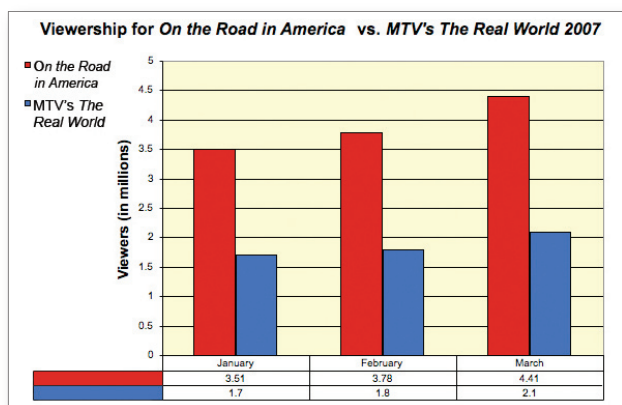




Layalina Productions

Quarterly Newsletter / Summer 2007

The Numbers Are In: On the Road is a Hit!



Layalina's reality television series, *Ala al Tariq fi Amrika* (On the Road in America), garnered nearly four-and-one-half million viewers per episode in the Arab world and held the top second best ratings, out of over 250 television channel options, for its Thursday night primetime grid slot on MBC1. According to the ratings survey administered by Ipsos-Stat, one of the leading research companies in the Middle East region, ***On the Road in America* is "among the most watched shows in the Arab world."** The first twelve episodes of the series aired from January 18 to April 5 on MBC1, the most credible free-to-air pan-Arab satellite network. Between January and March, ratings jumped from 3.5 to 4.4, which is equivalent to an increase of one million viewers over the duration of twelve weeks.

By way of comparison, MTV's *The Real World*, a popular U.S. cable television show, attracted an average of nearly two million viewers in a similar primetime time slot during the same months according to a survey by Nielson Media Research.

We are delighted with the popularity of *On the Road in America* and would like to thank the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation of Indiana for their generous support of this series.

Ambassador Argyros Joins Layalina's Board

Ambassador George L. Argyros, a Layalina Counselor and Donor, was elected to Layalina's Board of Directors in June. Ambassador Argyros is Chairman and CEO of Arnel & Associates, and General Partner of Westar Capital, a private investment company.

Ambassador Argyros is a retired U.S. Ambassador to Spain, and a former member of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations for the U.S. Trade Representative.



Argyros states, "As a business executive and retired Ambassador to a major European capital, I am keenly aware of the need for greater understanding between the United States and the Arab world. Our national security and business interests with this very important region of the globe call for sustained and constructive citizen diplomacy outreach. Layalina Productions is uniquely positioned to play a vital role in strengthening this important relationship and I am pleased to play a leadership role in helping guide Layalina's efforts."

Ambassador Argyros is on the Board of Directors for First American Corporation (NYSE); DST Systems, Inc. (NYSE); Daskocil Manufacturing Company; and Igloo Products Corp. He is an International Councillor and Trustee of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Board Member of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Member of the Library of Congress Open World Leadership Board, and Founding Chairman for the Nixon Center.

Ambassador Argyros holds degrees in business and economics, as well as an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters Degree from Chapman University and an honorary Doctor of Laws Degree from Pepperdine University. He is on the Board of Trustees for Chapman University and the California Institute of Technology. He is a 1993 recipient of the Horatio Alger Award of Distinguished Americans.

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Chairman's Message

Dear friends,

Please join me in welcoming Layalina Counselor Ambassador George Argyros as the newest member of our Board of Directors. My colleagues and I look forward to his leadership, counsel and support as we pursue our vision of increased understanding between the United States and the Arab world.

I am also happy to report that our reality series *On the Road in America* was a major hit throughout the Arab world. The premiere run for the 12 episode season of the series secured the second best ratings out of 250 channels for its primetime slot on MBC1, the most credible pan-Arab free-to-air satellite network.

We are delighted with the show's popularity and would like to thank the many supporters of our not-for-profit initiative for helping us present to millions of Arab viewers a more accurate representation of the diversity and uniqueness of our great country.

We hope that in light of our significant progress, you would consider making a tax-deductible donation to Layalina to help us maintain the momentum we have gathered and move forward on our other exciting projects.

