

## US Premiere: *On the Road in America*



Top left to right: Ambassador Marc Ginsberg, Layalina's President; Ali Amr, castmember; Lara About Saifan, castmember; Pat Mitchell, President and CEO, The Paley Center for Media; Jerome Gary, Executive Producer and Director of *On the Road in America*; Ambassador Richard Fairbanks, Founder and Chairman of Layalina. Bottom left to right: Leon Shahabian, Layalina's Vice President and Executive Producer of *On the Road*; Laura Michalchyshyn, Sundance Channel's Executive Vice President; and Larry Aidem, Sundance Channel President and CEO.

*On the Road in America*, Layalina's 12-episode reality travelogue series, had its US premiere broadcast in primetime on both coasts on the Sundance Channel from June 4 through August 20.

Produced by Layalina in association with Visionaire Media of Los Angeles, *On the Road* received favorable reviews from national and international media during its week-long press tour.

Created by Academy Award®-nominated producer Jerome Gary and executive produced by Gary and Layalina Vice President Leon Shahabian, the series aims at fostering cross-cultural exchange and understanding and helps to bridge the gap between the United States and the Arab world.

*On the Road* had its premiere run on MBC1, the largest free-to-air pan-Arab satellite network between January 18 and April 7, 2007. According to polling from Ipsos Stat, a leading European polling firm, *On the Road* was the second most-watched show in its primetime slot in the Arab world.

*On the Road* is made possible thanks to a generous grant from the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation of Indiana.

### Viewer feedback

"I am a Jew and a supporter of Israel. The interactions between Lara [castmember], a Palestinian, and Guy [director of photography], an Israeli, emerge into a friendship so beautiful that it really bring tears to my eyes. Lara transforms the way that she looks at Israelis. Although she does not support Israel to any extent, she does see that Israelis are people who want peace as much as she does... In my opinion, a friendship as unlikely as the one between Guy and Lara is a big step in achieving peace."

*On the Road* viewer feedback as posted on [sundancechannel.com](http://sundancechannel.com) by [diamondf467](#) on July 7, 2008.

## Spotlight: Honorary Chairman



President George H.W. Bush and Layalina President Ambassador Marc Ginsberg

On June 9, Layalina's President Ambassador Marc Ginsberg met with Layalina's Honorary Chairman, President George H.W. Bush, at the White House.

Ambassador Ginsberg briefed President Bush on Layalina's programming achievements and its future production schedule, including the successful airing of *On the Road in America* in the Middle East and its debut on the Sundance Channel in the US.

They also discussed current Mideast developments focusing on Layalina's public diplomacy mission in the MENA region and the role that private sector initiatives are playing in support of such missions.

We are delighted to count on President Bush's wise leadership and insightful counsel.



EPISODE 5, *On the Road* cast and crew in Montana.

A rugged pack trip into Yellowstone country elicits different levels of enthusiasm among the three cast members camped out under the stars. The group is introduced to two respected Western experts, writer/anthropologist Dr. Larry Lahren and author Doug Peacock. A fishing trip provides an opportunity to relax and make new friends.

## Chairman's Message

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to announce that our hit travelogue series *On the Road in America* had its domestic debut in primetime on the Sundance Channel from June 4 until August 20. The show was warmly received and favorably reviewed both by American and international media.

Currently, we are pre-producing *Life After Death*, a feature documentary that will premiere in primetime on Al-Arabiya and serve as an indictment against Al-Qaeda. Layalina has also begun production on the pilot episode of our news magazine show, *Al-Sa'at (The Hour)*. The show is a co-production with Al-Arabiya news channel and will feature insightful investigative news critical to the state of relations between the United States and the Arab world.

Our continued efforts to further strengthen US-Arab relations are made possible thanks to your generous support. We look forward to your tax-deductible contributions to bring additional programs to fruition.

Thank you in advance for your support.

