



Presented by **Sarkasmos Productions LLC** in association with **Technicolor**  
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Produced by: **Frederic Rose, Maziar Bahari and Monica Hampton**  
Executive Producers: **Technicolor and Hassan Elmasry**  
Starring: **Bassem Youssef, Jon Stewart, Andeel, Miral El Desoki, Tarek AlQazzaz and Hend Radwan**

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# SYNOPSIS

In the midst of the Egyptian Arab Spring, Bassem Youssef makes a decision that's every mother's worst nightmare... He leaves his job as a heart surgeon to become a full-time comedian.



Dubbed, "The Egyptian Jon Stewart," Bassem creates the satirical show, *Al Bernameg*. The weekly program quickly becomes the most viewed television program in the Middle East, with 30 million viewers per episode. *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* averaged two million viewers.

In a country where free speech is not settled law, Bassem's show becomes as controversial as it is popular. He and his staff must endure physical threats, protests, and legal action, all because of jokes. As Bassem attempts to remain on the air, keep his staff safe, and not get arrested, he continues to let those in power know they're being held accountable. Despite increasing danger, the team at *Al Bernameg* employ comedy, not violence, to comment on hypocrisy in media, politics, and religion.

*Tickling Giants* follows the team of *Al Bernameg* as they discover democracy is not easily won. The young women and men working on Bassem's show are fearless revolutionaries, who just happen to be really, really funny.

No unicorns or falafel were harmed in the making of this film.

***"If I could do anything, I would have my own comedy show, and be like Jon Stewart. Make fun of New Jersey - whatever the hell that is. I would make fun of politics, the president. There's only one problem. I live in Egypt."***

- Bassem Youssef

# CALL TO ACTION



Use your words.

They are louder and more articulate than your fists.

Jokes are words

put together in a funny way.

Anyone in power who is threatened by a joke

is not really all that powerful.

When you're thoughtful and honest, humor can be cathartic.

And, unlike beating people up, it's totally legal.

Are you brave enough to tell a joke?

Take a feather and tickle the foot of a giant.

Will the giant laugh or stomp on you?

It's a risk,

to bring peace and beauty to an otherwise hard moment.

Draw a picture. Sing a song. Say something.

Have your true self known.

When you are at your most authentic, others will be, too.

When you believe in something, speak up.

When someone is being taken advantage of, advocate.

When? Now.

Giants come in all sizes.

Big and small,

We should all, in our own ways, be

**Tickling Giants.**

This Call to Action is meant to encourage viewers to tickle the giants in their own lives, finding non-violent ways to express themselves when power is abused. From a protest against a world leader to standing up to a bully in a school cafeteria. People are encouraged to share their experiences with the hashtag #TicklingGiants.

Share how you're #TicklingGiants:

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# TICKLING GIANTS: ARE YOU BRAVE ENOUGH TO TELL A JOKE?



*“My wife kind of got screwed. She thought she was marrying a doctor, and she ended up with a guy who tells jokes for a living.”*

- Bassem Youssef

*“He’s so cute and he’s so short.”*

*– Bassem Youssef, on meeting Jon Stewart for the first time*

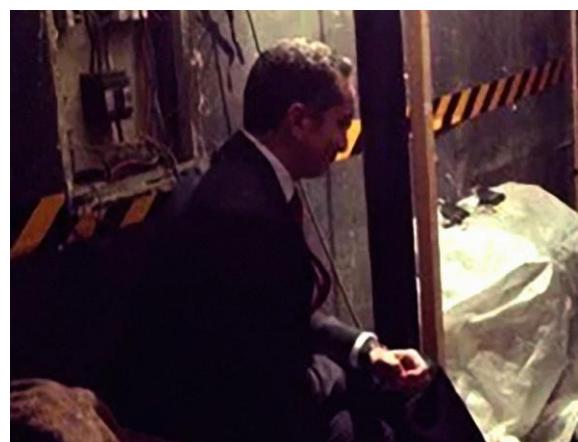


*“He (Egyptian President Mubarak) was immensely popular amongst his people. Typically winning elections between 98 to 127 percent of the vote.”*

*- Jon Stewart on The Daily Show*

*“I’m a doctor. My brother’s an engineer. If we had a third brother who was a dentist, we’d be almost a Jewish family.”*

