7TH ANNUAL
BOSTON PALESTINE
FILM FESTIVAL
October 18 to October 27, 2013
CELEBRATING PALESTINIAN CULTURE

Media Kit

When I Saw You directed by Annemarie Jacir

www.bostonpalestinefilmfest.org
Presenting the 7th Annual Boston Palestine Film Festival

Since 2007, the Boston Palestine Film Festival has been bringing Palestine-related cinema, narratives, and culture to New England audiences. The festival has featured hundreds of compelling and thought-provoking, films, including documentaries, dramatic features, animated films, rare early works, video art pieces, and new films by emerging artists and youth. These works from directors around the world have offered refreshingly honest, self-described, and independent views of Palestine and its history, culture, and geographically dispersed society. BPFF was created to celebrate Palestinian cinema as a cultural and artistic production of a people in exile and under occupation and siege.

This press kit includes information about:
- Background and brief synopses on all of the films that will be screened at this year’s festival
- Scheduled dates and times of screenings
- Screening venues
- Director biographies

To learn more: **www.bostonpalestinefilmfest.org**

To schedule an interview: **pr@bostonpalestinefilmfest.org**.

To follow us on Twitter: **twitter.com/BPFF_Festival**

To follow us on Facebook: **http://www.facebook.com/BostonPalestineFilmFestival**

We thank you for your continued support and interest! We hope you can join in celebrating another year of Palestinian culture and film with us.

Yours truly,
The Boston Palestine Film Festival Executive Committee
When I Saw You (Lamma Shoftak)  
ANNE MARIE JACIR  
2012 | DRAMA | 96 MIN.

Jordan, 1967. The world is alive with change: brimming with reawakened energy, new styles, music, and infectious hope. In Jordan, a different kind of change is underway as tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees pour across the border in the wake of the 1967 war. Having been separated from his father in the chaos of war, Tarek, 11, and his mother Ghaydaa are amongst them. Placed in “temporary” refugee camps, they wait, like the generation before them who arrived in 1948.

Following on the acclaimed Salt of this Sea, writer/director Annemarie Jacir has become a leader in Palestinian contemporary cinema. Entirely Arab-financed with all Palestinian producers, this heartfelt and moving film, Palestine’s entry for the 2013 Academy Awards for Foreign Language Film, is suffused with a distinct sense of this revolutionary time and place.

Director in virtual conversation following film.

Winner:  
NETPAC Award Best Asian Film  
Berlin International Film Festival, Germany (2013)  
Best Film from the Arab World  
Abu Dhabi International Film Festival, United Arab Emirates (2012)  
Special Jury Prize  
Oran Festival of Arab Cinema, Algeria (2012)
Saturday, October 19
12:30 pm | Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Shorts Program: *Identity and Homeland, from Within and Afar*

**The Handsome Groom**
SAMEH ZOABI
2012 | DOCUMENTARY SHORT | 22 MIN.

The filmmaker takes charge of his best friend’s romantic fortunes when his mother gives up trying to find him a wife in a Palestinian village in northern Israel.

From a compilation called *Family Albums* (2012), artistic producer Raed Andoni.

**The Dinner**
MAIS DARWAZEH
2012 | DOCUMENTARY SHORT | 22 MIN.

Mais Darwazeh lives alone. In Amman, a city of uprooted people, she creates her own identity by gathering around her table close friends, chosen ingredients, and old recipes.

From a compilation called *Family Albums* (2012), artistic producer Raed Andoni.

**Camp Faces**
HASAN TANJI
2011 | VIDEO ART | 3 MIN.

A short film about a day in the Palestinian refugee camp Yarmouk in Damascus, Syria in better times.
MiG
THAER ALSAHLI
2011  |  DOCUMENTARY  |  12 MIN.

In this lyrical first-person film, the filmmaker bears witness to the aftermath of a direct Syrian regime strike on the Palestinian refugee camp of Yarmouk, the first since the Syrian civil war began in 2011. The bombing, which hit a school and a mosque, caused a massive exodus of refugees from the camp—upwards of 70% of its residents by some estimates.

Though I Know the River Is Dry
OMAR ROBERT HAMILTON
2013  |  DRAMA  |  19 MIN.

Caught between his brother’s past and his child’s future, one man’s choice triggers catastrophe for his whole family. He has returned to Palestine after years spent in Detroit. On the fraught road through the country, he relives the choices that sent him to America and the forces now driving him home.

One of only 15 shorts nominated for the prestigious 2013 European Film Awards by the International Rotterdam Film Festival
Saturday, October 19
3:00 pm | Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Thematic Focus: Palestinian Narratives

Ismail
NORA AL-SHARIF
2013 | DRAMA | 28 MIN.

