

NEONFILMS



BRIDES

DIRECTED BY
NADIA FALL

WRITTEN BY
SUHAYLA EL-BUSHRA

Starring:
Ebada Hassan
Safiyya Ingar

FINAL
15th January 2025

CONTACT:

RUNNING TIME: 93 mins

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LOGLINE

Two teenage girls in search of freedom, friendship, and belonging run away from their lives in the UK with a dangerous plan of travelling to Syria.

SYNOPSIS

Teenage best friends Doe and Muna are going on the trip of a lifetime. Quiet, watchful Doe hasn't travelled since arriving in the UK as a refugee from Somalia at the age of three. Badass Muna of Pakistani heritage, is the dominant force, leading Doe through airport security. The girls are giddy; excited about their adventure, but as the flight is announced their mood changes. They are not going on holiday, but to Istanbul, to be met by a stranger who will take them to the border to start a new life in Syria. Disaster strikes when their fixer doesn't show up, but there's no turning back now. Doe and Muna hastily forge a new plan to continue their journey alone; testing their resolve, their faith and their friendship. As we find out more about the experiences that have led them to this point, the girls get closer to the reality of what lies ahead.

ABOUT THE FILM

BRIDES is a road movie about the intensity of female friendship and the mistakes we make as teenagers. It is the debut feature from acclaimed theatre director and 2023 Screen Star of Tomorrow Nadia Fall (BUSH, NO MASKS) and screenwriter Suhayla El-Bushra (ACKLEY BRIDGE, BECOMING ELIZABETH). The film stars newcomer Ebada Hassan and Safiyya Ingar (LAYLA, THE WITCHER) as two teenage girls in 2014, both in search of freedom, friendship and belonging, who run away from their troubled lives in a seaside town with a dangerous plan of travelling to Syria. On their road trip, we learn about the lives they are leaving behind, as they come to understand the reality of where they are headed.

The duo were cast after an extensive open casting process led by casting director Shaheen Baig (SCRAPPER, AFTER LOVE).

The film is a UK/ITALY co-production and is supported by the BFI and Ffilm Cymru Wales, both awarding National Lottery funding, and the Welsh Government via Creative Wales, Great Point Media, the Italian Ministry of Culture (MiC) Minority Co-production Fund, Friuli Venezia Giulia Audiovisual Regional Fund in collaboration with Rai Cinema

and with Bankside Films handling international sales. It was developed with the BFI and won the Breaking Through The Lens Action Grant in 2023, sponsored by Chopard.

Oscar-nominated producer Nicky Bentham (THE DUKE, MOON) of London-based Neon Films produced the film and developed it with El-Bushra and Fall from concept stage. Prior to production, she partnered with producer Marica Stocchi (THE MACALUSO SISTERS, READING LOLITA IN TEHRAN) of Udine-based Rosamont to mount the film as an official UK/ITALY co-production. Catryn Ramasut and Alice Lusher of Cardiff-based ie ie productions (LOLA, AMERICAN INTERIOR) are co-producers.

Fall, whose screen work includes NO MASKS for Sky Arts, BUSH for Film4, and ALAN BENNETT'S TALKING HEADS for BBC, is the incoming artistic director of the prestigious London theatre, The Young Vic.

Fall's cinematic vision for BRIDES is an intimate study of teenage friendship. A road movie that sees our protagonists unfurl, experiencing an expansive landscape and culture a million miles from their stifling, dead-end hometown, both small and small-minded.

Crossing Turkey, the girls witness different types of Muslim identities, stirring up questions within them about who they are as their vivid daydreams slide into flashbacks in colder tones, of the world they have left behind. The journey brings joy and freedom but is also fraught with danger. We see infinite vistas; big skies, arid landscapes, intense light. We are enveloped in the sounds of a bustling city, the call to prayer, the eerie quiet of a city at dawn, a tinny car radio. Here they are anonymous, and everything seems possible.

Joyful and bustling scenes as the girls are invited to stay with a local family: women of all ages eating and singing, headscarves removed. But as suspicion builds around them, the mood shifts. Way out of their depth, we see shadowy, twisting streets of the mediaeval town, deserted bus garages. Far from any tourist trail now, they hide in clandestine corners, the feeling of being watched. Their romantic idealism fast evaporating, they're not safe and we will them to turn back.

For Fall, the aim of BRIDES, like much of her theatre work, is to tell "the stories of young people from their perspective, especially those on the margins that seem to be written off by society, outsiders in some way."

