



La Biennale di Venezia

Arte  
Architettura  
Cinema  
Danza  
Musica  
Teatro  
Archivio Storico

# FINAL CUT IN VENICE

VENICE  
PRODUCTION  
BRIDGE

VENICE  
31.08—2.09.2025





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# FINAL CUT IN VENICE

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82. Mostra Internazionale d’Arte Cinematografica

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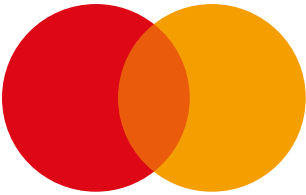
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Final Cut in Venice  
**Alessandra Speciale**

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The Final Cut in Venice 2025 brochure was compiled with the information available as of July 21st, 2025.  
The Venice Production Bridge cannot be held responsible for any possible inaccuracies.  
An updated version, including the daily schedule, will be sent out during the first week of August

# FINAL CUT IN VENICE 13<sup>TH</sup> EDITION

A program to support films in post-production from all African countries and six countries in Middle East: Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Yemen. The goal of the project is to enhance the role of the Venice International Film Festival as a bridge builder supporting the production of independent quality films coming from Africa and Arab countries; providing concrete help to film production, and promoting the competitiveness of their audiovisual products on the international market. This year, two of the selected projects are part of the *VPB Focus on the United Kingdom* and *VPB Focus on Morocco*.

Eight work-in-progress films from different geographical and cultural areas will be presented.

Access is reserved exclusively to Gold and Trade badge holders. The one-to-one meetings session between the selected projects and the professionals attending the Venice Production Bridge will be organized on September 2nd.



**Final Cut in Venice** will conclude with the awarding of prizes in kind or in cash, the purpose of which is to provide economic support for the post-production phase of the films.

For the **ninth year, La Biennale di Venezia** will give a prize of € 5.000 for the best film in post-production. The La Biennale di Venezia Prize will be attributed by a jury composed of three members named by the Festival Director, while the other prizes will be awarded by final and irrevocable decision of the Festival Director and the Final Cut in Venice’s supporters.

- The prizes are:
- € 15.000 for the colour correction of a feature-length film offered by **Laser Film** (Rome) for up to 50 hours of work (technician included);
  - € 15.000 offered by **Studio A Fabrica** (Ajaccio) for the sound mixing of a feature length film (up to 12 days of work, sound mixer not included);
  - **Oticons** will offer tailored film music services to one of the films, in the form of either music consulting, and/or music supervision and/or the production of an original score by one of our represented film composers. These services, valued at up to €10.000, will encompass all relevant processes, such as spotting sessions, composition, mock-ups and final production (for original score), or expert support in music licensing and supervision (if applicable).
  - for a feature-length fiction film a minimum of \$ 10.000 MG or for a feature-length documentary a minimum of \$ 3.000 MG for marketing, publicity and distribution in the Arab World or internationally, offered by **MAD Solutions** for one Arab project (except for projects already funded by MAD Solutions);
  - **Titra Film** (Paris) will offer up to € 5.000 for colour-grading; up to € 3.000 for the production of a DCP master, or the creation of i-Tunes, Google or Netflix files; up to € 2.000 for French or English subtitles (translation not included);
  - up to € 10.000 for the sound mixing of a feature length film (up to 7 days of work, auditorium and technician included) offered by **196-MEDIA** (Rome);
  - up to € 10.000 for digital visual effects “2D Comp” offered by **M74 srl** (Rome)
  - **Mnemonica** will offer its cloud platform to safely store, preserve, share, and distribute the winning movie, including all its digital assets, for a value of € 10.000

- up to € 7.500 for the creation of the DCP master with Italian or English subtitles, offered by **Sub-Ti Ltd.** (London);
- up to € 7.500 for the accessible contents of the film for audiences with sensory disabilities: subtitles for the deaf and hearing-impaired and audio description for the blind and visually impaired, including audio subtitles in voiceover, in Italian or English (the subtitles and the audio-described soundtrack for the DCP will be provided) offered by **Sub-Ti Access Srl** (Turin).
- € 5.000 offered by **Red Sea Fund** (Red Sea Film Foundation);
- € 5,000 by **Rai Cinema** for a first negotiation right for the acquisition of Free TV exploitation rights in the Italian territory and obligation to mention “in collaboration with Rai Cinema S.p.a.” in the credits of the work;
- \$ 5.000 awarded to an Arab project offered by the **El Gouna Film Festival** and an invitation to participate in the industry platform CineGouna;
- € 5.000 offered by **Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie** (OIF)/ACP/ EU as a refund for post-production services – delivered by societies based in one of the EU or OACPS countries (except South Africa) – of a feature-length film realised by a director from one of the ACP countries and produced or co-produced by a society based in one of the ACP countries;
- “Coup de cœur de la Cinémathèque Afrique” Prize, offered by **Cinémathèque Afrique of the Institut Français** (Paris). The prize consists in the acquisition of the non-commercial and non-exclusive broadcasting rights for 7 years for a value of € 4.000 – € 6.000 depending on the genre and length of the film and the number of available territories;
- participation in the production costs of a DCP (€ 2.500), offered by the **Festival International du Film d’Amiens**;
- participation in the production costs of a DCP (€ 2.500), offered by the **Festival International du Film de Fribourg**.

For the fourth year in a row, the FCV program will benefit of the additional support of the **Red Sea Film Foundation** within our supporters.



# THE VENICE PRODUCTION BRIDGE WELCOMES THE 8 SELECTED WORK-IN-PROGRESS FILMS TO THE 13<sup>TH</sup> EDITION OF FINAL CUT IN VENICE

## Thirteen Years of Final Cut in Venice

Over the past thirteen years, we have brought to the Lido some of the most promising works-in-progress films from Africa and five Arab countries — Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria. This year, we are proud to welcome a sixth Arab country, Yemen, with the selection of two titles: a fiction feature and a documentary.

Final Cut in Venice continues to pursue its mission of offering concrete support for the completion of films, while also providing an initial platform for international market exposure and acting as a privileged observatory on the state of film production in these regions. Each year, we identify key trends and share meaningful data.

For this edition, we received 78 works-in-progress, up from 52 the previous year — a 50% increase that signals a significant surge in production. One particularly notable figure is the strong presence of Sub-Saharan Africa, which accounted for 30 of the 78 projects submitted — nearly half of the total. This is reflected in our final selection, where half of the six films chosen (excluding the two selected as part of this year's countries in Focus, Morocco and the United Kingdom) come from Sub-Saharan Africa. Another point of interest is the near balance between genres: 40 documentaries or docu-fiction films versus 38 fiction features, confirming the vitality of non-fiction cinema across the region. Our selection takes these dynamics into account and aims to offer industry professionals attending Gold and Trade an up-to-date and stimulating overview of emerging trends.

