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The Tel Aviv University and Tu Vas Voir  
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27. Venice  
International Film  
Critics' Week  
OPENING FILM



# מים WATER

An Israeli Palestinian Film



tu vas voir



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# A FEATURE FILM BORN OUT OF A UNIQUE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN COOPERATION

## THE FILM

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HD, 120 minutes, color, original version : Arabic, Hebrew, English  
Produced by the Film and Television department of the Tel Aviv University  
In association with Tu Vas Voir.

The project WATER is a cinematic cooperation created within the Department of Film and Television at Tel-Aviv University. In 2012, a small group of Israeli and Palestinian filmmakers directed a feature film with total artistic freedom, exploring a strongly unifying subject: WATER.

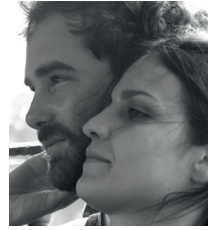
WATER is a poetic and pastoral subject, but one that is also very political as well as violent in the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

WATER belongs to two conflicting populations, who seldom manage to overcome prejudice and political intimidation, but have found a platform for a unique collaboration, in the form of this feature film.

WATER exemplifies cinema's ability to penetrate forbidden zones. This movie make us, Israelis and Palestinians, realize that we all yearn for a solution.

**Yael Perlov**  
**Project initiator and Artistic Director**  
**Tel Aviv University**





## STILL WATERS

### מֵי מְנוּחָה - מֵיָה רֹאכָה

By an ancient spring near Jerusalem, an Israeli couple finds a quiet moment away from the rat race of Tel Aviv life. The cool water spring is also used by a group of Palestinians heading to their jobs in Israel. At high noon, they are forced to look each other in the eye.

**Directors : Nir Sa'ar & Maya Sarfaty**

*"In the film there's a moment when the young couple encounters the Palestinian group at the spring. There is something that forces you to confront a political-ideological demand that was kept theoretical till now. Then it must be transformed immediately, to a practical decision: Should we stay or should we leave. Truth to be told, the safer choice is to leave but we chose to stay – only at this point a certain dialogue can start - for this territory is no one's, or every one's."*

Nir Sa'ar & Maya Sarfaty are currently living in Tel Aviv. Nir is graduated from the Film and Television department of Tel Aviv University. Maya is graduated from the Nissan Nativ Acting Studio

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## THE WATER SELLER

### בַּאֵעַ המַּא - מוֹכֵר המַיִם

All summer long, water seller Abu Firas is working in Bethlehem around the clock. The city is suffering from a shortage of running water and the inhabitants are obliged to buy water at inflated prices. Through his daily journey on his water truck, Abu Firas shows us the unique city of Bethlehem.

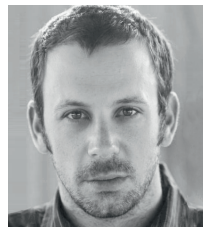
**Director : Mohammad Fuad**

*"I know the water seller Abu Firas from Bethlehem. My family and I get our water from his truck when we run out. Then, we have to decide whether we should do laundry, clean the house or take a shower. It creates problems between us, for a 10 minute shower I take, leaves my brother with a 2 minute shower."*

*"This is the first time I've worked with Israelis. I did not feel our working together is political, but human. The film does not deal with politics directly, but, everything in our lives is political and related to Israel."*

Mohammad Fuad is 26 years old, and lives in Bethlehem. He is graduated from Film Studies of Dar al- Kalima Art College in Bethlehem.





## RAZ AND RADJA

### راز ورجا - רז וראג'ה

Raz, a tired reserve soldier, guards a broken army truck and Radja, a Palestinian who broke the curfew. The two repeatedly attempt to jumpstart the truck, while a friendly donkey refuses to leave them alone.

#### **Director : Yona Rozenkier**

*"I can rely to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict only from the eyes of a soldier. I felt it is right I will take that point of view. I directed, I wrote the screenplay, I act in it, I was there – I was that soldier."*

Yona is 31 years old, born and raised in kibbutz Yehiam, currently living in Tel Aviv. He is graduated from the Film and Television department of Tel Aviv University.

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## EYE DROPS

### قطرة - טיפות עיניים

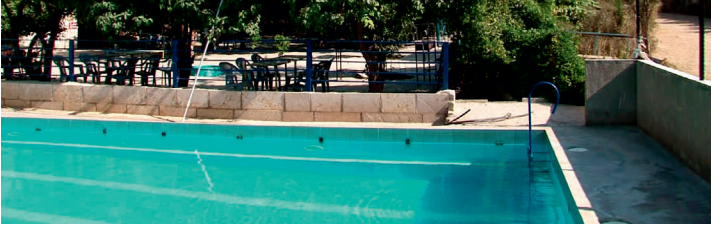
Mohammad Bakri and his two sons, Saleh and Ziad, are living in a small flat in Tel Aviv. Their neighbor Sarah, a Holocaust survivor, asks them to assist her with her eye-drop medication. A unique and mysterious connection grows among them.

#### **Director : Mohammad Bakri**

*"This story took place 11 years ago. I needed something to push me into working on it – writing, directing and acting." "I wish to screen this film in Ramallah. I say the same things here and there – I speak one voice. I tell my children the same things I tell strangers. I cannot tell how people in Ramallah may experience a film that deals with a Holocaust survivor, it is a question that has yet to be answered."*

Mohammad was born in Albene village of the Galilee in 1953. He graduated high school in Acre and studied Theater and Arab Literature in Tel Aviv University. He has been working as an actor and a director in theater and cinema for the past 35 years.





