

# فجر كل يوم

DAWN EVERY DAY

a film by  
Amir Youssef



BFI LONDON  
**FILM**  
**FESTIVAL**





# DAWN EVERY DAY

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

While this story takes place during a complicated and difficult moment in Egypt's history, we never really see the external events happening at that time, as this story is told from the point of view of 8-year-old Nabil, a child that has no capacity to understand social dynamics or regional politics. And even though many viewers of this film are not from Cairo and are not from an age group that lived in the 1950s, we can all relate to how today's seismic political events and social movements tend to separate us rather than connect us.

TO NABIL

I WANTED TO MAKE SOMETHING THAT BRINGS ME CLOSE TO YOUR INNER CHILD, BEFORE YOU WERE EVER MY FATHER. I WANTED TO VISIT YOU, WHEN YOU WERE STILL LEARNING ABOUT THE WORLD AND ITS WAYS, TO RELIVE A TIME AND PLACE THAT IS FAR AND DISTANT. A PERIOD I WILL NEVER BE FAMILIAR WITH UNLESS I MADE THIS PICTURE.

ONLY FOR ME TO COME ACROSS THE REMNANTS OF A FIRST FRIENDSHIP AND THE INNOCENCE OF PURE COMPANIONSHIP, FOREVER LOST AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF GEOPOLITICAL CHAOS THAT CHILDREN CAN NEVER UNDERSTAND NOR RELATE TO.

A PICTURE ABOUT A CHILD COPING WITH HIS FIRST LOSS.



# DAWN EVERY DAY

## FILM SYNOPSIS

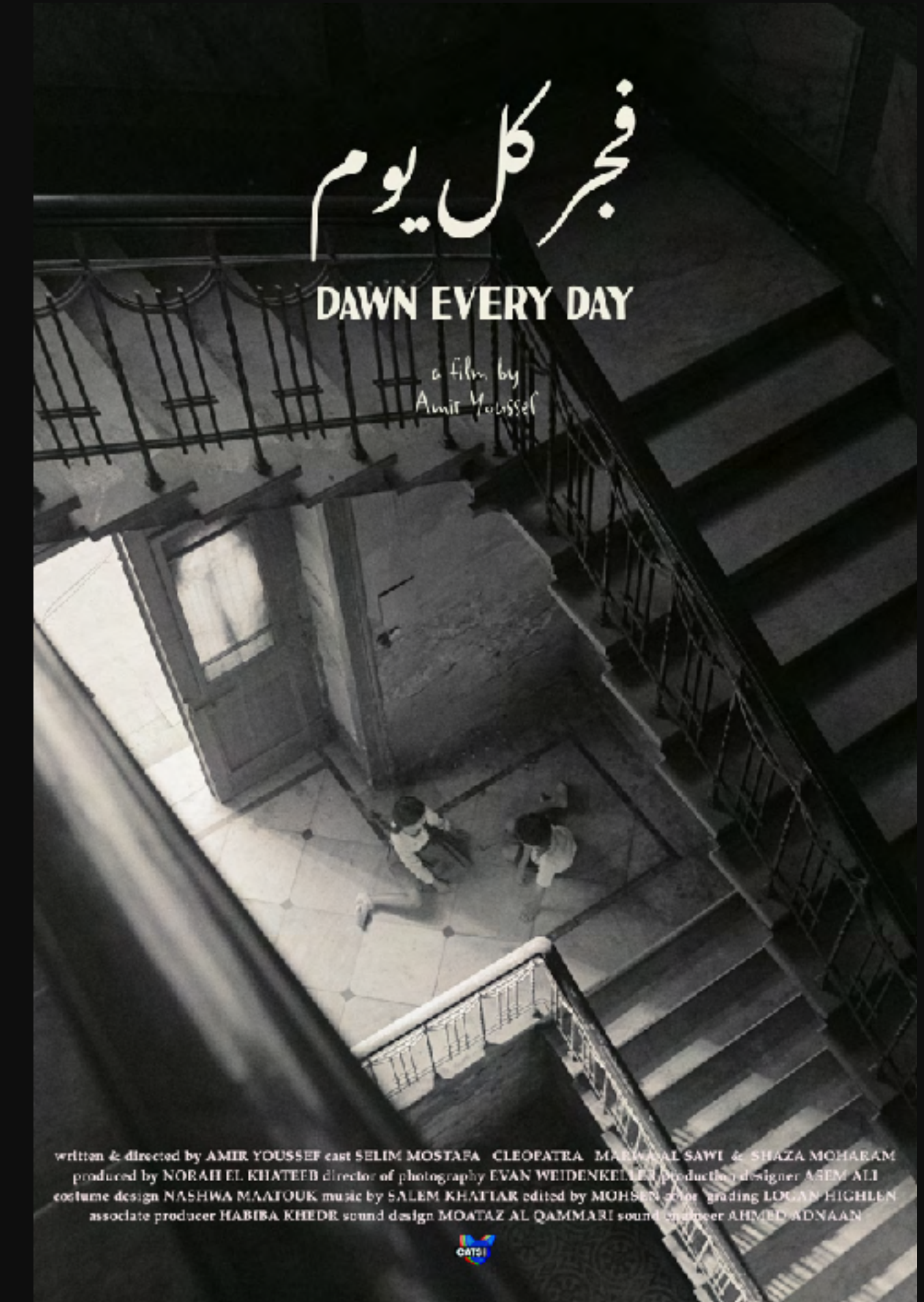
In the 1950s, the cosmopolitan society in Egypt was disrupted by the conflict between nationalists and colonial powers, affecting citizens and residents with foreign affiliations, including Europeans, Syro-Lebanese and Egyptian Jews.

