

Press Release 11/09/2024

HFEH Mind partner with Munchie Lunchie Productions as official charity partner of Short Film 'Ashes of a Dying Ember'

- 'Ashes of a Dying Ember' is a short film by Ealing based Munchie Lunchie Productions, featuring a Syrian refugee in London who becomes the victim of a corner shop robbery gone wrong, and the subsequent struggles with his mental health.
- HFEH Mind supported the pre-production phase by providing information on mental health issues, exploring signposting, and workshop delivery.
- Munchie Lunchie and HFEH Mind will host free workshops supporting refugees with an introduction to the film industry and mental health support.
- Munchie Lunchie and HFEH Mind will also jointly host a Poetry Slam 'PoetryintheCity' featuring multiple poets discussing poetry in the diaspora context, the writings of famous Arab poet Al-Muntunabbi, and concluding with poetry recitals from each artist, and crowning the winner of the #PoetryintheCity pop-up competition.
- Together we will drive awareness of marginalised communities and mental health support available to all.

On August 5th 2024, local mental health charity HFEH Mind and Munchie Lunchie Productions, an Ealing based production company whose focus is to change the world positively via their art, partnered for the pre-production phase of a Short Film entitled 'Ashes of a Dying Ember'.

Now entering September and ready to enter the production phase, HFEH Mind will now support efforts to get this short into production and into film festivals. In tandem, both companies will help raise awareness about mental health and drive donations to Ashes of a Dying Ember's GoFundMe page.

HFEH Mind and Munchie Lunchie Productions aim to complete production and premier the short at major film festivals across the UK, Europe, USA, and the Middle East. Alongside the production and festival schedule, they will co-host multiple workshops and activations to support the films debut and drive the mental health conversation, all while empowering refugees to learn and discover new industries and develop mental health wellbeing.

MUNCHIE LUNCHIE PRODUCTIONS



Karim Hadaya, former Syrian refugee and British citizen founded Munchie Lunchie Productions and believes that theatre and film are interchangeable and complement one another. The medium may change but the artistic value remains the same. In a powerful blend of reality and memory, drawing from his personal experience as a refugee, Karim's lead character Hadi, is a refugee in London, who confronts his past through encounters with two ghostly versions of himself, all seeking peace from the lingering scars of war.

The Plot: Hadi Al-Amaery, a Syrian refugee in London has taken to the woods after being the victim of a corner shop robbery gone wrong. There, under a blanket of stars and in the shadow of a warming fire he faces his past self who experienced the war back in Syria and the persona of the refugee he consequently became after his arrival. The dying embers of Hadi Al-Amaery are newly stoked by the raging fire in his heart.

Through all the trauma and the grief that reignites his anger at the world and his place in it, he still wishes to heal; to overcome; to balance the scales of his existence, thus he compartmentalises his experiences and reconstructs himself - A clean burn.

"The need for such movies to be made is paramount now more than ever. Film has a power to change the perceptions and views of the public in a very profound way. I'm sure this short will create a new avenue for a richer conversation regarding the issues and challenges faced by refugees and asylum seekers. I think if the average person can begin to relate to common issues such as mental health and identity, then we will shift the narrative from fear to understanding." - **Karim Hadaya - Company Director - Munchie Lunchie Productions LTD**

The short makes incredible use of the writings and scriptures of infamous Arab poet Al-Mutanabbi's (915 – 965), considered one of the greatest poets in the Arabic language. For over a thousand years, the poetry of Al-Mutanabbi, one of the most prominent and influential Arab poets at the Abbasid court of Sayf al Dawla in Syria, has been used in Arabic literature as a reference and a proof of his wisdom, intelligence, pride, and insight.

Al-Mutanabbi started writing poetry when he was nine. He wrote broadly on love, politics, battles, and mundane problems like his own medical concerns. He had an oeuvre of 300 folios of poetry when he died in 965 CE, the victim of a political assassination. His poetry has been translated into more than twenty languages world- wide and is accorded proverbial status in today's Arab world for the wisdom and values it espouses.

The short tackle's topical themes including that of asylum and displacement, mental health in relation to grief and trauma response, identity in the diaspora communities in England, violent crimes against ethnic minorities and the rise of knife crime in London, and discrimination, socio-economic disparities, and marginalisation. The five stages of grief; denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance, are also explored throughout the short.

“Everyone deserves the right to mental health support and refugees are no different. We pride ourselves on delivering support in our communities wherever it is needed. EDI is at the heart of our companies and my personal values, and we will continue to support marginalised communities along with everyone else who struggling with their mental health. It’s imperative everyone knows help is out there and how to access it.” – **HFEH Mind - Yvonne Jones - Director Adult Services, EDI Lead & Adult Safeguarding Lead**

Asylum seekers flee persecution and war, seeking protection under international law. In the UK, asylum and displacement issues for refugees are marked by a complex and often contentious process. Upon arrival, they face a rigorous application procedure to prove their need for sanctuary. The British government provides temporary housing and basic support while claims are processed, though many experience prolonged uncertainty and limited access to work and/or education. The public opinion on immigration and asylum policies remains divided, influencing political discourse and potential legislative changes. Despite these challenges, numerous non-governmental organizations and community groups work tirelessly to support the refugees' integration and advocate for their rights and well-being.

Grief and trauma significantly impact mental health, often leading to a range of emotional and psychological responses. Individuals experiencing grief may face profound sadness; anger; and confusion, while trauma can manifest as anxiety; hyper-vigilance; and intrusive memories. These responses can disrupt daily functioning, relationships, and the overall well-being.

