

Film Education Summit

Doha
Film
Festival

مهرجان
الدوحة
السينمائي



Film Education Summit

26–27 November 2025

Welcome to DFF's Film Education Summit

As part of our festival this year, we are proud to present the Film Education Summit, a two-day forum dedicated to reimagining film education, talent development, and the future of cinema in our region and beyond.

The Summit convenes leading film schools, educators, filmmakers, producers, cultural leaders, and film institutions to exchange ideas, share pioneering models, and inspire fresh approaches to mentorship and training.

Through curated panels, it highlights alternative pathways into the industry, fosters dialogue between academic and vocational practices, and builds inclusive professional networks that empower the next generation of filmmakers in the region.

Event Overview

Location: [Museum of Islamic Art Auditorium](#)

26 November 2025

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Rethinking Film Education
for a New Generation

11:30 AM – 11:45 AM

Coffee Break in Auditorium Foyer

11:45 AM – 1:45 PM

Learning by Doing – International
Vocational Schools, Labs, Residencies &
Alternative Pathways

27 November 2025

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Regional Focus – Building Sustainable
Regional Film Ecosystems

12:00 PM – 12:15 PM

Coffee Break in Auditorium Foyer

12:15 PM – 1:45 PM

Building a Sustainable Ecosystem for
Children’s Cinema in the Arab World –
Realities, Challenges, and Pathways for
Audience Development

For more information or assistance, please contact educationsummit@dohafilm.com

26 November 2025

Panel 1: Rethinking Film Education for a New Generation
10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

This panel explores how film schools and training institutions are adapting to the needs and aspirations of new generations of filmmakers. By examining the balance between theory, practice, and industry realities, it will address how programmes are evolving to prepare students for an increasingly global and competitive market. The discussion will also highlight the importance of short films as an entry point into the industry, and the role of innovative pedagogical approaches in shaping the next generation of storytellers.

With the support of



Panelists



Cécile Blondel

Gobelins | Director of International Development and Head of Master in Visual Storytelling | cblondel@gobelins.fr

Cécile Blondel has over 35 years of experience in teaching and academic development, shaping the future of animation education. As Director of the Master's in Storytelling and Director of International Development at Gobelins, Paris, she designs programs that address the evolving needs of the animation industry. Beginning her career in special effects and prosthetics, she later focused on storytelling—exploring history, memory and narrative structure across media.

Her work emphasises how story shapes animation and how education can empower future storytellers. In 2016, she founded the International Master's in Animation at Gobelins, establishing a global framework for advanced animation training. She has developed curricula and pedagogical models worldwide and collaborated with institutions, industry leaders and governments. As a script doctor, her work has contributed to award-winning Gobelins films. A frequent international lecturer, she speaks on storytelling, education and professional development in animation.

Gobelins

Gobelins Paris is a leading school in visual creation. With 60 years' experience, the school trains students in image-related professions, from conception to production across still, animated, interactive and immersive media. Every year, nearly 1,200 students and 2,000 continuing education trainees receive training in animation (ranked No. 1 in the world by the 2025 Animation Career Review), graphic and motion design, photography and video, web and mobile design, and video games.

Committed to creative freedom, equal opportunity and inclusion, the school actively fights discrimination and is a signatory of the gender equality charter. Open to the world, it welcomes over 200 international students and maintains numerous academic partnerships. Gobelins Paris also offers short on-site, off-site and online courses, as well as tailor-made programmes with global public and private partners. It is a consular higher-education institution of the Paris Île-de-France Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



Rana Kazkaz

Northwestern University in Qatar | Associate Professor
in Residence - Director of the Communication Program |

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Rana Kazkaz is an award-winning filmmaker, associate professor in residence, and Communication Program Director at Northwestern University in Qatar. Her films have been recognised at the world's leading film festivals, including Cannes, Sundance, Toronto, Tallinn, Tribeca, and Abu Dhabi. With a focus on Syrian stories, her films include 'The Translator', 'Mare Nostrum', 'Searching for the Translator', 'Deaf Day', and 'Kemo Sabe'. Her current film projects include 'The Foolishness of God', 'The Hakawati's Daughter', 'Love-45', and 'Honest Politics'.

Her articles have been published in the Journal of Screenwriting and Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media. She is a member of the Académie des César and has been awarded fellowships with the Buffett Institute for Global Affairs, MacDowell, the American Film Institute's Directing Workshop for Women, and Ryan Murphy's Half Initiative. She received her MFA from Carnegie Mellon University/Moscow Art Theater and her BA from Oberlin College.

Northwestern University in Qatar

Northwestern University in Qatar is a multidisciplinary community of evidence-based storytellers focused on the Global South. Driven by its core values of excellence, community, collaboration, and sustainability, it is a distinctive global institution that delivers an exceptional education in media arts, sciences, and crafts. Positioned at the forefront of knowledge production and digital innovation, it amplifies Northwestern University's global impact in research, teaching, and service through its partnership with Qatar Foundation, contributing to Qatar's rise into a knowledge society.



Marcin Malatyński

The Polish National Film, Television and Theatre School
in Lodz | Deputy Director and Head of International Relations |
m.malatynski@filmschool.lodz.pl

Marcin Malatyński is a producer and teacher. A graduate of the University of Economics and the Film Production Department at the Polish National Film, Television and Theatre School in Lodz, he has been a lecturer at the Lodz Film School since 2003. From 2008 to 2012, he was international coordinator of the development programme 'Passion to Market', run with La Fémis and the NFTS. From 2012 to 2016, he headed the Film Production Department and has since been the Head of International Relations at the Lodz Film School.

He has produced short and feature fiction films, including 'Tower. A Bright Day', directed by Jagoda Szalc (premiered at the Berlinale Forum), 'An Orange from Jaffa' by Mohammed Almughanni (Grand Prix at Clermont-Ferrand 2024), and 'Dancing in the Corner' by Jan Bujnowski (premiered at La Semaine de la Critique, Cannes 2024). He is the CEO of Indeks Film Studio, a production company for debut films.