Inspired by a day in the life of the famous and prolific Palestinian painter Ismail Shammout (1930-2006), *Ismail* depicts the evocative story of a young Palestinian artist struggling to survive and support his parents and young brother after their expulsion to a refugee camp in 1948 by the Israeli forces.

Though I Know the River Is Dry
OMAR ROBERT HAMILTON
2013 | DRAMA | 19 MIN.

See this film’s previous listing on October 19th, 12:30 p.m.

Followed by a panel discussion on representing, portraying, and reclaiming Palestinian narrative. Omar Robert Hamilton, Nora al-Sharif (invited), and Susan Abulhawa (*Mornings in Jenin, My Voice Sought the Wind* (forthcoming)).
Sunday, October 20
12:30 pm | Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Thematic Focus: Art and the Human Spirit

Ismail
NORA AL-SHARIF
2013 | DRAMA | 18 MIN.

See this film’s previous listing on October 19th, 3:00 p.m.

Picasso in Palestine
RASHID MASHARAWI & KHALED HOURANI
2012 | DOCUMENTARY | 52 MIN.

In June 2011, Picasso’s painting, Buste de Femme (1943), was brought from its home in Van Abbemuseum in the Netherlands to the Exhibition space at the International Academy of Art Palestine (IAAP) in Ramallah for an unprecedented and ambitious exhibit. As the film depicts, even great works of art are subject to the vicissitudes of the occupation, and this effort was fraught with unimaginable bureaucratic and logistical obstacles and challenges.
Sunday, October 20
3:00 pm | Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

**Nation Estate**
LARISSA SANSOUR
2012 | DRAMA | 9 MIN.

With a glossy mixture of computer-generated imagery, live actors, and an arabesque electronica soundtrack, Larissa Sansour’s *Nation Estate* imagines a vertical, futuristic solution to Palestinian statehood. Palestinians are finally living the “high life.”

**Winner:**
Ecumenical Jury Prize
International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Germany (2013)

**Critics’ Award**
Rencontres Internationales des Cinémas Arabes, Marseilles, France (2013)

**Stile Libero Award**
Collecchio Video Film Festival, Collecchio, Italy (2013)

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**When I Saw You (Lamma Shoftak)**
ANNEMARIE JACIR
2012 | DRAMA | 96 MIN.

*See this film’s previous listing on October 18th, 7:00 p.m.*
Monday, October 21
2:00 pm | Cambridge Public Library

Voices Across the Divide
ALICE ROTHCHILD
2013 | DOCUMENTARY | 57 MIN.

Voices Across the Divide explores the Israeli/Palestinian conflict through rarely heard personal stories. Narrated by Alice Rothchild, an American Jew raised on the tragedies of the Holocaust and the dream of a Jewish homeland in Israel, the film follows her personal journey as she begins to understand the Palestinian narrative, while exploring the Palestinian experience of loss, occupation, statelessness, and immigration to the US.

The documentary is both a personal journey to understand the Palestinian narrative as well as the implications and contradictions of deeply held cultural beliefs in the Jewish community.

Director in conversation following film.
Monday, October 21
4:00 pm | Cambridge Public Library

From Al-Araqib to Susiya
JENNY NYMAN
2013 | DOCUMENTARY SHORT | 15 MIN.

Two Palestinian villages – one in Israel, one in the West Bank – share a single story of a struggle against forced displacement. The parallels are striking. Al-Araqib is a Palestinian Bedouin village in Israel whose residents are Israeli citizens. As of April 2013, Israel had destroyed the village 49 times to make way for two Jewish National Fund (JNF) forests. Susiya is a Palestinian village in Area ‘C’ of the West Bank whose residents live under Israeli Occupation. The majority of structures in Susiya are subject to demolition orders, and Israel intends to forcibly displace the community to make the land available for a Jewish settlement.

The Village Under the Forest
MARK J. KAPLAN
2013 | DOCUMENTARY | 68 MIN.

Unfolding as a personal meditation from the Jewish Diaspora, The Village Under The Forest explores the hidden remains of the destroyed Palestinian village of Lubya, which lies under a purposefully cultivated forest plantation called South Africa Forest.

Using the forest and the village ruins as metaphors, the documentary explores themes related to the erasure and persistence of memory and dares to imagine a future in which dignity, acknowledgement and co-habitation become shared possibilities in Israel/Palestine.

Directed by Emmy-winner Mark J Kaplan, The Village Under The Forest is written and narrated by scholar and author Heidi Grunebaum.

Winner:
Audience Award for Best South African Film
Encounters South African International Documentary Festival (2013)
Monday, October 21
6:30 pm | Harvard Law School

It’s Better to Jump
GINA M. ANGELONE, PATRICK STEWART, & MOUNA STEWART
2013 | DOCUMENTARY | 73 MIN.

