

Ein Shams Films
presents:



Production Notes

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HAWI...

There are many common attributes between the making of this production and the actual nature of the film itself. Both share one context, one message and one aim. It is a film made with nothing but a camera recorder belonging to the director and writer. He took it to Alexandria where the only expenses he had were for his own accommodation.

Everything else concerning the making of the film was deliberately done pro-bono, aiming to send a single message to independent filmmakers; that “it can be done”.

This ideology also intertwines with the characters of the film. The title song of ***Hawi***, in fact inspired the film’s name. The song says, *“I have become a magician... Accustomed to not expressing my feelings... I have learnt how to pull a loaf of bread from the heart of poverty... An expert at hiding my tears when in pain... I have become content with sleeping upside down like a bat...”* Every character in ***Hawi*** plays out the lyrics of this song. Not only do they live in poverty, but they use it in search of riches, they use their struggles and pains to beseech comfort and peace, they use their separation, alienation and foreignness to find ways to come closer together, to meet and to go back home... ***Hawi*** is an open invitation, to audiences and filmmakers alike, to find hope amidst great despair.

Ibrahim El Batout is considered to be one of Egypt’s pioneers in independent cinema, bringing forth a new understanding to feature films. He has introduced what is now known as zero-budget films and has made many feature length and short documentaries.

His fame erupted with ***Ithaki*** in 2005, a feature film that portrayed his personal experience covering events of wars in Europe, Russia among many other locations. He returned in 2008 to make his second feature, ***Ein shams***, which caused much controversy when released in 2009. **Ibrahim El Batout** expects the future of cinema to retain to the zero-budget ideology, especially due to the constantly rising costs of filmmaking. **El Batout** took his personal camera as a starting point to all his new endeavors. He chooses the topic he wishes to tackle, the locations he will shoot in and the actors who will mesh well with the environment and the ambiance of the film. In his first cinematic experience, he chose the old and infamous district of Ein shams to launch his cinema career. He shot the production in the same way he did ***Hawi***, a method he has sworn to always use in his upcoming films, even if circumstances have him directing a medium or high-budget one. He simply sees that this is where the future lies.

Ibrahim El Batout’s newest cinematic endeavor; ***Hawi***, started unveiling itself in his mind towards the end of 2009. After the release of ***Ein shams*** in May of that year, he decided that his new film should be made in a unique and new location. Because he was fond of and familiar with the city of Alexandria, he decided to pursue his new project there, making use of his good friends in the field and recruiting actors who resided in the unique coastal city.

During his search for the right caliber of actors and characters for his newest venture, and while hopping between various theaters, concerts and art shows, **El Batout** caught a performance by the underground band **Massar Egbari**. Their unique choice of music immediately lit a light bulb over his head, especially when they sang *Hawi* (The Magician). After hearing the song, he visualized the abilities of a magician to manifest something out of nothing, which he could related to on a personal level through endorsing the zero-budget film making ideology. This is when it all began...

When asked about how the film's cast and crew were selected, **El Batout** said, "I started by putting general guidelines to the standards I was looking for. I met a lot of potential actors and cameramen whom I insisted to be native Alexandrian's because my main for making this film was to shed light on them. After making my selections, with great difficulty may I add, we commenced shooting on 17 November 2009 up until our last day on set on the 10 February 2010. There were countless adventures throughout this experience, and even more lessons learnt."

Choices

The stories behind the selection of each actor on this production won't be forgotten in a hurry by the actors themselves. They all fell in love with the project and accepted to work on the film on a pro-bono basis, or as **El Batout** put it, on an IOU basis. He promised every actor involved a percentage of revenue gained from local and international viewership as well as a fair share of any recognition or of the awards it may reap. In return, the actors were given the chance to shine and show their true selves and talents. He was especially fond of their fresh attitude towards acting and the pure enthusiasm shown while working. **Mohamed El Sayed** plays **Youssef** in *Hawi*; a man who had recently returned to Alexandria after being away for years. He commented on the circumstances that led to him being part of the film saying, "Coincidentally, I was recommended to **El Batout** by more than one person, among them was **Kamal Sameer** the cinematographer, another good friend of mine. When he told me that **El Batout** would be coming to Alexandria to cast members for the production, I went and met him. I was surprised when he immediately gave me a lead role in the production. He didn't talk much about the character though, but rather gave me a general outline of what he was like. He also insisted that I think hard about it before making a decision, especially because I wasn't going to receive any pay for my acting. I liked the challenge and was immediately inspired."