The Polish National Film, Television and Theatre School in Lodz

The Polish National Film, Television and Theatre School in Lodz was established in 1948 and is considered one of the oldest and most prestigious film schools in the world. Each year, the school is ranked among the top institutions. Its mission is to educate directors and cinematographers in live-action, documentary and animated film, as well as photographers, editors, screenwriters, producers and actors. Students gain practical and theoretical knowledge and shoot their own projects under the artistic guidance of acclaimed filmmakers.

Students and graduates are prize-winners at major Polish and international film festivals. Alumni include Andrzej Wajda, Roman Polanski and Krzysztof Kieslowski. The school is guided by universal ethical principles, freedom of tuition, creative liberty and freedom of research in the arts, with respect for truth, solidarity, democracy and tolerance, continuing a longstanding artistic educational tradition.



Mark Prescott

London Film School | Head of New Business & Training |
m.prescott@lfs.org.uk

Mark Prescott is Head of New Business & Training at London Film School, where he leads London Film Works, the school's hub for short courses, summer programmes, creative workshops, outreach initiatives and international training partnerships. Before joining LFS, Mark was Head of Commercial at the British Film Institute (BFI), overseeing BFI Publishing, education partnerships and the development of BFI Player's commercial and learning initiatives.

Prescott also built the BFI's international film skills and consultancy business, creating training collaborations with corporate, cultural and government partners across the UK and overseas. Earlier in his career, Mark founded a digital content business for Penguin Random House and served as a Cultural and Creative Industries Advisor to the Mayor of London's Office, helping shape cultural strategy and creative sector growth across the capital.

London Film School

London Film School (LFS) is one of the world's top 15 film schools and is recognised by the UK Office for Students as a world-leading conservatoire for the film arts. Based in the heart of Covent Garden, London, the School has, for over seventy years, trained and inspired generations of filmmakers who have gone on to shape global cinema. Home to a uniquely international student community from more than sixty countries, LFS is known for its intensive, hands-on approach to filmmaking across directing, writing, producing and cinematography.

Extending its impact beyond degree study, London Film Works (lfw.org.uk), the School's professional and corporate training arm, delivers short courses, executive programmes and international collaborations that connect creative industries, education and business worldwide. Together, they form a creative ecosystem dedicated to excellence in film education, innovation and storytelling.



Yassine Lassar Ramdani

Kourtrajmé School | Former Board Member and Head of the TV Writing Programme | yassine.ramdani@gmail.com

Yassine Lassar Ramdani is a French-Algerian writer-director and producer. Initially trained as a neuroscientist, he graduated from the Kourtrajmé film school in 2020. 'Five-O', his first short film, screened at 40+ festivals, including Tribeca and Clermont film festivals. He writes for film and TV. His feature writing debut with French studio Gaumont has entered production.

At Kourtrajmé, Yassine served as a board member, screenwriting lecturer and development executive. In 2024, he created and led the professional TV writing programme for emerging writers, in partnership with Gaumont, Canneseries Festival and Newen Studios.

Kourtrajmé School

Created by Oscar-nominated director Ladj Ly, the tuition-free Kourtrajmé school is open to all, with no prerequisites or educational requirements. Each year, students range in age from 18 to 45. Offering training in screenwriting, acting, directing, editing and visual arts, the Kourtrajmé school embodies a collective mindset.

We nurture a collaborative environment, placing shared success at the heart of our educational philosophy.

The curriculum emphasises professionalisation through short-term, practical training and hands-on learning experiences that prepare students for industry challenges. To date, the Kourtrajmé method has been implemented internationally in Paris, Marseille, Guadeloupe and Dakar, Senegal.



Julie Tingaud

La Fémis | Deputy Head of International Affairs / Development and Professional Training | j.tingaud@femis.fr

Julie Tingaud is Deputy Head of Development and Professional Training at La Fémis, where she has been responsible for international affairs since 2007. A graduate of ESSEC Business School and holder of a master's degree in media from ESCP Business School, she began her career at La Fête du Cinéma before working as Audiovisual Attaché at the French Embassy in Japan, where she organised cultural and industry events in partnership with Unifrance and the Bureau Export.

She also gained experience in film production at The Bureau, giving her a practical understanding of the filmmaking process from development to post-production. At La Fémis, she develops and manages partnerships with film schools worldwide, coordinates student exchanges and summer programmes, designs training initiatives abroad, oversees the school's diversity programme and collaborates with festivals and industry partners to support student films and young graduates.

La Fémis

Founded in 1986, La Fémis (École nationale supérieure des métiers de l'image et du son) is a French public film school under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture and the CNC. Chaired by filmmaker Michel Hazanavicius and directed by Guillaume Duchemin, La Fémis provides initial and continuing training in cinema and audiovisual professions, in close collaboration with industry professionals.

The school offers several programmes, including a four-year course in seven core departments (scriptwriting, production, directing, cinematography, sound, editing and production design), specialised tracks in continuity, distribution–exhibition and research (SACRe), a one-year programme in TV series development, a two-year residency for emerging filmmakers and the AIMS programme for artistic educators. Teaching is delivered by over 1,200 industry professionals each year, ensuring that students gain hands-on experience and mentorship within a vibrant creative environment.

Moderator



Jovan Marjanović

Sarajevo Film Festival | Festival Director |

jovan.marjanovic@icloud.com

Jovan Marjanović is a highly accomplished professional with extensive expertise spanning various facets of the film and TV industry. Since 1999, he has been closely affiliated with the Sarajevo Film Festival, currently serving as its director. Under Marjanović's guidance, the festival has maintained its status as the foremost film festival in South-Eastern Europe, distinguished by its outstanding programming, robust industry segment, and unwavering support for emerging filmmakers. Beyond his directorial role, Marjanović is a notable producer credited with numerous international award-winning films and local box office successes.

