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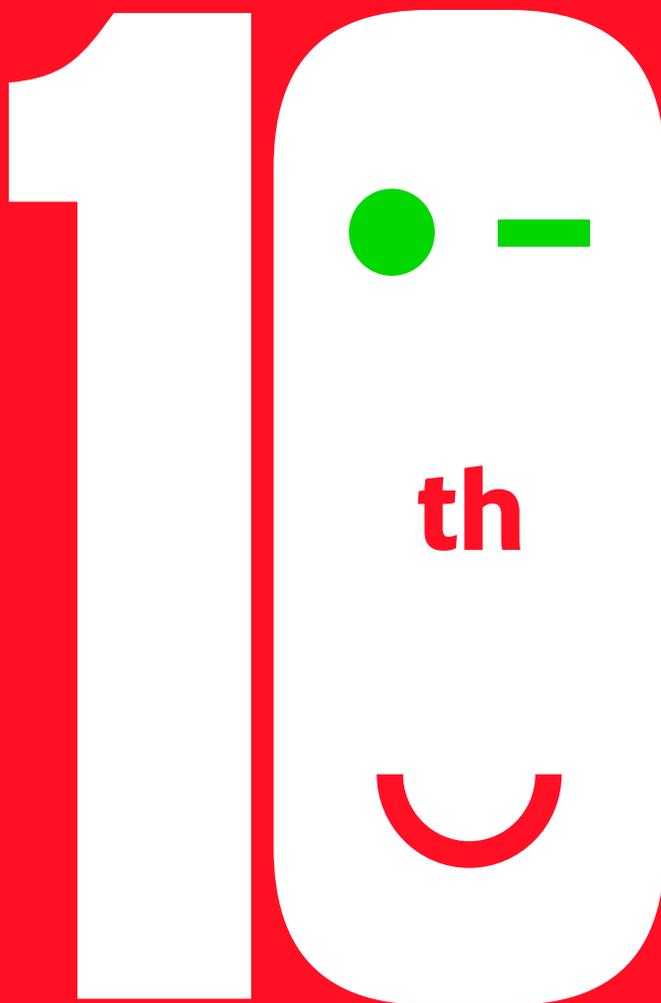
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**Ajyal Film Festival**

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**Jury Experience**

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Giffoni



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# Ajyal Film Festival 2022

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Editorial

**Shane Brennan**

**Lubaba Alhawari**

Design

**Raymond Bobar**

**Dawood Al-Anwari**

**Arwa Al Amoodi**

**Doha, Qatar, October 2022**

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My dear young friends,

Welcome to the Special 10th Edition of the Ajyal Film Festival and thank you for being an invaluable part of this incredible journey.

Your participation makes this one of the world's most rewarding and unique film events. One that gives young people the chance to watch, discuss and critique thought-provoking films from around the world and inspires them to create positive changes in themselves and their community.

And while you take advantage of this unparalleled opportunity to watch some of the most compelling movies from around the world; you are choosing to continue to grow intellectually and emotionally and gain new perspectives and expand your horizons.

As the beating heart of this festival, you are the reason that this event exists. The dynamism, positivity, energy, and passion for learning that your participation brings will not only enhance the festival's reputation globally but also provides invaluable inspiration for the filmmakers taking part.

While Ajyal presents the opportunity for you to inspire creativity, it also serves as a unique platform to strengthen your character. Your collaboration with 500 other like-minded young people from around the world working is an exciting chance to build new friendships and enhance your understanding of diverse global cultures. The new perspectives you gain through the films and your interactions around them will expand your horizons for the rest of your lives.

We believe in the power of youth to lead positive change in the world. Through your role as Ajyal Jurors, you are strengthening the cultural bridges that our nation has built over the years.

As Qatar celebrates an extraordinary milestone in hosting the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™, your participation in this year's Special Edition of Ajyal makes you extra special global ambassadors of our country, and proud representatives of our culture. I wish you the very best and look forward to engaging with you all in the coming days.

**Fatma Hassan Alremaihi**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Doha Film Institute

Festival Director,  
Ajyal Film Festival



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## Ajyal Programming Team

Festival Director, Ajyal Film Festival  
**Fatma Hassan Alremaihi**

Deputy Director, Ajyal Film Festival  
**Abdulla Al Mosallam**

Director of Strategy & Development  
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Pre-Screeners  
**Amna Al Ali**  
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**Ben Robinson**  
**Shorooq Shaheen**

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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 year-round offices and many Qatari associations; as well, several important visual and performing arts organisations have their offices in Katara.

### Giffoni Film Festival



The Giffoni Film Festival is one of the most relevant international cultural events for youth. Named after the town in the south of Italy where it originated, it was launched in 1971 by then 18-year-old Claudio Gubitosi, and has

made its mark internationally thanks to its unique ability to select and present the best in films for young people. Giffoni's main focus is making children and young adults, who attend from 50 countries worldwide, the protagonists of the event by providing them with the opportunity to sit on the juries that decide the festival's winners. The event has developed over the years, becoming a truly global experience for children, youth and their families. Capable of attracting celebrities and industry professionals from around the world, Giffoni is now a comprehensive, year-long cultural event that is exported worldwide.

# Festival Overview



## Ajyal Competition

The stars of our festival are our young Ajyal Jury. From ages 8 to 25, they form the juries of the Ajyal Competition and select the festival's ultimate award winners. By providing young people access to acclaimed international cinema and renowned filmmakers, Ajyal helps them develop their understanding of the world around them and grow into confident and mindful global citizens. The Ajyal Competition inspires creative thinking, cooperation and self-expression— leading to friendships that will last a lifetime.

# Ajyal Jury

The Ajyal Competition Jury is divided into three sections by age group. The three juries are:



## Mohaq

Mohaq means 'New Moon' in Arabic, and these are Ajyal's youngest jurors, aged 8 to 12. They will get to watch one programme of inspiring short films as well as four captivating feature-length films.



## Hilal

Ajyal's jurors aged 13 to 17 make up the Hilal jury, which means 'Crescent Moon' in Arabic. Four compelling feature films and one programme of fascinating shorts make up this jury's film selection.



## Bader

The most mature of Ajyal's juries, Bader—Arabic for 'Full Moon'—jurors are aged 18 to 25 and will select their favourite films from four thought-provoking features and one programme of engaging short films.

# Awards

Each of the three Ajyal Juries awards a Best Film prize to their favourite short and feature-length films, for a total of six awards. The directors of the winning films are granted funding toward their next film, so jurors are empowered to support and promote future content that is relevant and meaningful to them.

# Mohaqq Competition

The new moon is full of hope and endless possibilities. The critical minds of young people will be challenged and inspired by these films, which are appropriate for audiences 8 years of age and older.

## The Apple Day

Iran / Farsi, Azerbaijani / 2022  
79 mins / Colour



'A' is 'Apple', or more appropriately in Farsi—'S' is for Seeb. Young Mahdi is learning the alphabet and his teacher has the creative idea of rooting the new letters in real-life objects. Since Mahdi's father is an apple seller by trade, his duty is to bring each student an apple for the class on 'S'. A simple enough task on the surface. But when the family's van is stolen, it sets off a series of events that make 30 apples seem like a herculean challenge—one which older brother and young hero, Saeed, is determined to accomplish.

The obstacles Saeed faces along the way range from hilarious to heart-breaking. The whole family is already struggling after moving from their seemingly arcadian existence to the less bountiful streets of Tehran. The last thing they need is to lose their primary source of income. But they are an entrepreneurial bunch, and between washing clothes on the side to working part-time in shops, they are determined to make their new life a success. A family drama that's sweet at its core, 'The Apple Day' is a tale of kinship, brotherly love, and perseverance.

Director: **Mahmoud Ghaffari**  
Screenwriter: **Mahmoud Ghaffari, Mahnaz Jarchi**  
Producer: **Elaheh Nobakht**  
Cinematographer: **Ali Ehsani**  
Editor: **Mahmoud Ghaffari**  
Cast: **Arian Rastkar, Zhila Shahi, Khodadad Bakhshizae**  
Sales/Distribution: **Eli Image**



**Mahmoud Ghaffari**

is an Iranian director of fiction and documentary films. He has collaborated

with various filmmakers such as Bahman Ghobadi and Asghar Farhadi. His feature debut as a director, 'It's a Dream' (2012), was awarded at The Fribourg International Film Festival (FIFF). Ghaffari won again at FIFF with his short 'Hair'. His recent feature, 'The Apple Day', was nominated for a Crystal Bear in Generation Kplus at Berlin International Film Festival 2022.

