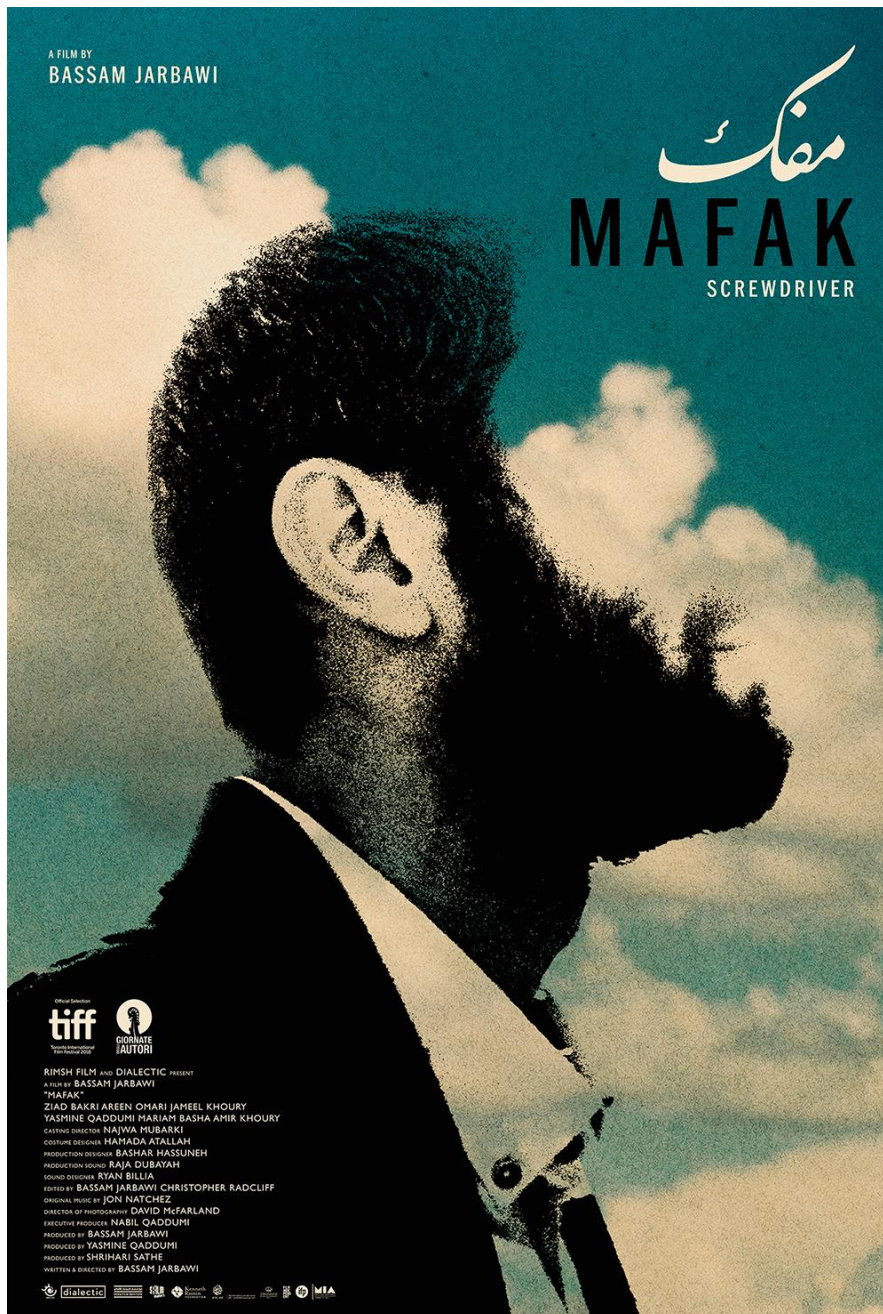


**SCREWDRIVER (MAFAK)**  
Written and Directed by Bassam Jarbawi



**2018 - PALESTINE/USA/QATAR - ARABIC/HEBREW - 108 MIN**

*Official Selection Giornate Degli Autori (Venice Days) – in Competition*

*Official Selection Toronto International Film Festival - Closing Night, Discovery Programme*

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## **LOGLINE**

After fifteen years of imprisonment, Ziad struggles to adjust to modern Palestinian life as the hero everyone hails him to be. Unable to distinguish reality from hallucination he unravels and forces himself to go back to where it all began.

