

Sezione / Section: Official selection, Out of competition

Regista / Director: Aboozar Amini

Titolo originale / Original Title: Kabul, Between Prayers

Titolo internazionale / International Title: Kabul, Between Prayers

Testi / Texts

Il totale dei caratteri per i tre testi sotto elencati non deve superare le 2800 battute, spazi inclusi.

The total character count for the three texts below must not exceed 2,800 characters (including spaces).

- **Sinossi / Synopsis:**

A devoted soldier of the Taliban's ideology that has shaped his destiny since birth, Samim (23), struggles between their alluring promises of martyrdom, and the mundanity of his daily existence as a husband and farmer. His younger brother Rafi (14) idolizes Samim, as well as the Taliban's promises – for both of them, this is the only vision of the world they have ever known.

- **Commento del regista / Director's Statement:**

As a member of the Hazara ethnicity, a group historically marginalized and oppressed by the Taliban and Pashtuns, one might expect me to harbor resentment towards my protagonist. Yet, such judgment fails to satisfy me. As an artist, my foremost inclination is to transcend the impulse to condemn, creating a space where observation can delve deeper.

This film does not merely depict another faceless Taliban soldier. Rather, it seeks to engage with him as an individual. Consistent with my previous work, I eschew the trappings of clichés and political agendas when approaching my subjects. This endeavor is particularly daunting given the extensive media portrayal of Afghanistan over the past two to three decades, often steeped in predetermined narratives and exoticism.

I refuse to tread the same well-worn path. My vision of Afghanistan transcends mere exoticism; it aims to confront the humanity of my protagonist, even if he espouses radical ideologies. By living alongside him, I hope to hold up a mirror wherein he may glimpse his own reflection, however monstrous it may be. Though there are inherent limitations, I am committed to seizing every opportunity to explore their inner world. Even the smallest window into their psyche is a precious gift that I intend to embrace fully.

In this way, this is not a Taliban-sympathizing film, but rather a mirror to their faces.

● **Biografia / Biography:**

Filmmaker Aboozar Amini spent his childhood immersed in the entire collection of books relocated to their home from after his father's bookstore in central Kabul was forced to close during the rise of communism: the collection consisted primarily of Persian literature and translations of world novels, providing the foundation for his early intellectual development. His first feature documentary, *KABUL, CITY IN THE WIND* (2018) won the Special Jury Prize for First Appearance Competition at IDFA, and Best Film Award in the Next:Wave Competition at CPH-DOX. Trained in contemporary arts at Rietveld Art Academy in Amsterdam, Amini holds an MA in directing and aesthetic language of cinema at London Film School. Since the re-rise of the Taliban, Amini has been giving online lessons to girls in Kabul who are banned from the university. He is a member of the European Film Academy. Amini's current academic research focuses on Japanese cinema of the 1950's.

● **Filmografia / Filmography:**

- 2018, Kabul, City in the Wind
- 2018, Best Day Ever
- 2016, Where is Kurdistan
- 2015, Angelus Novus
- 2010, KabulTehranKabul

Sceneggiatura / Screenplay: Aboozar Amini, Jia Zhao

Fotografia / Cinematographer: Anonymous

Montaggio / Editor: Annelotte Medema, Cătălin Cristuțiu, Neel Cockx

Scenografia / Production Designer: n/a

Costumi / Costume Designer: n/a

Suono / Sound: Ensieh Layla Maleki

Musica / Music: n/a

VFX: n/a

Interpreti / Main Cast: n/a

(Solo i nomi degli attori, senza indicare i ruoli)

(Actors' names only, without character names)

Produzione / Production

Silk Road Film Salon, Clin d'oeil films

Distribuzione internazionale / International Distribution

Mediawan Rights

Distribuzione italiana / Italian Distribution

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Paese / Country: the Netherlands, Belgium

Anno / Year: 2025

Formato / Format / color or b/w: 1,85/Color

Durata in minuti / Running Time (in minutes): 99

Lingua / Language: Pashto, Farsi-Dari