On another note, **Sherief El Desouky**, who is another lead in the film, was nominated by **Mohamed Abdel-Fattah** aka **Kalabala**, and he commented saying, "**Kalabala** was **El Batout**'s assistant on *Ein shams*. He recommended me for *Hawi* and **El Batout** had seen me in *Al-Onf Wal Sokhrya (Violence and Irony)*, directed by **Asmaa Bakry** in 2003. I met **El Batout** shortly after that and we talked about *Hawi* and Jaafar, the character he wanted me to play. He is a street merchant who carries his goods on a horse

drawn cart. When the horse gets sick, **Jaafar** worries that he might die, not only because he is his only companion, but also because the horse is his livelihood. **El Batout** asked me how good I was with horses and how good I was at steering a horse-drawn cart.”

Another fundamental character in **Hawi** is **Hanan** the cabaret dancer, played by **Rina Aref**. The character suffers as society frowns upon her profession, however, she sees it as an art form such as ballet or stage performance. The way in which **Rina Aref** was chosen to play the role came by complete coincidence. She had taken her dog to her local café where she regularly meets with her friends. It so happened that **El Batout** was there by too. He watched her from a distance and asked **Kamal Sameer** about her later.

Kamal and **Rina** are friends and he introduced her to **El Batout**, who **Rina** later described as a perfect gentleman. **Rina** tells the story, “At the time I met **El Batout**, I was going through a vicious cycle of depression and he literally pulled me out of it when he offered me the role of **Hanan**. He gave me a general outline on the character but explained nothing about the scenes I would be doing. He also told me that I’d be working for free. I accepted the role immediately, and for more than one reason. Firstly, I felt that **Hawi** was an opportunity that should not be missed. Secondly, I had seen **Ein shams** and loved it and thirdly, I really wanted to work with **Sherief El Desouky** and **Mohamed El Sayed**. I have grown to love them as actors since childhood. Even though I didn’t know much about my character, I trusted the team I was working with and I trusted in **El Batout**’s vision.”

And the stories of the casting process continue. **Khaled Raafat**, plays **Insaneyya (Humanity)** in the film; who happens to be **Hanan**’s driver and **Youssef** ’s only friend after prison. When **Khaled** went to watch a much-anticipated Egyptian football match at a local meeting point, he met **Emad Mabrouk** who told him that **El Batout** had been looking for him and wanted to cast him in his new film. **Khaled** tells the story, “When **El Batout** and I finally met, he told me that he wanted me for a rather small part. During that same discussion, when **Emad Mabrouk** and **El Batout** talked about the character, it was decided to broaden the role further and turn **Insaneyya** into a more pivotal character. This is how it all began for me with **Hawi** and **Insaneyya**.”

Musician **Fady Eskandar** plays the role of **Fady** in **Hawi**, who is the guardian of the underground music band **Massar Egbari** and **Youssef** ’s friend. **Fady** was cast for his role in a very strange manner. He originally rented out a studio to **Massar Egbari** for their rehearsals and, on a particular occasion, one of the band’s members; **Hany El Dakak**, asked if they could use his next door apartment to shoot some footage. **Fady** met **El Batout** and agreed immediately to let him use the apartment for his film. **Fady** continues with the story saying, “One day, **Hany** came to me and told me that **El Batout** sees that I fit perfectly with one of the characters in his film and would like to cast me. I almost kicked him out! I told him I’m a musician and not an actor! He laughed and asked me to hear **El Batout** out before making up my mind, which I did. When we talked, I realized that **El Batout** wanted me to play myself in **Hawi**, and I immediately agreed. **El Batout** is a real gentleman and a truly passionate filmmaker. He simply asked me to take this journey with him, and all I could do was say ‘yes’.”

The only exception where an actress with previous experience was chosen was that of actress **Hanan Youssef** who plays the role of **Aya's Aunt** in the film. She comments saying, "**El Batout** and I are good friends and I worked with him before on ***Ithaki*** and ***Ein shams***, I must add that I love working with him. His insistence on working independently and without the restriction of making a profit out of the production brings out the best in me as a performer." It is noteworthy that **Hanan**, too, is originally from Alexandria.