Thank you in advance for your help.

With kind regards,



Richard Fairbanks
Chairman of the Board

On the Road in the Middle East

We are delighted to announce that we are working with our production partner Visionaire Media of Los Angeles on developing the reverse series to *On the Road in America*.

On the Road in the Middle East will showcase the experiences of a diverse group of 6 twenty-something Americans on a road trip through the Arab world. This exciting reality series will help us meet our mission to further cross-cultural understanding by introducing to millions of Arab television viewers the dreams and aspirations of contemporary American youth, beyond the stereotypes and sometimes misleading representations in other media. In turn, American television viewers will discover, over the course of 13 half-hour weekly episodes, the Arab countries of the Maghreb, the Gulf and the Levant, their communities, cultures and salient issues that are of concern to Arab youth.

Our aim is to debunk stereotypes by capturing the warts-and-all exchanges between Americans and their Arab interlocutors. This comes at a time when poll after poll finds rising levels of anti-Americanism among Arab youth, even in moderate Arab countries, which are traditional allies of the United States.

We are interested in bringing this series to fruition on an expedited basis due to the distressing state of U.S.-Arab relations. We are keen to produce a second hit series, now that we have gained a following among Arab audiences and television executives alike.

Given the seven figure production budget for the show, we anticipate that it would take us over two years to raise the balance of the necessary funding through tax-deductible charitable donations. As such, we have decided to license the intellectual rights of the property to Visionaire Media and have them take the lead in funding the series using private sector resources. Visionaire will pre-sell the series to an American broadcaster who would then gain the domestic rights to *On the Road in the Middle East*. In return, Layalina will own the rights to the series in our primary



Potential cast members for *On the Road in the Middle East*.

market, the Arab world.

We will reserve the right to re-edit episodes as we see fit and license the series to a credible and popular pan-Arab free-to-air satellite broadcaster of our choice. Under this arrangement, Layalina will also provide, in return for a fee, production assistance to Visionaire by making its Vice President, Leon Shahabian, available to serve as executive producer for the series. This ensures that Layalina has creative and editorial input throughout all stages of production.

As we embark on this project, we are encouraged by the emails and phone queries that we continue to receive from curious and adventurous college students from throughout the United States who are interested in being involved in the series. We look forward to choosing the finalist talent via casting calls in the South, mid-Atlantic and Midwest to supplement the casting call that Visionaire conducted on the West Coast.

We look forward to keeping you informed of our progress with this important series.

OTR Screening @ GWU

On April 18, George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs, the Elliot School of International Affairs and the Public Diplomacy Institute co-hosted a screening of two episodes from Layalina's hit reality series *Ala al Tariq fi Amrika* (On the Road in America). The screening was followed by a panel presentation on public diplomacy and Arab media by Layalina President Ambassador Marc Ginsberg and Layalina Vice President and series Executive Producer Leon Shahabian. During the question and answer session, Marc and Leon entertained questions about the show and the state of pan-Arab broadcasting. George Washington University Public Diplomacy Fellow Robert J. Callahan moderated the event, which took place at the Jack Morton Auditorium on GWU's campus and was open to the public.

Layalina Donors Messrs. Charles Elkins and Alan Heil attended the function. Also in attendance were active and retired senior Foreign Service Officers, officials from other government agencies,

academics from George Washington University, Georgetown University and National Defense University, as well as students.



Top: Audience members engage in discussion following the screening. Above (Left to Right): George Washington University Public Diplomacy Fellow Robert J. Callahan moderates as Layalina President Ambassador Marc Ginsberg and Layalina Vice President and series Executive Producer Leon Shahabian lead a discussion on public diplomacy.

New York Fundraising Function

On March 26, Messrs. Walter A. Carozza, Alexander Paluch and Vincent A. Wasik of International Development Trust (IDT) co-hosted a fundraising luncheon to benefit Layalina Productions, Inc. The function took place at the University Club and was attended by executives of private equity firms who have an interest in the Middle East.

