



OFFICIAL SELECTION

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TORONTO INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL 2017

Special Jury Prize
Dubai
International
Film Festival
2017

WINNER
NATIONAL BOARD
of REVIEW
STUDENT GRANT

Winner
Grand Jury Prize
NASHVILLE
FILM FESTIVAL
2018

BAFTA STUDENT
FILM AWARDS
SHORTLIST

THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT

A SHORT FILM BY CYRIL ARIS

"THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT" A FILM BY CYRIL ARIS, STARRING FOUAD YAMMINE AND NICOLAS DANIEL
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JOE SAÂDE PRODUCTION DESIGNER ISSA KANDIL EDITORS CYRIL ARIS AND MOUNIA AKL
SOUND MIXER RAWAD HOBEIKA SOUND DESIGNER CEDRIC KAYEM COLORIST BELAL HIBRI ART DIRECTOR HANÂDY MEDLEJ
CASTING MIA DAIBESS WARDROBE LARY BOU SAFI 1ST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GEORGES CASSAB
PRODUCTION MANAGERS SONIA HABIB AND JINANE CHAAYA EXECUTIVE PRODUCER CANDICE ABELA-MIKÂTI AND LENA FADEL
MUSIC BY PAUL TYAN PRODUCED BY MARC FADEL AND VALERIE CASTILLO MARTINEZ
CO-WRITTEN BY MOUNIA AKL WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY CYRIL ARIS

INDIEFLIP

INDIEFLIP

MADE IN CANADA



TAGLINE

The President's Visit to the tiny seaside factory of the *Sultan of Soap* becomes a complete wash out!

SYNOPSIS

When a small coastal town of fishermen learns about the secret visit of the President of the Republic to its local soap shop, they embark in an everlasting struggle at cleaning up and maintaining the perfect image of their town.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

"To truly laugh, you must be able to take your pain, and play with it".
– Charlie Chaplin.

It is that bittersweet pain of caring too much for a country we call home that drove the story of *The President's Visit*, set in a political deadlock where the Presidential seat had been vacant for over two years. This absurdity is something you cry at, play with... and eventually laugh at. I find it inherently Lebanese to play with contradictions, so adopting a contrasting tone to the subject matter is truthful to the place and identity. Comedy becomes a self-imposed remedy to make the situation more bearable, while our lives simply pass by. But in this film, the townsfolk eagerly overdress and over-prepare for the coming of The President - for a better future, for a better life. Because this time, change is coming...

Maybe tomorrow is, indeed, a better day.



DIRECTOR, WRITER, EDITOR

CYRIL ARIS

Cyril Aris is a Lebanese Director & Screenwriter, living in New York and Beirut, currently in development for his first fiction feature, '*It's a Sad and Beautiful World*'.

His debut feature documentary, *The Swing* (2018), recipient of a post-production grant from AFAC, had its world premiere in the documentary competition of the 53rd Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, receiving positive reviews from the press with The Hollywood Reporter calling in 'Intimate and moving'.

His last short film, *The President's Visit* (2017), premiered at the 42nd Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), won the US National Board of Review (NBR) grant award, was shortlisted for a student BAFTA award, won the Muhr Jury Prize at the 14th Dubai International Film Festival, and the Grand Jury Prize at the 49th Nashville Film Festival, making the film eligible for an Oscar nomination in 2019. It was a recipient of grants from the Doha Film Institute, the Katharina Otto-Bernstein Film Fund and the Ministry of Culture of Lebanon, and played in over 50 film festivals worldwide.

Previous credits include short film *Siham* (2013), Jury Award for Best Film Under 15' Minutes at the Palm Springs International ShortFest, LBC's TV series *Beirut, I Love You* (2011, 2012), and Yahoo's web-series *Fasateen* (2012), which both gathered several million views.

Producing credits include short film *Submarine* (2016), directed by Mounia Akl, official selection at the 69th Cannes Film Festival (Cinefondation competition), as well as TIFF, SxSW and over 100 festivals worldwide. It won the Jury Award at the 13th Dubai Film Festival and was Staff picked by Vimeo, receiving 350,000+ views.

Aris holds an MFA from Columbia University in the City of New York, and has taught Film at Columbia University, NHSI at Northwestern University and Barnard College.



CO-WRITER

MOUNIA AKL

Mounia Akl is a Lebanese director and writer, living between Beirut and New York. She holds a bachelor's degree in architecture from ALBA and an MFA in Directing from Columbia University. Her previous work includes four fiction films and two web series.

