

PRESS RELEASE

**Jury and guest jury member Fatih Akin have made their decision**

## **Egyptian filmmaker Omar El Zohairy to receive the first Baumi Script Development Award**

**Düsseldorf / Berlin, 16 February, 2016. The jury has made its decision from over 80 international submissions: the 27-year-old Egyptian Omar El Zohairy will receive the first € 20,000 Baumi Script Development Award for his project "Feathers of a Father". This year, the jury included the filmmaker Fatih Akin, who was also a close friend of Karl Baumgartner, in addition to the founders Martina Baumgartner (for the Baumgartner family), Reinhard Brundig (for Pandora Film) and Petra Müller (for Film- und Medienstiftung NRW).**

„The story's originality and freshness immediately impressed us as a jury. In "Feathers of a Father", Omar El Zohairy tells a bizarre story in which he dares to address a highly political and topical subject. A story which would have immediately thrilled Baumi and his great love for world cinema," says **Fatih Akin**.

### **Jury motivation:**

„We launched the Baumi Script Development Award to support filmmakers in the creation and development of their stories. Very much in the spirit of Baumi who was constantly discovering new talents and accompanying them part of the way, the jury decided this year to select the treatment "**Feathers of a Father**" by the young Egyptian filmmaker **Omar El Zohairy**. Omar's story combines the deeply rooted religious mysticism of his culture with a clear and critical view of the political situation in his country. He takes us along on a tragi-comic family adventure where his almost kafkaesque story reflects the image of a society in a state of upheaval. An absurd, funny and ultimately dramatic story which calls the essence of our humanity into question. We are very much looking forward to the screenplay and the subsequently developed feature film!“

### **About the film:**

During a magic trick at the birthday party of six-year-old Mando, his father is transformed into a chicken and the magician isn't able to change him back. Each member of the family - the pregnant mother, the older brother and Mando himself - copes with the situation in their own way. Mando misses his father the most and eventually becomes the chicken's best friend. Just when the family is coming to terms with the fact that the father will stay as a chicken, he is changed back. But he is no longer his former self, he doesn't speak or feel. Was the family perhaps better off with the chicken?

### **About the prize-winner:**

The young Egyptian filmmaker Omar El Zohairy comes from Cairo where he completed his studies in Directing at the High Institute of Cinema and made his first shorts there. In 2014, he had the world premiere of the short fiction film "The Aftermath of the Inauguration of the Public Toilet at Kilometer 375" in the Cinéfondation competition at the Cannes Film Festival. This was the first Egyptian film ever to be invited to this section. This was then followed by more than 30 other successful festival invitations around the globe. The winning treatment for "Feathers of a Father" will also see him working together with the co-author Ahmed Amer on the screenplay for this first feature film and then directing.

The founders would like to extend special thanks go to **Friederike Zeit** for the design and making of the prize sculpture, **Katja Clos** for the graphics including the logo, and **Fritz Erler** for the programming of the website.

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