

THE ARAB FUND FOR ARTS AND CULTURE (AFAC)

AFAC is a Beirut-based, independent Arab initiative launched in 2007 to provide direct funding to projects in cinema, visual arts, performing arts, literature, music, as well as research, training and regional events, while facilitating cultural exchange and cooperation across the Arab world and globally.

www.arabculturefund.org

Folding

ARAB

DOCUMENTARY

FOR

ALL

ARTS

AND CULTURE

2011

PROGRAM



آفاق AFAC

The Arab Fund For Arts and Culture
الصندوق العربي للثقافة والفنون – آفاق

in partnership with
SUNDANCE
INSTITUTE DOCUMENTARY

PROGRAMS

Since 2007, the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC) has awarded grants to more than 75 film projects of all kinds through open calls for proposals and special programs under three programs:

- 1- **General Cinema Fund** for the development, production and post-production of short and full-length documentary, animation, experimental and feature films (annual call).
- 2- **ADFP – The Arab Documentary Film Program** supports feature-length documentaries in partnership with the Sundance Institute. The third call for proposals opens in early 2012
- 3- **Special Cinema Programs** – Programs such as Crossroads that address the current context in the Arab world and support filmmakers in various cinema genres throughout the region.



From the making of “When I saw you” – Anne Marie Jacir – 2009

THE ARAB DOCUMENTARY FILM PROGRAM (ADFP)

The Arab Documentary Film Program (ADFP), a partnership with the Sundance Documentary Institute, aims to be a launch pad for documentary filmmakers, providing them with the financial and professional resources to create influential work that is globally recognized. During each cycle of the ADFP, about 15 feature-length documentary projects in the script/development or production/post-production stages are awarded grants worth up to \$50,000. In addition to providing direct funding, Sundance and AFAC cooperate with renowned international festivals or institutions to bring together grantees with experts and industry professionals to provide tailored support, consultation and networking opportunities.

Projects from the ADFP creatively tackle a range of subjects: probing identity politics and gender issues; investigating urban mythologies, labor violations and governmental corruption; exploring forgotten or suppressed histories, and contrasting these against official narratives; framing intimate portrayals within a broader socio-political context, especially in the context of the latest upheavals rocking the Arab region. Building on the success of its first cycle with its 15 grantees, ADFP has selected 16 new grantees in its second cycle in 2011 and will continue to support its grantees' work and garner visibility for their projects, with a number of workshops and events scheduled in 2011 and 2012.



From the making of “Crayons of Askalan” – Laila Hoteit Salas
AFAC ADFP grantee 2009

ADFP GRANTEES 2011 PRODUCTION AND POST-PRODUCTION



The Runner
Saeed Taji Farouky, Palestine

The Runner is a film about endurance. It is an exploration of what drives us to take risks, and make sacrifices, for a cause that is virtually unknown. It is a film about the burden of being a hero. It is told through the story of a 28 year-old champion long-distance runner - Salah Ameidan - whose journey transformed him from an athlete into the symbol of a national liberation movement. Living in exile in France, Salah runs for a country that doesn't exist: he is from Western Sahara - officially Africa's last colony and under Moroccan occupation since 1975.



The Man Inside
Karim Goury, Egypt/France/Kuwait

The Man Inside is a subjective experimental documentary portrait of an absent father, set inside a hotel room, somewhere on earth. A man enters the room. He leaves only indirect indications of his presence : the noise he makes when he's walking, waking up, going to bed or taking a shower. He is reading letters from his father, an Egyptian citizen, exiled in Kuwait City, letters that often went unanswered. And then, as the man leaves the room, we can hear his father's voice, speaking about his new life since he left Egypt — totally absent, yet omnipresent. It was 1982.