With kind regards,



Richard Fairbanks  
Chairman of the Board

**“This review should be required reading for all new and current DOS [Department of State] officers, political or career.”**

*The Honorable Patricia Harrison,  
President and CEO of the Corporation  
for Public Broadcasting and,  
Former Under Secretary of State for  
Public Diplomacy & Public Affairs.*

## In Pre-Production: Life After Death

We are currently pre-producing *Life After Death*, a feature documentary that will air on Al-Arabiya and serve as an indictment against extremist violence. It will feature family members of American, Arab and European victims of Al-Qaeda and their compelling messages of suffering, endurance and hope.



Religious, cultural and language barriers will be dismantled to garner partnerships in a global mission to interdict Al-Qaeda terrorism and foster mutual appreciation and respect, based on shared experiences of losing loved ones at the hands of terrorists. We will film starting in mid-September in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt; Amman, Jordan; and Madrid, Spain.

*Life After Death* is a Visionaire Media production in association with Layalina Productions.

## Now Shooting: Al-Sa'at



Layalina is currently in production on the pilot episode of its news magazine show *Al-Sa'at (The Hour)*, a co-production with Al-Arabiya news channel. The pilot features insightful investigative news elucidating the state of relations between the United States and the Arab world. Production is slated to end by early September.

Layalina's production partner Al-Arabiya intends to air the completed pilot. Layalina's portion of the pilot episode budget for this series is made possible thanks to a generous \$100,000 grant from the Marc and Eva Stern Foundation of California.

## The Layalina Review: 4th Anniversary Celebration

In July, we celebrated the fourth anniversary of our bi-weekly press review. The Layalina Review has become a peerless one-stop source for monitoring developments in the spheres of public diplomacy and Arab media. For each edition of the Review, Layalina staff and volunteers compile press articles from English, French and Arabic news sources and summarize the information into 11 to 15 stories. Topics range from media freedoms and censorship, analysis of US government public diplomacy efforts, Arab television to culture and sports diplomacy, video games, regional polling data, and communication industry advancements.

The Review's distribution list encompasses 6,000 readers internationally, including academics, Foreign Service Officers, students, members of Congress and their staff and foreign diplomats.

The Review is made possible thanks to a generous \$50,000 grant from Dr. Scholl Foundation of Illinois.



The Layalina Review is cross-listed on the website of the USC Center for Public Diplomacy on the newsroom page <http://uscpublicdiplomacy.com/index.php/newsroom> and their affiliated blog <http://intermap.org>, as well as on <http://www.PublicDiplomacy.org>, a website sponsored by the alumni association of the USIA and the Foreign Policy Association's Public Diplomacy blog at <http://www.publicdiplomacy.foreignpolicyblogs.com>.

## On the Road: In the News

“*On the Road in America* was originally produced by a nonprofit group with the hope of **showing Arab viewers in the Middle East a broader and more nuanced view of America than that seen in Hollywood exports.**” *THE NEW YORK TIMES, De Tocquevilles From the Middle East* by Elizabeth Jensen, June 1, 2008.

“To be honest with you, after 9/11, I didn’t think Arabs would be welcome [in America], because everyone viewed us as terrorists,” Amr said. “**After I went to America, my mind definitely changed. You can’t judge any country without visiting.**” *USA TODAY, Young Mideast bunch on tour in ‘America’* by Gary Strauss, June 4, 2008.



Al Jazeera’s Min [from] Washington presented by Abd-al-Rahim Fuqara. Left to Right: castmember Ali Amr; castmember Lara Abou Saifan; Jerome Gary Executive Producer and Director of *On the Road in America*; Leon Shahabian, Executive Producer of *On the Road*; and Abd-al-Rahim Fuqara.

## On the Road: On Tour



Left to right: Idris Diaz, Assistant Counsel for Africa, USAID; Said Ahmad, Iraqi Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission; Osama Al Taye, Iraqi Embassy Chief of Staff at the Washington, DC *On the Road* Screening; Dr. Susan F. Rice, a Layalina Donor with Leon Shahabian, Layalina’s Vice President at the Los Angeles screening of *On the Road*. Panel discussion moderated by Pat Mitchell at the Paley Center for Media with Ambassador Richard Fairbanks, Jerome Gary, castmembers and Laura Michalchshyn. The audience in Paley Center reacts to a moving scene from *On The Road*.

