

Persmap



Berlin International Film Festival 2013
Winner FIPRESCI AWARD

FROM THE PRODUCERS OF INCENDIES & MONSIEUR LAZHAR

INCH'ALLAH

A FILM BY ANAÏS BARBEAU-LAVALETTE

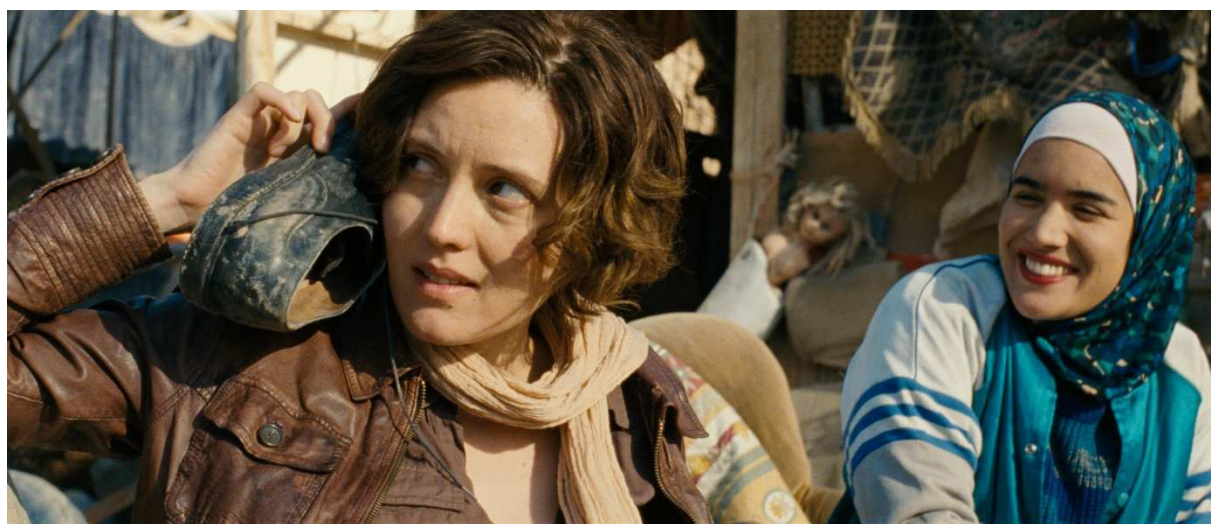
LES FILMS CHRISTAL PRESENTS A MICROSCOPE FILM UNLIMITED JULY AUGUST PRODUCTIONS INCH'ALLAH BY ANAÏS BARBEAU-LAVALETTE
EVELYNE BROCHU SABRINA QUAZANI SUWAN LEVY YOUSUF SWED HAIM MOULDEH ALKARBI ZORAN GENALI CARLO BRANDT MARIE-THÉRÈSE FORTIN
EMMANUELLE BEAUGRAND-CHAMPAGNE NATHALIE BOUTFLE CONSTANCE DEMONTOY WEL AWY LARA ATALLA VALÈRE BEAUGRAND-CHAMPAGNE
PHILIPPE LAVALETTE ANDRÉ-LINE BEAUPRANT SOPHIE LEFEBVRE SOPHIE LESLOND JEAN UMANSKY SYLVAIN BELLEMARE JEAN-PAUL HURIER
LEVON MINASSIAN ERIC DANIEL STEPHEN TRAYNOR ISABELLE DUBAR LUC DÉRÛ KIM McCRAW ANAÏS BARBEAU-LAVALETTE
WWW.INCH'ALLAH-FILM.COM

Inch'Allah

Een Film van Anaïs Barbeau-Lavalette

Chloe is een jonge Canadese verloskundige werkzaam in een Palestijns vluchtelingenkamp op de Westelijke Jordaanoever. De dagelijkse check bij de controleposten en de scheidingsmuur confronteren Chloe met het conflict en de mensen die het treft. Haar beleving van de oorlog is voor Chloe een avontuur dat enerzijds zeer persoonlijk en anderzijds zo groot als het land is. Voor Chloe wordt het te veel, ze raakt ontworteld en verliest de controle. Er zijn reizen die al onze zekerheden wegnemen. Voor Chloe is Inch'Allah een dergelijke reis.

Winnaar FIPRESCI award - Berlijn International Film Festival 2013
www.inchallah-lefilm.com



Land: Canada – Jaar: 2013 – Genre: drama – Duur: 101 min
Releasedatum: 28 Maart 2013
Distributie: Cinéart

Meer informatie over de film:
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Persmap en foto's staan op: www.cinéart.nl
Persrubriek - inlog: cinéart / wachtwoord: film

Cast

Chloe EVELYNE BROCHU
Rand SABRINA OUAZANI
Ava SIVAN LEVY
Faysal YOUSEF SWEID
Safi HAMMOUDEH ALKARMI
Soraïda ZORAH BENALI
Michael CARLO BRANDT
Elaine MARIE-THÉRÈSE FORTIN
Imad AHMAD MASSAD
Soldier at the checkpoint YOAV DONAT

Crew

Writer and director ANAÏS BARBEAU-LAVALLETTE
Producers - Canada LUC DÉRY
KIM MCCRAW
Co-producer - France ISABELLE DUBAR
Associate producers - Israel EILON RATZOVSKY
YOCHANAN KREDO
Casting - Canada EMANUELLE BEAUGRAND-CHAMPAGNE
NATHALIE BOUTRIE
Casting - France CONSTANCE DEMONTOY
Casting - Israel YAEL AVIV
Casting - Jordan LARA ATALLA
Director of photography PHILIPPE LAVALETTE
Production designer ANDRÉ-LINE BEAUPARLANT
Costume designer SOPHIE LEFEBVRE
First assistant director PASCAL ELISSALDE
Makeup artist KATHRYN CASALT
Hair stylist DENIS PARENT
Sound engineer JEAN UMANSKY
Editor SOPHIE LEBLOND
Sound designer SYLVAIN BELLEMARE
Audio mixing engineer JEAN-PAUL HURIER
Composer LEVON MINASSIAN
Line producer STEPHEN TRAYNOR
Postproduction supervisor ERIK DANIEL
Script consultant VALÉRIE BEAUGRAND-CHAMPAGNE
Production MICRO_SCOPE (CANADA)
In association with ID UNLIMITED (FRANCE)
JULY AUGUST PRODUCTIONS (ISRAEL)
Canadian distribution LES FILMS CRISTAL
French distribution HAPPINESS DISTRIBUTION
International sales EONE ENTERTAINMENT