WHY THIS STORY AND WHY NOW?

Our teens - a time of unparalleled intensity when the pendulum swings from utter heartache, crippling embarrassment and loneliness, to the euphoria of die-hard friendships and thrilling risk-taking. Neurobiologist Dr Andrew Curran describes adolescence as a 'pre-programmed neurological event' where dopamine floods our brain actively making us take high-risk decisions with poor judgement. Nature's critical goal, to make us break free of our dependence on our parents through a process of trial and error, and somehow turn us into 'successful' adults. Fall explains; "those heady and electric teenage years fascinate me, when love and loss are felt so damned deeply and our brains are literally hard wired to make impulsive and dangerous decisions, consequences be damned. It's a wonder any of us survive our youth!"

Upon hearing of the real-life case of the young women from East London that left school one day to make a fateful journey across Europe to Syria to join ISIS, Fall saw that "there was no attempt to understand them" and that these young girls were "vilified in the British press as outright monsters". On DOE and MUNA's journey within the film, Fall notes that audiences meet them as "young Muslim girls in a community that doesn't understand or support them; they feel like outsiders in the place they are meant to call home". More than anything, the girls are desperate to find somewhere to belong and so embark on, not just a road trip to supposed salvation, but ultimately a journey of their own self-discovery.

For screenwriter El-Bushra, a key motivator for writing the script was to tackle the widespread misrepresentation of young Muslim women within the media, with El-Bushra noting that the swathe of girls who fled the west for Syria were "either painted as innocent victims of trafficking or evil terrorists who want to destroy the west". She didn't think the reality was quite so simplistic. El-Bushra's aim in writing BRIDES was therefore to "really get under the skin of some of those reasons, the push and pull factors of why two teenage girls would make such a drastic decision." At its heart, the film is "an exploration of female friendship, especially teenage female friendship, and the intensity of that, as much as it is a look at radicalisation of teens."

The filmmakers do not propose to posit simplistic or reductive answers about why some young women chose to travel to Syria. Instead the film examines the challenges, hopes and dreams of its young protagonists. There remains a warmth and humour in their friendships alongside the vulnerability and naivety that comes with their misguided quest. Our story seeks neither to demonise nor act as apologists but to see these young women for who they are. "As much as some of British society might want to deny them, the fact is they remain all of our daughters" Fall states.

The film is set a decade ago in 2014, at the precipice of the rise of ISIS. But many of its themes resonate widely today. The horror of war and conflict on a world stage via the “pain-on-loop” of social media has now become a mainstay of international conflicts. Through our protagonists, we dig deeper into the consequences of this, specifically on young people. With the real girls that fled the UK and other countries for ISIS, El-Bushra was struck by the “normality” of these girls, “especially on their social media”, the very place where they were groomed and recruited. Fall remarks, “though BRIDES is technically a period piece (set in 2014), the conflicts and wars gripping our planet by the throat have only spread and grown today. And the pain, suffering and horror is being live streamed to our phones all day every day and of course young people are consuming this too. I feel it is imperative for us to congregate in this moment of division and tell and share a range of stories, especially nuanced and complex ones which include those from a Muslim diaspora. We need these narratives right now, told with light and shade, to remember we have more in common than we have differences”

El-Bushra continues: “These girls were, more than anything else, human – certainly not evil, definitely not stupid. It made me wonder what we, as a society, are doing to fail these young women – how have we managed to alienate them to such an extent that they would willingly give up their families, homes and lives?”

Fall’s hope for the impact of the film is that “people take away the human story of why young people make the decisions they do, how impulsive it can be sometimes, or how there’s as much a push as there is a pull to something”. Bentham adds, “I hope that audiences get a different perspective on a story they think they know. I hope that they consider that we all have a collective responsibility to young people in our society. We all have a role to play to make them feel seen and heard”, concluding that “a lot of them were minors when they made those terrible decisions and we can’t wash our hands of them, no matter how bad the decisions they made might be”.

Fall adds: “I do think all storytelling is about evoking the act of empathy and I really do think of empathy as a muscle we all need to exercise to feel more connected to each other and ultimately less alone. I think watching film and theatre is like going to a mind gym, to practise empathy and build it. It’s certainly why I tell stories and why I wanted to tell this one, so that the audience could recognise these girls: that they could be your niece, sister, daughter, best friend and not just ‘the radicalised other’ out there somewhere.” Fall also hopes that the film “survives as a tender study of teenage friendship, reminiscent of those deep platonic love stories of adolescence, where we would die for our best friends. I hope it serves as an allegory, asking what happens to young people when they are othered and don’t feel like they belong?”

