

Well played – Arabische Filmtage

Yallah – Brave Women in the Arab World

Nawara

Feature Fiction by Hala Khalil, Egypt 2016, 125 min



Film Synopsis

Nawara lives in a poor neighbourhood of Cairo and works as a maid for wealthy Egyptians. Nawara looks at this world without envy, her only wish for herself and her family is an existence in peace and safety. Between the alleys of the poor neighbourhood and the roads leading to the villas of the luxury compound, Nawara goes back and forth every day on her way to work, carrying in her journey between these two worlds the worries of the people of her neighbourhood and their simple dreams. But then the «Arab Spring» strikes: upsetting the social order to its very core.

Director's Biography

Hala Khalil is a director, script writer and producer. She obtained her degree in film directing from the film academy in Cairo 1992. She wrote and directed: movies, short films, documentaries and TV series. In addition she worked as an executive producer for several years.

Her first award winning short film *The Kite* (1997) participated in many festivals, winning international acclaim. In 2004 she wrote and directed her first feature film *Best of times*. In 2006 she wrote and directed her second film *Cut*

and *Paste*. Both films also were critically acclaimed, participated in numerous international film festivals and won several awards.

Her latest film *Nawara* participated in Dubai International Film Festival, Portland International Film Festival, Festival International du Film d'Amour de Mons and Luxor African Film Festival. Nawara won Best actress award in Dubai International Film Festival and Festival International Cinéma Méditerranéen Tétouan.

The Mulberry House

 Feature documentary/biography by Sara Ishaq,
 Yemen/UK 2013, 65 min

Film Synopsis

Sara grew up in Yemen to a Yemeni father and a Scottish mother. As a teenager, she became increasingly suffocated by the constraints of her surroundings, and at age 17, finally decided to move to Scotland, where her mother now resides. Her father, however, would only approve under the condition that she would not forsake her Yemeni roots – a promise she made, but could not keep.



Wir weisen darauf hin, dass im Rahmen der Veranstaltungen Foto-, Ton- und Filmaufnahmen von Rundfunksendern sowie für Veröffentlichungen der Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung und ihrer Partner gemacht werden können.

Ten years later – 2011 – Sara returns to Yemen as a different person, geared up to face the home of her past and reconnect with her long-severed roots. But against all personal expectations, she returns to find her family and country teetering on the brink of a revolution.

Director's Biography

Sara Ishaq is an award-winning Yemeni-Scottish documentary filmmaker. Her debut short documentary film *Karama Has No Walls* was nominated for Oscars, Bafta New Talent Award, and screened internationally, winning several awards including Aljazeera Film Festival Award for Short Doc.

Sara holds an MFA in film directing at the Edinburgh College of Art. She spent some time in the past few years volunteering in the occupied Palestinian territories and radio-reporting from Yemen, while documenting her experiences through video blogs, and has been involved in several BBC productions set in the Middle East. Sara's most recent doc *The Mulberry House* shot in Yemen during the revolution in 2011 and later in 2012 was an official selection of IDFA 2013 and at Al Muher Alarabi Competition Dubai International Film Festival 2013. In 2014 it was nominated for the Asia Pacific Screen Awards.

I Am The People

Feature documentary by Anna Roussillon, Egypt 2013, 111 min



Film Synopsis

As the Egyptian people rises up in Tahrir Square, rural villagers in the south are watching the revolution on TV. From the overthrow of Mubarak to the fall of Morsi, the film follows the upheavals through the eyes of Farraj, a peasant in the

Nile valley near Luxor. In the daily life of the farmer, between hopes and disappointments, change is a long time coming.

Director's Biography

Born in 1980 in Beyrouth, Anna Roussillon grew up in Cairo, and then moved to Paris. She studied philosophy, linguistics, language, literature and Arab civilization and documentary filmmaking in Lussas (France). Graduated from Arabic, she teaches in Lyon, translates literary texts, and participates in radio programs, while working on various film projects in relation with Egypt. *I am the people* is her first feature documentary.

Much Loved

Feature Documentary by Nabil Ayouch, Morocco/France 2015, 108 min



Film Synopsis

Marrakech today. Noha, Randa, Soukaina, Hlima and others live a life of 'love for sale'. They're whores, objects of desire. Full of joy and a sense of complicity, dignified and free in their kingdom of women, they overcome the violence of a society that takes advantage of them while at the same time condemning them.