Director: **Camiel Schouwenaar**  
 Screenwriter: **Job Tichelman, Camiel Schouwenaar**  
 Producer: **Reinier Selen, Rinskje Raap**  
 Cinematographer: **Marc de Meijer**  
 Editor: **Patrick Schonewille**  
 Cast: **Maik Cillekens, Anouar Kasmi, Kailani Busker, Mohamed Tijani**  
 Sales / Distribution: **m-appeal**



**Camiel Schouwenaar** works as a writer and director for youth drama productions and animation

films. After he graduated from the Netherlands Film Academy, he started directing puppet show series that won international awards. He loves storytelling for young audiences, where drama is presented in a light-hearted and imaginary way. His animation short 'Polska Warrior' won the Prix Jeunesse UNESCO Award, two Cinekid Awards and the Golden Calf.

## Bigman

'Strijder' / The Netherlands, Germany / Dutch / 2022  
 89 mins / Colour



Dylan and his best friend Youssef share the same dream of becoming professional footballers after they finish school. They practice diligently every chance they get, coached by Dylan's huffish but good-humoured father. The team sets their sights on winning the coveted Touzani Cup. But a tragic accident leaves Dylan partially paralysed and unable to play. Stubbornly, Dylan refuses to accept the new limitations of his disability. With the help of Maya and the boys on his team, he searches for new ways to participate in his beloved sport in this inspiring feature about friendship, determination, and the will to win.

Based loosely on screenwriter Job Tichelman's own life as a disabled football player, the film deals compassionately with the heart-rending realities of coming to terms with being differently abled than one's peers. Dylan's character arc from denial and anger to ultimate acceptance is moving. He grows as a person with each challenge he doggedly overcomes, even giving up his treasured number ten jersey for the good of his team. A directorial debut for Camiel Schouwenaar, 'Bigman' is a classic footballing tale with a poignant goal.

## Dounia & The Princess of Aleppo

'Dounia et la Princesse d'Alep' / Canada, France / French / 2022  
 71 mins / Colour



Six-year-old Dounia loves to play, learn and discover new recipes. She lives with her grandparents and father in Aleppo and treasures hearing stories of her mother, who tragically passed away when Dounia was too young to remember. One night, a group of uniformed men take her father away, and an uneasy feeling begins to take hold. War has begun, but her grandparents do their best to shelter the young girl from its effects. As bombs drop around them, the family decide to flee in search of a new home with only a few possessions—and a little magic in hand.

Their perilous journey takes them across land and sea. Joined by other fleeing refugees, the motley crew find some solace in each other through shared songs and stories. Dounia's more traumatic encounters are eased in child-like flights of imagination thanks to her magic 'baraki' seeds. The film deals with quite a heavy subject matter in displacement, war, and loss, but the protagonists' upbeat attitude and grit, along with enchanting musical scenes, make it an optimistic experience full of hope and wonder.

Director: **Marya Zarif, André Kadi**  
 Screenwriter: **Marya Zarif**  
 Producer: **Judith Beauregard**  
 Music: **Pierre Yves Drapeau**  
 Cast: **Rachaf Ataya, Elsa Madorissian, Manuel Tadros**  
 Sales/Distribution: **Be for Films**



A multidisciplinary artist, **Marya Zarif** has developed skills in multiplatform design, screen-play writing

and direction and has fifteen years of experience in content for young audiences. In 2015 Marya co-founded 'Je Veux Jouer' (I Want to Play), a foundation whose purpose is to transform the lives of Syrian refugee children through games. In 2020, she created, wrote, and co-directed her first animated web series, 'Dounia'. 'Dounia and The Princess of Aleppo' is her first feature film.



**André Kadi** joined Frima animation studios in 2007. As the head of the artistic department,

he founded a branch of the studio in Bordeaux. He opened a 2D animation studio in 2012, where he made the series 'MaXi and Agent Jean', before co-founding Du Coup Animation in 2018 with Marie-MichelleLaflamme, then Du Coup Production in 2021.

Winner of Best Animated Feature for Children at Brussels Animation Film Festival 2022

Director: **Jean-Jacques Denis, Anthony Roux**  
 Screenwriter: **Anthony Roux**  
 Editor: **Stéphanie Jans**  
 Cast: **Lila Lacombe, Kaycie Chase, Jérémie Covillault**  
 Distribution: **Pulsar Content**



**Jean-Jacques Denis** trained at the Gobelins School of Visual Arts in Paris and started his career as a storyboarder

for several animated series. He began working with Ankama in 2010, first as a storyboarder for the series 'Wakfu' in 2011, then as director of the series 'Dofus: Kerub's Bazaar'. In 2016, he co-directed his first feature film 'Dofus - Book 1: Julith'.



**Anthony Roux**, also known as "Tot", is Ankama's founder and creative director. A graduate of the Académie des

Beaux-Arts in Tournai, he presided over the series 'Wakfu' as author, scriptwriter and director before adventuring into feature films and bringing his universe to the big screen in 'Dofus - Book 1: Julith'.

# Dragon Princess

'Princesse Dragon' / France / French / 2021  
 78 mins / Colour



Bristle is a young girl with a very unusual childhood—she is being raised by a dragon! A little different from her two dragon brothers, Bristle makes her own way in the world. But since she is not quite human and not fully animal, she finds it hard to fit into either kingdom. One day a frog sorceress visits her father, Dragon, and demands he gives her his second most-prized possession. After Bristle has exposed their secret cave to the humans, Dragon is furious and offers up his only daughter. Wrought with despair, Bristle flees and embarks on a journey of discovery into the world of humans.

Among humans, Bristle does her best to remain inconspicuous. But her wild side does not mix well with the hypocrisy of high society, and she soon runs into conflict. Winner of the Best Children's Feature at Anima 2022, 'Princess Dragon' has a distinctively Studio Ghibli feel to its aesthetic, giving the film a certain dreamlike feel. The story has many classic fairy-tale elements but weaves them together beautifully to create a fresh and compelling narrative about friendship, solidarity, betrayal, and greed.

# An Invisible Apprentice

'Una Aprendiz Invisible' / Argentina / Spanish / 2021  
 12 mins / Colour



Despite the shimmering lights, upbeat music and assumed fun of her roller disco class—something is weighing heavy on the shoulders of 12-year-old Inés. Her dance class is a planned distraction, one that was meant to take Inés away from the flashing and beeping lights of her ailing sister's EKG machine. Learning balance in more ways than one, the young girl begins to compartmentalise her feelings in this nostalgic 80s short about maturation, family, illness and hope.

Director: **Emilia Herbst**  
 Producer: **Eduardo Driuzzi**  
 Screenwriter: **Emilia Herbst, Denise Umaschi, Mariana Planella**  
 Cinematographer: **Santiago Cantillo**  
 Cast: **Moe Kaplan Arias, Cecilia Rainero, Agustín Mendilaharzu**  
 Distribution: **FilmsToFestivals Distribution Agency**

**Emilia Herbst** is an Argentinian director, producer and actor who studied at the Escuela Metropolitana de Arte Dramático (EMAD) and the Universidad del Cine in Buenos Aires. She currently works in film and television. 'An Invisible Apprentice' is her debut short film as a director.

# Burros

USA / English, Spanish, O'odham / 2021  
 15 mins / Colour



In southern Arizona, twenty miles from the Mexico border, a young Indigenous girl discovers a Hispanic migrant her age who has been separated from her father while travelling through the Tohono O'odham tribal lands into the United States. Unable to communicate, Elsa takes her through her community and ultimately to her grandmother, Gagi, who speaks Spanish and bridges the language barrier. 'Burros' is an emotional story set in a complicated place in the world, but at its core, it is a story about finding connection.

Director / Screenwriter: **Jefferson Stein**  
 Producer: **Liz Cardenas, Russell Shaeffer, Jefferson Stein, Douglas Riggs**  
 Editor: **R. Brett Thomas**  
 Cinematographer: **Cole Graham**  
 Cast: **Amaya Juan, Zuemmy Carrillo**

**Jefferson Stein** is a filmmaker from Texas, based in Los Angeles. His short film, 'Tumble Dry Low', screened at Seattle, Maryland, and Tallinn Black Nights and was selected for the Shoot New Directors Showcase. His follow-up, 'Burros', produced by Film Independent Spirit Award winner Liz Cardenas, was awarded a Film Independent fiscal sponsorship, premiered at Tribeca 2021, won Best Narrative Short at Santa Fe IFF, Sidewalk, Arizona, and New York ICFF, qualifying for the Live Action Short Oscar® at the 95th Academy Awards®.