Beyond the film serving to provoke questions, conversations and an emotional tug for global audiences who might not have otherwise considered this story and this perspective, Fall also notes the importance of having a film led by “teenage protagonists that looked like me and my friends” in reaching “young audiences and especially those from the global majority.”

Fall continues; “As a British South Asian woman of Muslim heritage, I often avoided telling stories from my community, for fear of being pigeon-holed, or getting it wrong, causing offence or even becoming the target of racism. But today what scares me spurs me on and this is a story that absolutely needs to be told - and it is our story to tell.”

PRODUCTION STORY

Writer, El-Bushra, and Director, Fall, first met whilst both working at the National Theatre in London in 2016, when the pair collaborated on an adaptation of Nikolai Erdman’s “The Suicide”, which was staged at the venue’s Lyttleton Theatre. Shortly after, they teamed up with Producer Bentham to create the original Film4 backed short film, BUSH, starring Kassius Nelson, about a 17-year old girl navigating the trials of love, friendship, and bikini waxes. This humorous but heartfelt short cemented an enduring collaboration between the three, and paved the way for BRIDES.

El-Bushra recalls “I wanted to tell this story because I felt increasingly frustrated by the lack of well rounded female Muslim characters that we see on our screens. Muslim women are just not understood. Before I became a writer I worked in a community centre in Brighton with vulnerable young people. The area is not very diverse and I saw those people pushed to the outskirts of town and ignored. I felt compelled to tell their stories, because we don’t normally hear them”.

She adds “I’ve long been interested in the subject of teenage girls, their pent-up frustration and simmering dissatisfaction is often explored in my work”. When she saw a BBC documentary on Jihadi brides she was both fascinated and saddened. At that time, three teenage schoolgirls from London had just left home, heading for Syria, and the story was very much in the headlines.

El-Bushra and Fall were struck by the normality of the young women featured, especially on their social media feeds – often funny and giddy, like any teenage girl. El-Bushra researched many of the stories extensively and was particularly interested in Umm Layth, a Glaswegian teenager who blogged about her increasing radicalization before travelling to Syria and sending advice to potential converts. She was well

educated and intelligent. Of course what she was condoning was abhorrent, but we couldn't help but be struck by her articulacy.

She also interviewed Gina Vale, a research fellow at The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR), Kings College, London to understand more about the backgrounds of these young women, as well as the myriad factors that led them to their fate.

For El-Bushra, it was therefore important that the script mirrored the “humour, warmth and complexity” of the girls behind the headlines. The filmmakers didn't want to provide any simplistic answers, but to take the audience on a journey before hitting them with a powerful message.

Fall's background is in participatory theatre, having worked extensively with young people in various non-theatre settings, including psychiatric wards, Pupil Referral Units, youth offending sites and hostels. These experiences inspired and informed some of her most important work. “What struck me then and has stayed with me since, is no matter how traumatic or challenging the lives of these young people were, when they shared their personal stories with me they were never plaintive. Even in the bleakest of times, they harboured hopes for a better future. And that is the absolute super power of youth. As an artist I want to grapple with the painful and darker sides of humanity but I'm not interested in pain-porn, BRIDES is told from the perspective of young women, and with that comes the key ingredient in my work - redemption”.

The making of the film itself has very much been an international collaboration, from shooting in three different countries (UK, Turkey and Italy), to co-producing with Italian production company Rosamont, and Welsh production company ie ie productions. As a first time feature director, Fall notes that her experience has been “quite a baptism by fire, but a great adventure!”, who throughout the filmmaking process held onto the story and ultimately the “why” of telling it, recognising that it's a story that is “bigger” than herself. As primarily a theatre director, Fall also held onto working with her young actors. For Fall, it's all about creating that “authentic performance” through a rehearsal process she describes as “crucial” and “precious”. Shooting in three different countries allowed Fall to “think outside of our norm and outside the box” through her collaborations with each local crew, allowing her an access to “different cultures, different processes” that she otherwise would not have encountered, ultimately creating a richness to the filmmaking process for Fall. “It's a truly international film, and a truly collaborative film, and I think the most rich work comes from that exchange with other cultures and other people, quite frankly, and that's what making art is about”, Fall concludes.

