



FESTIVAL DE CANNES  
COMPETITION  
2019 OFFICIAL SELECTION

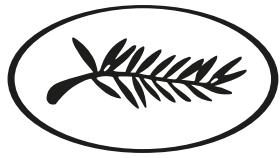


# IT MUST BE HEAVEN

DIRECTED BY ELIA SULEIMAN



RECTANGLE PRODUCTIONS, NAZIRA FILMS, PALLAS FILM, POSSIBLES MEDIA and ZEYNO FILM present  
in association with DOHA FILM INSTITUTE



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# IT MUST BE HEAVEN

DIRECTED BY **ELIA SULEIMAN**

97 MIN - FRANCE, QATAR, GERMANY, CANADA, TURKEY, PALESTINE - 2019 - SCOPE - 5.1

## **INTERNATIONAL SALES**

### **WILD BUNCH**

5 Square Mérimée - 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
06400 Cannes  
[www.wildbunch.biz](http://www.wildbunch.biz)

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## **RELATIONS PRESSE** **LE PUBLIC SYSTÈME CINÉMA**

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# SYNOPSIS

ES escapes from Palestine seeking an alternative homeland, only to find that Palestine is trailing behind him. The promise of a new life turns into a comedy of errors: however far he travels, from Paris to New York, something always reminds him of home.

From award-winning director Elia Suleiman, a comic saga exploring identity, nationality and belonging, in which ES asks the fundamental question: where is the place we can truly call home?

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

*“The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner;  
he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong;  
but he is perfect to whom the entire world is a foreign land.  
The tender soul has fixed his love on one spot in the world;  
the strong man has extended his love to all places;  
the perfect man has extinguished his.”*

Hugh of Saint Victor

*“Where do the birds fly after the last sky?”*

Mahmoud Darwich

If my previous films tried to present Palestine as a microcosm of the world; my new film *It Must Be Heaven* tries to show the world as if it were a microcosm of Palestine.

*It Must Be Heaven* shows ordinary everyday situations of people across the world living in a climate of geopolitical global tension. And the violence erupting in one place is similar to the violence erupting in another. Images and sounds containing this violence or tension are being felt in all the world centers and not, as in the past, just somewhere in the far corners of the world. There are checkpoints in each country at airports and in shopping malls. Police sirens and security alarms are no longer intermittent but constant.

Rather than focus on the 'larger' picture constantly bombarded by the mass media, always generalized, masked and falsified, *It Must Be Heaven* depicts the moment in the margin, the trivial, or that which is usually out of focus. Consequently, it approaches what is intimate, tender and touching. It's the personal and human stories that are based on identification which raise questions and raise hope.

As in my previous films, there is little dialogue; what is spoken is more like monologue to infuse rhythm and musicality. Otherwise the narrative of the film is knitted from a subliminal montage; scenes that are composed from choreographic movements; burlesque drawn from the world of the absurd; images that open up to the poetry of silence, which is at the heart of cinematic language.

Elia Suleiman

# ELIA SULEIMAN

Born in Nazareth on July 28, 1960, Elia Suleiman lived in New York between 1981 and 1993. During this period, he directed his two first short films, *Introduction to the End of an Argument* and *Homage by Assassination*, which won him numerous prizes. In 1994, he moved to Jerusalem where the European Commission charged him with establishing a Cinema and Media department at Birzeit University. His feature debut, *Chronicle of a Disappearance*, won the Best First Film award at the 1996 Venice Film Festival. In 2002, *Divine Intervention* won the Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival and the Best Foreign Film prize at the European Awards in Rome. His feature, *The Time That Remains*, screened In Competition at the 2009 Cannes film Festival. In 2012, Elia Suleiman directed the short film *Diary of a Beginner*, part of the portmanteau feature *7 Days in Havana*, which screened that year in Un Certain Regard at the Cannes Film Festival.



