

Press Kit

**mecfilm**

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Presents

in co-operation with the  
FALAFEL DADDY COLLECTIVE

# Palestine is Waiting

(A Work in Progress)

A film by  
Dahna Abourahme  
Tarek Elaydi  
Jess Ghannam  
Annemarie Jacir  
Suzy Salamy

USA 2001

## Synopsis

There are over 5 million Palestinian refugees in the world today. Whether living in refugee camps or unwelcomed in host countries, Palestinian refugees constitute the largest and oldest refugee problem in the world. "Palestine is Waiting" is a short documentary about four generations of Palestinians and their experience of living as refugees and their desire to return. Many of the refugees wish to return to their homes and land in historic Palestine, and all of them want the right to return. The right to return is guaranteed under international law and protected by United Nations resolutions. Still, after 54 years of demanding this basic human right, Palestinian refugees are being denied this right and are under continued displacement and chronic occupation. The core of Palestinian identity is the connection to the land of Palestine. "Palestine is Waiting" explores the issue of space that is intrinsic to the right of return. Refugees from the West Bank, Lebanon, and the United States will reveal their stories and speak about the devastating impact of forced expulsion on themselves and their children. The problems of dispossession are felt at the level of people's fractured identity and the emotional legacy it leaves with successive generations of the Palestinian diaspora. Yet, stories of Palestine are passed down from generation to generation and these memories persist and they persist in the collective minds of all Palestinians. There were 473 villages destroyed in 1948. Many of these villages remain in ruins, untouched to this day. Other villages are occupied by settlers from Europe and the United States who have no history or connection to the land. Through the eyes and lives of the Palestinian refugees, "Palestine is Waiting", explores why the right of return is the core issue in forging a just peace in the Middle East.

*USA 2001, Dahna Abourahme, Tarek Elaydi, Jess Ghannam, Annemarie Jacir, Suzy Salamy, 10 min, Beta, colour, Arabic/English, English subtitles.*

Expected release date of the full length version is Spring 2003, 53 min.

## Credits

### *Lebanon Unit*

Andrew Courtney  
Jawad Husein  
Ribhi Husein  
Annemarie Jacir  
Suzy Salamy  
Nisrine Shehadeh  
Assaf Shhayed

### *USA Unit*

Jess Ghannam  
Dahna Abourahme  
Tarek Elaydi  
Annemarie Jacir  
Suzy Salamy

### *Palestine Unit*

Annemarie Jacir  
Suzy Salamy  
Dahna Abourahme  
Jess Ghannam  
Rajaie Khateeb

## Falafel Daddy Productions

Falafel Daddy Productions, is a collective of Palestinian based in the USA. They began in 2000, when activists involved in Al-Awda (the Palestinian Right of Return Coalition) joined together to make a film on the growing movement of Palestinian activism in the United States. Their mission is to spread awareness and information about Arab issues not offered in mainstream media. For more information: [www.falafeldaddy.org](http://www.falafeldaddy.org)

### *Dahna Abourahme*

Dahna is an audio-video artist and activist. She teaches video to youth in New York City and Palestine. She was recently involved in a community arts project through the Kitchen, working with adults and seniors in the Robert Fulton Houses. She has also done sound recording and design for several films/videos which include a short film that sets a Mexican folktale in present day New York, and a documentary about one of the unrecognized Palestinian villages inside Israel. Her most recent work is an audio-video installation exploring the abnormality in the normal and the importance of stories in our lives.

### *Tarek Elaydi*

Tarek Elaydi has been making short films since he was 12. At Colorado State University he specialized in computer graphics and completed many short CG films including one on the human anatomy which is widely used at universities as teaching tool. Currently, Tarek is on post-production on a documentary he shot in the West Bank, on the impact of the current Intifada on daily life. He lives in San Francisco.

### *Jess Ghannam*

Jess Ghannam is a psychoanalyst, human rights activist, and documentary filmmaker. Based in San Francisco, he has been working on describing the psychological effects of torture, occupation, and prolonged incarceration. He writes, directs, and produces documentaries related to human rights issues in the Middle East. Currently he is documenting the effects of extended military occupation on refugees living in the Gaza Strip. He is also a practicing psychoanalyst and teaches at the University of California, San Francisco.

### *Annemarie Jacir*

Annemarie Jacir is a Palestinian filmmaker, activist, and poet living between New York City and Palestine. She grew up in Saudi Arabia, later moving to Texas and to California. She has written, directed, and produced a number of short films and is the writer/director of "The Satellite Shooters". She is a winner of the Kathryn H. Parlan Screenwriting Award at Columbia University as well as a Zaki Gordon Award for Excellence in Screenwriting. Publications include Ripe Guava, Mizna, and selections of her poetry are featured in "Arab Women Writers: A Contemporary Anthology" published by Interlink Publishers.

### *Suzy Salamy*

Suzy Salamy is a videographer, video editor, and activist. Born in Brooklyn and raised in Ohio, Suzy studied film at Bard College. Her work includes "Enough Already", a documentary exploring the life of a first generation Palestinian American woman living in New York City. She currently works freelance production and post-production within the television industry.