Amidst this turmoil, 8-year-old Nabil navigates through new social norms that he cannot comprehend, impacting his next-door best friend, Mireille, in post-nationalized Egypt. This story is inspired by real people and real events.



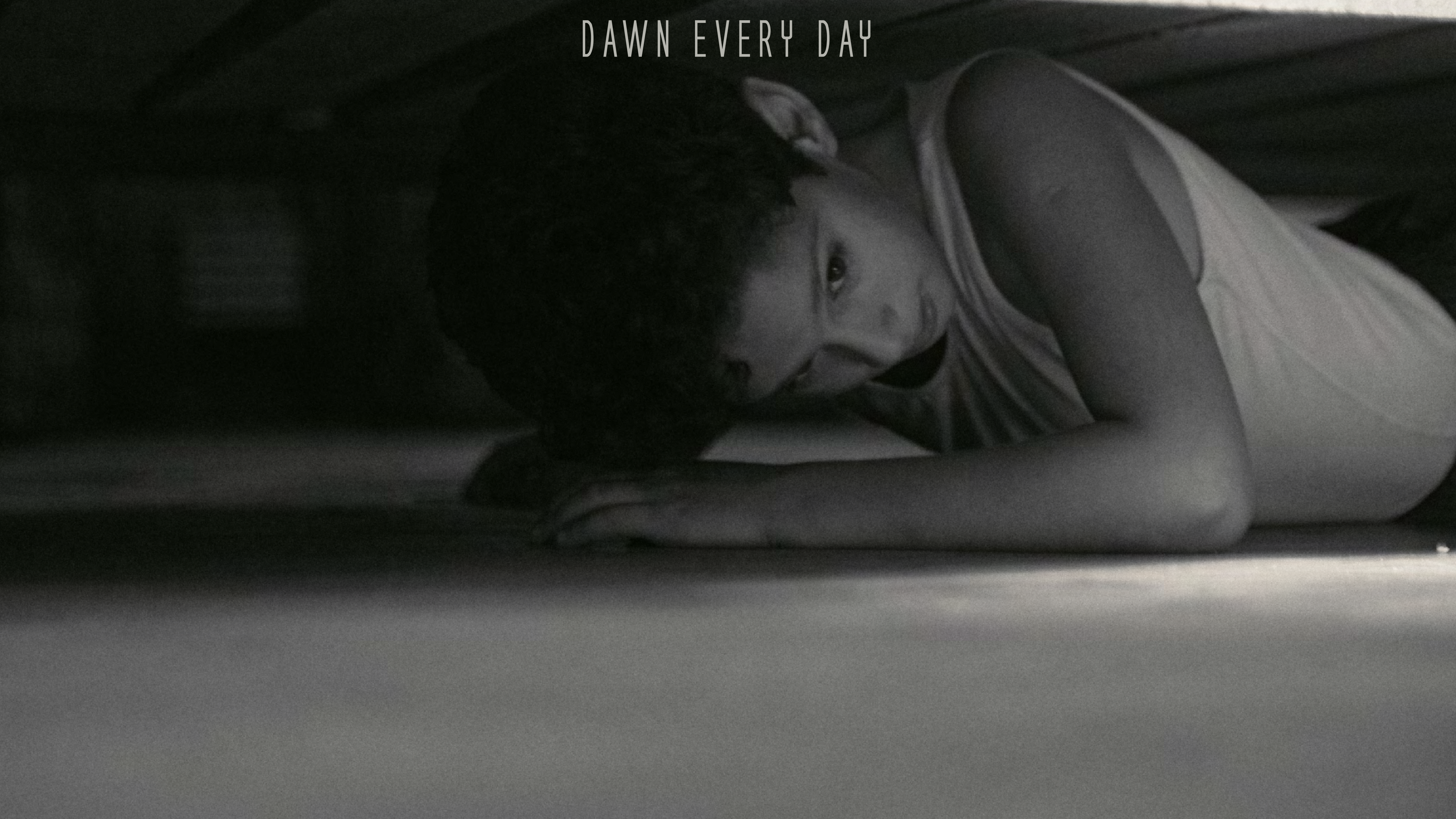
Specs

TRT: 20 min | Black & White | Digital | 1.33:1 | 1.85:1 | Stereo | 24 fps | Arabic





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# CHARACTERS



Nabil is an eight-year-old boy who grew up in a well-educated, Coptic family in Heliopolis Cairo. He is the youngest child of six siblings from his father Youssef and his mother Elein. Like most children in the 50's he enjoyed playing outdoors and wanted to roam freely without constraints, the one thing he hated the most is the cold shower, that his mother Elein gave him every morning. He spent most of his time playing marbles and skating, and shared these experiences with his first friend and next door neighbor Mireille. He has lived and viewed life through the child's gaze, until events unfold in this narrative.



Mireille is a 7-year-old girl who grew up in Heliopolis Cairo. She is the youngest of three daughters from her father Albeir and her mother Yola. In many ways her family shares many similarities with Nabil's. The same similarities most middle-class Egyptian families in Cairo shared during this era. As a young girl Mireille loved the outdoors, however the stairways were the farthest she could go. Her parents usually left the apartment door open and so did Nabil's, and it felt like they shared the space. As time passed her world view became unstable, as her family became directly impacted by the political unrest in Egypt in the 1950s..