## The 2025 Line-Up

The Final Cut in Venice 2025 selection includes eight films in post-production, most of them presented as world premieres. Beyond the trends mentioned above, the projects were selected based on essential criteria: quality, originality, and formal and cultural diversity. Special attention was also given to female representation. The selected filmmakers come from or are originally from seven countries: Angola, Cameroon, Egypt, Morocco, Palestine, Senegal, and Yemen.

On August 31 and September 1, in the Sala Pasinetti at the Lido of Venice, we will screen, at the stage of rough cut or assembly of sequences, five fiction feature films — all by first-time directors: **House of the Wind** by Auguste Kouemo Yanghu, **My Semba** by Hugo Salvaterra, **Standing at the Ruins** by Saeed Taji Farouky - *Focus on the United Kingdom*, **The Station** by Sara Ishaq, **Yesterday the Eye Didn't Sleep** by Rakan Mayasi. We will also present three documentaries, including a debut feature from Yemen, **Let's Play Soldiers** (working title) by Mariam Al-Dhubhani, a sophomore work **Out Of School** by Hind Bensari - *Focus on Morocco* and **Legacy**, directed by Senegalese filmmaker Mamadou Dia, already acclaimed for his previous films *Nafi's Father* and *Demba*.

We are pleased to renew the support of our valued supporters, to whom we extend our sincere thanks for their continued commitment: Red Sea Film Foundation, Laser Film, A Fabrica, Oticons, MAD Solutions, TitraFilm, 196-MEDIA, M74 srl, Mnemonica, Sub-Ti Ltd, Sub-Ti Access Srl, Rai Cinema, El Gouna Film Festival, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, Cinémathèque Afrique / Institut Français, Festival International du Film d'Amiens, and Festival International de Films de Fribourg.

## Recent Highlights

Recently several films selected by Final Cut in Venice went on to achieve notable success on the international festival circuit. At Venice 2024 alone, three titles from our program were featured in official sections: *Happy Holidays* by Scandar Copti (Palestine) and *Carissa* by Jason Jacobs and Devon Delmar (South Africa) in the Orizzonti competition, and the documentary *Sudan, Remember Us* by Hind Meddeb at the Giornate degli Autori. Then, *Ancestral Visions of the Future* by Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese (Lesotho) had its world premiere at Berlinale 2025, while *Aisha Can't Fly Away* by Morad Mostafa (Egypt) was selected for the Un Certain Regard section at Cannes 2025.

## Join Us at the Lido

We are pleased to invite you to the screenings and discussions with the directors and producers of the FCV 2025 program — a unique opportunity to discover the latest productions emerging from Africa and the Arab world, and to engage in meaningful exchange that offers deeper insight into the films and the realities they depict.

## Alessandra Speciale

Curator of Final Cut in Venice

PALAZZO DEL CINEMA  
SALA PASINETTI

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31  
and MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

Screenings of the films in post-production followed by a Q/A session reserved for Gold and Trade accreditations.  
The schedule will be available mid-August.

HOUSE OF THE WIND  
(LA MAISON DU VENT)

(Cameroon, Benin, France, Belgium)  
DIRECTOR Auguste Kouemo Yanghu  
PRODUCTION Horizons d’Afrique  
GENRE Fiction

LOGLINE Josette, 75, struggling with her loneliness, meets Sarah, a young woman from her neighborhood. The two women, of diametrically opposed personalities, become acquainted, and gradually, all of Josette’s points of reference, linked to family ties, are shattered.

LEGACY  
(SOLEIL, LUNE, ÉTOILES)

(Senegal, France)  
DIRECTOR Mamadou Dia  
PRODUCTION Joyedidi  
GENRE Documentary  
LOGLINE This is the final year of the Master’s program at the prestigious dance school École des Sables. These students, who have come from all over Africa, give themselves “body and soul”, drawing on their aspirations, memories, and doubts, to earn their diploma and, above all, the blessing of “the mother of modern African dance.”

OUT OF SCHOOL  
(LA COUR DES GRANDS)

(Morocco, Denmark)  
FOCUS ON MOROCCO  
DIRECTOR Hind Bensari  
PRODUCTION Le Moindre Geste  
GENRE Documentary  
LOGLINE *Out of School* is a coming-of-age tale set in an isolated rocky village in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. It follows siblings Mohamed and Fatima as they navigate the shift from childhood to adult life when they are constrained to stop their education at 12 years old.

MY SEMBA  
(MEU SEMBA)

(Angola)  
DIRECTOR Hugo Salvaterra  
PRODUCTION Geração 80  
GENRE Fiction  
LOGLINE *My Semba* is an ode to poetry, cinema, and music – exploring survival, identity and resilience in an African metropolis where art becomes resistance.

STANDING AT THE RUINS  
(AL WOQOOF ALA EL ATLAL)

(Egypt, United Kingdom)  
FOCUS ON THE UNITED KINGDOM  
DIRECTOR Saeed Taji Farouky  
PRODUCTION Tourist With A Typewriter  
GENRE Fiction  
LOGLINE Hala, an Opera singer living in Rome, comes back to Cairo to claim her mother’s inheritance. This takes her on a journey across Cairo, meeting various people and many sides of the city to resolve her grief and the memories of her mother in the rough fantastical backdrop of the city.

THE STATION  
(AL MAHATTAH)

(Yemen, Jordan, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Qatar)  
DIRECTOR Sara Ishaq  
PRODUCTION Screen Project, Georges Films  
GENRE Fiction  
LOGLINE As Layal runs a women-only fuel station in a segregated war-torn town, she is faced with her 12-year-old brother’s growing desire to break free and become a ‘man’. When Layal’s estranged sister unexpectedly shows up with a proposition for their brother, the siblings’ relationship is put to the test.

LET’S PLAY SOLDIERS (WORKING TITLE)

(Yemen, Qatar, Norway, France)  
DIRECTOR Mariam Al-Dhubhani  
PRODUCTION Meem Square Films  
GENRE Documentary  
LOGLINE In Yemen, four brothers come of age under the shadow of war. Adham returns from the frontlines haunted by trauma, while Nasser fights to keep his two younger siblings from being recruited. The film is a lyrical meditation on boyhood, memory, and the quiet defiance of hope amid ruins.

YESTERDAY THE EYE DIDN’T SLEEP

(Belgium, Lebanon, Palestine)  
DIRECTOR Rakan Mayasi  
PRODUCTION ATATA  
GENRE Fiction  
LOGLINE In a Bedouin village in the Bekaa Valley, everyone is looking for Gamra. She is an enigmatic young girl who was accused of burning the vehicle of the man she loved when he decided to marry someone else. Will this burning flame spread out to the entire village?



