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'On Borrowed Time' a feel-good movie from the United Arab Emirates

By Sophie Braccini



Photo provided

Efi Lubliner, the co-founder of the local International Film Showcase, is bringing "On Borrowed Time," an excellent comedy filmed in Dubai by director Yasir Al-Yasiri, to Moraga starting this weekend. Lubliner says he sought distribution of this film almost two years ago when he saw it at the Palm Springs International Film Festival because it is becoming increasingly rare to find well-done comedies that do not use triviality and support a good universal moral statement.

The film, which is like a silly version of "Grumpy Old Men" in Arabic, charmed Lubliner. Here four old friends have given up hope as they are slowly but surely ending their lives in a retirement home, but something is going to happen that will shake their world and they will embark on a last adventure. Director Al-Yasiri said in an interview with "Emirates Voice" that he based his script on the short story of famous poet and celebrated songwriter Kareem Al-Iraqi and that it is an inspiring

story of human adventure and unquenchable hope.

Lubliner agrees that the theme is universal and that the story of people wanting to continue to live to the fullest sense of the term despite age, would appeal to anyone. He very much enjoyed the actors who portray this quartet of rule-breakers, Abu Hassan the wannabe astrologer and ringleader; Abu Hamad, wheelchair-bound but still dreaming of recording a vocal album; General Talaat the retired general who speaks with military precision, but hides a tender side; "The Pharmacist," who deals prescription meds to his fellow retirees. The production lists a cast of very well-known talents from the area including Kuwaiti actor Saad Al-Faraj; Syrian star Salloum Hadad; and Emirati actors Mansoor Al-Feeli and Marie Al-Halyan.

Lubliner confirms that this is a film for all ages, as long as they can read subtitles.

The film was shot in Dubai, featuring well-known locations such as Atlantis The Palm and SEGA at Dubai Mall. Lubliner found it extremely esthetically pleasing and very well led by Al-Yasiri.

The movie will open June 16 at the Rheem Theatre in Moraga for at least one full week; the film will not be showing in Orinda this month. Info: lamorindatheatres.com.

Editor's note: The reporter interviewed Lubliner for this article, but due to technical difficulties did not have the opportunity to see the film prior to press time, unlike when other International Film Showcase movies are reviewed.



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