



HAWA HAWAII Kenya

Category : Drama
Length : 90'
Language : Swahili & Arabic
Shooting format : HD
Shooting location : Mombasa (Kenya) or Zanzibar
Shooting dates : January-February 2016
Expected date of completion : July 2016
Stage of production : Development stage

Budget : 380 000 €
Financing in place : 0 €
Workshops or markets attended : Durban Film Mart 2014, Locarno Filmmakers Summer Academy 2014, Locarno Open Doors Network 2014
Current situation : Seeking for European coproducer, international sale agent



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Wafa TAJDIN – PRODUCER (SEVEN THIRTY Films)



Born and brought up in one of Africa's busiest cities, Nairobi, Wafa Tajdin is no stranger to the patchwork of experiences that are part and parcel of growing up in a 21st century metropolis. A sentiment that has contributed immensely to her choice of academic pursuits – an undergraduate degree in economics and a Master's degree in media studies from the Rhodes School of Journalism in South Africa. A passion for journalism and telling the stories that matter led Wafa Tajdin onto the path of film and television specifically with respect to producing human-interest stories from angles that are innovative, interesting and relevant to Africa in particular.

Amirah TAJDIN – DIRECTOR



Culturally disorganized Amirah Tajdin is an artist and filmmaker who considers her ongoing romance with crazy cities and her mixed lineage as influences for most of her films, photography and general creative process. She graduated from Rhodes University with a Bachelor of Fine Art (Photography) in South Africa, was born and brought up in Nairobi, spent her teenage years in Dubai and currently considers everywhere and nowhere home. In addition to this, she forms one half of the Africa-based indie production company, SEVEN THIRTY Films, alongside her sister Wafa Tajdin (producer).

SYNOPSIS

Hamedi, a Swahili wedding singer and part-time drag queen returns home to be by his dying mother's side. Over the course of what turns out to be the last week he spends with her, he painfully finds closure from the wounds he's been running away from all his life spent as a misfit in Mombasa and as a son who never could live up to his mother's expectations. The film takes place over seven days during which the protagonist has to balance his mother's worsening cancer condition and the culmination of his career of wedding singer. He discovers truths about his mother's past, revisits painful memories from his childhood and channels his emotions through his one true love – music. Thus the sounds of popular 'Taarab' music, Bollywood love songs and old Egyptian orchestral music accent Hamedi's island existence and, more importantly, his deeply fractured relationship with his mother, who violently shuns his drag-queen lifestyle and less-than-manly career choice. Hamedi tries to mend his relationship with his mother by communicating with her through these love songs.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT (extract)

« [...] My love for aesthetics and constant search for visual thrills amidst humanity's agenda the world over continue to inform my creativity. [...] I exercise my discretion and fascination with the spaces and people that we come across in every city the world over courtesy of globalization and migration of not only culture but of universal human spirit as well, found within these 'loud-quiet' spaces, our hiding places.

With *Hawa Hawaii*, I've brought the story closer to home and my heart, setting it in my home country of Kenya and more importantly, Mombasa [...]. This coastal region has been the home of more than just my father and forefathers, it's been the home of some of Africa's most colourful characters, inspired artists and tortured souls. Hailing from this Swahili background myself, I felt compelled to pen a story set within it's sometimes restricting confines yet incredibly rich history. And of course as a misfit myself in regard to my expected role as a Swahili/Muslim woman, I could not pass up weaving a world of pain, beauty and mere observation, through the characters of this story. [...] »

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