Much loved is a strong, true, moving and sometimes humorous ensemble drama about a group of women, who turn out to be prostitutes in Morocco. In Morocco the film triggered strong controversy and was finally banned as a scandal film.

Director's Biography

Nabil Ayouch was born in Paris in 1969. He works in Casablanca and Paris. In 1997, he directed his first fea-

ture film *Mektoub*, followed by *Ali Zaoua* in 2000. His next film, *A Minute of Sun Less*, came in 2003, followed in 2008 by *Whatever Lola Wants*. In 2011, his first documentary *My Land*, shot in the Middle East, was released. In 2012, his film *Horses of God*, inspired by the suicide bombings in Casablanca in 2003, was presented at Cannes.

Suleima

Animated short documentary, Jalal Maghout, Syria 2014, 14 min

Film Synopsis

The portrait of a woman, representative for thousands of anonymous women who fight against dependencies and injustice in Syria: Suleima is a woman in her forties who is linked to the Syrian revolution from the very outset. She separates from her husband who disapproves of her activism and is rejected by her daughter and son after she asks for a divorce. Vulnerable, yet strong, she stands by her beliefs and fights against dependence and injustice.

The film *Suleima* is based on an interview with a woman who has been a part of the Syrian revolution since its beginning. Twice detained, she states: «I'd rather die than see someone arrested without trying to help.»



Director's Biography

Jalal Maghout is an independent filmmaker from Syria who started his film career after receiving a bachelor's degree in visual communication from Damascus University 2010. He has produced and directed a variety of short animated films that were played at festivals around the world, including his most recent film *Suleima* – an animated documentary which

has been selected amongst others for: Dok-Leipzig, Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film and ANNECY International Animation Film Festival.

Jalal has also an experience as jury member at international film festival, such as in Stuttgart and Annecy. Besides films, he also has an experience in music videos, caricature, comics and painting. And before moving to Berlin in 2013 he has been working as a teacher at the Damascus University. Currently, Jalal is preparing his master-film in Berlin besides developing other projects.

Damascus, My First Kiss

Medium length documentary by Lina Elabed, Syria 2012, 48 min



Film Synopsis

Syria is a country of many nationalities and a place where different religions and minorities co-exist with one another. The spirit of this country is shaped by these differences among people, no matter whether they are boys and girls or men and women. What are the actual roles and freedoms that women have in a male-dominated society? How are these conditions reflected in their sexual awareness and their relationships to their bodies?

Questions and answers take us into the close and personal details of how two outstanding women and the filmmaker understand their relationship with their bodies and the society, thoughts and feelings, what it means to be a woman in Syria.

Director's Biography

Born 1980, Lina Elabed is a graduate from the Faculty of Journalism at Damascus University. She made a graduation

film of 52 minutes a portrait of a Syrian author. Later, she worked for several years as a newspapers journalist.

She has worked on several projects that focus on women's conditions in the Middle East, such as a television trilogy about female fundamentalist organization Al Qubaiseat and other investigative Documentary and journalistic pieces.

She went into a cooperative work with Danish directors on documentary in 2009. Later she made a short doc. Her second short doc was financed by Al-Arabiya TV entitled *Nour Alhuda* granted the DOX BOX Jury Award as best Syrian film in 2010.

Her experience includes also working for national TV stations as a line-producer, and attempts in TV drama script-writing. Today, Lina is part of a production company based in Beirut: SakaDo productions.

My Love Awaits Me by the Sea

Feature Documentary by Mais Darwazah, Palestine/Germany 2013, 80 min



Film Synopsis

My Love Awaits Me by the Sea is a poetic documentary narrating the story of director Mais Darwazah, who takes a first time journey back to her homeland, Palestine. She leaves a secluded reality and follows a lover whom she has never met; Hasan, a Palestinian artist, who unveils a beautiful and utopian world to her. Fairytale and reality are woven together to question the elusiveness of place and the need to believe in dreams.

This film pays tribute to Hasan Hourani, a Palestinian artist who, with his imagination, rises above the Occupation. Hourani completed 'Hasan is everywhere', a children's book of illustration and poetry, just before his tragic death by drowning in the forbidden sea of Jaffa in 2003.