Director's biography

After a year spent exploring Honduras, **Anaïs Barbeau-Lavalette** directed the documentary *LES PETITS PRINCES DES BIDONVILLES* (2000), which won the audience award at the Muestra Cultural Latinoamericana Latin American festival in Montreal. She then made *SORCIÈRES COMME LES AUTRES* (2000) and *LES MOTS BLEUS* (2001). After studying at INIS, she co-directed *BUENOS AIRES, NO LLORES*, a documentary filmed in Argentina and selected for numerous international festivals.



She went on to participate in the *Odyssée du volontariat*, a journey lasting several months and taking her around the world, during which she made some fifteen short documentaries. After returning to Canada, she continued to make documentaries, including *LES MAINS DU MONDE*, a film about social action that was shown on Télé-Québec, and co-directed *SI J'AVAIS UN CHAPEAU*, which gave voice to children from Quebec, India, Tanzania and Palestine. The film earned a special mention from the jury for the African and Creole section of the *Vues d'Afrique* festival, and received two *Gémeaux* nominations in 2006 (best social-issues documentary and best research). Her next film was the documentary *TAP-TAP*, a lyrical portrait of Montreal's Haitian community.

She made her first fictional feature, *LE RING*, in 2007. Among others, the critically acclaimed film was selected for the 2008 Pusan and Berlin festivals. It also won awards such as the Grand Jury Prize at the Taipei Film Festival, the award for Best Director at the Miradas Festival (Madrid) and the Special Jury Prize and Best Actor at the Vladivostok Film Festival.

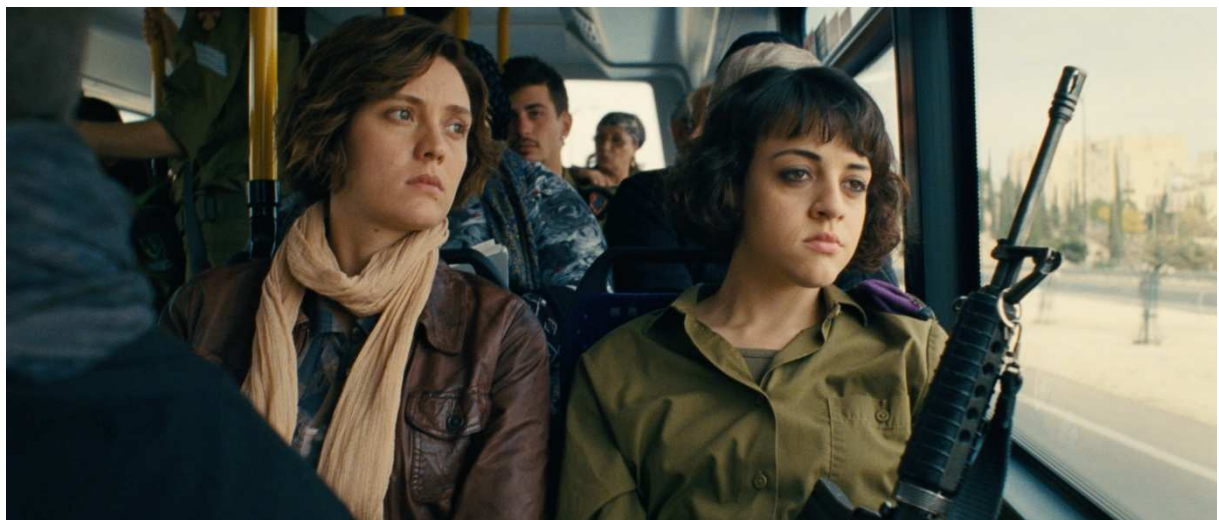
In 2009, her documentary *LES PETITS GÉANTS*, about a group of young people from disadvantaged areas working on an opera (co-directed with [Emile Proulx-Cloutier](#)), was the closing film at the *Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois*. In 2010, Anaïs joined the *micro_scope* team in Jordan to direct *SE SOUVENIR DES CENDRES – REGARDS SUR INCENDIES*, a documentary about the refugees who worked on Denis Villeneuve's feature film. The documentary won the 2011 *Gémeaux* for Best Cultural Documentary.

Her first novel, *Je voudrais qu'on m'efface* (Éditions Hurtubise), was published in 2010 and went on to be shortlisted for the *Prix des libraires du Québec*. In 2011, she published *EMBRASSER YASSER ARAFAT* (Éditions Marchand de feuilles), a collection of short pieces inspired by her visits to Palestine. In 2012, she co-directed the short film *INA LITOVSKI* with André Turpin.

INCH'ALLAH, her second fictional feature, is a Canada-France co-production filmed in Jordan and scheduled for theatrical release in the fall of 2012. The film, starring Evelyne Brochu, Sabrina Ouazani, Sivan Levy and Yousef Sweid, tells the story of a young obstetrician from Quebec who treats pregnant women in a makeshift clinic in a West Bank refugee camp.