**HOTEL EXCELSIOR 3° FLOOR**  
FOYER

**TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 2, 2025**  
**9:30-13:00 / 14:30-16:30**

One-to-one meetings with the 8 selected projects to find funding, distribution possibilities, and festival selection. Industry delegates (Gold and Trade) will be able to schedule the meetings via the FCV area on the VPB website.  
[www.veniceproductionbridge.org](http://www.veniceproductionbridge.org)  
<https://veniceproductionbridge.org/final-cut-venice>

CAMEROON, BENIN, FRANCE, BELGIUM

# HOUSE OF THE WIND

## LA MAISON DU VENT

AUGUSTE KOUEMO YANGHU



**SYNOPSIS**

Josette, 75, struggling with her loneliness in Yaoundé, has only one goal : to bring back her children who have gone to live in Europe.

While trying to convince them to build a house in Cameroon, she meets Sarah, a young woman from her neighborhood.

The two women, of diametrically opposed personalities, become acquainted and gradually grow closer, becoming like mother and daughter.

When Adrien, Sarah’s white boyfriend, leaves France for Yaoundé with the intention of marrying her, Josette takes this intrusion into her life badly.

Secretly, she manages to scare Adrien away, and he disappears. After some research, Sarah discovers that it was in fact Josette who chased her lover away, by revealing she is traditionally married. Betrayed, Sarah gathers her things and leaves Josette’s house.

Devastated, Josette finds herself plunged into solitude once again, until the day she learns that her son Benoît has died, from an illness he kept secret from her.

All her other children return to Cameroon for the funeral. But faced with their Western chauvinisme, Josette realizes she no longer has much in common with her offspring.

**LOGLINE**

Josette, 75, struggling with her loneliness, meets Sarah, a young woman from her neighborhood. The two women, of diametrically opposed personalities, become acquainted, and gradually, all of Josette’s points of reference, linked to family ties, are shattered.



Auguste Kouemo Yanghu, *Director, Screenwriter, Producer and Set Designer*



Arthur Grec, *Co-producer*

<b>NEED TO COMPLETE THE FILM</b> Editing, color grading, sound mix, original music, English and French subtitles, Master DCP, VFX and distribution	<b>MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Horizons d’Afrique	<b>CREATIVE TEAM</b> Auguste Kouemo Yanghu, Director, Screenwriter, <i>Producer</i> Sehet Eva, <i>DoP</i> Cernaix Geoffroy, <i>Editor</i> Ewin Ryckaert, <i>Editor</i> Blick Bassy, Adrien Jolivet, <i>Original music</i> Pape Sarr, <i>Gaffer</i> Emmanuel Ouiya, <i>Key Grip</i> Bonnat Emmanuel, <i>Sound Engineer</i> Elemva Valerie, <i>Costume Designer</i> Rosine Nkem, <i>Set Designer</i> Kwanya Josette, Moudjeu Pouadeu Edwige Tatiana, <i>Cast</i>	<b>DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANIES</b> Horizons d’Afrique La Mansarde Cinéma
<b>GENRE / SPECS</b> Fiction / Color	<b>CO-PRODUCTION COMPANIES</b> Merveilles production, La Mansarde Cinéma, Steel Fish Pictures		<b>ADDRESS</b> BP, 14964 Yaoundé, Cameroon
<b>CURRENT TIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME</b> 110’ / 110’	<b>CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT</b> Advanced stage of editing		1 boulevard Saint-Denis 75003 Paris, France
<b>LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES</b> French and Bafang / French and English	<b>FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED</b> OIF - Fonds Image de la Francophonie, JCC - Fonds Jeune Création Francophone, CNC - Avance sur recettes, Pictanovo - Région Hauts de France, Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles		<b>DIRECTOR’S AND PRODUCER’S CONTACTS</b> Auguste Kouemo Yanghu +33 667691517 kouemobernard@yahoo.com horizonafrrique@gmail.com
<b>BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED</b> € 880.227 / € 150.000			<b>CO-PRODUCER’S CONTACTS</b> Arthur Grec +33 650388674 arthur.grec@gmail.com

## DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

When I think of *House of the Wind*, I immediately imagine a slowness that matches the rhythm of Josette’s walking and gestures. To emphasize the moment, time will seem long and suspended. With this cinematic mechanism based on time dilation, I would like to immediately immerse the viewer in the temporality of Josette, an elderly person who lives alone and who sometimes counts the hours before going to bed. At first, the staging will be very sober, approaching a realistic, naturalistic, and sometimes contemplative style in the daily life of this lonely septuagenarian. The characters and situations will always be real, entirely credible and believable, never caricatured. In the composition, Josette will sometimes be lost in a frame that is too wide or unbalanced, as if the situation rendered her “invisible”. Gradually, the camera will move closer to the characters, especially Josette. Everything is seen and discovered through her eyes, her emotions, her feelings; the viewer accompanies Josette in her quest. I would like the audience, like a third person in this couple (Josette and Sarah), to participate in their attraction and share their desire to live in communion.

## DIRECTOR’S BIOGRAPHY

Born in Cameroon, Auguste Kouemo Yanghu began his film studies thanks to the film classes created by the Ecrans Noirs association in Cameroon, then deepened his knowledge at the École Supérieure de l’Audiovisuel in Toulouse. A film instructor, he joined the Canal Plus Horizons group in 2019 as a reader-consultant for detective series aimed at African audiences. He has directed several short films, including *Waramutsého!* (2009), which has won 19 awards worldwide; *Painful Footprints* (2015), which has won 15 selections and two prizes; and *My Friend Fukushima* (2023). With the support of Pictanovo, he wrote his first feature film, *House of the Wind*, and the tv series *Luminol*.

## DIRECTOR’S FILMOGRAPHY

- 2023**    **My Friend Fukushima** short film
- 2015**    **Painful Footprints** short film
- 2009**    **Waramutsého!** short film



SENEGAL, FRANCE

LEGACY

SOLEIL, LUNE, ÉTOILES

MAMADOU DIA



SYNOPSIS

This is the final year of the Master’s program at the prestigious École des Sables, founded and led by renowned choreographer and dancer Germaine Acogny, now 81. These students—drawn from across the African continent—are dedicating themselves, body and soul, to earning their diploma and, above all, the blessing of “Maman Germaine,” affectionately known as the mother of modern African dance. Wherever they go, they will carry her legacy.

*Soleil, Lune, Étoiles* offers an intimate portrait of their lives and aspirations. Yet, the landscape that has long made the École des Sables a peaceful and inspiring refuge is about to change. A major port is being built nearby, and the lagoon on which the school stands will be impacted. While the project brings national ambitions for economic growth, it also raises important questions about environmental transformation and cultural continuity.

