

LEILA JARMAN

COVER LETTER

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Leila Jarman and I am a Los Angeles based film and media maker. I am writing to be considered for the creative Producer opening at Spotify-Rap Caviar. I have over 10 years experience working in production and, more specifically in editorially driven, non-fiction work. But first, here's a little bit about how my career has evolved.

It must have been 102 degrees in the shade as I stood on the side of a road in Jordan, squeezing the camera as tightly as I could so that it wouldn't fall from my grip. I was twenty-three years old and had traveled alone across the world armed only with blind passion to make my first film. Looking back, I must have been crazy to do what I did, but I wasn't interested in anything but the story I wanted to tell. After graduating college, I yearned to find a way to translate and apply all of this knowledge of philosophy and theory into something direct and practical—into some kind of work that would impress itself on the world. My first film was Voice of the Valley, a documentary feature about two Muslim Jordanian women with the only socio-political radio program in Jordan, broadcasting stories about an impoverished agricultural community. I traveled to Jordan with nothing but a camcorder and the story of these two women. I knew nothing of filmmaking or the budgets necessary to facilitate a film, but I set out to do everything I could to bring this idea to fruition. My fears and anxieties about this experience were overshadowed by my relentless desire to tell their story. I initially planned a one-month shoot and ended up spending over 13 months in the Middle East making this film. I raised \$35,000 (with practically no internet connection and no idea where to start) to finish the film and I single handedly completed the edit, sent it to film festivals, and sold the film for distribution.

Voice of the Valley was one of my most challenging and rewarding, both as a woman and as a filmmaker. When I finally finished the film, I began exploring filmmaking in a more experimental sense, directing, producing and editing art films, dance films, music videos and video installations, all the while working in the film industry as an editor and story producer. To fund these projects, I borrowed cameras from friends, bartered for locations and did everything I could to study the works of great directors I respected. As I continued to direct my own films, I started to gain recognition and increased opportunities. You can read about those opportunities and select projects in my resume where I also outline my technical skills and proficiencies.

Most recently I have had the privilege of serving as Creative Director for Women's Voices Now, a global non-profit organization that advocates women's rights by using the power of social impact film to influence media and culture, reaching over 750,000 unique visitors every year (that's a pretty big number for the non-profit world!). We carry out our mission with a free streaming archive of international women's rights based films, an annual online film festival, educational programs, screening events, our digital publication, multimedia workshops and trainings, and a film fiscal sponsorship program. I outline my specific role as both resident filmmaker and creative director in my resume, but this work has been challenging, inspiring and, while I'd love to stay with Women's Voices Now forever, there's not really much space for growth--I'm kind of at the top of the ladder, and I am always sure to check myself and seek new and challenging opportunities to grow with and from.

I have always envisioned my work and the trajectory of my career as representative of my rich and eclectic cultural background (Iranian, Brazilian, British, American). This means as the world evolves, I will too; not only in the stories I chose to tell but also how I tell them. I believe that my eclectic background, experience and set of skills mesh rather precisely with the position you are seeking to fill, plus, I love music and have inadvertently become a hip-hop aficionado due to my fiancé's encyclopedic knowledge on all things rap and hip-hop. I would love to further discuss the position and my qualifications and background.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,
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