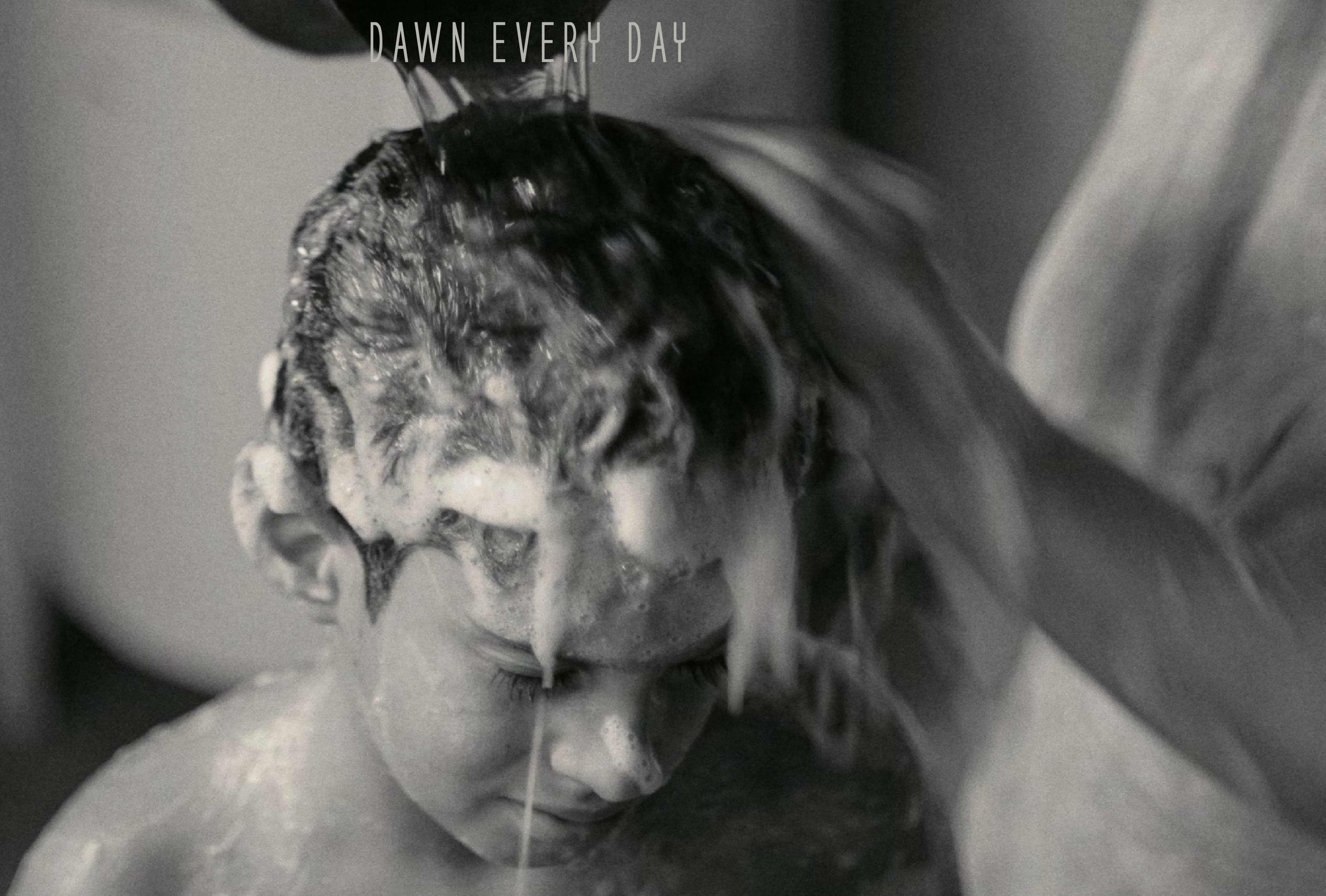
DAWN EVERY DAY

# FESTIVALS





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# DAWN EVERY DAY



## AMIR YOUSSEF

WRITER - DIRECTOR



@amirnyou



amirnyh@gmail.com

Amir is an Egyptian filmmaker based in San Francisco. He strives to create unconventional stories that echo unheard voices, while drawing inspiration from the extremely rich culture of his native Egypt. In his latest work, Amir focuses on themes of alienation and identity during periods of social and political chaos. He delves into topics of duality, where opposing ideas and emotions coexist, revealing the complexity and dissonance within the true self.

