

MILK

A short film by Tasnim Hindeyeh
Pitch Deck

LOGLINE

After fleeing Gaza, two Palestinian sisters rebuild their lives as housekeepers in Chicago. But when May's breast pump begins to fail, the fragile routine holding her together starts to unravel.

SYNOPSIS

Milk is a 12 to 15 minute narrative fiction film following May, a Palestinian woman rebuilding her life in Chicago after being displaced from Gaza. Living with her older sister, Fatimah, and their brother in a cramped apartment, May spends her days cleaning rooms beside Fatimah in a run-down motel.

Over the course of one day, May carries a breast pump from room to room, tucked inside her bag like something private and necessary. As the pump begins to fail, the fragile routine she has built around it starts to break, bringing her closer to what she has been carrying all along.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Milk is deeply personal, inspired by my journey into motherhood and the emotional changes that came with it. As a Palestinian artist, I feel a profound responsibility to preserve stories that risk erasure, while exploring survival in its most intimate form: through the body, through labor, through silence, and through the routines that keep us moving.

My father left Palestine in 1961, leaving behind a history I carry with me, even without ever having visited our homeland. Through May's failing breast pump, I wanted to explore how memory, survival, and absence can live inside the smallest routines. I feel my ancestors urging me to keep Palestinian stories alive with tenderness, honesty, and care.

MAIN CHARACTERS

May: In her late 20s, May is quiet, attentive, and observant. She works as a housekeeper in Chicago, moving through the motel with a careful stillness and a private routine she depends on. Beneath her composure, something unspoken presses close to the surface.

Fatima: In her early 30s, Fatimah is talkative, warm, and protective. She carries humor into the long workday, using conversation and small gestures to care for May.

VISUALS



CINEMATOGRAPHY

The cinematography in Milk is intimate and observational, shaped by naturalistic lighting, soft pastel tones, and restrained handheld movement. The light comes from the spaces May moves through: motel windows, fluorescent bathrooms, television glow, laundry room fixtures, and the faint blue light of the breast pump.

COLOR GRADING

The film incorporates soft hues and undertones to create a visually pleasing and emotionally evocative experience for the audience. The pastel tones add a touch of lightness to the film's narrative, while still respecting the gravity of the characters' struggles and the underlying themes.

LOCATION

Milk will be filmed over three days in Chicago, set within a decaying motel and a rundown apartment. With peeled wallpaper, aged furniture, and traces of 1970s design, these spaces embody the film's themes of struggle, perseverance, and hope.

THE FILMMAKERS



Tasnim Hindeyeh
Writer/Director

Tasnim Hindeyeh began her career in Dubai and Amman, working on acclaimed Arab indie films such as *The United* (Sundance award-winner Amin Matalqa) and *7 Hours Difference* (DIFF premiere).

Her short film *Valeria*, exploring intergenerational trauma in the Hispanic community, screened at Festival de Cortos y Largos, Chicagoland Shorts, and Summer Spirit of Chicago. She is also the founder of Salt + Soil Agency, a creative and cultural production studio.

THE FILMMAKERS



Gustavo Martin
Producer

Gustavo Martin is an award-winning Peruvian-American director based in Chicago. His films have screened at festivals worldwide and been featured on Filmshortage.com. His documentary Fupa won Best Documentary Short at Midwest Weirdfest and screened at Boston and Atlanta Underground Festivals.

He made his feature directorial debut with American Warrior (Mulberry Films/Quiver), starring Danny Trejo (Desperado, Machete) and Veronica Falcón (Ozark, Queen of the South), which opened the Santa Fe Film Festival and screened at Heartland International and Tallgrass.

THE FILMMAKERS



Sumana Syed
Impact Producer/
1st AD

Sumana Syed is a South Asian Muslim-American screenwriter and filmmaker based in Chicago, holding a BA in Film and Television from Columbia College Chicago. A recipient of the prestigious Islamic Scholarship Film Fund in 2023, she is driven by a passion for storytelling that uplifts her community and highlights pressing social issues.

Her debut short film, *Make Them Proud*, shot in NYC with an all-WOC crew, explores mental health and the eldest daughter experience in South Asian culture, fostering meaningful conversations about therapy and representation.

THE FILMMAKERS



Ava Ginsburg
Art Director

Ava Gisnberg is a Chicago-based Production Designer with a BFA in Film and Television from Columbia College Chicago. Her impressive Art Department credits include work on acclaimed TV shows such as FX's *The Bear*, HBO's *Somebody Somewhere*, and Apple TV's *Shining Girls*, alongside independent films and commercials.

