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NORTH★

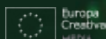
DU
Productions

presents

FAR *from* MAINE

I Hear Your Voice

a documentary by Roy Cohen



CINÉFORUM



FILM
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FAR *from* MAINE

I Hear Your Voice

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TECHNICAL INFORMATION

International Name: **Far From Maine**

Working Title: **I Hear Your Voice**

Length: **90'**

Genre: **Documentary**

Written and Directed by: **Roy Cohen**

Produced by: **Temps Noir (France), The Piranesi Experience (Italy), Campfilm (Unghery), AKKA Films (Switzerland), UpNorth Film (Norway), Dune Productions (Denmark)**

With the support of **MEDIA Europa Creativa, Italian Ministry of Culture, Normandie Images, Jewish Story Partners, Region Normandie, Danish Film Institute, West Danish Film Fund, DR, RTS, Cineforum, Loterie Romande, Film Independent, Fritt Ord Foundation, Midtnorsk Filmsenter**



Tel Aviv 2022



Thessaloniki 2023 -
Winner of the Best
International Project Award

CPH:DOX

CPH:Forum Central Pitch 2023

FILM
INDEPENDENT
FAST
TRACK

Film Independent Fast
Track 2023

PRESS QUOTES

“

I have been staring at a blank screen for weeks trying to explain how magnificent this film is. An absolute must-see film.

— UNSEEN FILMS

“

An intimate cinematic letter confronting the long shadow of violence, memory, and loss.

— DOCUMENTARY MAGAZINE

“

An inside look from Israel that clearly exposes the degree of manipulation to which a population has been subjected.

— EN PRIMERA FILA

“

The best film I saw at IFF Rotterdam this year.

— LETRAS LIBRES

“

A chronicle of a regret, of a loss that cannot be healed.

— CORRIERE DELLA SERA

“

A documentary that refuses the audience the comfort of taking the “right” position and being done with it.

— EYE FOR FILM

“

A compelling look at a man questioning his own beliefs, what he was told growing up, and what type of person he wants to be at a pivotal moment in his country's history.

— SONIC CINEMA

LOGLINE

Haunted by the killing by Israeli police of a Palestinian friend from his youth, an Israeli filmmaker embarks on a cinematic dialogue across time — confronting memory, friendship, and the genocide unfolding today.

PROJECT SUMMARY

In this intimate cinematic letter, Israeli filmmaker Roy Cohen addresses his Palestinian friend and fellow peace activist Aseel Aslih, who was murdered by Israeli police in their youth. Cohen tells Aslih of his experiences navigating a growingly genocidal society and seeks Aslih's moral clarity and resilience in the evocative letters he had written in their youth.

Far from Maine is produced by Serge Gordey ("Five Broken Cameras") and edited by Valentina Cicogna ("The Disappearance of My Mother"). It participated in Dok.Incubator 2024 and won its Courage in Filmmaking Award, and Thessaloniki Film Festival's Best International Documentary in Development (2023).

Far from Maine is a co-production between six European countries. The production has never sought nor accepted any Israeli (or other Middle Eastern) investment, public or private.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In this film, I am trying to express the feelings and thoughts that I have towards Israeli society and the possibility of a future here as an activist against the occupation and as a queer Israeli man of Arab-Jewish descent.

My personal journey goes through a peace camp in Maine, where I met Palestinians like Aseel Aslih. That experience made me realize that I could only know the truth by understanding perspectives that are silenced in my society. This lesson has never been so important as in this time of genocide.

I have felt helplessness in the face of my country's brutality towards Palestinians, like I had when Aseel was shot to death by Israeli police in 2000. This film has been the process of discovering what meaningful action could mean for me. And I have no doubt that Aseel inspired it. In the last 25 years, I have constantly talked to him in my head.

In speaking with Aseel in the film, I am bringing back his voice, which may inspire others to find ways to be active, resilient and at times hopeful about the future in Israel-Palestine and in their own part of the world, troubled and oppressed as it may be.



CHARACTERS



Roy Cohen: An Arab-Jewish filmmaker and journalist from Tel Aviv whose complex identity shapes his view of Israel-Palestine. Born to a Moroccan-Algerian family that rejected their Arab heritage, he struggles to reconcile his love for his homeland with its increasing violence. As a gay parent raising a daughter with his American husband, he searches for ways to maintain hope in a multicultural future while questioning whether Israel can provide a safe and ethical home for his family.