This may be one of the last graduating classes to experience the school in its current form—and to carry the Acogny technique into the world as it was originally nurtured. The film is not a statement for or against development, but rather a reflection on the value of places like this—spaces of learning, movement, and heritage—in times of inevitable change.

LOGLINE

This is the final year of the Master’s program at the prestigious dance school École des Sables. These students, who have come from all over Africa, give themselves “body and soul”, drawing on their aspirations, memories, and doubts, to earn their diploma and, above all, the blessing of “the mother of modern African dance.”





Mamadou Dia,  
*Director*



Eugénie Michel Villette,  
*Co-producer*

<b>NEED TO COMPLETE THE FILM</b> Editing, color grading, sound mixing, English or French subtitles, master DCP, marketing, publicity and distribution	<b>MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Joyedidi	<b>CREATIVE TEAM</b> Mamadou Dia, <i>Director</i> Alan Wu, Dimitri Ouédraogo, Mélanie Braux, <i>Editors</i> Mamadou Sané, <i>Sound Engineer</i>	<b>DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANIES</b> Joyedidi Les Films du Bilboquet
<b>GENRE / SPECS</b> Documentary / Color	<b>CO-PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Les Films du Bilboquet		<b>ADDRESS</b> Parcelles Assainies Unite 26808 99999, Dakar, Senegal
<b>CURRENT TIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME</b> 45’ / 85’	<b>CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT</b> Advanced stage of editing		3 avenue jean-Baptiste Lebas Roubaix 59100 France
<b>LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES</b> French / English	<b>FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED</b> Ministère de la Culture - Soutien à la production de films de danse		<b>DIRECTOR’S CONTACTS</b> Mamadou Dia +221 775148943 dia.mamaid@gmail.com
<b>BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED</b> € 147.419 / € 39.694			<b>CO-PRODUCER’S CONTACTS</b> Eugénie Michel Villette +33 660549068 eugeniemichelvillette@lesfilmsdubilboquet.fr

## DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

*Soleil, Lune, Étoiles* is part of the everyday vocabulary at the École des Sables. According to Germaine Acogny: “My dance is a dialogue with the cosmos, and you must draw energy from the Earth. Our feet are our roots, the chest is the Sun, the buttocks the Moon, the pubis the stars...”

The École des Sables was founded in 1996 and is still directed by dancer/choreographer Germaine Acogny. *Soleil, Lune, Étoiles* was born from a clear and troubling reality: the near absence of filmic testimony about contemporary African figures who are already shaping our history. In Sub-Saharan Africa, cinematic portrayals of our cultural icons remain rare—held back not by lack of significance, but by market constraints and industry blind spots that continue to marginalize these stories. However this documentary breaks away from a classic portrait.

At its core, the film is about passing on knowledge—an idea embodied by Germaine Acogny and expressed through the students she mentors. Their journeys reflect a living legacy shaped by movement, discipline, and cultural pride. As this tradition continues, the École des Sables finds itself at a crossroads. With the construction of West Africa’s largest port nearby, the surrounding lagoon—long a source of inspiration and calm—is poised for change. What this means for the school, its setting, and the community that has grown around it remains an open question.

## DIRECTOR’S BIOGRAPHY

Born and raised in Senegal, Mamadou developed a love for cinema through Bollywood, African, and Western films. After studying at Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, he worked as a video journalist with agencies such as the Associated Press. In 2014, he moved to New York and earned a Master’s degree in Filmmaking from NYU Tisch School of the Arts, where he directed his short film *Samedi Cinema*, which premiered at Venice and Toronto in 2016.

He has since completed two fiction feature films and has a documentary currently in post-production. His first feature, *Baamum Nafi* (2019), about two brothers clashing over a marriage, explores political and religious extremism and won the Best First Feature Award at Locarno. It was Senegal’s official submission to the Oscars in 2021 and screened at over 80 festivals worldwide. His second feature, *Demba* (2024), delves into grief and indigenous mental health practices in Senegal, featuring mostly non-professional actors from his community. The film premiered at the Berlinale and was released theatrically in Senegal.

## DIRECTOR’S FILMOGRAPHY

- |             |                                 |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>2024</b> | <b>Demba</b> feature film       |
| <b>2019</b> | <b>Baamum Nafi</b> feature film |
| <b>2016</b> | <b>Samedi Cinema</b> short film |

YEMEN, QATAR, NORWAY, FRANCE

LET’S PLAY SOLDIERS (WORKING TITLE)

MARIAM AL-DHUBHANI



SYNOPSIS

This feature-length creative documentary is set in the war-torn town of Al-Hisn, Yemen, where four brothers come of age under the long shadow of conflict. The film follows the eldest, Adham, who returns from the frontlines haunted by trauma, and 16-year-old Nasser, who now carries the weight of protecting his younger siblings from the same fate. Narrated through the poetic and poignant voice of their mother, Noor, the film becomes both an intimate family portrait and a meditation on the inherited impact of war, toxic masculinity, and the fading line between play and survival in militarized childhoods.

The project explores the psychological and emotional toll of a decade-long war on the most vulnerable members of society: children. It sheds light on the normalization of child recruitment, and how war reshapes identity, responsibility, and the bonds between siblings. In a country where stories are often reduced to headlines, this film offers a deeply personal, layered, and distinctly Yemeni perspective that has rarely been seen or heard on the international stage.

LOGLINE

In Yemen, four brothers come of age under the shadow of war. Adham returns from the frontlines haunted by trauma, while Nasser fights to keep his two younger siblings from being recruited. The film is a lyrical meditation on boyhood, memory, and the quiet defiance of hope amid ruins.



Mariam Al-Dhubhani,  
*Director  
and Screenwriter*



Mohammed Al-Jaberi,  
*Producer*

<b>NEED TO COMPLETE THE FILM</b> Editing, color grading, sound mixing, English or French subtitles, master DCP, marketing, publicity and distribution	<b>MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Meem Square Films	<b>CREATIVE TEAM</b> Mariam Al-Dhubhani, <i>Director and Screenwriter</i> Qutaiba Barhamji, <i>Editor</i> Mohammed Al-Qahoom, <i>Music</i> Mohammed Al-Jaberi, <i>Producer and DoP</i>	<b>DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Meem Square Films
<b>GENRE / SPECS</b> Documentary / Color	<b>CO-PRODUCTION COMPANIES</b> Stray Dogs Macalube Films		<b>ADRESS</b> 36, Ba Nafea Street Al-Buraiqa, Aden Yemen
<b>CURRENT TIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME</b> 60’ / 90’	<b>CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT</b> Advanced rough cut		<b>DIRECTOR’S CONTACTS</b> Mariam Al-Dhubhani +974 66291509 maa6294@u.northwestern.edu
<b>LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES</b> Arabic / English	<b>FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED</b> IDFA Bertha Fund, DFI, IMS, AFAC, Docs Fund Up, Sorfund, HotDocs, Amman Film festival, Al-Jazeera		<b>PRODUCER’S CONTACTS</b> Mohammed Al-Jaberi +974 55280102 maa365@georgetown.edu
<b>BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED</b> €490.642 / €226.934			

DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

I grew up in a small village outside Sana’a called Al-Ishahs—“the Huts.” At home, I spoke Russian with my mother; outside, I had to be fully Yemeni. Films helped me make sense of that duality. I always dreamed of being a filmmaker, but in a country without a single cinema or film school, I became a pharmacist. After fleeing the war in 2014, I found my way back to storytelling in 2018 through a Doc Lab with Rithy Panh. That’s when the spark returned. *Let’s Play Soldiers* is my first feature—born out of love, rage, and a deep connection to the village where my husband grew up. Filming there has been both a gift and a responsibility. Nasser and his family welcomed us as their own. This film is for them—to honor their strength, their tenderness, and to show the world a Yemen that exists beyond headlines: full of dignity, humanity, and quiet resilience.

DIRECTOR’S BIOGRAPHY

Mariam Al-Dhubhani is an award-winning Yemeni-Russian journalist, filmmaker, curator, and educator whose work confronts stereotypes and centers stories from conflict zones. A two-time TEDx speaker and VR pioneer in Yemeni storytelling, she began her career during the 2011 Arab uprisings. Her acclaimed films have earned international recognition, including Most Promising Filmmaker at the Toronto Arab Film Festival. She mentored emerging filmmakers across Yemen, Libya, and Iraq, served on juries for global film grants and festivals, and collaborated with UN agencies on immersive media. Mariam is currently completing her feature debut *Let’s Play Soldiers*, spotlighted at Cannes, IDFA, and Hot Docs.

DIRECTOR’S FILMOGRAPHY

- 2022** **Musalem** VR short documentary
- 2020** **No Words** short film
- 2019** **Old Sana’a City: Samsarat Al-Nuhas** VR short documentary
- 2019** **In the Middle** short documentary
- 2018** **Just Another Memory** short documentary



ANGOLA

MY SEMBA  
MEU SEMBA

HUGO SALVATERRA



SYNOPSIS

*My Semba* tells the story of X, a young man navigating the intensity of life in Luanda — a city that mirrors the energy and contradictions of many African megacities. Alongside his siblings, Lele and Maria, he takes refuge in art, wrestles with faith, and draws strength from the bond of brotherhood. Together, they find release in the underground — from poetry slams to clandestine clubs — where words become weapons of resilience. Through verses, they give voice to their frustrations, dreams, all the while articulating the silent scream of a generation searching for an identity and meaning. *My Semba* is Hugo Salvaterra’s debut feature — a cultural manifesto born from an urban outburst — and firmly establishes Geração 80 as one of Africa’s leading independent art-house studios.

LOGLINE

*My Semba* is an ode to poetry, cinema, and music - exploring survival, identity and resilience in an African metropolis where art becomes resistance.





Hugo Salvaterra,  
*Director  
and Screenwriter*



Jorge Cohen,  
*Producer*

<b>NEED TO COMPLETE THE FILM</b> Editing, sound mix & music licensing, online, delivery of final assets <b>GENRE / SPECS</b> Fiction / Color <b>CURRENT TIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME</b> 86’ / 86’ <b>LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES</b> Portuguese / English <b>BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED</b> €450.000 /€60.000	<b>MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Geração 80 <b>CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT</b> Advanced rough cut <b>FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED</b> Red Sea Souk Post-Production Jury Special Mention Award (2023)	<b>CREATIVE TEAM</b> Hugo Salvaterra, <i>Director and Screenwriter</i> Kamy Lara, <i>Editor</i> Nakhane Touré, <i>Music</i> Marco Salaverría, <i>Sound</i> Ery Claver, <i>DoP</i> Prudenciana Hach, <i>Set Designer and Costume Designer</i> João Ngangula, <i>Special Effects</i> Euclides Teixeira, Willie Ribeiro, Eliane Silva, <i>Cast</i>	<b>DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Geração 80 <b>ADDRESS</b> Rua Ramalho Ortigão Nº1, Alvalade, Luanda, Angola <b>DIRECTOR’S CONTACTS</b> Hugo Salvaterra +244 922589333 hsalvaterra@geracao-80.com <b>PRODUCER’S CONTACTS</b> Jorge Cohen +244 923330955 jcohen@geracao-80.com
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DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

*My Semba* is a place of woven narratives about the common young man and woman living in the city of Luanda today. A film deep rooted in lyricism and poetry, which to me represents the highest possibility of connection and communication. It is also a meta live- action, where spoken word and rap live, artforms in virtue of the great African oral traditions —mantras of affirmation and truths from subjective perspectives, seeking an urgent collective definition of our urban way of life, in its zeitgeist. The Poet, the MC, the Priest examine their pain and joy, distilling them into words. It is from this well that *Meu Semba* drinks from. A love letter to cinema, music, poetry, and above all, Angola. I strived to make a film about finding one’s identity, both for the protagonist X and of Angola as it exists today. I hope with this film, to hold in one hand the courage of original African storytelling and in the other, the idea of finding one’s true self. *My Semba* is more than a film - it’s a cultural manifesto.

DIRECTOR’S BIOGRAPHY

Hugo Salvaterra, writer, photographer, music producer, and DJ, is a multidisciplinary artist who has been concentrating these skills into screenwriting and directing for more than 10 years. His dedication to humanistic ideals are prevalent in the still and moving images he creates, with a strong focus on cultural and social issues particularly in the African continent and diaspora. A self-identified Pan-African storyteller, producing art in the most varied formats including feature films, short films, experimental works, documentaries, music videos, and advertising. Storytelling lives in the epicentre of his craft and cinema is the love of his life. He holds a Master of Fine Arts (NYFA - New York and Los Angeles) and is a recipient of the prestigious Fulbright scholarship in 2015.

DIRECTOR’S FILMOGRAPHY

- 2018    1999 short film
- 2016    **Ear of the Beholder** short film

MOROCCO, DENMARK

# OUT OF SCHOOL

## LA COUR DES GRANDS

HIND BENSARI



**SYNOPSIS**

Mohamed, 12, drops out of school—his parents can’t afford the 35km journey to secondary school. He dreams of city work and lifting his family from poverty. His sister Fatima, in her final year of primary school, hopes to avoid the same fate. She dreams of becoming a teacher, wearing jeans to work, not just housework until marriage.

*Out of School* follows these siblings as childhood ends and expectations crumble. Will they transcend their circumstances or accept their parents’ path? Through their coming-of-age journey, the film captures the tension of adolescence caught between the world they imagine they can reach and the reality they must inhabit.

