

Director Biography

Aida Schlaepfer



Director Aida Schlaepfer was born in Baghdad to a Lebanese mother and an Iraqi father, and spent her childhood living between her parents' homelands. At age 20, she moved to Europe, where she studied German for several years before eventually settling in Switzerland. Always interested in film and the arts despite having been trained as an accountant, Aida earned a degree in Art and Media Design at F+F Schule für Kunst und Mediendesign in Zurich. In 2003, she relocated to Egypt to attend the High Cinema Institute at the prestigious Academy of Arts in Cairo, earning a post-graduate diploma in Film Directing. Aida has several films and advertising to her credit, including *Shadow Black and White* (2001) Video, *Silent Screening inside a Woman* (2002) Video, *East and West Dancing* (2003) Video, *Marionette* (2005) 35mm, educational film created in 2006 for the German School in Cairo, *Gangs of Baghdad* (2007) HD Doc., *Homeland* (2010) DVC Doc., "Ana Esmay Mwatn Masry" my name is Egyptian Citizens HD Egypt Doc (2011), *To be we also want to be* HD Swiss Doc. (2013), "Noun" Iraq Doc.(2015).

Marionette, in particular, received wide exposure and was screened at film festivals around the world, including Poland (2006), Houston (2006—Bronze Medal winner), Cairo (National Festival of Cinema; Saqeyat Al Sawee Cultural Center; French and Russian Cultural Centers, 2006; Independent Film Encounter IFE, 2007), France (2007), Berlin (2007) and Tunisia (2007). *Gangs of Baghdad* was featured at the 11th Annual Hollywood Film Festival and Hollywood Awards - ArcLight Cinemas in California, USA (2007), the Russian Cultural Center in Cairo (2008), the French Cultural Center in Cairo (2008), the Gulf Film Festival in Dubai (2008), Al-jazeera International Documentary Film Festival in Qatar (2008), and at the Horcynus Festival in Rome (2008). International Festival of Muslim cinema Golden Minbar Kazan (2008), My Name is Egyptian Citizen, HD Egypt Doc: Nominated for Best Short Film at the Al Jazeera International Film Festival 2012 for gold price.

NouN Won best Arab Film, Golden Medallion and special mention at the 9th Muscat Int. Film Festival 2016 and at Tangier Int. Film Festival Best Film "Golden cave" 2016. And was screen at several Festival over the world.

NouN was shown at servel TV: SRI Swiss Italian TV, LRT Lithuania, RTL Klub Hungary, suroyotv Sweden and Iraqi TV. At Cinema: Lugano at Cinema Iride, (Switzerland), Vienna at Cinema Bellaria, (Austria), GOSFILMOFOND, Cinema Filum and Illusion Cinema Moskau City Central (RUSSIA). Also at several University and conference over the world.

Festival programming:

- International Documentary Film Festival Baghdad 2012

Film curator:

- Hurghada Asian Film Festival 2012

- The 12th Moqavemat International Film Festival

Aida was on the jury in:

- "The Media School Film Festival" in Polen in 2005
 - "FIDADOC International Documentary Festival" in Agadir, Marokko, im November 2008
 - Festival du film arabe de Bruxelles 2009
 - The Third Jam-e-Jam TV Awards, International selection 2013
 - 1.Erbil International Film Festival 2014
 - President of the interreligious jury at Visions du Réel Nyon 2015
 - 31st Alexandria Film Festival for Mediterranean Countries
 - The 9th Muscat Int. Film Festival 2016
- She represented Iraq at the Festival of Creative Arab Women in Sousse, Tunisia, in 2010, where it on "The impact of modernity on creativity spoke of women in Arab film ".

Besides having their activities in film production, in 2013, she was the principal actress in the Film „Al Haj Nejim“ for the Director Amer Alwan. The movie win the „Prix de Meilleur film au 20ème EDITION du - Festival International du Cinéma d'auteur de Rabat 2014“.

Member of:

- Professional Association of Swiss and European filmmakers
- Professional Association of Egyptian filmmakers
- Professional Association of Iraqi filmmakers

In addition, her paintings have been exhibited throughout Lebanon, Switzerland, Czech Republic and Egypt. Besides her activities as a director and artist, she works in a production company and is the founder and president of the International Arab Film Festival Zurich. Aida credits her personal experience of having watched Lebanon and Iraq descend into war and anarchy with instilling within her a deep understanding of how destructive war is—both physically and psychologically. This understanding and personal experience with war motivated Aida to complete a one-year professional training in mediation in Zurich; it was also the impetus behind the creation of Gangs of Baghdad. More than anything, Aida hopes to bring global attention to the plight of the vulnerable and galvanize action for change with her films.