Her last short film, *Submarine* (2016), was in the official selections of the 69th Cannes Film Festival in the Cinefondation category, the Toronto international Film Festival, South by Southwest, and the Dubai International Film Festival where it won the Muhr Jury Prize. *Submarine* was awarded the James Bridges production grant, the Kodak Motion Picture Product Grant, the IFP Audience award, the Liberty Global Best Film Award at the *Denver Film Festival* and an honorable mention at the *Atlanta Film Festival*.

In 2017 Mounia took part in the Lebanon Factory and co-directed a short film, *El Gran Libano*, which opened the Quinzaine des Réalisateurs at the 70th Cannes Film Festival. She is currently writing her first feature film *Costa Brava* with Spanish co-writer Clara Roquet, which was selected for further development at the Cannes' Cinefondation Residency in the fall of 2017.



PRODUCER

VALERIE CASTILLO MARTINEZ

Valerie grew up in the Philippines and moved to the US in 2001. She served in the U.S. Air Force as a systems analyst, completed her MBA and worked in banking prior to pursuing film.

She graduated from Columbia University's MFA creative producing program, where she wrote, directed and produced several projects set in the US and international locations. She started her company *Indieflip* with a vision to make films on underrepresented subjects and cross cultural themes.

In addition to her films playing at numerous festivals worldwide, she has received grants from institutions such as Doha Film Institute, Katharina Otto Bernstein, National Board of Review and Caucus Foundation. She won the Entertainment Partners Best Producing Award at the Columbia University Film Festival, while her first feature screenplay, *Death of Nintendo*, received Faculty Honors at the screenwriting competition. It was later selected for to be a part of the 2017 Tribeca Film Institute Network. She has recently completed a fellowship with Film Independent's Project Involve, and has several projects currently in development.



PRODUCER

MARC FADEL

Marc Fadel is an independent producer based in Lebanon, with a Master's in film production from ALBA, and more than 12 years of experience working in film, TV Commercials, music videos and corporate videos. The last short he produced, *Nocturne in Black (2016)*, was shortlisted for the 2017 Oscars® in the Live Action Shorts category and won the 2017 BAFTA Student Film Award for Live Action and the Golden Medal at the Student Academy Awards in 2016.

Marc has worked with the largest production houses and agencies in Lebanon and the Middle East, where he was involved as a producer, line producer or production manager, and was also an active member in the organization of the Beirut International Film Festival for 3 years.



CREDITS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Candice Abela-Mikati
Lena Fadel

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Sonia Habib
Jinane Chaaya

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Issa Kandil

ART DIRECTOR

Hanady Medlej

WARDROBE

Lary Bou Safi

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Joe Saade

EDITOR

Cyril Aris
Mounia Akl

SOUND DESIGNER

Cedric Kayem

SOUND MIXER

Rawad Hobeika

COLORIST

Belal Hibri / Lucid Post

MUSIC COMPOSER

Paul Tyan

CASTING DIRECTOR

Mia Daibess

CAST

Fouad Yammine (Nino)
Uncle David (Nicolas Daniel)
Najib Nassif (Fisherman)
Walid Mounla (Fisherman)
Mohamed Mounla (Fisherman)
William Farhat (Fisherman)
Siham Haddad (Nino's Mother)
Mounia Akl (Soraya)

MADE WITH THE SUPPORT OF

- The Doha Film Institute | Qatar
- The Katharina Otto-Bernstein Film Fund | USA
- The Ministry of Culture of Lebanon | Lebanon



FESTIVALS & AWARDS

Official Selection at the:

