



jeo productions presents



photo by Loredana Mantello

DANA

directed by Joseph Tito

Bahrain Confidential had an hour with film director and producer, Joseph Tito to get the low down on his life, his newest film 'Dana', and how he is finding living in Bahrain...

Dana, the newest production from Joseph Tito was launched in Bahrain in February and pre-production is well underway. The film portrays the story of three generations of Bahraini women - their true nature, strength, intelligence and power.

Joseph explained that he was inspired to write the story after a vacation in Bahrain last year when he was blown away by the warmth and generosity of the Bahraini people. Having not visited the GCC before, he quickly realised that the Western view of the Arab women he had been exposed to was not in-line with the strong, intellectual and powerful women that he was meeting here. Noting this discrepancy, he felt the need to showcase the true Arab woman to the rest of the world, and saw a beautiful country and culture that provided the perfect medium to do so.

Dana follows the story of Hessa (grandmother), Dana (mother) and Layla (daughter), mapping their lives and relationships as they develop through the 1970's both in Bahrain and in Beirut when Layla heads off to study there.

The film refrains from taking a political slant, intending only to portray lives and relationships of the characters. The historical political situation is however represented accurately, in terms of how it has directly impacted their lives. He explains that every effort has been taken throughout to incorporate accurate historical data into the plot, down to the smallest detail, such as the names of the schools they attended.

The screenplay was written by an excellent, female Bahraini writer which Joseph felt was important to put across the essence of the story and maintain its authenticity.

Dana has a number of Bahraini sponsors, including Shaikha Mai bint Mohammad Al Khalifa, a powerful woman who Joseph feels portrays strength and passion - the very essence of the film and significant source of inspiration for him in its making.

The film will be shot over 40 days in October in various locations and is set for world release by March next year. For the production and pre-production phases, Joseph is keen to use as much of a Bahraini workforce as possible and



"If women ruled the world, it would be a much more compassionate place."

is currently hiring crew, while casting* for Arabic actors will take place in Bahrain 17th to 19th May.

Dana aims to feature Bahrain in a positive light. The world will see a new side to this country, a rich and beautiful

industry, from which he has gained experience in all aspects of production.

Having always been interested in creative writing, he started out as an international model from the age of 15. Realising that he had more to offer and that he wanted to use his voice, he moved to acting and then scriptwriting, throwing himself in at the deep end to direct his first short film, 'Windows' (2004), his adaptation of Kellerman's Windows. This was quickly followed by a succession of TV-shows, documentaries and feature films.

Dana will be his third feature film after 'Dance as if No One is Watching' (a black comedy), and 'Death of a Virgin' (a horror film) which received international acclaim at Cannes, Toronto, Spain, Portugal and Brazil. In his current situation, both directing and producing films he feels he is fulfilled, using all his creative talents to their full potential.

To wrap up the interview Joseph wanted express his thanks to Bahrain saying, "The people have been warm, accepting and welcoming" and to Shaikha Mai for all her help and inspiration. He leaves us with a parting thought: "If women ruled the world, it would be a much more compassionate place." ■

culture, which will help rebuild the image of Bahrain and the Middle East in the eyes of the world. This will have ramifications in business and tourism and Joseph hopes it will also promote Bahrain as a destination for location filming in the future, in place of the 'standard desert' shots generally taken in Dubai or Morocco. Most of all, he hopes Bahrain will be proud of the film.

About Joseph Tito

Joseph Tito has been in Bahrain since November last year, and is just back from Beirut on a location scout.

His rise to Chief Executive of Jeo Productions, came after an extensive and varied career in the media and arts



Dana casting will be held for Arabic actors (male and female) ages eight to 70 between the 17th and 19th May. This will involve auditions with part of the script, both in Arabic and in English and applicants should be comfortable with both. Head shots can be sent to info@jeoproductions.com, for more information or contact Leila Tel. +973 3439 4517.