Sarajevo International Film Festival

Towards the end of the four-year siege of Sarajevo, in 1995, Obala Art Centar initiated the Sarajevo Film Festival with the aim of helping to reconstruct civil society and retain the cosmopolitan spirit of the city. High-quality programming, a strong industry segment, an educational and networking platform for young filmmakers, and the resulting presence of the international film industry, film authors and media representatives, alongside a paying audience of over 100,000, confirm its status as the leading film festival in the region, recognised by both professionals and the wider audience. In a region of over 140 million people, the Sarajevo Film Festival unites film businesses, shaping future standards for festivals, promotion and presentation in Southeast Europe.

26 November 2025

**Panel 2: Learning by Doing – International Vocational Schools, Labs,
Residencies & Alternative Pathways
11:45 AM – 1:45 PM**

Focusing on practice-based learning, this panel examines the growing importance of vocational schools, labs, residencies, and grassroots initiatives that open alternative routes into filmmaking. From apprenticeships to peer-led spaces, participants will discuss how hands-on mentorship and collaborative structures can expand access to the industry and develop vital crew and creative skills. Case studies from leading institutions and innovative programs worldwide will showcase how diverse training models are building resilient, adaptable, and skilled film professionals.

Panelists



Claude Borna

Sèmè City Development Agency | Managing Director |
cborna@semecity.com

Claude Borna started her career as a senior consultant at Deloitte. Later, at Amazon, she managed several product categories, including video content for the UK and France. She then joined Sony Pictures, where she established the European Department of Strategic Planning and Innovation and later served as Senior Vice President in charge of global business strategy for distribution and accounts including Amazon and Netflix.

Claude joined the Presidency of Benin in 2016 with the task of designing and implementing Sèmè City, a campus offering academic and incubation programmes with a strong focus on the creative and cultural industries. By fostering innovation, it contributes to the emergence of a new generation of talent and encourages the economic development of Benin and the region. Claude holds an MBA in Entertainment Management from the Anderson School at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a bachelor's degree from McGill University in Canada.

Sèmè City

Sèmè City is Benin's flagship project for education, innovation, and entrepreneurship, created by the Government of Benin to nurture a new generation of African talent. Its mission is to design and scale innovative learning and incubation programmes that bridge academic excellence, creativity, and real-world impact. At the crossroads of science, technology, and the creative industries, Sèmè City brings together universities, research institutions, startups, and global partners to co-develop solutions addressing Africa's most pressing challenges.

Through its initiatives, it promotes experiential learning, skills development, and the growth of high-potential sectors, including the audiovisual and cultural industries. By fostering a vibrant ecosystem of creators and innovators, Sèmè City aims to position Benin and West Africa more broadly as a hub for knowledge, creativity, and inclusive growth, contributing to a new narrative for African innovation.



Matthieu Darras

Tatino Films | Founder & CEO |

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Matthieu Darras is the founder and CEO of Tatino Films. Since 2019, the company has been designing and implementing film and talent development programmes worldwide. Its flagship initiatives are First Cut Lab, Pop Up Film Residency and Full Circle Lab. Matthieu Darras previously worked for major film festivals, including Cannes, Venice, and San Sebastian. He was also at the inception of TorinoFilmLab and served as its artistic director until 2018.

Tatino Films

Tatino Films is a global film and talent development company with initiatives and team presence worldwide. Through flagship programmes like First Cut Lab, Full Circle Lab and Pop Up Film Residency, Tatino delivers labs and residencies for over 300 filmmakers annually from 50 countries, supporting more than 150 projects across features, series and shorts.



Dominic Davis

Sundance Institute | Manager of Documentary Fund |
dominic_davis@sundance.org

Dominic Davis returned to the Sundance Institute in 2022 as Manager of the Documentary Fund. In 2011, Dominic worked in the Artist Relations Office of the Sundance Film Festival. He went on to programme for the American Museum of Natural History, Tribeca Film Festival and Rooftop Films. He has reviewed applications for Catapult Film Fund and Creative Capital, and managed the Rooftop Films Filmmakers Fund. Dominic was born in Germany and grew up on military bases, but adopted Kentucky and Florida as his home states. He has a degree in mass media studies and political science from the University of Kentucky. When not watching films, he goes for very long runs.

Sundance Institute

The Sundance Institute is a non-profit organisation dedicated to the discovery and development of independent artists and audiences. Through its programmes, the Institute seeks to discover, support and inspire independent film and media artists from the United States and around the world, and to introduce audiences to their new work.



Sam Genet

Head of Projects and Partnerships – Ateliers de Grand-Bassam
/ General Coordinator – Ouaga Film Lab |

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Sam Genet is the director of the Festival Cinémas d’Afrique Lausanne (Switzerland), where she oversees strategy, programming and general coordination. With a master’s degree in international business and a CAS in cultural project management, she has extensive experience in film programming, artistic curation and cultural project management. As a member of the film selection committee, she also curates the festival’s exhibitions and music section. She is also general coordinator of the Ouaga Film Lab (Burkina Faso) and head of projects and partnerships at the Ateliers de Grand-Bassam (Ivory Coast), two leading initiatives for the development and support of African film projects.

Ateliers de Grand-Bassam / Ouaga Film Lab

The Ateliers de Grand-Bassam (Ivory Coast) and Ouaga Film Lab (Burkina Faso), supported by the Grand-Bassam Project and the Ouaga Project, are development labs dedicated to African film talent. They offer an intensive working environment where project leaders, supervised by internationally renowned mentors, trainers and experts, work on the structure and coherence of their narratives and strengthen the artistic and strategic dimensions of their projects. They also receive support in pitching techniques, which are essential for positioning their work and attracting partners. The labs also serve as networking spaces, promoting exchanges between participants and fostering connections with industry professionals. As true catalysts for African cinema, they contribute to the emergence of a new generation of filmmakers.