Toby Stein: A progressive New Englander who moved to Israel for love, now navigating the complexities of being an American immigrant in Tel Aviv. His outsider perspective allows him to see Israeli society's moral decay with particular clarity, yet his deep commitment to social justice compels him to seek political engagement rather than simply leave. As a parent, he grapples with whether to raise his daughter in a militarized society that increasingly portrays families like his as unwelcome outsiders.



Aseel Aslih: A charismatic Palestinian citizen of Israel, born and raised in the Galilee. Aseel's words and friendship transformed Roy's understanding of the conflict in their youth. The son of a political prisoner, Aseel was a gifted writer and peace activist who maintained his dignity and hope despite systemic discrimination. His death at the hands of Israeli police in 2000, while wearing his Seeds of Peace shirt at a demonstration, became a symbol of the peace movement's collapse and continues to haunt those who knew him.



Galith Nir: Roy's sister who embodies the psychological toll of living in Israel's south. A survivor of the October 7th Hamas attack, she returns to her home near Gaza where she develops an unsettling numbness to the constant explosions and death around her. Her transformation from a civilian caught in conflict to someone seemingly desensitized to nearby destruction represents the human cost of prolonged exposure to violence.



Shurouq Swaiti: A Palestinian from Jericho and former Seeds of Peace participant who shares Roy's concern of being a parent during a war. Shurouq's family experienced deportation from Israel twice, forced to live outside of their homes in Palestine. And yet, Shurouq and Roy are able to meet during the war and connect over their shared need for a better future for Shurouq's son, Ali, and Roy's daughter, Alia.



Yousef Bashir: A Palestinian from Gaza and former Seeds of Peace participant whose current reality starkly contrasts with the hopeful summers of his youth. His family's personal losses in the 2023-24 war challenge Roy's ability to reconcile his Israeli identity with the suffering of his friends. Yousef's testimony serves as a powerful reminder of how former peace camp participants now live on opposite sides of a military siege.



ARTISTIC APPROACH

The story of the contemporary Middle East is told through Roy's voice, talking to Aseel. The collective loss that Roy feels is described to the person who wanted hope the most, and who is not here to see what has become of the region. Aseel is both native to this land and naive to the present; telling him this story is a distinct feature of this film's style, making it a documentary that is both informative and intimate.

Aseel's voice is brought to the viewer using Aseel's texts - beautiful poems, letters and articles he wrote as a teenager. These texts show Aseel's hope to be a bridge between Israelis and Palestinians, a hope that was very real in the 1990s and is now lost. Aseel's words are played against the backdrop of his beloved Seeds of Peace summer camp in Maine and the Galilee's olive groves, where he grew up - and where he found his death in October 2000.

Archive plays an important role in this film. Aseel's and Roy's personal story is punctuated with historic and political events, from 1993 (the Oslo accords), through 2000 (October riots) and 2006 (shutting down all 13 cases of October 2000 without trial). News archives paint this personal story on a large, historic canvass. While this story is gut wrenching and personal, it is by no means small. The promise of Seeds of Peace friendships is shown initially in archival footage from the 1990s - of which there are troves. What ended up happening to those friendships is explored through conversations with significant people in the Seeds of Peace community. These scenes offer an intimate look into a past that was once possible - sleepovers and school visits in Palestine and Israel. The film traverses hope and disillusionment, alienation and intimacy, and the filmmakers employ a variety of tools in the documentary filmmakers' arsenal to invoke these distinct sensations.



KEY CREATIVE PERSONNEL



Roy Cohen, is an award-winning filmmaker and journalist based in Tel Aviv. Roy produced and directed "**Machine of Human Dreams**" (DOC NYC, CPH:DOX, **Sheffield doc/fest, 2016**). As a journalist, Roy has written for **The Guardian**, and publishes regularly for the **Israeli publication, mekomit.co.il** (known as 972mag in English). Growing up as the son of a Moroccan taxi driver, Roy has a B.A. from **Harvard University** and Master's from **Cornell**. He was selected by **Globes newspaper** as one of Israel's 40 leaders under 40.



Serge Gordey is a France-based international documentary producer (**Gaza-Sderot and 24 hours Jerusalem, Oscar nominee and International Emmy awarded Five Broken Cameras, H2: The Occupation Lab**). He was the president of the documentary committee of CNC (**French national cinema center**) from 2015 until 2017.



