

لجنة أبوظبي للأفلام ABU DHABI FILM COMMISSION

December 2011– January 2012 Newsletter

Six short films go into production in Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi Film Commission commenced production on the six films that won its annual Aflam Qaseera ("Short Film") Production Fund competition, which is designed to promote emerging writers, directors and UAE-based production companies.

The winning projects were Hamad Mansoor Alawar's *Daddy's Abc*, Jac Mulder's *A Genie Called Gin*, Mohamed Youssouf's *Visa Run*, Mohammed Al Otaiba's *The Three Sisters Orphanage*, Nizar Sfair's *The Tooth Of Hope* and Sana Bagersh's *The Journey*.

These films, which were selected from a field of 90 candidates, are each 5 - 12 minutes in length, in English and Arabic and represent a mix of genres. Each of the filmmakers has received production funding and support from the Film Commission at every step of development and production. The Aflam Qaseera films are intended for distribution at international festivals and for eventual broadcast.

Aflam Qaseera is one of a number of efforts by Abu Dhabi Film Commission to support short film production in the U.A.E. Earlier this year, the Film Commission brought 8 short films by Emirati directors to the Short Film Corner at the Cannes Film Festival and Marché du Film.

To watch behind the scenes of Aflam Qaseera visit film.gov.ae



Abu Dhabi Film Commission wins Best Entity Promoting Local Film Production in the MENA region at BroadcastPro Middle East

Abu Dhabi Film Commission was recognised as the 'Best Entity Promoting Local Film Production' for its efforts in promoting local talent at the BroadcastPro Summit and Awards held at the Jumeirah Beach Hotel in November. The event included more than 300 delegates from Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain and UAE in attendance and 14 awards were given for various categories including creativity, programming and technological innovations.

For more information visit: broadcastpro.com



Film Visit Program to Germany: The German Embassy in UAE and the Goethe Institute partners with the Abu Dhabi Film Commission to promote a unique opportunity

In advance of the Berlin Film Festival in February 2012, Abu Dhabi Film Commission has partnered with the German Embassy in Abu Dhabi and the Goethe-Institute Gulf Region to put together a special program for young filmmakers based in the UAE. A delegation of 12 filmmakers, Alwiya Thani, Adel Al Jabri, Ali Al Afeefi, Amal Al-Agroobi, Hana Makki, Hind AL Hammadi, Khalid Al Mahmood, Manal Wicki, Mohammed Taha, Nizar Sfair, Reem AL Falahi and Rola Shamas, were selected to take part in a tailor-made 10-day visit to the Berlin Film Festival and the Berlinale Talent Campus, the festival's annual creative summit for up-and-coming filmmakers.

The cultural exchange is designed to give UAE based filmmakers a chance to meet German filmmakers, exchange views with German film students, and gain perspective on the German film market.

The partnership with the German Embassy and Goethe-Institute also continues a tradition for Abu Dhabi Film Commission of taking emerging filmmakers to major festivals and markets, such as Cannes, Sundance and Melbourne, to network with other filmmakers, promote the UAE film talent and gain first-hand experience of the global film industry.

2011 Shasha Grant Winner receives two Awards at Dubai Film Connection

Mahmoud Al Massad, this year's winner of Abu Dhabi Film Commission Shasha Grant for his project *Blessed Benefits "Inshallah Istafadet"*, has won two awards from Dubai Film Connection part of Dubai International Film Festival. Mahmoud was awarded a 6000 Euro special prize from the European broadcaster and Producer Arte for his film. Following that, Rula Nasser, the producer of the film, also won registration to the Producers Network at the Cannes Film Festival that brings together 500 producers from around the world to participate in the activities of Cannes Film Festival and communicate with the most prominent film production companies in a series of meetings and networking opportunities.

Blessed Benefits "Inshallah Istafadet", screenplay shows a construction worker Ahmad who gets tangled up in an unfortunate business deal, which makes him sentenced to four months in prison. On his way in, he meets professional Fraudster Khaled, who is released after doing time for falsifying checks. When Khaled ruins Ahmad's last hope to prove his innocence, Ahmad starts to realize life inside prison might not be free, but it may be better than the one he has outside.

Mahmoud's previous projects have also seen success; his film *This is My Picture When I Was Dead* - won a DIFF Award of USD 25, 000 in 2008 - found international success as well as winning the First Prize in the 2010 Muhr Arab Documentary Awards. *Blessed Benefits "Inshallah Istafadet"* is going to be filmed in Jordan in first half of 2012, as it has also participated in the annual Rawi Regional Screenwriters Lab organized by The Royal Film Commission Jordan, which aims at the development of narrative feature-length scripts by Arab filmmakers.