Director's selected Filmography

- 2012 INCH'ALLAH
- 2012 INA LITOVSKI
- 2010 SE SOUVENIR DES CENDRES - REGARDS SUR INCENDIES
Prix Gémeaux – Best documentary, culture 2011
- 2009 LES PETITS GÉANTS
Best Documentary – Culture - Prix Gémeaux 2010
- 2007 TAP-TAP
- 2007 LE RING
Berlinale - Panorama section - 2008
Grand Jury Prize, New Talent section - Taipei Film Festival - 2007
Best Achievement in directing - Festival Miradas de Madrid - 2007
Special Jury Prize and award for Best Actor - Vladivostok Festival -2007
- 2005 SI J'AVAIS UN CHAPEAU
Special Mention - Best Documentary, Festival Vues d'Afrique – 2006
- 2004 LES MAINS DU MONDE



Cast biographies

Evelyne Brochu – Chloe

After graduating from the Conservatoire d'art dramatique de Montréal in 2005, Evelyne Brochu soon launched a successful television career. In 2007, she landed a major role in the hit series *LA Promesse* (2007-2011), shown on TVA. In 2009, she joined Danielle Proulx and Guy Nadon in the excellent cast of the drama *AVEUX* (2009), written by Serge Boucher and directed by Claude Desrosiers. She recently played Mylène in the series *MIRADOR* (2010-2011) directed by Louis Choquette and broadcast on Radio-Canada. In 2010, Evelyne received two *Gémeaux* nominations, one for her performance as Mélanie in *LA PROMESSE* and one for the role of Jolianne in *AVEUX*.

In 2007 she was very active in the theatre, appearing in *LE DIABLE EN PARTAGE* by Fabrice Melquiot, *LA NUIT ARABE* by Roland Schimmelpfening and *SACRÉE FAMILLE* by Carl Ritchie. In 2008, she was in the cast of *L'ASSASSINAT D'ANDREW JACKSON* at Théâtre de Carleton and in a Compagnie Jean Duceppe production of *LE LION EN HIVER*. In 2009, she played Hennie in *RÉVEILLEZ-VOUS ET CHANTEZ !*, a new production by Théâtre de l'Opis, and had a part in *CHAMBRE(s)*, presented at Théâtre de Quat'Sous, directed by Éric Jean. Most recently, she played the role of Sara in *TOM À LA FERME* by Michel-Marc Bouchard, a play directed by Claude Poissant and staged at Théâtre d'Aujourd'hui.

Her big-screen credits begin with *CHEECH* (2005), directed by Patrice Sauvé. She returned to film in 2008 with a role in Denis Villeneuve's *POLYTECHNIQUE*. More recently, Evelyne appeared in *FRISSON DES COLLINES* by Richard Roy, and in the latest film by Jean-Marc Vallée, *CAFÉ DE FLORE*, which premiered at the Venice Mostra in 2011. She plays the lead role, Chloe, in *INCH'ALLAH*.

Sabrina Ouazani – Rand

Sabrina Ouazani, born in France to Algerian-born parents, is a young actress who has already earned a strong reputation in French cinema. She landed her first role at the age of 13, in the film *L'ESQUIVE*, for which she received a best new actress nomination at the César Awards in 2002. That year the film, by Adbellatif Kechiche, won the César for Best Picture, along with shared awards for Best Actress at the Festival de Valence and the Festival d'amour de Mons, while the cast shared a Special Jury Prize at the Istanbul Film Festival.

From 2004 to 2009, Sabrina appeared in several series and tv films for French TV: *LOUIS PAGE* (2004), *RAVAGES* and *REPORTERS* (2006), *EN ATTENDANT DEMAIN* and *UNE HISTOIRE À MA FILLE* (2007), and *GARÇON MANQUÉ* (2008). In 2009, she appeared in five productions such as *LES VIVANTS ET LES MORTS*, *TENIR TÊTE*, *SIMON MAGELLAN*, *MARION MAZZANO* and *FRÈRES*. In the last two years, she has appeared in *LE CHANT DES SIRÈNES* (2010), *PASSAGE DU DÉSIR* (2011) and, in 2012, in the police drama *MANIPULATIONS*, starring Lambert Wilson.

Sabrina is best known for her film work. She worked with Kechiche again for *LA GRAINE ET LE MULET* (2007). In 2006 and 2007, she acted in *J'ATTENDS QUELQU'UN*, *NUIT D'ARABIE* and *PARIS* by Cédric Klapisch, as well as *TANGEROISES*. In 2008, she was in the cast of *JE SUIS HEUREUX QUE MA MÈRE SOIT VIVANTE* by Claude and Nathan Miller, and of *ADIEU GARY* by Nassim Amaouche, which won the Critics' Week Grand Prize at Cannes that year. She followed up those roles in 2009 with performances in *LOIN DE PARIS* and *TOUT CE QUI BRILLE* and appeared in *DES HOMMES ET DES DIEUX* by Xavier Beauvois, a film that won the Grand Jury Prize at Cannes in 2010 and the César for Best Picture in 2011. Recently, Sabrina appeared in *LA SOURCE DES FEMMES* by Radu Mihaileanu (2010), *VOLE COMME UN PAPILLON* by Jérôme

Maldhe (2011) and, also in 2011, played one of the leads alongside Omar Sy in David Charhon's comedy DE L'AUTRE CÔTÉ DU PÉRIPH. Sabrina just finished the shooting of MOHAMED directed by Ernesto Ona where she plays the title role. She will be part of the feature film DE GUERRE LASSE by Oliver Panchot this fall, also starring Jalil Lespert and Nils Arestrup.

In INCH'ALLAH, she plays Rand, a pregnant Palestinian woman who becomes friends with Chloe, a doctor from Quebec.

Sivan Levy – Ava

Sivan Levy is an Israel-born multidisciplinary artist. The actress, director and singer-songwriter attended the Alon School of Arts, where she studied singing, composition and piano. After graduation, she completed her military service and sang as a soloist for the Israeli Defense Force Musical Ensemble.