In advance of *On the Road in America*’s primetime premiere, the Sundance Channel organized a national press tour that included outreach events in New York City, Los Angeles and Washington, DC.

On May 28, The Paley Center for Media (formerly the Museum of Television and Radio) co-hosted a screening at its theater in New York City with the Sundance Channel, Layalina and Visionaire Media. The screening played to a packed house and included an hour-long preview of the series, which was followed by a panel discussion featuring Layalina’s Chairman Ambassador



photo: Chloe A. Seldman

Richard Fairbanks, castmembers Ali Amr from Cairo and Lara Abou Saifan from Beirut, series creator Jerome Gary and Sundance Channel Executive Vice President Laura Michalchshyn.

Two hundred guests were in attendance including Mr. Frederick Whittemore, a Layalina Director and Donor, Ms. Damaris Skouras, a Layalina Counselor and Donor, Ambassador Bruce S. Gelb, a Layalina Donor and Lady Julie Hardinge, a Layalina Donor.

Our guests later commented that the event



was “an enlightening, heartening presentation and discussion,” and called the series, “a truly important piece of work,” noting that “the Arab cast seem very real in their reactions. It amazed me at the end when they all started to change their viewpoints towards Americans

and made friends” said Sara on [www.arabic.meetup.com](http://www.arabic.meetup.com).

On May 29, the Sundance Channel, Visionaire Media and Layalina co-hosted a screening and reception at Plaster City in Hollywood. A few dozen guests were present, including Layalina Donor Dr. Susan F. Rice.

On June 3, the Sundance Channel, Layalina, Visionaire Media and The New America Foundation co-hosted a screening at Landmark E Street Theater in Washington, DC. Among the attendees were Mr. Alan Heil, a Layalina Donor, (see page 4)

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The Layalina Review is a FREE biweekly online publication. With 26 issues per year, it is a comprehensive news source for happenings in media and public diplomacy in the Arab world.

## On the Road: On Tour

(cont'd from page 3) Layalina Director Ambassador Walter Cutler and Mrs. Cutler who are also Layalina Donors, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bodman, Layalina Donors, as well as reporters from notable national and international press and diplomats. Layalina President Ambassador Marc Ginsberg hosted a Q&A discussion following the screening.

Layalina is grateful for the positive media coverage that *On the Road* received. It is a recognition of our continued efforts to create meaningful programming that fosters better understanding between the United States and the Arab world. We look forward to your continued support to make similar outreach events possible.



Left to right: castmembers and crew in the Hamptons, NY; castmembers Sanad Al Kubaissi from Saudi Arabia, and Ali Amr from Egypt in Washington, DC.

## Support Layalina

Layalina Productions, Inc. is a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Please support Layalina by making a tax-deductible donation. To donate by mail, please send your check or money order to:

Layalina Productions, Inc.  
Attn: Treasurer  
1250 24th Street, NW, Suite 300  
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For information on stock donations and wire transfers, please contact Layalina's Treasurer at [Lshahabi@Layalina.tv](mailto:Lshahabi@Layalina.tv) or (202) 776-7768. To donate by credit card, please visit [www.layalina.tv/support](http://www.layalina.tv/support)

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The Quarterly Newsletter is published by Layalina Productions, Inc., a §501(c)(3) non-profit, private sector corporation dedicated to bridging the growing divide between the Arab world and the United States through effective television programming.

To be placed on our mailing list, contact us at [information@Layalina.tv](mailto:information@Layalina.tv).

## Team Layalina is Growing



Please join us in welcoming Iqbal Khaiy, Layalina's new Design and Production Coordinator.

Iqbal is an honors graduate of the Corcoran College of Art and Design in

Washington, DC.

Iqbal is currently designing Layalina's new website and rebranding our publications. A native of Morocco, Iqbal speaks Arabic, French and Spanish.



Please join us in welcoming Jake Foley, Layalina's new Office Manager.

Jake will coordinate all aspects of development,

fundraising, production and post-production of Layalina's television programs and provide administrative support for Board and staff members.

Jake is a graduate of Harvard University, where he focused on Middle Eastern Studies. A native of Lowell, Massachusetts, Jake speaks Modern Greek and continues his studies in Arabic.