## KAREEM'S POOL

### מסבך קרימ - הבריכה של קרימ

70-year-old Kareem returns to Palestine after 30 years in Chicago. Upon his return, he builds a swimming pool thanks to a spring flowing on his land. Palestinian families come enjoy the peacefulness of the place, to relax. Until groups of settlers burst onto the scene.

#### Director : Ahmad Bargouthi

*"We are born political. Politics is not a practice, sometimes it is your life. I struggle to reach the day when I will be able to take the time and deal with my personal life, my pure, private life. The day in which I will deal with enjoying it, like taking my children hiking without checking the local news before." "During the hot summer, when the electricity usage in Tel Aviv is extremely high, Israel cuts off the electricity in Ramallah. No one will tell people in Tel Aviv to reduce their usage, they will simply cut Ramallah off. No one will tell the settlers in Khlamis to reduce their usage, while us in Ramallah will not even be notified about the cut off."*

Ahmad is 35 years old, lives in Ramallah. Ahmad has a vast experience in production and editing, and he teaches film editing in "Alasarya" College, Ramallah. This is his first film.

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## DROPS

### قطرات - טיפות

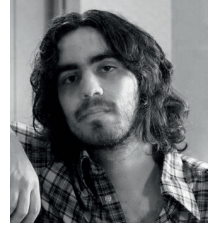
A soldier runs into the bathroom on his military base, catching his breath after escaping from his division. While washing up, he starts creating a symphony of water drops. Indulging in the sounds, he flashes back to his childhood, when he played around in the bathtub, refusing to leave when his father told him to.

#### Director : Pini Tavger

*"I had a moment of crisis in my army basic training, I was against army principals at the time and while standing in the camp's bathroom I heard these drops of water. I did not practice cinema those days, but mainly music and I found it thrilling – being able to create a symphony of drops. It was a moment of catharsis, a moment that made me feel alive."*

Pini is 33 years old, born in Jerusalem to Russian immigrants. He is graduated from the Film and Television department of Tel Aviv University and from the Nissan Nativ Acting Studio.





# NOW AND FOREVER

## מִן הָאֵן וְאֵלֵי הָאָבֵד - מעכשיו ועד עולם

Sarah, an Orthodox Jew, waits at home for her parents to take her to a Shidduch: a matchmaking meeting with a potential groom. Mohanad, an Arabic plumber, arrives and discovers that she is hiding. Being forced to communicate through a door, a strong bond grows between them.

### Director : Tal Haring

*"It's not a film I would have done naturally. My tendency is to think "it's a political film" and avoid it in the first place. In my nature I look for the simplicity in people, not entangled assumptions that use the characters as instruments to pass a message. Political films are usually like that, the soldier stands for one image while the Arab woman stands for another. If you succeed in bringing out the actual people, with their complexes and difficulties – beyond the political aspect – it is different. I found it very interesting opening up to it, learning it is possible to create both political and interesting films!"*

Tal is 26 years old, born in Ramat Hasharon and currently living in Tel Aviv. Student in the Film and Television department of Tel Aviv University.

## THE TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY

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*"In times of frozen dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, things happened, a laboratory was created: Palestinians came to joint meetings in Tel Aviv, Israelis went to joint productions in the west bank. Quietly but surly, they met each other and built relations underneath the everyday surface. I don't illude myself that art can bring political changes: the reality that we live in is too difficult and complex for it. However, I know that we created a group of young people full of energy, determined to choose a different step forward. Yes, it was a small step, but nevertheless a step full of hope."*

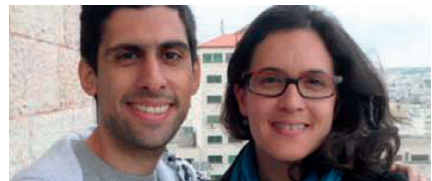
### Yaël Perlov Initiator and Artistic Director



*"Water is a precious, powerful source, shared by us and our neighbors alike in its way of crossing and blurring the physical borders between us."*

*The more we learned of this powerful source while working on the films and through cinema - the more we unveiled of its essence, breaching physical and psychological boundaries between us and the Palestinians."*

### Kobi Mizrahi and Maya de Vries Producers



# TU VAS VOIR

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Won over by COFFEE, a first project supported by Tel Aviv University and initiated by Yael Perlov, we decided to accompany the production of the second film. This time with a new theme, WATER.

We were touched by the energy and creativity of the directors, who took on one of the major geopolitical issues in the region and handled it in such a way as to produce touching emotions where we least expected them. What results is a particularly powerful force, one that is both beautiful and destabilizing.

There are too few places where Israelis and Palestinians can meet, get together, and work on common projects. They live less than forty kilometers apart, and yet know very little about life on the other side. Today, it is clear for us that we need to support this unique project of artistic cooperation by offering it the best possible distribution. All the COFFEE and WATER films, be they documentaries or fiction, once brought together, carry within themselves the power of true cinema.

Through their numerous points of view, these films share with us the complex reality of Israelis and Palestinians. Their artistic qualities and their differences in approach and perspective, their sensibilities, constitute a whole; they project us into the heart of a complex reality and make it intelligible and moving.

We will continue to be part of this project and will accompany the University with another film in 2014.

With a new theme.

**Edgard Tenenbaum and Michel Zana**  
**Associate Producers**

## **WATER - An Israeli-Palestinian Film**

**Produced by the Film and Television Department of Tel Aviv University, supported by The Yehoshua Rabinovich Foundation for the Arts, The Geshar Multicultural Film Fund, The Culture Office of the United States Embassy in Tel Aviv and coproduced by Tu Vas Voir.**

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**Producers: Kobi Mizrahi and**  
**Maya de Vries**

**Director of the cinema department at**  
**Tel Aviv University: Reuven Hecker**

**Associate Producers:**  
**Edgard Tenenbaum and Michel Zana**

**Coproducer: Tu vas voir**

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