*- Bassem Youssef*



# DIRECTOR'S PLATFORM: SARA TAKSLER Q&A

## ***How did you get involved in Tickling Giants?***

I first decided to make *Tickling Giants* in June of 2012. Bassem Youssef, an Egyptian heart surgeon recently turned political satirist, was in New York visiting *The Daily Show*, where I'm a Senior Producer and have worked for the past 10 years. When I met Bassem, he didn't have the show before a live audience yet and he wasn't such a huge star. But I found it interesting that he was doing what I do, but with such higher stakes. I love taking a serious issue and finding a cathartic way to process it through humor. Bassem was doing just that, but while under the microscope of a country where free speech was not yet settled law. Also, Bassem brought a few female producers with him and I was really curious about what it would be like to be my counterpart, in Egypt. So on the first day we met, I asked him if I could make a documentary about him and he said yes. It was a little impulsive, but I had recently been dumped and leaving the continent felt like a good idea.

## ***Do you get dumped a lot?***

Really? That's what you got from that story?

## ***Sorry. Well, deciding to film in Egypt must have been exciting.***

No, I immediately regretted it! What had I done? Not many people know this. But Egypt is located in Egypt. I'm the kind of person who always wears a seatbelt, a bike helmet, and if it were an option, I would wear a seatbelt, while on my bike. Now, I was volunteering to go to a country in revolution. A place where my country's state department was actively discouraging Americans from traveling. I decided to sit on the idea for awhile, because I was afraid to really go for it.

## ***You're kind of a scaredy cat.***

That's kind of you to notice. While that happens to be true, it was also a hard decision. There were people in Egypt literally dying in a fight to express themselves. And I was afraid. Seven months before I met Bassem, I became more acutely aware of the value of my own life. My friend Tara, my best friend since 4th grade, died unexpectedly. I became both more eager to add value to the world, and more afraid of things that might put me at risk. This film seemed like an opportunity for both. I nervously sat on the idea for *Tickling Giants* for months, thinking about it every single day.

## ***What ended up being the impetus to really go for it?***

Bassem was called into court, accused of making jokes about government and religion. I realized how important this story was, and how privileged I was to have an opportunity to tell it. This may sound cheesy, but I was reading the book *Lean In* which asks the question, "What would you do if you weren't afraid?". The next day I contacted Bassem and made plans to start filming.

## ***Have you previously worked in documentary film?***

In 2007, I made a documentary, with my friend Naomi Greenfield, called *TWISTED: A Balloonamentary*. That film was about balloon-twisting conventions. After premiering at the South by Southwest Film Festival (SXSW), we went on to play 15 film festivals, did a theatrical release in 10 cities, and received positive reviews. I knew the work that goes into making a documentary and decided to never do it again. But after meeting Bassem, I was ready to turn back on that plan.



### ***What did you want to tell with the story of Tickling Giants?***

*Tickling Giants* is about a guy who is just telling jokes, and yet his voice is so much louder and more articulate than the people a few blocks away who are shooting each other. We are all faced with giants - people who abuse their power. It is up to us to decide how to stand up to that. Statistically, it seems unlikely that too many of us will become famous comedians when our countries fall into revolution. But, we all have opportunities to be leaders on issues big and small, finding our own non-violent ways to start *Tickling Giants*.

### ***Did a lot of people watch Bassem's show?***

The show was a force of nature. 30 million people in Egypt watched each episode. By comparison, *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* averaged about two million viewers a night.

### ***Did you start spreading the word about the movie immediately when you began filming?***

We were concerned about getting any attention while we were filming. Egypt is a dangerous place for journalists, so I did not mention going to Egypt on any kind of social media until we finished filming.

There is a lot of anxiety in Egypt that you are being observed by the government. I was staying in the hotel where the *Al Jazeera* news team was arrested, and there was a general feeling of fear for anyone filming anything. One of my camera guys was beaten up when he filmed people watching Bassem's show. As time went on, we filmed outside less and less because of arrests of camera people in Egypt. For this reason, I shot most of the b-roll on my little point and shoot camera, from a moving car. All of this concern was compounded by me being a female, traveling alone. One night, while eating a late dinner at my hotel, a man at the table next to me stared at me the whole time. When I left the restaurant he followed me around for 10 minutes, whichever way I turned. I was afraid to leave the lobby. Then, Bassem happened to call. When I told him what was going on, he laughed and said, "He wants you, baby! He's flirting with you!" Everyone at the office the next day confirmed Bassem's suspicion. There were certain cultural norms I had to get used to.