## Canary

Canada / No Dialogue / 2022

12 mins / Colour



Canary birds are highly sensitive to their environments. Because of this, they were often used in mining as an indicator to see if the air was safe to breathe. Young Sonny doesn't like mining much, and he trains his pet canary to play dead so they can take the day off. A prank that leads to unintentional disaster in this well-crafted animated short about honesty, integrity, and friendship.

Director: **PH (Pierre-Hugues Dallaire), Ben (Benoit Therriault)**

Screenwriters: **Pierre-Hugues Dallaire, Thomas Michael, Benoit Therriault**

Producer: **Marie-Cécile Dahan**

Cinematographer: **Philippe Sylvain, Jonathan Meret**

Editor: **Guillaume Poulin**

Music: **Iohann M. Miller**

Distribution: **MIYU Distribution**

**PH & Ben** have been directing together for over 12 years. Their short films and commissioned work have been featured at the Annecy International Film Festival (Share the Joy, IGA; Vraiment Frais, IGA; Aide Gourmet, IGA). Other accolades include Vimeo Staff Picks for 'Share the Joy', an Honourable Mention at the Queen Palm International Film Festival, 'LottoMax Bear', and a CREA Award for 'MSSS Smoke'. Their short-circuited but notable attempt at making the short film 'Outside' in 2016 led them to 'Canary'.

## Ice Merchants

Portugal, UK, France / No Dialogue / 2022

14 mins / Colour



Every day, a father and his son jump with a parachute from their house attached to a cliff high in the cold mountains. They carry with them their precious cargo of ice that they produce by freezing water outside their sub-zero home. One day the temperature begins to creep above freezing leading to dire consequences for the family in this foreboding animation about climate change and its effects.

Director / Screenwriter / Editor: **João Gonzalez**

Producer: **Bruno Caetano**

Distribution: **Agência - Portuguese Short Film Agency**

**João Gonzalez** is a Portuguese director, animator, illustrator, and musician with a classical piano background. With a scholarship from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, he achieved his master's degree at the Royal College Art (UK), after finishing his degree at ESMAD (PT). In these institutions, he directed two films, 'Nestor' and 'The Voyager', that together received more than 20 national and international awards, as well as more than 130 official selections in film festivals around the world.

## The Most Boring Granny in the Whole World

'Die allerlangweiligste Oma auf der ganzen Welt' / Germany / English / 2022

7 mins / Colour



Young Greta thinks she might have the most boring grandma in the whole world. She never lets her play with her antiques or colour in old black and white photographs. One day while her granny naps on the couch, Greta hosts a mock funeral, inviting all her toys as guests. Her granny awakes, and they realise together how precious time can be in this charmingly contemplative short about mortality and living life to the fullest.

Director: **Damaris Zielke**

Screenwriter: **Manuel Ostwald**

Producer: **Jiayan Chen**

Cinematographer: **Michael Throne**

Sales: **AG Animationsfilm**

Distribution: **Fabian&Fred**

**Damaris Zielke** was born in southwest Germany in 1992. She studied visual communication in Weimar at Bauhaus University. She continued studying animation at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg from 2016-2021 and worked as a freelance Motion Designer & Animator on different TV productions and documentaries at the same time. In 2019 Zielke took part in the six-week Lucerne Masterclass for advanced animation (LuMAA) in Switzerland. Currently, she is working as an animator in London.

## Nasser & The Ticket

Qatar / Arabic / 2022

4 mins / Colour



Almost 50 years ago this year, the legendary Pelé played a match in Doha Sports Stadium. On that fateful day in 1973, young Nasser is desperate to see his idol take the field. But he is stuck in Arabic class and must avoid the wrath of his teacher as he attempts to get his hands on a ticket in this charming short about the beautiful game and its power to unite cultures.

Director: **Tony El Ghazal**

Producer: **Afnan Tag, Ben Robinson**

Cinematographer: **Yasser Mustafa**

Cast: **Hamad Al-Ibrahim, Abdul Ghani Maqboul**

**Tony El Ghazal** is a Lebanese award-winning writer and director. He has directed several narrative fiction films and documentaries, which have played at film festivals worldwide. His films centre around stories from the Arab world that are universal in their appeal. In addition to short films, he also conceptualizes and directs corporate commercials. Tony graduated from Northwestern University in Qatar, where he was awarded two Studio 20Q grants to produce his short films, 'Bayt El Omor' (2021) and 'Ibn El Ballad' (2022).

## Suzie in the Garden

'Zuza v zahradách' / The Czech Republic /

English / 2022

13 mins / Colour



Suzie is an inquisitive little girl who frequently visits an allotment outside the city with her parents. One day she meets a black dog and discovers a mysterious garden. Initially frightened by the person that lives there, Suzie soon picks up the courage to explore when she finds a lost key on the path. Beautifully textured with oil paints on layers of glass above a lightbox, 'Suzie in the Garden' is a charming animation about childhood innocence and discovery.

Director / Screenwriter / Animator: **Lucie Sunková**

Producer: **Alena Vandasová, Martin Vandas**

Cinematographer: **Jaroslav Fišer**

Editor: **Anna Ryndová**

Music: **Aliaksandr Yasinski**

Distribution: **Cinefila**

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**Lucie Sunková** was born in Prague in the Czech Republic, where she studied at Vaclav Hollar Art School and FAMU (Film and TV School of Academy of Performing Arts in Prague). She is a scriptwriter, artist, director, and animator. Sunková focuses primarily on one animation technique—painting with oil paints on glass over a camera. She also writes and illustrates books for children.

## Walking from Paris to Brest

'La Marche de Paris à Brest' / France /

No Dialogue / 2021

7 mins / Black and White



In 1927, filmmaker Oskar Fischinger travelled for three weeks along the side roads between Munich and Berlin, filming frame by frame the people he met along the way and the places he passed through. In 2020, director Vincent Le Port undertook a similar project during a month-long walk between Paris and Brest. The result is a time capsule-like short capturing both a place and its people, delicately woven together through fleeting vignettes.

Director / Cinematographer / Editor: **Vincent Le Port**

Distribution: **L'agence du court métrage**

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Born in Rennes in 1986, **Vincent Le Port** graduated from La Fémis in directing. He co-founded the production company Stank with which he develops his projects, including 'Le Gouffre' (Jean Vigo Short Film Prize 2016). 'Bruno Reidal', for which he was awarded the Gan Foundation for Cinema, is his first feature film.

# Hilal Competition

Carried along by the crescent in their teenage years, soon-to-be adults will find films in this section that encourage their self-expression. Hilal films are suitable for audiences 13 years of age and older.

## After Yang

USA / English / 2022  
96 mins / Colour



Based on a short story by Alexander Weinstein, 'After Yang' is a compelling drama set in the alarmingly near future where domestic robots pervade our daily lives. A young couple, Jake and Kyra, adopt a daughter named Mika. To help her understand her place of birth and culture more, they also purchase an android as a carer and teacher—Yang. Forming a strong bond with her new companion, Mika is inconsolable when Yang malfunctions. As a discontinued model that was bought outside of the conventional channels, Jake faces an existential quest to repair Yang.

In the process, Jake uncovers secrets of the android's previous life buried deep inside Yang's core. Watching the fragmented memories of another from the outside, Jake realises his own life has been passing him by too. Through introspection and self-discovery, Jake begins to bridge the gaps in his family and reconnects with his wife and daughter across a distance he didn't know was there. A reflective and thoroughly intriguing film, 'After Yang' is a contemplation on humanity, empathy, kinship and questions the nature of what it means to be truly alive.

Winner of the Alfred P. Sloan  
Feature Film Prize at Sundance  
Film Festival 2022

Director / Screenwriter: **Kogonada**  
Producer: **Theresa Park,**  
**Andrew Goldman, Caroline**  
**Kaplan, Paul Mezey**  
Cinematographer: **Benjamin Loeb**  
Cast: **Colin Farrell, Jodie**  
**Turner-Smith, Malea Emma**  
**Tjandrawidjaja, Justin H. Min**



**Kogonada**—the name is a pseudonym—is a South Korean-born American filmmaker. He is known

for his video essays that analyse the content, form, and structure of various films and television series. The essays frequently use narration and editing as lenses, and often highlight a director's aesthetic. Kogonada is a regular contributor to Sight & Sound magazine and is frequently commissioned by The Criterion Collection to create supplemental videos for its home-video releases. Kogonada's debut film, 'Columbus', starring John Cho and Haley Lu Richard, premiered at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival. He wrote and directed his second feature 'After Yang' for A24, starring Colin Farrell and Jodie Turner-Smith.