Violent crimes against ethnic minorities as well as the rise of knife crimes are pressing social issues, reflecting deeper systemic and societal problems in today’s London. Ethnic minorities often find themselves disproportionately affected by violence, rooted in racial discrimination, socio-economic disparities, and marginalisation.

“At this time in the UK we require solidarity and togetherness more than ever. The world is a better place when we understand each other and our hopes, dreams, struggles and aspirations. I see this film as a beacon of light because of its message and themes that resonate with myself personally on many levels and layers. The Joy of making this film is shared not only with the production team but also with the cast, crew, and donors who have supported our movie so far. We hope to reach our audience with the same joy and bring a unique film to their screens this year.” - **Max McCall - Director of Ashes of a Dying Ember**

HFEH Mind are thrilled about this partnership and to be co-hosting collaborative workshops aimed at improving refugees' lives and helping them adapt to a new life, develop coping strategies, and ultimately follow their dreams.

MUNCHIE LUNCHIE PRODUCTIONS



This partnership hopes to destigmatise negative connotations towards refugees and minority communities and help those in need of mental health support, no matter what situation they find themselves in or where they come from.

Several free workshops will be hosted aimed at introducing refugees to the 4 pillars of film: Acting, Narrative, Visual, META, and the film industry as a whole. With the aim of empowering asylum seekers and refugees to tell their own stories and share their experiences with mental health via this medium. The groups will be supervised by a professional film crew and their work will be shared on social media with the hashtag #FilmForChange and at special screenings.

Workshops will comprise 'The Basics of Creating Film', 'Acting Techniques and Exercises for Performance & Mental Wellbeing', 'Script Writing and Screen Plays' and a 'Camera and Sound' workshop.

Alongside this we will be hosting a live Q&A with the Cast & Crew, in the form of an in-depth panel discussion with industry professionals regarding representation of the true experience of asylum seekers and refugees in the media.

"Story telling is one of the oldest and most powerful tools society uses to spread messages. This partnership will help shed light on the lives and minds behind some of the most vulnerable people in our society. We really look forward to sharing these stories with our communities and making sure everyone knows help is available, no matter your background." **Nicholas Smith - Head of Marketing and Communications**

A Poetry Slam is also planned with writer Karim Hadaya hosting the Slam. They also aim to have verses from Al Mutanabbi's poetry distributed around West London with blank spaces left for the public to add their own verses of poetry and foster engagement by sharing them on social media for the chance to win a copy of Al Mutanabbi's poetry (Cambridge University Press), a copy of the film Ashes of a dying ember, plus a signed poster by the cast and crew.

Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum (SMEF) supports and represents the needs and aspirations of a growing 23.4% ethnic minority population in Surrey, by actively addressing racial inequity within public services and local communities. SMEF supports 63 grassroots community groups, builds relationships between faith and belief groups and brings people of diverse backgrounds together across Surrey. They also run 11 health and wellbeing and domestic abuse race equity projects, that enhance the lives of ethnic minority communities.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to share stories and contributions of some of our most vulnerable communities. Film has a powerful role in bringing together people of different backgrounds, providing an important platform for voice. SMEF is pleased to promote the Short." **Saba Khan – Chief Executive Officer to Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum.**

MUNCHIE LUNCHIE PRODUCTIONS



The film's cast & crew will be volunteering with HFEH MIND on their current and future campaigns, as well as participating in the Ealing Half Marathon raising vital funds for mental health in the tri-borough.

All profits generated from the production will be donated to HFEH Mind by Munchie Lunchie Productions LTD to continue their work in the community.

HFEH Mind's and Munchie Lunchie's websites and social media profiles will host more information about the project, the workshops, and how to access any mental health support materials or services.

Please find Boiler Plates, supporting links and downloads for imagery below

End

Go Fund Me (Ashes of a dying ember Production)

- [Donation link](#)

Approved Imagery and Video

- [Download Here](#)

About HFEH Mind

Hammersmith, Fulham, Ealing and Hounslow Mind is a Local Mind Association operating across the Tri-borough. Mind operates a federated structure of Local Mind Associations, which are independent charities with their own funding and services. We share the same values as Mind, and we are regularly reviewed to make sure our charity is maintaining local Mind quality standards, so that we are providing local and effective services which meet the needs of our local community. Everyone deserves the help and respect they need to recover. We listen, support recovery, fight stigma, and work with partners to take action on mental health. We provide services for adults, children and young people, and training and consultancy for employers.

Find out more about HFEH Mind [here](#)

HFEH Mind Social Media: [FB](#), [Insta](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), [TikTok](#)

About Munchie Lunchie Productions

Munchie Lunchie Productions is a young production company run by the next generation of filmmakers in the UK. Their mission is to create equitable and diverse stories that truly represent the mixed tapestry of cultures in the UK and around the world. Their future projects catalogue consists of

MUNCHIE LUNCHIE PRODUCTIONS

 **mind**
Hammersmith,
Fulham, Ealing
and Hounslow

37 films, tv shows and plays of different genres and themes. The drama short film ashes of a dying ember will usher in their first motion picture to be submitted for national and international festivals.

Find out more about Munchie Lunchie Productions [here](#)

Munchie Lunchie Productions Social Media: [Insta](#), [YouTube](#)

Crowdfunder link (Ashes of a dying ember): <https://gofund.me/74490701>

Promo video (Ashes of a dying ember): <https://youtu.be/eQ6ACaLZogo?si=2LncRIGkEUaDI1oc>