**LOGLINE**

*Out of School* is a coming-of-age tale set in an isolated rocky village in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. It follows siblings Mohamed and Fatima as they navigate the shift from childhood to adult life when they are constrained to stop their education at 12 years old.





Hind Bensari,  
*Director  
and Screenwriter*



Alaa Eddine Aljem,  
*Producer*

<b>NEED TO COMPLETE THE FILM</b> Editing, color grading, sound mixing, English or French subtitles, master DCP, marketing, publicity and distribution	<b>MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Le Moindre Geste	<b>CREATIVE TEAM</b> Hind Bensari, <i>Director and ScreenWriter</i> Amine Zouine, <i>DoP</i> Julie Brenta, <i>Editor</i> Tin Soheili, <i>Music</i> Ali Bamhaoued, <i>Sound</i>	<b>DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Le Moindre Geste
<b>GENRE / SPECS</b> Documentary / Color	<b>CO-PRODUCTION COMPANIES</b> Bullitt Films		<b>ADDRESS</b> 214, BD Ibnou Sina 20210 Casablanca Morocco
<b>CURRENT TIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME</b> 60’ / 66’	<b>CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT</b> Advanced Rough Cut		<b>DIRECTOR’S CONTACTS</b> Hind Bensari +212 640126020 hind@hibee productions.com
<b>LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES</b> Amazigh / English	<b>FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED</b> 2M tv, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), IMS, DAAP, Creative Europe Media		<b>PRODUCER’S CONTACTS</b> Alaa Eddine Aljem +212 0656343075 alaa.e.aljem@gmail.com
<b>BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED</b> €320.000 / €50.000			

## DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

Life in the Atlas Mountains has long been shaped by survival and collective duty. In the early 2000s, a school, a water fountain, and solar panels reached the remote village of Oulghazi. Children like Mohamed and Fatima became literate; their parents remained bound to ancestral ways. From 6 to 12, these children escape the rhythm of the seasons for that of the classroom, where dreams are born, but not always realised. While Mohamed dares to defy his fate, seeking work beyond the mountains, Fatima clings to school as her last breath of freedom before domestic confinement. The film weaves childhood memories with the quiet resignation of early adulthood. Through intimate portraits, poetic visuals, and village sounds turned into rhythm, *Out of School* asks whether education alone can change destiny. Like Sisyphus, Mohamed and Fatima push against the inevitable, finding strength in the act of trying, and grace in the face of limits.

## DIRECTOR’S BIOGRAPHY

Hind Bensari (1987, Casablanca) is a self-taught Moroccan filmmaker who grew up in the UK. Her debut short *475: Break the Silence* (2013) broke audience records, aired on 20+ global channels, and contributed to repealing a Moroccan law allowing rapists to marry their victims. In 2018, her feature *We Could Be Heroes* won Best Documentary at Hot Docs—making her the first African filmmaker to do so—and the Grand Prize at the Tangier National Film Festival. The film helped change legislation for equal rights and pay for disabled athletes in Morocco. Commissioned by Creative Europe, her 2021 campaign *CharactHER* was showcased at Cannes Film Festival and distributed across Europe to combat gender disparity in film. Since 2023, Hind has taught documentary filmmaking at ESAV Marrakech. Her upcoming film *Out Of School* releases in 2026.

## DIRECTOR’S FILMOGRAPHY

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>2021</b> | <b>Fight For</b> documentary mini-series      |
| <b>2021</b> | <b>CharactHER</b> short documentary           |
| <b>2018</b> | <b>We Could Be Heroes</b> feature documentary |
| <b>2013</b> | <b>475: Break the Silence</b> short film      |

EGYPT, UNITED KINGDOM

# STANDING AT THE RUINS

## AL WOQOOF ALA EL ATLAL

SAEED TAJI FAROUKY



### SYNOPSIS

Hala starts her journey in her childhood home, where she meets with her mother’s caretaker. The place is unchanged, but its majesty has faded, especially when an appraiser comes and shatters the value of the antiques littering the house, revealing its all high copies. She then finds a notebook that takes her on a magical trip: to a house in the city she never knew existed, where she meets a Sudanese family seeking refuge amidst the ruins, and a lawyer who gives her an address to a village. There she meets a soldier’s widow and a woman who knew her mother in another life. Does her journey answer her lingering questions and heal her grief or leave her wanting to know more?

### LOGLINE

Hala, an Opera singer living in Rome, comes back to Cairo to claim her mother’s inheritance. This takes her on a journey across Cairo, meeting various people and many sides of the city to resolve her grief and the memories of her mother in the rough fantastical backdrop of the city.





Saeed Taji Farouky,  
*Director,  
Screenwriter  
and Producer*



Menna Ekram,  
*Producer*



Michel Makram,  
*Producer*

<b>NEED TO COMPLETE THE FILM</b> Editing, color grading, sound mixing, English or French subtitles, master DCP, marketing, publicity and distribution	<b>MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Tourist With A Typewriter	<b>CREATIVE TEAM</b> Saeed Taji Farouky, <i>Director, Screenwriter and Producer</i> Maged Abul Dahab, <i>DoP</i> Karima Mansour, Ahmed Ghanem-Ghada Atef, Shady Abdullah, Iman Abdel Maguid, Jack John, <i>Main Cast</i>	<b>DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Tourist With ATypewriter Rubik’s Films
<b>GENRE / SPECS</b> Fiction / Color	<b>CO-PRODUCTION COMPANIES</b> Rubik’s Films		<b>ADDRESS</b> Flat 3, Abney House, 1 Collison Place, Manor Road N16 5AU, London
<b>CURRENT TIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME</b> 90’ / 90’	<b>CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT</b> Early editing stage		<b>DIRECTOR’S AND PRODUCER’S CONTACT</b> Saeed Taji Farouky +44 7963079203 saeed@touristwithatypewriter.com
<b>LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES</b> Arabic / English			<b>PRODUCERS’ CONTACTS</b> Menna Ekram +20 1223306361 menna.ekram@gmail.com  Michel Makram +20 1017664917 Michel.mkrm@gmail.com
<b>BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED</b> €120.000 / €30.000			

DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

This is my first feature fiction film, an Egyptian/British co-production between myself and Rubik’s Films based in Cairo. The whole film was shot over 6 days in Cairo after months of pre-production. We worked with a small crew and cast non-actors except for the film’s lead actress, contemporary dancer Karima Mansour. As I am both of Palestinian and Egyptian descent and both identities come with complex present and past, I felt compelled to explore them. Egypt and Palestine have been tremendous changes: a revolution in 2011 then a coup d’état in 2014 in Egypt that flattened any chance for freedom of expression and as the 2-year mark approaches on the vicious war on Gaza and the ongoing starvation and isolation, I wanted to make a film about the ruins of this identity. Drawing on personal experience which is the loss of my grandmother and going back after years in the diaspora to search for her heritage, I explore fragments of my identity and grief. The film is a road trip around the city and through the process of the grief, it’s an inquisitive, quiet and poetic ode to grief and self reflection.