### ***Did you feel safe filming in Egypt?***

I actually felt very safe as a general rule. I spent most of the time in Bassem's office and everyone there couldn't have been nicer and made me feel completely at home. Because of budgetary constraints, I couldn't bring any crew with me, but my local crew took great care of me. However, there were times that were scary. Bassem's publicist suggested I not come for one of the shoots because things were becoming volatile. Bassem and I talked on the phone and he assured me, "Worst case scenario, a *Daily Show* producer dies at my office and I get tons of press." Who wouldn't want to help a friend out like that? So, I decided to go. We were filming at the office and protesters started arriving. I was shown an escape route in case things went south. I was trying to film on a second camera but my hands were literally shaking. Everyone in the office was nervous and frustrated, but then, something beautiful happened. They started laughing and telling jokes and going on with their day, undeterred by the ugliness. I was so inspired.

### ***How was the office of The Show different than the environment at The Daily Show?***

The two offices have an incredibly similar vibe. The main difference is that one has a bunch of Ahmed's while the other has a lot of Adam's. I won't tell you which is which.

### ***Do you speak Arabic?***

I don't and I couldn't afford a translator. While interviews were mostly done in English, all the other shoots were a challenge. I never fully knew what was going on in the office until we finished shooting and my camera people would fill me in. But I found that it didn't matter that much, because while I didn't know what was being said, I could feel the emotion of any given moment. In movies, *what* is said matters as much as *how* you say it. The feeling of whether a moment is funny or serious or stressful comes through, regardless of language.

### ***Is there a “right time” for comedy?***

To me, there isn't a wrong time for comedy or for speaking truth to power. Now is always the right time to speak out. I don't believe that every joke is well-timed or universally appreciated, but if you have a desire to find humor, there's probably a right joke to be made. Bassem was giving people something they couldn't get anywhere else. People in Egypt have this great sense of humor and there's a guy giving them a way to laugh while their country is in this awful turmoil. It's an incredible gift.

### ***Are you still working at The Daily Show?***

I am still working at *The Daily Show*, which means working 7 days a week. I go edit every night after work and on weekends.

When I finish, I am going to sleep for three days straight, then catch up on a bunch of reality shows, and then sleep for four more days.



### ***Has this schedule negatively affected your mental health?***

Is it that obvious? Probably, but I really love making this movie.

### ***How did you fund the film?***

As many independent filmmakers do, I started a crowdfunding campaign on IndieGoGo. My goal was to raise \$150,000 in donations, to get us started. I sent emails about the campaign to everyone I knew and many of them were kind enough to forward it on to their friends. One of these people was Lynn, a friend of my best friend Tara, who had died unexpectedly a couple years before. Lynn shared the link with a bunch of people and it wound up on the computer of a woman named Lorie. She had the trailer up on her computer and her husband happened to sit down and watch it. His name is Frederic Rose and he happens to be the CEO of Technicolor!

### ***That sounds made up. Is that true?***

Totally true! The next day I got an email telling me to call Fred because he wanted Technicolor to be an Executive Producer of the film. A few hours later we were on the phone and Fred told me, “364 days a year it's my job to make this company money. Today, I get to do something nice.” I was told that Technicolor wants to support emerging filmmakers making films on important topics. They didn't want creative control, they just wanted to help me make the best version of my film. It was too good to be true. Technicolor is covering funding for my editing team, animation, graphics, visual effects, color and sound. They made this film so much bigger than it ever would have been. I won a lottery I had not entered.

### ***How long did it take you to believe this wasn't a prank?***

I'm still not totally certain.

### ***Isn't there a super special fun fact about this?***

I got to know Lynn because she and I started an Acts of Kindness site in memory of Tara. And then, through Lynn, I ended up getting this really amazing Act of Kindness from Technicolor. <http://ttgactsofkindness.tumblr.com/>

***How did you come up with the title for Tickling Giants?***

I was interviewing Andeel, a writer on the show and a political cartoonist. I described to him the essence of the film - people speaking out to power, in their own non-violent ways. Andeel drew a picture of Bassem holding a feather, tickling the rather large foot of a giant. When I looked at that, I decided to make that the inspiration for the title.

