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Empowering
Conversations
Through Creativity



Jose & Joseph

“Slice of life of expatriate women living in an Arab world.”

Bahrain Confidential's Jenny Thomas talks to Joseph Tito, CEO and Director of JEO Productions about the latest talk in town—the reality TV show, ‘Blending In With The Bahrainis’.

Tell us about JEO Productions.

JEO Productions came to life 12 years ago. **Josie Houpt, the Vice-President and Producer**, has been by my side since the very beginning. We are fortunate to have an adventurous team of artists and entrepreneurs who love being inspired by various cultures from all around the world. JEO Productions first started in Toronto, then Italy, Bahrain and soon Saudi.

Growing bigger and travelling and documenting experiences in film, we want our audience to see the beauty we see.

Tell us about ‘Blending In With The Bahrainis’.

Blending In With The Bahrainis (BIWB) is about expatriates living in Bahrain. The idea became a reality when we wanted the international audience to see how beautiful a place Bahrain is, and how welcoming and caring the people are.

It goes beyond reality TV shows. These women were chosen because each of them has a story to tell. From their professional to their personal life, BIWB shows Bahrain through these women’s eyes. This is not a scripted show. Each episode will have a theme ranging from daily decisions to customer service and everything in between. Our aim is to portray the talented scenes in Bahrain and its lovely culture.

BIWB is going be 12-1-hour episodes, which premiere after Ramadan.

The cast consists of six women:

Rebecca- An entrepreneur from the UK, who created a well-esteemed publishing empire in Bahrain with two well-known magazines, a design firm and a beauty hair extensions line. Balancing her personal and professional life with great ease, she pursues excellence in everything she does. A lover of animals, Rebecca is devoted to taking care of strays.

Nadia- Half-Bahraini, half British, she is an outspoken and carefree lady who balances the responsibility of behaving for her Bahraini father, while also enjoying a good party. Working in event promotions, she always knows what’s hot and what’s not on the island.

Jelena- Serbian-Italian mother of two first came to Bahrain with her Italian chef husband. Opening a huge Mediterranean restaurant in Bahrain, her day consists of kids, social activities and building a community and teaching piano to local children.

Emma- A reformed party lover and world traveller; the expecting Scottish mom-to-be is married to a well-known and powerful Bahraini man. Now shifting her lifestyle, her days are occupied with baby planning and shopping for her expanding family.



Rebecca



Nadia



Jelena



Emma



Natasha



Natasha- The Australian- Iraqi has called Bahrain her home for ten years. After first coming to the island as a flight attendant, she has since re-invented herself. She now strives to build her dream business and work.

6th member is in the process of being re-casted.

What are the criteria for choosing the contestants?

We first had a casting where women came and were asked questions. It is not just about beauty, these women were chosen because they each have something to say about Bahrain.

For any reality show, the cast has to be good. Put simply, it’s a show that has not been done before. For the first time, we show why expatriates who have the choice to live anywhere in the world, choose Bahrain.

What was the response from the first teaser? Why was it taken down?

We wanted to give the viewers a glimpse of what was going to happen. In two days we got over 10,000 views. The response we received has been amazing! So far, we have received interests from North America, UK, Australia, South Africa and Lebanon.

For the interest of a North American audience, we needed to re-cast either an American or a Canadian, which is one of the main reasons why the teaser was taken down. This re-cast will be based on viewers’ votes! So, go on and hit that like button.

What in your opinion is Bahrain's take on reality TV shows?

Well, it’s never been done before. People are skeptical because they think our concept is like that of Keeping Up With The Kardashians! BIWB’s concept is not like that; it’s quite the contrary. Each show has a different concept. We want BIWB to have an impact on the worldwide audience.

Anything exciting been happening?

Well, we are casting for a new MTV show. It’s a show that focuses on 18-25 year olds, showing the life of the Arab world through the eyes of some pretty cool third culture kids.

We also just finished the “Happy” video. That was FUN! Inspired by Pharrell’s, “24 Hours of Happy”, the video has people everywhere from the National Theatre to the Race track and everything in between, literally every nook and corner of Bahrain, dancing along the famous track. The video went viral in 24 hours and till day it has hit 57,500 views.

What better way to promote Bahrain and it’s joyous people!

Photo Credit: Jody Peck

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