

WIKI

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MIZNA **مزنه** PRESENTS THE 7th TWIN CITIES

# Arab Film Fest

NOVEMBER 10 → 13, 2011 HEIGHTS THEATER

3951 CENTRAL AVE NE, COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, MN

MIZNA.ORG/ARABFILMFEST11 763-788-9079

MIZNAARABFILMFEST2011.EVENTBRITE.COM

## ABOUT THE TWIN CITIES ARAB FILM FESTIVAL

MIZNA'S TWIN CITIES ARAB FILM FESTIVAL was conceived in 2002 and was first presented in 2003. It has since run on an eighteen month cycle, between autumn and spring seasons. It is the second longest standing Arab Film Festival in North America.

The festival aims to exhibit primarily films made by and about Arabs, but also about non-Arabs who live in the Arab world.

With few exceptions, the festival screens Minnesota theatrical premieres. For Mizna, the festival serves as an opportunity to collaborate with a variety of Twin Cities organizations.

The festival also signifies Mizna's interest in celebrating artists whose work is Arab-themed by inviting filmmakers to attend screenings of their films and to engage audiences in related discussions.

Mizna is a non-profit organization devoted to providing a forum for Arab American art. Mizna provides cultural programming in the Twin Cities and publishes the only journal of Arab American literature in the the United States.

Find out more at [MIZNA.ORG](http://MIZNA.ORG)

## Curator's Statement

**This** YEAR'S FILMS, MORE THAN THOSE FROM ANY PREVIOUS EDITION OF THE TWIN CITIES ARAB FILM FESTIVAL, represent how Arab Artists (both in their native lands and outside of the Arab world) are utilizing moving imagery to articulate their visions for the future of their diverse communities. This is not to imply that Arab filmmakers are just now taking matters into their own hands. For years, filmmakers of independent and under-ground oppositional cinema have been defying state censorship, often risking their work becoming banned in the process. Our opening night films, *18 Days* and *Voices from the Revolution*, continue this tradition by cataloguing defiance and reflecting upon sociopolitical changes as they are happening.

The films selected for this festival explore more than just the current oppositional trends. One need not be solely interested in Arab matters in order to be influenced by films that cover themes such as gender, refugees and diasporas, and alternative religious identities and art therapy, to mention a few. One need only be human to be touched by the sensibilities of *Grandma, a Thousand Times* and *This Way Up*, films that address the universal issues of aging and the inevitability of death.

This year's festival also proves that, just as moving imagery is a tool to transform societies and communities, it is, itself, transformed as a medium of storytelling as it reflects upon the very communities and cultures that it changes. Indeed, the thematic diversity of the films of this edition is rivaled only by the diversity of their aesthetic styles. From the atmospheric and abstract *Beirut My, Heart* to the "Hollywoodesque" *City of Life*, the film festival committee did not need to look hard in order to insure various artistic styles and ways of story-telling were represented.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank a most dedicated group of staff, volunteers, sponsors, and supporters. I would also like to extend a special thanks to Mizna's Executive and Artistic Director, Lana Barkawi, and Film Festival Director, Marya Morstad. Every one of you made this possible.

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FESTIVAL CURATOR

Rami Azzazi

FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Marya Morstad

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Anh Thu Pham

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## Opening Night: Egyptian Uprising



THUR  
10 NOV  
7:00  
PM

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EGYPT  
DRAMA  
SHORTS  
REVOLUTION  
MN PREMIERE

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various directors

in Arabic, SUBTITLED | 125 min.

2011 | Egypt

**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**

Cannes Film Festival

# 18 DAYS

يوم ١٨

With no budget, and on a voluntary basis, 10 directors and their crews decided to make 10 short films about the 18 days of the Egyptian Revolution in Cairo's Tahrir Square. These stories, inspired by events experienced, heard, or imagined, were an "instant response" to this pivotal moment in Arab history.

*18 Days* was an official selection at the Cannes Film Festival a mere three months later. This film is an amazing feat, resulting from the unified vision of emerging and established directors who decided to act fast and shoot. The filmmakers agreed that their proceeds would be devoted to organizing convoys to provide political and civic education in the villages of Egypt.

## VOICES FROM THE REVOLUTION

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DOCUMENTARY

U.S. PREMIERE

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**DIRECTOR:** Heba Amin

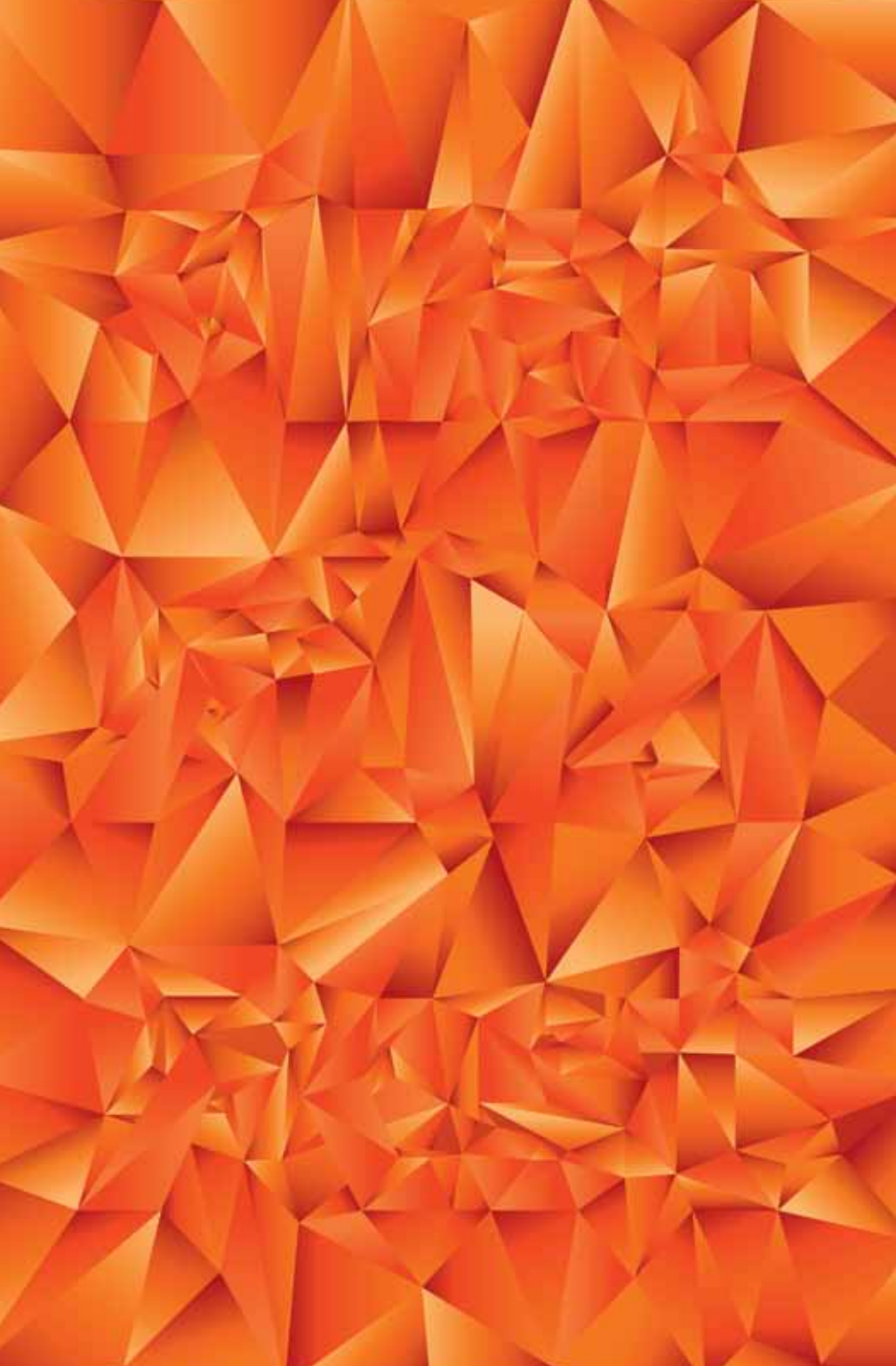
in Arabic SUBTITLED | 7min.