For more information visit blessedbenefit.com



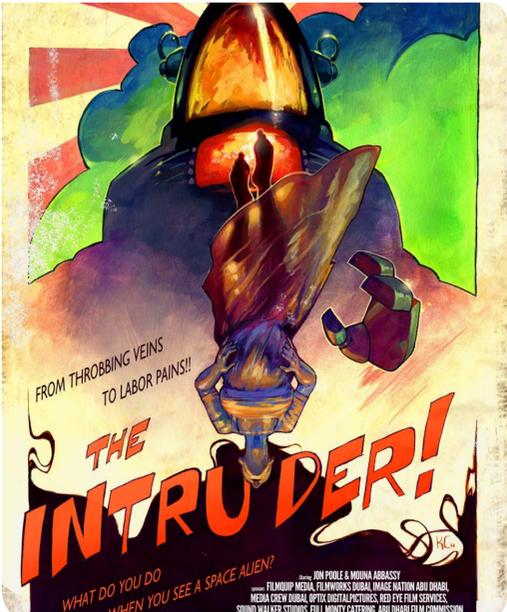
Mawaheb Internship Alumni's film competed at DIFF

Majid Alansari, Abu Dhabi based film Director and Mawaheb Internship Programme Alumni, competed at the Dubai International Film Festival in Muhr Emirati section with his short film *The Intruder*. The film is a Sci-Fi short film, which gives tribute to vintage GENRE films and filmmakers from the 50's, 60's, 70's. Inspired by artists such as Roger Corman, Robert Wise, and Rod Serling comes this simple story of a couple who witness an extraterrestrial space ship landing on their home planet, but where it comes from and what it wants are questions that this story will reveal.

Majid has previously worked for a Dubai based production house and directed several short films, which landed him a position in the Mawaheb internship program of Abu Dhabi Film Commission and Imagenation Abu Dhabi. Through Mawaheb Majid worked on two local productions *Sea Shadow* and *Djinn* experiencing the various departments of a feature film set. Majid was also chosen to intern with one of Imagenation's partners, Participant Media (*The Help*, *The Crazyies*, *Fair Game*, *Contagion*) joining their Narrative Department where he further improved his skill in script development.

His film *The Intruder* was sponsored and supported by Filmquip Media, Filmworks, Imagenation Abu Dhabi, Media Crew, Red Eye Film Services, Sound Walker Studios, Full Monty Catering, Abu Dhabi Film Commission, Optix Digital Pictures and a group of freelancers based in the UAE. Earlier, Majid was one of the filmmakers that were selected by the Film Commission to represent the UAE filmmakers in international film festivals, such as Cannes and Sundance.

For more information visit dubaifilmfest.com



for more information, please visit our website: www.film.gov.ae
we would like to receive your feedback: communication@film.gov.ae

BBC films in the Capital for Wild Arabia

Filming continues in Abu Dhabi for the BBC's latest wildlife series, *Wild Arabia*. The current cooler weather conditions allows for the four camera teams and Directors to focus on the rich desert wildlife, capturing on film the rare region's hidden natural beauty and exploring the UAE's rich cultural heritage of falconry, Dow racing and camel racing. The three-part, high-definition series will be shot over the coming 12 months - more than a third of it in the UAE this winter, with the assistance of the Abu Dhabi Film Commission - and is scheduled to be broadcast in early 2013.

The crew is planning to capture many natural, environmental and cultural elements in the UAE. The episode, which is named *Changing Arabia – The Arabian Gulf and the Emirates* will include locations such as Ras Al Khor flamingo sanctuary, turtle nesting beaches, traditional falconry festival, World's tallest building in Dubai (Burj Khalifa) and Masdar City in Abu Dhabi. The team is using a wide array of filming techniques and camera equipment. Recent shoots have seen them shooting with Arri Alexa (the first time its been used on a BBC wildlife series) and a Phantom camera rig for super slo-mo shots sequences. The team also took to the air to shoot some stunning shots of the Emirates and even mounted a CineFlex rig on a 4 x 4 to shoot some sequences.

The BBC Natural History Unit (NHU) is a department of the BBC dedicated to making television and radio programmes with a natural history or wildlife theme, especially nature documentaries. Each year it produces around 100 hours of television and 50 hours of radio, making it the largest wildlife documentary production house in the world.