Alice Kharoubi

Festival de Cannes | Director of Cinema Programming /
Head of Cannes Makers / Short Film Selection Committee |
akharoubi@festival-cannes.fr

After studying in France and the United States, Alice Kharoubi has been an integral part of the core team at the Festival de Cannes for many years. While managing Cannes Court Métrage, she was appointed Film Programmer for the Abu Dhabi Film Festival and was also a member of the programming team at the Festival Tous Écrans in Geneva. She currently holds the position of Director of Cinema Programming at the Marché du Film and serves as a committee member for the Festival de Cannes Short Film Competition. Alice is frequently sought after to mentor young filmmakers and scout projects, and she actively participates in various film and script selection committees. She has also been working with the Red Sea International Film Festival, where she is a key member of the programming team and oversees the Red Sea Souk Talents.

Cinéma de Demain

Cinéma de Demain, led by the Festival de Cannes, is dedicated to discovering and supporting the filmmakers of tomorrow. Through the Short Film Competition, La Cinef, the Caméra d'Or and La Résidence du Festival, it accompanies emerging voices from the early stages of writing to international recognition. On the industry side, the SFC Rendez-vous Industry connects filmmakers, producers and key partners to help projects grow and reach global audiences.

Cannes Makers

Organised by the Marché du Film, Cannes Makers is an immersive initiative that opens the doors of the international film industry to a new generation of professionals. With a strong focus on international sales and distribution, the programme offers participants a unique opportunity to learn directly from leading experts and teams shaping today's global marketplace. Beyond the on-site experience at the Festival de Cannes, Cannes Makers is deeply committed to building a supportive and lasting community of alumni.



Louay Khraish

Film Independent | Director of International Programs |
lkhraish@film-independent.org

Louay Khraish is the Director of International Programs at Film Independent, where he leads a wide range of international initiatives in collaboration with global partners. He is the writer and producer of the critically acclaimed feature film 'Arzé', which premiered at Tribeca in 2024 and was Lebanon's official submission for the 97th Academy Awards. Additionally, Louay Khraish is the producer of 'Film Arabi', an educational web series designed to empower aspiring Arab filmmakers with the skills to tell their own stories. He has also served as a story consultant for the award-winning, female-led Lebanese feature 'Solitaire' and the Canadian film 'Peace by Chocolate'. Khraish holds a PhD in the humanities from the University of Texas at Dallas.

Film Independent

Film Independent is a non-profit arts organisation that champions creative independence in visual storytelling in all its forms and fosters a culture of inclusion. We support a global community of artists and audiences who embody diversity, innovation, curiosity and uniqueness of vision.



Antoine Le Bos

Le Groupe Ouest | Founder & Director, Screenwriter |
antoine.lebos@legroupeouest.com

Following a first life as a sailor and an interrupted PhD in philosophy, Antoine graduated from the CEEA in Paris (the French conservatory for screenwriting) in 1996. After writing and directing award-winning short films and staging a chamber opera in Paris and a philharmonic orchestra in Prague, he co-wrote the 3D animation series 'Ratz', won the Gan Foundation Prize as a writer in 2005, and worked as a screenwriter or script consultant with directors such as Atiq Rahimi, László Nemes and Massoud Bakshi. In 2005, he founded Le Groupe Ouest in western Brittany, a place created by writers for writers and now one of Europe's leading centres for script development residencies. In 2015, with his team, he launched LIM (Less Is More), a Creative Europe-supported programme for committed filmmakers. Within LIM, he initiated Storytank, a European think tank uniting screenwriters and researchers.

Le Groupe Ouest

Le Groupe Ouest was created by writers for writers in a seaside village in Brittany, France, and has become one of Europe's leading centres for coaching and training screenwriters and filmmakers in the writing phase, supporting talent from around the world. Working closely with new generations of filmmakers, the team has developed innovative tools and methods for story architecture, with workshops dedicated to the prewriting phase and collaborations with researchers in cognitive neuroscience, anthropology and phenomenology. Ten years ago, Le Groupe Ouest launched LIM (Less Is More), a feature film development programme supported by the EU and numerous European countries. Through LIM, it founded Storytank, a European think tank uniting writers and researchers, and co-created with Vision Denmark the European Writers Club, fostering international collaboration between writers, producers and broadcasters.



Rithy Panh

Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center | Director /
Filmmaker Mentor

Born in Phnom Penh in 1964, Rithy Panh is one of Cambodia's most acclaimed filmmakers, known for his poignant portrayals of the Khmer Rouge era. His work often revisits the traumas of his homeland, aiming to preserve memory and seek justice for the victims of mass atrocities. Panh has directed numerous award-winning films, including 'The Missing Picture' (2013), which won the Un Certain Regard at Cannes and was nominated for an Academy Award, and 'Irradiated' (2020), which won the Berlinale Documentary Award for Best Documentary. 'Everything Will Be Ok' (2022) won the Silver Bear for Outstanding Artistic Contribution. His feature 'Meeting with Pol Pot' ('Rendez-vous avec Pol Pot') premiered in the Cannes Premiere section in 2024 and continues his exploration of Cambodia's tragic past.

Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center

Bophana Center acquires film, television, photography and sound archives on Cambodia from around the world and offers free public access to this precious heritage. For Cambodians, it opens the door to their collective memory; for teachers, students, researchers and journalists, it is an exceptional documentary resource. Since its opening in 2006, more than 240,000 people have rediscovered these materials in Phnom Penh and across the country.

The centre now holds thousands of hours of video and audio, from early Lumière films to recent works by Cambodian directors, as well as television coverage, non-profit films and documentaries, including works by Norodom Sihanouk. Bophana Center also trains archivists, film and audiovisual technicians and young filmmakers, and is expanding into multimedia with new training curricula. As a forum for artists, it supports creative work in all its forms and produces documentaries and fiction about Cambodia, which are the archives of tomorrow.



Meike Statema

IDFA | Head of Talent Development | meike@idfa.nl

Meike Statema oversees talent development at IDFA's Filmmaker Support Department, which fosters creative freedom and supports filmmakers in developing their projects and careers. IDFA offers various programmes and funding opportunities, including the IDFA Bertha Fund, which provides financial support to visionary documentary projects from Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean and Oceania.

