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Qatar's Film Committee Unveils Taim Hassan, Creative Team and Production Partner for *Caesar* Feature Film

Prominent Syrian actor Taim Hassan to portray Caesar, the Syrian military defector who exposed Assad regime atrocities

Award-winning filmmaker Ameer Fakher Eldin will direct, with BAFTA-nominated screenwriters Rory Haines and Sohrab Noshirvani to write as project enters next phase of development

Syrian production company Tadmor Film City joins the project providing on-the-ground support

Doha, Qatar – 21 November 2026: The Film Committee at Media City Qatar has announced that acclaimed Syrian actor Taim Hassan will portray "Caesar" in the feature film telling his extraordinary true story. Award-winning filmmaker Ameer Fakher Eldin will direct the film, with BAFTA-nominated Rory Haines and Sohrab Noshirvani appointed to write the screenplay. Tadmur Cinema City, a Syrian production company, has joined Caesar as a production partner, providing on-the-ground support in Syria.

Announced during the second edition of Doha Industry Days, the casting and creative appointments, alongside the addition of a Syrian production partner, mark a significant new stage in the project's development of the project, one year after the Film Committee announced that it had acquired the life rights to the story of Caesar, the Syrian military police photographer who risked his life to expose systemic torture and human rights abuses inside Syrian prisons during Bashar Al-Assad's presidency.

The real-life Caesar, who publicly revealed himself as First Warrant Officer Farid Nada al-Madhan in February 2025, was a photographer in the Military Police Documentation Unit and Head of the Judicial Evidence Office in Damascus. He spent three years secretly removing evidence from the Assad regime, including photographs documenting the treatment of detainees under Syrian government custody. He defected in 2013, and his evidence became central to international efforts seeking accountability for abuses committed in Syria.

The new creative team brings together leading regional talent and internationally acclaimed filmmakers with an established track record of telling complex, internationally resonant stories. The cast will be led by Taim Hassan, one of the Arab world's top actors, whose celebrated performances range from biographical dramas such as *Nizar Qabbani and King Farouk* to morally layered ones such as *Taht Sabe' Ard* and his recent leading role in *Mawlana.*

Ameer Fakher Eldin will direct the feature film following the international success of his first two features. His debut, *The Stranger*, premiered at the Venice International Film Festival and received the Edipo Re Award before going on to represent Palestine as its submission for Best International Feature Film at the Academy Awards. His second feature, *Yunan*, premiered in competition at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2025.

Rory Haines and Sohrab Noshirvani will write the screenplay. The writing duo received a BAFTA nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay for *The Mauritanian*, the acclaimed feature film based on the true story of Mohamedou Ould Slahi and his detention at Guantánamo Bay. They also created and wrote the BAFTA-nominated BBC drama *Informer*.

H.E. Hassan Al Thawadi, Chairman of the Film Committee at Media City Qatar, said: "Caesar's story is one of extraordinary courage, sacrifice and global consequence. When we announced this project last year, our ambition

was to assemble a cast and creative team capable of approaching his story with the humanity, sensitivity and cinematic ambition it deserves."

Farid Nada Al-Madhan, the real Caesar, said: "I am honoured to be here with you today. "I cannot express enough gratitude to the State of Qatar for its continued support. The story of Caesar is not simply a story of suffering. It is not just the story of a photographer or someone who took pictures. It is a story about humanity. It is a story about confronting challenges. Above all, it is an ethical story. That is what we have worked to communicate."

This was never intended to be simply a forensic or documentary exercise. It is a human story – the story of people who had lives, families and experiences, but whose lives unfortunately ended in inhumane circumstances. That is why we decided to tell this story through cinema: to give a voice to the human beings who suffered. I was particularly encouraged by Mr. Hassan, who demonstrated a strong interest in the human dimension of Caesar and in conveying the real circumstances behind the story."

We left Syria in 2014 and came to Qatar, where we received support in every aspect. Praise be to God that we are back here in 2026 to celebrate the launch of this film. I would like to thank everyone involved, including our partners and the production team, for helping bring this project to life."