2011 | Egypt & Germany

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Programmers developed a platform for Egyptians to post on Twitter via voicemail, despite government imposed Internet cuts during the revolution. Thousands of heartfelt messages were recorded prior to the fall of the Mubarak regime.







FRI  
11 NOV  
1:00  
PM

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IRAQ & USA  
DOCUMENTARY  
AMATEUR

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**DIRECTOR:** Tarik Rasouli  
in English & Arabic, **SUBTITLED**  
69 min. | 2010 | USA

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# IRAQ, FINALLY

In the summer of 2009, Tarik Rasouli, a 19-year-old Iraqi-American from Minnesota, embarked on a journey to see Iraq for the first time. Tarik went to Iraq to familiarize himself with his history and gain insight regarding how Iraqis felt about the rule of Saddam, Bush's "shock and awe" campaign, and the state of the country.

Using a handheld flip video camera, Tarik tells the story of his journey, meeting his little brother and stepmother for the first time and experiencing first-hand a country that, in another reality, might have been his home.

FILMMAKER PRESENT FOR Q & A



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## MY NAME IS MOHAMED

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DRAMA

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Arabic, **SUBTITLED** | 11 min.  
2010 | Iraq, UK & Jordan

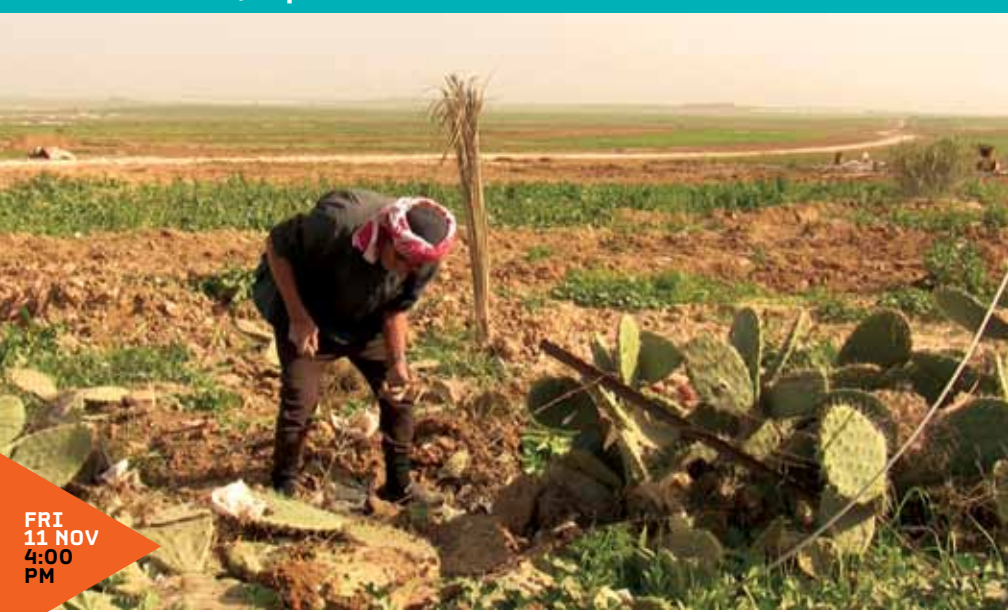
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**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**

Beirut International Film Festival 2009  
Rotterdam Arab Film Festival 2009

A nine-year-old Iraqi refugee living in Jordan, dreams of going to school like other children. Instead, he must clean shoes in order to support his widowed mother and younger sister.





FRI  
11 NOV  
4:00  
PM

PALESTINE  
WAR  
DOCUMENTARY  
MN PREMIERE

# GAZA-STROPHE

## PALESTINE

**DIRECTORS:** Samir Abdallah & Khéridine Mabrouk

in Arabic, **SUBTITLED**

95 min. | Palestine

**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**

International Festival of Mediterranean Documentary and Current Affairs (Marseille) › Grand Prix France TV

Euro-Mediterranean Documentary

Market 2010 (Barcelona)

› Ahmed Attia Prize

Al Ard Doc Film Festival (Italy)

› El Ard Prize

In the aftermath of the Israeli war against Gaza in January 2009, documentarians Samir Abdallah and Khéridine Mabrouk discover, along with Palestinian human rights delegates, the extent of the Gaza-strophe.

Dozens of eye-witness accounts illuminate the extent of the Palestinian nightmare, and the way in which Gazans keep hope alive through poetry, songs, and nokta (jokes and storytelling).

Gaza Shield looks at three media artists who develop a conscientious online video game to advance knowledge, peaceful activism, and creativity, and confront the injustices of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

**FILMMAKER PRESENT FOR Q & A.**

## GAZA SHIELD

DOCUMENTARY

MN PREMIERE

**DIRECTOR:** Tania Khalaf

Arabic, **SUBTITLED** 18 min.

2010 | Lebanon

**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**

Arab Film Festival-Australia





FRI  
11 NOV  
7:00  
PM

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EGYPT

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DRAMA

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MN PREMIERE

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**DIRECTOR:** Ibrahim El-Batout  
in English & Arabic, **SUBTITLED**  
69 min.

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2010 | Egypt & Qatar

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**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**

Tribeca Film Festival (New York)  
Durban International Film Festival  
Gulf Film Festival  
Washington Film Festival

# HAWI

حاي

Shot in Alexandria using amateur actors and crew, Ibrahim El Batout's third feature *Hawi* (meaning "magician" or "juggler" in Arabic) carries on the Egyptian filmmaker's passion for revealing the details of daily life in Egypt.

This story follows Youssef, a prisoner released after five years of solitary confinement in order to fetch a sheath of important documents. Seemingly unconnected subplots, including a group of aspiring songwriters, a satellite TV executive searching for a show host, and an elderly juggler leading his sickly horse through the city streets tell the story of a city populated by disparate and often desperate characters. These intimate portraits offer a closer view of so-called reality and the lives of everyday people.

FRI.  
11 NOV.  
9:30  
PM



# TAQWACORE

## THE BIRTH OF PUNK ISLAM

USA & PAKISTAN  
DOCUMENTARY  
PUNK ROCK  
ISLAM

**DIRECTOR:** Omar Majeed  
in English | 80 min.  
2009 | Canada

**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**  
SXSW Film Presented  
24 Beats Per Second 2010  
IFDA Film Presented 2010

The word *taqwacore* is a combination of *hardcore*, a genre of punk music, and *taqwa*, an Arabic word that translates as “piety” or “God-fearing.” The first to use the term was writer, journalist, and Muslim convert Michael Muhammad Knight. His novel, *The Taqwacores*, about a group of young Islamic punk rockers, received a storm of recognition among young American Muslims and prompted the formation of various Muslim punk bands.