It’s Better to Jump gives voice to Arab inhabitants of the ancient walled city of Akka (located on Israel’s northern coast) as both the people and their town face a very uncertain future. It’s Better to Jump weaves together a magical story of an historic place, its people, and the hopes they hold beyond all limitation to make giant leaps of faith in life.

Directors in conversation following film.
Monday, October 21
8:15 pm | Harvard Law School

Thematic Focus: From the Field; Documenting Palestine

Beirut Photographer
MARIAM SHAHIN & GEORGE AZAR
2012 | DOCUMENTARY | 47 MIN.

In 1981, George Azar, a Lebanese-American, crossed the Syrian border into Lebanon. He carried an inexpensive camera, less than $100, and a desire to change the way the Arab world was portrayed by the US media. He began taking photographs. But within a few months, Israel attacked Lebanon, and war broke out. Suddenly immersed in a world of gunfire and terror in an unfamiliar city, George chronicled the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) guerillas, teenage snipers, and civilians living through what became one of the bloodiest summers in the history of the modern Middle East. Thirty years on, he returns to Beirut, retraces his steps, and unpicks the stories and people behind some of his most iconic photographs - those that were published, and many of which were unseen at the time.

Directors in conversation following film.

Blogging Ramallah
MARIAM SHAHIN & GEORGE AZAR
2012 | DOCUMENTARY SHORT | 25 MIN.

Blogging Ramallah follows five young Palestinians in their quest to address political issues within Palestinian society, the Israeli occupation and social and gender issues that they face on a daily basis. Through their blogs and micro-blogs, the tweets they have created a new way to stay connected, spread the word and continue in their efforts to liberate themselves and their country from continued oppression and occupation.

Directors in conversation following film.
Tuesday, October 22
6:00 pm | Harvard Law School

Maqloubeh
NICOLAS DAMUNI
2012 | DRAMA | 10 MIN.

Hemmed in by curfew, five young roommates decide to prepare Maqloubeh*. At first in disagreement over the ingredients, the friends finally find common ground to finish the dish. An unexpected guest interrupts them before they are able to enjoy the meal.

*Maqloubeh (upside down): Traditional Palestinian dish.

When the Boys Return
TONE ANDERSEN
2012 | DOCUMENTARY SHORT | 58 MIN.

After prolonged incarceration as political prisoners in Israeli prisons, teenagers Mohammed Jamil, Hamzeh, and Mahran come home to the West Bank and find the reentry to normal life challenging. As they join a weekly counseling group, they start coming to terms with their traumas. A moving story about young boys’ strength and courage coming of age under occupation.
Occupied Palestine
David R. Koff
1981 | DOCUMENTARY | 87 MIN.

Long before the first Intifada drew international media to focus on Palestinian life under Israeli rule, David Koff produced this in-depth portrait of the daily conflict being waged in Israel/Palestine. It was recently rediscovered. With a combination of candid interviews and remarkable historic footage, Occupied Palestine unpicks the strategic and ideological motors of colonization in Palestine, powerfully depicting that the roots of today’s crises were firmly planted in the ground decades ago. Met with bomb threats and censorship on its initial release in the US in 1981, Occupied Palestine remains a singular work of engaged filmmaking and a unique record of an overlooked chapter in the course of the conflict.

Director in conversation following film.
Wednesday, October 23
7:00 pm | Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Thematic Focus: *Humor and Demons*

**The Cup Reader**
SUHA ARAJ
2012 | DRAMA | 12 MIN.

Warde, shamed as a young girl yet renowned in Palestine for her mystical fortunetelling and matchmaking, lives with her sister, Jaleleh, and reads her clients’ fortunes. Each woman has made, or will make, a choice between love and marriage, not having had the luxury of both.

**Genies and Madness (Jinn wa J’noon)**
Mahdooh Afdile
2012 | DOCUMENTARY | 87 MIN.

An invitation to embark on a magical journey into the filmmaker’s amusing life, this humorous film is a mixture of reality and imagination. Mamdouh Afdile is a recent film school graduate waiting for his big break. His brother has other plans. And his parents believe in ghost and demons.

*Genies and Madness* is a wild, comical ride inside one family’s lunacy. The filmmaker tries to come to terms with his family’s demons and to confront his own.

www.bostonpalestinefilmfest.org
Thursday, October 24  
7:30 pm | Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Thematic Focus: *Childhood and Coming of Age in Palestine*

**Just a Child**  
Mohammad Al-Azza  
2011 | DOCUMENTARY SHORT | 12 MIN.

14-year-old Raghd is being released from a 9-month administrative detention in an Israeli prison in the West Bank. His family celebrates, but Raghd’s reentry to the community is not easy, and he continues to feel anxious and isolated. Through Raghd’s eyes, we come to appreciate the enormity of the impact of political imprisonment on generations of young Palestinians and those who love them.