In 2007, Sivan joined the cast of the film CITY BIRDS, directed by Hila Shrem. The year after, directors Lena and Slava Chaplin introduced her to audiences in BURNING MOOKI, for which Sivan received a Best Supporting Actress nomination at the Ophir (Israeli Academy of Film and Television) Awards. In 2010, she played one of the title roles in Veronika Kedar's feature film JOE AND BELLE. Sivan was once again nominated for the Ophir for best supporting actress in 2011 for the film INVISIBLE, directed by Michal Aviad and starring Ronit Elkabetz. Shortly, she will appear in SIX ACTS (2012) directed by Jonathan Gurfinkel, in PLASTICINE by Vidi Bilu (2013) and will work again with Veronika Kader for THE END OF THE WORLD (2013).

Sivan has also worked in television, starting in 2009 with the Israeli series IMALL'É as well as MOMMY, both directed by Ram Nehari. That same year she was in ROOM SERVICE by Eitan Aner and the following year worked once again with directors Lena and Slava Chaplin in the TV movie IN THE PRIME OF HER LIFE, a modern adaptation of the works of Israeli author Shai Agnon. Still in 2010, Sivan acted in the production UNE BOUTEILLE À LA MER DE GAZA by Thierry Binisti. More recently, in 2011 she appeared in the series BAREFOOT, directed by Ori Sivan. In 2013, Sivan will be part of PIONEERS by Michal Aviad and Era Lapid as well as HOUSE OF WISHES by Haim Bouzaglo.

Sivan has also written, directed and starred in three well-received short films. CHERCHEZ LA FEMME (2008), co-directed with Eyal Bromberg, was shown on ARTE and selected for the Berlinale in 2009 via the Fucking Different Tel Aviv special project. She co-directed WATER WELLS (2010) with Iyar Dyoman and composed the film's music. Lastly, she was composer and co-director, with Natalie Melamed, of DINA AND NOEL (2011).

Sivan is currently recording her first album. In INCH'ALLAH, she plays Ava, a young Israeli conscript who strikes up a friendship with Chloe, a young doctor from Quebec.

Yousef Sweid – Faysal

Yousef Sweid is an Israeli Arab actor born in Haifa. A graduate of the University of Tel Aviv, he is a familiar presence in theatre, television and film in Israel.

Yousef has often appeared in the productions of Israeli institutions such as the Habima National Theatre and the Cameri Theatre. In 2005, he performed in MITHOS, staged by the Itim Theatre Ensemble, an experimental company based in Tel Aviv, and in PLONTER, a play presented at the Cameri Theatre. In 2007, he was in the cast of HEVRON, a co-production of the Habima National Theatre and the Cameri Theatre. Yousef performed in another co-production in 2008: THIRD GENERATION, a play written and directed by Yael Ronen and co-produced by Habima and Berlin's Schaubühne Theatre. In 2010, he appeared in three theatrical productions: MESILA LEDAMESEK, directed by Ilan Ronen at the Habima Theatre, a production of ROMEO AND JULIET directed by Michael Ronen and staged at the Gesher Theatre, and IF THERE IS HEAVEN by Moshe Kepten, presented at the Habima Theatre. Most recently, Yousef worked with Yael Ronen once again on THE DAY BEFORE THE LAST DAY, presented at the Schaubühne Theatre in Berlin.

In 2004, Yousef was nominated for the Ophir (Israeli Academy of Film and Television awards) for best supporting actor for his performance in David Noy's series MAKTUB. In 2006, he appeared on the television series HA-ALUFA, directed by Shai Kapon. Since 2010, he has played the role of Mahbub in RECHOV SUMSUM an Israeli children's program in the vein of SESAME STREET. That year he also appeared in HIJACKED by Gidi Raff and AVODA ARAVIT by Shai Kapon. His television career continued in 2011 with 2.3 A WEEK by Shahar Berlovitch and HOMELAND, an American series directed by Michael Cuesta.

Yousef's film credits include WALK ON WATER (2004) by directors Eitan Fox and Gal Ochofski. He worked with the same team again in 2006 on THE BUBBLE, which raised Yousef's profile among audiences in Israel and internationally. He continued his film career with RESTLESS (2008) by Amos Kollek and AGORA (2009) by Alejandro Amenabar.

In INCH'ALLAH, he plays Faysal, the older brother of Rand.



Carlo Brandt – Michael

Carlo Brandt, originally from Switzerland, has played major roles in plays and films in France and several other countries.

Carlo is a mainstay of the Théâtre de la Colline in Paris. He is best known for his performances in numerous productions of the plays of Edward Bond. Since the early 80s, Carlo has appeared in more than 40 plays, including works by Molière, Heiner Muller, Antonin Artaud, Chekhov, Jean Genet, Christopher Marlowe, Paul Claudel and Harold Pinter, in productions staged at the Théâtre de la Ville à Paris, Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord and Théâtre de l'Odéon, as well as theatre festivals such as the Avignon Festival.

On television, Carlo first rose to prominence in 1993 in telefilms such as *LE DROIT À L'OUBLI*, *LA RÉPÉTITION*, *TOUT VA BIEN DANS LE SERVICE* and *JENNY MARX LA FEMME DU DIABLE*. He followed up with *LE BOULEVARD DU PALAIS* in 2001, *TOUS CONTRE LUI* in 2002, *CYRANO DE MÉNILMONTANT* in 2004, and the series *LES MONTANA* the same year. In 2005, he appeared in two historical dramas for television: *SARTRE, L'ÂGE DES PASSIONS* and *HISTOIRES: MARIE-ANTOINETTE*. He returned to television in 2009 with a role in the series *LA COMMANDERIE*, followed in 2010 by the television movies *E-LOVE* and *UN LIEU INCERTAIN*. In 2011, he appeared in *MINISTÈRES* and *COMPLICATIONS*.