El Batout confirms that finding his cast members was one success story after the other. He comments on the experience saying, "I find in **Sherief El Desouky** and **Mohamed El Sayed** true and exceptional talents, and **Fady Eskandar** is one of Alexandria's most important musicians. Also, **Saeed Kabeel**, **Ahmed Soliman** and **Dr. Mahmoud Abu Doma** are brilliant actors who do it for pleasure because they have true passion for it. They act because they love to act and not because it is a source of money. The energy they bring into the set is remarkable and they really pour their souls into it. I appreciate every moment they put into this film, especially that we worked with no budget."

Improvisation

As accustomed by **El Batout** since ***Ein shams***, there wasn't a detailed script for the performers to follow, but rather an open discussion about the scene and the characters prior to shooting. This assisted the actors with their improvising acting. With ***Hawi***, there were no papers to work with; nothing that was fully planned out or plotted, just an inspirational discussion that fueled the performers before shooting commenced. **El Batout** elaborates saying, "The script wasn't entirely improvised. We agreed on how it would flow while we were shooting because there was a general idea in my head that I wanted to get out, but not in the restricted or emotionless manner that following a strict script often results in."

When asked about his preference, **Sherief El Desouky** said, "I am actually a big fan of improvising when it comes to acting, especially because my origins are in theatre. As long as you know how the scene should unfold and you have a trusting relationship with the director and the team, like the relationship I have with **El Batout**, you can get the message across easily and naturally."

As for **Rina Aref**, her experience with improvisation was one that she thoroughly enjoyed, particularly due to the fact that she shared many attributes with her character and felt at ease with playing herself. On another note, **Mohamed El Sayed** had a different take on the matter. He said, "During the past eight years, I have formed a bond with the people on the seafront as I took daily long walks on the beach when I wasn't working. The taxi and bus drivers, the merchants; we all know each other by name and our relationships grew deep. It's important to know that we, as actors, are very sensitive to our surroundings and pick up the vibes of the people and the circumstances we go

through. Imagine if I had learnt my script the day before and met all these people on my way to the set; I would have been highly influenced by the experiences I went through and the conversations I had along the way, which would highly affect my performance.

In this case, with *Hawi*, knowing what the scene was about right before shooting gave me the chance to perform it with purity, and without any outside influence, and this was something that I enjoyed thoroughly.”

Another cast member who thoroughly enjoyed the improvising experience was **Fady Eskandar**. He says, “What **El Batout** wanted was a natural performance that reflected real people and situations. Improvising on the script resulted in exactly that; with no rehearsals and no predetermined perceptions, we simply became ourselves and that is evident in the final result. I think it was a very smart decision from **El Batout**’s side.”

Fady Eskandar was also happy with the fact that **El Batout** did not share anything about the film’s story except with his assistant **Emad Mabrouk**. He says, “I didn’t know the entire story of the film or how the events unfold. We were told the information we needed to know scene by scene, and I think that was brilliant! As actors, we will be just as surprised as the audiences when we watch it because we have no idea what to expect.”

On the flip side, **Rina Aref** has expressed her desire to see the film before its completion and had, at one point, refused to speak about it before seeing it.

As for **Hanan Youssef**, she expressed her comfort in not seeing scenes other than the ones she performed in. Her trust in **El Batout** assures her that *Hawi* will be even better than *Ein shams* and that, even though there was never a predetermined script to follow, **El Batout** was able to create the right ambiance before each scene, and he was able to prepare the actors for what they needed to do. She says, “You have to work with him to understand how we feel while on location.”

Behind the Scenes

Since this production had no shooting permits, countless memorable stories and a combination of funny and sometimes difficult situations. It may have been funny at times, but it was certainly difficult at others as well. When comparing shooting in Cairo to shooting in Alexandria, **El Batout** admits that Alexandrians are indeed much easier to work with. Since the city requires less civil permissions and its residents have greater understanding towards the art scene and the challenges that the filmmakers go through, the film was completed in record time and with considerable ease.

Among the memorable shooting situations was during a particular scene between **Rina Aref** and **Sherief El Desouky** at the Alexandria Zoo. After the key scenes were shot, **El Batout** decided to get extra footage. While setting up for a few additional scenes, the team was approached by one of the employees at the zoo, who asked **El Batout** to see the manager. With complete poise, **El Batout** continued to shoot; telling the employee that he will shortly. When he completed shooting, he went to see the manager who asked **El Batout** about the nature of the filming. He stated that it was merely a graduation project

for one of the Je Suite students and that it was nothing to be concerned with. The manager eased up and asked **El Batout** to merely pay the LE 20 fee required for a permit, which he did, and then continued on his way. Later on, at a famous café where artists gather in Alexandria, the entire group had a good laugh about the story.