His latest short film 'Dawn Every Day' is currently on the festival circuit. It premiered at Galway Film Fleadh in Ireland and screened at BFI London Film Festival, Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival and Kustendorf Film Festival. It also won awards at El Gouna Film Festival, Urbanworld, Thomas Edison, and Martha's Vineyard International Film Festival.

Amir's previous short film 'The Laughing Woo Woo' screened at the 2023 Slamdance Film Festival. His directorial debut film The Initiation won Best Narrative Short Film at the 2020 Oakland International Film Festival and Best Director at the 2020 Oregon Short Film Festival.



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## NORAH ELKHATEEB

### PRODUCER

✉ [Norah.Khateeb@catsfilms.com](mailto:Norah.Khateeb@catsfilms.com)

Norah Elkhateeb is a seasoned film and television producer based in Cairo, boasting a remarkable 14-year track record in the industry. Her expertise spans high-budget TV commercials, films, documentaries, short films, and music videos. As the founder of CATS Films in Cairo and the Associate Producer of Famico Games, a Los Angeles-based video game company, Elkhateeb has carved a niche for herself in both the regional and international entertainment landscapes.

Elkhateeb's illustrious career includes collaborating with Egypt's and the Middle East's most decorated film and commercial directors. Notably, her inaugural docudrama film, "Girl Rising," earned a nomination for the 2014 News & Documentary Emmy. Helmed by Academy Award-nominated director Richard E. Robbins, the film featured the work of esteemed female writers and the voices of acclaimed actresses such as Meryl Streep, Kerry Washington, and Anne Hathaway.

An alumna of Raindance's Producers Foundation, Elkhateeb holds an MA in International Film Business from the London Film School/Exeter University, where she was honored with the Sawiris Foundation for Arts and Culture Scholarship. During her tenure in London, she gained valuable experience in sales and distribution, serving as the Acquisitions Manager's Assistant at Taskovski Films, one of London's premier distribution and sales companies for documentaries. Recently Elkhateeb was selected as one of the mentors for the short films pitch program by Elgouna film festival's CineGouna platform. Currently, "Dawn Every Day" (Short, Egypt, 2024) just premiered in Galway film fleadh 2024 and will be screening at BFI London Film Festival and Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival. And has projects in development, including "The Deer That Ran Away" (Feature, Egypt, 2026) and "YA & Niki" (Feature, Italy-Egypt-Lebanon, 2026), which was recently selected for Fid Marseille Lab.



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## EVAN WEIDENKELLER

### CINEMATOGRAPHER



@evan\_weid\_dp

Evan Weidenkeller, an esteemed award-winning cinematographer based in the vibrant city of Los Angeles. Evan's passion for capturing stunning visuals is evident through his extensive training, having studied Cinematography at San Francisco State University and obtaining his MFA in Cinematography from the distinguished American Film Institute Conservatory. His impressive body of work has been recognized and exhibited at some of the most prestigious film festivals worldwide, including Cannes, Palm Springs International, and TIFF. Evan's exceptional creative collaboration and ability to use light sensitively have made him a renowned figure in the industry, skillfully bringing a director's vision to life in a variety of commercial, documentary, and narrative works.



# DAWN EVERY DAY CAST



## SELIM MOSTAFA

ACTOR

Selim Mostafa is an Egyptian actor who began his career in TV commercials and made his acting debut at the age of seven in the series "Why Not." His performance resonated with many Egyptians, leading to his breakthrough into leading roles in high-production movies and series.



## CLEOPATRA

ACTRESS

Cleopatra had her first camera experience at dawn every day, gradually embracing the challenge of trying something new. Her natural on-screen presence emerged as she started performing, inspired by her growing friendship with Selim and the crew on set.



# DAWN EVERY DAY CAST



**SHAZA MOHARAM**

ACTRESS

Shaza Moharam is an award-winning Egyptian performer and filmmaker whose practice is rooted in the embodied female experience.