Claudio Esposito (The Piranesi Experience) is a renowned Italian producer. He is bringing with him the know-how of the Italian industry regarding the technical enhancement of delicate archival material (such as the one of the eighties) and will create the best conditions for the editing of an effective trailer of the film.



Sára László (Campfilm) is an award-winning Hungarian producer. She is quite experienced with films that tell live stories from childhood to adulthood and will bring her expertise to craft the relationship between present and past that the film embraces.



Nicolas Wadimoff was born in 1964 in Geneva and is a Swiss director, documentary filmmaker and producer. He is the **cofounder of Etat d'Urgences**, an association **managing the cultural centre USINE** in Geneve. Nicolas made his first documentary in 1990. He worked as a **film director at Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS)** and **founded Akka Films**, devoted to the development of fiction films and production of documentaries.



Impact Producer - Torstein Parelius. Producer for **Gammaglimt** since February 2015. Producer and impact producer for **UpNorth Film** from 2017. Attended the 2015 Young Nordic Producers Club in **Cannes**, the **Dok.Elevator** programme 2017 in **Malmö** and the 2021 **Doc Society Impact Distribution Lab**. Was a tutor at **East Doc Platform** 2019 in **Prague**, a panelist/decision maker at **DocEdge Kolkata** 2020, a mentor for several local documentary projects and a guest lecturer for master- and bachelor students at **Volda University College**. Has been an outreach consultant on several projects outside of UpNorth Film. Was in the programming committee at the **NxtMedia Conference** 2019 and **jury leader for the Ildflugen Award** at **The Norwegian Documentary Film Festival** 2022. Select recent filmography includes **The Chocolate War** (2022/co-producer), **Nelly & Nadine** (2022/co-producer), **Name of the Game** (2021/Outreach producer), **Oh, it Hertz!** (2021/Producer), **Newtopia** (2020/Producer) and **iHuman** (2019/Co-producer/Outreach producer).



Greg Harriott is an acclaimed cinematographer, nominated for Oscars and Emmys as for **‘Going to Mars: The Nikki Hailey Project’**, **‘Ron Delsener Presents’** and **‘Free Solo’** Through his experience, he captures this story in a refined and intimate way.



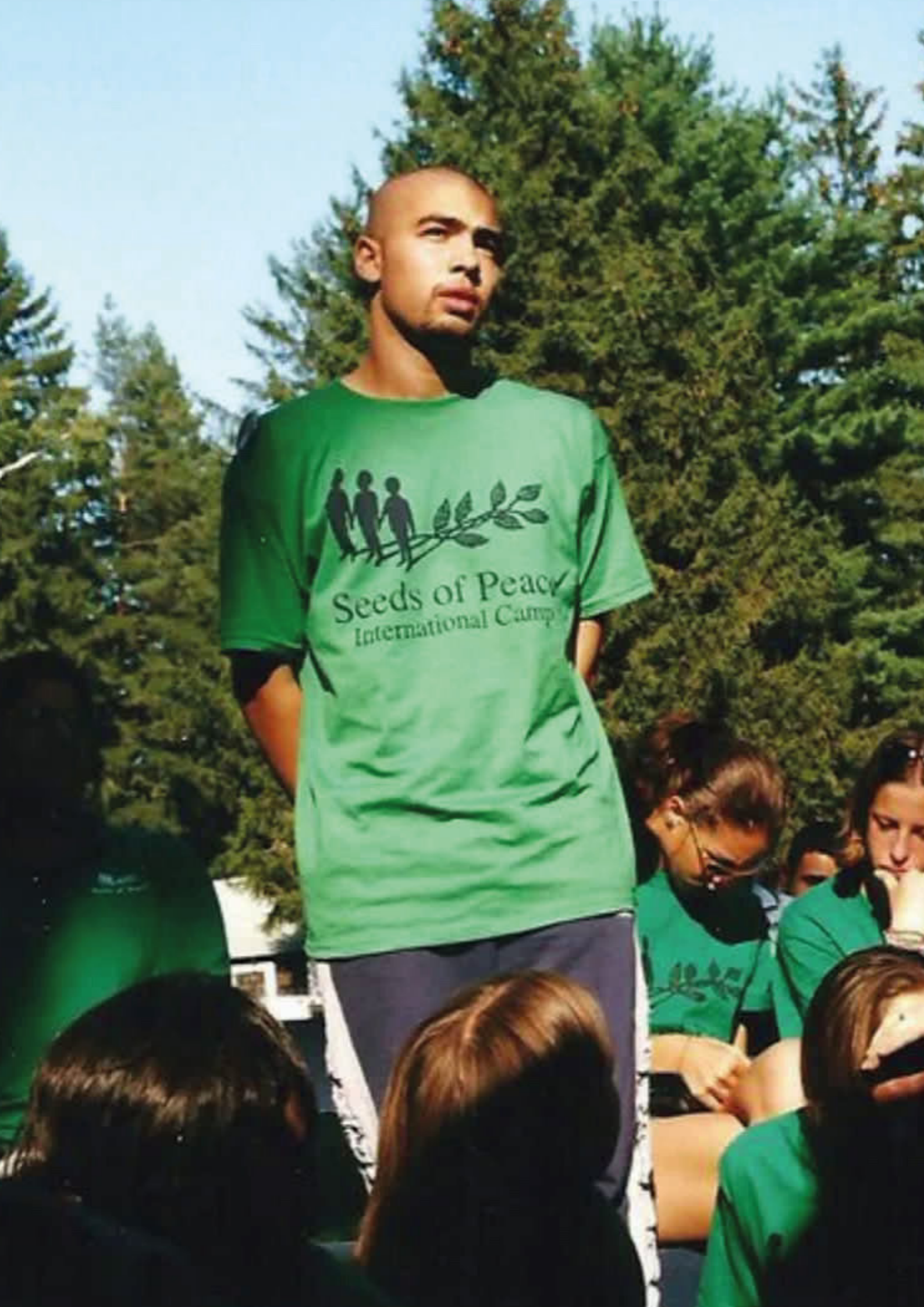
Leandro Monti is a director of photography based in Switzerland. He worked as DoP on Annemarie Jacir's "Palestine 1936" (TIFF 2025) and the Gaza-related documentary "Who Is Still Alive?" (Venice 2025), among over 20 fiction and documentary films.