Winner of the Generation Kplus  
Crystal Bear Award at Berlin  
International Film Festival 2022

Director: **Sanna Lenken**  
Screenwriter: **Linn Gottfridsson**  
Producer: **Rebecka Lafrenz, Anna Anthony**  
Editor: **Andreas Nilsson SFK**  
Cinematographer: **Simon Pramsten**  
Sales: **REinvent International Sales**  
Cast: **Sigrid Johnson, Oscar Töringe, Ellen Taure, Iggy Malmberg, Adam Daho**



Born in Gothenburg, Sweden 1978, **Sanna Lenken** studied at Dramatiska Institutet in Stockholm and

the European Film College in Denmark. After several successful short films such as 'Eating Lunch' and the series 'Double Life', she made her feature film debut in 2015 with 'My Skinny Sister' for which she was awarded the Crystal Bear at the Berlin Film Festival as well as the Audience Award at the Göteborg Film Festival. Her most recent work is the popular series 'Thin Blue Line' for SVT and the Viaplay series 'Thunder in My Heart'.

## Comedy Queen

Sweden / Swedish / 2021  
93 mins / Colour



Sasha is 13 years old and wants nothing more than to become a stand-up comedian. She wants to make everyone laugh, especially her father, who cries in the shower when he thinks no one is listening. Behind her eyes, the unhealed tears also burn on Sasha, but she refuses to mourn her mother, who has passed away in tragic circumstances. Instead, she secretly writes a list of everything she must do to survive—shave her hair, stop reading books, say no to the world's cutest puppy and above all—become a Comedy Queen.

Balancing humour with heartbreaking loss, 'Comedy Queen' delicately deals with grief, denial and ultimately acceptance of a tragic death in a family. Too young to fully understand her feelings and unable to open up to her father or therapist, Sasha rebels against everything and everyone around her. Suffering from immeasurable sorrow, she finds a creative outlet for her grief and anger in the form of comedy. An outlet that allows her to finally come to terms with her loss and re-establish a relationship with her father in this touching coming-of-age drama.

## The Territory

Brazil, Denmark, USA / Portuguese / 2022  
85 mins / Colour



'The Territory' follows the vital, inspiring fight of the Indigenous Uru-eu-wau-wau people of Brazil to defend their land from non-Indigenous farmers intent on colonising their protected territory. Co-produced by the Uru-eu-wau-wau community, the film draws on intimate access to both the Indigenous perspective and the farmers who want their land to chronicle a conflict that has profound implications for the survival of a people and the planet. The community has faced environmentally destructive and often violent incursions into their sovereign territory by nonnatives seeking to exploit the land. Illegal logging and land clearing incursions have become more frequent and more brazen over the years.

The film offers an authentic portrait of a community's daily life and struggles. With its breathtaking cinematography showcasing the dramatic landscape, the film brings audiences deep into the precious ecosystem they are fighting to protect. With the community's survival at stake, Bitaté Uru-eu-wau-wau and Neidinha Bandeira—a young Indigenous leader and his female mentor—must find new ways to protect the rainforest from encroaching invaders. But rather than rely on others to tell their story, the Uru-eu-wau-wau take control of the narrative and create their own news media team to bring the world the truth in this thought-provoking documentary about environmentalism and indigenous peoples' rights.

Winner of an Audience Award  
at the Sundance Film Festival 2022

Director / Producer: **Alex Pritz**  
Producer: **Darren Aronofsky, Will N. Miller, Sigrid Dyekjær, Lizzie Gillett, Gabriel Uchida**  
Editor: **Carlos Rojas Felice**  
Cinematographer: **Alex Pritz, Tangã Uru-eu-wau-wau**  
Sales / Distribution: **Dogwoof**



**Alex Pritz** is a documentary film director and cinematographer focused on human's relationship with

the natural world. Pritz's directorial debut, 'The Territory', premiered in the World Cinema competition at Sundance 2022, winning both an Audience Award and Special Jury Award for Documentary Craft, making it the only film at that year's festival to win awards from audience and jury alike. He is a co-founder of Documist and has received grants from the Sundance Institute, IDA Enterprise Fund, Catapult Fund and Doc Society. Pritz holds a Bachelor of Science from McGill University, where he studied Environmental Science and Philosophy.

Director: **Ali Asgari**  
 Screenwriter: **Ali Asgari, Alireza Khatami**  
 Producer: **Niki Karimi, Raphaele Delauche, Nicolas Sanfaute, Ali Asgari, Jean-Charles Mille**  
 Cinematographer: **Roozbeh Rayga**  
 Editor: **Ehsan Vaseghi**  
 Cast: **Sadaf Asgari, Ghazal Shojaei, Babak Karimi, Amirreza Ranjbaran**  
 Sales/Distribution: **MPM Premium**



**Ali Asgari** is a prominent figure in Iranian cinema, with more than 200 awards to his name. Two of his

shorts were nominated for Palme d'Or at Festival de Cannes, and 'The Baby' was in the short film competition of Venice Film Festival 2014. Ali's films are concerned with precarious lives who live at society's margin in his native country Iran. His debut film 'Disappearance' was developed at the Cinefondation Residence of Festival De Cannes. Ali is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and 'Until Tomorrow' is his second feature film.

## Until Tomorrow

**Doha Film Institute Supported Film**

Iran, France, Qatar / Farsi / 2022

86 mins / Colour



Fereshteh is a young mother facing a serious dilemma. On the surface, she is relatively happy, studying and working in a print shop in Tehran, with dreams of one day travelling abroad. But her parents are coming to visit, and she has kept a secret from them—her two-month-old daughter. Born out of wedlock and with little help from the father, Fereshteh and her trusted friend Atefeh must resort to increasingly desperate measures to keep her baby hidden and safe in a city with limited options for a mother living outside of traditionally accepted family norms.

'Until Tomorrow' is a compelling portrait of the millennial generation and how they are re-examining the value system in Iran and many other countries. The odyssey of Fereshteh takes us under the skin of the Iranian capital, Tehran, to understand how the youth have gained the bravery and confidence to question the traditional ways of life and break away from patriarchy. Director Ali Asgari, whose film 'Disappearance' made its MENA Premiere at Ajyal 2017, once again perfectly captures a generation's courage when faced with bureaucratic adversity.

## Displaced

'Pa Vend' / Kosovo / Albanian / 2021

15 mins / Colour



In post-war Kosovo, driven by the ambition of keeping their beloved sport alive, two local players wander from one obscure location to another, carrying the club's only possession—their ping pong tables. In an environment of hopelessness, ravaged by forced migration, the dedicated pair cling to the pursuit of bringing their sport back to its pre-war level of success—a dream that almost seems impossible given the challenges they face.

Director / Cinematographer: **Samir Karahoda**

Producer: **Eroll Bilibani**

Editor: **Enis Saraçi**

Cast: **Jeton Mazreku, Ermegan Kazazi, Rifat Rifati**

Distribution: **Radiator IP Sales**

**Samir Karahoda** began working as a photographer in 1992, and in 2003 he completed his photography studies at the Academy of Fine Arts at Mimar Sinan University in Istanbul. In addition to his work as a photographer, he is also a cinematographer, tutor, and curator of the short film program at the DokuFest, Documentary and Short Film Festival in Prizren. His documentary short film 'In Between' had its world premiere at the Berlinale 2019—the first Kosovar film to compete at the festival.

## The Eternal Melody

'Anhad' / Nepal / Nepali / 2021

13 mins / Colour



When an elderly woman living high in the mountains with her grown son is visited in a dream by her late husband, mother and son go to great lengths to help ease his passage to the next world. Religion, spirituality, and the universal human condition are intricately woven in this tale about the agony of accepting loss—while navigating the dissonance between letting go and holding onto that which has passed.

Director / Screenwriter: **Niranjan Raj Bhetwal**

Producer: **Ram Krishna Pokharel**

Cinematographer: **Sarad Mahato**

Editor: **Kiran Shrestha**

Cast: **Chandra Kumari Upadhyaya, Hari Bahadur Adhikari, Govinda Prashad Upadhyaya**

Born in Nepal, **Niranjan Raj Bhetwal** is a filmmaker based in Kathmandu. He holds a bachelor's degree in scriptwriting and direction, followed by a 2-year diploma in digital animation and video editing with several filmmaking workshops and master classes. As a filmmaker, his passion is to represent authentic Nepali voices, and his films explore themes that include family ties, magical realism, and complex and diverse characters with strong spiritual values. His short film 'Kafal Pakyo' (2014) travelled to over 75 film festivals and won numerous awards.

