

# Persmap



# THE PATIENCE STONE

Een Film van Atiq Rahimi

Speelduur: 98 min. – Land: Afghanistan – Jaar: 2013 – Genre: Drama



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# Synopsis

## Nederlands

Volgens een oude Perzische legende bestaat er een mysterieuze steen aan wie je alles kan toevertrouwen. Een steen die je voor je moet houden, terwijl je alles deelt; je verlangens, je pijn, je hele leven. De steen luistert. En op een dag barst de steen uiteen.

In een land dat verscheurd wordt door oorlog, waakt een mooie vrouw over haar ernstig zieke man. Hij is getroffen door een kogel in zijn nek en leeft sindsdien als een kasplant in volledige stilte. Op een dag begint de vrouw te praten tegen haar comateuze man. Het blijkt één lange biecht te zijn, waarin ze praat over haar jeugd, haar frustraties, haar eenzaamheid, haar dromen en haar verlangens.

*THE PATIENCE STONE is gebaseerd op het gelijknamige boek, in Nederland uitgebracht als 'Steen van Geduld', vertaald in 33 verschillende talen en winnaar van de Franse literatuurprijs (Goncourt prijs) in 2008.*

## English

According to Persian mythology, there is a magic Stone to whom one can confide all one's problems and worries.

Somewhere in a country torn apart by a war a beautiful woman watches over her husband in a decrepit room. He is reduced to the state of a vegetable because of a bullet in the neck, and not only is he abandoned by his companions of the Jihad, but also by his brothers. One day, the woman starts a solitary confession to her silent husband. She talks about her childhood, her suffering, her frustrations, her loneliness, her dreams, her desires. She touches him, kisses him, things she could never have done before.

*THE PATIENCE STONE is based on the same named book, which was translated in 33 different languages and was the winner of the French literature award (Goncourt price) in 2008.*



## CAST

Vrouw Golshifteh Farahani  
Man Hamid Djavdan  
Tante Hassina Burgan  
Jonge Soldaat Massi Mrowat

## CREW

Director Atiq Rahimi  
Writers Jean-Claude Carrière  
Atiq Rahimi  
Production The Film  
Coproduction Studio 37  
Corniche Group  
Razor Film  
Arte France Cinéma  
Jahan-E-Honar Productions  
Producer Michael Gentile  
Executive Producer Hani Farsi  
Coproducer Gerhard Meixner & Roman Paul  
Associated Producer Lauraine Heftler  
Line producer Philippe Gautier  
DOP Thierry Arbogast  
Production Designer Erwin Prib  
Music Max Richter  
Editor Hervé De Luze  
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Medienboard  
Mini Traité

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When I asked Jean-Claude Carrière to adapt my book *Syngué sabour*, he said: "What are you expecting from me?" – "Betray me!" I answered.

It wasn't said in provocation but with cinematographic vocation. Because what is exciting and challenging for a writer-director, is finding a way to exceed one's own book to show and say in his film all the things he didn't manage to write using words.

The book's central idea is the myth of *Syngue Sabour*, the patience stone, a stone on which you can shed your misfortunes, your complaints, your secrets until it's so full it bursts. In this story, the stone is the husband, a warrior paralyzed by a bullet in the neck. The woman, to bring him back to life, has to pray from morning till night for 99 days. But the prayer soon turns in to confession. She murmurs in to his ear all the things she kept locked inside her for so many years.

Like in my previous books, the characters evolve in extreme circumstances and in a single décor. But our adaptation primarily consists in moving away from this theatrical situation, by deconstructing the Romanesque narrative to arrive at a purely cinematographic dramaturgy. We thus changed the narrative point-of-view. By following the woman's point-of-view, the camera permits itself to leave the bedroom, to follow the main character out of the house, in to the streets of Kabul, in to the heart of the war. The camera is mobile, light, wandering, like Rossellini's *GERMANY, YEAR ZERO*, giving the impression of capturing situations on the spur of the moment. On the other hand, the interior scenes where sensuality, intimacy, dreams and phantasms, memories, regrets, remorse... prevail and haunt our heroine's mind, the camera will harmonize itself to the rhythm of the characters emotions and very breaths. Supple, gracious, sensual, the camera slides through the bedroom, through the woman's intimate world, like a confidante, an accomplice.

The contrast between the two worlds, outside/inside, social/intimate, war/love... will, in terms of lighting, be interpreted by contrasting images; the crude exteriors, and those, soft and veiled, of the interior where the woman is lit like a source of light and colour, as can be seen in the miniature Persian carpets.