**Flying Paper**  
NITIN SAWHNEY & ROGER HILL  
2013 | DOCUMENTARY | 71 MIN.

Flying Paper is the uplifting story of young Palestinian kite-flyers in Gaza, where the fascinating kite culture is a form of creative resistance. The children are on a quest to shatter the Guinness World Record for the most kites ever flown.

The film was co-produced with young Palestinians in Gaza trained by the filmmakers through a youth media program called *Voices Beyond Walls*.

**Director, Nitin Sawhney, in conversation.**
Inheritance
HIAM ABBASS
2012 | DRAMA | 88 MIN.

A Palestinian family living in the north of Galilee gathers to celebrate the wedding of one of their daughters, as war rages between Israel and Lebanon. Internal conflicts explode; secrets are revealed, and lies are unmasked. The battles between different family members become as merciless as the outside war once their father falls into a coma and inches toward death.

This drama is the directorial feature film debut of Palestinian actress Hiam Abbass.
Saturday, October 26
12:30 pm | Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Thematic Focus: Alienation and Resistance

**Alone (Wahdon)**
NORMA MARCOS
2012 | DRAMA | 11 MIN.

Every evening, a Lebanese poet gets a breath of fresh air on his terrace, which borders the forest. He watches four young people disappear into the woods at night and return in the early hours.

This film draws its inspiration from the poem *Wahdon* by Lebanese poet Talal Haidar and the story of a French woman active in the Palestinian resistance.

**Uncle Nashaat (‘Ammo Nashaat)**
ASEEL MANSOUR
2011 | DOCUMENTARY | 68 MIN.

A family chronicle, a tangled mystery story, and a privileged view on the Palestinian struggle, Uncle Nashaat begins with the filmmaker’s search for the circumstances of the 1982 death of his fighter uncle, his childhood hero. Cutting through the myths and following the clues, Mansour discovers a darker truth involving political rivalry, jealousy, family feud, and disputed property rights.
The Great Book Robbery
BENNY BRUNNER
2012 | DOCUMENTARY | 57 MIN.

The Great Book Robbery explores the looting of 70,000 Palestinian books during the 1948 war by the newly born state of Israel. The film employs a multifaceted approach to tell a multilayer story: dramatic location filming, eyewitness accounts, archival footage, pictorial material, C.G.I.—computer-generated images, documents and culture critiques.

The Great Book Robbery sheds new light on the Palestinian tragedy of 1948, also known as the Nakba (or ‘catastrophe’), when some 725,000 Palestinians were dispossessed to make way for a Jewish-majority Israeli state. In the intervening years, Israel has constructed a moralistic and heroic narrative of the 1948 war. The film aims to deconstruct this imperial history and to prevent this story from fading into oblivion by passing it on to future generations.
The Red Stone: Jerusalem’s Other Side
AHMED DAMEN
2012 | DOCUMENTARY | 48 MIN.

Taking its title from the characteristic red stone from which many of Jerusalem’s historic buildings are built, Ahmad Damen’s investigative documentary focuses on Palestinian areas of West Jerusalem that were depopulated of their original Palestinian inhabitants when Israel was established in 1948. By tracking the architectural and family histories of some of these splendid properties, The Red Stone introduces the buildings’ current occupants, the Israel real estate agents trading in their “exotic” appearances, and the original owners, now barred from their homes. A powerful story of conflict and architecture.

Winner:
Jury Selection Award
Toronto Palestine Film Festival (2013)
Infiltrators
KHALED JARRAR
2012 | DOCUMENTARY | 70 MIN.

Infiltrators is a visceral and haunting “road movie” that chronicles the daily travails of Palestinians as they seek routes through, under, around, and over a bewildering matrix of barriers erected by Israel in the West Bank/Jerusalem area. Filmmaker Jarrar follows this high stakes “game” of cat and mouse with a handheld video camera. Jarrar’s debut documentary was a standout success at the 2012 Dubai International Film Festival, winning several awards.

Winner:
Muhr Arab Documentary Prize &
Special Jury Prize
Dubai International Film Festival (2012)
MiG
THAER ALSAHLI
2011 | DOCUMENTARY | 12 MIN.

Repeat from previous listing.

Shebab (Youth) of Yarmouk
AXEL SALVATORI-SINZ
2012 | DOCUMENTARY | 78 MIN.

The Shebab (Arabic for ‘youth’) have been a posse since they were teens in Yamouk refugee camp, Syria. Now on the eve of adulthood, they have a genuine thirst for life, while being confronted by complexities.