The Talent Development Programme includes IDFA Project Space, where first- or second-time directors refine their work with guidance from acclaimed filmmakers, and IDFAcademy, held during the festival each November, where 100 participants gain insight into the global documentary industry and learn from leading creators. At IDFA 2025, seventeen films developed through IDFA's training programmes and the Bertha Fund are featured in the official selection, six projects participate in IDFA Forum, and numerous alumni are introduced to the professional industry—showcasing IDFA's lasting impact on the international documentary community.

IDFA

IDFA is the world's leading institute for the art of documentary film and new media. Every November, IDFA's festival welcomes some 245,000 visitors and 3,000 professionals to Amsterdam. Leading the industry are IDFA's markets IDFA Forum and Docs for Sale, two flagship business events that documentary professionals never miss. For the world's documentary filmmakers, IDFA aims to support the creative work of filmmakers and create a space for free artistic expression. Through several programmes and funding schemes, including the IDFA Bertha Fund, filmmakers can develop their projects, their careers and themselves. Over the course of 11 days, audiences and professionals attend film screenings, performances, the DocLab exhibition, VR cinema and education screenings at more than 20 locations across Amsterdam.



Kristina Trapp

EAVE | CEO | tina@eave.org

Kristina Trapp has worked in the international film industry for over 25 years, including at the German regional film fund MFG Filmförderung Baden-Württemberg, the European cultural channel ARTE, and as head of the Film Commission Strasbourg, as well as coordinating the European training programme Atelier Ludwigsburg-Paris. She joined EAVE in 2004 as Programme Manager, became Deputy Chief Executive in 2007 and was appointed CEO in 2009. Kristina has served on various selection committees and juries for film funds and co-production markets, and is a member of the European Film Academy and ARTEF (Anti-Racism Taskforce European Film). She was the co-director and board member of the umbrella organisation for European training providers, ATC, a member of the advisory board of the CEE Animation Workshop, and a board member of EWA (European Women's Audiovisual Network). She is currently a member of the supervisory board of the German regional fund MOIN.

EAVE

European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs (EAVE) is a professional training, project development and networking organisation for audiovisual producers. Working with a worldwide network of partners, EAVE runs programmes for producers around the globe, with its flagship EAVE Producers Workshop. EAVE also offers specialised courses such as EAVE+ (strategic company planning and leadership), the EAVE Marketing Workshop (marketing and distribution), EAVE Slate and the EAVE AI Skills Booster. Regional workshops include Puentes (Latin America), Ties That Bind (Asia), EAVE BIPOC Producers (Canada), EAVE Change (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and the Arab Producers Lab. EAVE is also a partner of the pan-African programme Creative Producers Indaba. In addition, it offers tailor-made professional development activities under the EAVE on Demand label.

Moderator



Jovan Marjanović

Sarajevo Film Festival | Festival Director |

jovan.marjanovic@icloud.com

Jovan Marjanović is a highly accomplished professional with extensive expertise spanning various facets of the film and TV industry. Since 1999, he has been closely affiliated with the Sarajevo Film Festival, currently serving as its director. Under Marjanović's guidance, the festival has maintained its status as the foremost film festival in South-Eastern Europe, distinguished by its outstanding programming, robust industry segment, and unwavering support for emerging filmmakers. Beyond his directorial role, Marjanović is a notable producer credited with numerous international award-winning films and local box office successes.

Sarajevo International Film Festival

Towards the end of the four-year siege of Sarajevo, in 1995, Obala Art Centar initiated the Sarajevo Film Festival with the aim of helping to reconstruct civil society and retain the cosmopolitan spirit of the city. High-quality programming, a strong industry segment, an educational and networking platform for young filmmakers, and the resulting presence of the international film industry, film authors and media representatives, alongside a paying audience of over 100,000, confirm its status as the leading film festival in the region, recognised by both professionals and the wider audience. In a region of over 140 million people, the Sarajevo Film Festival unites film businesses, shaping future standards for festivals, promotion and presentation in Southeast Europe.

27 November 2025

Panel 3: Regional Focus – Building Sustainable Regional Film Ecosystems
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

This conversation brings together regional film institutes, commissions, and cultural organisations to reflect on the current challenges and opportunities shaping cinema from the Arab world and wider MENA. By comparing experiences from across the region, spanning education, policy, and market trends, the panel will shed light on how collaborative strategies can strengthen infrastructure, empower filmmakers, and foster sustainable growth. It will also consider the role of regional festivals and markets in providing platforms for emerging talent and independent voices.

Panelists



Jad Abi-Khalil

Aflamuna | Executive Director | jad.abikhalil@aflamuna.org

Jad Abi-Khalil was born in Beirut, Lebanon, and graduated in cinema studies from IESAV – Saint Joseph University in 1998. He has an extensive background in directing, having worked on numerous short films and feature documentaries. Since 2007, Abi-Khalil has been actively involved in producing feature documentaries. A dedicated contributor to the Arab film industry, Jad is a founding member of Aflamuna (formerly known as Beirut DC), a cultural association dedicated to Arab cinema. He served as the chairman of its board of directors from 2009 to 2013 and held key positions, including head of its DOCmed training programme from 2011 to 2013, Beirut Cinema Platform (BCP) from 2015 to 2020, and Good Pitch from 2018 to 2020. Since 2021, he has assumed the role of Executive Director at Aflamuna.

Aflamuna

Aflamuna is a cultural non-profit based in Beirut working to harness the power of independent Arab cinema to elevate the most pressing social, political and cultural movements of our time. Established as a cooperative under the name of Beirut DC in 1999 by a group of Lebanese filmmakers and cultural organisers, it became a non-profit organisation in 2006 under the same name, launching multiple programmes and initiatives that helped independent cinema flourish in the Arab region. Today, after over two decades, Aflamuna upholds this legacy while keeping an eye to the future.



