500 DUNAM ON THE MOON a documentary by RACHEL LEAH JONES

A DOCUMENTARY BY RACHEL LÉAH JONES

500 DUNAM ON THE MOON

THE STORY OF THREE VILLAGES IN ONE
AYN HAWD, EIN MOD AND AYN HAWD AL-JADIDA
SYNOPSIS

500 DUNAM ON THE MOON is a documentary about the Palestinian village of Ayn Hawd which was captured and depopulated by Israeli forces in the 1948 war and subsequently transformed into a Jewish artist's colony and renamed Ein Hod.

It tells the story of the village's original inhabitants who, after expulsion, settled only 1.5 kilometers away in the outlying hills. Since Israeli law prevents Palestinian refugees from returning to their homes, the refugees of Ayn Hawd established a new village: “Ayn Hawd al-Jadida” (The New Ayn Hawd). Ayn Hawd al-Jadida is an unrecognized village, which means that it receives no services such as electricity, water, or an access road. Relations between the artists and the refugees are complex: unlike most Israelis, the residents of Ein Hod know the Palestinians who lived there before them, since the latter have worked as hired hands for the former. Unlike most Palestinian refugees, the residents of Ayn Hawd al-Jadida know the Israelis who now occupy their homes, the art they produce, and the peculiar ways they try to deal with the fact that their society was created upon the ruins of another.

It echoes the story of indigenous peoples everywhere: oppression, resistance, and the struggle to negotiate the scars of the past with the needs of the present and the hopes for the future. Addressing the universal issues of colonization, landlessness, housing rights, gentrification, and cultural appropriation in the specific context of Israel/Palestine, 500 DUNAM ON THE MOON documents the art of dispossession and the creativity of the dispossessed.
CREATIVE PERSONNEL

DIRECTOR/PRODUCER

RACHEL LEAH JONES is a director/producer born in Berkeley, California. After moving to Israel as a child with her mother, she returned to the United States, where she completed her BA in Race, Class, and Gender Studies and the Politics of Representation at Evergreen College in Olympia, Washington and an MFA in Media Arts Production from the City University of New York. Jones has worked as a producer and assistant director on documentaries in Jerusalem, where she spent much of the past decade also working as a photo editor, writer, and researcher with the Alternative Information Center—a joint Palestinian/Israeli organization that disseminates information and analysis on Israeli society, Palestinian society, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She is bilingual in English and Hebrew and speaks colloquial Arabic. 500 DUNAM ON THE MOON is her directorial debut.

FILMOGRAPHY

2002: Producer, Raging Dove, directed by Duke Dror. 74 minute documentary portrait of Johar Abu Lashin, a Palestinian-Israeli boxer living in Johnson City, Tennessee. Produced by Zygote Films/Tel Aviv.
1999: Assistant Director, Citizen Bishara, directed by Simone Bitton. 52 minute portrait of Dr. Azmi Bishara, a Palestinian philosopher and member of the Israeli Knesset. Produced by Arna Productions/Jerusalem, Cineteve/Paris, and Canal Horizons/Paris.
1998: Assistant Director, L’attentat, directed by Simone Bitton. 58 minute documentary about a suicide bombing in Jerusalem, documenting the common mourning of Israeli victims’ families and Palestinian suicide bombers' families. Co-produced by Cineteve/Paris, Noga Communications/Tel Aviv, and Arna Productions/Jerusalem for France Channel 2 and Israel Channel 8.
1998: Assistant Director, Shenkin: a Street of Faith, directed by Duke Dror. 26-minute documentary on religious-secular relations in the heart of hipster Tel Aviv. Produced by Zygote Films/Tel Aviv for Israel Channel 2.
1997: Producer, Warp and Weft, directed by Duke Dror. 26 minute documentary about the closure of a textile plant in Dimona, an Israeli "development town" in the Negev desert. Produced by Zygote Films/Tel Aviv for Israel Channel 2.
1996: Producer, Cafe Noah, directed by Duke Dror. 26 minute documentary about Egyptian and Iraqi Jewish musicians and their struggle to maintain their music once in Israel. Produced by Zygote Films/Tel Aviv for Israel Channel 2.
CO-PRODUCER

EYAL SIVAN is a director/producer born in Haifa, Israel. In 1985 Sivan left Israel to settle in Paris. His first film, about Palestinian refugees, won the Cinéma du Réel Prize at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. In his work, Sivan deals with the politics of memory in Israel, questions of civil disobedience, binationalism, and the instrumentalization and representation of genocide—for which he was awarded the Adolf Grimm Gold prize for “The Specialist,” inspired by Hannah Arendt’s essay “Eichmann in Jerusalem.” Sivan is the general director of the Paris-based production company Momento!. His credits include: The Specialist; Populations in Danger; Burundi Under Terror; Itssembatsemba: Rwanda One Genocide Later; Aqabat Jaber: Peace with no Return?; Jerusalem: Borderline Syndromes; Jerusalem, Jerusalem; Itgaber: He will Overcome; Israeland; Izkor: Slaves of Memory; and Aqabat Jaber.