Her work has screened at various renowned festivals including TIFF, Berlinale, Cairo, Pia, and Marrakech. Her performance in “The trap,” Egypt’s sole entry in CANNES 2019, embodying a working-class woman in an abusive relation, was named as one of the best of the year. Her directorial debut “Ahlam,” a Pseudo-documentary depicting the political awakening of a stigmatised young woman, won Best Documentary from the Cuban Institute of the Arts and the Cinematic Industry.

She is a Berlinale Talent, a two-time Fulbright Award recipient, and a MAEC-AECID grantee. Her projects have garnered the support of the American Film Showcase, the Doha Film Institute, the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, the Goethe Institute, the Cultural Resource, the Cairo Film Connection, among others.



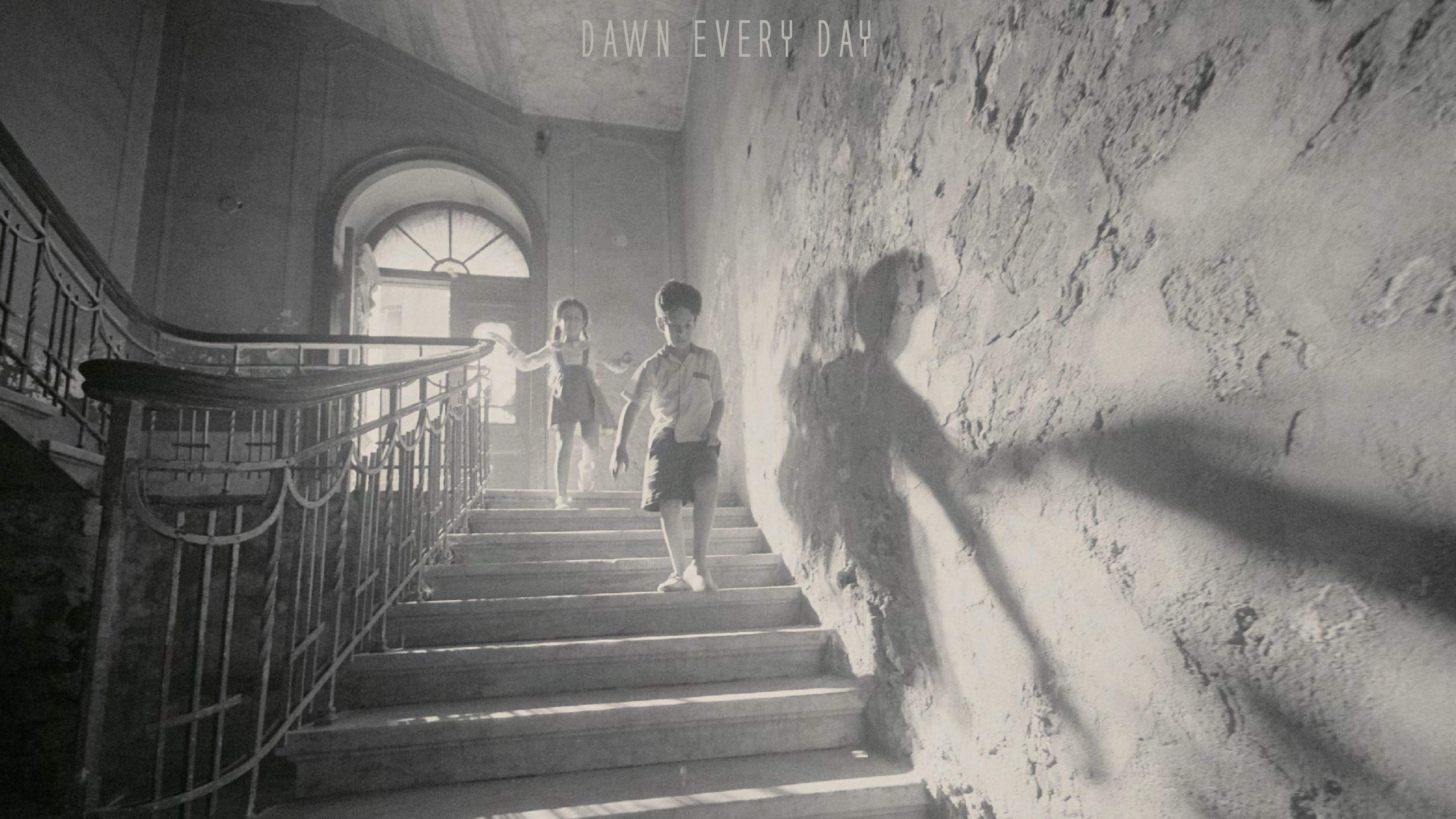
**MARWA AL SAWI**

ACTRESS

Marwa Al-Sawi has a deep love for writing, acting and all things theatre. She graduated with a minor in theatre in 1994 from American Univeristy in Cairo. Her latest appearance on stage was with ACT in "The Animal's Lawsuit." Her acting repertoire includes roles in recent short films, tv series and 2 feature films.



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## ASEM ALI PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Asem Ali is a production designer based in Cairo, Egypt. During his studies at the High Cinema Institute, Asem worked as an assistant art director. Shortly afterwards, he kick started his career independently as a production designer rubbing shoulders with several high-end creatives and directors, including Ali Ali and Maged Nasser in a multitude of award- winning commercials. These ads garnered the highest-ranking awards in the industry, including: the Dubai Lynx, Cannes Lions, ADFEST, and D&AD. He marked several milestones for international high-end brands, such as: Orange, Coca-Cola, Vodafone, Etisalat, WE, Juhayna, Molto, Danette, Pepsi, The American University in Cairo (AUC), Nescafé, Samsung, Pizza Hut, and City Edge.