For producer Bentham, the co-production route was both a creative fit but also a financial imperative, in the wake of “such seismic shifts in the way independent films are being financed” in a post-Brexit UK, but also because “to make a film like BRIDES, with authenticity, grit and heart, it really takes a village”. Her participation in the ACE programme in 2021 led her to meeting Italian producer Marica Stocchi of Rosamont. Co-production allowed for a “deeper and incredibly fruitful collaboration between producers and between cultures. We all gave a lot to make it happen but we got so much in return”. Marica Stocchi adds “I loved working with the BRIDES team and Nicky moreover. It is my first co-production with the UK and I know it has been successful because we built a great dialogue and trust between teams and the countries. It is a real joy when a project that is so beloved and well nurtured by those around it gets the attention we all agree it deserves”.

CHARACTERS

Doe

Newcomer Ebada Hassan plays Doe, a 15-year old Muslim girl, struggling with the racism and harassment she faces in her hometown whilst being subjected to a stream of devastating war footage and a heady mix of radical indoctrination online. We come to learn that Doe and her mother, Khadija (Yusra Warsama), came over to the UK from Somalia when Doe was only 3-years old, after the death of her father. The arrival of Khadija’s boyfriend, Jon (Leo Bill), into their lives ignites tensions and unease in their household. Whilst school and home are tough, Doe seeks solace at the local mosque, where she meets Samir (Ali Khan), a striking young man with strong principles and good humour. As an attraction blossoms between the two, Doe also grows closer to her faith.

Hassan describes Doe as “vulnerable” and “looking to escape” her home life through this journey.

Muna

Safiyya Ingar’s Muna is the tough and sassy counterpart to Doe’s sweet and gentle nature. Muna was born in the UK and that’s the only life she’s ever known, but she is from a traditional Muslim Pakistani family. She puts on a tough front, but she is also struggling with the casual and overt racism she faces on a daily basis. At home she’s frustrated by her passive mum, and terrified of her brother, who has been the patriarch of the house since her father left them. Muna is often the victim of his violent outbursts. As a result, Muna is liable to lash out, and can become enraged at the drop of a hat, sometimes leading her to aggressive and violent behaviour too.

Speaking about Muna, Ingar says: “She has the tenacity, the street wisdom; she’s clever and funny and can charm her way through situations”.

LOCATIONS

BRIDES was shot on location across three different countries: the UK, Turkey and Italy.

For the UK portion, we wanted an anonymous seaside town as we wanted to convey the idea that these two girls were living in a dead-end town, but it wasn’t a specific place that pushed them away, it really could happen anywhere. We shot the UK section in Wales, predominantly around Cardiff and the south Wales area, which provided us with an abundance of beautiful British coastlines. A core team of HoDs and our two leads then travelled to Istanbul, Turkey. Met by a local crew, we shot for five days, predominantly in the heart of the bustling city.

Once the two protagonists leave Istanbul, they travel by road across Turkey to the Syrian border. For this section we travelled to Sicily, which served as a great double for rural Turkey.

As producer Bentham explains, “it’s been a huge challenge to shoot this film in three countries. It can be gruelling for a relatively small production to be spread thinly across the globe. But we were agile and covered a lot of ground. We managed to get so much exciting material on screen and it’s also been a huge privilege working with such fantastic international teams, it’s added to the production value hugely”. Bentham continues: “all of that alchemy of all the different countries and everything that we’ve picked up and learnt along the way, I think that all that colour and radiance is evident on screen, it was certainly a very vibrant filmmaking process.”

ABOUT THE CAST

Ebada Hassan - DOE

Newcomer Ebada Hassan hails from South London. She was cast in BRIDES following several rounds of workshops and auditions after having responded to an open casting call on social media that was posted by celebrated casting director Shaheen Baig. Shooting BRIDES offered Hassan her first opportunity to travel for work, which she did whilst juggling her studies. Following the shoot, she returned to University and recently graduated from King's College London with a BA in Global Health and Social Medicine.

Since completing her studies and wrapping on BRIDES, Ebada has been honing her craft at Collective Acting Studios and is now pursuing acting as a career.

As Fall notes, for Hassan, “this is not just her first time in front of a camera but her first time acting full stop; she hadn’t so much as attended a drama club at school.”

Therefore, as a first time actor, and a first time feature director, Fall’s process with Hassan was to use improvisation and other drama exercises and techniques as a way into her character’s world and psyche. By building in rehearsal times at each stage of the filming journey, Fall utilised her extensive theatre experience to work closely with her young actors, whilst also allowing Hassan to bond with fellow actor Safiyya Ingar who plays Muna.