***What do you want people to take away from watching Tickling Giants?***

Anyone, big or small, can have their ideas heard if they figure out their own ways to express themselves non-violently. Most people have daily interactions with some abuse of power. It might be a kid bullied on a playground or a boss that takes advantage. It might be a huge issue that you're really passionate about and you just haven't found a way to support that cause. But the core idea in *Tickling Giants* is to leave audiences inspired. A team of ordinary people risked their own comfort and, by doing so, found a way to be heard and to influence change.

# BASSEM YOUSSEF:

## Q&A



### ***How did your show come about?***

I had been watching Jon Stewart probably ten years before I started my own show in Egypt. His show was broadcast on the CNN International satellite channel. I thought to myself, “Who is this guy?” Frankly, at first I understood very little of what he said because I didn’t know about Republicans and Democrats and had no idea why he kept attacking Fox News. I found Jon so compelling and funny. So I actually had to study American politics so his references would make sense.

As I watched Jon, I kept thinking how great it would be if we had something like this program here. At the time, there was no freedom of speech in Egypt, so that kind of show would have been totally impossible. When the Egyptian Revolution happened in January of 2011 and President Mubarak was forced out of office, it was a new day and some freedom of speech was now possible. I saw an opportunity. As I created my YouTube show in my laundry room, and then the first season of my television program, *Al Bernameg*, Jon Stewart was my role model. I wanted to do my show the Jon Stewart way, as I challenged the state-run media and the powers-that-be in Egypt. From the beginning, Jon had a huge influence on me.

### ***What happened after the first season of your television show?***

When I finished the first season of this small television show, we were beginning to attract a lot of attention. I realized it was a good start, but we had to go much bigger. We needed a live audience in a theater and a bigger staff. This had never been done before in the Middle East, let alone Egypt. Some shows had small paid audiences, but were never open to the public in a theater setting. And who knows more about doing this kind of show than Jon Stewart? So I decided I needed to go to New York, meet him and learn how his show was produced.

I was in touch with Jon’s production team and they agreed I could shadow them for a couple of days to appreciate all the ins and outs of how to create, produce and maintain a live program. And this is when I met Jon, his team, and one of his senior producers, Sara Taksler.

### ***Why a documentary?***

The first day at Jon’s show, Sara came up to me and told me that in addition to working on *The Daily Show*, she also produced documentary films. She asked me, “Would you like to be the subject of my next film?” It seemed like a fine idea, so I immediately said, “Yes!” I then asked her what documentaries had she produced before and she told me, “I made a film about balloon animals and you will be my second subject.” And I said “That seems quite promising, so let’s do it.”

I really didn’t think through the implications of such a move. I never imagined that she would be that dedicated and committed to this project. If anything, I assumed that Sara would spend maybe six or seven months filming and then quickly finish the film. Now we’ve been working on this for three years. She traveled to Egypt and was with me through the most unsettling moments of my career – like when we had demonstrators outside our theater, threatening to come in and kill me. Sara was able to capture everything we were going through on film for *Tickling Giants*. And during the filming, she covered all the costs out of her own pocket. Sara was there every step of the way and then later brought in the best talents to work on finishing the movie. I truly feel overwhelmed and very privileged to have this kind of attention from someone that I had just met and hardly knew.

### ***Do you think that satire is revolutionary or even dangerous?***

I don't think that satire, in itself, is dangerous. Depending on what atmosphere you're operating in, even speaking out is dangerous. Satire is a much more potent weapon and tool against people who try to shut people up or try to suppress freedom of expression because the beauty of satire is that anybody can talk, anybody can raise their voices. Satire uses humor and cuts so deep that it undermines this fake halo of respect and fear that people in power think they have. So when you use satire, you disarm them from their biggest and most feared weapon. And they're not scary anymore. This is the beauty of satire. Satire brings more people to the table to discuss issues that otherwise might not be addressed by most people. Now it is more inviting and more appealing for them to speak about politics because humor is involved. What happens after is then up to the people. Do these discussions lead to action?

The satirist or the comedian is not an activist. He brings more people to the table to discuss the issues and that's why it's a very effective tool.

### ***Most people believe that the Arab Spring was a failure. Do you think freedom of expression will ever return to Egypt? Could a show like yours happen again in the future?***

Nothing is stagnant. We live in a very dynamic world and things change all the time. Four years ago, we never thought that we, in Egypt, would get rid of a dictator and start this kind of a political and cultural revolution, but it suddenly happened. And who could have imagined me, a doctor, of all people, becoming this media star? Unimaginable. You never know what will happen. We are living now in a much faster era. In the Middle East, we have a huge younger generation that is more connected. Oppressive governments can't control the internet like they could with television networks and newspapers. They can't rule people with the same methods that were employed on their parents in 1950s and '60s - outdated, obsolete kind of propaganda that people will not buy into it for the rest of their lives.