### ALLAHU AKBAR

EXPERIMENTAL

**DIRECTOR:** Usama Alshaibi  
Arabic | 6 min. | 2003

In many Islamic sects, it is forbidden to have depictions of God or the Prophet. Complex geometrical patterns are used to praise the perfection of God in nature.

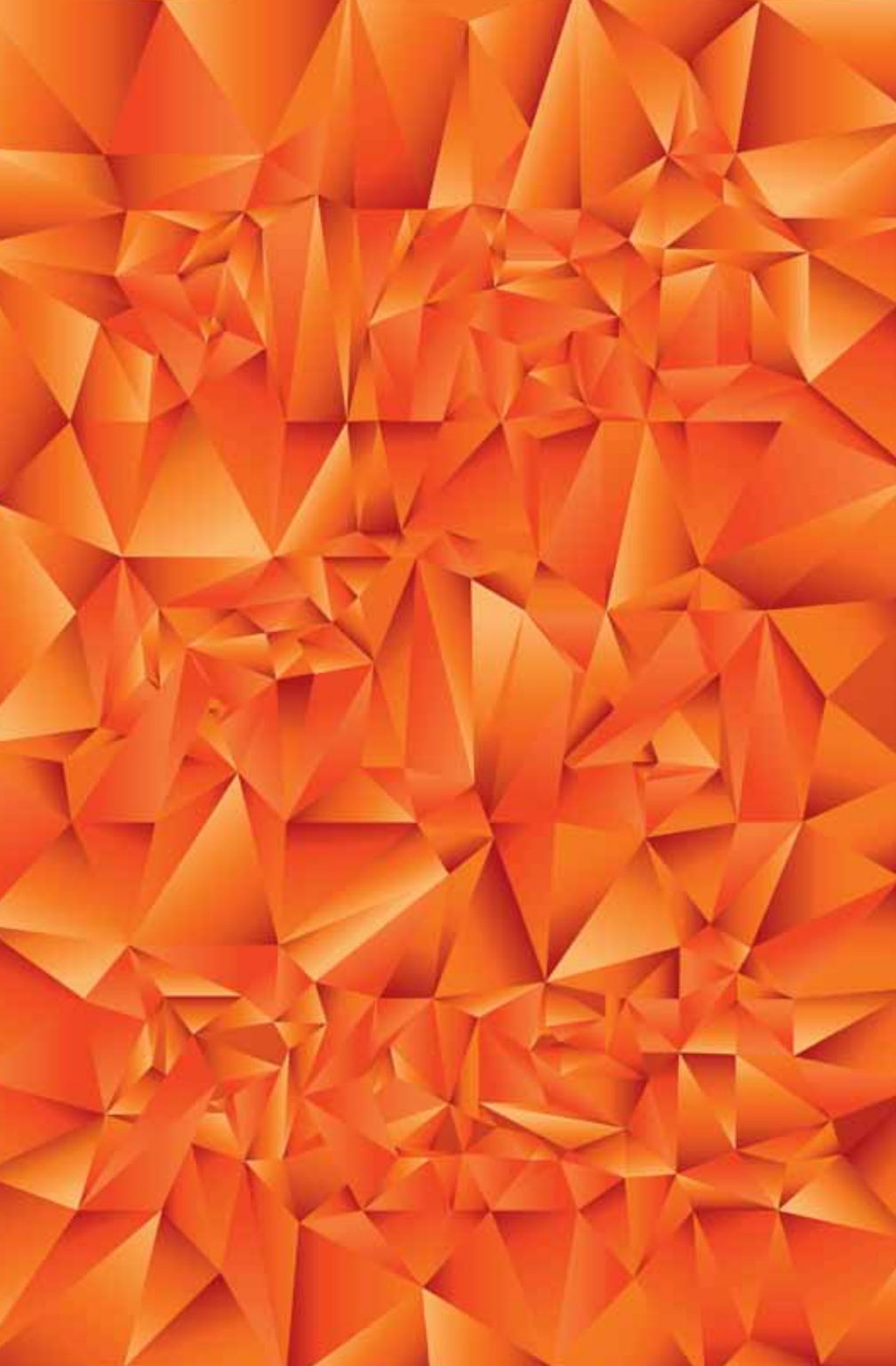
A lone survivor navigates the wreckage of a metropolis in the wake of a zombie epidemic. This short, produced in Abu Dhabi, is billed as the first-ever Arab zombie film.

### ENVY THE DEAD

**DIRECTOR:** Isa Swain | 10 min.  
Arabic | 2011 | UAE

**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**  
The New Orleans Horror Film Festival







SAT  
12 NOV  
10:00  
AM

LEBANON  
DOCUMENTARY  
PRISON  
THEATER

**DIRECTOR:** Zeina Daccache  
in Arabic, **SUBTITLED** | 78 min.

**FESTIVALS & AWARDS**

Dubai International Film Festival 2009  
First Prize for Best Documentary  
& the People's Choice Award

Dox Box International Documentary  
Film Festival 2010 (Damascus, Syria)  
First Prize

San Francisco-Los Angeles Arab  
Film Festival 2010 • Noor Award  
for Outstanding Documentary

# 12 ANGRY LEBANESE

Theater director Zeina Daccache set up Lebanon's first prison based drama project in notorious Roumieh prison, transforming the lives of many men and resulting in the beginnings of prison reform. For 15 months, 45 adult male inmates, some completely illiterate, worked together to present an adaptation of the famous stage play, *12 Angry Men*, better known through the Sidney Lumet film starring Henry Fonda. The play addresses themes of forgiveness, self-development, stigma and hope, to which Daccache added monologues, songs, and dance routines created by the prisoners. The rehearsals, therapy sessions and interviews show the tremendous dignity and despair of the prisoners as well as the charismatic Daccache's boundless energy and patience in revealing the power of 'drama therapy.'

Ahmad, a determined young Syrian poet, detests his life in Damascus and the constraints of his traditional society. Upon being drafted for military service, he decides to flee the country.

## MISH MUSH

DRAMA

**DIRECTOR:** Amar Chebib  
in Arabic, **SUBTITLED** | 19 min.

2010 | Canada, Syria  
& Arab Republic





SAT  
12 NOV  
12:00  
PM

DOCUMENTARY

DIRECTOR: Georgi Lazarevsk

in Arabic, SUBTITLED | 52 min.

2007 | Palestine

FESTIVALS & AWARDS:

Cracow Film Festival 2008

Tetouan International Mediterranean Film Festival 2009

To say that residents a Catholic-run nursing home, in East Jerusalem, live in the shadow of the “security wall” being constructed by Israel is hardly a metaphor. As recounted in this documentary, the wall, composed of concrete slabs, runs right past the windows and doors of our lady of Sorrows. But the loss of a view is not what troubles the Palestinian Christian residents most. Even the actual shadow introduced by the wall is not the worst thing: it is the separation from their families. Our Lady of Sorrows, an incidental victim of the wall’s zigzag through the West Bank, has fallen on the Israeli side. For these elderly Palestinians, it is the “wrong” side.

# THIS WAY UP

POETIC DOCUMENTARY

MN PREMIERE

DIRECTOR: Mahmoud Kaabour

in Arabic, SUBTITLED | 48 min.