In 2014, Asem designed the feature film "Harag we Marag" (Chaos & Disorder) by director Nadine Khan, which won the Special Jury Prize from the Dubai International Film Festival in the same year. In 2016, he designed Ahmad Abdalla's "Decor", which was selected for several national and international film festivals. The film landed world premiere at the BFI London Film Festival, and screened at the Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF), Carthage Film Festival (JCC), and Palm Springs International Film Festival in the USA. In 2019, he teamed up again with Abdalla in his controversial film Leil/Khargi (Exterior/Night), which toured the world over receiving several awards. The film had its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival, and screened at the Cairo International Film Festival Stockholm Film Festival, Marrakech Film Festival, Malmo Arab Film Festival, and Luxor African Film Festival.

Moreover, he collaborated with multiple high-profile directors such as Mariam Abou Ouf, Hossam Ali, and Nadine Khan along with Heba Yousry and Ayten Amin, on successful TV hits, namely: "Embrateyrt Meen?" (Whose Empire?) (2014), "30 Youm" (30 Days) (2017), and "Sabea' Gar" (Seventh Neighbor) (2017).

His recent works include director Ahmed El Gendy's "El Anesa Farah" (Miss Farah) (2019), the Arabic-speaking version of the award-winning American drama "Jane the Virgin". In 2020, Asem Ali reunited with Abo Ouf in the social drama "Leh La'?" (Why Not?).



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## NASHWA MAATOUK

### COSTUME DESIGNER

Nashwa Maatouk is an accomplished Egyptian costume designer and researcher specializing in the history of dress and textile. She holds a BA in Fine Arts from Helwan University, with a major in Set and Costume Design, and a Master's degree in Costume Design for Performance from the University of the Arts London.

Since 2015, Nashwa has been an active professional in the industry, collaborating on commercials with prominent directors such as Omar Zohairy, Majed Nassar, Hamba, and Doss and Shank. Her film credits include the short film "60 Geneh," directed by Amr Salama, which premiered as the opening film at GFF 2023. Prior to that, her work on the short film "The Last Dismissal," directed by Saudi filmmaker Jawaher El Amri, was featured at the Hollywood Shorts Film Festival 2023.

