

UNITE DE PRODUCTION PRESENTS

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MUCH LOVED



OFFICIAL SELECTION

tiff

TORONTO INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL 2017



RAZZIA

A FILM BY NABIL AYOUC H



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DISTRIBUTION

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PRESSE

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Dossier de presse produit par



2017 / France-Morocco-Belgium / 119 min / Scope



SYNOPSIS

Casablanca. Vibrant and rough, inviting yet unforgiving. Four souls in search of truth.

Hakim, living in the conservative medina, dreams of being a rock star.

Salima, on the verge of resignation, struggles to free herself from a society that wants to define her.

Joe, a Jewish restaurant owner, chooses to live in the Casablanca he fantasizes about, blurring his reality.

Inès, young and rich, is torn between tradition and modernity as she deals with her sexual awakening...

More than three decades earlier, a passionate teacher in the Atlas Mountains is put to silence... Through the echo of his shattered dreams, their disillusionments embody the sparks that will light up the city in flames.

SHORT VERSION

Casablanca: vibrant and rough, inviting yet unforgiving. Four souls in search of truth, thirty years after a passionate teacher in the Atlas Mountains was put to silence... Through the echo of his shattered dreams, the disillusionments of the four characters embody the sparks that will light up the city in flames.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Great revolutions start with modest individual ones. What took place during the Arab Spring of 2011 is in reality the sum of various factors: a series of frustrations, humiliations, a total disregard for and decline of basic civil rights. These widespread people's movements that toppled regimes were made up of men and women who first experienced an intimate, inner revolution before expressing their anger in the streets. I wanted to learn more about these people, to understand what pushed some of them to resist and others to renounce.

In Morocco where I live, I have witnessed society evolve from a type of community life to sectarian exclusion of all those who don't fit into the mold. The process of Arabization of the educational system that began in the 1980s is having devastating effects today because its principle is to establish a doctrinaire approach to society, doing away with all forms of critical thinking. The harassment and attacks my actresses and I were subjected to after my film *Much Loved* demonstrated how easily, when dealing with sensitive subjects, the fine line can be crossed by the masses, passing from attentive listening to condemnation, anathema, and then violence.

I experienced this as a brutal wake up call, a trigger. I felt it was urgent to speak openly and more than ever, to shine a light on what is occurring. I have always felt it was necessary to speak up about what hurts and what we'd like to keep at a distance. I like fleshing out characters that society seeks to render inaudible and invisible by pushing them to the margins. With *Razzia*, I wanted to delve deeper, exploring the soul of the silent majority, this invisible army whose voices aren't raised loudly enough and yet who are wholly entitled to proclaim their right to exist. Whilst speaking of them, I'm speaking of us, our flaws and failures, our broken and forgotten dreams. I'm speaking about what it is that keeps a society standing strong, attached to universal values, or alternatively one that abandons the weakest and sinks into totalitarianism.



Abdallah, Salima, Joe, Hakim and Inès are beings that others wish to muzzle and squash. Yet, they are the embodiment of hope, for each in their own way personifies a difference or an inner struggle that keeps us alive. They are ordinary people we come across in everyday life and who become, from my viewpoint, heroic. Like Aïta's war songs, delivered by Yto in the film, their cries resound a warning call. If you listen carefully, you can hear their solitude, their heartbreak, and their contradictions. They communicate with each other without ever speaking or meeting. Yet invisible bonds are formed, intersecting with one another; and while some may bow down, one woman decides to hold her head high and give birth to her child.

Casablanca is their home. Casablanca is also my home. It is a dirty, hot, stifling city and yet, every day, it sparks one form or another of desire in me: it feels like a place where everything is possible, where at any time one can be led in one direction or another. The heart of the city, its working-class neighborhoods, and its medina are vibrant and exciting. For several years now Casablanca has made the effort to open up towards the sea. Today, the city turns to the sea with open arms as if its salvation came from there. However, in a dreadful paradox of life as it is today, it is no longer possible for a woman

to wear a bathing suit on the beach. This space has been besieged by those who decided that bodies should remain hidden. Taking back what is ours, taking back this public space means reappropriating mental and physical territory: for this sea points towards an elsewhere that we miss so dearly – the ability to project. Casablanca is also a film, a myth that Maryam Touzani, my co-screenwriter, and I have been looking to deconstruct and reclaim, all the while paying tribute to it.

Casablanca is finally, and above all, this fragment of reality in which our characters construct their own story. These stories are life's possibilities that others are intent on destroying: personal battles at the heart of a quintessential struggle. And this struggle encompasses them while also being beyond their control. It imperceptibly governs the destiny of a nation, and through its universalist dimension, that of all nations. Worlds that do not know nor accept one another; a chronicle of latent, oh-so ordinary hatred, that is molded on a daily basis through seemingly insignificant yet in fact incredibly significant gestures, resulting in a collective plundering – indeed a razzia - of people's lives.

Nabil Ayouch



NABIL AYOUC

Nabil Ayouch was born in Paris on April 1st, 1969. He is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (the Oscars), the French Film Academy (Les Cesar), and sits on the board of the Arab Film Academy.