## **SYNOPSIS**

In 1992, Al-Amari Refugee Camp in Palestine is a collection of cement cubicles, angles, colors, smells and sounds. It's tight, but eight year olds Ziad and Ramzi find the space to explore. While playing around with old tools, Ziad accidentally cuts Ramzi. Ramzi stabs Ziad with a screwdriver. Immediately, they become best friends.

In 2002, teenagers Ziad and Ramzi are the stars of Al-Amari basketball team. But, when Ramzi is shot dead in a crossfire, Ziad and his team seek revenge. Ziad is captured by Israeli forces, tortured, and then released fifteen years later.

Paraded as a hero upon his release, Ziad feels like a fraud. Ziad attempts to get his life in order, and works with an old friend at a construction site. However, the fast paced world and demand of modern Palestinian life become overbearing. Ziad pushes all loved ones away and struggles in silence.

He finds it difficult with both love interests, Mina and Salma. Salma, a girl from the camp madly in love with Ziad, offers him stability. A family friend, she pushes his limits by her constant presence in his space. On the other hand, Mina, a Palestinian-American filmmaker, represents all that is different. She holds the key to his self exploration. Her interviews chip away at his psyche as they move from past memories, to future dreams.

Haunted by the memories of his past, Ziad fails to move forward. Living in limbo, unable to distinguish reality from hallucination he unravels and forces himself to go back to where it all began.

## CAST

Ziad Bakri is an actor born in Bi'na, Galilee in 1980. He is known for his roles in Michel Khleifi's *Zindiq* (2009), Elia Suleiman's *The Time that Remains* (2009), Joyce Nashawati's *Blind Sun* (2015), and Maha Haj's *Personal Affairs* (2016). He directed his own work called *The Salt Fisherman* (2011) which was nominated for Muhr Arab award in Dubai.

Areen Omari is a Palestinian actress and producer. She is known for her roles in Lorraine Lévy's *The Other Son* (2012) and Rashid Masharawi's *Waiting* (2005) and *Laila's Birthday* (2008).

Jameel Khoury was born in 1980 in Haifa. He is an actor and composer, known for Tom Clancy's *Jack Ryan* (2018), *Fauda* (2015) and *Out in the Dark* (2012).

Amir Khoury is an emerging actor, known for *Fauda* (2015), *7 Days in Entebbe* (2018) and *The Little Drummer Girl* (2018).

Mariam Basha is a young actress and dancer born in Palestine in 1998. She was born to an artistic family and started her career in acting at the age of 7 at the Palestine National Theatre in Jerusalem.

## DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

*Screwdriver (Mafak)* is a genre-blending film crossing lines between a haunting psychological thriller and social drama following Ziad, as he struggles to adjust to his chaotic new world after release from prison. Ziad is wrapped up in a Kafkaesque struggle of rehabilitation and feels on edge as he fails and unravels. Ziad's hallucinations increase until catatonic, and he turns into a master of self-imposed solitary confinement. His prison is his freedom. Ziad feels caged not confined, suffocated not isolated, abandoned and not alone. He reacts to his confinement with surges of panic and rage, losing control until the line between reality and fantasy is dangerously and permanently blurred.

Solitary prisoners' reliance on fantasy as a technique for survival captured my attention, and largely influenced the story of *Screwdriver (Mafak)*. Although acute suffered symptoms subside post-solitary confinement, many prisoners suffer permanent damage crystalized as intolerance to social relations. Some prisoners become so reliant on prison to organize daily routine that they lose personal autonomy. Some seek return to prison. This stagnant ever-waiting hopelessness pervades Palestinian psyche. The result is an inability to define self without occupier, to organize and feel life without restriction.

*Screwdriver (Mafak)* is set in a place where films of that nature are scarce. The gruesome escalation of a character's hallucinations are neither shown nor discussed in the region. Ziad's audio-visual distortions become key for establishing emotional escalation, and play a major role in placing the viewer in his point of view. As for tone and texture, I opted for a more poetic treatment of violence; to avoid the horror of the violent act and rather render its aftermath. Using fiction that is grounded in reality, I found a subtle way of questioning complicated political issue without falling into sensationalism and voyeurism.

*Screwdriver (Mafak)* is set in the specifics of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, however, it can provide for a universal narrative of torture, confinement, and the battle with one's own image and reflection. This allows for the narrative to exist within the humanitarian rather than the political sphere. The current strength of the film stems from the multiplication of specific true life stories woven into a universal fiction – a fiction that highlights mental rather than physical traumas.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

Bassam Jarbawi witnessed the first Intifada as a child. About a decade later between 2000-2002, as a teenager, he photographed the Al-Amari Refugee Camp in Ramallah during the Israeli incursion / second Intifada. The photographs he took during that time helped start a reference lookbook that he shared with the film's cinematographer David McFarland. Most of the preparation work done with David happened in the camp and was centered around getting a feel for the families in their private space.