2010 | UAE, Qatar & Lebanon

FESTIVALS & AWARDS:

Doha Tribeca Film Fest, 2010

Dox Box Film Festival, 2011

London International Documentary Film Festival, 2011

## GRANDMA, A THOUSAND TIMES

تيتة ألف مرة

This poetic tribute commemorates the many worlds of Teta Fatima, a feisty grandmother living in Beirut. With great intimacy, the film documents the larger-than-life character as she struggles to cope with the silence of her once-buzzing house. The face of their filmmaker grandson remind her of her late husband, a renowned violinist, while his previously unpublished violin improvisations weave through her world and throughout of the film. Grandfather, grandmother, and grandson are brought together in an intergenerational, magic-realist documentary.



## BEIRUT, MY HEART

DRAMA

MN PREMIERE

DIRECTOR: Sabah Haider

in Arabic, SUBTITLED | 10 min.

2011 | Lebanon

FESTIVALS & AWARDS:

Beirut International Film Festival

*Beirut, My Heart* presents a deeply personal narrative told eloquently and sincerely. A woman follows her heart to Beirut and is left seeking answers after the man she loves disappears without explanation. She stays on and while mourning, a mysterious poet guides her to peace.



SAT  
12 NOV  
3:00  
PM

# MAN WITHOUT A CELLPHONE

بدون موبایل

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PALESTINE

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COMEDY

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GENERATIONS

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MN PREMIERE

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**DIRECTOR:** Samen Zoabi

in Arabic, Hebrew, **SUBTITLED**

83 min. | 2010

Belgium, France & Palestine

**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**

Haifa International Film Festival

Tribeca Doha Film Festival, 2011

Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

Jerusalem Film Festival.

Twenty-something Palestinian-Israeli slacker Jawdat just wants to have fun with his friends, talk on his cell phone and find love. He navigates the dating scene with Muslim, Christian, and even Jewish girls, and wrestles with the Hebrew college entrance exam. Meanwhile, his curmudgeonly olive-farming father, Salem, is determined to drag Jawdat and his whole community into a fight against a nearby Israeli cell phone tower that he fears is poisoning the villagers with radiation. As Salem's efforts to remove the tower disrupt Jawdat's precious cell phone reception, preventing any further communication with his potential girlfriends, Jawdat is forced to reassess his priorities.

In order to obtain a green card, Noura, an aspiring artist, secretly marries Daniel, her gay, American best friend. Everything seems to be going as planned until Fareez, her conservative father, shows up unannounced and propels Noura's double life toward disaster.

## FIASCO

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COMEDY

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**DIRECTOR:** Nadia Hamzeh

in Arabic, **SUBTITLED** | 35 min.

2009 | USA

**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**

Las Vegas International Film Festival

World Fest Houston, 2010

Student Emmy for Best Comedy



SAT  
12 NOV  
5:00  
PM



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LEBANON

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DRAMA

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1976

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MN PREMIERE

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**DIRECTOR:** Georges Hachem

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in Arabic, **SUBTITLED** | 75 min.

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2010 | Lebanon

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**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**

Dubai International Film Festival, 2010  
› Best Film

Montréal Film Festival, 2010  
› Muhr Award Canada

Namur Film Festival, 2010 (Belgium)

Dubai International Film Festival, 2010

La Rochelle Film Festival, 2011 (France)

Festival du Film Francophone  
d'Angoulême, 2011 (France)

# STRAY BULLET

رصاصة طائشة

It is August, 1976 in Lebanon at the beginning of the civil war. Noha is about to get married. The upcoming wedding offers a great relief to Noha's family concerned that she would end up a spinster like her elder sister. Everything seems to be going smoothly when, two weeks before the wedding, Noha suddenly changes her mind. Her aspirations for independence, however, are thwarted at every turn.

The film stars Nadine Labaki, the award-winning Lebanese director of the films [\*Caramel\*](#) and [\*Where Do We Go Now?\*](#)





SAT  
12 NOV  
7:00  
PM

DUBAI  
DRAMA  
INTERCONNECTIONS  
MULTICULTURAL  
MN PREMIERE

# CITY OF LIFE

دار الحي

**DIRECTOR:** Ali F. Mostafa  
in Arabic, English & Hindi,  
**SUBTITLED** | 89 min.  
2009 | UAE

**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**  
Doha Tribeca Film Festival  
Dubai International Film Festival

Three lives are about to collide in Dubai: a privileged, young, male Emirati at odds with his cultural identity awakens to the sacrifices of brotherly friendship; a disillusioned Indian taxi driver, who bears an uncanny resemblance to a Bollywood star, finds his unexpected calling; a former Romanian ballet dancer turned flight attendant searches for love in an illusory world. *City of Life* is an urban drama that tracks the various intersections of a multi-ethnic cast, examining how random interactions and their consequences can irrevocably impact another's life. This is the biggest film production from the United Arab Emirates to date.

Occupied Kuwait, 1990.  
Two dead bodies lie in the street. Day after day, everyone passes them by, afraid to stop, except one man. Based on a true story, this is the director's thesis film for the University of Southern California.

## TO REST IN PEACE

DRAMA

**DIRECTOR:** Fawaz Al-Matrouk  
in English | 19 min.  
2010 | Kuwait, Canada & USA





SAT  
12 NOV  
9:30  
PM

## SCHEHERAZADE, TELL ME A STORY

إحكي يا شهرزاد

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EGYPT

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DRAMA

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WOMEN

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MEDIA

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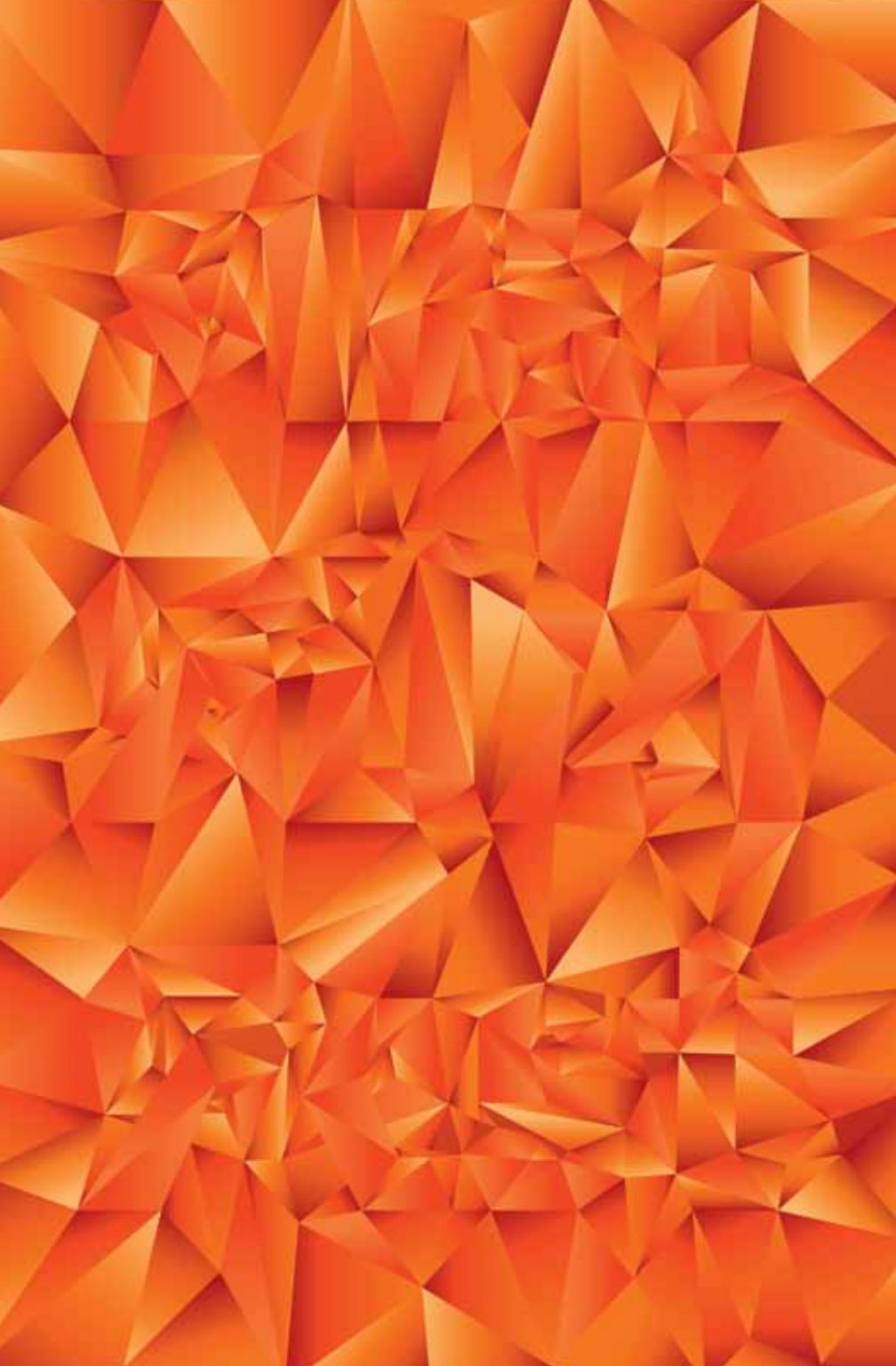
**DIRECTOR:** Yousry Nasrallah  
**in Arabic, SUBTITLED** 134 min.  
**2009** Egypt