Another interesting story while filming was while shooting a scene where **Rina Aref** was teaching girls how to dance. Considering that this was a zero-budget production, renting a place was simply out of the question. What **El Batout** decided to do was to have **Rina** and the girls to sit at the café where they are all well-known, and he and his crew sat on another table while he pretended to teach them how to use his camera. Since that café was one where they were all considered regular customers, there were no suspicions about what they were actually doing. While **El Batout** sat with his crew, he focused his camera on **Rina** and started giving instructions to his crew that were actually directed towards her. The crew managed to complete the scene under the nose of the café owner and without any suspicion.

On a more painful note, **El Batout** broke his arm while he was trying to convince and comfort two of his crew members to climb up a wall for a specific scene. Ironically, it was **El Batout** who fell off the wall and broke his left arm. Since **El Batout** was also acting in the film, he had one of two choices; either to postpone shooting until his arm healed, or to incorporate his broken arm into the script. Needless to say, he chose the latter.

Another quite tickling situation was when a little lie was revealed under unexpected circumstances. While interviewing **Khaled Raafat** for the role of **Insaneyya**, **El Batout** specifically asked him if he knew how to drive, to which **Khaled** answered “yes”, but it turned out that he did not. **Khaled** had learned how to drive in the 80’s but was not accustomed to an automatic car. Even though he practiced before shooting the scene, it still wasn’t good enough. As a result, **El Batout** decided to have the car - which was his personal car - be pulled by another. **Rina** was terrified, especially when **Khaled**’s foot accidentally hit the gas pedal and the car slammed into the one pulling it. Overall, the scene was finally completed, but obviously not easily.

The first scene that was shot for the film, which also happens to be the film’s opening scene, was shot from above an elevator shaft. To shoot the scene, **El Batout** had to climb into the elevator shaft from the building’s roof, forgetting that the space between the concrete and the elevator itself was extremely small. To shoot the scene, **El Batout** had to lie flat on his back on the elevator’s roof and pray for things to go well.

The horse stable where **Jaafar** and his horse **Dorgham** shot their scenes faced a few problems of their own, especially for **Sherief El Desouky**. Over and above the heavy potent odor in the stable, it was also infested with rats as big as cats and, as luck may have it, **Sherief El Desouky** is terrified of rats.

One of the film’s scenes required **Sherief El Desouky** to ride his horse and cart in Fouad

Street, one of Alexandria's busiest streets, and has a law against animal drawn carts in it. While **El Batout** and the crew shot the scene from a car driving next to the horse, a policeman stood in front of the horse and demanded that **Sherief** gets off the street. **Sherief** decided to remain in character and told the policeman to let him be while he tries to earn a living. As luck may have it, **El Batout** had driven further down the road and it took him some time to get back to where **Sherief** was. By then, **Sherief** and the policeman got into a fight and **Sherief** was about to be taken to the police station. The crew arrived at the scene just in time to talk the policeman out of it and all went well in the end.

There were two real characters in the film that portrayed their real selves. The first was **Abdel-Aziz the tailor**, who was introduced to **El Batout** through **Emad Mabrouk**.

Abdel-Aziz was incorporated into the film as **Youssef**'s tailor and, and on the way to shoot the scene in the shop, **El Batout** asked **Mohamed El Sayed**, who plays **Youssef**, to save time by changing his clothes in the car. Upon arriving to the shop, **El Batout** was so impressed by its authenticity that he asked all crew members to wait outside, and decided that no extra light or assistance is needed to capture the shot needed. All what was needed was the camera and **Mohamed El Sayed**.

The second character that portrayed himself was the shoe shop owner **Edward**. He was in one of the scenes with **Hanan**, while she was buying a new pair of shoes.

The obstacles, challenges and unique circumstances the crew went through while making this film are truly countless, but **El Batout** was expecting a rocky road to completion. He says, "The difficulties and obstacles are part of the experience. We expect to come across many more problems with censorship and audiences. But, at the end of the day, this experience is one that we chose to go through, and we all know what's at stake".

