



PALESTINE FILM INSTITUTE

Palestinian cinema emerges as a record of the people's dreams, hopes and struggles. It is evidence of the land we miss, an image of the people we lost, and an archive of a future to shape and inhabit. This is why the Palestine Film Institute (PFI) emphasises the importance of supporting Palestinian films and narratives in international forums. This year, the PFI presents 3 feature films at the Durban FilmMart for the first time, enabling filmmakers and producers to showcase feature films about Palestine to decision-makers and festival programmers on their own terms, and providing a vital platform to engage with the global film community and participate in industry events.



A DISTURBED EARTH

A *Disturbed Earth* traces Rihab’s journey into the ‘imaginary’ as she attempts to assemble the broken pieces of her lost village, Safsaf. She embarks from Sydney to reconstruct the village, the massacre, and the escape through the stories of survivors in Lebanon’s Palestinian refugee camps.

Rihab discovers a photograph of the last couple to marry in Safsaf. Upon finding and contacting their granddaughter, Leila, a graphic novelist in Detroit, they unite forces to visually represent their village.

Their rented apartment in Beirut serves as the headquarters for their research mission. They pin visual clues resembling a detective’s wall and begin drawing on it, gradually unveiling a map of the village and its surroundings – mountains, rivers, neighbouring villages, valleys, meadows, and hills.

Drawings and photographs act as portals into animated vignettes, bringing the village’s world to life. Gaps in the stories are revealed through the animation scenes, showcasing both stripped-back and intricately detailed depictions. The imagined village cannot be a precise representation; it is a blend of fantasy, obscurity, voids, and vivid details.

The film climaxes in a symbolic ceremony honouring the massacre victims. Rihab and Leila join their elders on a rooftop in Ain El Helweh for sunset prayers and a ceremony from their place of exile. Their voices, carried through speakers encircling the mass grave, console the disturbed earth of the burial site.

This is a buried story, waiting beneath the breathing rubble of a village.

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER STATEMENT

So many of our village stories are overshadowed by the immense suffering and destruction that Palestinians have endured year after year since 1948. For this reason, I feel a strong commitment to representing and preserving our village stories, especially as we stand on the brink of losing the last generation born in our villages.

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER PROFILE

Director **Rihab Charida** is a Palestinian filmmaker based in Beirut, with a background in producing documentaries for television news and current affairs programmes. Producer **Anne Köhncke** is a producer and co-founder of six-time Oscar-nominated Final Cut for Real. She lives and works between Norway and France, holds an MA in Film, and is a member of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

COMPANY DETAILS

Moon Drift Film is a newly established production company based in Australia. Two production companies are on board as co-producers.



Rihab Charida
DIRECTOR



Anne Köhncke
PRODUCER

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Type:	Documentary Feature Length
Country:	Lebanon, Australia
Production Company:	Moon Drift Films
Running Time:	90 minutes

FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget:	502 753 USD
Finances Committed:	62 565 USD

GOALS AT DFM

- Funding
- Broadcaster



THE GOAL

This is the story of aspiring young football players from Gaza and their dreams of playing for the Palestinian national team, Al-Fida'i. The group of friends – Abdullah Alian, Mahmoud Yaghi, Raafat Sharab, Abdel Aleem, and Abu Jarad – are part of the junior national team, united by their passion for football and their dream of representing Palestine. What will happen to these dreams amid the genocidal war on Gaza?

On October 7th, all training programmes were abruptly cancelled, and travel was halted as war unfolded in Gaza. We will document their life paths and explore whether they can hold onto their dreams during the conflict. Do they still nurture aspirations to compete on international football fields? Some contemplate leaving

Palestine, the country they dream of playing for, simply to survive and play again. But can they? Will their dreams be buried in Gaza's stadiums, akin to the mass graves of countless martyrs? Can their dreams somehow serve as motivation to survive? Could football be a lifeline for them? Is there a chance they will once again score goals, win international cups, and succeed in life, or will their lives become another tragic milestone in this devastating war?