Ward w Rihan
Parine Jaddo, Iraq

Ward W Rihan is a feature documentary about an Iraqi woman's search for traces of her mother. When PJ loses Najiba in the cold of exile, she returns to Iraq to look for a Turcoman song her mother sang with her brothers. She travels back to Iraq where the harsh reality of everyday life in Baghdad and Kirkuk set in. Whilst she fails in finding the archive of the song, she finds an old recording of her great uncle unearthing a deeper understanding of her culture and the Maqam music of Iraq.



My Love Awaits me by the Sea
Mais Darwazeh, Jordan

A woman embarks on a journey from Jordan back to Palestine to find her imaginary lover Hasan, a deceased poet and illustrator. Through his fantasy world she discovers the remnants of hope in characters living under occupation. This film is a personal account of displacement, taking the filmmaker on a near impossible first journey back to her country of origin. Along the way, she meets characters, searching for her Hasan in every one of them; characters that don't conform to the prevailing realities, instead creating their own personal comfort zones in order to survive under despairing conditions.



'74
Rania Rafei and Raed Rafei, Lebanon

'74 is a documentary that showcases a student rebellion in Beirut in the 1970s as seen through the eyes of present-day young leftist activists. Based on archival documents and extensive rehearsals with a group of seven activists, the film documents the thoughts and the spirit of young Lebanese militants through group re-enactments of the events of the 1974 AUB student revolt.



As if we were Catching a Cobra
Hala Al-Abdallah, Syria

In newspapers around the world, comic strips may cause laughter, tears, and provoke thoughts...they may even lead to a lawsuit or incite to murder. Caricature is the best thermometer to measure freedom of expression in any country, offering a singular opportunity for self-expression and the possibility to resist auto-censorship and defy state censors. Arab caricature encapsulates the history of the relationships between people and their occupiers, governments and tyrannies. Against the backdrop of the current revolutions and through the works of artists in Egypt and Syria, the film explores the evolution of freedom of expression in the Orient through caricature.



Yasmina, or the Old Curse
Nacer Khemir, Tunisia

Yasmina, or the Old Curse is a visual novel of an old woman and the ghost town she inhabited in southern Tunisia. Many years ago, the filmmaker promised Yasmina, a centenarian who lived in the village of Korba until her death in 2006, that he would help find her long lost nephew in exchange for filming her. Her nephew was born from a secret love affair between Yasmina's older brother and the daughter of a French station master in 1926, and was shipped off to France before the untimely death of her brother, a symbol of “futuwa,” of knighthood. Shot over the course of 20 years, Yasmina's story will shed light on the feminine imagination throughout the twentieth century.



Journey of Migration
Hind Shoufani, Palestine

Journey of Migration is a poetic multi-format documentary about the fall of the PLO as seen through the personal life of Elias Shoufani, the director's father. Shoufani is a historian, an erstwhile farmer, an academic author of over 22 books, a former member of the Revolutionary Fatah Council, a widower, an Arabic/Hebrew specialist, an underground military trainer and a father to two girls. The film explores a unique Palestinian story through dramatic personal testimonies and exiled families, from the 1948 Nakba to Shoufani's dejected resignation from Fatah in 1992, to the unexpected hope inspired by the Arab Spring.



Home Sweet Home
Nadine Naous, Lebanon

The director's father spent 40 years of his life as the founder and director of “Rabia Lebanese School,” a secular school in Beirut's southern suburbs, which was once a mixed area, but is now predominately Shiite and a stronghold of Hizbullah. Today, 69 years old and drowning in debt, he must sell the school and retire. Her mother is relieved to see the school up for sale. For the director, returning home after many years spent abroad, the school's closure spells the death of an era in Lebanon, as she sets out to document this painful period in the lives of her family as well as in the life of the country.



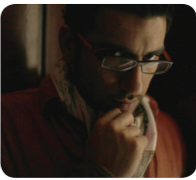
Off Frame
Mohanad Yaqubi, Palestine

Off Frame discovers a lost archive, which presents a memory of a period of the Palestinian revolution. The film develops by revealing these images and discussing with the personalities involved in filming them, in order to understand the relation between film and history, image and politics, where the Maviola screen offers an exploration through flashbacks of the practices of the Palestinian revolutionary filmmakers and their relationships with the various underground networks of militant cinemas around the world.