I am optimistic. I don't think the revolution is dead. It's just sleeping for now. When will people wake up again? I don't know. Maybe in my lifetime. Maybe my daughter will carry on "The Show, Part Two." She is very feisty and she's much funnier than me and she's only three years old. So she has a lot of time to practice.

### ***What does the title *Tickling Giants* mean to you?***

*Tickling Giants* captures what it's like to make fun of giants, to use satire in the most dangerous situations – when you are standing right under the foot of a giant who could crush you in a breath. Instead of running away or shying away from danger, you stand your ground and tickle the powers-that-be, whatever that means to you. Not a safe thing to do. The title actually was inspired by a cartoon drawn by one of my show's writers who also happens to be a great cartoonist. The cartoon not only makes a great poster for the film, it also coincidentally inspired the title.

### ***What is your hope for the film?***

I hope when people watch *Tickling Giants*, they will appreciate how much work went into creating such a show and reaching so many people who were not accustomed to this kind of a conversation based in political satire. The show was a non-violent tool that enabled people to discuss the issues that matter to them most. Our show was done in the most uncomfortable situations, in the most unlikely places of all. So I want people, first of all, to see the kind of challenges that we faced every day.

I hope this film reaches a global audience, so that people everywhere can realize the power of freedom of expression, the power of speaking truth to power, and how satire and humor are great ways to put their case forward. I would say that most people in Western countries take public humor for granted, so this film may be an eye opener for them.

When you live in fear, when you're afraid all the time, you can't think. You blindly follow the dominant narrative, believe the propaganda, and censor out every kind of common sense or logic that you have. But when you laugh, when you see the humor, speak the humor, satirize, you can't be afraid anymore. When you are laughing, you are no longer afraid. You are actually more assertive, smarter and you don't give into the propaganda, fear, hatred and collective ignorance. So I hope that *Tickling Giants* shows how people can harness the power of satire and humor.

# FREDERIC ROSE: Q&A WITH TECHNICOLOR CEO

## ***How did you find out about Sara's film?***

It was actually through a family friend. That friend brought Sara's Indiegogo campaign to my attention. I reviewed the materials, and some of the prior press information surrounding Bassem. His story is clearly very compelling. I brought the project to the attention of two Technicolor execs and they too had very strong positive responses. Our involvement grew from there.



## ***What about Bassem appealed to you?***

Bassem is a very charismatic individual. But more than that, the film is a window into the Islamic world of today - in all its complexity. We in the west have a very narrow understanding of contemporary life in Cairo, and Egypt. That said, it's also a story about freedom of speech and expression... a few things we know about and support from Technicolor.

## ***How did Sara find out about Technicolor's interest?***

We picked up the phone and called her. She was surprised, but recognized we sincerely wanted to help her finish her film.

## ***So Technicolor came aboard as an Executive Producer?***

Effectively, yes, by way of offering the production, the means to finish the film, through editorial support, color finishing, sound mixing, VFX and animation.

## ***Has Technicolor ever produced a film before or been involved in this fashion before?***

The short answer is yes. Over the course of our history, Technicolor has selectively funded and produced films - generally to launch a new service offering where a proof of concept was needed to sell the marketplace. Over the last 10 years, we've also provided finishing services to emerging talents in an academic context, through the graduate film programs at AFI and UCLA, among others.

## ***Why?***

Technicolor has empowered storytellers for one hundred years always with an eye towards emerging talent. Technicolor was there from the start with filmmakers like Francis Coppola, Martin Scorsese, Steven Spielberg, Clint Eastwood, and more recently with directors like Christopher Nolan to name just a few. Creative relationships are something we value highly and are core to Technicolor culture.

In the case of *Tickling Giants*, Sara is the kind of filmmaker we want to empower as we believe she has a unique story to tell. And the message of her film, "the power of humor" is something we support.

## ***Did the Charlie Hebdo attack influence your decision?***

It certainly informed our decision to back Sara. We're a French company. That attack, and the attacks of mid-November remain very much on our minds.