Sea Shadow exceed expectations – rave reviews

Nawaf Al-Janahi's *Sea Shadow* entered theatres for 3 weeks across the UAE and the Gulf region. The film, competed with Hollywood blockbusters, boasted a unique attendance level from multinationals that exceeds all expectations, reaching, in its first week, 2nd place in UAE's top 5 movies, according to Dubai One TV. It was also officially selected in the 23rd edition of Palm Springs International Film Festival, which runs from 5 to 16 January in the United States.

The reviews are just as complementary; "Charming performances", said Mark Adams, a UK film critic, "A cinematic gift", hailed Ibrahim Al-Mulla, a UAE film critic, and UAE filmmaker, Abdullah Hasan Ahmed, praised the production "I saw Ras Al-Khaimah as I know it", he declared.

The film, which was developed and produced by Image Nation Abu Dhabi, also made it to the top 5 lists, during its opening weekend, in two of the most well-known and busiest theatres in UAE, #2 in Reel Cinemas and #4 in VOX Cinema.

The UAE has more than 250 screens across the country and is the biggest cinema market in the Arab world. Its achieved the highest revenues in the whole region in 2010, according to a report published by Forbes Middle East magazine last February.

For more information on "Sea Shadow", please visit nawafaljanahi.com



Filmed in Abu Dhabi in December & January

Abu Dhabi Film Commission team supported various projects and facilitated their locations and production needs. The Film Commission provided necessary filming permit, script and custom clearance for different production crew while filming in Abu Dhabi.

The production that took place during the month of December and January are: *SES ASTRA*, a corporate video documenting the partnership between Yah Sat and Yah Live filmed by Central Films; *40th UAE National Day Celebration*, a corporate video by Navigation Films; *Los Vies Del 12*, a cultural documentary on the UAE by CANAL 12; *ADMA 50th Anniversary Film*, a corporate video by The Edge Picture Company FZ LLC; *Passage to Abu Dhabi* by No Quarter; *Future Century Jipang*, a documentary on Abu Dhabi's development by Media Mettle Inc.; *Siemens WFES 2012*, a video for the World Future Energy Summit by Rupert Chesman FZ LLC; *Second visit after 50 years* by Alain Saint Hilaire, by Navigation Films; *NHK Arabic Language Lessons*, by Don Productions; *Volvo Ocean Race*, coverage for the Volvo Ocean Race in Abu Dhabi by Volvo Ocean Race, *Eco Point on Saadiyat Island*, a promotional video by Capital D and PUMA Volvo Ocean Race, a documentation of the Volvo Ocean Race in Abu Dhabi and PUMA involvement by PUMA SE.

Also, four projects from Aflam Qaseera [short films] Production Fund were filmed in Abu Dhabi *The Tooth of Hope*, by Eye-Squad; *The Journey*, by Brandmoxie; *A Genie Called Gin* by Muddville Films and *The Orphanage* by Boomtown

To watch behind the scenes of Aflam Qaseera visit film.gov.ae



Location of the month: The Westin Hotel, Golf Resort & Spa

The Westin Hotel was opened in November 2011, created into a modern allusion of the existing falcon shaped clubhouse of the Abu Dhabi Golf Club, and has a warm and neutral design running throughout its interior.

Boasting 172 rooms, including 8 suites and 1 presidential suite, all of which overlook the PGA championship golf course, The Westin Golf Resort and Spa is conveniently located close to the airport, ADNEC Convention Centre and major business districts.

A 2000sqm Conference Centre has its own separate entrance, catering and washroom facilities. The 5 flexible conference rooms can be divided into smaller rooms. The ballroom is oval shaped with an adjoining outdoor courtyard.

There are two outdoors pools: Main pool, a 700 sqm pool has been designed in a freeform kidney shape, and features an integrated and shaded kids' pool and Lap pool, a 250 sqm rectangular lap pool is lined with palm trees, and features a pool lounge wet deck area.

There are six unique restaurants including a signature Moroccan restaurant Agadir, a Moroccan lounge and dining facility, which features all the mystery and allure of a Kasbah. Dining areas within the venue are broken up into various pockets of relaxed seating areas, and adorned with deeply cushioned upholstery, luxurious drapes, enjoying pillows and glowing lanterns. An outdoor terrace offers diners the choice of enjoying their food al fresco.

There are washrooms and green room facilities. Film crews will require access permits from the hotel.

Outside there is a large hard car parking area that can accommodate equipment trucks and cranes if needed. Use of tracks and green screens are all possible.

Please contact our Locations Department for filming permits on **+971 2 4011701**

or send an email to locations@film.gov.ae