Mr. Carozza served as master of ceremonies and spoke eloquently on the need to engage the Arab world. Layalina Director and Donor Ambassador Paul A. Russo introduced Layalina Chairman Ambassador Richard Fairbanks and



Layalina Donor and event co-host Mr. Walter Carozza welcomes his guests.

provided further insights about the region as well as the need for Layalina's efforts. In his presentation, Ambassador Fairbanks discussed Layalina's impact in the Arab world following the success of *On the Road*

in America and described programming currently in development. Ambassador Fairbanks thanked Layalina Director and Donor Mr. Frederick B. Whittemore, Layalina Counselor and Donor the Honorable John C. Whitehead and Ambassador Russo for their attendance as well as for their leadership and support of our efforts.

Following the presentation, Ambassador Fairbanks entertained wide-ranging questions about the Arab world and Layalina's efforts from audience members.

We look forward to building on the success of this function by holding a larger gathering in the Fall in New York. Please contact us should you wish to be added to the list of invitees, or should you wish to host a fundraising function to benefit Layalina.

Top Left: Layalina Director and Donor Ambassador Paul A. Russo addresses attendees. Top Right: Mr. M.K. Kim, CEO of SMI-Hyundai and Mr. Glenn Silber, Producer, ABC's 20/20. Bottom (Left to Right): Layalina Director and Donor Mr. Frederick B. Whittemore, Layalina Counselor and Donor Hon. John C. Whitehead and Layalina Chairman Amb. Richard Fairbanks.

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

We are pleased to announce that the pilot episode of *Al-Sa'at* (The Hour), our upcoming investigative news magazine series, is now in the development phase of production.

Our team is working with senior editors and executives of *Al-Arabiya*, the Dubai-based popular pan-Arab news channel, on defining the co-production parameters of the pilot, including budget assembly. We will work with our colleagues at *Al-Arabiya* over the course of the next few weeks to identify and flesh-out the topics of the segments for the initial episode. *Al-Arabiya* is a very credible network that is making serious in-roads into controversial *Al-Jazeera's* lead in many Arab countries.

With the blessing of the Marc and Eva Stern Foundation of California, we have reallocated the Foundation's generous grant from the account dedicated to the production of the pilot for our proposed half-hour sitcom series *Arabitak Keif?* (How's Your Arabic?) to the account dedicated to the production of the pilot for *The Hour*.

While the Stern Foundation grant will allow us to bring to fruition the initial episode of this 13 episode season series, we look forward to your generous financial support to help us raise the necessary funds to produce subsequent episodes, especially given the timeliness of this project. Thank you in advance for your assistance.



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On the Road: In the News



"People [in the Arab world] are shocked that that's how things are in the States," says On The Road in America cast member Sanad, referring to the lifestyle and the freedom Americans have to say what they want. "Some of them assumed it was fixed or scripted. I keep telling them 'Trust me, it's not.'"

- Emmy writer Ann Farmer quoting Sanad Al-Qubaisi in "Road Picture."

Ala al Tariq fi Amrika (On the Road in America) was featured in the June issue of *Emmy Magazine*, the bi-monthly publication of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences and the March 26-April 1 issue of *Variety* magazine.

Muslim Journalists Visit Layalina

On May 15, Layalina Vice President Leon Shahabian met with a delegation of nine senior television and print journalists from countries with substantial Muslim populations, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan and the Philippines.

The visiting Muslim journalists were participating members of an exchange program entitled "Building Understanding between the U.S. and the Asian Muslim World," as part of the 2007 Senior Journalists Seminar of the East-West Center. The delegation represented major news outlets such as *Tolo TV* from Afghanistan and *TPI TV* from Indonesia, as well as major dailies and agencies such as the *BBC World Service*, *Prothom Alo*, *Indian Express*, *Press Trust of India*, *Dawn* from Pakistan, and *Urusan Malaysi* from Malaysia. The Meridian International Center arranged the professional meetings for the delegation.

The journalists had expressed interest in meeting with Layalina executives, particularly to share their thoughts about the merits of *Ala al Tariq fi Amrika (On the Road in America)*.

Leon interacted with the journalists and provided them with an overview of Layalina's recent efforts and overall mission and spoke on the current state of American efforts in the sphere public diplomacy for the Arab world.

Layalina Productions is delighted to support these types of exchange efforts that lead to increased understanding and open dialogue between the United States and Muslim nations.



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.

Support Layalina by making a tax-deductible donation online at www.layalina.tv or by contacting us at 202-775-3202.