### ***How did you support Sara's project?***

We surrounded Sara with some of the best talents found within Technicolor. Sara's challenge was to shape a cohesive story out of 200 hours of footage she recorded before we came on board. We provided support for that massive effort, but the material needed to be first translated into English as it was mostly shot in Cairo, in Arabic. The translation process was a massive undertaking all on its own.

### ***What's the return for Technicolor?***

The topic of diversity is raging in the motion picture industry in the US currently. It's incumbent upon everyone in the industry to support diverse points of view, and diverse cultures. We're a globally situated company. Diversity is something we take very seriously. We celebrate diversity on a daily basis. Sara's film is a window into the lives of many young Egyptian people, beyond Bassem's immediate story. Rarely do American documentaries provide this kind of glimpse into another culture.

# CAST



## BASSEM

During the Arab Spring in 2011, Bassem was treating injured protesters in Tahrir Square. His friend suggested they start a YouTube show and Bassem insisted on mimicking his idol, Jon Stewart. In a very short time, he's transforming from an unknown private citizen to one of the most famous people in the world.



## MIRAL

Miral works as a researcher at *Al Bernameg*. She is not afraid to speak her mind or protest for what she believes is right. Miral feels working at *Al Bernameg* gives her an opportunity to fight for the things she believes in.



## ANDEEL

Andeel is a writer and a political cartoonist. After being a fan of *Al Bernameg*, he is selected to become a writer on the show. Andeel is a proud revolutionary and believes the people will eventually find democracy.

*"If the show got canceled for good, that would be a very strong message... to my landlord." - Andeel*

# CAST



## ***JON***

Jon Stewart is a successful comedian. He is inspired by Bassem and has a special friendship with him. *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* had the most consecutive Emmy wins of any show in television history.



## ***TAREK***

Tarek came up with the idea to start a YouTube show, with Bassem, in 2011. *Al Bernameg* is a source of tension in Tarek's family, as they have a different political affiliation than Bassem. Tarek begins to fear that the show may put his family at a safety risk.



## ***HEND***

Hend has no interest in politics, she just loves producing comedy. She is the conscience of *Al Bernameg*, earning the trust of all on staff, especially Bassem.

# TICKLING GIANTS: CREW & PRODUCTION

## SARA TAKSLER – DIRECTOR / PRODUCER / EXECUTIVE PRODUCER / WRITER

A Senior Producer at *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, Sara Taksler has pitched stories and jokes, and researched footage for over a decade. Taksler directed and produced the feature documentary, *TWISTED: A Balloonamentary*, a hilarious and heartwarming look at the world's premier balloon-twisting convention, with film partner Naomi Greenfield. After debuting at South by Southwest,

*Hollywood Reporter* called the film "A thoroughly winning feature" and *Variety* hailed it as "A feel good, irony-free celebration". Taksler's first film, *Stop the Ignorance: The Beauty That Is New Jersey*, was a tribute to her home state. Her latest documentary, *Tickling Giants*, had its world premiere at the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival. A graduate of Washington University in St. Louis, Taksler can talk backwards and has a remarkable fake sneeze.

Sara's favorite way of Tickling Giants: Using comedy to find cathartic ways to process major bummers.

## FREDERIC ROSE - PRODUCER

Frederic Rose has been Chief Executive Officer of Technicolor, a worldwide creative and technology leader in the media and entertainment sector, since 2008. Under his leadership, Technicolor today holds an unquestioned global lead in not only cinematic visual effects, but also in commercial post-production and animation. Rose is a last century graduate of Georgetown University and enjoys regular commutes between London and Los Angeles.

Fred's favorite way of Tickling Giants: Doing the unexpected.

## MAZIAR BAHARI - PRODUCER

Maziar Bahari is an Iranian Canadian journalist and filmmaker. During the 2009 Iranian Election Protests Bahari was arrested without charge and detained for 118 days. His memoir, *Then They Came for Me*, was published by Random House in June 2011 and was made into the major motion picture, *Rosewater*, directed by Jon Stewart in 2014. Bahari was a reporter for *Newsweek* from 1998 to 2011. He has made over thirteen films - his first, *The Voyage of the Saint Louis* (1994). A retrospective of Bahari's films was organized by the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) in November 2007.

Maziar's favorite way of Tickling Giants: Reminding them of their broken promises over and over again.