Between the need for freedom and for belonging to the group, between longing for revolt and the prospect of a well-ordered life, choices are hard to make; even more so if you’re a Palestinian refugee in Yarmouk.
A World Not Ours
MAHDI FLEIFEL
2012 | DOCUMENTARY | 93 MIN.

A World Not Ours is an intimate, humorous, portrait of three generations of exile in the refugee camp of Ain el-Helweh (Arabic for “Sweet Spring”), in southern Lebanon, a place hastily built in 1948 that now houses 70,000 refugees in one square kilometer. Based on a wealth of personal recordings, family archives, and historical footage, the film is a sensitive and illuminating study of belonging, friendship, and family.

Filmed over more than 20 years by multiple generations of the same family, A World Not Ours is more than just a family portrait; it is an attempt to record what is being forgotten and preserve collective memory.

Winner:
NETPAC Award
Abu Dhabi International Film Festival (2012)

Objectif D’Or (top festival prize)
Millenium International Documentary Film Festival, Brussels (2013)

Best International Film
Edinburgh International Film Festival, Scotland (2013)
**Director biographies**

**Hiam Abbass** was born in Nazareth and grew up in a Palestinian village in the northern Galilee. Abbass is an acclaimed Palestinian actress and film director who has been featured in local as well as international films such as *Haifa*, *The Gate Of The Sun*, *Paradise Now*, *Munich*, *The Syrian Bride*, *Amreeka*, *The Visitor*, and *Miral*. Abass was nominated for Best Actress at the Israeli Film Academy Award for her performance in Eran Riklis’ *Lemon Tree*. She has just completed the shooting of two new features, *Rock the Casbah*, and *May in the Summer*. *Inheritance* is Hiam Abass’ first feature. She currently resides in Paris.

Born to Palestinian parents, **Nora al-Sharif** grew up between Kuwait, Cairo, and Amman with a passion for Cinema from a young age. After a career as a Graphic Designer in Jordan, she decided to pursue filmmaking and spent some time assisting on various film and TV projects before moving to London in 2009, where she obtained a Masters in Directing Film and Television from the University of Westminster.

**Axel Salvatori-Sinz**, born in 1982, grew up in the suburbs of Lyon, France. After completing an anthropology curriculum, specializing in Arabic & Muslim societies, he obtained a Masters degree in directing documentary films. He directed several commissioned films for the French Embassy, while staying in Salvador. *Shebabs of Yarmouk* is his first full-length documentary. Within the frame of the 2012 FEMIS Documentary Workshop, he is currently writing the script for his next film that takes place in a Corsican village: *Chjami è Rispondi*.

**Gina M. Angelone** is an established filmmaker with a history in documentary and television production. Her television work has received both a Cable Ace award and an Emmy nomination. In 2005, Gina’s feature documentary *René & I* about twin survivors of human experimentation in Auschwitz, won two Audience Awards, a Human Rights Award and a Special Jury Mention in international festivals and aired on NBC.
Director biographies

Born in Dubai in 1979, Mahdi Fleifel was raised in Ain el-Hilweh refugee camp in Lebanon and later in the suburbs of Elsinore, Denmark. In 2009, Fleifel graduated from the National Film and Television School in London, where he now lives and works. His first-year film, Arafat & I, screened at festivals around the world and won numerous awards. In 2010, Fleifel and Irish producer Patrick Campbell established the London based production company Nakba Filmworks. A World Not Ours is Fleifel’s first feature length documentary.

A French filmmaker of Palestinian descent, Norma Marcos is also a writer and screenwriter. Among other works, she has directed three documentaries: The Veiled Hope (1993), Waiting for Ben-Gurion (2006), and Fragments of a Lost Palestine (2010). She is currently working on a feature film screenplay and is about to publish her first book.

Hasan Tanji was born in Moscow, Russia in 1993. He lived in Yarmouk refugee camp in Damascus from 1996 to 2013, when he returned to Moscow because of the war in Syria. He has studied montage and visual effects as well as directing and cinematography at the Russian Culture Center in Damascus. He worked for Syrian TV as an editor and visual effects maker. Camp Faces is his first film. Together with other Palestinians, Tanji founded The Palestinian Assembly of Creativity.

Suha Araj is often found overhearing, watching, or telling a story. Her feature script, The Khsara Club, explores the humor created from the contrast of cultural expectations and has been developed with the Sundance Screenwriters Lab and RAWI, Torino Film Lab, Dubai Film Connection, EAVE, IFP No Borders. For seven years she was part of the film selection committee of the Arab Film Festival in San Francisco and has also served on the LunaFest Board of Advisors. Her short documentary film, I am Palestine, screened at festivals internationally and is used as an educational tool. She served as a story advisor to the Sundance selection, Slingshot Hip Hop. She is a cofounder of DivineCaroline.com.
Mais Darwazah is a Jordan-based architect, graphic designer, and director of ‘mixed genres’ films and documentaries. In addition to The Dinner, she has directed two films: My Love Awaits Me by the Sea (2011), which was an official selection of the Toronto International Film Festival in 2013, and Take Me Home (2008).