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- * 42nd Toronto International Film Festival, Canada 2017 | World Premiere
 - * 39th Cinemed Film Festival - Montpellier, France 2017 | French Premiere
 - * 14th Dubai International Film Festival, UAE 2017 | MENA Premiere
 - * 11th Kustendorf International Film Festival, Serbia 2018
 - * 24th Palm Springs International ShortFest, USA 2018
 - * 49th Nashville Film Festival, USA 2018
 - * 4th Qumra Film Festival (Doha Film Institute), Qatar 2018 | Qatari Premiere
 - * 45th Athens International Film and Video Festival, Ohio USA 2018
 - * 33rd International Short Film Festival (InterFilm), Germany 2017
 - * 33rd Valencia International Film Festival Cinema Jove, Spain 2018
 - * Festival Des Cinémas Arabes à Paris, France 2018
 - * 30th Galway Film Fleadh, Ireland 2018
 - * 20th Sarasota Film Festival, USA 2018
 - * 27th Indy Shorts - Heartland Film Festival, USA 2018
 - * 20th Guanajuato International Film Festival (Focus on Lebanese cinema selection), Mexico 2018
 - * 13th Show Me Shorts, New Zealand 2018
 - * 16th Festival of Mediterranean Short Film Tangier, Morocco 2018
 - * 23rd IFVA, Hong Kong 2018
 - * 22nd REGARD – Saguenay International Short Film Festival, Canada 2018
 - * Lebanese Short Films at Metropolis, Lebanon 2018 | Lebanese Premiere
 - * 13th Passaggi d'autore: intrecci mediterranei, Italy 2017
 - * 10th Heart of Gold Film Festival, Australia 2017
 - * 15th Bogotá Short Film Festival, Colombia 2017

- * 13th FIFOG Festival International du Film Oriental de Genève, Switzerland 2018
- * 5th International Bosphorus Film Festival, Turkey 2017
- * 12th Big Sur International Film Festival, USA 2018
- * Middle East Now Summer Nights Florence, Italy 2018
- * 34th Festival de Cinéma Traversées - Lunel, France 2018
- * 14th Akbank Short Film Festival, Turkey 2018
- * 5th International Bosphorus Film Festival, Turkey 2017
- * 9th Arab Film Festival, Germany 2018
- * 4th Arab Film Festival at the Arab American National Museum (AANM), Michigan USA 2018
- * 7th Underexposed Film Festival YC, USA 2018
- * 5th Literally Short Film Festival, Texas USA 2018
- * 2nd Cairo Cinema Days, Egypt 2018
- * 9th Festival de cine Al Este, Peru 2018
- * 4th Arab Film Festival Zurich, Switzerland 2018
- * 11th International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala, India 2018
- * 3rd Festival International du Film Arabe de Gabès, Tunisia 2018
- * 8th Postira Seaside Film Festival, Croatia 2018
- * 3rd Batroun Mediterranean Film Festival, Lebanon 2018
- * 5th FunCinema International Comedy Film Festival, Argentina 2018
- * 6th Fairhope Film Festival, Alabama USA 2018
- * Lebanese Film Festival, Australia 2018
- * 1st Lebanese Independent Film Festival, Lebanon 2018

FESTIVALS & AWARDS



Awards:

- * Grand Jury Prize, Nashville Film Festival, USA 2018 - Oscar qualifying award for the Oscars of 2019
- * BAFTA student award - shortlist, UK 2018
- * Muhr Short Film Jury Prize, Dubai International Film Festival, UAE 2017
- * National Board of Review (NBR) Award, USA 2017
- * Recipient of the Doha Film Institute Production Grant, Qatar 2017
- * Recipient of the Katharina Otto-Bernstein Production Grant, USA 2017
- * Recipient of a grant from the Ministry of Culture in Lebanon, Lebanon 2017

REVIEWS

"Providing the biggest number of hearty belly laughs of any film on this list, Cyril Aris' *The President's Visit* concerns a small Lebanese fishing village that's whipped into a frenzy when a local soap maker lets it slip that the country's leader is buying some of his artisanal soaps for his "cleansing" of the country's corrupt political landscape. What was supposed to be a secret trip to the town turns into an all out frenzy with people going out of their way (and in some cases, outright lying) in an effort to impress the president. Aris' cast is comedically gifted across the board, and the director can get just as much mileage out of a well timed sound effect happening in the distance as he can from the film's sharply written dialogue and message."

- Andrew Parker, *The Gate*



WEBSITE
SOCIAL MEDIA
IMDB
TRAILER

<http://www.cyrilaris.com/#/thepresidentsvisit/>
<https://www.facebook.com/thepresidentsvisit/>
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt6819172/>
<https://vimeo.com/224499266>

TECHNICAL DETAILS

RUNNING TIME	19 Mins
SHOOTING FORMAT	Arri Alexa 2K
ASPECT RATIO	1.85: 1
EXHIBITION FORMAT	DCP 1998x1080, Stereo
COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION	Lebanon, USA, Qatar
DATE OF COMPLETION	2017
LANGUAGE	Arabic, English subtitles, French Subtitles, Spanish Subtitles



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