## MONICA HAMPTON - PRODUCER

Monica Hampton has worked in the entertainment business for the past 22 years, producing fiction and non-fiction features with Michael Moore, VICE Films, Kevin Smith, and Davis Guggenheim. After graduating from the University of Maryland, her career began in New York City in 1994. In 1996, she joined Kevin Smith's View Askew Productions, working with him for six years on *Chasing Amy*, *Dogma*, *Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back*, and *Jersey Girl*. Under the View Askew banner, Hampton solo-produced *Vulgar*, distributed theatrically in 2002 by Lions Gate Films. In 2003, she teamed up with Michael Moore to produce *Fahrenheit 9/11* and solo-produced *Slacker Uprising*. In 2005, Hampton joined VICE, becoming Head of Production and Post Production. While at VICE, she produced *Heavy Metal in Baghdad*, a documentary about Iraq's most famous heavy metal band. She also worked for Davis Guggenheim on several documentaries including the 2015 *He Named Me Malala*. In addition to *Tickling Giants*, Hampton is currently producing a feature documentary for VICE entitled *SHOT: The Psycho-Spiritual Mantra of Rock*.

Monica's favorite way of Tickling Giants: Making films that illuminate positive spaces in dark places



# TICKLING GIANTS: CREW & PRODUCTION

## ***TECHNICOLOR - EXECUTIVE PRODUCER***

Technicolor, a worldwide technology leader in the media and entertainment sector, is at the forefront of digital innovation. Their world-class research and innovation laboratories enable them to lead the market in delivering advanced video services to content creators and distributors. They also benefit from an extensive intellectual property portfolio focused on imaging technologies. Their commitment: supporting the delivery of exciting new experiences for consumers in theaters, homes and on-the-go. Technicolor shares are on the NYSE Euronext Paris exchange (TCH) and traded in the USA on the OTCQX market-place (TCLRY).



## ***HASSAN ELMASRY - EXECUTIVE PRODUCER***

Hassan Elmasry and his wife Rasha, along with their three children, have been living in London for the past seventeen years. Hassan, who grew up in Libertyville, Illinois, manages a multi-billion-dollar investment fund and Rasha, who grew up in New York City, designs jewelry. Elmasry serves as co-chair of the board of directors of Human Rights Watch, the global research and advocacy organization.

Hassan's favorite way of Tickling Giants: Helping brave human rights defenders shine the light of truth on the misdeeds of those in power.

## ***JAMIE CANOBBIO - EDITOR***

Jamie Canobbio is a film and television editor whose projects include *Strange Fruit* (2005, SXSW) and *Vegas: Based on a True Story* (2009, Tribeca) as well as projects for Discovery, PBS, TruTV, ESPN and Major League Baseball. Canobbio studied filmmaking at Hunter College in New York City and has written several screenplays with two slated for production in 2016. He's a die-hard Mets fan.

Jamie's favorite way of Tickling Giants: With a big smile on his face.

## ***THOMAS M. VOGT - EDITOR***

Working as an editor for the past 20 years, Tom Vogt started his career at the award-winning Colossal Pictures Studio in San Francisco in the early nineties. After a short stint as a hair model, Vogt and his hair moved to Los Angeles to work on the Emmy award-winning television series, *South Park*, as lead editor for eight years. He edited Academy Award-nominated, *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut* and *Team America: World Police*. Vogt also edited Morgan Spurlock's *POM Wonderful Presents: The Greatest Movie Ever Sold*. His interests include long walks on the beach, wine tasting and befriending cabbies.

Tom's favorite way of Tickling Giants: Focus on the belly, the sides (around the ribcage), the backs of the knees, and the ears.

## ***TYLER H. WALK - EDITOR***

Tyler Walk is a Cinema Eye award-winning and Emmy-nominated editor whose most recent projects include Michael Moore's *Where to Invade Next*, David France's Oscar-nominated documentary *How to Survive a Plague*, and Eric Weinrib's *Roseanne for President!* A graduate from Penn State University and The Edit Center, Walk is also an amateur pinballer and pretend rock star by night.

Tyler's favorite way of Tickling Giants: Quoting lines from *The Lord of the Rings*.

