Edward Said documentary “gives Palestine its own voice” at Doha Film Festival 2026

Doha, Qatar; November 25, 2026: Audiences around the world want to understand Palestine from Palestinians, the team behind ***Edward Said: Between Worlds*** (USA, 2026) told the media at Doha Film Festival 2026.

Director and producer Maiken Baird, producer Sarah Mowaswes and Edward Said's children, Najla Said and Wadie Said, presented the film ahead of its Gala Screening at Katara.

In the film,Palestinian-American scholar, musician and intellectual tells the untold history of Palestine in his own words, 23 years after his death. Made in collaboration with the Said family and estate, it traces seven decades from his childhood in Jerusalem before the Nakba of 1948 to his death in New York, asking who has the right to tell their own story.

"Since October 7, there has been so much misinformation about Palestine, about what it is like and who Palestinians are," said Mowaswes, who is Palestinian American. "This film brings multiple Palestinian perspectives into the present and makes Palestine a character in its own right. On our phones we see Palestine as death and destruction. It is a real, vibrant place and has been for many years. We wanted to create that sense of place, because it is so often reduced to rubble."

Najla Said said the absence of Palestinian voices in Western media was part of the reason to bring her father back. She pointed to his 1984 essay *Permission to Narrate*, which argued that Palestinians should tell their own story. "Since October 7, in the mainstream media in America and the Western world, we haven't heard from many Palestinians, and there are plenty who can articulate what has happened," she said.

Baird, a Danish-American filmmaker, read *The Question of Palestine* in 1981 and later went to Columbia University, where Said taught, partly because of him. "After October 7, I felt a lot of what people were saying was untrue and misinformed," she said. "He was, to me, the most articulate and interesting person on anything to do with Palestine and this region as a whole, so I wanted to bring him back through his own words."

"The gratitude people express at screenings is the gratitude I felt in 1981," Baird said. "You learn the truth about the creation of Israel and what happened, which you don't learn in the Western world. He was the main person who told that story in English."

Wadie Said said the film takes viewers back to a time when his father argued Palestine's case in the United States almost alone. "The Palestinian narrative was non-existent at the time. I found myself back in that period through these pictures and archival footage, seeing how he resisted and built that narrative with enemies all around him. He was by himself, and yet he proved our narrative and communicated it to the world."

He said the book that showed him his father's importance was *After the Last Sky: Palestinian Lives* (1986), with photographs by Jean Mohr, a frequent visitor to the family home. "That was the first time I

recognised him as a thinker, someone whose writing, stances and way of expressing himself had a profound effect on many, many people."

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