Bringing Taim on board alongside Ameer, Rory and Sohrab, and welcoming Tadmor Film City to the project, represents an important step forward in realising that ambition. They bring a powerful combination of regional understanding, international experience, and a proven ability to translate complex real-life events into compelling human stories. We are excited to work with them and see the project move into its next phase of creative development."

The feature film will trace al-Madhan's extraordinary journey from a man secretly documenting atrocities from within the Assad regime to an international witness whose evidence would have far-reaching consequences for global policy and accountability.

Taim Hassan said: "As a Syrian actor, bringing Caesar's extraordinary story of courage and sacrifice to the screen carries deep personal meaning. I am honoured to portray him and to work with this exceptional creative team to tell his story with the authenticity, sensitivity and humanity it deserves."

Ameer Fakher Eldin said: "Caesar's story carries enormous responsibility. Behind the scale of the events is the deeply human story of an individual confronted with an extraordinary choice, and the courage required to act when the consequences were almost unimaginable. I am honoured to be entrusted with bringing that story to the screen and look forward to working with Rory, Sohrab and the wider team to approach it with the care and integrity it deserves."

Rory Haines and Sohrab Noshirvani said: "The scale of cruelty suffered by the Syrian people under the Assad regime was an unfathomable tragedy. In holding the perpetrators accountable and honoring their victims, Caesar showed a type of heroism often ignored by movies. The courage required to take on the machine from within is unimaginable to those fortunate enough never to have to face that choice.

Caesar's story is as much an inspiration, that any one person can make an immense difference, as it is a warning, that any country could slip into a state of fear and malice, and find itself in need of such a person. Ameer is a wonderful filmmaker with the depth of soul and empathy required to bring Caesar's story to the screen. We're privileged to be part of the team that helps him fulfill his vision."

The developments announced today build on the Film Committee's original announcement at Doha Industry Days 2025, when Caesar made a rare appearance in Doha and the Committee unveiled plans to develop his story across multiple formats, including a feature film and documentary. The wider project is being developed with Department M and Katara Studios, with distribution by award-winning studio NEON (*Anora, Parasite, Triangle of Sadness, Anatomy of a Fall*) and support from Kuwait-based Sard Media.

The project reflects the Film Committee's commitment to championing powerful stories from the region that combine artistic ambition with social relevance, while bringing together leading regional and international creative talent to develop those stories for global audiences.

Further details on the feature film, including additional casting announcements and creative appointments, and production schedule will be announced as development progresses.

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ABOUT TADMUR CINEMA CITY

Tadmur Cinema City is a film and television production destination inspired by the cultural heritage of Palmyra. Located in Tadmur, Syria, it aims to bring together production facilities, creative talent, and local and international partners to support screen storytelling. By connecting the region's rich history with contemporary filmmaking, Tadmur Cinema City seeks to contribute to the growth of Syria's film and creative industries.

ABOUT THE FILM COMMITTEE AT MEDIA CITY QATAR

The Film Committee at Media City Qatar (Film Committee) was established to position Qatar as a leading destination for global film production, co-financing and creative collaboration. Under the chairmanship of H.E. Hassan Al Thawadi, the Film Committee supports the development of a world-class film ecosystem through strategic partnerships, production incentives, investment and infrastructure development.

Working alongside the Doha Film Institute, Media City Qatar and other national and international partners, the Film Committee seeks to foster a thriving creative economy, attract international productions and strengthen Qatar's role within the global film and storytelling landscape.

ABOUT DOHA INDUSTRY DAYS

Hosted by the Film Committee at Media City Qatar (Film Committee), in partnership with the Doha Film Institute and the Doha Film Festival 2026, Doha Industry Days brings together leading figures from global cinema, media and technology to explore the future of filmmaking in Qatar, across the region and around the world.

Taking place from 19–21 November 2026 at the Rosewood Doha Hotel, the second edition will feature fireside conversations, panel discussions, Inner Circle Sessions and keynote exchanges with senior industry leaders and creative voices. Across three days of creative exchange and collaboration, participants will

explore emerging trends, new models of financing and distribution, technology, infrastructure and the evolving future of storytelling.

The programme is designed to deepen connections between the Arab world and the international film industry, champion voices from the region and the wider Global South, and support Qatar's continued growth as a hub for film, media and entertainment.

For more information, contact: media@filmcommittee.com