Safiyya Ingar - MUNA

Safiyya Ingar is a British actor, voiceover artist, and writer. They have appeared in hit shows such as THE WITCHER and SUMMER OF ROCKETS alongside indie features including LAYLA which premiered at Sundance in 2024. Ingar was born to an Indian Muslim family and brought up in an East London flat with six siblings. She attended Leyton Sixth Form College and went on to study at Arts Educational School.

In addition to her screen work, Ingar has appeared on stage at the Unicorn Theatre, Nottingham Playhouse and Manchester Royal Exchange. She has also voiced several video games and audio books, including as Dr Who’s companion, Valarie Lockwood, in the *The Eleventh Doctor Chronicles* series.

Supporting Roles & Ensemble

Alongside our leads, BRIDES is host to a number of incredible supporting cast members and a wildly talented ensemble including:

Leo Bill - Jon (FUNNY WOMAN, BECOMING ELIZABETH, WAR OF THE WORLDS),

Arthur Darvill - Mr Hansard (DOCTOR WHO, BROADCHURCH, DC’S LEGENDS OF TOMORROW),

Sinead Matthews - Ms Jenner (HULLRAISERS, THINGS YOU SHOULD HAVE DONE, CHEWING GUM),

Yusra Warsama - Khadija (DELIVER ME, THE GALLOWS POLE, CASTLE ROCK),

Ali Khan - Samir (EVERYONE ELSE BURNS, SHOWTRIAL, A HAUNTING IN VENICE),

Cemre Ebuuziyya - Zeynep (A TALE OF THREE SISTERS, IF YOU LOVE, MAGARSUS),

Aziz Capkurt - Baris (DIRTY ANGELS, INFORMANT, RUNAWAY),

Derya Durmaz - Zeynep's Mum (DO NOT FORGET ME ISTANBUL, THE BLUE WAVE, LOVE AND REVOLUTION).

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Led by a predominantly female team, BRIDES was a collaboration between the UK (England & Wales), Italy and Turkey.

Director - Nadia Fall

Nadia Fall is the new Artistic Director of the Young Vic theatre in London. She was formerly Artistic Director and CEO of Theatre Royal Stratford East, and was an associate director at the National Theatre from 2015 to 2018. Prior to this she spent many years as assistant and protégé of acclaimed theatre and film director, Sir Nicholas Hytner. Her work includes a critically acclaimed production of Mike Leigh's cult classic *Abigail's Party*, August Wilson's *King Hedley II* and *The Village* at Stratford East; *Three Sisters* (in a new version by Inua Ellams), *Home* (also as writer), *The Suicide*, *Our Country's Good*, *Dara*, *Chewing Gum Dreams* (created by Michaela Coel), *Hymn* and *The Doctor's Dilemma* at the National; *Talking Heads* at The Bridge; *Hir* and *Disgraced* at Bush; *Way Upstream* at Chichester; *Hobson's Choice* at Regent's Park Open Air Theatre; and *The Maids* and *Oliver Twist* at the Lyric Hammersmith. In 2018 she completed her debut short film, BUSH, with Neon Films and Film4. In 2020 she filmed NO MASKS, a Sky original drama based on the stories of key workers from the community and their fight against the coronavirus, starring Russell Tovey, Anya Chalotra and Eamonn Walker. Fall also filmed her production of Alan Bennett's TALKING HEADS (THE OUTSIDE DOG), for BBC One, starring Rochenda Sandall. In 2020, Fall was named as a Sky Arts ambassador in 2020 and included as a Screen Star of Tomorrow in 2023. BRIDES is Nadia's debut feature film.

Writer - Suhayla El-Bushra

Suhayla El-Bushra is a screenwriter and playwright. She has written for TV drama series HOLLYOAKS, BECOMING ELIZABETH and was a lead writer and executive producer on ACKLEY BRIDGE (C4/The Forge). She is currently working with Avalon Productions on a book adaptation, as well as developing an original series with The Forge. Suhayla was writer in residence at the National Theatre where her adaptation of Nikolai Erdman's *The Suicide* was staged in the Lyttelton. Other plays include *Pigeons* at The Royal Court, *The Long Song* at Chichester Festival Theatre, *The NW Trilogy* at The Kiln and a musical adaptation of Roald Dahl's *The Enormous Crocodile* at Regents Park Open Air Theatre. Her short film BUSH was made by Film4/Neon Films, and she was selected for BAFTA Elevate in 2018. BRIDES is Suhayla's debut feature film.