## Farrucas

Spain, USA / Arabic, Spanish / 2021  
17 mins / Colour



Hadoum, Fatema, Sheima and Sokayna are four teenagers from El Puche, a marginalised suburb in the Spanish city of Almería. Proud of their Moroccan and Spanish roots, the girls help each other navigate life's challenges in their underprivileged neighbourhood and underfunded schools. Full of dreams and hope, their self-confidence is put to the test during Fatima's 18th birthday in this compelling short narrative about identity, expectation, and free will.

Director: **Ian de la Rosa**  
Screenwriter: **Ian de la Rosa, Jana Díaz Juhl**  
Producer: **Carlotta Schiavon, Inés Massa, Jana Díaz Juhl, Pau Brunet**  
Cinematographer: **Gina Ferrer**  
Editor: **Marc Esteve Escrihuela**  
Cast: **Hadoum Benghnidira Nieto, Fatema Benalghani Bousrij, Sheima El Haddad Bousrij, Sokayna El Assri**  
Distribution: **Marvin&Wayne Short Films**

**Ian de la Rosa** graduated with a degree in film direction from the Catalonia Film School and received one of the Cannes Cinéfondation Awards for his final degree project 'Victor XX'. His first short film as a producer, 'Porque la sal', premiered at Visions du Réel. In 2019, the filming of the hybrid short film 'Farrucas' began, and in 2020, with the help of the Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts, de la Rosa completed the project. He is currently working on the script for his first feature film, 'Aceituna'.

## Happy New Year, Jim

Italy / English / 2022  
9 mins / Colour



It's New Year's Eve. Friends Jim and Morten are playing online video games all night long, like every day. But something's not sitting well with Morten tonight. He's become uncomfortable with the realism of the digital world and the preprogrammed destinies of characters in their games. These persistent thoughts set off a fascinating series of questions to a bewildered Jim about the ethics of artificial intelligence, the direction of technological advancement and ultimately, an existential crisis about the nature of reality itself.

Director / Editor / Producer: **Andrea Gatopoulos**  
Producer: **Marco Crispino**  
Cast: **Jim Muzungu, Morten Hakke**  
Sales / Distribution: **Gargantua Film**

**Andrea Gatopoulos** is a film producer, director and distributor. His films have been featured in more than 120 festivals worldwide, including Venice SIC@SIC, Camerimage, Rotterdam IFFR, In the Palace, Drama, Cyprus, and Rome Film Festival. In 2020 he worked alongside Werner Herzog for his film Accelerator in Leticia, Colombia, in which he developed the filmed correspondence 'Letters to Herzog'. His last short film, 'Happy New Year, Jim.', premiered at Cannes Film Festival during Directors' Fortnight.

## The Headhunter's Daughter

'Hija ti Mengor' / Philippines / Ilokano, English / 2021  
15 mins / Colour



Lynn leaves her family behind to traverse the harrowing roads of the Cordilleran highlands in the Philippines, to try her luck in the city as a country singer. Motivated not by money or fame, she simply wants her voice to be heard and the chance to appear on television so her father might see her perform. Laden with vestiges of American colonialism, this Sundance awarded short is a haunting ballad about the erosion and ultimate replacement of indigenous cultural traditions.

Director / Screenwriter / Cinematographer:  
**Don Josephus Raphael Eblahan**  
Producer: **Hannah Schierbeek**  
Cast: **Ammin Acha-ur, Karla Prol Rev G. Naogsan, Pablo Quintos**

**Don Josephus Raphael Eblahan** is an independent filmmaker born of Ifugao and Visayan descent. Eblahan's works explore themes of trauma, spirituality, and nature told through the cosmic lens of post-colonial spaces and indigenous identities. In 2021, Eblahan's film 'Hilum' won the Student Prize and received Special Mention from the International Jury at Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival.

## InBetween Home

'Stille Post' / Austria, Romania / Romanian, German, English / 2022  
17 mins / Colour



In her efforts to obtain accommodation and, therefore, a residence permit in Austria, Marinela—an overburdened, single Romanian mother—relies on her daughter Ilinca as a mediator and translator. However, Ilinca has other plans. She wants to talk to Bubú; she wants to go home. 'InBetween Home' uses a touch of humour to compassionately portray the struggles of first-generation immigrants as they encounter language barriers, bureaucracy, and homesickness in their hope of finding a new life.

Director / Screenwriter: **Brigitta Kanyaro**  
Producer: **Chris Dohr, Eugen Kelemen**  
Cinematographer: **Carolina Steinbrecher**  
Editor: **Eugen Kelemen**  
Cast: **Diana Cavaliotti, Lara Kelemen, Gisela Salcher, Karl Fischer**  
Distribution: **Lemonade Films**

**Brigitta Kanyaro** is a Romanian actress and filmmaker based in Vienna. She produced her first short film 'Liniste' (2017) which premiered at Transylvania IFF. In 2020, she was nominated for the Romy Young Talent Award for her first leading role in the series 'Last Will'. In 2019, she made her directorial debut with the short film 'Annamalai', which won the Austrian award at Linz ISFF. Kanyaro was selected for the 2021 artist residency Femart in Bucharest with her debut feature film project, where she won the main prize.

## It Feels Personal

UK / English / 2021

14 mins / Colour



Digital creator Hugh discovers that his video has been stolen, re-contextualised, and turned into a viral meme by an anonymous TikTok user. Frustrated by the theft, he embarks on an internet odyssey, interviewing and interrogating the people that he encounters in an attempt to uncover the perpetrator. A short desktop documentary about the blurry lines of intellectual property in the shared and borderless digital community.

Director / Producer: **Hugh Clegg**

Editor: **Osian Pearson**

Music: **Adrian Cermak**

**Hugh Clegg** works between the lines of documentary and fiction. He loves stories that explore the smaller preoccupations of life and try to find the funny side of complex issues. His films have won at BAFTA and Oscar qualifying festivals. Hugh has just graduated from the National Film and Television School and is currently co-directing a short comedy for Netflix US.

## On The Surface

Iceland, USA, Mali / English / 2021

4 mins / Colour



'On the Surface' is a short contemplative animation about a young Black woman who goes swimming in the Icelandic Sea. There, she reflects on her experience of raising a child in a country that feels nothing like home. She relives her traumatic pregnancy and postnatal depression as she enters the freezing water. Facing her fears, she begins to relax in the deep wild abyss—helping her to heal on her emotional journey.

Director / Screenwriter: **Fan Sissoko**

Producer: **Fan Sissoko**

Music: **Tariqh Akoni, Hafdis Bjarnadottir**

Cast: **Enid Mbabazi**

Distribution: **Sudu Connexion**

**Fan Sissoko** is a French-Malian artist and filmmaker based in Reykjavik, with a background in design for social change. Her work explores themes of migration, motherhood, otherhood and neurodiversity. Notable commissions include work for the Migration Museum, the Museum of London, the Science Gallery Dublin, and the National Trust. Her animated short film 'On the Surface' was awarded a grant from Art with Impact, screened at festivals around the world, including Clermont Ferrand ISFF (France), and won the Heartwired Award at Our Heritage, Our Planet Film Festival (US).

## Paradiso, XXXI, 108

Palestine, Germany / Hebrew / 2022

18 mins / Colour



"Nothing can be heard anymore; the roar of our plane absorbs every other sound. We are heading straight to the world's biggest display of soundproof fireworks, and soon we will drop our bombs". Using archival footage interweaved with an almost haunting soundscape, Kamal Aljafari perfectly encapsulates the folly of war in this disarmingly captivating short documentary.

Director / Producer: **Kamal Aljafari**

Editor: **Yannig Willmann**

Sound: **Attila Faravelli**

**Kamal Aljafari** is a Palestinian filmmaker. He attended the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne and now lives in Berlin, Germany. He has taught filmmaking at The New School in New York and the German Film and Television Academy Berlin (DFFB). He was also a Film Study Center Radcliffe Fellow at Harvard University. In 2021, Olhar de Cinema - Curitiba International Film Festival in Brazil devoted its Focus Section to his work. Aljafari's 'Paradiso, XXXI, 108' premiered at Corti d'Autore, at the Locarno Film Festival 2022.

# Bader Competition

Young adults have completed the circle of youth and are now taking their own steps on the path of life. Their opinions resonate more strongly, and this appealing programme exposes them to cinema as a contemporary art form.