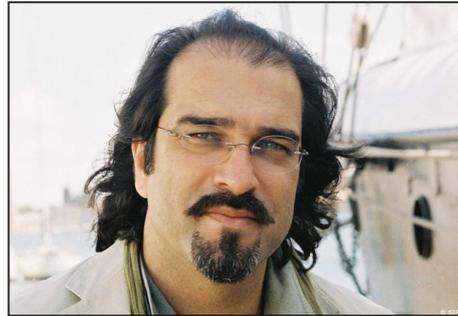
The film is also structured by passages leading from the present to the past, making the narration nonlinear. However, the woman's memories are not depicted with systematic and arbitrary flash backs. It is always the elements and the situations from the present that introduce us in to the past. Like, for example, the combat scene between the combat quails that the heroine perceives in the streets of Kabul, not online does this scene reflect what the character lived during her childhood, but progressively transforms itself in to her own memory. Just like the wedding party in the whorehouse that reincarnates our main character's wedding... rendering these flashbacks more poetical than technical.

This is how characters in the book, that only exist through the memories and stories told by the woman, come to life. Like the aunt who is an initiating character in the life the heroine, or her father, a breeder of combat quails.

Atiq Rahimi

## Biography of Atiq Rahimi

French-Afghan writer and filmmaker, Atiq Rahimi (1962) fled Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion and relocated to France. After studying at the Sorbonne, he joined a production company and made several documentaries for French television. He began writing in the late 1990s, with his first novel, *Earth and Ashes*, written in Persian, becoming an instant bestseller in Europe and South America. The film version of Rahimi's book has won 25 awards, including the Prix du Regard vers l'Avenir at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival.



In 2008, Rahimi won the Prix Goncourt for *Syngué Sabour* (translated into English as *The Patience Stone*), his fourth book was first written in French. Rahimi returned to his native Afghanistan in 2002. As Senior Creative Advisor for that nation's largest media group, Moby Group, he developed programs and genres for its various media outlets, and helped develop and train a new generation of Afghan filmmakers and directors.

## Filmography

- 2012 – THE PATIENCE STONE
- 2004 – KHAKESTAR – O – KHAK
- 2002 – AFGHANISTAN, UN ÉTAT IMPOSSIBLE?

## Books by Atiq Rahimi

- 2011 – Maudit soit Dostoïevski
- 2008 – The Patience Stone (*Syngué Sabour*)
- 2002 – A Thousand Rooms of Dream and Fear (*Les Mille Maisons du rêve et de la terreur*)
- 2000 – Earth and Ashes (*Terre et cendres*)

# Biography of Golshifteh Farahani

Golshifteh Farahani (1983) was cast as the lead in *THE PEAR TREE* at age 14, for which she won the Crystal Roc for Best Actress of International Film Festival Tehran. Since then, she acted in many films, a lot of of them received international awards. In recent years she has acted in movies by some of Iran's best directors: Dariush Mehrjui's controversial film *SANTOORI (THE SANTOOR PLAYER)*, *HALF MOON* of Bahman Ghobadi, winner of the Golden Shell at the San Sebastian Film Festival in 2006, and Rasool Mollagholipoor's *M FOR MOTHER*, the Iran's nominee of the 2008 Academy Awards for Best Foreign Film, and for which she also won the special prize by the jury for the Best Actress from the Roshd International Film Festival. As her last acting experience in Iran, she appeared in *ABOUT ELLY*, directed by Asghar Farhadi. This film has been selected at the Tribeca Film Festival and won a Silver Bear at the Berlin Film Festival.

In January 2012 Golshifteh Farahani was banned from returning back to her homeland after posing nude as a protest against Islamic restrictions on women's dress in the French 'Madame Figaro' and also in the César Award's video for Most Promising Actors category.

## Filmography

2011 - *POULET AUX PRUNES*  
2011 - *LA RÈGLE DE TROIS (short)*  
2011 - *THERE BE DRAGONS*  
2011 - *SI TU MEURS, JE TE TUE*  
2009 - *DARBAREYE ELLY*  
2008 - *BODY OF LIES*  
2008 - *SHIRIN*  
2008 - *HAMISHEH PAYE YEK ZAN DAR MIAN AST*  
2008 - *DIVAR*  
2007 - *SANTOORI*  
2006 - *MIM MESLE MADAR*  
2006 - *NIWEMANG*  
2006 - *BE NAME PEDAR*  
2006 - *MAHIHA ASHEGH MISHAVAND*  
2006 - *GIS BORIDEH*  
2005 - *BAB'AZIZ*  
2004 - *ASHK-E SARMA*  
2003 - *BOUTIQUE*  
2003 - *DEUX FERESHTE*  
2003 - *JAYI DIGAR*  
2001 - *ZAMANEH*  
2000 - *HAFT PARDE*  
1998 - *DERAKHTE GOLABI*