Producer - Nicky Bentham

Nicky Bentham is an Oscar-nominated film producer and founder of London-based Neon Films. The company develops and produces untold stories from the margins, bringing them into the mainstream spotlight for international audiences. Last year she produced the thriller LOCKED IN with Gaumont UK and Netflix, directed by Nour Wazzi, which was the global number 1 on the platform for multiple weeks. She was Oscar-nominated in 2024 for the short film THE AFTER, directed by photographer Misan Harriman, starring David Oyelowo and financed by Netflix. Previous producing credits include THE DUKE starring Jim Broadbent and Helen Mirren directed by Roger Michell, and the multi-award winning MOON. Nicky sits on the board of Pact and is co-chair of Pact's Film Producers' Group. She is a voting member of BAFTA and co-founder of the non-profit organisation Raising Films.

Producer - Marica Stocchi

Marica Stocchi is the main producer at Rosamont, an Italian production company founded in 2018. Marica is a 2019 EAVE and 2021 ACE graduate. In 2021, she won the Silver Ribbon for Best Producer for THE MACALUSO SISTERS directed by Emma Dante. She was also selected by Producers On The Move and invited to join EFA. In 2022, she was appointed a member of the ACE board. Over the past few years, Rosamont has produced 11 films, including 9 international co-productions, which have premiered at festivals such as Cannes, Venice, and Tribeca. The Macaluso Sisters competed in the 77th Venice International Film Festival (winner of 5 Silver Ribbons: Best Film, Best Director, Best Production, Best Sound, Best Editing) and Misericordia, the third feature film by Emma Dante, won the Grand Prix at the 27th Tallinn Black Nights FF. "Here we are" by Nir Bergman, Cannes Official Selection; "Oceans Are the Real Continents," Tommaso Santambrogio's first feature, in co-production with the Cuban Cacha Film, in competition at Venice Days of the 80th Venice International FF; "Reading Lolita in Tehran" from Azar Nafisi's bestseller, directed by Eran Riklis, starring Golshifteh Farahani, winner of the Critic Award at the Rome Film Festival 2024.

Furthermore, her first TV series for Rai Fiction, “Stucky”, has just been broadcast successfully on Rai2.

Co-Producer - Catryn Ramasut

An innovative producer with a distinctive vision for connecting music, film and digital media, Catryn Ramasut has built a reputation for pioneering cross-platform content. Partnering with musician Gruff Rhys, their company ie ie productions launched with SEPARADO! (2010), winning the CPH:DOX Sound and Vision award. Their groundbreaking AMERICAN INTERIOR (2014) premiered at SXSW, bringing together over 30 international partners across music, publishing, film and digital. After QUEERAMA (2017) opened Sheffield Doc/Fest, her acclaimed documentary ROCKFIELD: THE STUDIO ON THE FARM (2020) charted the story of the legendary Welsh recording studio that launched countless rock careers, from Black Sabbath and Queen to Oasis and Coldplay. Moving into narrative features co-producing LOLA (2023) and BRIDES (2024), she also served as Chair of Creative Wales, Welsh Government's creative industries agency, before taking up her current role as Director of Arts for Arts Council of Wales, where she continues to drive transformation and cultural advancement across film and the wider creative sectors.

Co-Producer - Alice Lusher

Producer Alice Lusher founded ie ie productions' award-winning drama arm in 2015 and now leads all company activity with a focus on international co-production and supporting underrepresented talent and stories. Alice specialises in exploring innovative and bespoke approaches to developing and producing independent film and television for mainstream global audiences. Alice is an alumni of Filmonomics, BFI.Network@Iff, BFI Insight, Rotterdam Producers Lab and LIM. She was also Associate Producer on C4/Clerkenwell drama TRUE LOVE via the Screen Skills HETV Co-producer scheme. Recent credits include: bilingual, multi-award nominated drama series MERCHED PARCHUS (RESPECTABLE GIRLS), BAFTA Cymru nominated short films; ELEN, I CHOOSE, FOREST COAL PIT and feature co-productions; LOLA (Wales/Ireland) released 2022 and BRIDES (UK/Italy) which will premiere in the world dramatic competition at Sundance 2025.