In 1997, Nabil Ayouch directed his first feature film, *Mektoub*, which like his film *Ali Zaoua*, (2000) represented Morocco at the Oscars. He then made *A Minute Less Sunshine* (sic) [*Une minute de Soleil en moins*] (2003) and *Whatever Lola Wants* (2008), produced by Pathé. His first short film, *The Desert's Blue Stones* [*Les Pierres Bleues du Désert*], featured Jamel Debbouze in his first screen role.

In 2009, Nabil Ayouch wrote and directed the closing ceremony for the World Economic Forum at Davos, after having already directed several live performances such as the opening ceremony at the Chateau de Versailles for the year-long celebration of Moroccan culture in France, called *Le Temps de Maroc*, in 1999.

The same year, Nabil Ayouch founded Ali n' Productions, a company whose purpose is to help launch young directors through a variety of initiatives such as the Mohamed Reggab Award, a screenplay and production competition for 35mm short films. Between 2005 and 2010, he produced 40 genre films as part of the Film Industry, Made in Morocco project. In 2006, with support from the European Union and the Marrakech



International Film Festival foundation, he launched the Meda Films Development program, a structure that accompanies producers and screenwriters from ten countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean during the development phase of their films.

In 2002, Nabil Ayouch founded G.A.R.P. (An association of authors, directors and producers) then, in 2003, the “Moroccan Coalition for cultural diversity.” In 2008, he participated in the creation of the Moroccan Anti-piracy association, which he chairs. He was appointed to the Economic, Social and Environmental Council in 2011.

Also in 2011, he released his first feature-length documentary, *My Land*, which was filmed in the Middle East. In 2012, Nabil Ayouch finished *Horses of God* [Les chevaux de Dieu], the film adaptation of Mahi Binebine’s novel *The Stars of Sidi Moumen* [Les étoiles de Sidi Moumen], inspired by the May 16th, 2003 suicide bombings in Casablanca. The film appeared in the Official Selection of the Cannes Film Festival (Un Certain Regard), won the François Chalais Prize, and represented Morocco at the Golden Globes and the Oscars. It has received 26 international awards and prizes.

In early 2014, he opened the Ali Zaoua Foundation – which he chairs – a Cultural Center for teenagers and young adults located in the Sidi Moumen district of Casablanca where the May 16th 2003 suicide bombers came from. Today, nearly 400 children and

teenagers are enrolled in The Stars of Sidi Moumen center and go there to learn various types of artistic expression. Another “Stars” center was created in Tangier in 2017. And a third one is in the works in Marrakech.

In November 2014, the Louvre museum paid homage to Nabil Ayouch, giving him carte blanche for 3 days during which a large portion of his work was on display for the Parisian public.

In March 2015, in Casablanca, the Gallery 38 organized a photography exhibition of Nabil Ayouch’s work, a series depicting people on the margins of society, which he had worked on during the course of the previous year.

In May 2015, his film *Much Loved* was chosen for the Directors’ Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival. In September 2015, it was awarded the Valois d’Or and the Valois for best actress at the Angoulême film festival. The film was censored in Morocco. *Much Loved* opened in over twenty countries, and has won 12 international prizes to date.

Razzia, is selected at the Platform Competition of the Toronto International Films Festival, and will be released in French cinemas early 2018.



CAST

Salima	Maryam Touzani
Joe	Arieh Worthalter
Hakim	Abdelilah Rachid
Inès	Dounia Binebine
Abdallah	Amine Ennaji
Ilyas (adult)	Abdellah Didane
Ilyas (child)	Mohamed Zarrouk
Yto (old)	Nezha Tebbaï
Yto (young)	Saâdia Ladib
Nejma	Maha Boukhari
Jawad	Younes Bouab
Jacques	David El Baz

CREW

Director
 Screenwriters
 Producer
 Co-producers
 Production Manager
 Line Producer
 Director of Photography
 Sound Designer
 Editor
 with the collaboration of
 1st Assistant Director
 Script Supervisor
 Production Designer
 Costume Designer
 Sound Mixers
 Sound Editor
 Casting Director (Morocco)
 Casting Director (France)
 Music Composers

Nabil Ayouch
 Nabil Ayouch & Maryam Touzani
 Bruno Nahon
 Patrick Quinet & Nabil Ayouch
 Albert Blasius
 Frantz Richard
 Virginie Surdej
 Zacharie Naciri
 Sophie Reine
 Marie-Hélène Dozo
 Guillaume Plumejeau
 Emilie Flamant
 Hafid Amly
 Lydie Colin
 Saïd Radi & Thomas Gauder
 Fred Demolder
 Amine Louadni
 Adélaïde Mauvernay
 Acif Melody
 Caroline Chaspoul
 & Eduardo Henriquez
 Guillaume Poncelet

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 Les Films du Nouveau Monde (France)
 Artemis Production (Belgique)
 & Ali n' Productions (Morocco)

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