Valentina Cicogna is a co-writer and editor of this film. Among her credits are films that she has edited, such as **THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MY MOTHER** (Sundance, 2019), **THE CALL** (IDFA, 2017; Mid Length category winner Hot docs, 2018); and directed and edited **PURE UNKOWN** (Visions du Reel, 2022).



Christian Ugenti is an Italian pianist, composer, and conductor. Trained in Piano, Composition, and Conducting at the Conservatories of Bari and Monopoli, he refined his artistry with Aldo Ciccolini and Aquiles Delle Vigne. He worked for over a decade at the Petruzzelli Foundation, collaborating with renowned conductors, stage directors, and soloists. Since 2012, he has composed music for **Disney, Netflix, Marvel, Warner Bros.**, and major **Hollywood studios**, with works featured in **Encanto, Blade Runner 2049, Money Heist**, and more. His music is performed by leading orchestras, while he also teaches at the Conservatory of Matera and leads international masterclasses.



PRODUCERS

Serge Gordey is an international French producer. Currently a senior producer at Temps noir (formerly with Point du Jour and Alegria), he is also the co-founder and manager of Rosa Normandie Films, a Normandy-based company.

Serge has been active in the film industry for over 30 years. He has dedicated himself extensively to the documentary field, initially as a director and later as a creative producer, focusing primarily on historical, cultural, and political films.

His résumé from the past 20 years includes the production of highly relevant films in the Middle East: *Human Weapon* (Prix Europa 2003), *The Junction* (first prize at the Haifa Film Festival), and he served as executive producer for the pioneering webdoc *Gaza-Sderot: Life in Spite of Everything*, which earned him recognition as an "international trailblazer" (Mipdoc 2009). He was also a co-producer of *Five Broken Cameras* (Oscar nominee, International Emmy winner, and numerous other awards), co-executive producer of *24 Hour Jerusalem* (Arte), *As I Want* (Berlinale, Best Documentary Award at the Carthage International Film Festival and the International Women's Film Festival in Créteil), and *H2: The Occupation Lab* (Doc Aviv, Fipadoc).

Serge chaired the CNC Documentary Committee (French National Cinema Center) from 2015 to 2017 and was named Chevalier des Arts et Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture for his commitment to documentary filmmaking.