Director of Photography - Clarissa Cappellani

Clarissa Cappellani is an Italian director of photography. In 2024 she was nominated for the Silver Ribbon (the oldest Italian cinema award) with the movie MISERICORDIA (Best Film Award at Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival 2023), written and directed by Emma Dante. In 2019 she shot LAST WORDS (Cannes Film Festival – official selection 2020) by Jonathan Nossiter: a futurist movie starring Nick Nolte, Stellan Skarsgård and Charlotte Rampling. Her first feature film was Salvo Cuccia's debut movie HIDDEN

IDENTITY (33rd TFF Torino Film Festival 2017 - official competition, Prix Special du Jury at the Annecy Film Festival 2017). Cappellani has also lensed a wide range of documentaries: from the political doc DRAQUILA – ITALY TREMBLES by Sabina Guzzanti (Cannes Film Festival - official selection 2010) to art documentaries, including SALVATORE: SHOEMAKER OF DREAMS by Oscar nominated director Luca Guadagnino (Venice Film Festival - official selection 2020).

Casting Director - Shaheen Baig

Working across film and television Shaheen has cast award winning work with new and established directors. Film work includes multi nominated and award winning features AFTER LOVE, MOGUL MOWGLI, ALI & AVA, CALM WITH HORSES, LADY MACBETH and debut features from Georgia Oakley, BLUE JEAN, Mahalia Belo, THE END WE START FROM, and Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner SCRAPPER. Upcoming features include ANEMONE starring Daniel Day Lewis, THE THING WITH FEATHERS and Harris Dickinson's directorial debut. Shaheen is a member of BAFTA, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the Casting Directors Guild of Great Britain & Ireland. In 2023 Shaheen was awarded the Baird Medal by Royal Television Society for her contribution to screen.

Editor - Fiona DeSouza

Fiona DeSouza most recently cut BRIDES directed by Nadia Fall for Neon and BFI. Prior to this she cut LOCKED IN, a psychological thriller following an ordinary woman driven to murder, directed by Nour Wazzi and acquired by Netflix. Fiona also edited the BBC series GREAT EXPECTATIONS directed by Brady Hood and Samira Radsj, starring Academy Award winner Olivia Colman. In recent years, Fiona's credits include the Amazon series HANNA directed by Weronika Tofiliska, KINDRED directed by Joe Marcantonio and starring Jack Lowden, LOCKWOOD AND CO. directed by Joe Cornish, and the third season of Netflix's TOP BOY.

Hair & Make Up Designer - Tamara Ramsey Crockett

Tamara Ramsey Crockett is an experienced and ambitious award winning make-up artist and hair stylist working in Film and TV, Fashion/Editorial, Music Videos, and Runway. Some of her credits and clients include personal for Dame Kelly Holmes for BBC's coverage of the Paris Olympics, personal for Tati Gabrielle on Netflix's YOU, personal to AJ McLean for new series BUILDING THE BRAND, Hair & Make Up Designer for BBC's GRIME KIDS, amongst many others. Tamara also works as part of the resident education team for Bobbi Brown and travels the UK doing press, events and training for the brand.

Composer - Alex Baranowski

Alex Baranowski is a multi award-winning composer and graduate of Paul McCartney's LIPA based in London. 2023 saw Alex co-score Daniel Kaluuya's debut feature, *THE KITCHEN*, alongside *Labrinth*, which premiered at LFF, as well as Gaumont/Netflix film *LOCKED IN* and *THE TEACHER*. In 2024 Alex scored *MIDAS MAN*. Other film scores include the twice BAFTA nominated feature *MCCULLIN* (Curzon), *NUREYEV* (Universal Film), *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* (2020) starring Carey Mulligan and Andy Serkis, Warner Bros' *THE WINDERMERE CHILDREN* (2020) and Alcove Entertainment's critically acclaimed *A GAZA WEEKEND*. Alex also notably scored Gillian Anderson's directorial debut, *THE DEPARTURE*; HBO series *RAIN DOGS* and BBC's *STAGED* starring David Tennant and Michael Sheen. In 2021 he won the Les Arcs award for Harry Wootliff's acclaimed *TRUE THINGS* starring Ruth Wilson. Nominated for a Tony Award for *The Cripple of Inishmaan* on Broadway, Alex has composed music for several theatre productions; working with directors including Danny Boyle, Sir Nicholas Hytner and Rupert Goold. In 2016 Alex scored Wes Anderson's *COME TOGETHER* film for H&M.

