



# Cayalina

ليالينا للإنتاج  
Productions

Fall 2006

In Production

## On the Road in America

Since our last update, we have conducted casting for new talent in the Arab world, completed pre-production, and launched principal photography. *Ala al-Tariq fy Amrika* (On the Road in America), our reality travelogue series, is produced in association with Visionaire Media, Inc. of Los Angeles and made possible thanks to a generous grant from The Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation of Indiana. We have also successfully completed broadcast agreement negotiations with O3 Productions, Inc., the acquisition arm of the Middle East Broadcasting Centre Group (MBC), the Arab world's leading satellite television broadcaster. The 12 half-hour episode first season is slated to air early next year on an MBC network channel. As for the U.S., we have signed a distribution agreement with New Line Television in order to gauge the interest of the domestic television market in this cross-cultural series.

In April and May, director Jerome Gary conducted casting in Rabat, Casablanca, Cairo, Beirut and Dubai to obtain a truly representative sample of the Arab world. The first season's talent consists of: Dr. Mohamed Kassem Abou Ghazal, a 27 year-old Jordanian physician living in Lebanon, Sanad Osama Karkar, a 19 year-old Saudi student living in Dubai, and Ali Amr, a 23 year-old Egyptian student who was the star of the pilot episode. Mohamed and Sanad were chosen from a pool of over 250 candidates.



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# Chairman's Message

Dear friends,

I am delighted to welcome you to the Fall 2006 edition of our quarterly newsletter. With this edition, we are celebrating the one-year anniversary of our bi-weekly press review publication, which tracks developments in public diplomacy and Arab media. We are also proud to report that the first season of our *On the Road in America* series is in production. Please visit our redesigned website to learn more about this show and to watch a preview.

My colleagues and I look forward to your tax-deductible financial support which will bring to fruition the pilots for *Al-Sa'at* (The Hour) and *Arabitak Keif?* (How's Your Arabic), the next shows in our production pipeline.

I would like to thank our donors for their continued support. Your assistance allows us to positively contribute to a future of greater understanding between the U.S. and the Arab world.

With kind regards,

*Richard Fairbanks*

Richard Fairbanks  
Chairman of the Board

# On the Road in America

*(continued from cover)* During their journey across the United States, the talent visited Washington, DC, New York, NY, Chicago, IL, Clarksdale, MS, West Helena, AR, towns in Montana and cities in California. The DC episode focused on the themes of democracy and freedom of speech. The students dined with senators and congressmen, and participated in a panel discussion with a select number of young professionals at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a non-partisan think tank. The cast also got a taste of American talk

radio as guests on a live call-in show. After wrapping in Washington, the cast and crew traveled to New York City for an episode that dealt with the theme of capitalism. They visited a commodities board and experienced the material gains of a free market system on a limousine ride, an afternoon on a yacht and a day at the beach in the Hamptons. To learn about the benevolent side of capitalism, the cast met with a third world philanthropist. Next, they visited the Museum of Natural History, Central Park, Times Square and Grand Central Station.

Following their visit to the East Coast, the boys headed to the Midwest to visit Chicago for an episode centered on the theme of community. Chicago is divided into North and South sides, each claiming its own distinct identity, resulting in a friendly rivalry that has pervaded the city's history. The cast visited the different neighborhoods and explored the factors that differentiate them. They also attended a Chicago Cubs game, and the Lollapalooza music festival. The episode ended with a softball game of North and South-siders,

coming together for the sake of sports, food and community. Heading south to Clarksdale, MS, the birthplace of the blues, the cast attended the Sunflower River Blues and Gospel Festival. They were introduced to soul food, rural life, and the South's painful history with slavery while in West Helena, AR. The young men then headed west to Montana, where they got a glimpse of the rugged life of the frontier by participating in an overnight pack trip through the mountains. They also learned how to fly-fish on a float trip

on the Yellowstone River. The cast was educated on the Native American experience in the West by archeologist and anthropologist Dr. Larry Lahren. In each city, the cast met and interacted with Americans of all walks of life, each listening to and learning from the other. To follow the experiences of our cast and crew as they crisscross the country, be sure to read the next edition of our newsletter.



## Programming Update: *Al-Sa'at* (The Hour)



*Al-Sa'at* (The Hour) is a 13-episode, hour-long news magazine show currently in development. Don Hewitt, the former executive producer of CBS's *60 Minutes* and a member of Layalina's Board of Counselors, has pledged his assistance to the production team. Layalina hopes to set the bar high for indigenous programmers by introducing investigative reporting, a developing genre on Arab television. We look forward to your tax-deductible support to produce the pilot episode of this innovative series.

## Programming Update: *Arabitak Keif?* (How's Your Arabic?)



*Arabitak Keif?* (How's Your Arabic?) is a 13-episode, half-hour sitcom series that features a diverse group of Americans studying Arabic at an American university. Currently in development, this show educates the audience to help bridge the gap of mutual misunderstanding between the two cultures. We will produce the pilot in association with New Frontier Entertainment of Los Angeles. Thanks to a generous \$100,000 grant from the Marc and Eva Stern Foundation of California, we now have secured a third of the necessary funds to produce the pilot episode. We look forward to your assistance to move forward with this exciting series.



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## Milestones

- In July, we celebrated the **one-year anniversary** of our Bi-Weekly Press Review on Public Diplomacy and Arab Media. Over the course of the past year, we supplemented the original PDF format with an HTML version as well as an RSS feed, a format for syndicating content. Distribution has grown from a dozen subscribers to some 4,000 readers. The websites of both the **USC Center on Public Diplomacy** and the **Public Diplomacy Council** link to the Press Review, attesting to the success of this initiative.
- June marked the launch of the stand-alone production website for *On the Road in America*. Visit it at **www.ontheroadinamerica.tv**
- In August, we unveiled our **redesigned website** with enhanced features. Visit us online at: **www.layalina.tv**

## Goodbye Omar... Welcome Maggie!

Omar Wahab, Layalina's outgoing Project Assistant, first joined our efforts as an intern in January 2005. We wish Omar the best of luck at Harvard University, where he has matriculated as a Master of Arts candidate in Middle Eastern Studies. Prior to his work at Layalina, Omar worked for Banco Santander in his native Miami, FL, the 2004 Kerry-Edwards presidential campaign and Wahab Construction of Miami. Omar is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Georgetown University with a degree in International Politics. Omar's summer vacation visiting family and friends in Lebanon was cut short by the start of hostilities between Hizbollah and Israel.

Margaret Daher, Layalina's new Project Assistant, recently returned to Washington following a year long stint as a Student Affairs Officer at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in Qatar. Prior to her work in Doha, Margaret worked at Georgetown University's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies. She graduated from Georgetown University in 2005 with a Bachelor of Arts cum laude in Arabic and Spanish. Margaret, a native of Michigan, has also lived in Egypt, where she studied and worked as a research assistant and volunteer English teacher for six months.



The Quarterly e-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).

Support Layalina by making a tax-deductible donation online at [www.layalina.tv](http://www.layalina.tv) or by contacting us at 202-775-3202.