With the help of Al-Amari camp residents the production team established its office right in the middle of the camp. Majority of the crew was local and the professional cast was ably supported by many first time actors some of whom were residents of the camp and many of them previously imprisoned. The production had cast an actress to play the female lead but she was unable to get a visa from the Israeli authorities to enter Palestine. With only a few days left to start principal photography, Yasmine Qaddumi one of the film's producers stepped in to play that character.

Lucie Legrand arrived from France to work on the graffiti murals. She designed and executed the beautiful murals in the refugee camp and at the Arab Evangelical Episcopal School in a matter of few days. They remain there to this day.

The film industry is in its nascent stages in the West Bank thus equipment and production supplies are scarce. David, as a result, had to use improvised lighting using reflected light / household fluorescent tubes, sodium bulbs along with the basic production equipment we had access to.

Bassam participated in the RAWI Screenwriters Lab, a Project of the Royal Film Commission – Jordan in consultation with Sundance Institute in 2011. Shrihari Sathe participated in the 2013 Sundance Institute Creative Production Fellowship and Lab.

*Screwdriver (Mafak)* which was previously known as *Solitaire King* received grants from the Sundance Institute Feature Film Program, a development grant from AFAC - The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, a production grant from the Doha Film Institute and a post-production grant from SFFilm | Kenneth Rainin Foundation. The project participated in the Film Independent Fast Track, IFP No Borders and Mercato Internazionale Audiovisivo (previously known as New Cinema Network) markets.

## KEY CREW BIOS:

### **BASSAM JARBAWI (Writer-Director-Editor)**

Bassam Jarbawi began working as a photographer during the second Palestinian Intifada. His photographs produced several exhibits and his first documentary *Frequency* (2004). Jarbawi completed his B.A. in Communication and Political Science at Macalester College, and earned his M.F.A. in Screenwriting and Directing at Columbia University in New York.

His short film *Roos Djaj (Chicken Heads)* premiered at New York Film Festival, screened at Sundance Film Festival and won Best Film at the Columbia University Film Festival, Sonoma Film Festival, and Dubai International Film Festival, to name a few. Post graduation, Bassam worked in digital distribution in New York. His first feature, *Screwdriver (Mafak)* was part of the Rawi Screenwriters' Lab (2011), Dubai Film Connection through the support of Rawi and the Sundance Institute.

### **SHRIHARI SATHE (Producer)**

Shrihari Sathe is a New York and Mumbai based director and producer. Sathe produced Jaron Henrie-McCrea's *Pervertigo*, which world premiered at the 2012 Warsaw and Mumbai film festivals and was a part of the 2011 IFP Independent Filmmaker Labs. Sathe's follow up production, Eliza Hittman's *It Felt Like Love*, premiered at 2013 Sundance Film Festival and 2013 International Film Festival Rotterdam to great reviews. Sathe is a 2013 Sundance Institute Creative Producing Fellow and has received fellowships from the HFFPA, PGA, IFP, Film Independent, and The Sundance Institute to name a few. He is an Independent Spirit Award nominee and a Gotham Award nominee.

Sathe is a Trans Atlantic Partners fellow (2013) and Cannes Producer's Network fellow (2014, 2015, 2016). He is a co-producer on Partho Sen-gupta's *Arunoday (Sunrise)*, which world premiered at the 2014 Busan International Film Festival, and Afia Nathaniel's *Dukhtar (Daughter)*, which world premiered at 2014 Toronto International Film Festival and was Pakistan's Official Submission for Foreign Language Film at the 87th Academy Awards®. Sathe's feature directorial debut – *Ek Hazarachi Note (1000 Rupee Note)* – won the Special Jury Award and Centenary Award for Best Film at the 2014 International Film Festival of India and has received over 30 awards. Sathe's produced, Elisabeth Subrin's *A Woman, A Part* which world premiered at the 2016 International Film Festival Rotterdam and co-produced Anthony Onah's *The Price* which world premiered at 2017 SXSW and Eliza Hittman's *Beach Rats*, a 2018 Sundance Film Festival winner. His latest two productions – Bassam Jarbawi's *Screwdriver (Mafak)* will have its world premiere at Giornate Degli Autori in Venice and Ritu Sarin & Tenzing Sonam's *The Sweet Requiem* will world premiere at 2018 Toronto International Film Festival.