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**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**  
Venice Film Festival (Italy), 2009  
› Lina Mangiacapre Award

A savvy, strong-willed female talk show host, Hebba, stirs up political controversy when she focuses her on-air discussions on women's sociopolitical issues. Her husband, Karim, is just about to be appointed editor-in-chief of Egypt's top government newspaper and is told that this position will be his only if his wife avoids political topics on her show. He persuades her to focus her programs on more mundane topics, but this new, "non-political" stance become even more subversive to authorities.

A provocative and audacious film exploring how men and women shape each others' lives in today's Cairo.





SUN  
13 NOV  
10:30  
AM

# THE KORAN

## BACK TO THE ORIGINS OF THE BOOK

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DOCUMENTARY

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**DIRECTOR:** Bruno Ulmer  
English, French & German,

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**SUBTITLED** 52 min.

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2010 | France

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Bruno Ulmer's [\*The Koran\*](#) documents the story of the sacred Scriptures of Islam and looks at archeological investigations of the most ancient Koranic manuscripts in existence.

The film briefly explains the content and organization of the Koran (Qur'an), and traces its history from its revelation to the prophet Mohammed through its role in uniting early Islamic empires spread throughout the Middle East, to the present-day devotion and practice of believers.



SUN  
13 NOV  
12:00  
PM

# ALGERIA, IMAGES OF A FIGHT

ALGÉRIE, IMAGES D'UN  
COMBAT

DOCUMENTARY

DIRECTOR: Jérôme Laffont

in French, SUBTITLED 48 min.

2010 | Belgium

As with all modern conflicts, the Algerian War of Independence from French colonial rule became a high-stakes venue in the battle of competing images. In opposition to the propaganda movies made by the French military campaign, a few directors such as René Vautier devoted themselves to documenting the struggle of fighters for Algerian independence. Much of this footage - at times moving, at times harrowing, and often very beautiful - was banned in France. Much of it has been lost and some even destroyed. This compelling film raises important questions about the power of filmmaking and the purposes it serves in documenting, or manipulating, reality.

DOCUMENTARY

DIRECTOR: Dounia  
Bovet-Wolteche

in French, SUBTITLED 53 min.

2009 | Belgium

# IF FOG HAD ROOTS

LES RACINES DU BROUILLARD

A journey by sea from one side of the Mediterranean to the other takes a French woman to Tizi-Ozou, the Algerian hometown of Ali, a friend she first met in Algeria in 1962 while celebrating Algeria's independence. After his death years later she goes back to the Algerian village where Ali's wife still lives, and is faced with the signs of their common past. This atmospheric, contemplative, black-and-white film is told through three voices.



SUN  
13 NOV  
2:30  
PM

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MIDWEST & PALESTINE

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DRAMA

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**DIRECTOR:** Dan Tanz

in English | 90 min.

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2010 | USA

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**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**

Minneapolis-St. Paul International  
Film Festival

## TRIUMPH67

London, 1987: the Super8 camera of 15-year-old Mohannad Aziz has captured the idyllic summer romance between his handsome older brother Sami, and a lovely American student Flora Mur. Seventeen years later, much has changed. Mohannad has achieved prominence as a radio journalist while Sami's photography career hasn't quite taken off. In the aftermath of Sami's premature death, Mohannad finds the past is closer than he thought, and that its secrets rarely remain hidden. Conflicted memories of his beloved brother vie uneasily with his still-potent attraction to Flora. Mohannad must grapple with the past, the present and his own secrets from that long-ago summer. The film was shot entirely on location in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

FILMMAKERS PRESENT FOR Q & A.



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## QUARTER MAGIC

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COMEDY

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**DIRECTOR:** Jacob Kader

in English | 17 min.

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2010 | USA

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Figuring out how magic works is what keeps people interested - doesn't matter if you're making a quarter or a 25-foot wall disappear. Set in Brooklyn, Malmud the Magician sets off to find his mysterious mentor.



SUN  
13 NOV  
5:00  
PM

## HERE COMES THE RAIN

شتي يا دني

LEBANON

DRAMA

TRAUMA

MN PREMIERE

**DIRECTOR:** Bahij Hojeij

in Arabic, **SUBTITLED** 100 min.

2010 | Lebanon

**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**

Abu Dhabi Film Festival, 2010  
(première)

Doha Tribeca Film Festival, 2010

Festival International du Film  
Indépendant de Bruxelles, 2010

Cairo Film festival

International Festival of Arab Film, 2010  
(Oran, Algeria)

Kidnapped in the mid-1980s, during the war in Lebanon,

Ramez is suddenly released from prison after 20 years.

Profoundly changed, Ramez returns to his family.

Unable to relate to them, he often wanders the streets of Beirut, where he meets a woman whose husband was kidnapped under similar circumstances.

Set in Byblos, an historic town in Lebanon with a prominent Maronite Christian community, a family's life is turned upside down when their iconic Virgin Mary statue sheds tears.

## TETA

DRAMA

MN PREMIERE

**DIRECTOR:** Merva Faddoul

in Arabic, **SUBTITLED** 24 min.