Director's biography

Having worked across the Middle East in architecture, graphic design and television documentaries, Mais Darwazah's independent film career started by making short experimental films. After finishing her undergraduate degree in Interior Architecture from Kingston University, UK in 1997, she received the Chevening scholarship from the British Council, completing an MA in Documentary Directing at Edinburgh College of Art in the UK in 2007.

Her graduation film *Take me home* (54', 2008), was screened in more than 20 international film festivals. As part of an Arab feature documentary collective entitled *Family Albums*, she completed *The Dinner* (25', 2012), which was co-produced with ARTE France and received the Special Mention audience award at Cinemed, 2012.

In 2010, Darwazah started developing *My love Awaits Me by the Sea*, her first feature-length documentary, which has participated in several development workshops like the Berlinale's Talent Campus DocStation, and received numerous regional and international funds such as the Sundance Documentary Development Fund. Her film was selected to officially screen and premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival, 2013. Mais currently lives and works in Jordan.

Parisienne

Feature fiction by Danielle Arabid, Lebanon/France 2015, 120min



Film Synopsis

Lina is a Lebanese Student that just arrived to Paris to continue her studies in a French University in 1993, only to find that the Chaos that was home was no different than

what she will witness in the French capital. She feels alone and lost. Accompanied only by her fear and natural instinct for self-preservation, she is looking for something that she never found in her homeland of Lebanon: freedom. Paris will offer her the opportunity to find herself and acquire a new self confidence that she didn't know she had in herself.

Director's Biography

Born in Beirut in 1970, Danielle Arbid left her country at the age of 17 to study literature in Paris. In 1997 she started making films.

Selected by the most important festivals in France and around the world (Cannes, New York, San Francisco, Locarno, Pusan, Tokyo, etc.) her two first feature films *In the Battlegrounds* and *A lost man* have successively been selected for the Quinzaine des réalisateurs at the Cannes film festival in 2004 and 2007 and won numerous prizes including Director's fortnight-Europa award and Le Grand prix de Milan.

Her films like *Alone with war* or *On borders* and the serie *Living room conversations* have received both critical and public acclaim as well as several awards including the Golden Leopard and Silver Leopard at the Locarno film festival as well as the Albert Londres prize and a grant from the Villa Medici.

Her work has been the focus of several retrospective screenings, notably the Bastia festival in 2006, Paris Cinéma in 2007, and the 2007 Gijon festival, and at the La Rochelle festival in 2008. In 2011 Danielle Arbid directed her third feature *Beirut Hotel*, produced by the French television Arte. The film was premiered in the official competition of Locarno film festival, and was a great public success.

It Was Better Tomorrow

Feature documentary by Hind Boujemaa, Tunisia 2012, 71 min

Film Synopsis

While the Egyptian people rise up on Tahrir Square, the rural villagers in the south only see the revolution on TV. From the overthrow of Husni Mubarak to the fall of Mohamed Morsi, the film chronicles the changes through the eyes of Farraj, a farmer in the Nile Valley near Luxor. In the daily life of the

farmer, between hope and disappointment, the transformation is long in coming.



Director's Biography

Hinde Boujemaa is a Tunisian-Belgian director. In 2012 she signed her first feature documentary, *It was better tomorrow* (official selection, 2012 Venice Film Festival). Driven by her activism, she directed four short films for a Tunisian campaign that fights against inequality and discrimination against women.

In 2014, her short fiction ... *Romeo and Juliet Married* won the Muhr Award for Best Short Film at the 2014 Dubai International Film Festival. In September 2016, she has directed a documentary and an experimental film *Conversations of Saturday Afternoon* for a Tunisian campaign against the discrimination of women. Boujemaa is currently preparing her feature fiction *Noura in Wonderland*.

Factory Girl

Feature fiction by Mohamed Khan, Egypt 2013, 90 min

Film Synopsis

It is a simple love story about Hiyam, a young factory girl, who lives in a poor neighbourhood with her mother, stepfather and young sister who works with her at the same factory. Hiyam falls in love with the new factory supervisor, believing that he loves her too. Eventually, Hiyam is shocked by his changing attitude towards her, refusing their relationship since she belongs to a lower working class, while he is from a middle-class. Her strength appears when a pregnancy test is discovered in the factory premises; her immediate family and close friends accuse her of sinning. Hiyam decides not to

defend herself and pays an enormous price in a society that fails to accept independent women.