In 2016 Sathe received the Cinereach Producer Award. He is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Columbia University's School of the Arts and is a member of the Producers Guild of America and Indian Motion Picture Producers Association.

### **YASMINE QADDUMI (Producer/Actress)**

Yasmine Qaddumi holds a bachelor's degree in Communication and Media from the American University of Kuwait. Yasmine moved to Palestine and established Rimsh Film as managing partner with Bassam Jarbawi. Rimsh Film line produced Raed Andoni's *Ghost Hunting* - 2017 Berlinale winner.

### **DAVID McFARLAND (Director of Photography)**

David McFarland is a Director of Photography based in Los Angeles. David began studying photography, art, and music at an early age. He is a graduate of Boston University where he studied

cinematography and anthropology. His commercial work and feature films have taken him all around the globe and his work has been shown at most major film festivals.

His latest films- *The Ballad of Lefty Brown* (A24) and *The Price* (Samuel Goldwyn/ Orion Pictures) both premiered at SXSW - 2017. Most recently, he lensed *The Sweet Requiem* which will world premiere at Toronto International Film Festival – 2018 and *Mafak (Screwdriver)* which will world premiere at Giornate Degli Autori in Venice – 2018.

### **JON NATCHEZ (Original Music)**

A multi-instrumentalist specializing in woodwinds and brass, Jon has lent his talents to dozens of bands. He recently won a Grammy as a member of The War on Drugs, was formerly a member of Beirut, and has performed with David Byrne, St. Vincent, Taylor Mac, The National, and Liza Minnelli, among others. In the film world, Jon has composed numerous feature scores, most recently for *The Things We've Seen* (2016), *The Surrounding Game* (2017), *Pledge* (2018), and *Boo!* (2018), as well as music for the Netflix series *Hot Girls Wanted: Turned On* (2017) & *Afflicted* (2018) and the upcoming Panenka series *Over Water* (2018).

### **RYAN BILLIA (Sound Designer)**

Ryan Billia, a supervising sound editor and re-recording mixer, is the owner of Rumble Audio in Brooklyn, NY. He has worked on films which have screened at Sundance, Cannes, Toronto, SXSW, Berlin, and many more, including the 2017 Sundance winner, *The Miseducation of Cameron Post*. He is on the faculty in the graduate film program at NYU-TISCH.

### **CHRISTOPHER RADCLIFF (Co-Editor)**

Christopher Radcliff is a NYC-based filmmaker originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. As a writer/director, his work includes the feature film *The Strange Ones* (co-directed with Lauren Wolkstein), which was released in 2018 to critical acclaim, as well as the award-winning short films *Jonathan's Chest* (2014) and *The Strange Ones* (2011, the basis for the feature), which both premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and have screened around the world. His work as an Editor and in post-production include: *Premise* (2019), *The Strange Ones* (2018), *Random Acts of Flyness* (2018), *Easy Living* (2017), *Man With Van* (2017), *Welcome to the DPRK!* (2017), *Collective:Unconscious* (2016), *Weiner* (2016), *God Loves Uganda* (2013), and *16 Acres* (2012).

### **NAJWA MUBARKI (Casting Director)**

Najwa Mubarki has been involved in various elds of the film industry as Casting Director, Production Manager, Producer and Researcher. Her years of experience starting with Journalism at Al-I t'tihad Newspaper, to Production Manager at Al-Kasaba Theater and the Palestinian National Theater has over the years, proven to be essential at promoting and supporting the Palestinian cultural scene. Mubarki has worked on renowned features as Casting Director such as *Divine Intervention* (Winner of "prix du jury" in the 55th Cannes Film Festival 2002), *Rana's Wedding*, *Miral*, *Habibi*, *3000 Nights* and *Degrade*. And as Production Manager for *The Olive Harvest*, *From Palestine with Love*, and as Line producer on *My Love Awaits Me by the Sea*, Born and raised in Acre, Mubarki currently resides and works in E. Jerusalem, Palestine.

### **BASHAR HASSUNEH (Production Designer)**

Bashar Hassuneh was born in Jerusalem in 1982. He studied Psychology and earned a BA degree from Birzeit University in 2004. In 2005 he followed his artistic ambition to work in the cinematic set designing, while also acting in small rolls for films and performed in pieces of video art. Hassuneh has worked on

films such as Annemarie Jacir's *Wajib* (2017) and *Salt of This Sea* (2008); Hany Abu Assad's *The Idol* (2015) and *Omar* (2013) amongst others.