Nitin Sawhney, Ph.D. is Assistant Professor of Media Studies at the New School for Public Engagement. His research, teaching, and creative practice engages the critical role of technology, artistic interventions and DIY cultures among communities in contested spaces. In 2006, Nitin co-founded a nonprofit initiative Voices Beyond Walls to conduct digital video and storytelling workshops with children and youth in Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza. During a 5-year period, the program was conducted in over 10 refugee camps with nearly 70 video shorts produced. Nitin also co-founded the Boston Palestine Film Festival and served on its original Organizing Committee 2007-2009. Flying Paper is his first feature-length documentary film.

Roger Hill graduated from Ohio University in the fall of 2005 with a Bachelor of Specialized Studies degree in Film, Sociology and African American Studies. Hill directed MentalRev’s first feature length documentary Struggle: A Film on Voter Suppression and Election Rigging in US Presidential Elections. Struggle was chosen by Link TV as their featured documentary in the months leading up to the 2012 presidential election. Hill has collaborated on a number of projects, including co-producing a segment that aired on Democracy Now!, and has contributed footage to a number of documentaries and music videos. Hill has toured with his films in cities across the United States and worked as a trainer with Voices Beyond Walls in Gaza.

Jenny Nyman has lived in Palestine/Israel since 2005. Currently working as a Multimedia Coordinator at human rights NGO Adalah in Haifa, she also was one of the leading forces in establishing The Freedom Theatre in Jenin Refugee Camp. From Al-Araqib to Susiya is her first short film.
George Azar has covered the Middle East as a photographer and documentary filmmaker for the past 30 years, reporting from Beirut, Jerusalem, Baghdad, Tehran, Damascus, Kabul, and Gaza. He is the author of Palestine, a Photographic Journey (University of California Press, 1991) and the photographer of Palestine: A Guide (Interlink Books, 2006). As a director and cameraman, Azar has produced more than 40 films and television program episodes for Al Jazeera. His still photographs have appeared on the front pages of The New York Times, The International Herald Tribune, The Economist, Newsweek, The Philadelphia Inquirer, and other major publications. In 2012 his film Free Running Gaza was awarded the Jury Award at the Al Jazeera International Documentary Film Festival.

Mariam Shahin has covered the Arab World since 1988 as a writer and documentary producer and director. She has covered war, peace, conflict, and development in Cairo, Khartoum, Baghdad, Beirut, Damascus, Amman, and Gaza for CBC, ZDF, ABC Australia and US, the BBC, PBS, SBS, NBC, and WDR before becoming a regular contributor to the Al Jazeera English Programming Department in 2006. She is the author of Palestine: A Guide (Interlink Books, 2006) and Unheard Voices: Iraqi Women on Sanctions and War, (Change Thinkbook, 1991). In 2012 her film, Free Running Gaza was awarded the Jury Prize at the Al Jazeera International Documentary Film Festival.

Born in Tira, Israel, 1980, Mamdooh Afidine has graduated with Honors from the Sam Spiegel Film and Television School in 2005, majoring in directing and scriptwriting, cinematography and editing. He worked as cinematographer and also as a freelance editor for prominent TV channels. He has lectured on cinema in several venues, and has served on the juries of the Jerusalem International Film Festival and Tel Aviv International Children's Film Festival. He has directed several short films and series on TV since 2004 such as: Genies and Madness (Jinn Wa’Jnoon) is his first documentary feature film.
**Director biographies**

**Annemarie Jacir** is a screenwriter and filmmaker living in Jordan. She has been working in independent cinema since 1994 and has written, directed, and produced over 14 films. Named one of Filmmaker magazine’s 25 New Faces of Independent Cinema and part of the ‘Arab New Wave,’ two of her films have premiered as Official Selections at the Cannes Film Festival, one in Venice and one in Berlin. Her short film, *Like Twenty Impossibles* (2003), was the first Arab short film to be an official selection of the Cannes Film Festival and continued to break ground when it went on to be a finalist for the Academy Awards. Her first feature film, the acclaimed *Salt of this Sea*, also premiered in Cannes and was Palestine’s 2008 Oscar Entry for Best Foreign Language Film, won the FIPRESCI Critic’s Prize, as well as Best Film in Milan and Traverse City, and was theatrically released in Europe, the US, and Asia. *When I Saw You*, her second feature film, recently won NETPAC’s Best Asian Film at the prestigious Berlin International Festival.