Director's biography

Since 1971, Mohamed Khan cemented his role as a salient director in the Egyptian and Arab filmmaking scenes. With a rich repertoire of more than 25 films, his works received over 30 international awards and recognitions. Between 1962-63, Khan studied filmmaking at London School of Film Technique (nowadays known as The London Film School).

He joined the Script Department at the General Egyptian Company in 1963 before he moved to Beirut, where he worked as Assistant Director from 1963 to 1966. As a book author, Khan has under his belt two books namely; *An Introduction to the Egyptian Cinema* – published in London 1969 – and *Outline of Czechoslovakian Cinema* – published in London in 1971. His films received several awards and accolades in the Arab world and beyond, in addition, three of his films are listed on the 100 Greatest Arab Films of Dubai International Film Festival in 2013.

Mohamed Khan died in July 2016.

Sleepless Nights

Feature documentary by Eliane Raheb, Lebanon/Palestine/ UAE/Qatar/France 2012, 128min

Film Synopsis

Through the stories of Assaad Shaftari, a former high ranking intelligence officer in a Christian right wing militia, responsible for many casualties in the protracted civil war in Lebanon and Maryam Saïdi, the mother of Maher, a missing

young communist fighter who disappeared in 1982, the film digs in the war wounds and asks if redemption and forgiveness are possible.

Director's Biography

Eliane Raheb is a female director born in Lebanon. She has directed the two short films *The Last Screening* (1996) and *Meeting* (1997), and the medium length documentaries *Karib Baiid (So Near Yet So Far, 2002)*, *Intihar (Suicide, 2003)* and *Hayda Lubnan (This is Lebanon, 2008)*, which has received the Excellency Award at the Yamagata Film Festival, and was broadcasted on ARTE/ZDF, Al Jadeed and NHK.

Her first feature documentary, *Sleepless Nights* (2012) premiered at the San Sebastian Film Festival and was screened in over 30 film festivals. It also aired on the Al Jazeera Documentary channel. The film received the Best Documentary Award at the Bird's Eye View, the Human Rights Award at the Bilbao Cine Invisible Festival, the Critics' Award for Best Film at the Ismailia Film Festival, the Best Documentary award at the Women Film Festival of Valencia and the award for Best Feature at the LAIFF



Festival in Argentina. *Sleepless Nights* was also ranked 5th in the Sight and Sound magazine's classification for the best documentaries of 2013.

Eliane Raheb is the founder of ITAR Productions, a company that has produced numerous documentaries and 160 short films shot in seven Arab countries during the Arab Spring and broadcasted online and on the channels ARTE and France 24.

Eliane Raheb is also a founding member of the Association for Cinema, Beirut DC within which she has directed

several documentary workshops and played the role of artistic director for its Arab Film Festival Ayam Beirut Al Cinema'iya (Beirut Cinema Days) during six editions.

Nearby Sky

Feature documentary by Nujoom Alghanem, UAE2014, 85min



Film Synopsis

Fatima Alhameli is the first Emirati Female camel owner to physically take part in the Camel Beauty Pageant Competitions as well to enter the camels' auctions in the UAE. Regardless of all the difficulties and challenges she encountered while trying to prove herself in one of the most male dominant domains, her wish to win in a race or a beauty pageant contest remains the only compensation to overcome her failures. Fatima's story is uniquely portrayed. She is shown giving us her own first hand experiences and the film depicts her personalized story. For the first time we see her journey as a child, mother and businesswoman. The film reveals the path she has chosen for herself to walk including the challenges she faces, both socially and personally. Just when Fatima begins to lose hope, an unexpected reward comes her way.

Director's Biography

Nujoom Alghanem, born in 1962, is an Emirati poet, scriptwriter and multi-awardwinning film director. She has produced eleven films including five short films, six feature length documentaries and a great number of corporate films. She has won numerous prizes. She graduated with MA from Griffith University in Australia in 1999 and received her Bachelor degree in Video Production from Ohio University in the US in 1996.

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