In 2010 Hassuneh cofounded Habkara, a contemporary shop in Ramallah old city, West Bank. "Habkara" which is the Arabic verb for "collecting and resembling things". Habkara sells art crafts, recycled accessories and furniture designs.

**HAMADA ATALLAH (Costume designer)**

Hamada Atallah is a fashion designer and has taught craft and design since 1992. Atallah has worked extensively as a costume designer in film and on the stage. Film credits include *Rana's Wedding*, *Divine Intervention*, *Salt of this Sea*, *The Well*, *Bottle in the Sea of Gaza*, *Alata - Darkness*, *Man Without a Cell Phone*, *Tanathor* *Last days in Jerusalem* and most recently *The Attack*, *Inheritance* and *When I Saw You*. Theatre work includes 'Jidariyeh', 'Eyes That See', 'Handala' at the Palestinian National Theater and 'Gilgamesh He is Not Dead' and 'Shams' at Al-Hakawati in France.

## **KEY CREW**

Written & Directed by	Bassam Jarbawi
Produced by	Shrihari Sathe
Produced by	Yasmine Qaddumi
Produced by	Bassam Jarbawi
Executive Producer	Nabil Qaddumi
Director of Photography	David McFarland
Original Music	Jon Natchez
Edited by	Bassam Jarbawi Christopher Radcliff
Sound Designer	Ryan Billia
Production Sound Mixer	Raja Dubayah
Casting Director	Najwa Mubarki
Production Designer	Bashar Hassuneh
Costume Designer	Hamada Atallah

## **CAST (In order of appearance)**

Ziad	Ziad Bakri
Ziad (Kid)	Wassim Mousa
Ramzi (Kid)	Mohammad Adawi
Doctor 1992	Huthayfa Jalamna
Ziad (Teen)	Amir Khoury
Ramzi (Teen)	Adham Abu Aqel
Octopus (Teen)	Munther Bannourah
Mo-Mo (Teen)	Abedalrahman Zubaidi
Blue Player	Ibrahim Jawhari
Ramzi's Mother	Israa Darawsha
Ziad's Mother	Areen Omari
Imam	Nidal Taha
News Report 2002	Bassam Jarbawi
Victim	Imad Mizro
Interrogator	Amira Habash
News Reporter	Faleh Faleh

Octopus	Jameel Khoury
Ziad's Friend	Israr Hammad
Nawal	Mariam Basha
Salma	Maya Omaia Keesh
Guest 1	Fadi Badran
Guest 2	Murad Badran
Mo-Mo	Ahmad Jubeh
Mina	Yasmine Qaddumi
Partygoer	Khaled Akeel
Social Worker	Amani Matariyeh
Basketball Court Guard	Raed Zahran
Sanad	Sanad Amina
Photographer	Adel Husary
Ministry Secretary	Quds Manasra
Bank Customer	Yazan Nofal
Bank Teller	Ahmad Jarrar
Shoe Vendor	Anwar Zidan
Ticketed Vendor	Rafat Lafi
Policeman	Muayad Abd El Samad
Waiter	Suhaib Abu Gahrbebe
Construction worker 1	Ali AlDeek
Construction worker 2	Muayad Odeh
Construction worker 3	Ahmad Salhab
Mina's Friend	Mohammad Dweik
Doctor 2017	Motasim Al-Sheik
Receptionist 1	Narmeen Eid
Receptionist 2	Siwar Tamale
Villa Owner	Marwan Awad
News Report 2017	Dina Masri
CT Scan Technician	Bashar Hassuneh
Sanad's mother	Wesal Khalil
Refugee camp man	Mahmoud Ayad
Salt Lady	Basima Hammad
On-Screen Reporter	Suha Hussein
Selfie boy	Mohammad AlShafie
Israeli Settler	Doraid Liddawi

## **SUPPORTED BY**

- **Doha Film Institute**
- **Sundance Institute Feature Film Program & Creative Producing Fellowship**
- **SFFilm Rainin Grant**
- **AFAC - The Arab Fund for Arts & Culture**
- **RAWI Screenwriters Lab - A project of the Royal Film Commission Jordan in consultation with the Sundance Institute**
- **Film Independent**
- **IFP**
- **Mercato Internazionale Audiovisivo**