## Hafreiat

Spain, Qatar, Jordan / Arabic, English, Spanish / 2022  
78 mins / Colour



Abo Dya is a fugitive from Amman who lives in Gneyya, a small village in northern Jordan. He resides there with his wife and son Dya, and they are expecting their second child to be born in the coming weeks. Abo Dya is one of the Jordanian workers hired for a Spanish archaeological expedition which has become a primary source of income for the villagers. The working conditions are arduous, and the relationship with their foreign employers is becoming increasingly tense. The only realistic solution Abo Dya sees is to return to Amman, which his family is unwilling to do because of the risk of returning to his criminal past.

Alex Sardà's empathetic documentary chronicles a man's relationship with his family as they attempt to find security in uncertain times. With a strong personality and blind determination, Abo Dya tries to improve the working conditions of the site by leading a strike. He confronts the Spanish team leading the dig and schools his young son on the side to prevent him from falling into the same trap he has. Ultimately, the film questions the possibility of genuine rehabilitation in a society that is reluctant to forget a person's past transgressions.

Director: **Alex Sardà**  
Scriptwriter: **Alex Sardà, Txell Llorens**  
Producer: **Carlota Coloma**  
Cinematographer:  
**Artur-Pol Camprubí**  
Editor: **Ariadna Ribas**  
Music: **Sergi Alejandre, Rasheed Jalloul**  
Distribution: **Begin Again Films**



**Alex Sardà** collaborates primarily with the production companies 15L Films and Nanouk Films.

His short documentary 'Ciutat de Granada 145-147-149' premiered at the London Architecture Film Festival 2021. Previously he made two short narrative films, 'Gang' (2020), awarded at the FICC 2020 festival for Best Direction and 'Fuga' (2021), which was awarded at the 2021 Malaga Festival, with the Silver Biznaga for Best Actor. His documentary feature film 'Hafreiat' (2022) was developed in the documentary forums of Thessaloniki and Lau Haizetara of San Sebastian. He is currently developing his second feature film with 15L Films and Boogaloo Films.

Winner of the NEXT:WAVE Award  
at CPH:DOX 2022

Director: **Lea Najjar**  
Screenwriter: **Lea Najjar, Alia Haju**  
Producer: **Matthias Drescher**  
Cinematographer: **Jonas Schneider**  
Editor: **Tobias Wilhelmer**  
Sales/Distribution:  
**MAGNETFILM GmbH**



**Lea Najjar**, born in 1994 in Vienna, grew up in Beirut and graduated high school from the City International

School in Beirut. She then completed her freshman degree at the American University of Beirut (AUB) in 2013. During her school years, she worked as a press photographer. In 2014 she studied at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg and finished her diploma in documentary directing with her first feature film 'Kash Kash'. 'Kash Kash' celebrated its world premiere at the CPH: DOX in Copenhagen, where it won the NEXT:WAVE Competition for best debut and emerging filmmaker from the international scene.

## Kash Kash – Without Feathers We Can't Live

**Doha Film Institute Supported Film**  
**Germany, Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic / 2022**  
90 mins / Colour

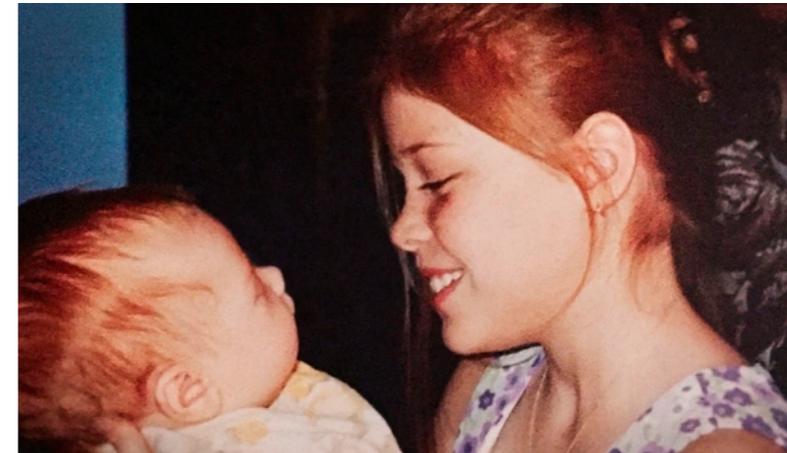


The filmmaker's hometown, Beirut, is torn apart by a corrupt political elite, anti-government protests, and one of the biggest explosions of the 21st century. But above the city's roofs soars an unexpected bearer of hope—the pigeon game of chance "Kash Hamam". Every evening, in the golden sun above the labyrinth streets, the sky populates, and all over the city swarms of birds fly out of their cages. Their flight follows the choreography of an ancient tradition. A game allegedly invented by embattled kings in the hope of saving their soldiers from the folly of war.

The rules are simple, with each player circling their flock in the hope of luring competing players' pigeons to join and land back on their roof for them to capture. But the game and its metaphor are far more complex. Despite the rising inflation and sky-high cost of bird food, dedicated players still lovingly raise, feed, and adorn their pigeons with colourful anklets. In a city facing unprecedented modern challenges, its people still manage to find solace through their long-held traditions in this moving portrait of hope in the face of despair.

## My Sister Liv

**Australia, USA / English / 2022**  
70 mins / Colour



When eight-year-old Tess learned that her mother was pregnant, she was not excited at the prospect of a sibling. But with the birth of little Liv, who had the same fiery red hair as her older sister, an unbreakable bond was formed that, sadly, was torn apart too soon. Liv grew into a young woman full of energy and with incredible musical talent, but even as a child, she suffered from anxiety and depression until she was driven to a radical solution. Tess was left with a void in her life that she decided to fill by working with teenagers who have the same difficulties as Liv did.

'My Sister Liv' is a feature documentary following the inseparable sisters Tess and Liv. Liv is a young girl growing up with the relentless pressures of social media, depression, body dysmorphia, and, often, suicidal thoughts. The film takes us into the intimate journey of Liv's raw emotions and fears of a young life on the edge, and, ultimately, Tess's desperate struggle to save her. 'My Sister Liv' reveals the realities of stigma around mental health, and the aftermath for those left behind after a suicide. As a family learns to cope, they find hope in fearlessly talking about mental health and fighting to save young lives.

Director: **Alan Hicks**  
Screenwriter: **Paula DuPré Pesmen, Alan Hicks, Andrew McAllister, Jordan Swioklo**  
Producer: **Paula DuPré Pesmen, Camilla Mazzaferro**  
Editor: **Andrew McAllister, Michael Mahaffie, Jordan Swioklo**



**Alan Hicks** is a Grammy Award-Winning filmmaker based in Los Angeles and Sydney. Hicks' first

feature documentary, 'Keep On Keepin' On', won both the Audience Award and Best New Director honours at the 2014 Tribeca Film Festival. The film also won awards from the IDFA, AFI, Cinema Eye, Seattle Film Festival, Palm Springs, Hamptons Summer Docs and was shortlisted for the Academy Awards Best Documentary Feature in 2015. Hicks then co-directed the documentary feature film, 'Quincy', following music legend and icon Quincy Jones. 'Quincy' premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2018 and won the Grammy for Best Music Film.

Director/Producer:

**Rachid Bouchareb**

Screenwriter: **Kaouther Adimi,**

**Rachid Bouchareb**

Cinematographer:

**Guillaume Deffontaines**

Editor: **Guerric Catala**

Music: **Amine Bouhafa**

Cast: **Reda Kateb, Lyna Khoudri,**

**Raphael Personnaz, Samir Guesmi**

Sales: **Wild Bunch International**

Distribution: **Front Row Filmed**

**Entertainment LLC**



**Rachid**

**Bouchareb**

is a French director, producer, and screenwriter. He began as a short film

director before going on to found his 3B Productions production company. Throughout his career, he has questioned history through his many feature films including 'Cheb', which won him an award at Cannes FF in 1991, 'Indigènes' (Days of Glory, 2006), and 'Hors la Loi' (Outside the Law, 2010). He went on to film an American trilogy: 'Just Like a Woman' (2012), 'Two Men in Town' (2014) and 'Le Flic de Belleville' (Belleville Cop, 2018).

## Our Brothers

'Nos Frangins' / France / Arabic, French / 2022

92 mins / Colour



December 5th, 1986. Thousands of students take to the streets of Paris to protest the harsh higher education reforms. Twenty-year-old Abdel Benyahia attempts to break up a bar fight but is tragically shot dead by a drunken police officer. Just hours later, Malik Oussekiine is pursued and beaten to death by three police officers from the controversial motorcycle unit. As revolt threatens to erupt amidst a population horrified by Malik's murder in the heart of their city, the families of both victims, while never meeting, struggle to understand what really happened that night.