While Carlo launched his career in the theatre, he quickly earned a reputation as a big-screen actor in Jacques Rouffio films such as *L'ÉTAT DE GRÂCE* (1986) and *L'ORCHESTRE ROUGE* (1985). He played Castellani in *INDOCHINE* by Régis Wagnier, winner of a Golden Globe and the Oscar for Best Foreign-Language Film in 1993. Two years later, Carlo appeared in *RIDICULE* by Patrice Leconte, a film that won several awards in France, opened the Official Selection at Cannes in 1996, and was nominated for the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film in 1997. He went on to act in *CODE INCONNU* by Michael Haneke in 1999, which was selected for the official competition at Cannes that year. From 2000 to 2004, Carlo acted in a number of films. In 2005, he appeared in *MARIE-ANTOINETTE* by American director Sofia Coppola, and in 2008 in Tony Gatlif's *LIBERTÉ*. Carlo Brandt was also in *L'IMMORTEL* (2009) by Richard Berry, *L'HIVER DERNIER* (2010) by John Shank, *17 FILLES* (2010) by Delphine and Muriel Coulin, and the film adaptation of the comic book *LARGO WINCH 2* (2010) by filmmaker Jérôme Salle.

In *INCH'ALLAH*, he plays Michael, a French doctor supervising Chloe in a makeshift clinic in a Palestinian refugee camp.

The production company

Micro_scope is an independent production company. Founded by producer Luc Déry in 2002, the company's main objective is the development and production of innovating, inventive and accessible feature films.

In its first year of existence, micro_scope participated in two co-production projects : A PROBLEM WITH FEAR from Gary Burns, director of WAYDOWNTOWN, and Bertrand Bonello's TIRESIA, a collaboration with French company *Haut et court*. A PROBLEM WITH FEAR opened the Perspective Canada section at the 2003 Toronto Film Festival and was selected for the Berlin Film Festival, while TIRESIA was part of the official competition in Cannes 2003.

In January 2004, producer Kim McCraw joined micro_scope for its first solo production FAMILIA. This first feature film by director Louise Archambault which stars Sylvie Moreau and Macha Grenon was released in September 2005. The film participated at the Locarno Film Festival's International Competition and opened the Canada First section at the Toronto Film Festival where it won the Citytv Award for Best Canadian First Feature. FAMILIA also screened in many other international festivals like Göteborg, Sao Paulo and Hong Kong and was released in France and in the United States. At the 2006 Canadian Genie Awards, FAMILIA was nominated in 7 categories including Best Film and Best Director and won the Claude Jutra Award for the Best First Feature Film.

CONGORAMA was released theatrically in Canada in October 2006. Philippe Falardeau's second feature stars Olivier Gourmet (winner of the 2002 Cannes Festival Best Actor prize for its role in THE SON, by the Dardenne brothers) and Paul Ahmarani (THE LEFT-HAND SIDE OF THE FRIDGE). The film is a co-production with Tarantula Belgium (BATALLA EN EL CIELO, NUE PROPRIÉTÉ) and Tarantula France (FRATRICIDE, CARRÉ BLANC). CONGORAMA premiered at Cannes in May 2006 as the closing film for the Director's Fortnight. The film was a Special Presentation at the Toronto International Film Festival and was chosen as the opening feature for the Montreal Festival du Nouveau Cinema. CONGORAMA also screened in many international festivals like San Francisco, New Directors / New Films at MoMA, Pusan, Göteborg and Halifax where it won the Best Canadian Film award. At the 2007 Quebec Jutra Awards, the film won five prizes including Best Film, Best Director and Best Screenplay. CONGORAMA is distributed in a half dozen of countries such as France (UGC-PH), Belgium (Lumière) and Portugal.

In November 2007 micro_scope released its latest project, CONTINENTAL, UN FILM SANS FUSIL (CONTINENTAL, A FILM WITHOUT GUNS), a first feature film by Stéphane Lafleur. Distributed by Christal Films, the film stars Gilbert Sicotte, Réal Bossé, Fanny Mallette and Marie-Ginette Guay. It premiered at the end of August 2007 at the prestigious Venice International Film Festival, in the Venice Days section, and was also selected in many other festivals around the world, such as Thessaloniki, Goteborg, Rotterdam and the AFI Film Festival in Los Angeles. CONTINENTAL also made its mark at the Toronto International Film Festival where it won the Citytv Award for Best First Canadian Feature. It was also awarded the Bayard d'Or for the Best Film at the Namur International Francophone Film Festival and the Borsos Award for Best New Canadian Feature Film at the Whistler Film Festival. In March 2008, the film gathered four Jutra Awards for Best Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay and Best Supporting Actor (Réal Bossé).

In September 2008, Philippe Falardeau's third feature, C'EST PAS MOI, JE LE JURE!, is released in Canada. Based on a novel by Bruno Hébert, the film stars Antoine L'Écuyer, Suzanne Clément, Daniel Brière. Following its premiere at the Toronto Film Festival (Special Presentations), it was shown at the Berlinale in the Generation section where it won the Crystal Bear and the Deutsche

Kinderhilfswerk Grand Prix for Best Feature Film. The film also won many awards among which Best Canadian Film and Best Actor (Antoine L'Écuyer) at the Atlantic Film Festival in Halifax, and Vancouver Film Critics Circle's Best Canadian Film and Best Supporting Actress (Suzanne Clément).

In 2010, micro_scope released *INCENDIES* by director Denis Villeneuve. Adapted from Wajdi Mouawad's stage play, the film stars Lubna Azabal, Mélissa Désormeaux-Poulin, Maxim Gaudette and Rémy Girard. After premiering at the Venice Film Festival where it won the Venice Days Best Film award, *INCENDIES* was invited to dozens of festivals around the world including Telluride, Namur (Audience Award), Warsaw (Grand Prix Award), Abu Dhabi (Best Actress for Lubna Azabal), Valladolid (Best Script, Audience Award and Young Jury Award), Pusan, Taipei, Thessaloniki, Rotterdam (Audience Award) and Sundance. The film is also a four time winner for Best Canadian film in Toronto, Vancouver, Halifax and Calgary. Distributed by Sony Pictures in United States, *INCENDIES* was sold in more than 50 countries and was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the 83rd Oscar ceremony.