Independence!

Ibrahim El Batout is a true pioneer in independent film making in Egypt and among its most prominent leaders, especially after his experience with his second feature ***Ein shams***. He insists that the independent cinema experience must increase in Egypt and that this would give the opportunity for many good filmmakers out there to shine. In that light, the Egyptian cinema field will be enriched with new ideas and concepts that will, in turn, increase viewership and diversity among the new generation of filmmakers and audiences alike, even if some of them are only delusional. At the end of the day, the viewers will make their choices and those who are truly talented will prevail.

"The message I am trying to get across with my experience with independent film making is to encourage anyone who has a camera to get out there and create a feature.

We need to go beyond the constraints and regulations of the cinema industry, which has sadly become more of a trade than an art form. This is an ideology that I strictly refuse to accept. Cinema is about creativity, thought and talent and should not be measured by

how much revenue a film makes. It is an art that we make for people and a message that we need to get across. Cinema, and art in general, must never be treated commercially,” says **El Batout**.

Even though pursuing such a dream, it may cause mayhem - simply because if anyone who had a camera went out and made a film, there would be 3 or 4 new production releases daily and audiences wouldn't really know what to choose - **El Batout** still believes that it can be done. “What's the harm in having a surplus of films? This can only improve the cinema sector in Egypt because every film maker will do his best to make his film in the best way he possibly can, and this can only benefit the production and thus the field itself. Audiences will eventually filter what they see and give us the means to measure the success - or failure - of our productions and experiences” says **El Batout**.

As **El Batout** gets ready to venture into his first medium budget cinema production with his new film *1/4 Gram*, produced by **Montana Studios**, he insisted on giving the new film the independent “feel”. Except for **Hanan Youssef**, the entire cast are new faces and he confirms that he will never depart from independent film making. “Every film has a unique set of circumstances and requirements and *1/4 Gram* simply must be made with a good budget and facilities. I did however make sure to enroll new actors in the production because I need their authenticity and honesty. Audiences have a tendency to believe a new face more than that of an experienced actor.” he says.

Even before starting on his new film, **El Batout** is already preparing for his latest independent cinema endeavour as he works on rewriting *Aly Ma'azza*. This new production will be made with a small budget and will most certainly fall under the independent film making category.

Alexandria

Rightfully crowned the Pearl of the Mediterranean, Alexandria is one of the oldest cities in Egypt and the world. The long stretch of beautiful beaches and tranquil sea has witnessed empires rise and fall and, today, it is known for the distinct nature of its residents. Alexandria is a city known for its diversity, which also applies to the origins of its citizens. Through the centuries, this city has become home to almost all of the world's ethnicities and religions. Its boundaries hold within it religious types and atheists, artists and fundamentalists, intellectuals and illiterates, all meshed together into one cosmopolitan mixture that can't be found anywhere else.

Cinema, theatre and performance lovers can always be found on the city's corniche. Art fanatics merge into a unified symphony throughout its streets and cafés, as well as its countless cinemas, theatres and art education institutes. Alexandrian evenings are famed for its gatherings between those art lovers as they perform, listen and appreciate all forms of art under the sun. Though many are talented, only a few get a true chance to shine

when scarce opportunities of publishing, casting or recruiting cross their paths.

As far as the film making business is concerned, the lovers of this industry in Alexandria feel neglected, especially because their motives for being part of it are never money-related, but rather go back to the fact that they simply love it. In this city, **Ibrahim El Batout** found buried treasures that he was determined to make good use of. His entire crew; actors, technicians and assistants are all from Alexandria and he considered this decision as one of utmost importance.

As **El Batout** found in this unique community everything that his heart desired; a team of professional and highly talented cinematic personalities that are in the field driven by their passion for it. As he recruited one member after another, he was surprised and humbled to find that none of them questioned his integrity, especially because they were taking part in the film pro bono. He comments on the matter saying, “I have never before had the opportunity to work with such dedicated, talented and professional people. They all agreed to work with me for no fee and they have all become my partners in this project. I promised them percentages of any revenues and awards that this production may make, locally or internationally, and they have all agreed to work with me out of their true love for cinema. This experience is one that I cherish with all my heart and I appreciate and respect every single person who has worked with me on *Hawi*.”