Mohammed Alghadhban

Baghdad Film Institute | Executive Director |
alghadhban@rolaiq.com

Mohammed Alghadhban is the founder of Rola Productions, a production company, and Executive Director of the Baghdad Film Institute. A Cannes Makers 2024 participant at the Cannes Film Festival, he has worked across fiction and documentary projects that bridge Iraq and the world. His credits include Associate Producer of 'Baghdad Messi' (2023), Co-Producer of 'Immortals' (2024), Line Producer of 'Charbon' (2024), and Producer of 'Red Bus in Baghdad' (in development, 2025). Through Rola Productions and the Baghdad Film Institute, he focuses on fostering international co-production, film education, and industry infrastructure for a sustainable Iraqi film ecosystem.

Baghdad Film Institute

The Baghdad Film Institute (BFI) is Iraq's leading centre for film education and industry development, dedicated to building a sustainable and globally connected film ecosystem. Its mission is to drive the growth of a thriving Iraqi film sector through professional training, cultural exchange and strategic industry engagement – positioning Iraq as a dynamic contributor to global cinema. Guided by a vision of artistic excellence and international storytelling, BFI serves as a national hub for empowering filmmakers, advancing production practices and shaping the future of Iraq's creative industry.



Abedalsalam Al-Haj

The Royal Film Commission – Jordan | Capacity Building
Manager | abedalsalam.alhaj@film.jo

Abedalsalam Al-Haj is the Director of the Jordan Cinema Academy and Head of Capacity Building at the Royal Film Commission – Jordan, with over two decades of experience in the film industry. He holds an MFA in Cinematic Arts (USC), a Diploma in Documentary Filmmaking (Arab Film Institute), and a Diploma in Civil Service Development (Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, UK). A pioneer in introducing cinema as an academic discipline in Jordan, Al-Haj has led more than 500 training programmes across Jordan and the region since 2012, including Mosalsalat Lab, the Film Prize of the Robert Bosch Stiftung projects market, and the Halaqat programme. He has collaborated with governments and international organisations to develop film education frameworks and supervised numerous short and feature films. His professional credits include international productions such as ‘The Hurt Locker’, ‘Fair Game’ and ‘Captain Abu Raed’. He remains committed to advancing film education and cinematic development.

The Royal Film Commission – Jordan

The Royal Film Commission (RFC) aims to encourage Jordanians and people from the MENA region to tell their stories, thus contributing to cross-cultural understanding and enhancing freedom of expression. In addition to offering film and TV training programmes, the RFC positions Jordan as a location for international film productions, offering diverse locations, creative resources, technical support, production services, financial incentives, and up to 25% cash rebate.



Ryan Ashore

Red Sea Film Foundation / Red Sea Labs | Director |
ryan.ashore@redseafilmfest.com

Ryan Ashore is a filmmaker and producer whose passion for cinema began at an early age. After completing film school and gaining experience on numerous sets, he built a career spanning films, drama, fashion, and independent productions across multiple countries. As Director of Red Sea Labs at the Red Sea Film Foundation, he focuses on empowering emerging and established talents from the Arab region, Africa and Asia to become the next generation of storytellers. Under his leadership, the Labs have become a hub of innovation, offering programmes in feature films, series, music, shorts and on-set training. Driven by his love for film scores and sound design, Ryan created the Music and Sound programme to mentor emerging composers and connect them with the industry. His vision has expanded the Labs into year-round initiatives that support creatives from concept to production, including Inspire, which fosters dialogue and creativity across film, episodic storytelling, animation, and music.

Red Sea Film Foundation / Red Sea Labs

The Red Sea Film Foundation is a non-profit cultural organisation dedicated to nurturing creativity, supporting talent and building cultural bridges across regional and international film industries. Its core initiatives include the Red Sea Fund, Red Sea Labs and Red Sea Souk, culminating annually in the Red Sea International Film Festival, which celebrates global cinema in Saudi Arabia. Launched in 2019, the festival showcases the creative energy of Jeddah, the Kingdom and the wider Arab region, welcoming filmmakers, cinephiles and industry professionals from around the world. The Red Sea Souk, the festival's industry market, connects filmmakers with producers, distributors and sales agents, strengthening ties between Arab cinema and the global film community. At the heart of the foundation's mission, Red Sea Labs fosters emerging voices through training and mentorship. Its flagship programme, the Lodge, empowers filmmakers with creative and professional development from concept to production.



Dora Bouchoucha

Nomadis Images / Sud Ecriture | CEO |

nomadis.images@gmail.com

Dora Bouchoucha has been a film producer since 1994, producing and co-producing award-winning documentaries, shorts and features. She founded the Carthage Film Festival Projects' Workshop in 1992 and Takmil in 2014, and created the Sud Ecriture workshops in 1997, which she continues to run. She is actively involved in training and promoting cinema from the global South. In 2010, she was appointed head of Fonds Sud and in 2012, President of the CNC Aide aux Cinémas du Monde. She led the Carthage Film Festival in 2008, 2010 and 2014, and has served on juries including the Berlinale feature film jury (2017) and the Venice debut feature jury (2020). She directed Manarat, the Mediterranean film festival in Tunisia, and is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Since June 2021, she has been Vice President of the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris.

Sud Ecriture

The Sud Ecriture workshops were founded in 1997 for the purpose of training emerging screenwriters from Africa and the Arab world. Every year, five or six projects are selected to take part in a two-session workshop. In long collective sessions, the stories are analysed in depth, in light of the authors' intention and vision, in order to improve their scripts and increase their chances of being produced. Headed by Tunisian producers and script consultants Dora Bouchoucha and Lina Chaabane, and with the mentorship of scriptwriter Jacques Fieschi for the last 20 years, Sud Ecriture has become a reference in scriptwriting training, praised by aspiring filmmakers and professionals across the region.



Lamia Chraïbi

Tamayouz Cinema Foundation | Co-Founder | lamia@laprod.ma

Lamia Chraïbi is a Moroccan producer and founder of La Prod and Moon & Deal Films. She is committed to bold, diverse storytelling through local and international co-productions, combining creativity and rigour without compromise. She has collaborated with renowned filmmakers including Hicham Lasri, Narjiss Nejjar and Ismaël Ferroukhi. Her international credits include 'Mimosas' by Oliver Laxe and 'Tegnap' by Bálint Kenyeres. She produced 'Achoura', Morocco's first fantasy film. Her line-up includes documentaries such as 'Ziyara' by Simone Bitton and 'School of Hope' by Mohamed El Aboudi. A member of Film Independent, EAVE and ACE, Lamia founded the Tamayouz Cinema Foundation, empowering Moroccan women in cinema through workshops and mentoring.