The world premiere of *EN TERRAINS CONNUS*, Stéphane Lafleur's latest feature film, took place at the Berlin Film Festival in 2011, in the *Forum* section where it won the Ecumenical Jury Award. Still in February 2011, the film opened the Montreal Rendez-vous du Cinema Québécois. *EN TERRAINS CONNUS* was also invited to many festivals such as Jeonju, Shanghai, Durban, Melbourne, Motovun (Croatia) and Monterrey in Mexico. The film gathered the Best Film Award at the Los Angeles Film Festival, the Grand Jury Prize in the New Talent section at the Taipei Film Festival and the Best Actrees Award at the Vladivostok Film Festival. *EN TERRAINS CONNUS* is still travelling around the world on the film festival circuit.

MONSIEUR LAZHAR, the fourth feature film of Philippe Falardeau, was presented at the Locarno International Film Festival on the Piazza Grande where it won the Audience Award and the Variety Piazza Grande Award. The film, well received by the public and the critics, was rewarded in many festivals: Best Canadian film at the Toronto Film Festival, Special Award and Audience Award at the Namur International French Film Festival, Art Cinema Award at the Hambourg Filmfest, Best Script and FIPRESCI International critic Award at the Valladolid Film Festival and the Audience Award at Rotterdam, Copenhagen and Sydney Film Festivals. The film also received 6 awards at the Canadian Genies and 7 at the Quebec Jutra. Finally, the film was presented in the section "Spotlight" at the Sundance Film Festival and at South by SouthWest. *MONSIEUR LAZHAR*, internationally distributed by the Parisian company Films Distribution, was nominated at the 84th edition of the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film.

INCH'ALLAH, the second feature film by Anaïs Barbeau-Lavalette (*THE FIGHT*), a Canada-France coproduction, shot in Jordan, will be released in Quebec next September 28th. Starring Evelyne Brochu, Sabrina Ouazani, Yousef Sweid, Sivan Levy and Carlo Brandt, the film is distributed by Les Films Christal in Quebec and by Happiness Distribution in France.

The feature film *WHITEWASH* by Emanuel Hoss-Desmarais and Marc Tulin is currently in post-production. The film is starring Thomas Haden Church and Marc Labrèche and is distributed in Quebec by Les Films Christal and internationally by eOne Entertainment.

Micro_scope is now working on the post-production of *GABRIELLE*, second feature film of the director Louise Archambault while the documentary *TRICOTÉES SERRÉES* by Annie St-Pierre is still in production.

Interview with Anaïs Barbeau-Lavalette

Interviewed by Michel Coulombe

How did you get interested in Palestine?

I first visited Palestine while making the documentary *SI J'AVAIS UN CHAPEAU*. We were filming in a refugee camp, with children. I had a kind of epiphany, a real flash of inspiration, about all the ambiguities of the situation. A combination of love and hate, fascination and confrontation. I decided to go back for a longer visit. I studied politics and Arabic; I made some friends. My time there wasn't simple. I was shaken several times, especially as a woman. On several occasions, people asked me what I was doing there. As a society it's the polar opposite of what defines me in my bones, in my soul: freedom. I realized it was probably that paradox that was drawing me in. The fact that this place I love, full of wonderful people and daily acts of resistance, is deprived of the liberty that is so essential to human beings, both internally (women's freedom) and externally (the occupation). In some sense, that's what attracted me in. I went back several times, to several cities, and the more often I returned, the less I understood, the more I wanted to immerse myself. I started to write my script over there, after meeting various people. Most of the characters are inspired by real people.

I don't know if this film marks the end of my encounter with Palestine. But I do know that I've reached a different place by telling this story. I no longer need to wonder why I'm so interested in this place. The answer is now clear to me: I needed to make this film, to tell the story of Palestine in my own way.

Do you think people don't understand, or understand poorly, what's going on in that part of the world?

Whenever you immerse yourself in such a subject, its true depth is revealed to you, so exploring it is an endless process. Even now I can't say I understand Palestine or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I've met people there, so it's a war with a human face for me, which brings me closer to it and makes it more accessible, more transparent. But I'm still very far from being an expert! My connection to the region is both emotional (through my friendships), and sensorial (through my travel – sounds, odours, powerful experiences). So I feel closer to it than most of the people, but without necessarily being equipped to get into a serious debate about the conflict.

Apart from that, the Arab world is often depicted very superficially, as a monolithic culture. Those distant "Arabs" frighten us. We don't get them and don't want to truly understand them. The monstrous nature of terrorist acts (which have been happening for a long time, everywhere) is exacerbated, taken out of its context, never explained, and always associated with "the Arabs." It terrifies us, distances us, reduces the desire for dialogue. That was my context for plotting my characters' path. I wanted to bring us closer to something that seems incomprehensible at first. Without justifying their choices, I wanted to restore a human face to an inhuman act. It's disturbing, but I think it contributes to a process of building peace and openness to the Other. At least, that's my hope.

Your film follows INCENDIES by Denis Villeneuve. Is that just a coincidence, or is there a deeper reason for Quebec filmmakers' newfound interest in this region?

I started writing INCH'ALLAH long before I knew about Denis Villeneuve's project. I was so happy to see Quebec audiences taking an interest in a subject that seems so distant at first. That said, I don't think it's that particular region that interests Quebec filmmakers, but the world in general. We have an increasing need to see ourselves more clearly by leaving home. Quebec's identity is being redefined, and even though the national question isn't settled, we can exist beyond our borders. That is also part of what defines Quebec: our way of seeing other places. Cinema is just starting to reflect that new openness. INCENDIES, MONSIEUR LAZHAR and REBELLE are all great examples. Stepping outside your comfort zone gives everyone some breathing room. It makes an active contribution to telling our story and defining ourselves.