Currently, Nashwa is working on her first feature film, "Happy Birthday," with director Sarah Goher, as well as the TV series "Mataam El Habaib," directed by Essam Abdel Hamid and produced for the Shahid platform.



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**LOGAN HIGHLEN**  
COLORIST

 @LHighlen

Logan Highlen is an exceptional Colorist renowned for infusing each project with a distinctive creative flair and unwavering attention to detail. More recent contributions to his color portfolio include noteworthy projects such as 'American Crime Story: Impeachment', and the independent feature film 'Only the Good Survive.'

For Dawn Every Day, Logan was brought on by his close collaborator, DP Evan Weidenkeller, to get an early start on look development for the film and extended into the final DI and image mastering.



**MOATAZ ALQAMMARI**  
SOUND DESIGNER

Moataz AlQammari is a highly skilled film sound designer, editor, and sound mixer. With a passion for delivering exceptional audio experiences, Moataz has worked on numerous feature films, shorts, TV shows and documentaries, showcasing his expertise in sound design, dialogue editing, and mixing. His dedication to the craft led him to volunteer on independent film projects, supporting emerging filmmakers. Notably, Moataz's work as the sound designer and mixer for the 2020 Palme d'Or winning short film "I am not afraid to forget your face - Sixteen" stands as a testament to his exceptional talent and creativity.



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## HABIBA KHEDR

ASSOCIATE  
PRODUCER

Habiba Khedr is a passionate emerging filmmaker based in Cairo, renowned for her fresh perspective and compelling storytelling. Recently embarking on her filmmaking journey with Cats Films, Khedr is eager to make a significant impact in the industry. Khedr's filmography as an associate producer for Cats Films show cases an impressive array of projects. including "The Last Dismissal" (Saudi Arabia, 2023) which premiered at the Hollywood Film Festival in 2024. Another short film, "Dawn Every Day" (Egypt, 2024) which premiered at the Galway Film Fleadh in 2024 and will be screening at BFI London Film Festival and Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival.



## SALEM KHATTAR

MUSIC COMPOSER



@theheritagekeeper

Salem Khattar is a distinguished multi-instrumentalist Arab musician, skilled in playing the oud, nay, riqq, buzuq, and tabla. A passionate guardian of heritage, he composes Arabic music and imparts his knowledge through private lessons in both instrument performance and the intricate theory of maqam. Beyond his musical prowess, Salem is a skilled art and antique restorer, seamlessly blending tradition with artistry.



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH CHILD ACTORS?**

I loved it! They are both wonderful!

Even though it was challenging because of the complexity of their characters in the story, the key for me was to gain their trust and to really allow them to enjoy this experience freely, and naturally results fell into place.

### **WHAT WAS THE TOUGHEST THING YOU ENCOUNTERED WHILE MAKING THIS FILM?**

We started filming in Cairo and 200 miles away the devastating war on Gaza was breaking. A cyclic propagation of pain and loss was felt on our film set, echoing decades of hardship in the Middle East, as similarly witnessed by the young Characters in our film.

### **HOW WAS THE VISUAL LANGUAGE CRAFTED FOR THIS FILM?**

The visual language was crafted from Nabil's point of view and how he was internally evolving through the story.

Blocking, choice of lenses, lighting and the entire mise en scène was crafted with this intention.

We spent 6 months crafting every moment in preproduction, while not constraining ourselves with the preconceived ideas we had in mind on the day, by making modifications and allowing surprises to shape some moments on set.

### **WHAT CAMERA AND LENSES DID YOU SHOOT ON?**

We shot on Alexa 35 with mainly ARRI/Zeiss Ultra Prime 8R and Master Primes 12-16mm. We also worked with ARRI to create costume-built textures inspired by Kodak 5222 B&W.





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