Three-time Academy Award® nominee Rachid Bouchareb revisits the dramatic events of Paris in December 1986. While Malik Oussekiine's death made national headlines, the equally tragic death of Abdel Benyahia was relatively forgotten. Although unrelated, the shocking events are linked by a single, harrowing night and inspector Daniel Mattei. Charged with investigating both deaths, he is faced with an unwilling police force and government who conspire to cover up Abdel's death and discredit the murdered man. 'Our Brothers' is a timely and sobering story about police brutality and race relations with sadly all-too-contemporary relevance.

## A Story for 2 Trumpets

'Histoire pour 2 Trompettes' / France /

No Dialogue / 2021

5 mins / Colour



An enchanting and beautifully crafted animated short, 'A Story for 2 Trumpets' tells the tale of a young girl's evolution into a woman and an artist. Through a series of spellbinding pastel vignettes accompanied by dreamlike music, we are whisked into a surreal world where metaphors and personal experiences melt together. A captivating tale about metamorphosis, adolescence and how the creative process can draw inspiration from all of life's experiences.

Director: **Amandine Meyer**

Producer: **Emmanuel-Alain Raynal, Pierre Baussaron**

Cinematographer: **Etienne Bouget, Vladimir**

**Mavounia-Kouka**

Editor: **Thomas Hardouin**

Music: **Chapelier Fou**

Distribution: **Miyu Distribution**

**Amandine Meyer** is a designer, artist and animator born in Lorraine, France. After spending some years in Berlin, she now lives in Montreuil, near Paris. Her books, including several for children, have been self-published and taken on by various publishing houses. She also collaborates with other artists on video and light projects. Her first comic books were published in the Japanese fanzine 'UZO'. 'A Story for 2 Trumpets' is her debut film as an animation director.

## As Time Passes

USA / English, Turkish, Farsi / 2022

14 mins / Colour



'As Time Passes' is a poetic series of captivating vignettes tracing the filmmaker's family roots from east to west and their experience as a diaspora. Through journal entries, a mother's words, neighbourhood stories, and existential inquiries, one still searches for meaning beyond the walls of their mind. Tinged with sadness and longing for a sense of self, the film reminds us; "In the depths of darkness, seeds are planted. We begin to yearn for light—only to find that we, ourselves, are the light".

Director / Producer / Editor: **Jamil McGinnis**

**Jamil McGinnis** spent his childhood in various parts of Germany, in thirteen different homes speaking three different languages. His work has been screened at Locarno, Clermont-Ferrand, BFI, and the Museum of Modern Art. He writes and directs along with Pat Heywood under the moniker Seneca Village Pictures, a home the two co-founded to continue exploring the space between life and cinema. They are currently in development on their first feature film titled 'In Search of Time'. He currently lives in Brooklyn, NY.

## Fairplay

Switzerland, France / French / 2022

17 mins / Colour



A shy teenager in search of recognition, a man ready to do anything to win a car, and a senior executive at the end of his career who wants to prove to himself that he's still got it. Three hapless characters who are all hurtling towards equally unexpected fates in the pursuit of victory. 'Fairplay' is a darkly comedic short about the absurdity of peer pressure and one-upmanship.

Director: **Zoel Aeschbacher**

Screenwriter: **Gania Latroche, Zoel Aeschbacher**

Producer: **Nelson Ghrenassia, Elena Tatti**

Cinematographer: **Dino Berguglia**

Editor: **Youri Tchao-Debats**

Cast: **Sokhna Diallo, Elise Esnault, Pierre Gommé,**

**Apollonia Luisetti**

**Zoel Aeschbacher** is of Swiss and Vietnamese origin. His graduation film, 'Bonobo' (2018), received the Audience Award at Clermont-Ferrand Film Festival and won the Student Academy Award for Best Film in 2019. He directed 'Fairplay' in 2022 and is currently working on his first feature film, 'Underdog'.

## Five Stars

'Cinco Estrellas' / Spain / Spanish / 2021

11 mins / Black & White



Carlos and Toñi live in a tiny apartment in a marginalised neighbourhood in Portugal. They haven't been able to pay their rent for months, their electricity is cut off, and they survive by collecting scrap metal. But a windfall is on the horizon when Henrik and Jens, two Danish tourists, offer to pay to spend a day with a low-income family. A tongue-in-cheek dramedy about wealth disparity and the objectification of people in poverty to entertain the privileged.

Director / Screenwriter: **Roberto Jiménez Bozada**

Producer: **Cesar Martínez Herrada**

Cinematography: **Tito Carlon**

Editor: **Pablo Barce**

Cast: **Lorena López, Daniel Albaladejo,**

**Erik Adam Pedersen**

**Roberto Jiménez Bozada** began his career at Globomedia in 2000. After five years of working as a screenwriter on the series '7 Vidas' and 'Aída' (Telecinco), he moved to the production company Vértice 360, where he worked as a screenwriter and executive producer on series such as 'The simulators' (Four) and 'The Mata Family' (Antena 3). In 2011 he returned to Globomedia as a co-executive producer on 'BuenAgente' (La Sexta). He assumed the direction of the fiction department at DLO Producciones in 2014, and between 2019 and 2020, he was a scriptwriter for the Big Bang Media series 'Caronte' (Mediaset).

## It's Nice in Here

The Netherlands / English / 2022

16 mins / Colour



A fragmented portrait of a boy nicknamed Crimson, seen through the eyes of the police officer that took his life and his best friend who witnessed it all. The film explores how stories surrounding police brutality get told. With two opposing narratives being presented, we are reminded that we are constantly swimming in a carefully curated reality where we must continually question our own subjective biases, in the faint hope of discovering the objective truth.

Director / Screenwriter: **Robert-Jonathan Koeyers**

Producer: **Richard Valk**

Cast: **Anka Ferris, Henry Brinkerhoff, Kevin Strickland**

Distribution: **Kapitein Kort**

**Robert-Jonathan Koeyers** is a multidisciplinary artist and filmmaker. He studied animation at the Willem de Kooning Academy in Rotterdam, where he graduated with an experimental film titled 'Here: A Visual Poem'. Throughout the years, he has been using film, photography, animation, and music to help turn his stories into deeply personal projects that aim to unpack how his Blackness has shaped and moulded him into the person he is—and aim to explore how the lived experiences of Black people can be told in an authentic and vulnerable way.

## Mkawda

'Mgawda' / Algeria / Arabic, French / 2021

13 mins / Colour



Using the metaphor of a doctor listening to an ailing patient's beating heart, visual artist Souad Douibi takes us through the streets of Algiers for a "check-up" on its inhabitants. A totally immersive sound experience, 'Mkawda' captures the zeitgeist of a city in pain. One that is sick of corruption, forced migration and economic mismanagement. But the hope of the people is evident in their words and proof that maybe time can heal all wounds.

Director / Screenwriter / Editor: **Souad Douibi**

Producer: **Smail Lif**

Cinematographer: **Tarek Boudraa, Wassim Soualmi**

**Souad Douibi** is a visual artist, performer, and art therapy teacher. She graduated from the Higher School of Fine Arts of Algiers in 2008. Douibi exhibited regularly as a painter, photographer and videographer in Algeria and Europe between 2005 and 2011. After a break from the art world that lasted two years, she returned to the stage as a performer engaged in the streets of Algiers, but also an artist who is involved in social change through cultural and artistic activities.

## Rest in Piece

**Doha Film Institute Supported Film**

Germany, France, Qatar / No Dialogue / 2021

10 mins / Colour



Amidst a cacophony of shelling, Midyan is forced to flee his war-torn home. Packing only a suitcase of his dearest possessions, he embarks on a perilous journey into the unknown. Weary and starving in a desolate wasteland, poor Midyan resorts to eating the objects he has packed. The effects are monstrous, yet they give him the strength to carry on through the scorching desert. A beautifully crafted clay animation, 'Rest in Piece' shows us the courage and resilience of displaced peoples.

Director / Cinematographer: **Antoine Antabi**

Screenwriter: **Simon Thummet, Antoine Antabi**

Producer: **Katharina Weser, Georg Neubert,**

**Jasper Wiedhöft**

Distribution: **Manifest**

**Antoine Antabi** was born in Damascus in 1983 and graduated from the University of Fine Arts in Damascus. He finished his studies in 2006 with a degree in stop-motion animation. His first stop-motion film 'Silent Thoughts' premiered at the Damascus International Film Festival and won the bronze award in the short film competition. After leaving Syria, he lived in Dubai and Lebanon. Since 2019, he now lives in Leipzig, Germany, and works as a graphic designer and photographer, while developing stop-motion projects.