Palestinian filmmaker **Sameh Zoabi** was born in 1975 in Iksal, a small Palestinian village in Israel. He studied Film Direction at Columbia University. In addition to *The Handsome Groom*, he has directed the drama *Man without a Cellphone* (2010), and the dramatic short *Be Quiet* (2005), which was selected for the Sundance Festival in 2006 and honored by the Cinefondation at the Cannes Film Festival.

**Khaled Jarrar**, born in Jenin, completed his studies in interior design at the Palestine Polytechnic University in 1996, and then entered the field of photography in 2004. In 2011, he graduated as a visual artist from the International Academy of Art, Palestine. His first exhibition took place in public space at the checkpoints of Huwarra and Qalandya in the West Bank and Jerusalem. Jarrar started making films and videos in 2008, among them *Journey 110* (a selection of BPFF 2011). He has participated in international art events such as Art Basel 41, Instant video, London Palestine Film Festival, the International Contemporary Art Fair “FIAC” in Paris, the Berlin Biennale 7 in 2012, and the Sharjah Biennial 11 in 2013.
Director biographies

Mohammad Al-Azza is the director of the Arts & Media Unit of Lajee Center in Aida Refugee Camp in Bethlehem in the West Bank. He is a refugee from the village of Beitibreen who was born and lives in Aida Refugee Camp. He began learning photography and documentary production as a teenager in Lajee Center in 2005. His first documentary, Ali Wall, won the Global Jury Prize of the It Is Apartheid Film Contest (2010), and his documentary Everyday Nakba (2011) has mobilized an international movement to improve access to clean water in Aida Refugee Camp and other Palestinian communities.

Patrick A. Stewart began working in television in 1982. Working in film as well as video, Stewart shot many music videos. Following that he shot a documentary D.U.I., which premiered at the Milan Film Festival in 1985. In 2000, he was the Director of Photography for Mike Figgis’ groundbreaking film Timecode. Pairing again the next year with Figgis, he shot Hotel in Venice, Italy. Stewart then continued with Figgis to shoot a portion of Martin Scorsese’s blues documentary Red, White, and Blues. Later in 2007, Patrick paired with Peter Bogdonovich to shoot the Tom Petty feature documentary Runnin’ Down a Dream. Finally, Stewart worked with Clint Eastwood and his company Malpaso to shoot the documentaries: Dave Brubeck: In His Own Sweet Way, and Johnny Mercer: The Dream’s On Me.

Mouna B. Stewart is a Palestinian artist whose first foray into filmmaking was with It’s Better To Jump. She played a central role in the project, serving as producer, interviewer, and translator.

Tone Andersen is a Norwegian filmmaker and cinematographer. She has worked on dozens of international documentary films and has shot stories on social and human rights concerns from Asia, Africa, the US, the Middle East, and Europe. She was the cinematographer on the award-winning A Stone’s Throw Away (2003) and USA vs al-Arian (2007). When the Boys Return is her directorial debut for long TV documentary.
Nicolas Damuni was born in 1973 in Beirut as a Palestinian refugee. In 1994, he studied cinema at USJ, then moved to Paris, where he graduated from ESEC in Image and Sound Technics, then Editing and special effects. Soon after, he joined the Florent Acting School for four years. Since then, he has worked as director, editor, colorist, special effects creator and post-production assistant on several projects in France and in the Middle East. In 2006, his work was selected for the Mediterranean Film crossing Borders festival and, in 2007, he was selected for the Berlinale Talent campus.

Born in Jerusalem, Larissa Sansour studied Fine Art in Copenhagen, London and New York. Her work is interdisciplinary, immersed in the current political dialogue and utilizes video art, photography, experimental documentary, the book form and the internet. Sansour borrows heavily from the language of film and pop culture. By approximating the nature, reality and complexity of life in Palestine and the Middle East to visual forms normally associated with entertainment and televised pastime, her grandiose and often humorous schemes clash with the gravity expected from works commenting on the region. Her short film A Space Exodus was nominated in the Best Short category at the Dubai International Film Festival. Exhibitions in 2012 include the Centre for Photography in Copenhagen, Galerie Anne de Villepoix in Paris and Australian Centre for Photography in Sydney. She lives and works in London and Copenhagen.