2011 | Lebanon





SUN  
13 NOV  
7:30  
PM

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PALESTINE

---

DARK COMEDY

---

HISTORY

---

SURREAL

---

MN PREMIERE

---

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**DIRECTOR:** Elia Suleiman  
in Hebrew, Arabic, **SUBTITLED**  
109 min. | 2009  
France, Belgium, UK & Italy

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**FESTIVALS & AWARDS:**  
Cannes Film Festival, 2009  
Toronto Film Festival, 2009

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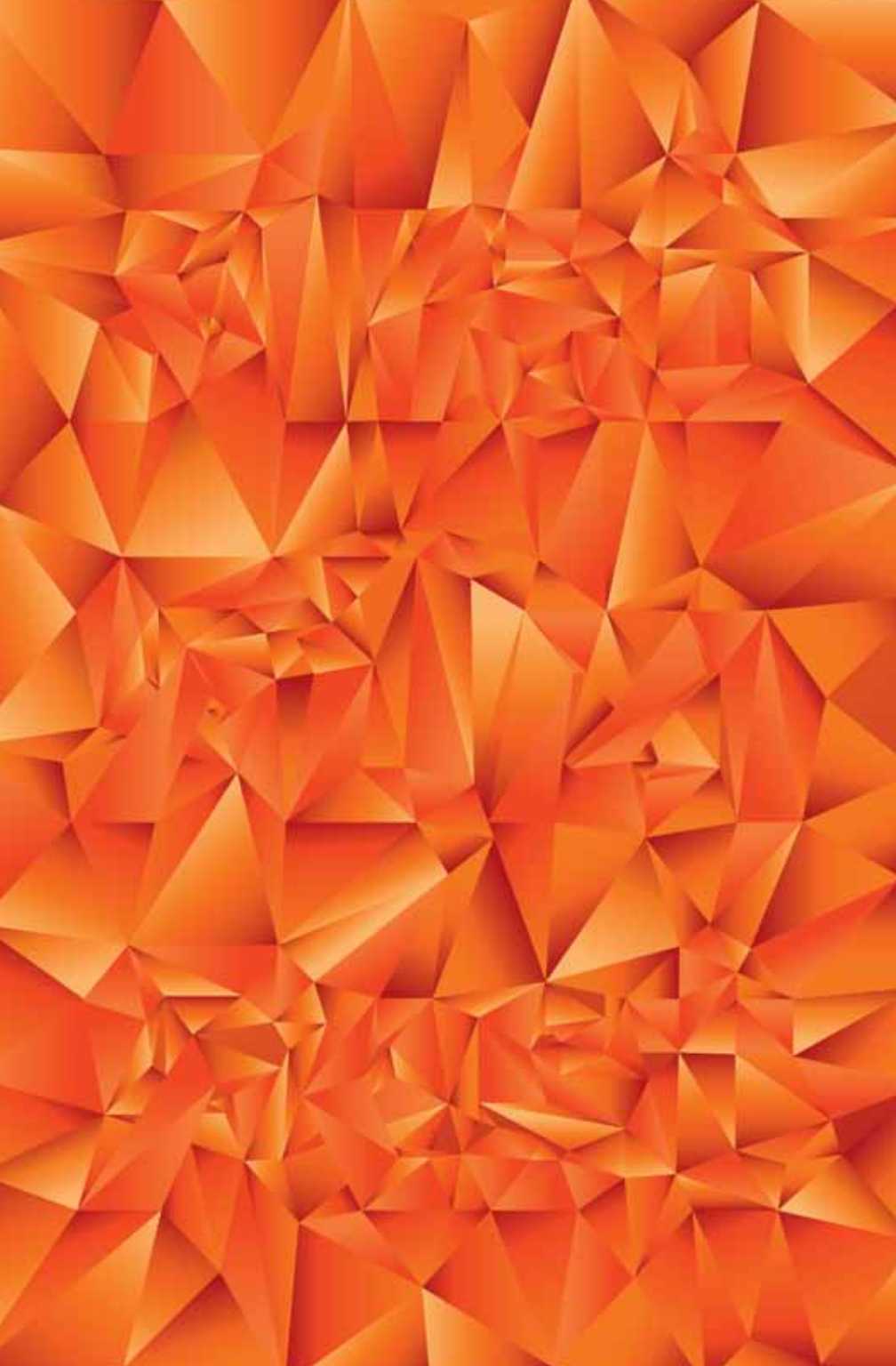
## THE TIME THAT REMAINS

الزمن المتبقي

A wry, semi-autobiographical account of Palestinians, reduced to living as a minority in their own homeland, is told through the experiences of acclaimed director Elia Suleiman's family and across several generations. The film examines the impact that the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 had upon its indigenous Palestinian people, and illustrates the intimate details of one family's struggle to continue living on their land to the present day, in spite of Israeli occupation.

This film is a dark comedy similar to Suleiman's *Divine Intervention*, which won the 2002 Cannes Jury Prize and was screened at Mizna's first Arab Film Festival in 2003.





## 12 ANGRY LEBANESE

### Zeina Daccache

Zeina Daccache, is a Lebanese actress, director and drama therapist. She studied at St. Joseph University in Beirut and at Philippe Gaulier College in London, and now works in Lebanon as a television actress. She also is a drama therapist and founder and director of Catharsis-Lebanese Center for Drama Therapy. In 2009 she directed [\*12 Angry Lebanese\*](#), the play performed by the inmates in Roumieh Prison, upon which this documentary is based.

## 18 DAYS: RETENTION

### Sherif Arafa

Sherif Arafa is an Egyptian director, writer, and producer. He was born in 1960 and graduated in 1982 from the Higher Institute of Cinema in Cairo. Sharif Arafa participated in the making of many of the movies that define the history of Egyptian cinema, such as [\*Terrorism and Kebab\*](#), [\*Birds of the Dark\*](#), [\*The Mafia\*](#), and [\*Halim\*](#).

## 18 DAYS: GOD'S CREATION

### Kamla Abou Zikri

Kamla Abu Zikri was born in Cairo where she graduated from the High Institute of Cinema. Her work has been screened and won awards in several American and international festivals. Zikri's films include [\*First Year Con\*](#) (2004) and [\*One-Zero\*](#) (2009).

## 18 DAYS: 19-19

### Marwan Hamed

Marwan Hamed was born in Cairo. After graduating from film school, he made a 40-minute short, [\*Lilly\*](#) (2001), based on a story by Yousef Idrees. His first feature film was the celebrated [\*The Yacoubian Building\*](#) (2006), for which he won Best New Narrative Director at the Tribeca Film Festival. His second feature was the controversial crime drama [\*Ibrahim Labyad\*](#) (2009).

## 18 DAYS: WHEN THE FLOOD HITS YOU

### Mohamed Ali

Mohamed Ali was born in Alexandria. He studied law and film directing in Cairo, where he is now based. His award-winning work includes the feature film [\*Lebet El Hob\*](#) (2006) and the television series [\*Ahl Cairo\*](#).

## 18 DAYS: CURFEW

### Sherif El Bendari

Sherif El Bendari was born in Cairo. He earned a degree in film at Helwan University's Faculty of Applied Arts, and teaches directing there. He has directed documentaries for Al Jazeera television along with a number of commercials. His first short narrative film, [\*Rise & Shine\*](#) (2006), was selected for 75 festivals worldwide and won 15 awards. His graduation project, [\*At Day's End\*](#) (2008), found similar success. He was chosen for the Berlinale Talent Campus in 2007.

## 18 DAYS: REVOLUTION COOKIES

### Khaled Marei

Khaled Marei has won a number of awards as a director and editor. His editing credits include Marwan Hamed's internationally acclaimed hit [\*The Yacoubian Building\*](#) (2006). His films include [\*Asal Eswed\*](#) and [\*Bolbol Hayran\*](#) (both 2010).