DIRECTOR’S BIOGRAPHY

Saeed Taji Farouky is a Palestinian, Egyptian and British filmmaker who has been producing work around themes of conflict, human rights, and colonialism since 1998. His latest documentary, *A Thousand Fires* premiered as the opening film in the Semaine de la Critique at the Locarno Film Festival in 2021 where it won the Marco Zucchi Award for Most Innovative Documentary. His previous documentary *Tell Spring Not to Come This Year* premiered at the Berlinale in 2015, where it won the Panorama Audience Award and the Amnesty International Film Prize. His films focus on exile and the lingering trauma of conflict. He is also the co-founder of Safar Film Festival, the UK’s only dedicated Arab film festival, and the lead tutor of Radical Film School, a free programme for filmmakers from marginalized backgrounds to make experimental and political work.

DIRECTOR’S FILMOGRAPHY

- 2021

A Thousand Fires feature documentary
- 2018

Strange Cities Are Familiar short fiction
- 2016

They Live in Forests, They Are Extremely Shy short fiction
- 2015

Tell Spring Not to Come This Year feature documentary
- 2013

The Runner feature documentary
- 2013

There Will Be Some Who Will Not Fear Even That Void feature documentary
- 2005

I See The Stars At Noon feature documentary

YEMEN, JORDAN, FRANCE, GERMANY, NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, QATAR

# THE STATION

## AL MAHATTAH

SARA ISHAQ



**SYNOPSIS**

In a war-torn Yemeni village, Layal runs a women-only petrol station in her inherited family home. Here, she shelters her prepubescent brother, Laith, from the dangers of war (and peer pressure) having already lost a brother to the fighting. Her stance is clear: a sign on her Station’s gate reads, “NO MEN, NO WEAPONS, NO POLITICS.”

The Station bustles with life as women flock to the Station to eagerly await long-overdue fuel amid a fuel crisis. While Layal manages her customers – between regulars, close friends and unwanted ones – she is confronted by local authorities who demand that Laith join the village boys in a military boot camp or pay a hefty exemption fee that she cannot afford.

Desperate to ensure her brother’s exemption, Layal turns to her estranged older sister, Shams – a nurse who works at the rival army’s field hospital – to send money for the fee. To her shock, Shams arrives at the Station’s gate with a van of supplies and a teenage chaperone. Shams’ solution is to take Laith with her, one which Layal vehemently opposed. It is enough that they already lost a brother – a deep wound both sisters carry. But Shams’ presence at the Station with her chaperone fuels Laith’s urge to escape his friendless existence in this women’s world. As tensions rise, the relationship between the three siblings reaches a breaking point. The sisters have to see eye to eye, or lose another brother.

**LOGLINE**

As Layal runs a women-only fuel station in a segregated war-torn town, she is faced with her 12-year-old brother’s growing desire to break free and become a ‘man’. When Layal’s estranged sister unexpectedly shows up with a proposition for their brother, the siblings’ relationship is put to the test.



Sara Ishaq,  
*Director  
and Screenwriter*



Nadia Eliewat,  
*Producer and Screenwriter*

<b>NEED TO COMPLETE THE FILM</b> Editing, color grading, sound mixing, English or French subtitles, master DCP, marketing, publicity and distribution	<b>MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Screen Project, Georges Films	<b>CREATIVE TEAM</b> Sara Ishaq, <i>Director and Screenwriter</i> Nadia Eliewat, <i>Producer and Screenwriter</i> Romain Namura, <i>Editor</i> Amine Berrada, <i>DoP</i> Darius Timmer & Tessa Rose Jackson, <i>Music</i> Tarek Abu Ghoush, <i>Sound Designer</i> Zeina Soufan, <i>Costume Designer</i> Nasser Zoubi, <i>Production Designer</i> Ghaith Al-Adwan, <i>VFX Supervisor</i> Manal Al-Mulaiki, Abeer Mohammad, Rashad Alrajeh, Saleh Almershahe, Randa Mohammad, Fariha Hassan, Fatima Muthana, Amal Ismael, Mohammad Alroboe, Shorouq Mohammed, <i>Cast</i>	<b>DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> Screen Project
<b>GENRE / SPECS</b> Fiction / Color	<b>CO-PRODUCTION COMPANIES</b> One Two Films, KeplerFilm, BarentsFilm, The Imaginarium Films, Setara Films, Ta Films		<b>ADDRESS</b> Zuhdi Asfour Street, Abdoun 11183, Amman, Jordan
<b>CURRENT TIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME</b> 30’ / 110’	<b>CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT</b> Editing stage		<b>DIRECTOR’S CONTACTS</b> Sara Ishaq +31 618338925 sarahjishaq@gmail.com
<b>LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES</b> Arabic / English	<b>SALES</b> Paradise City Sales		<b>PRODUCER’S CONTACTS</b> Nadia Eliewat +971 567249517 neliewat@screenproject.net
<b>BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED</b> €2.065.418 / € 150.000	<b>FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED</b> Jordan Film Fund, Doha Film Institute, AFAC, Asia Pacific Screen Awards, Wouter Barendrecht Film Foundation, Cairo Film Connection, CNC, Île-de-France, Eurimages, Medienboard Berlin, ZDF/ ARTE Das kleine Fernsehspiel, German Federal Film Board (FFA), Hubert Bals Fund (NFF/ Europe), Sørfond		

## DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

During the war in Yemen in 2015, I came across a women-only petrol station in the heart of my hometown, Sana’a. While waiting in long queues with my sisters, I observed a unique atmosphere around us. This vibrant, women-only microcosm became a rare space where women from all walks of life came together with one common goal - to sustain and support their families. Women chatted from their car windows, shared food and drinks, ‘car-schooled’ their children, and exchanged stories. Despite occasional disputes, the mood was lively and communal. Here, I listened to personal accounts of life during wartime; accounts of economic hardship, families divided by political tensions, loved ones lost to the conflict, and, amid the darkness, moments of joy: stories of survival, weddings, and new births. At the time, I considered capturing the life of the Station as a documentary film, but the social and security constraints of the sensitive environment made filming impossible. Still, the stories of resilience, sisterhood and survival lingered with me for a year, resulting in the birth of *The Station*; my first foray into fiction filmmaking.

