



A Memory in Khaki

a Film by Alfoz Tanjour

2016 / 108 min / Qatar / Arabic / Documentary

Contact

Producer Louai Haffar

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LOGLINE

An auteur's personal narrative interwoven with those of other Syrian characters highlighting years of silence, fear and terror. A representation of stories which were behind the eruption of the Syrian society and the start of its revolution.

SYNOPSIS

"Strangely, as soon as I arrived with my family at a modest refugee camp in the heart of Europe, I started to seek refuge in my memories. The memories I had left at our doorstep over there. But the images this time were faint.. fast.. broken.. And they were all in khaki; images of the bitter hideaway years endured by Sanaa in Damascus, the lingering nights that Ibrahim spent in a dark prison, the deep persisting pain suffered by Khalid in exile, and the dream of a free homeland which is all that remains for Shadi..!!"

A Memory in Khaki is a cry out breathe for that which is embattled inside the spirits of individuals who lived under the Syrian oppressive regime. The auteur's personal narrative is interwoven with those of other Syrian characters who were forced, because of their political beliefs, to leave the country before or after the revolution. The film sheds light on years of silence, fear and terror, and it dives into the stories which were behind the eruption of the Syrian society and the start of its revolution. It is a Syrian account which, by laying out the past, tells the story of the future.

TECH SPECS

Runtime: 108 minutes

Shooting format: HD

Production country: Qatar

Shooting locations: Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Greece, France, Finland

Language: Arabic

Subtitle: English

DIRECTOR



Alfoz Tanjour is a Syrian director born in 1975. He studied Film Directing in the Academy of Fine Arts in the Republic of Moldova between 2000 and 2004. Since his graduation, Alfoz has directed many short films, among them (The End of a Red Balloon) and (A Little Sun) that won the Bronze Tanit Award at the Carthage Film Festival in 2008 and the Special Jury Prize at the Mons Festival in Belgium in 2009. He also directed (Wooden Rifle) which won the Public Liberties and Human Rights award at the Aljazeera International Documentary Film Festival in 2013 and the Gold Panda for best production

at the International Gold Panda Awards for Documentary in China, in 2014. Alfoz is currently preparing for his first feature-length narrative film.

Filmography:

Little Suns (short narrative), 2007
Damascus.. Symphony of a City (documentary), 2009
Black Stone (documentary), 2010
Cola Bridge (documentary), 2010
Wooden Rifle (documentary), 2011
Outside the City's Walls (documentary), 2012
Faraway, so Close to the Homeland (documentary), 2014
A Memory in Khaki (documentary), 2016

INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR ALFOZ TANJOUR

*How did you get the idea of your film?

It took me three years since the Producer Louai Haffar called me and asked me to work with him on a documentary film that features the Syria war. From the beginning I knew that working on such topic would be a very hard mission. Many directors worked on this topic before in different ways and the world was watching the Syria crisis on TV channels. Back then, I was living in Beirut and started to choose topics, ideas, main chapters, and possible characters.

However, one day I woke up and started over from the very beginning; I used my memory and the collective memory of Syrians on what we lived for decades in the "Kingdom of Silence" (referring to Syria under Assad's rule).

*What was the biggest change in your project?

I travelled with my family to Europe and lived as a refugee; this change made my look at the project. Therefore, I decided that the film's characters should be from my friends who sought asylum and would openly talk about what they faced and witnessed in Syria before their exiles.

*How did you choose those friends?

I selected my friends based on their stories and their compatibility with the film's idea. I made many random and spontaneous conversations with the characters before shooting to discuss the idea and what I want to say.



*How did you write the scenario? Did you visit the locations? Did you have any idea on the stories of the people who starred your film?

I studied cinema in its classic and traditional form. I never knew I will make documentaries. The main thing I have learned in the university is how to write a good scenario. I usually don't like surprises, therefore, I prefer to know everything about characters, cameras, and locations, before starting my work. Yet, I didn't know what will the characters say because I am always keen on catching moments of truth and reality.

*Did something urge you to change your film path during shooting?

The most impressive thing was my asylum seeking; it was a very hard experience on the psychological and humanitarian levels, which encouraged me to combat weakness through this film. I wanted to face migration, fear, and maybe nostalgia with my work.



*How important was to you to shed light on the Fascist-like regime that ruled Syria in the past decades?

The regime in Syria has committed myriads of oppressive practices, which definitely pushed me to highlight them but not in a traditional and stereotypical way. I tried to show the regime's practices by telling long stories that document the situation in Syria during the past half-decade.

*Some people consider that opposing the Syrian regime means that you support extremist forces that have fought on many Arab territories. What do you think about this?

I have watched many political analysts on TV and I have read some experts' views on social media, and I think they are all unreal. In my film, I sought to avoid the discussion of political speeches and focused on simple stories we lived as Syrians. In this work, I didn't try to answer questions or find solutions, but I asked questions on the oppression we witnessed and the reasons that forced us to live under it. I believe that artists should have a humanitarian position that highlights people's suffering and struggle.

CREW

Director	Alfoz Tanjour
Executive Producer	Louai Haffar
Scriptwriter	Alfoz Tanjour and Louai Haffar
Production Manager	Eyad Shihab
DoP	Ahmad Dakroub
Composer	Kinan Azmeh
Dramaturge	Ali al-Kurdi
Art Advisor	Arash T. Riahi and Linda Zahra
Editor	Alfoz Tanjour