At the film's centre is a Quebec woman of your generation who's immersed in a reality that's foreign to her. In a sense, she's your mirror image. Did that outsider's point of view give you "permission" to write and make a feature film on the Palestinian question?

I wouldn't have dared make a fictional piece in that region from any but a Quebecer's point of view. In fact, it's what interests me about the film – to what extent can someone else's conflict become our own? Over time, the character of Chloe becomes a battlefield. She's swallowed up by the war. She can no longer be a simple witness. That's what I wanted to express. In such a setting, our protective walls come down. Everything that makes us what we are is threatened. That is war. It can enter us and ravage us. We aren't immune to it. War doesn't belong only to other people. I think by focusing on an alter ego, it's easier to grasp the "humanity" behind the "inhumanity" of war. Chloe could be me, my sister, my neighbour. Her path could be our own. That's what I'm interested in. What's more, a number of women – Americans, English, even Israeli – are currently in prison in Israel due to actions similar to Chloe's. I didn't make anything up.

Did you film in the same locations as the story is set?

The story takes place in a refugee camp on the outskirts of Ramallah, in Palestine, where Chloe works, and in Jerusalem, in Israel, where she lives. We filmed some scenes in Ramallah and along the separation barrier, and in Tel Aviv. But most of the filming was done in Amman, Jordan, mainly in two Palestinian refugee camps.

How were you received?

Very warmly. Obviously, we didn't just show up unannounced. We had to make contacts in the camps – the right contacts. Through them we were able to meet people and organize filming. People living in the camps helped, particularly with security and by appearing as extras. The filming was a big deal that stirred up a lot of excitement. We kept night filming to a minimum, as it's more dangerous. When a scene called for it, we included the residents.

We did a great deal of casting in the refugee camps. It was quite a sight to see a hundred people lined up in front of our little house, where we had an improvised audition space. You can't fake being born in a camp – it's in your walk and your talk. It shows! I really wanted the children to be cast in the field. So all the children come from the refugee camps or the garbage dump seen in the film. I used the same approach for casting Jessy in my first feature film, LE RING. I'm a believer in the physical truth of children. It reveals much more than words alone.

Given that for all these characters, this fiction delves into a reality they know too well, did you have to do a lot of explanation, justification and negotiation?

For the most part, the Palestinians and Israelis who read the script liked it. They found it daring, original and not Manichean. It's very reassuring to hear things like that before you start filming, when you're taking on such a huge subject that's so far from your own reality. I never had any intention of making a thesis on the conflict. In fact, INCH'ALLAH is not a film about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It's a film about a Quebecker in Palestine, about a doctor who is thrown into the deep end of the war. I wanted to talk, first and foremost, about what doesn't belong to us, about what happens to us when we're confronted with a reality so much bigger than us: war. That was my point of view, and the Middle Eastern people who read the script understood it right away. My perspective on Israelis and Palestinians is not political. I'm telling the story of a woman caught between a rock and a hard place. I wanted to convey that we're not sheltered from anything and that when we're faced with the worst, even our deepest moral values, which we think are so firmly rooted, can give way.

How did you work with Evelyne Brochu, who plays Chloe? Was she familiar with the region? How much Arabic did she have to learn, given that her character speaks it?

I met Evelyne several times and suggested books and movies to her, not necessarily directly related to the theme, but ones that had inspired me in specific or general ways. She also came with us on the first location-scouting trip. She had never been to that part of the world and hadn't done much adventure travel. So it was important to change that before starting filming. We did auditions with her in Paris and Tel Aviv, which gave her the chance to trade lines with the actors who would play Rand and Faysal. We explored both Israel and Palestine. She got to see and feel the presence of the barrier of separation, the checkpoints, the occupation, the camps; meet Palestinians and Israelis; experience the difference first-hand. It was important for her to experience all that in person, because most of the film wasn't going to be filmed there, but in Jordan. I think it really opened her eyes. When we got back home, she worked on her Arabic dialogue with Ruba Ghazal, a Palestinian living in Montreal. Evelyne has a very good ear. During filming she kept improving her Arabic pronunciation and vocabulary.

How did you cast the rest of the parts? Aside from the children, are the rest of the actors professionals?

We looked long and hard to cast the roles of Rand and Faysal. I really wanted to find a Palestinian woman for Rand, but after a lot of effort we realized it would be very hard to find a young Palestinian actress who could easily travel to Jordan for filming. Not to mention that the Palestinian actresses we auditioned didn't have the energy we were looking for – a woman yet still childlike, fiery, tragically vital. I had seen Sabrina Ouazani in several films, including L'ESQUIVE and DES HOMMES ET DES DIEUX, and I had been thinking of her for a long time. We met in Paris and she gave a very good audition. Her parents are Algerians so she didn't speak Palestinian Arabic, but she worked very hard ahead of filming to have a good enough accent. She also had a dialogue coach on set. She played Rand with a lot of guts.

Yousef Sweid, who is a well-known actor in the Middle East, plays Faysal. He's a Palestinian who lives in Israel. Sivan Levy plays Ava. She's an Israeli from Tel Aviv, and a professional actress who's currently studying French in Paris. She was thrilled to have the chance to work in French for the first time. There are actually quite a few Israelis who are Francophiles.

And then there's Safi, the treasure we discovered at the open casting call in a refugee camp. He was one of the hundred or so little boys. I noticed him right away, because he projected both a certain strangeness and a profound sweetness. He really had the character's aura: cut off from the world,

but not weak or miserable. He had a certain pride about him, despite being different. The Safi character is very important to me. Although he's a secondary character, he gives a poetic touch to a film that's otherwise grounded in realism. He is apolitical, and dreams simply of flying across borders. Which he does, in his way.

Like in LE RING, children have an important place in INCH'ALLAH.

