producing feature-length films and documentaries by Qatari filmmakers, as well as television series for the BBC, CNN, and PBS.

## Contact

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The Film House  
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justin@thefilmhouse.tv

## Nouf Al Sulaiti



**Nouf Al Sulaiti** is a Qatari filmmaker. Now in her final year at Northwestern University in Qatar, she has worked on

numerous film projects, both fiction and documentary, including Yassine Ouahrani's 'Noor' (2017), Zaki Hussain's 'How to Get Over a Heartbreak' (2017), and her own 'Outdated' (2016) and 'Papers' (2016), both of which she also produced. Al Sulaiti has received grants to make Zaki Hussain's 'Terima Kasih', which she is producing, and her own current short project, 'Gubgub'. She has worked on projects with both the Doha Film Institute and the Film House, where she worked on short films, and on commercials for clients including Ooredoo and Silatech. She is currently a teaching assistant in Documentary Production and previously for Media Construction at Northwestern University in Qatar.

## Justin Kramer



**Justin Kramer** is an American filmmaker and artist. His career started in New York City, where he formed Elwood Gentry

Productions and worked on projects for HBO, MTV, CNN, VH1, and AMC among others. His producing, directing, and cinematography have been seen in numerous award-winning short films, television shows, feature documentaries, music videos, and commercials. Kramer has displayed photography work at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and has lectured at Harvard University on documentary filmmaking. In 2009, he moved to Qatar to join the Doha Film Institute, where he produced and mentored numerous workshops and programmes that resulted in some of the first films and filmmakers from Qatar gaining international recognition. Since, Kramer has developed The Film House, the first company of its kind in Qatar, producing documentaries, commercials, and design at a world-class level for clients like 'VICE', Levi's, Al Jazeera and the BBC. Kramer's first feature-length documentary, 'Zabaleen' (2016), which was selected for several film festivals, is an intimate look at a family of garbage collectors in Egypt.

## Director's Note

There is a young girl like Jawaher in everyone. Many young girls feel the need to win admiration and affirmation for the things they do. This need may stay with them for the rest of their lives. However, many strong girls learn to become their own admirer, their own motivator, their own strength. They learn to not rely on others for validation. They learn to be independent. I have seen myself as Jawaher at many moments in my life. I had to remind myself constantly that I am my own power, I drive myself forward, and I should not allow anything to stand in my way. Especially in a society and culture like mine, many young girls who start to feel overshadowed by others (often their brothers) start feeling down. I want to remind young girls - and women in general - that it is we who can control these things. We should not let anyone overshadow us no matter how they might try; girls can do anything boys can. We are unstoppable - unless we stop ourselves. We should never let that happen. I try to show these things through the events Jawaher experiences at the seashore. She thinks she is longing for her father's admiration; little does she know that she is her own support. I want every girl to feel that she can be strong, even when the world seems to be working against her.

## ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

### Looking For:

- Festival strategy
- Mentorship
- Promotion and positioning advice
- Rough-cut consultation

Work-in-Progress / Short Narrative

# Sh'hab

Director / Screenwriter  
**Amal Al-Muftah**

Qatar / Arabic  
**Genre:** Drama

**Contact**  
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**Upon hearing a myth about falling stars, a young girl's curiosity is sparked. When night falls on Al Wakrah village, she sets out in her father's boat to chase the fabled comets.**



In the old village of Al Wakrah, a mischievous eight-year-old girl would do anything to stay out of the kitchen and spend time with her father and elder brother at sea. Her mother shares with her the most elaborate mythological tales about falling stars to keep her in the kitchen, not realising the tales are stirring her daughter's curiosity. When night falls on Al Wakrah, she sneaks out alone to search for a fallen star but her adventure comes to a halt when she encounters a Jinn. Later night, Amal climbs into a boat with the help of her brother, where she sees, for the first time in her life, a falling star. She grabs the paddles and sets off to chase her dream.

## Amal Al-Muftah



**Amal Al-Muftah** was born in Doha in 1994. She started making films in high school, including 'Al-Kora' (2013) and the award-winning 'Alhamali' (2014). After graduating from high school, she enrolled in Northwestern University in Qatar's Communications programme. During her first year there, she worked on 'Smicha' (2016) with Innovation Films, and 'Eh fe Amal' (2015). Her third narrative film, 'Sh'hab', is currently in post-production.

## Director's Note

I grew up listening to my grandmother narrate tales that were hundreds of years old. Tales about the sea, the desert and the people; tales that took me back to a time when "human spirits were high" and "life was not that hard". I am making 'Sh'hab' to pay tribute to these tales and to re-create feelings of longing for my grandmother's stories.