# TICKLING GIANTS: CREW & PRODUCTION



## KURT ENGFEHR - CONSULTING EDITOR

Kurt Engfehr's best known for his work as an editor and co-producer on two of Michael Moore's films, Cannes Palme d'Or-winning and box-office smash, *Fahrenheit 9/11* and Oscar-winning, *Bowling for Columbine*, for which he won the American Cinema Editors award for best documentary editing. The trophy is proudly displayed on the mantle above the fireplace, right next to the last award he won, a third-place Thanksgiving Day Bowling Tournament trophy from 1987. In addition to his collaborations with Moore, Engfehr also co-directed *The Yes Men Fix the World*, which won the audience award at Berlin and aired on HBO and *Fat, Sick & Nearly Dead*, a humorous documentary about weight loss and self-realization that was released theatrically in 2011 and became an online global sensation, being seen by over 20 million people. He then produced and edited the documentary *No Manifesto* (2015) about the band Manic Street Preachers, which had a successful theatrical run in the UK. Engfehr's latest film, which he directed and shot, *The Kids Menu*, will be released in 2016.

Kurt's favorite way of Tickling Giants: An Amazon Parrot tail feather gently inserted into the ear canal.

## ANDEEL - CARTOONIST

Andeel is an Egyptian cartoonist, script writer and internet artist who is loved in Egypt by everyone except: Sisi supporters, Muslim Brotherhood supporters, Meninists, and Game of Thrones fans.

Andeel's favorite way of Tickling Giants: Counter-clockwise.

## PAUL TYAN - COMPOSER

Paul Tyan is a French-Lebanese film composer based in London. Tyan has been playing music since the age of 11 and grew up in a musical environment where his mother sang in a choir and his brother played in a blues band. For Tyan, writing film music is a great source of inspiration, where every project gets new ideas and emotions out of him.

Paul's favorite way of Tickling Giants: With his guitar pick instead of using a feather.

## WAIL GZOLY - CINEMATOGRAPHER

Wail Gzoly is a filmmaker and cinematographer. He has worked for many international news agencies including VICE, BBC, EURONEWS and DW (Deutsche Welle). He is currently working on a season of Faces of Africa for China Central Television. He is also filming his next documentary in Kenya. Gzoly's hobbies include taking portraits of people that each tell a story and anything having to do with music, including dancing, playing or even just listening to music.

Wail's favorite way of Tickling Giants: Taking pictures and making documentaries that expose the truth.

# TICKLING GIANTS: QUOTES



## BASSEM

*Stop just believing what you hear on TV. Come see and talk about what's actually happening.*

*I love sarcasm. With sarcasm, I can cut through people's facades and don't have to spill any blood.*

*I hope that as our daughter grows into a young woman, she will have her own mind. It's important to me that Nadia understands freedom of expression. Right now, freedom of expression just means one thing: pooping wherever she wants.*

*I have to continue because maybe people, if they can laugh at their differences, maybe they can laugh at each other instead of hating each other.*

## SIGN (on wall in office)

*Sarcasm: Because beating the shit out of people is illegal*

## ANDEEL

*Comedy and satire work really well in the moments where you're not supposed to laugh. The funniest joke ever is the joke that's told in the funeral.*

*This is, in my opinion, what the thing is all about. You have giants who want to crush people and you're just using whatever tool or whatever mean you have to counter this effort. Your thoughts, your ideas, or anything.*

*There's no way that the giant can just crush everybody unless people let him do that.*

## FAN

*People now understand democracy because of Bassem.*

## JON STEWART

*If your regime is not strong enough to handle a joke, then you don't have a regime. You know, there's an expression - I don't know if you have it: 'adding insult to injury.' Yes, maybe it is an insult, but it is not an injury. A joke has never ridden a motorcycle into a crowd with a baton. A joke has never shot tear gas to a group of people in a park. It's just talk.*

# FILM CREDITS

*Directed, Produced, Executive Produced & Written by*  
Sara Taksler

*Produced by*

Frederic Rose  
Maziar Bahari  
Monica Hampton



*Executive Produced by*

Technicolor  
Hassan Elmasry

*Co-Produced by*

Fork Films: Abigail E. Disney & Gini Reticker  
Marcie Jastrow  
Craig Newmark  
Polinera Productions

*Associate Produced by*

Zohar Adner  
Lucky Monkey Pictures: Lauren Versel  
Dan McCoy  
Lynn Spreadbury  
The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy  
Sandra Tasic

*Animation based on cartoons by*

Andeel

*Edited by*

Jamie Canobbio  
Thomas M. Vogt  
Tyler H. Walk

*Editing consulting by*

Kurt Engfehr

*Music by*

Paul Tyan