## FILMOGRAPHY

- 2019** ***IT MUST BE HEAVEN*** 97'  
Official Selection – In Competition – Cannes 2019
- 2012** ***7 DAYS IN HAVANAE*** – segment « Diary of a Beginner » 17'  
Official Selection - Un Certain Regard – Cannes 2012
- 2009** ***THE TIME THAT REMAINS*** 105'  
Official Selection – In Competition – Cannes 2009
- 2007** ***CHACUN SON CINÉMA*** – segment « Irtebak » 3'  
Short film for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Festival de Cannes
- 2002** ***DIVINE INTERVENTION*** 92'  
Jury Prize – Cannes 2002
- 2000** ***CYBER PALESTINE*** 16'  
Directors' Fortnight – Cannes 2001
- 1998** ***THE ARAB DREAM*** 30'  
Order for Arte Télévision, for the end of the Millenium 2000
- 1996** ***CHRONICLE OF A DISAPPEARANCE*** 84'  
Best First Film Prize - Venice 1996
- 1992** ***HOMAGE BY ASSASSINATION*** 28'  
Rockefeller Award – USA 1993
- 1991** ***INTRODUCTION TO THE END OF AN ARGUMENT*** 45'  
Best Experimental Documentary – USA 1992

# CAST

ELIA SULEIMAN as himself

## NAZARETH

NEIGHBOUR SON & FATHER Tarik KOPTI and Kareem GHNEIM  
WAITER George KHLEIFI  
BROTHERS & SISTER Ali SULIMAN, Fares MUQABAA, Yasmine HAJ  
BISHOP Nael KANJ  
BEDOUIN WOMAN Asmaa AZAIZY

## PARIS

MAN IN THE METRO Grégoire COLIN  
PRODUCER Vincent MARAVAL  
AMBULANCE CREW Claire DUMAS and Antoine CHOLET  
HOMELESS MAN Eric CORNET  
JAPANESE COUPLE Yumi NARITA and Kengo SAITO

## NEW-YORK

CARD READER Stephen McHATTIE  
FEMEN Raia HAÏDAR  
MASTER OF CEREMONIES Fadi SAKR  
TAXI DRIVER Kwasi SONGUI  
TEACHER Guy SPRUNG  
PRODUCER Nancy GRANT  
AIRPORT SECURITY Alain DAHAN  
And Gael GARCÍA BERNAL as himself

# CREW

Written & directed by Elia SULEIMAN  
DP Sofian EL FANI  
Editor Véronique LANGE  
Sound recordist Johannes DOBERENZ  
Sound editors Gwennolé LE BORGNE, Olivier TOUCHE  
Laure Anne DARRAS  
Sound mixer Lars GINZEL  
Production designer Caroline ADLER  
Costume designers Alexia CRISP-JONES, Éric POIRIER  
Executive producers Fatma HASSAN ALREMAIHI, Hanaa ISSA  
Produced by Édouard WEIL, Laurine PELASSY, Elia SULEIMAN,  
Thanassis KARATHANOS, Martin HAMPEL, Serge NOËL  
Coproduced by Zeynep OZBATUR ATAKAN, Georges SCHOUCAIR  
Production companies RECTANGLE PRODUCTIONS  
NAZIRA FILMS, PALLAS FILM  
POSSIBLES MEDIA, ZEYNO FILM  
In association with DOHA FILM INSTITUTE  
In coproduction with ZDF/ARTE, TURKISH RADIO  
TELEVISION CORPORATION (TRT)  
CN3 PRODUCTIONS  
With the support of EURIMAGES  
MITTELDEUTSCHE MEDIENFÖRDERUNG,  
SODEC QUÉBEC, QUÉBEC CRÉDIT D'IMPÔT  
CINÉMA ET TÉLÉVISION – GESTION SODEC,  
CANADA CRÉDIT D'IMPÔT POUR LA PRODUCTION,  
CINÉMATOGRAPHIQUE OU MAGNÉTOSCOPIQUE  
CANADIENNE, AIDE AUX CINÉMAS DU MONDE  
– CNC – INSTITUT FRANÇAIS, CENTRE NATIONAL  
DU CINÉMA ET DE L'IMAGE ANIMÉE, FFA –  
FILMFÖRDERUNGSANSTALT, TELEFILM CANADA  
In association with WILD BUNCH, LE PACTE, SCHORTCUT FILMS,  
MAISON 4:3, THE ARAB FILM FUND FOR ARTS  
AND CULTURE, KNM  
International Sales WILD BUNCH  
French distributor LE PACTE