I like working with them. They are raw, real and unpolished. And that goes double for kids from the camps! I like that energy, even if it isn't the easiest thing to control on a film set! As far as drama goes, because a child is not yet full-grown his presence is a visual reminder of hope, possible futures, what's to come.

You shared this experience with your own young son Manoé, to whom you dedicated the film. Did you hesitate to bring him with you?

When I found out I was pregnant (a surprise!), at first I thought nobody would ever give me the funding to make a medium-budget feature film abroad in that condition. I often heard it was impossible to be both a mother and a director. Fortunately, SODEC and Telefilm Canada didn't flinch. And our producers, Kim McCraw and Luc Déry, took the news with happy pragmatism: we'd figure out a way to make it all work. They made things easier for me over there – I had my own little apartment, I travelled with a nanny, and so on. When he was just a few months old, Manoé was part of the adventure. He attended the casting sessions (I nursed between auditions!) and was with us during the two scouting trips, crawling in Jerusalem and walking for the first time while we were filming in Amman. His presence made me stronger. Not only was I better equipped to direct the pivotal birth scene – by removing it from preconceived ideas about that experience – I also felt as though I'd made a better film thanks to him. His presence helped me put things in perspective. I don't like talking about my private life, but in this case I think it's important to speak up and say yes, it is possible to make a film when you have a child. And I'm not done yet! I am very grateful to micro_scope for making it all possible and smooth. I'm not worried about women directors. We've come a long way, thanks to those who went ahead of us.

The presence of my father, Philippe Lavalette, who was director of photography on the film, also made this huge experience a cherished family story. Philippe never says "no." He never says "enough." Even in the baking sun, amidst chaos, on the hundredth try, he wants to keep looking, wants to find the way. He's always exploring, never settling for comfort, always testing his limits and therefore mine. If I hesitate, in a flash we'll change the whole scene around and he doesn't miss a beat. And there's also tenderness, a rare commodity on a film set. Philippe has a kind of charisma that attracts people to him. He's a calm, steady, luminous presence.

What about the film's sets? Do all these places exist as we see them, or did you need to build sets?

André-Line Beauparlant was the film's production designer. She did an amazing job. The basics of the dump were already there, with the children at work, riding donkeys, and the fires burning here and there. But we amplified and expanded it a lot, made it more vivid. I didn't want a sad, miserable dump. The children laugh and work like small adults; life triumphs there. But above all, we had to reconstruct the separation barrier bordering the dump. That meant putting up 300 metres of concrete made to look like the real separation barrier, on a site run by André-Line in a country where women don't ordinarily lead!

We later trucked our barrier to another location: the checkpoint where Ava works. Out in the middle of the Jordanian desert, on a real army base, we recreated a border zone out of nothing. It all looked so real, both the place and the people, but it's all staged. There's hardly a scene where the extras

aren't choreographed to the step. But it all melts into the background because we used shoulder-held cameras, documentary-style. You get the impression that nothing is staged, but all of it is.

You show the separation barrier, the checkpoints, people's daily lives, but close-ups are also very important in the film. We're often very close to Chloe. Did that idea establish itself early on?

It's true that we stay very close to her. I had an instinctive desire to stick to her. Without ignoring the landscape, of course, but exploring it with her, hanging on her breathing, her skin, her reactions. We see Palestine – its life, its people, the conflict – through her. I didn't want either a postcard or simple contextualizing. Above all, I wanted Chloe to be our country. And that the elements of the territory – the barrier, the checkpoints, the camps – provide dramatic punctuation rather than simply be the backdrop.

Chloe is by turns resigned, melancholic, disgusted, guilty, defeated. She goes through the whole range of emotions. Is that rollercoaster ride drawn from your own experience?

I don't see Chloe's experience as a roller coaster, but rather a freefall. Gradually, she is struck by the conflict. She herself becomes a battlefield. She loses her bearings. She is overwhelmed by all of it. That didn't happen to me, but I realized it was possible to lose yourself that thoroughly. And that's what interests me in Chloe's evolution. As for me, I was deeply disturbed several times. And I made a film about it.

People confront Chloe – they tell her this isn't her war, they push her away. They could say the same things to you. How would you answer?

What if it could become my war in some small way? It sure becomes Chloe's war, in all its absurdity. Even if it isn't my war, it's most definitely a war that's now part of me, like it or not. As a filmmaker, I feel as though I'm talking about my own war: the one inside me. I don't pretend to talk about others' pain, those who live with war, or those who think about it every day. But I don't feel as though I'm an impostor, either. I've encountered that war. And it encountered me.

From THE RING to INCH'ALLAH, from Hochelaga-Maisonneuve to the West Bank: that seems like a huge change of scenery. Why?

I want to talk about the things inside me. Hochelaga-Maisonneuve is inside me. I first took it on by mentoring a child from the neighbourhood, then I made a documentary (*SI J'AVAIS UN CHAPEAU*), then I wrote a fictional script (*LE RING*) and a novel (*JE VOUDRAIS QU'ON M'EFFACE*). And I've just finished a short film, *INA LITOVSKI*, co-directed with André Turpin, inspired by my novel. When I encounter a country – and Hochelaga is one – I want to tell its story. But first I need to experience it physically, through all my senses, to give myself permission – and inspiration – to do it.

I went through the same process with *INCH'ALLAH*. I travelled in Palestine then made *Si J'AVAIS UN CHAPEAU* (which has four segments, each set in a different country) before going back to stay, study, and write a series of columns recently published as *EMBRASSER YASSER ARAFAT*. Then I immersed myself in writing *INCH'ALLAH*. I wrote some of the script in Quebec, and some in Palestine to allow me to do more research. I'll never forget the days spent writing in the small garden belonging to a very old lady from Nablus, between cardamom-flavoured coffees and encounters with the parents of suicide bombers.

There is a strong connection between Hochelaga and Palestine, between *LE RING* and *INCH'ALLAH*: resistance. The inner fire of self-preservation, the fire inside Jessy or Safi.