FILMOGRAPHY

5 Broken Cameras (E. Burnat, G. Davidi, 2011)



Oscar 2013: Nominated for Best Documentary

Sundance Film Festival 2012: Winner of Directing Award
(World Cinema Documentary Competition)

International Emmy Award 2013: Winner for Best
Documentary

IDFA: Winner of the Special Jury Award for Feature-Length
Documentary; Winner of Audience Award

Sheffield International Documentary Festival: Winner of
Audience Award

Claudio Esposito (Bari, 1987) is the Head of Production at The Piranesi Experience. He is an alumnus of the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia.

As a producer and writer, his work has been selected and awarded at festivals such as Tribeca, Torino, Tallinn Black Nights, Vancouver, Giffoni, BAFICI, Sarajevo, and Thessaloniki.

In 2022, Claudio was selected for the ACE Mentoring Programme EU as one of Europe's emerging producers and in 2023 for EAVE Puentes. Claudio is a professor at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia and, in 2023, received the "La Chioma di Berenice" award for Best Emerging Producer during the 18th Rome Film Fest. He has been a voting member of the EFA European Film Academy since 2024.

FILMOGRAPHY

SAMIA (Don't Tell Me You're Afraid) (Y. Samdereli, 2024).



Tribeca 2024: Special Mention for Best International Feature

Munich Film Festival 2024: Winner of the Audience Award

Silk International Film Festival 2024: Winner of the Golden Silk Road Award

Rome Film Fest 2024: Winner of the Sorriso Diverso Award

Sára László graduated in directing from the University of Theatre and Film Arts in Budapest and also completed a production course at the Parisian film school ESRA. Upon her return to Hungary, she co-founded Campfilm in 2007, working as a producer and co-writer on all Campfilm's completed projects.

In recent years, she has collaborated with various national and international partners, including Media Council Hungary, the Hungarian National Film Fund, HBO Europe, ARTE France, RTS, Jba Production (France), Novak Prod (Belgium), What's Up Films (France), and others. Through Campfilm projects, she has participated in several international training programs (EAVE Producers Workshop, Eurodoc, Nipkow Programme, Ex Oriente) and contributed to successes like *Natural Light* by Dénes Nagy, which won the Silver Bear at Berlinale.

FILMOGRAPHY

***Natural Light* (D. Nagy, 2021)**



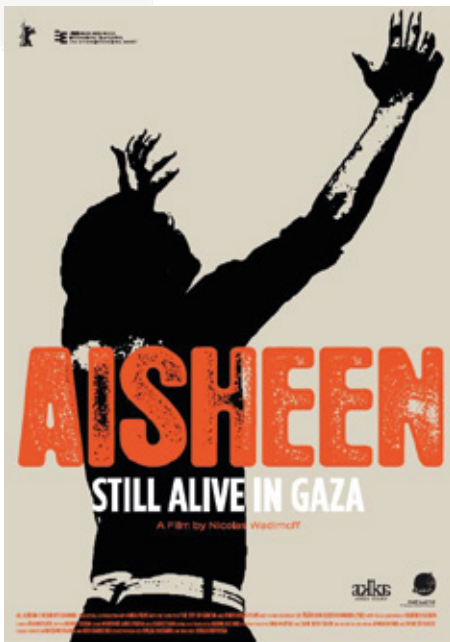
Berlinale 2021: Winner of the Silver Bear

European Film Awards 2021: Winner for European Production Design

BFI London Film Festival 2021: Official Selection

São Paulo International Film Festival 2021: Official Selection

Nicolas Wadimoff has directed more than 20 films, both fiction and documentaries, among them the multi awarded WHO IS STILL ALIVE? (2025) CLANDESTINS (1997), AISHEEN, STILL ALIVE IN GAZA (2010), OPERATION LIBERTAD (2012), SPARTIATES (2014), JEAN ZIEGLER, THE OPTIMISM OF WILLPOWER (2016) and THE APOLLO OF GAZA (2018) which have been shown at major international film festivals such as Berlinale, Festival del film Locarno, Venice Days, Canne's Director's Fortnight, etc.



Berlin International Film Festival: 2010 Winner
Prize of the Ecumenical Jury

Visions du Réel International Film Festival Nyon:
2010 Winner Young Audience Jury Award | 2010
Nominee Audience Jury Award | 2010 Winner
Compétition Internationale Longs Métrages Prix
Buyens-Chagoll

CPH:DOX: 2010 Nominee Amnesty Award

**Namur International Festival of French-Speaking
Film:**

2010 Nominee Golden Bayard Best Film

Swiss Film Prize: 2011 Nominee Swiss Film Prize Best
Documentary

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