Whose Country?
Mohammad Siam, Egypt

In the middle of the Egyptian revolution in February, amidst chaos, random arrests and savage killings in the heart of Cairo, Ahmed Saleh – a devout Muslim, a family man and a police assistant and a dedicated servant to the Mubarak regime for over 14 years – has his world turned upside-down when his younger brother disappears. As a result, fueled with rage, Saleh begins to confess to the corruption and violence he and his colleagues routinely committed as police assistants. His search, redemption and revenge journey is provoked after realizing that police authority was a double-edged sword which carried both harm and protection. This temporary freedom to speak out, however, will expire once a new regime is in place. A filmmaker as old as the Mubarak's regime questions him without accusation nor compassion and sounds out their memory with animated sequences in order to understand the mechanisms of the repression system.



Uncle Nashaat
Aseel Mansour, Jordan

Nashaat was a Palestinian fighter who was killed by the Israelis in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley in 1982. When Aseel, Nashaat's nephew, makes a discovery that casts doubt on the circumstances of his uncle's death, he embarks on a quest to uncover the truth. Not only does this quest lead him to uncover the disturbing truth behind his uncle's death, but it also sheds light on his broken relationship with his father throughout his childhood.



Deadly Business
Zidani El-Kheyer, Algeria

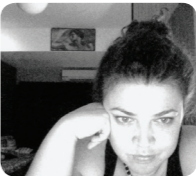
Deadly Business rather than deadly unemployment is the choice made by youth in Tkoot, Batna, a province at the edge of the Algerian desert, where rampant poverty and unemployment are ignored by the national government. Here stones are cut and polished by the hands of the poor to build beautiful and fancy houses for the rich. After only two years of cutting stones, the deadly disease of silicosis invades these young men's lungs.

SCRIPT AND DEVELOPMENT



Cairo-Ar-rehebat
Abdullah Al-Ghaly, Libya

This documentary is a two dimensional journey into the unknown history and geography of Libya. The geographical plane follows the director on his journey back to Libya to document the testimonies of Libyan revolutionaries, from the Egyptian borders to Tobrouq, Darna, Al-Gobba, Benghazi, Ejdaya, Musrata, Tripoli and Ar-rehebat (his home town) in the western mountains. The historical plane covers the anti-regime struggle, meeting royal family members who had to leave after the Gaddafi's revolution, army officers who participated in Gaddafi's revolution 40 years ago, and others who fled the Libya-Chad war including the director's father who kept silent after his escape to Egypt and never shared his story with his new family. It is now and for the first time after 25 years of silence, that he reveals the story to his son. The film is also an inner journey where the director reconnects to his roots again and reconciles with a past he had neither understood nor accepted.



Underground/On the Surface
Salma Al-Tarzi, Egypt

In light of current events, many questions arise about the Egyptian revolution; what propelled Egypt to suddenly awake from its 30 years slumber? *Underground/On the Surface* explores an unseen revolution that had been stirring beneath the calm surface and which contributed to the shaping of the revolutionary spirit of the 25th of January movement. The film portrays three underground worlds: hiphop artists, the Ultras, and graffiti artists. The groups differ in their concepts, motives and dynamics, but share a common trait: they all work against the mainstream, whether in effect or by intention.



Raise Your Head, You are a Proud Egyptian
Hala Galal, Egypt

Touching on the personal and the public, the familial and the societal, *Raise your Head you are a Proud Egyptian* will open the door to Egypt's past by unveiling the dark side of Egypt's history of oppression (from the Nasserite era through Mubarak's reign). This documentary tackles the present by investigating the corruption of the public health system and questioning future challenges, in light of the urgent need to rebuild Cairo's infrastructure.