

VOX Cinemas unveils debut slate of original Arabic films

Diverse line-up of movies features local stories from new and established storytellers from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon and UAE

Reaffirms VOX Cinemas' commitment to produce 25 Arabic films in five years, which was announced at last year's Red Sea International Film Festival

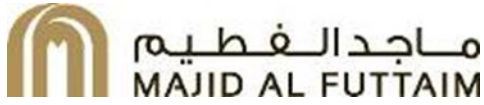
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 02 December 2022: VOX Cinemas, the dedicated cinema arm of Majid Al Futtaim, has unveiled its debut slate of original Arabic films at the Red Sea International Film Festival in Jeddah, which it proudly sponsors. The diverse line-up, featuring titles from new and established filmmakers in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, UAE and Lebanon, reaffirms VOX Cinemas' commitment to become a major player in Arabic film production

Ignace Lahoud, Chief Executive Officer, Majid Al Futtaim Leisure, Entertainment & Cinemas said, "It is an exciting time for Arabic film, which has been gaining plaudits and audiences in the region and beyond, and tends to outperform foreign films. Distinctly local productions, particularly in a nascent market like Saudi Arabia, offer an untapped and real opportunity. As the leading cinema company in the region, we are committed to growing a sustainable film industry and believe that establishing a dynamic content ecosystem is integral to achieving this goal."

He added, "Storytelling is deeply rooted in Arabic culture, and VOX Cinemas is dedicated to cultivating the next generation of regional filmmakers and empowering them to use the language of film to tell their stories. The diversity of our Arabic slate reflects the multitude of creativity in MENA's flourishing film industry, and as the region's largest exhibitor, we have a great opportunity to leverage our scale and amplify these voices on the big screen. Through collaboration with high-calibre talents and leading partners, we are dedicated to bringing quality content to audiences in the region and beyond."

HWJN (Hawjen) marks the third film from VOX Cinemas, Image Nation Abu Dhabi and MBC Studios having signed a landmark alliance at the Cannes Film Festival in 2019 to launch a major production partnership for film and TV projects across the Middle East. The film adaptation of the best-selling Saudi fantasy romance novel of the same name is directed by Yasir Al Yasiri and due for theatrical release next year. The three entities have also joined forces on *King of the Ring*, a Saudi remake of the South Korean comedy drama hit *The Foul King*, which will be screening during the Red Sea International Film Festival.

Also slated for 2023 is *Voy! Voy! Voy!*, a collaboration between VOX Cinemas, Film Clinic and Image Nation Abu Dhabi. The Egyptian film marks the directorial debut for award-winning director Omar Hilal, who is taking the leap from commercials to feature films with the support of VOX Cinemas. Inspired by true-life events, *Voy! Voy! Voy!* is a dramedy at its core and features an ensemble cast including stars such as



Mohamed Farrag, Nelly Karim and Bayoumi Fouad alongside up-and-coming talent Taha Desouky, Amgad El Hagar and Mohamed Abdel Azeem.

VOX Cinemas will join forces with Sirb Productions, sister company of Myrkott Animation Studio and the masterminds behind the groundbreaking *Masameer* franchise, to produce their second live-action film billed as a Saudi comedy. Creators Abdulaziz Almuzaini and Malek Nejer will be hoping to recreate the success of *Masameer: The Movie*, which was distributed theatrically by VOX Cinemas, and enjoyed box office success across the region, becoming one of the highest grossing Saudi films ever.

Also on the slate is Director Hadi El Bagoury's first Egyptian action-comedy feature film. The film is in partnership with The Producers, the creative minds behind *Hepta*, which was the highest grossing romantic film in Egypt when it released, *Sheikh Jackson*, and *Excuse My French* amongst many other hits.

VOX Cinemas has joined forces with The Big Picture Studios, an Imagic Group company, on their debut feature film. The script is the result of a writers' workshop hosted by VOX Cinemas with new voices from Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon as part of its commitment to ensure authenticity and relatability when developing local films.

VOX Cinemas has also signed a deal with Blue Engine Studios, which was established by media industry veterans Ziad Kebbi and Hani Ghorayeb, to develop a Saudi comedy that takes the protagonist on an international rescue mission filled with adventure, danger and bad luck.

In line with its strategy to foster and nurture the next generation of regional storytellers, VOX Cinemas is also investing in development with various production companies. Through working with writers and hosting workshops, VOX Cinemas is enabling emerging filmmakers and providing them with the necessary resources to accelerate their careers including guidance on how to market and distribute films for the big screen.

In addition to being the region's largest cinema exhibitor, VOX Cinemas and its parent company have also established themselves as one of the largest film distributors in the MENA region. It is committed to bringing compelling content that resonates with movie lovers through original production and feature film acquisition, investing in film development and partnering with various production companies to explore projects in line with its strategy.

END

Note to the Editor: The legal name of this company is "Majid Al Futtaim" and should not be shortened or replaced by an acronym to avoid confusion with another business entity.

About Majid Al Futtaim

Founded in 1992, Majid Al Futtaim is the leading shopping mall, communities, retail and leisure pioneer across the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

A remarkable business success story, Majid Al Futtaim started from one man's vision to transform the face of shopping, entertainment and leisure to 'create great moments for everyone, every day'. It has since grown into one of the United Arab Emirates' most respected and successful businesses spanning 17 international markets, employing more than 43,000 people, and obtaining the highest credit rating (BBB) among privately held corporates in the region.

Majid Al Futtaim owns and operates 29 shopping malls, 13 hotels and four mixed-use communities, with further developments underway in the region. The shopping malls portfolio includes Mall of the Emirates, Mall of Egypt, Mall of Oman, City Centre malls, My City Centre neighbourhood centres, and five community malls which are in joint venture with the Government of Sharjah. The Company is the exclusive franchisee for Carrefour in over 30 markets across the Middle East, Africa and Asia, operating a portfolio of more than 400 outlets including City+, the region's first checkout-free store, and an online store.

Majid Al Futtaim operates more than 600 VOX Cinemas screens as well as a portfolio of world-class leisure and entertainment experiences across the region including Ski Dubai, Ski Egypt, Dreamscape, Magic Planet, Little Explorers and iFLY Dubai. The Company is parent to a Fashion, Home and Specialty retail business representing international brands such as Abercrombie & Fitch, Hollister, AllSaints, lululemon athletica, Crate & Barrel, LEGO and THAT, a Majid Al Futtaim fashion concept store and app. In addition, Majid Al Futtaim operates Enova, a facility and energy management company, through a joint venture operation with Veolia, a global leader in optimised environment resource management.

<https://maf.am/Majid Al Futtaim EN>

Please follow us on



<https://www.facebook.com/MajidAlFuttaim>



<https://www.instagram.com/majidalfuttaim>



<https://www.tiktok.com/@majidalfuttaim>



<https://www.youtube.com/user/majidalfuttaim>



<https://twitter.com/majidalfuttaim>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/majid-al-futtaim>



<https://majidalfuttaim.medium.com/>