## 18 DAYS: #TAHRIR 2/2

### Mariam Abou Ouf

Mariam Abou Ouf was born in Cairo. After earning a degree in political science and philosophy from the American University of Cairo, she studied at London Film School. She has worked as an assistant director and has directed commercials and television programs. Her work includes the award-winning documentary [\*Taxi\*](#) (2004). She recently completed her first feature film.

## 18 DAYS: WINDOW

### Ahmad Abdallah

Ahmad Abdalla was born in Cairo. He studied music before starting a career as a film editor. His first directorial effort, the critically acclaimed [\*Heliopolis\*](#), starring Khaled Abol Naga, screened in competition at ADFF in 2009. His second feature, [\*Microphone\*](#) (2010), won a number of international awards.

## 18 DAYS: INTERIOR/EXTERIOR

### Yousry Nasrallah

Yousry Nasrallah was born in Cairo and received his degree in economics and political science from Cairo University. He worked as a film critic and was the assistant to Volker Schlöndorff on the making of [\*Circle of Deceit\*](#) (1981). He later worked for the late, legendary director Youssef Chahine.

## 18 DAYS: ASHRAF SEBERTO

### Ahmad Alaa

Ahmed Alaa was born in Cairo. He graduated from the High Cinema Institute in 1999. He has worked as a director of commercials and an assistant director on a number of features. His debut feature is [\*The Replacement\*](#) (2009).

## ALGERIA IMAGES OF A FLIGHT

### Jérôme Laffont

Born in Lourdes (France) in 1979, Jerome Laffont is a graduate in Directing at INSAS in Brussels. His diploma film, a documentary about the closure of the blast furnace near Liege, [\*Au Coeur du chaud, des vestiges et des hommes\*](#), was selected by some twenty festivals. With Marie-France Collard and Foued Bellali, he is also co-director of the long documentary [\*Résister n'est pas un crime\*](#) (2008) on the abuse of anti-terrorist laws in Belgium. [\*Algérie, Images d'un combat\*](#) is his third film.

## ALLAHU AKBAR

### Usama Alshaibi

Usama Alshaibi was born in Baghdad, Iraq in 1969. His work in film and video has been screened at a number international film festivals and venues. In 2004, Usama returned to his birthplace in Iraq to shoot his first feature documentary titled [\*Nice Bombs\*](#), which had a theatrical release in 2007 and a broadcast premiere on the Sundance Channel in 2008.

## BEIRUT, MY HEART

### Sabah Haider

Sabah Haider is a Canadian filmmaker and journalist currently based in Beirut, Lebanon. She has written, produced, and directed a number of short, corporate, and documentary films. In 2009 she was awarded the University College London's Provost's Award for Public Engagement, for translating her master's research into filmmaking workshops for youth in Beirut's refugee camps and in Palestine.

## CITY OF LIFE

### Ali F. Mostafa

Ali F. Mostafa has worked on short films and commercials. His graduation film [\*Under the Sun\*](#) has been named best foreign film in various international festivals and won Best Film in the 2006 Emirates Film Competition. Mostafa was named Best Emirati Filmmaker at the Dubai International Film Festival in 2007, and Digital Studio magazine named him 2010 Young Filmmaker of the Year with his feature debut [\*City of Life\*](#).

## ENVY THE DEAD

### Isa Swain

Isa Swain was raised between the United Kingdom and the Middle East. After completing a degree from the New York Film Academy in Abu Dhabi, he made several short films and began working within the local film industry.

## FIASCO

### Nadia Hamzeh

Nadia Hamzeh received a degree in acting from the Academy of Dramatic Arts in her hometown of Damascus, then moved to the United States and earned her master's degree in directing from Chapman University. She won a student Emmy for best comedy from the American Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for her film [\*Fiasco\*](#).

## GAZA SHIELD

### Tania Khalaf

Born and raised in Beirut, Lebanon, Tania Khalaf worked in film and theater before moving to the United States. Her work has screened at a number of film festivals and venues. With co-producer Meta Newhouse, Khalaf won the 2005 Austin Film Festival's Best Documentary Short and was selected as a Next Frame Documentary Finalist for the film [\*still life\*](#). Her latest documentary, [\*Born in Beirut\*](#), received the Award of Excellence at the Broadcast Education Association Conference in 2008. Khalaf is an assistant professor of radio, television, and film at the University of North Texas.

## GAZA-STROPHE, PALESTINE

### Samir Abdallah

Samir Abdallah has produced documentary films and reportages since 1983. Abdallah founded L'Yeux Ouverts, which organizes workshops on film production and programming. Since 1994, and with more than 3,000 partnerships with associations from all over the world, through a network that he has recently named CiNemeteQUe, he makes known the cinema of "unwanted people" who have entered into resistance.

## GAZA-STROPHE, PALESTINE

### Khéridine Mabrouk

Khéridine Mabrouk has been the author of comic strips and an illustrator for several magazines for more than seven years. He has also been the artistic director for several publishing houses. Mabrouk graduated from the Gobelins School of the Image in France, has worked in 3D animation, and has made several promotional films.

## GRANDMA A THOUSAND TIMES

### Mahmoud Kaabour

Mahmoud Kaabour is an award-winning filmmaker and writer from Beirut, Lebanon. Upon graduating from the Mel Oppenheim School of Cinema in Montreal, he went on to the National Film Board of Canada, and the Evening News at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. His first documentary *Being Osama* screened at Mizna's third TCAFF in 2005 and received four international awards.

## HAWI

### Ibrahim El-Batout

Ibrahim El-Batout was born in Port Said, Egypt. In 1985, he graduated from the American University in Cairo. He has worked as a director, producer and cameraman, capturing stories mainly about human loss, suffering, and displacement since 1987, and has also directed numerous documentaries for international television channels, such as ZDF (Germany), TBS (Japan) and ARTE (France). His second feature film *Ein Shams (Eye of the Sun)* (2008) won the Golden Bull, the top prize at the 54th Taormina Film Festival, 2008.

## HERE COMES THE RAIN

### Bahij Hojeij

Bahij Hojeij earned his degree in film from Louis Lumière College in Paris and has been a film professor at the Lebanese University's Institute of Fine Arts. After making several shorts, his feature debut *Ring of Fire* won a 2004 Fipresci Prize. *Here Comes the Rain* is his second film.

## IF FOG HAD ROOTS

### Dounia Bovet-Woltèche

Dounia Bovet-Woltèche was born in Algeria in 1980 to a Belgian mother. In 2001 she graduated from the school of cinema at the INSAS in Brussels, where she studied directing. *If Fog Had Roots* is her first long-format documentary.

## IRAQ FINALLY

### Tarik Rasouli

Born in Fridley, Minnesota, to an Iraqi father and a Palestinian mother, Tarik Rasouli has been attending anti-war rallies since he was a child. He is a student at Minneapolis Community and Technical College working towards a peace studies degree. As a high school student, Rasouli led walkouts with organizations such as Youth Against War and Racism. He has also participated in Americorps in Hawaii, providing resources for homeless people. *Iraq, Finally* is Rasouli's first film.

## MAN WITHOUT A CELLPHONE

### Sameh Zoabi

Sameh Zoabi graduated from Tel Aviv University with a double major in film studies and English literature. He completed his M.F.A. in film direction at Columbia's School of the Arts. Zoabi has directed and written several narrative short films. His latest film *Be Quiet* is an international award-winning short film, receiving the third prize in the Cinéfondation Selection at the 2005 Cannes Film Festival.