Production Designer - Gem Randall

Gem made their breakthrough in Production Design in 2016 with Amazon Prime's limited series *THE COLLECTION*, a period piece set in post WW2 Paris. This role instilled in them a drive and passion for depicting character detail and storytelling through design. In 2023 they designed Sarah Phelps' five-time Bafta nominated BBC drama *THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT*, creating a seamlessly complete world in which these tragic murders could be recreated. Despite the rapid pace of their career, Gem remains committed to pushing the boundaries of narrative design. Their work is characterised by a fearless adaptability plus a constant pursuit of aesthetic quality, making them one of the most exciting new designers in the industry.

Costume Designer - Zoe Howerska

Coming from a northern working-class single parent family, challenging the odds is in Zoe's DNA. She trained in promos and features, working for years in various formats and mediums. Zoe created the world of *BANG*, the Bafta winning show for S4C and BBC. This being Zoe's first UK broadcast show, she was then nominated for Best Costume Design. Zoe then worked with Sarah Lancashire, Joanna Scanlan and Sidse Babbett Knudsen on Jack Thorne's *THE ACCIDENT* focusing on the narratives of class division in 21st Century Britain. Post pandemic, she has focused her design work on challenging and diverting the patriarchal centric narratives present within drama. Zoe worked on the award-winning menopause series *THE CHANGE* for Channel 4 in 2022, written and starring Bridget Christie. Zoe's distinct and thorough process has developed over the years and it's a passion for portraying truth away from the mainstream that runs deep.

CAST

DOE	Ebada Hassan
MUNA	Safiyya Ingar
JON	Leo Bill
MR HANSARD	Arthur Darvill
MS JENNER	Sinead Matthews
KHADIJA	Yusra Warsama
SAMIR	Ali Khan
ZEYNEP	Cemre Ebuzziya
BARIS	Aziz Capkurt
ZEYNEP'S MUM	Derya Durmaz
FEMALE SECURITY GUARD	Kathryn Hanke
KERRY	Fiona Helen Armstrong
MIKEY	Edward Llewelyn
TURKISH WOMAN	Rose Lami
KYLE	Mitchell Brown
LOVEDAY	Elodie Wilton
COLETTE	Laura Dalgleish
SAM	Sam Rhodes
STALL HOLDER	Muhammed Turkoglu
ELIF	Susku Ekim Kaya
AIYLA	Aliye Honey
ANOTHER MAN	Tuncay Gunes

MRS MAMOON Syreeta Kumar
 ASLI Hayal Lorena Cercis
 DILARA Ada Danila Farid Mancuso
 MISS WESTGATE Amanda Lawrence
 ISAAM Jay Varsani
 HANAN Maimuna Memon

FILMMAKERS

DIRECTOR Nadia Fall
 WRITER Suhayla El-Bushra
 PRODUCERS Nicky Bentham & Marica Stocchi
 CO-PRODUCERS Catryn Ramasut & Alice Lusher
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS Matt Murphie, Cassidy Uggla, Julie-Anne Uggla, Stephen Kelliher, Sophie Green, Mariyah Dosani, Philippa Nicholl, Emma Duffy, Lizzie Francke, Kiah Simpson, Susan Simnett, Sawsan Asfari, Rasha Mansouri, Rosalind Riley, Amy Gardner Marcello Mustilli, Domenico Granata, Massimo Cipollina
 DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Clarissa Cappellani
 CASTING DIRECTOR Shaheen Baig
 EDITOR Fiona DeSouza
 COMPOSER Alex Baranowski
 PRODUCTION DESIGNER Gem Randall
 SOUND DESIGNER Filippo Baracco

SOUND EFFECTS EDITOR Ivan Caso, ACS

RE-RECORDING MIXER Daniele Viti

COSTUME DESIGNER Zoe Howerska

HAIR & MAKE UP DESIGNER Tamara Ramsey Crockett

LINE PRODUCER (ITALY) Jacopo Cino

DELEGATE OF PRODUCTION (ITALY) Francesca Claudione

LINE PRODUCER (UK) Cheryl Keatley

FEATURED NEWS RELEASES & STORIES

In order of release.

Screen Daily - [Screen unveils 2023 UK & Ireland Stars of Tomorrow](#)

Screen Daily - [Stars of Tomorrow 2023: Nadia Fall \(director\)](#)

Screen Daily - [Bankside Films says yes to Nadia Fall debut 'Brides' \(exclusive\)](#)

BFI - [Great 8 showcase films revealed for Cannes 2024](#)

Deadline - ['Great 8' 2024: BFI Reveals Line Up Of British Titles From Early Career Directors Set For Cannes Market](#)

Screen Daily - ['Brides', 'The Thing With Feathers', 'Rabbit Trap' among UK films heading to Sundance 2025](#)