David R. Koff is an American documentary filmmaker who has focused on political subjects and human rights issues in Africa, the UK, the Middle East, and North America. He was nominated for an Academy Award for People of the Wind, a documentary feature he wrote and co-produced. During the 15 years he worked with UNITE HERE, the union representing hotel workers in North America, Koff produced and/or directed dozens of short films for organizing and mobilizing, with a special focus on immigrants’ rights, including The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride Documentary Project, and The New Haven Raids, with music by Ry Cooder.
Director biographies

**Khaled Hourani** is a Palestinian artist, curator, and art critic. He is the initiator of the project *Picasso in Palestine*. He attained a BA in History from Hebron University and was awarded the title of Cultural Management Trainer by al-Mawred Culture Resource and the European Cultural Foundation (Egypt). He has had several solo exhibitions locally and internationally and participates frequently in group exhibitions. Hourani has curated and organized several exhibitions locally such as the young Artist of the Year Award for the years 2000 and 2002 for the A.M. Qattan Foundation. He was the curator of the Palestinian pavilion for Sao Paolo Biennale, Brazil and the 21st Alexandria Biennale, Egypt. He writes critically in the field of art and is an active member and founder of artistic and administrative boards in a number of cultural and art institutions. Hourani is currently the Arts Director of the International Academy of Art Palestine.

**Ahmad Damen** started his passion early with eastern music and ‘oud playing at the age of 12, and composing at the age of 14. Damen continued composed with the Iraqi maestro, Mohammad Uthman Siddiq. His began composing soundtracks for movies in 2009, and since then has composed the music for more than 12 documentaries and other short fiction and TV projects. Damen has also worked extensively in film, as an assistant director and then as director and producer with Nizar Younes, with whom he collaborated on *The Red Stone*.

**Omar Robert Hamilton** is an independent filmmaker, producer of the Palestine Festival of Literature, and a founding member of the Mosireen Collective in Cairo. Since 2011, he has made dozens of short documentaries on the Egyptian Revolution, helping to make Mosireen the most watched non-profit YouTube channel in Egypt of all time. His third fiction short, *Though I Know the River is Dry*, premiered in competition at Rotterdam, where it won the Prix UIP, and is currently nominated for Best Short Film at the 2013 European Film Awards. His films have appeared on the BBC, al Jazeera, and ONTV; his articles in The Guardian, The BBC, and The Big Issue; and his photographs in The Guardian, The Economist, al Shorouq and The Daily Beast.
**Director biographies**


**Mark J. Kaplan** is an award-winning filmmaker, whose 25-year documentary filmmaking career has been committed to human rights. *Between Joyce & Remembrance*, Mark’s 2005 feature-length documentary, explored the response of three generations within one family to the death of their son at the hands of the Apartheid Security Police. His co-produced feature, *The Lion’s Trail*, won the Emmy Award (2005) for Outstanding Cultural and Artistic Programming, while *Where Truth Lies* (1999), a 30-minute documentary that examines issues of truth, healing, and reconciliation in South Africa, won joint first prize at the One World Media Awards for Best International Documentary 1999 in London and Best of the Festival Award, Vermont International Film Festival, 2000.

**Alice Rothchild** is a physician, activist, and author of *Broken Promises, Broken Dreams: Stories of Jewish and Palestinian Trauma and Resilience* (2007). Alice is co-founder and co-chair of American Jews for a Just Peace-Boston, is on the coordinating committee of Jewish Voice for Peace Boston, and has organized health and human rights delegations to Israel and Palestine since 2003.

**Sharon Mullally** is an Emmy Award winning independent producer/director and editor and co-founder of extendedPLAY Inc. Her work appears regularly on local and national public television. Sharon spent 10 years in staff positions at broadcast television stations in Philadelphia and Baltimore. For the past 15 years, Sharon has primarily produced media that focuses on social justice. Sharon has served as board member and workshop instructor for Philadelphia Independent Film/Video Association and instructor/facilitator at Scribe Video Center.
**Guest Speaker: Susan Abulhawa**, author of *My Voice Sought the Wind*, is from Jerusalem and currently lives in Pennsylvania. Her first novel, *Mornings in Jenin* (Bloomsbury 2010) was an international bestseller translated into 32 languages. Abulhawa was born to refugees of the 1967 six-day war. In 2001, she founded Playgrounds for Palestine, an NGO that builds playgrounds in occupied territories and UN refugee camps to uphold the Right to Play for Palestinian children.

**Thaer Al-Sahli** is a Palestinian writer, director, and cameraman formerly of Yarmouk camp and currently living in Tunis.

**Benny Brunner** is an Israeli-Dutch filmmaker, born in Bârlad, Romania and based in Amsterdam. He studied film at Tel Aviv University. Brunner has worked in the Middle East, Europe, South Africa, and the United States. He won a special commendation by the Prix Europa for *A Philosopher for All Seasons* in 1991.

**Rashid Masharawi** was born in Gaza. He has directed several features including *Curfew* (1993); *Haifa* (1995); *Waiting* (2005) and *Laila’s Birthday* (2008), which both screened at the Festival; and the documentary *Live From Palestine* (2002). His latest feature is *Palestine Stereo* (2013).