We documented the players before the war, and during the ongoing genocide, we have followed their traumatic struggle for survival amidst the onslaught, capturing their daily lives through their mobile phones and our cameras. It's a story of desperate attempts to cling to hope and dreams in the face of unimaginable tragedy.

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER STATEMENT

I was fortunate to document the Palestinian youth national team before the war: would they succeed in achieving their dreams amid brutal occupation? Then the horror of war hit Gaza, and the young men were caught up in it. As a Palestinian director, I weep for the dreams that are being destroyed and the countless lives affected. This film will challenge the eradication of dreams.

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER PROFILE

Inigo Gilmore, a renowned filmmaker, crafts powerful narratives. His acclaimed documentary *Topowa!* follows 12 Ugandan brass musicians on an inspiring journey to triumph, winning at Raindance Festival. With a deep affinity for South Africa, he cherishes its vibrant culture.

Jbara-Tibi, a Palestinian filmmaker with 12 years in documentaries, spent 25 years in journalism, including at CNN. Her films like *Bread and Butter* and *The Bride Dress* earned accolades at global festivals.

COMPANY DETAILS

Zainab Production Company, led by Marwah Jbara-Tibi, focuses on producing impactful Palestinian documentaries. *Abbas 36* and *Alfedai* have garnered international acclaim for their insightful storytelling.



Marwah Jbara Tibi
DIRECTOR



Inigo Gilmore
CO-PRODUCER

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Type: Documentary Feature Length

Country: Palestine

Production Company: Zainab Productions

Running Time: 60 minutes

FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget: 203 750 USD

Finances Committed: 10 000 USD

GOALS AT DFM

- To connect with key funders and South African producers who align with our vision and are eager to collaborate on our project.



THE RISE

This feature documentary tells the story of Bo-Kaap, South Africa's oldest Muslim neighbourhood, and its fight against gentrification through the intersecting journeys of five protagonists. It also explores the community's parallel struggle for a free Palestine.

Bo-Kaap's oldest resident, Hadji Abdiah Da Costa, aged 98, recounts her life story, the history of her ancestors, and her current residence next to the Auwal Mosque on Dorp Street – South Africa's first Mosque built in 1794. The roots of Islam in South Africa trace back to the 1600s in the Cape, where the Dutch brought

indentured labourers and political prisoners from the Malay Archipelago, known for its spice trade.

The documentary, titled *The Rise*, captures Bo-Kaap's intergenerational narrative through the experiences of its protagonists, who share stories of community, solidarity, identity, and access to land before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic. It focuses on three central characters' solidarity with Palestine over six years, culminating during the 2023/24 Gaza genocide. The film also features interviews in Bo-Kaap, including one with Honourable Minister Naledi Pandor.

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER STATEMENT

When tourists visit the beautiful city of Cape Town, Bo-Kaap is often listed among the top five places to visit. It's where my father and his ten siblings were raised. However, gentrification has now become a significant issue.

I am deeply motivated by my personal connection to this land, its beauty, culture, and heritage, which I believe should be preserved for generations to come.

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER PROFILE

Weaam Williams is a South African screenwriter, director, actress, and poet. She studied for a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Cape Town. Williams has found her voice as a woman and activist through cinema. Her documentary directorial debut, *Hip-Hop Revolution*, won the Best Edited Film Award at the NYC Reel Sisters Film Festival in 2008, with Spike Lee as Head of the Jury, and has been broadcast in 28 countries. Since then, Weaam has directed award-winning titles such as *District Six Rising from the Dust* and *Two Hues*.

COMPANY DETAILS

Holocene Films: Where classic craftsmanship meets digital innovation.



Weaam Williams
DIRECTOR/PRODUCER



Munier Parker
PRODUCER

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Type: Documentary Feature Length

Country: South Africa

Production Company: Holocene Films

Running Time: 80 minutes

FINANCING PLAN

Total Budget: 53 200 USD

Finances Committed: 15 437 USD

GOALS AT DFM

- Pre-Sale/Licensing Deal for the Rise
- Additional Grant Funding
- Festival Interest