Beyond her design work, Ava participates in one of the largest Palestinian film festivals, the Chicago Palestine Film Festival, as a key member of the film procurement team, where she curates and selects films for the festival's lineup.

WHY NOW?

At a time when Palestinian life is often reduced to images of crisis, Milk turns toward the intimate aftermath of displacement. The film explores survival through the body, through labor, through motherhood, and through the small routines people build when their lives have been interrupted.

By centering a Palestinian Muslim woman in an ordinary workday, Milk creates space for a quieter and more human portrait of Palestinian experience. As a Chicago-based production, the film also supports a growing indie film community and creates opportunities for Muslims and local filmmakers to tell culturally grounded stories with care and authorship.



DISTRIBUTION

Our team is targeting top-tier festivals—including Cannes, Sundance, Toronto, Tribeca, and SXSW—alongside Arab-focused and local festivals such as the Arab Film Festival and El Gouna Film Festival. Festival success will spotlight Milk, its creators, and position Chicago as a hub for emerging filmmakers. After the festival circuit, we aim for global distribution on platforms like Shorts of the Week, Vimeo, Netflix, HBO Max, Hulu, MUBI, Aflamuna, Watermelon Plus, and Amazon Video to reach a wide audience.

tiff.

SXSW

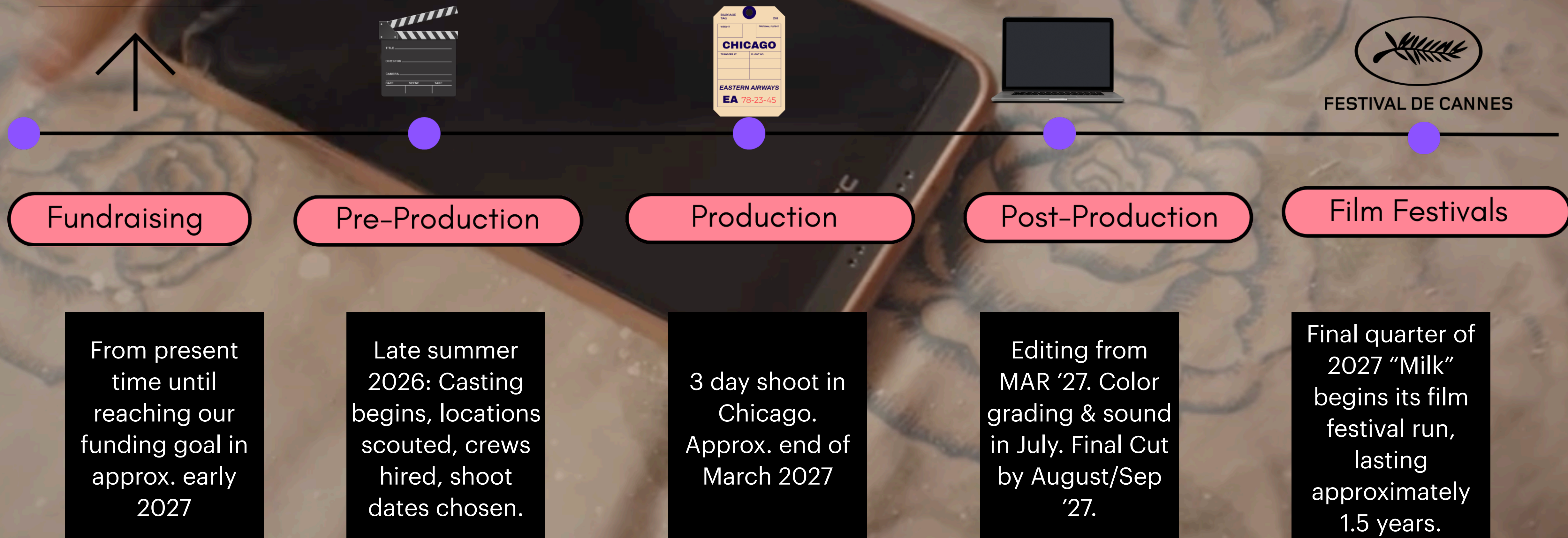


NETFLIX

hulu

HBOmax

TIMELINE



COMMUNITY IMPACT



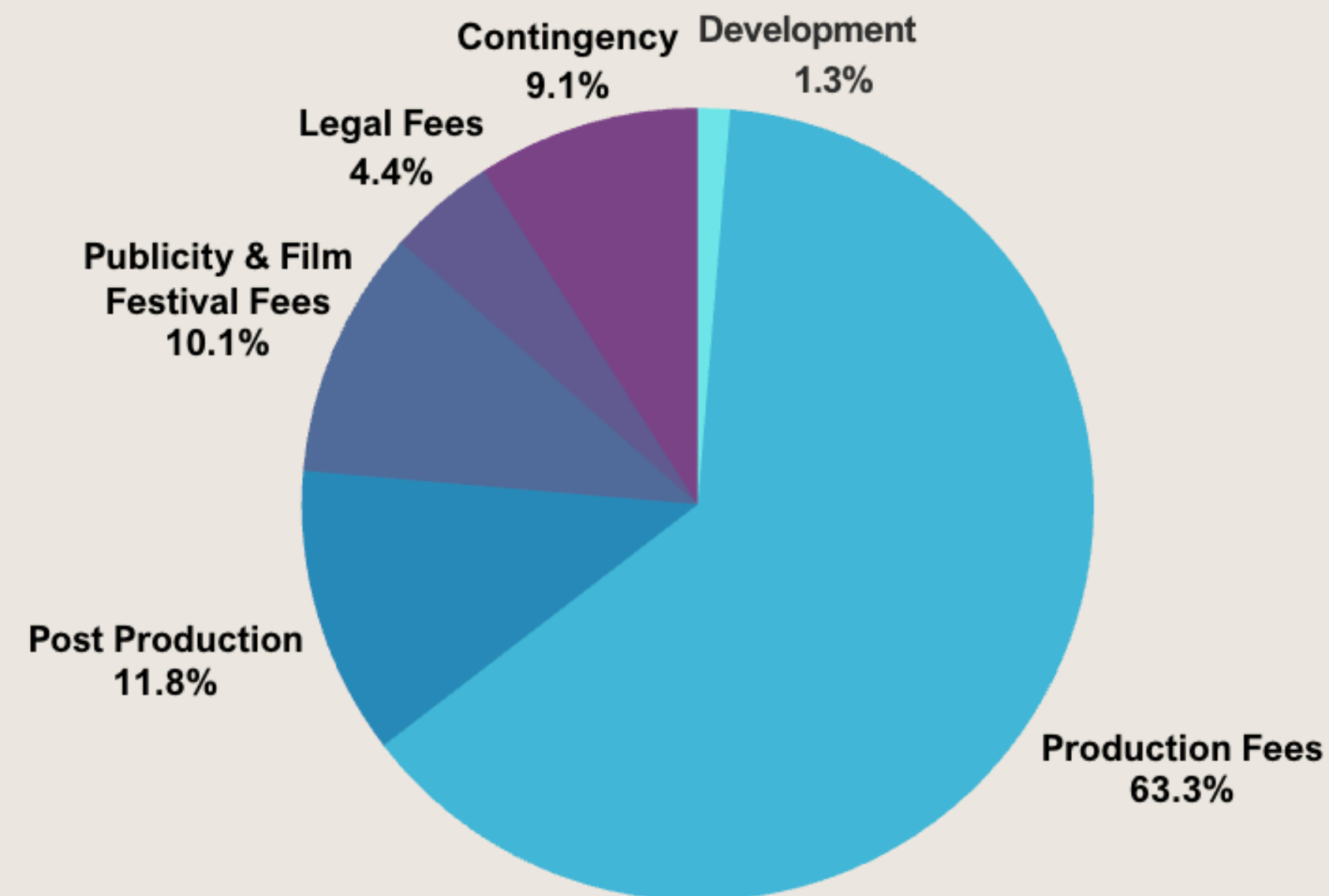
From early script readings to public pitch sessions in Chicago, *Milk* has been developed through collective feedback, grounding the story in lived experience and dialogue.

BUDGET

2026

Milk: Budget - \$34,000 (2k raised)

- Development = \$445 (1.3%)
- Production Fees = \$21,514
- Post-Production = \$4,000
- Publicity & Film Festival Fees = \$3,450
- Legal Fees = \$1,500
- Contingency = \$3,091



DONATION PERKS

Associate Producer: \$2k-\$5k (On-screen credit + IMDb listing, behind-the-scenes content, and private online screening).

Co-Producer : \$5k-\$9k (On-screen credit, IMDb listing if eligible, behind-the-scenes updates, private Q&A with the director, and early preview of a rough or near-final cu).

Exec. Producer : \$10k (On-screen credit, IMDb listing if eligible, set visit when available, private meeting with the director and producer, recognition across poster and website, advance preview of the final cut, and invitation to curated film roundtables or networking events).

Note: Fiscal sponsorship is currently in progress. Tax-deductible giving may become available once approved.

CONTACT INFO:

Director/Writer: Tasnim Hindeyeh
E: tasnim.hindeyeh@gmail.com

Producer: Gustavo Martin
gustavo.martin.film@gmail.com

THANK YOU