About the Makers of *Hawi*

Ibrahim El Batout (Ibrahim and Writer, Director and Cinematographer) began his filmmaking career in documentaries, from which he proceeded to make feature films. His first production was *Ithaki* in 2005, which received the Best Film Award at the Liqa’a El Soora Festival which was held at the French Centre in Cairo. He also worked with director **Nadia Kamel** on her documentary *Salata Balady*. In 2009, **Ibrahim El Batout** introduced his most important feature film to date; *Ein shams*. This acclaimed production took part in more than 45 film festivals around the world, including those held in London, Dubai, Sydney, Carthage and Taormina where he was awarded the Golden Tauro Best Film Award. He also received the award for Best Film at the Rotterdam Arab Film Festival, as well as the award for Best Film at the San Francisco Arab Film Festival.

Mohamed El Sayed (Youssef) is among Alexandria’s most talented and well known actors. He tried his luck in cinema by moving to Cairo but, after hardships in the capital, he returned to Alexandria and spent eight years away from the industry. In 1988, he worked as a teacher for two years. Then he worked in theatre for three years before deciding to resign from his daytime job to be a full-time actor. Through his work in theatre, he received four consecutive annual awards as Best Actor in Egypt, it is also worth noting that he directed two of the four plays he worked in. He also starred in a number of television series.

Sherief El Desouky (Jaafar) grew up in an environment filled with actors and pursued

an acting career in the early nineties. His stardom peaked in theater in Alexandria when he was recommended by the legendary Egyptian actor **Mostafa Rizk** to take part in a local play. Soon he became one of the city's favored performers. In his pursuit for the art of acting, he travelled to Cairo, hoping for a big break, but it never came. He then returned to Alexandria where he was apprenticed by one of theatre's most dedicated university professors; **Dr. Mahmoud Abu Doma**. In 2003, he took part in the film *El O'onf Wal Sokhrey* (**Violence and Irony**) with director **Asmaa El Bakry**, and he also participated in several independent films.

Rina Aref (Hanan) has had true passion for dance since the delicate age of six when she joined a professional ballet school in 1993. She was chosen to be part of an Egyptian folk dance group and as she performed she still managed to do well in school. At the age of 21, she tried to pursue her passion for Egyptian belly dancing, but failed to portray it as an art form due to the stereotypical erotic manner it was perceived as. Her experience with acting began when she was chosen by film director **Hasan Abd El-Salam** to perform in one of his plays. Before taking part in *Hawi*, she acted in two short independent films; *Sifaret El A'adam* (**Embassy of Nothing**), directed by **Hany Kassem** and *Iblees* (**Lucifer**), directed by **Amr Amir**.

Fady Eskandar (Fady) is one of Alexandria's most loved jazz musicians and has had an avid career in music since a young age. He is of Lebanese origin and has achieved remarkable success in both Lebanon and Cairo, where at some point during his career he was the most exclusive jazz performer in the country. Though he received countless offers to work with world-renowned Arab musicians, he always declined, simply stating that he does not wish to be part of the commercial line of music-making. Since his return to Alexandria, he prefers a quiet lifestyle, away from the busy city life. He still works in music, but only shares his work with friends and colleagues through the internet.

Khaled Raafat (Insaney) comes from a family of actors. Since the young age of nine, he has taken part in countless plays throughout school and university. He also co-directed and directed several plays and worked with world-renowned Arab directors and actors, including **Mohamed Sobhy**, **Asmaa Bakry** and **Mahmoud Abu Doma**.

Hanan Youssef (Aya's Aunt), even though denies it, she is considered the only professional actor among the *Hawi* team. Her career in cinema began in 1986 when she took part in **Mohamed Khan's** *Mishwar O'mr* (**A Life Journey**). She moved to Cairo to pursue her acting career and took part in many plays over the years. On two occasions, she decided to quit acting, but her passion for it was too strong to keep her away. She took part in all of **Ibrahim El Batout's** feature films; *Ithaki*, *Ein shams* and *Hawi*.

Because she loves working with **El Batout**, she claims that she always pressure him into finding her a role in his productions.

