

WIP J Yasmine's Journal



COUNTRY/REGION: Lebanon, France

GENRE | FORMAT | LANGUAGE | RUNNING TIME:

Documentary | Digital Format | French | 80 mins

DIRECTOR:

Christian ABBOUD

PRODUCER:

Pierre SARRAF

WIP GOALS:

Funds, Sales agents, Pre-sales

TOTAL BUDGET: US\$230,000

SECURED BUDGET: US\$55,000

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2021 *The Flying Viking*

2016 *Ubuntu*

ONE-SENTENCE SYNOPSIS

A woman announces on French radio that her daughters have been kidnapped by their father. From that moment, Yasmine and Salomé's childhood are no longer the same.

SYNOPSIS

One morning, Yasmine, 13, and Salomé, 10, get into their father's car. Together, they leave Bordeaux, cross the Alps, reach Milan, and take a flight to Turkey before landing in Lebanon. There, Yasmine and Salomé live like all little girls their age do: they play, go to school, do their homework and have fun with their friends. Like all young Lebanese girls, they love the beach, the mountains, walks in the hills with Mediterranean colours and national flavours. And like many children, they suffer from the divorce of their parents. Their father is Lebanese, their mother is French. And the mother announced on French radio that her daughters have been kidnapped by their father. According to French law, their dad broke the rules. However, according to Lebanese law, he didn't. Their mother eventually arrives in Beirut to take them back, but what do Yasmine and Salomé really want?

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

During a calm evening in the summer of 2018, while I spent a moment in the company of an acquaintance, he began to tell me that his brother had “kidnapped” his two little girls in France to bring them to Lebanon. He didn't tell me any more than that. My first reaction was shock: How can you do that to your own children? I could not help but empathise with the sadness of the mother, who remained in France, full of distress over her daughters. What was going on beneath the surface? It definitely couldn't be as simple a story as I had been told. What motivates a father to do this? All these questions tormented me incessantly. I needed answers. I had to get in touch with the father. I met him a month later. We started talking when Yasmine, Alfred's oldest daughter, arrives to greet me. A very special aura emanates from this little girl. I fell under the spell of Yasmine's maturity, her outspokenness, the finesse of her thought and her audacity. We looked at each other, silently. I knew that we had to make a film. Their “yes” was immediate.

DIRECTOR

Christian ABBOUD

Abboud was born on 13th May, 1980 in Beirut, a city divided by civil war. He worked as an editor until 2012 on more than 200 projects, having collaborated with internationally acclaimed directors and artists like Nadine Labaki, Henri-Jean Debon, Michel Elefteriades. In 2014, he started producing and directing his own documentaries that tackles human rights and social issues. His first self-produced feature documentary *Ubuntu* (2016) tells the story of a female Syrian refugee torn between exile and going back home.

PRODUCER

Pierre SARRAF

Sarraaf grew up in Beirut, a city divided by civil war. In 1990, he emigrated to Italy, France then Canada to study Biochemistry and Business Management (MBA). He returned to Beirut in 2003 to set up né à Beyrouth Films to produce feature films and documentaries. To date, Sarraaf was involved in the production of ten features, eight shorts and six documentaries. His latest features as co-producer are *Insyriated* (Audience Award at Berlinale 2017), *Capharnaüm* (2018), winner of the Jury Prize in Competition at Cannes Film Festival and nominee for Best Foreign Film at the Academy Awards.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

né à Beyrouth Films

Founded by Karim Makhoul, Nadim Tabet and Pierre Sarraaf in the early 2000s. On an industry level, né à Beyrouth plays a major role in fostering the film industry in Lebanon by producing the Lebanese Film Festival in Beirut since 2001, serving on the board of the Fondation Liban Cinema since 2016, and teaching Cinema Production at the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts (ALBA) of the University of Balamand.