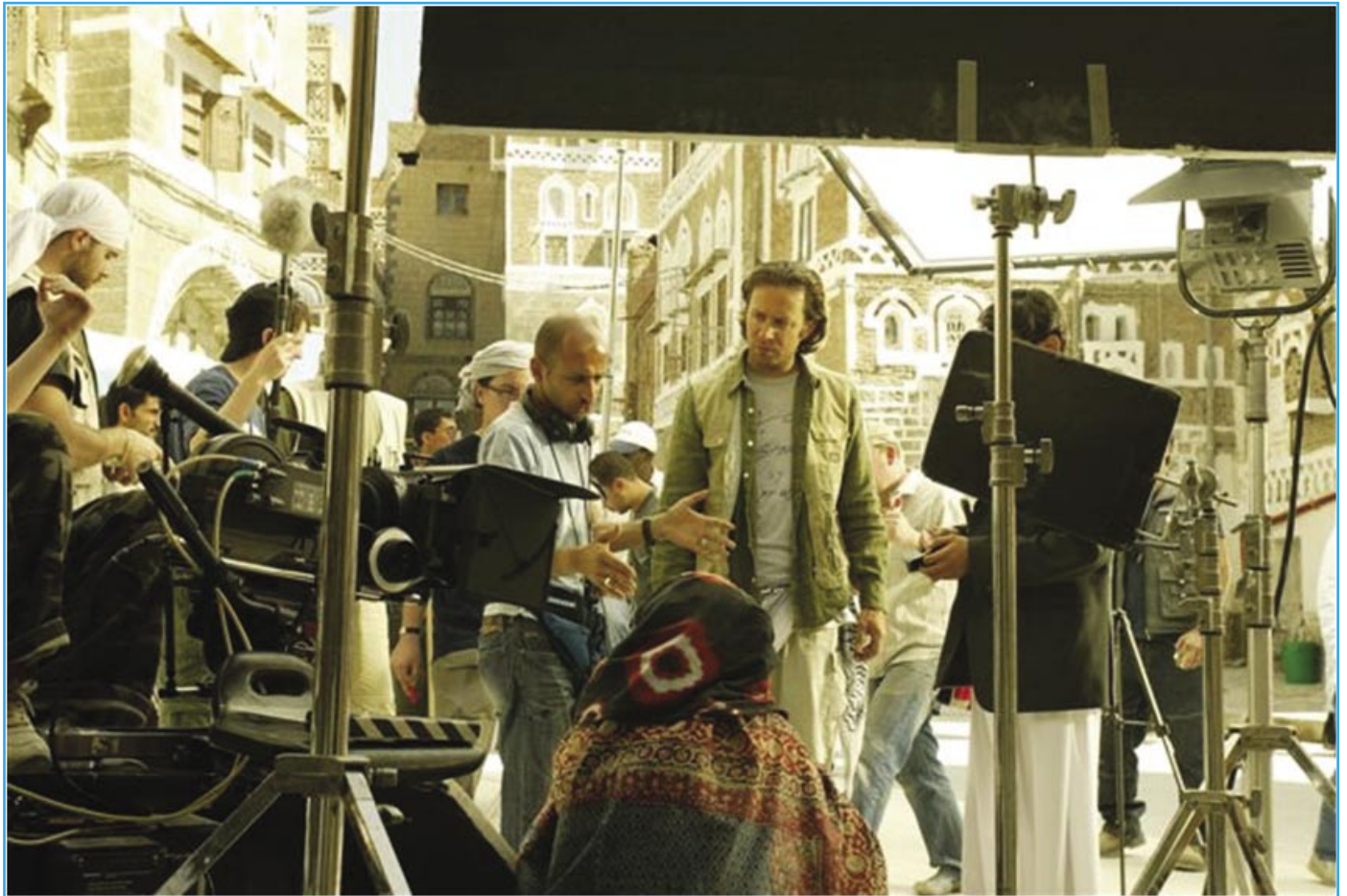


BRITISH COUNCIL HOSTS FILM SHOW IN SAUDI ARABIA FOR THE FIRST TIME



The British Council, in partnership with art organisations and cultural institutes, held its first ever film programme in various Saudi cities in December, with the screening of "A New Day in Old Sana'a", directed by Bader ben Hirsi, a British film director of Yemeni ancestry.

Bader ben Hirsi, toured Saudi Arabia for the screening of his film and for conducting workshops in scriptwriting and directing in Jeddah, Riyadh Literary Club, and Association of Arts and Culture in Dammam.

The tour attracted around 400 Saudi film makers, directors, cinema critics and journalists and theatre professionals and amateurs, and drama university professors. Around five local and national newspapers featured the film tour in their columns. The film director himself sensed a huge demand for building capacity in film-making. People have been asking for more professional training and

more public screenings. Immediately after the screening week, a number of arts institutes and cultural centres approached the British Council for more film screenings and workshops.

A drama academic commented in appreciation of the effort, "You have done something that has never been done before."