## Same Old

USA, Canada / English, Mandarin / 2022

15 mins / Colour



Lu is a Chinese immigrant living day to day on tips from his job as a delivery worker. He supports his wife and ailing mother as they desperately try to make ends meet in the unforgiving city. One night, his bicycle, and in essence his livelihood, is stolen from him. He's forced to embark on a desperate journey to reclaim it in this poignant short about the precarious position many zero-contact hour employees regularly find themselves in.

Director / Screenwriter / Producer: **Lloyd Lee Choi**

Producer: **Anthony Zhai Yang**

Cinematographer: **Norm Li**

Cast: **Limin Wang, Maggie Law, Anna Wang**

**Lloyd Lee Choi** is a Korean-Canadian New York based director who found a magical escape with cinema early on. Growing up, he was a regular fixture at the local theatre and, eventually, began to create films of his own. With several awards, including a Silver Cannes Lion for his Cornetto campaign, '40 Love' featuring Lily Allen, Lloyd has gone on to create global campaigns for Google, Chevrolet, Sony, and Peloton. Lloyd also released his first original scripted 30-minute short film, 'Before Mars', for National Geographic.

## Tremor

'Beben' / Germany / German / 2022

16 mins / Colour



During water therapy for his chronic spasms, Leon is involved in a shocking incident with his physical therapist. An eruptive and very public moment of betrayal. The resulting fallout reverberates through their lives like the aftershocks of a seismic event, seeing their once trusting relationship almost fractured beyond repair. 'Tremor' explores the often complex and intimate relationships formed between therapists and their patients.

Director: **Rudolf Fitzgerald Leonard**

Screenwriter: **Rudolf Fitzgerald Leonard, Annika Birgel, Luis Brandt**

Producer: **Annika Birgel**

Editor: **Rudolf Fitzgerald Leonard, Annika Birgel**

Cinematographer: **Stefanie Reinhard**

Cast: **Luis Brandt, Lilian Mazbouh, Gisela Aderhold**

Distribution: **Problemkind Filmproduktion GbR**

**Rudolf Fitzgerald Leonard** is an Australian director, producer and screenwriter based in Berlin. He is also the co-founder of Problemkind Filmproduktion, a Berlin-based production company he shares with director/producer Annika Birgel. Graduating from the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne, Fitzgerald Leonard's graduate short film 'Kin' screened at the Melbourne International Film Festival, winning the award for Emerging Australian Filmmaker. His short films focus on explorations of identity and representations of psychological and corporeal diversity.

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# Ajyal Spotlight

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The Ajyal Film Festival is honoured to present globally celebrated actors as our special guests for this year's 'Ajyal Spotlight'. By sharing their experiences with our jurors, our guests further DFI's mission to empower the next generation of creative thinkers.

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## Sadaf Asgari

Sadaf Asgari is an influential young Iranian actress. In her relatively short time gracing the silver screen, she has appeared in an impressive slate of prominent and award-winning films. Ajyal alumni might remember her from her heart-breaking debut role as Sara in the DFI-Granted 'Disappearance', which appeared at our festival in 2017 and one for which she received the Silver Screen Award for Best Performance at the Singapore International Film Festival.

Asgari went on to win the Best Actress in a Short Film award at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival for her stellar performance in 'Exam' (2019). She featured again at Ajyal's 2020 Festival in 'Yalda, a Night for Forgiveness' by Massoud Bakhshi, winner of the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance Film Festival in the same year. We welcome her once more to the Ajyal Film Festival, this year in the starring role of the critically acclaimed 'Until Tomorrow' directed by her uncle and multi-award-winning director Ali Asgari.



## Saleh Bakri

Saleh Bakri is an internationally renowned actor from Palestine. His body of work spans critically acclaimed projects in both film and theatre. Beginning his career on stage, he has appeared in plays such as ‘Death and the Maiden’ by Ariel Dorfman, ‘A Day of Our Time’ by Saadallah Wannous and ‘Fireworks’ by Dalia Taha—which was performed at The Royal Court Theatre of London.

In cinema, Bakri has appeared in several DFI-supported features, including ‘Wajib’ by Annemarie Jacir, which won the Don Quixote Award at the Locarno International Film Festival in 2017 and ‘Costa Brava, Lebanon’ by Mounia Akl, winner of the NETPAC Award at Toronto International Film Festival 2021. He also appeared in the DFI-supported short ‘The Present’ by Farah Nabulsi, which was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Live Action Short Film and won the BAFTA Award for Best Short Film in 2021.

Bakri’s other celebrated film work includes the Palme d’Or nominated ‘The Time That Remains’ (2009) by Elia Suleiman and the Cannes Film Festival 2022 FIPRESCI Prize-winning ‘The Blue Caftan’ by Maryam Touzani. He is currently appearing in the stage production, ‘The Queen Commanded Him to Forget’ by Ofira Henig, at the Pierre Boulez Saal in Berlin.

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# Ajyal Talks

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For 2022, we are delighted to present a thought-provoking panel about Doha's iconic cityscape and the future of urban environments.

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## A Skyline of Stories



In this fascinating panel discussion, experts from the world of urban planning and development weigh in on how modern cities seek to express themselves, using tools such as architecture, infrastructure, and zoning. We delve into the creative process involved in imagining the physical dynamics of a future city. Meeting the individuals behind the scenes that are creating and implementing this vision, we learn how their various roles are interwoven as they construct the rich tapestry of our metropolitan environments. Discover the complex challenges facing the various entities as they strive to bring their ambitious blueprints to life— creating incredible living experiences for inhabitants and the very future of our cityscapes.

## Panellists



Engineer **Abdullatif Mohamed Al Jasmi** is the Director of the Cultural Heritage Protection Department at Qatar Museums, the manager of the Qatar Cultural Heritage Law Project and the Director of the Qatar-Sudanese Archaeological Project. Since joining QM in 2019, Abdullatif has overseen heritage activation projects and the rubric for adaptive reuse of cultural spaces. Abdullatif is well versed in international heritage laws, conventions, and treaties. He is an active participant in seminars both locally and internationally in the field of cultural heritage protection, development, management, and promotion and tirelessly contributes to the advancement of this vital sector.



**Ibrahim M. Jaidah** is the Group CEO and Chief Architect of the Arab Engineering Bureau, overseeing more than 1,600 projects. In each project, Jaidah attempts to retain the identity of his culture while embracing the modern. His passion for vernacular architecture resulted in the publication of 'The History of Qatari Architecture 1800-1950' (2009), which has become a reference work in many educational institutions. Since then, Ibrahim has authored '99 Domes Masjid of Imam Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab' (2015) and 'Qatari Style' (2019), showcasing Qatar's architectural identity and celebrating the hospitality of the Middle East. Jaidah has won numerous awards, including the Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities Award, Arab Town Organization Awards, the State of Qatar Encouragement Award and has been nominated three times for the Agha Khan Award.



**Mr Hisham Qaddumi** is the founder and president of the multi-disciplinary planning and design firm, The Arab Architects, in Doha and Amman. As planning and technical advisor to the ruler of Qatar (1974-1987), he developed a wide range of high-profile projects and helped establish the nation's planning and building regulations and standards. Mr Qaddumi's duties as Head of the Technical Office included the planning, design and construction management of a large number of prestigious developments, including the Doha Master Plan and iconic landmarks such as the Sheraton Hotel, the National Theatre, the Doha Corniche, the University of Qatar, Hamad General Hospital, the Diwan Amiri and several other prominent ministerial and governmental complexes. He was also the chairman of the International Committee for the renovation of the Old City of Jerusalem, which won the Agha Khan Award in 2006.

## Moderator



**Jumanah Abbas** is an architect, writer, and curator—working through an ecology of interdisciplinarity that architecture debates, concepts and dialogues engage with. She works through collaborative projects with institutes and universities, such as 'Mapping Memories of Resistance: The Untold Story of the Occupation of the Golan Heights', a project in collaboration with London School of Economics, Birzeit University, and Al Marsad, Arab Human Rights Center in Golan Heights. Abbas also worked on Tasmeem Biennial 2022, themed around Radical Futures, by Virginia Commonwealth University, where she was appointed the Spatial Designer to curate the biennial's spatial design. She is currently working towards the realization of the upcoming Qatar Museums' Quadrennial project, a multi-site art exhibition opening in 2024.

## Doha Film Institute and Ajyal Film Festival 2022 team

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