## DIRECTOR’S BIOGRAPHY

Sara Ishaq is a Yemeni-Scottish filmmaker who received an Academy Award nomination and a BAFTA New Talent’s Award nominations for her debut short documentary, *Karama Has No Walls* in 2012, while she was studying an MFA in Film Directing at the Edinburgh College of Art. Her second award-winning documentary feature, *The Mulberry House* (2013) premiered at IDFA and was released both theatrically and aired on Aljazeera English. Sara is currently in post production of her first fiction feature, *The Station*, which was presented at the L’Atelier at the Cannes Film Festival in 2020, and is currently in post-production of a feature documentary which received the Sundance Production fund in 2023. Sara co-founded Comra Academy in 2017, a film foundation focused on creative film training in Yemen. In 2022, Sara joined the International Coalition for Filmmakers at Risk and now manages the organisation in Amsterdam.

## DIRECTOR’S FILMOGRAPHY

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>2015</b> | <b>Stranded</b> short documentary             |
| <b>2013</b> | <b>The Mulberry House</b> feature documentary |
| <b>2012</b> | <b>Karama has No Walls</b> short documentary  |



BELGIUM, LEBANON, PALESTINE

# YESTERDAY THE EYE DIDN'T SLEEP

RAKAN MAYASI



**SYNOPSIS**

In the Bekaa Valley, a plain encircled by mythical mountains, Yasser searches for Gamra, the enigmatic girl who vanished after her lover’s marriage, leaving a burning car and a tribe in turmoil. Reem, working the fields, is torn between her bond to the land and her shy love for Sari. She remains haunted by Gamra’s disappearance, which left a wound in the family. The absence weighs on Jawaher, a nurse whose own love is lost, as she moves between newborns and infants at the hospital. One night, Yasser, adrift in his search, accidentally kills a man on the road, a member of a rival clan. The wind carries ancient tales as the rain tries to cleanse village sins. To halt a cycle of blood, the clan demands sacrifice: two unmarried girls in exchange. Despite Reem’s defiance and Jawaher’s courage, they are sent as blood money. The sisters journey through a land where the state is absent and fate unknown. On a moonlit night, they seek refuge in the Sheikh’s house. Will they be spared, married, or killed? Somewhere, Gamra is still being sought. She may face the tribal truth test: if her tongue is burned, she lied, if untouched, she is guiltless. In the Bekaa, absence reshapes presence.

**LOGLINE**

In a Bedouin village in the Bekaa Valley, everyone is looking for Gamra. She is an enigmatic young girl who was accused of burning the vehicle of the man she loved when he decided to marry someone else. Will this burning flame spread out to the entire village?





Rakan Mayasi,  
*Director,  
Screenwriter, Editor*



Jennifer Ritter,  
*Producer*

<b>NEED TO COMPLETE THE FILM</b> Editing, sound post, original music, color grading <b>GENRE / SPECS</b> Fiction / color <b>CURRENT TIME / ESTIMATED RUNTIME</b> 45’ / 123’ <b>LANGUAGE / SUBTITLES</b> Arabic / English <b>BUDGET / FINANCING NEEDED</b> € 276.046 / € 80.000	<b>MAIN PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> ATATA <b>CO-PRODUCTION COMPANIES</b> Rakan Mayasi <b>CURRENT STATUS OF PROJECT</b> Rough Cut <b>FUNDS OR AWARDS RECEIVED</b> Centre du Cinéma et de l’Audiovisuel de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (aide aux productions légères) Tax Shelter du Gouvernement Fédéral de Belgique (BNP Paribas Fortis Film Finance)	<b>CREATIVE TEAM</b> Rakan Mayasi, <i>Director, Screenwriter, Editor</i> Wahid Ajmi, <i>Screenwriter</i> Louis de Schrijver, <i>Editor</i> Bassam Lebbos, <i>Sound</i> Pôl Seif, <i>DoP</i> Léa Chammas, <i>Costume Designer</i> Jawaher Mawlah, Reem Mawlah, Yasser Mawlah, <i>Cast</i>	<b>DELEGATE PRODUCTION COMPANY</b> ATATA <b>ADDRESS</b> 81 Rue Paul Janson 4020, Liège, Belgium <b>DIRECTOR’S CONTACTS</b> Rakan Mayasi +32 496661117 rakan.mayasi@gmail.com <b>PRODUCER’S CONTACTS</b> Jennifer Ritter +32 474257537 jennifer@atata.be
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DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

My grandmother was forcibly married at 14 – a story that haunted me since childhood. I grew up in Amman in the 90s, within a patriarchal, tribal system. I could never relate to its rigid masculinity or its authority. In *Trumpets in the Sky*, I paid tribute to her story, filming in the Bekaa Valley, where I witnessed firsthand the tribal codes that still govern. This feature continues that exploration. The experience is to live within the Bedouin community, build trust, and cast non-actors – people living their truth, open to the unknown. Their energy brings authenticity that’s essential. In tribal revenge, women are often reduced to objects to “cool blood.” I want to ask: can a woman claim her fate in such a world? My cinematic language blends neo-realism and poetry, where plot slowly dissolves into emotion and space. The story becomes secondary to presence. Through long workshops, co-writing, and immersion, we aim to create a visceral film rooted in lived experience. With minimal crew and resources, we embrace simplicity – not as a constraint, but as the only way to keep emotion intact.

DIRECTOR’S BIOGRAPHY

Rakan Mayasi is an independent filmmaker (Director, Screenwriter & Producer) from Palestine, born in Germany and currently based in Bruxelles. He studied Cinema and Psychology in Lebanon and then received film training with Abbas Kiarostami in South Korea at the Asian Film Academy. He has an MA in Filmmaking from LUCA School of Arts in Belgium. He has made several short films. His previous short film *Roubama* was an official selection at the Locarno Film Festival in 2012. His short film *Bonboné* tackles the phenomenon of Palestinian sperm smuggling from Israeli jails and has world premiered at TIFF in 2017 - it is the recipient of 35 Best Short Awards. Rakan recently underwent film training with Béla Tarr in Budapest. *Trumpets In The Sky* is a short film exploring Cinema in visual poetry, metaphor and mythology. It won the honorable mention for Best International Short Film at TIFF in 2021. His last short film *The Key*, premiered at SXSW, is a political fantasy-thriller centred around the Palestinian right of return. Rakan just wrapped his first feature film shot entirely with non-professional actors and without a script.

DIRECTOR’S FILMOGRAPHY

- 2023**    **The Key** short film
- 2021**    **Trumpets In The Sky** short film
- 2017**    **Bonboné** short film
- 2012**    **Roubama** short film
- 2010**    **Sea Sonata** short film

Editorial Coordination  
**La Biennale di Venezia**  
**Editorial Activities and Web**  
**and Venice Production Bridge**

Design  
**Leonardo Maraner (Headline)**

Layout  
**Riccardo Cavallaro**

July 2025





**VENICE**  

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**PRODUCTION**  

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