Perry Moataz (Aya and Film Editor) was preliminarily chosen as the film's editor, **El Batout** decided to add her to the film's cast, to play his daughter Aya, when he realized that her looks resembled his. She is a mass communication and marketing graduate and,

after spending some time with a career in marketing, decided she was uncomfortable with the constraints and routine of a suffocating 9 to 5 job. She resigned from her full-time job and enrolled in a film editing workshop that was headed by film directors **Tamer Saeed**, **Hala Lotfy** and none other than **Ibrahim El Batout**. Because she excelled in the workshop, **El Batout** recruited her to be part of *Hawi* especially because she is a native Alexandrian.

Emad Mabrouk (Assistant Director and Production Manager), besides **Ibrahim El Batout**, he is the only *Hawi* crew member who knew what the film was about. He and **El Batout** worked enthusiastically together to choose the cast and therefore Mabrouk had a lot of input in the final cast. He studied cinema between Alexandria and Jordan and currently heads a prominent cinema workshop in Alexandria. He completed a specialized workshop where he learned how to make films on a zero-budget basis. His participation in cinematic education is avid in Egypt and the Arab world.

Hossam Elouan (Production Commissar) is a scriptwriter, a documentary researcher, an independent film producer and a professor at the American University in Cairo. He received his Masters degree in cinema from the University of San Francisco. He was elected to teach Middle Eastern cinema in Mount Saint Mary's University in Maryland, USA, where he worked closely with Professor **Richard Walter**; renowned screenwriter and chairman of the University of California, Los Angeles. He gave many lectures in Egypt, Italy, Greece, Ireland and the United States. He has also published many articles in reputable publications around the world. He worked as a researcher on dozens of documentaries for El Jazeera and received many reputable awards throughout his career. Among his tutors are **Youssef Shaheen**, **Dawood Abd El-Sayed**, **Mohsen Zeyad** and **Yousry Nasr-Allah** and he has taken part in more than one international film festivals in Egypt and abroad.

Film Credits

Cast

Hanan Youssef
Mohamed El Sayed
Sherief El Desouky
Fady Eskandar
Ibrahim El Batout
Rina Aref
Perry Moataz
Mirette El Hariry
Khaled Raafat
Ahmed Soliman
Saeed Kabeel
Hany El Dakak
Waguhi El Laqany

Abdel Fattah Hussein
Mark Lotfy

Special appearance:
Mahmoud Abodoma

and Massar Egbari Music Band:

Hany El Dakkak
Ayman Massoud
Mahmoud Siam
Ahmed Hafez
Toussy
Mohamed Nabil

Produced by:
Ein Shams Films

Delegate Producer:
Hossam Elouan

Line Producer:
Emad Mabrouk

Original Music by
Massar Egbari

Cinematography by
Ibrahim El Batout

Cameramen:
Ahmed El Ghoneimy
Mina Nabil
Mohamed El Hadidi

Light Designer:
Philip Monuir

Still Photography:
Dalia Refaat
Mohamed El Hadidi

Film Editing:
Perry Moataz

Song of Hawi :
Lyrics:
Mohamed Gomaa
Composing:
Hany El Dakkak

Arrangement and Singing:
Massar Egbari Music Band

Digital Color Grading:
Tarek Sami

Location Sound Recordist:
Mounir Wagih

Post Production Sound :
Sound Designer & Mixer :

Alaa Al Kashef

Sound Editor:

Tamer El Demerdash

Foley Artist:

Rahim Sameh

Foley Recordist :

Dareen Hossam Eldeen

Color Grading by:
Mohamed Bekeir

Color Correction and Film Prints

Tamer Mortada

Ahmed Manawishi

Adel El Sherif

Sameh Soliman

Ahmed Sameir

Einas Anwar

Fadi Farouk

Ahmed Tarek

Yousef Ahmed

Khaled Ahmed

Rami Reda

Ahmed Rafat

Hamada Elmasri

Assistant Directors:

First Assistant Director:

Emad Mabrouk

Second Assistant Director:

Kamal Samir

Third Assistant Director:

Mohamed El Hadidi

This film has been presented at Durban FilmMart 2010

Special Thanks:



Oliver Damian (27 Film Production)
Guillaume De Seille (Arizona Films)
Christoph Thoke (Mogador Film)

In co-production with Doha Film Institute (Qatar)

Produced with financial support of the Hubert Bals Fund of the International Film Festival
Rotterdam (Holland)

With financial support of Aroma designs and solutions (Egypt)

Marketing, PR & Design: MAD Solutions
www.mad-solutions.com

Written & Directed by:
Ibrahim El Batout
www.Ibrahimeibatout.com

2010