Tamayouz Cinema Foundation

A Moroccan initiative with ambitions to expand across the African continent and the Arab world, the Tamayouz Cinema Foundation aims to structure the Moroccan film sector into a creative, sustainable and competitive industry. To achieve this, it focuses on the empowerment and professionalisation of women in the sector, while also striving to enhance the quality and visibility of Moroccan, African and Arab cinema on the international stage. Rooted in solidarity and creative excellence, the foundation supports a new generation of filmmakers, especially women, by acting as a trainer, connector, incubator and accelerator of projects and talent. With a growing community, the foundation seeks to foster a collective capable of representing film professionals, defending their interests and influencing public policy. This body would ensure women's voices in cinema, often absent from decision-making spaces, are heard while advocating for their rights, equal opportunities and wider inclusion.



Ali Khechen

Doha Film Institute | Film Training Senior Manager / Qumra
Industry Senior Manager | akhechen@dohafilm.com

Ali Khechen has worked as a Project Manager at the Cannes Court Métrage—Festival de Cannes and as an Industry Manager at the Guanajuato International Film Festival in Mexico. He is currently the Senior Manager of Film Training at Doha Film Institute. He is also the Industry Senior Manager of Qumra, a project incubator and industry platform that aims to provide mentorship, nurturing, and hands-on development for emerging filmmakers from the Arab world and beyond. He has been part of the project selection committee of the Sundance Documentary Fund and Feature Film Program and mentors filmmakers for IDFA Academy and CPH:DOX.

Doha Film Institute

Doha Film Institute (DFI) is an independent, not-for-profit cultural organisation established in 2010. It organically supports the growth of the local film community by enhancing industry knowledge, cultivating film appreciation and contributing to the development of sustainable creative industries in Qatar. Doha Film Institute's platforms include funding and production of local, regional, and international films, training programmes, film screenings, Doha Film Festival, and Qumra.



Adel Ksiksi

Al Jazeera Documentary | Manager of Programming |
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Adel Ksiksi is the Manager of Programming at Al Jazeera Documentary Channel, responsible for developing plans for programme strands and preparing the programme grid on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. He oversees the global planning effort for special events, series and long- and short-term programme planning to increase viewership ratings. Ksiksi is also Head of AJD Industry Days, an event that supports the expansion of documentaries worldwide, including international co-productions, and aims to match key decision-makers with interesting and valuable projects.

Al Jazeera Documentary

Al Jazeera Documentary is the first Arab-centred documentary channel dedicated to producing high-quality documentary films. Covering a wide range of topics, it presents high-quality documentaries that enrich the lives of millions of Arabs and inspire future generations of filmmakers.



Mohamed Sayed

Cairo International Film Festival | Head of Cairo Industry Days |
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Mohamed Sayed Abdel Rahim is a film critic, journalist and translator, and the Head of Cairo Industry Days (CID) at the Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF)—one of fifteen FIAPF-accredited Category A festivals and the oldest cultural event in the Middle East and Africa. A Golden Globes voter and Chief Editor & Translator at the Middle East News Agency, he previously served as CIFF’s Programmer, Artistic Director of the Hurghada Youth and Sharm El-Sheikh Asian Film Festivals, and programmer for the Red Sea, Ismailia and Alexandria Mediterranean Film Festivals.

Cairo Industry Days

Cairo Industry Days (CID) continues to grow as a hub for dialogue, training, and co-production between Arab filmmakers and the international industry, through panels, masterclasses, and workshops – including Cairo Film Connection, Cairo Film Market, and Cairo Pro-Meet. The programme brings together leading global professionals, fund representatives and festival programmers to support the development and international visibility of Arab cinema, reinforcing Cairo’s position as a bridge between Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.

Moderator



Jana Wehbe

The Attic | Co-Founder & Producer | wehbejana@yahoo.com

With a dynamic career spanning film, cultural and environmental advocacy and education, Jana Wehbe is one of the fierce voices in the Arab creative scene. A graduate of Université Saint-Joseph in filmmaking and the Lebanese National Higher Conservatory of Music in Oriental Modern Singing, she launched her producing journey with the FIPRESCI Award-winning film '2 1/2'. Since then, she has produced numerous documentary and fiction films, line-produced international co-productions and co-founded The Attic, a Beirut-based production company, in 2009. As industry programme manager for projects in development at Qumra – Doha Film Institute, and as a professor teaching and mentoring in producing, Jana has supported many emerging filmmakers from the region. As the former Executive Director of REEF, she was selected for the inaugural AFAC-Netflix Equity Fund and nominated for the Sony Future Filmmaker Award. From film sets to theatrical and music stages, Jana continues to champion authentic storytelling.

The Attic

The Attic was founded in 2009 by three Lebanese industry professionals, creating a space to originate and produce their multi-disciplinary projects and ideas. The Attic's debut was '2 1/2', winner of the FIPRESCI Award at DIFF 2010. Soon, this boutique production company was collaborating with different artists and allies to bring their projects to light, from feature films, documentaries, short films and animations to other formats such as concerts, theatre and visual works across various aspects of creation and production.

27 November 2025

Panel 4: Building a Sustainable Ecosystem for Children's Cinema in the Arab World – Realities, Challenges, and Pathways for Audience Development
12:15 PM – 1:45 PM

Filmlab Palestine invites filmmakers, educators, and cultural leaders to reimagine cinema for the next generation. Through the lens of its Story Lab program, the panel will explore how authentic and diverse stories can inspire Arab youth, particularly in regions affected by conflict and instability. The conversation will look at the current absence of quality Arabic-language content for children, the systemic obstacles to producing it, and the urgent need to nurture critical young audiences. By sharing both challenges and emerging initiatives, the panel will highlight how creative collaboration, education, and regional partnerships can spark a vibrant ecosystem for youth cinema that reflects local identity and speaks directly to the realities of Arab children and young people.