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## ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

### Looking For:

- Distributors
- Festival strategy
- Promotion and placement advice
- Sales agents

Work-in-Progress / Short Documentary

# Okht Rjal

Director

**Obada Yousef Jarbi**

Jordan, Qatar / Arabic

**Genre:** Documentary

**Interests:** Women's Issues

## Contact

Obada Yousef Jarbi

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**When switching gender roles becomes necessary for survival, three women become the breadwinners for their families.**



This is a story about three unusual Jordanian women: Um Saif, Um Mohammed, and Um Islam. Because their husbands are absent or unable to work, circumstances demand that the three leave their usual roles as wives and mothers in order to provide for their families. Each one capitalises on her own skills, doing what she does best, whether preparing vegetables, embroidering garments, or collecting scrap to sell in the streets and markets of Irbid.

## Obada Yousef Jarbi



Born in 1995, **Obada Yousef Jarbi** is a Jordanian resident of Qatar. An aspiring filmmaker, Jarbi is currently pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication and Broadcast Journalism at Qatar University. He began his filmmaking career in 2014, when he began filming and producing local films, and made his directorial debut with the documentary 'Addicted to Alienation' (2016). Recently, Jarbi completed his second short film 'The Fishermen' (2017), through the Doha Film Institute's documentary workshop. Through his filmmaking, Jarbi hopes to send a meaningful message to audiences.

## Director's Note

Throughout history, women around the world have experienced discrimination, and have been subjected to limitations on their independence. In the Middle East, women are often expected to be obedient housewives and caretakers, while their husbands bring home the halal bacon. Some of these practices are based on religious opinion, but many of the restrictions are cultural, originating from tradition as well as faith. While I was growing up in my hometown of Irbid, my grandfather would tell me stories about the strength and skill of the Arab woman, providing for her tribe and family, and he warned me never to underestimate the true willpower of a woman, nor how deep her love for her cubs runs. This embedded a deep interest in the role of the woman in the Middle East in me. Um Islam, Um Mohammed, and Um Saif are standing examples of how far women will go to provide for their families, despite their having no educational background and their limited skills. By documenting these three women, I want to test and explore my grandfather's tales of the resilience of the Arab woman.

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## ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

### Looking For:

- Documentary consultation
- Festival strategy
- Financing
- Mentorship
- Promotion and placement advice
- Rough-cut consultation

## DOHA FILM INSTITUTE AND QUMRA 2018 TEAM

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Qumra Director**  
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**Director of Strategy and  
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Qumra Deputy Director**  
Hanaa Issa

**Artistic Advisor**  
Elia Suleiman

**Qumra Managing Director**  
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**LEGAL**

Russell Frame

Durriyah Shami

**FOR THEIR INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE, QUMRA WOULD LIKE TO THANK:****Alpha Violet**

Keiko Funato

**Al Rayyan Parking**

Waleed Jumaan

**British Council**

Waseem Kotoub

**Darwish Holding**

Ziad Asmar

Pierre Bassil

Bader Al-Darwish

Saoud Al-Darwish

**French Embassy**

Olivier Deseez

**Intercinema**

Natalia Zakharova

**Lacombe, Inc.**

Vanessa Gomez

**MC Distribution**

Badih Massaad

**Ministry of Culture and Sports**H.E. Mr. Salah Bin Ghanim Al-Ali,  
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**Museum of Islamic Art**

Faraz Ahmed

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Wael Mohamed Abdou Ismail

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**Park Circus**

Graham Fulton

Rati Oneli

**Private Engineering office**

H.E. Mr. Hamad bin Khalifa Al Attiya

Mohamed bin Mutlaq Al Qahtani

Abdulla Al Saeed

Mohamed Al Salem

**Qatar Museums**Sheikha Nouf Mubarak Saif Ahmed Al  
Thani

Louise Cutajar

Emmanouil Tzannes

**Radical Media**

Annie Thomas

**Sarajevo Film Festival**

Lela Begić

Izeta Gradević

Lejla Karišik

Jovan Marjanović

Mirsad Purivatra

**Seagull Films**

Alla Verlotsky

**Screen International**

Raphael Bechakjian

**Souq Waqif Boutique Hotels**

Ramzi Fitouri

Olga Krotova

Anjabin Siddiqui

Mohammad Taha

Anna Lee Vergara

Ekaterina Zakharova

**Syndicado**

Jasmina Vignjevic

**Translation and Interpreting  
Institute**

Mona K. Bushara

Nada Al Mahmeed

**Special Thanks**

Violeta Bava

Paolo Bertolin

Teresa Cavina

Daniela Elstner

Ricardo Geraldo

Dana Hayes

Hannah Horner

Amira Ibrahim

Orwa Nyrabia

Nonthachan Prakobsup



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