## MISH MUSH

### Amar Chebib

Born and raised throughout the Arabian-Persian Gulf by a Canadian mother and Syrian father, Amar Chebib began experimenting with filmmaking during his adolescence. His first short drama *Le Boucher* screened in several international film festivals, his second, *Mish Mush*, premiered at the Dubai International Film Festival 2010. Amar lives in Kelowna, Canada where he is working on a feature documentary on the Sufi roots of traditional Arab-Ottoman music.

## MY NAME IS MOHAMED

### Yahya Hassan Al-Allaq

Yahya Hassan Al-Allaq was born in Baghdad, Iraq. Al-Allaq has a degree in theatrical cinema from the Faculty of Fine Arts at Baghdad University. He served as assistant director to Mohammad Al-Darraj for the film *Dreams*.

*My Name Is Mohamed* is his first short narrative film, co-directed by Sinan Najm Abdullah, Baan Shibab, Rania Okla, and Yacoub Haddad.

## QUARTER MAGIC

### Jacob Kader

Jacob Kader has experience writing, directing, and producing film, video, and theater. He received his M.F.A. in directing from Columbia University in 2009. His feature screenplay, *Small Victories*, received faculty honors at Columbia and was selected for Rawi Screenwriter's Lab in 2009 from the Jordanian Royal Film Commission and the Sundance Institute. His short films have screened at a number of international film festivals.

## SCHEHERAZADE TELL ME A STORY

### Yousry Nasrallah

Yousry Nasrallah was born to a Coptic Christian family in Cairo. He graduated in economics and political science at Cairo University. He then worked as a film critic and directing assistant in Beirut from 1978 to 1982. Nasrallah became assistant to Youssef Chahine, whose company Misr International would go on to produce his films.

## STRAY BULLET

### Georges Hachem

Georges Hachem is a Lebanese director. Formerly trained in performing arts at the Lebanese University and at the Louis Lumière College in France. Before his filmmaking pursuits, Georges Hachem has also conducted training workshops in film and directing in Beirut and Paris. He has staged several plays and has directed several short films.

## TAQWACORE

### Omar Majeed

Omar Majeed is a Pakistani-Canadian film director and producer. He studied cinema at York University Film School and editing at the International Academy of Design in Toronto. He went on to work as producer at Toronto's CityTV and won a Gemini Award for his television work. Majeed also worked with Canada's National Film Board through the Reel Diversity program in Montreal and with EyeSteelFilm.

## TETA

### Merva Faddoul

Merva Faddoul was born and raised in Byblos, Lebanon. Merva received her bachelor's degree in communications from the Lebanese American University, as well as a master's degree in film and interactive media production from the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California. She was the film program manager for an international initiative between the USC and the Royal Film Commission of Jordan. Merva continues to write and direct short films that have screened at several film festivals including the Cannes Short Film Corner and the Annual Arab Film Festival in the Bay Area.

## THE KORAN

### Bruno Ulmer

Bruno Ulmer started as a practicing physician and a visual artist. Prior to becoming a critically acclaimed documentary filmmaker, he worked for Danone's Cultural and Humanitarian Sponsorship program and for a French communication agency.

## THE TIME THAT REMAINS

### Elia Suleiman

Elia Suleiman is a Palestinian film director and actor. He is best known for his 2002 film *Divine Intervention*, a modern tragic comedy about living under occupation in Palestine. The film won the Jury Prize at the 2002 Cannes Film Festival. Suleiman's cinematic style is often compared to that of Jacques Tati and Buster Keaton, for its poetic interplay between burlesque and sobriety.

## THIS WAY UP

### Georgi Lazarevski

Georgi Lazarevski was born in Brussels in 1968. After graduating from the Louis Lumiere College in France, he practiced both photography and cinema as a cameraman. He has won awards for his photographic works and has directed shorts and documentary films for non-governmental organizations.

## TO REST IN PEACE

### Fawaz Al-Matrouk

Fawaz Al-Matrouk grew up in Kuwait until 1990 and the Gulf War. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, his family moved to Saudi Arabia, London, and Halifax, Canada, eventually settling in Toronto, where he has spent most of his life. He completed a degree in history at the University of Toronto, and an M.F.A. in film production at the University of Southern California. Drawing inspiration from his readings and his travels, Fawaz has excelled in directing, writing, and academics, receiving numerous awards for his work. Most recently, his thesis film *To Rest in Peace* won the silver prize at the PAGE Screenwriting Awards.

## TRIUMPH67

### Dan Tanz

*Triumph67* is Dan Tanz's first feature film. Tanz got the idea for the film while driving with his brother Joshua through the Driftless Area of southeastern Minnesota in the summer of 2008. Through his collaboration with two, prominent Arab film aficionados, Mohannad Ghawanmeh and Kitty Aal, Tanz set out to tell a story of a voice that has been ignored or demonized by Hollywood for decades.

## VOICES FROM THE REVOLUTION

### Heba Amin

Heba Amin is an Egyptian artist whose work seeks to map collective memory as it relates to the built environment. Her theoretical and studio-based work addresses themes related to urban planning, mapping, migration/immigration, and language as an aesthetic database to explore junctures, failures, and flawed memory. She works in an archival nature, drawing from collections of work to reconfigure and make meaning of the subject through different materials, most often manifesting as video, installation, and projection performance. Amin is a current DAAD scholar and lives in Berlin.

A photograph showing the interior of a restaurant. The space is dimly lit with warm, orange-toned lighting. There are several round tables with dark wooden chairs. In the background, there's a bar area and a brick wall. The overall atmosphere is cozy and modern.

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**THURSDAY, 10** NOVEMBER

**07:00 PM** 18 DAYS **يوم 18**  
+ VOICES FROM THE REVOLUTION

**FRIDAY, 11** NOVEMBER

**01:00 PM** IRAQ FINALLY  
+ MY NAME IS MOHAMED

**04:00 PM** GAZA STROPHE, PALESTINE  
+ GAZA SHIELD

**07:00 PM** HAWI **حاوي**

**09:30 PM** TAQWACORE  
+ ENVY THE DEAD + ALLAHU AKBAR

**SATURDAY, 12** NOVEMBER

**10:00 AM** 12 ANGRY LEBANESE  
+ MISH MUSH

**12:00 PM** THIS WAY UP  
GRANDMA, A THOUSAND TIMES **تيئة ألف مرة**  
+ BEIRUT MY HEART

**03:00 PM** MAN WITHOUT A CELLPHONE **بدون موبايل**  
+ FIASCO

**05:00 PM** STRAY BULLET **رصاصة طايشة**

**07:00 PM** CITY OF LIFE **دار الحي**  
+ TO REST IN PEACE

**09:30 PM** SCHEHERAZADE, **إحكى يا شهرزاد**  
TELL ME A STORY

**SUNDAY, 13** NOVEMBER

**10:30 AM** THE KORAN: BACK TO THE ORIGINS OF THE BOOK

**12:00 PM** ALGERIA, IMAGES OF A FIGHT  
IF FOG HAD ROOTS

**02:30 PM** TRIUMPH67  
+ QUARTER MAGIC

**05:00 PM** HERE COMES THE RAIN **شتي يا دني**  
+ TETA

**07:30 PM** THE TIME THAT REMAINS **الزمن المتبقي**