Panelists



Nada Bakr

Network of Arab Alternative Screens (NAAS) |
Executive Director | nada@naasnetwork.org

Nada Bakr is the Executive Director of the Network of Arab Alternative Screens (NAAS), a transnational network of cinema platforms, cultural spaces and film initiatives dedicated to sustaining and reimagining cinema culture across Arabic-speaking communities. She is an independent curator and cultural manager whose work spans visual arts, social justice, technology, digital art and culture. She holds an MA in Media Arts Cultures from Aalborg University, Denmark. She has served as Managing Director and Curator at Cairotonica – Electronic and New Media Arts Festival, and as a community programme curator at Disruption Network Lab, Berlin. Nada has collaborated with several spaces and projects, including Medrar for Contemporary Art, IMPAKT | Centre for Media Culture, Electric South, Akademie der Künste, The Mosaic Rooms and African Crossroads.

Network of Arab Alternative Screens (NAAS)

The Network of Arab Alternative Screens (NAAS) is a constellation of cinema platforms, screening spaces and cultural initiatives dedicated to sustaining and reimagining film culture across Arabic-speaking communities. NAAS believes cinema is a vital space for collective experience, critical inquiry and imagination, and creates opportunities for the practitioners who keep that space alive to gather, exchange practices, and forge cross-border dialogue and solidarity. NAAS also serves as a key resource for anyone looking to engage with cinema culture from the region, with an emphasis on non-conventional channels of film circulation and exhibition. Rooted in a commitment to preserving cultural memory and ensuring public access to diverse cinematic expressions, its programmes are designed to safeguard and produce knowledge that centre independent, marginalised perspectives, affirming the place of Arab cinema within the global independent film landscape.



Jessica Khoury

Film Clinic | VP of Business Affairs |

Jessica.khoury@fcidistribution.com

Jessica Khoury is an established distributor specialising in independent Arab cinema. She is the VP of Business Affairs at Film Clinic Indie Distribution. Prior to her work at Film Clinic, she worked for Pacha Pictures in Paris, then returned to Beirut and worked for the Beirut-based distribution company, MC Distribution, for three years, serving as production supervisor at About Productions. Jessica Khoury is an alumna of the 2019 EAVE Producers Workshop and GMM 2022 Fellow.

Film Clinic

Founded in 2005 by renowned producer and screenwriter Mohamed Hefzy, Film Clinic's mission is to support creative up-and-coming talent with the expertise of the best in the film industry. Now, with a track record of over 65 films ranging from commercial blockbusters to award-winning arthouse titles, Film Clinic has been giving a voice to filmmakers both locally and internationally. In 2017, Film Clinic set up its own distribution arm, Film Clinic Indie Distribution, to financially support and distribute the work of some of the most exciting emerging Arab filmmakers.



Ola Salama

Filmlab Palestine | Executive Director | o.salama@flp.ps

Ola Salama is the Executive Director of Filmlab Palestine, a cultural institution dedicated to empowering Palestinian filmmakers and fostering a vibrant cinema culture. Born in Gaza and holding a master's degree in Economics from Birzeit University, she brings a multidisciplinary background in marketing, culture and public administration. Since joining Filmlab Palestine, Ola has led flagship initiatives, including the Palestine Cinema Days festival and The Story Lab, which nurture storytelling among youth across the Arab world. Guided by a belief in cinema as a tool of cultural resistance and collective memory, she has expanded the lab's impact through international partnerships, industry labs and screenings that reach even displaced and war-affected communities, while amplifying Palestinian narratives on the global stage.

Filmlab Palestine

“Emancipatory Film Culture in, from, and for Palestine”. Established in 2014, Filmlab: Palestine aims to promote and revive the cinema culture in Palestine, with a vision of creating a professional, creative, and innovative film industry landscape. Its philosophy is to create a sustainable hub for local film production, with programmes that support networking, training and education for film professionals and emerging talents, and that realise diverse, high-quality films, including content for children. The culmination of these efforts is the annual Palestine Cinema Days festival, which connects Palestine with the regional and international film industry, promotes Palestinian cinema culture and builds an active local cinema audience.

Moderator



Darine Hotait

Cinephilia Productions | Founder – Writer – Director |

darine@cinephiliaproductions.com

Darine Hotait is a published writer and film director whose films have screened on Sundance Channel, The New Yorker, HBO, AMC, BBC and at international film festivals. Named on Disney’s list of Directors on the Rise, her work has earned numerous accolades, including the New York Council on the Arts Artist Prize, the New York Foundation for the Arts Immigrant Fellowship, the Jerome Foundation Award, the North Manhattan Arts Alliance Prize and the 40 Under 40 Arab America Award. Her writing has appeared in Red Hen Press, The Seventh Wave, Rusted Radishes, The Siren Literary, Blind Spot and other publications. In 2010, she founded Cinephilia Productions in New York City, a development studio, talent incubator and production company championing African and Arab filmmakers. Continuing her commitment to amplifying underrepresented voices, she co-founded Route 243 in 2025, a film and television studio focused on crafting global narratives.

Cinephilia Productions

Founded in 2010, Cinephilia Productions is a New York-based film production company, development studio and talent incubator dedicated to championing African, Arab, Southwest Asian and Latin filmmakers. Through its development programmes, Cinephilia has incubated hundreds of film projects that have premiered at major festivals including Cannes, Venice, Toronto, Rotterdam and DOC NYC. The company has provided film education to more than 5,000 filmmakers, cultivating a global community committed to artistic excellence and cultural exchange. Cinephilia fosters genre-driven storytelling and empowers underrepresented voices through mentorship, training and production initiatives that bring bold, visionary stories to life. It is also a proud partner of Filmlab Palestine through The Story Lab, a programme dedicated to developing and producing films for children’s audiences in the Arab world, nurturing the next generation of storytellers and expanding the reach of Arab cinema.