CO-PRODUCER AND EDITOR

RUBEN KORENFELD is an editor, producer, and director born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Between 1974 and 1980 he lived in Israel and since then has lived and worked in France. His credits include: Ouessant, by Patrick Le Gall; I love Pinochet, by Marcela Saïd; Gao Rang (Fried Rice), by Claude Grünspan; Justice en Europe, by Martin Messonnier; Sao Paolo, by Guilberto Ferrari; Jérusalem, by Marek Halter and Stéphane Kurch; Yom Yom, by Amos Gitai: Montoneros: Une Histoire Argentine, by Frédéric Compain; Chicago, by Alfredo Vallardao; Une Etoile est Morte, by Paz Bilbao; Kieslowsky Dialogues, by Ruben Korenfeld; Dockers, by Martine Jouando; and Trotsky, by Patrick Le Gall, among others.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

PHILIPPE BELLAICHE is a cinematographer born in Paris, France. Prior to completing his studies at the Ecole National Superieur Louis Lumiere, he completed an MA in Epistemology and Logic at the Sorbonne. In addition to working as a cinematographer on fiction and documentary films, he has taught in the Film Departments at Tel Aviv University, Camera Obscura (Tel Aviv), and Sam Spiegel (Jerusalem). His credits include: Raging Dove by Duke Dror; Circumcision, by Nurith Aviv; My Enemy, My Friend: the Life of Uri Avneri, by Yair Lev; Forget Baghdad, by Samir; A Day in September, by Kevin MacDonald; Tapouz, by Amos Gitai; and Paulus Mystery, by Abraham Segal, among others.

SOUND RECORDIST

DAHNA ABOURAHME is a media artist and activist born in Amman, Jordan. After immigrating to the United States with her family, she completed her BS in Humanities and International Affairs at Georgetown University and her MFA in Media Studies at the New School for Social Research in New York. In addition to producing/directing short experimental pieces, she works with children as an audio-video instructor in both New York and Palestine. Her credits include: Water, Burning Wood, and Sand; Sifting; Palestinian From Brooklyn; Palestine is Waiting; Travelogue: Palestinian Landscape; and Blue Flickers.
CREDITS

Director/Producer
Rachel Leah Jones

Director of Photography
Philippe Bellaïche

Additional Camera
Duke Dror • Rachel Leah Jones

Sound
Dahna Abourahme

Editor
Ruben Korenfeld

Assistant Editor
Eulalie Korenfeld

Additional Editing
Angela Alston • Yael Bitton • Lorena Luciano • Sarah Schubart

Executive Producers
Ruben Korenfeld • Eyal Sivan

Associate Producers
Omar Al-Qattan • Yael Lerer

Production Manager
Armelle Laborie

Produced by
Momento! (Paris)
RLJ Productions (New York)

Produced in Association with
The Alternative Information Center (Jerusalem)
France 2 TV Documentary Unit — Yves Jeanneau (Paris)
Sindibad Films (London)

Production Assistance
Ziad Abbas • Jason Benjamin • Randi Cecchine • Munir Fakher al-Din • Gabrielle Rubin
Production Stills
Ahlam Shibli

Translation
Munir Fakher al-Din ▶ Wael Qattan ▶ Bashar Tarabieh

Post-Production Assistance
Yigal Nizri ▶ Jaime Omar Yassin

Online Editor
Peter Elphick

Mix
David Lassalle

Color Grading
Isabelle Laclau

Graphics
Patrick Anok ▶ Thierry Baudier

Web Design
Jeffrey Yas

Legal Services
Susan Steiger

Accounting
Marysette Moisset ▶ Dinesh Kapadia

Participants (in alphabetical order)
Lina Abu al-Hayja ▶ Mahmoud Abu al-Hayja ▶ Muhammad Majed Abu al-Hayja
Muhammad Mubarak Abu al-Hayja ▶ Muhanad Abu al-Hayja ▶ Abu al-Hayja ▶ Raeda
Abu al-Hayja ▶ Saad Abu al-Hayja ▶ Yasmin Lewis ▶ Alon Yarkoni ▶ Eden Yarkoni ▶
Yana Yarkoni ▶ and Tali Junger as Mlle. Fifi

Production Services
JCS (Jerusalem)
MCA/CCNY (New York)
Movie Mobile (Tel Aviv)
On Air (Jerusalem)
Petra (Jerusalem)
Scala (Tel Aviv)
Post-Production Services
CMC (Paris)
Downtown Avid (New York)
On Sight (London)
Radical Avid (New York)
Sylicone (Paris)

Archival Materials
Association of Forty
Israel Broadcast Authority Channel 1 Archive
Israel Government Press Office Photo Archive
Israel Second Broadcast Authority Channel 2 Archive
Janco-Dada Museum
Jerusalem Cinematheque Israel Film Archive, Axelrode Collection
Yad Gertrude

Music
“Kerkenah” “Parfum De Gitane”
Anouar Brahem, ECM Records, Munich

Produced with the Support of
Centre National Cinematographique
Al-Jalil Foundation
The Bert Saperstein Communications Trust
The Foundation for Middle East Peace
New York Women in Film and Television
University Film and Video Association

© RLJ Productions (New York) and Momento! (Paris), 2002
www.500dunam.com
PRESS (AS OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2002)

PRINT

TELEVISION

RADIO

INTERNET
“Rachel Leah Jones’s documentary 500 Dunam on the Moon unsettles the dominant Israeli narrative about the artists’ colony Ein Hod, founded in the wake of the dispossession of the Palestinian village Ayn Hawd, while giving the term “artists colony” an ironic twist. Within the film, the pictorial setting of the region does not serve a kind of a nostalgia for the exotic, but only highlights a multi-layered history of silence; the much glorified (“hod” of the Hebrew) hybrid architectural style that combines “East” and “West” has been literally built upon the ruins of Palestinian houses. Capturing this process from the perspective of the remaining Palestinian villagers, living on the outskirts of their old home, Jones’s film courageously puts the “present absentees” back, as it were, on the map.”

—Professor Ella Shohat, NYU.

“Of the many films in this year’s festival [Human Rights Watch] that deal with conflict in the Middle East, most seem to be sketches toward a movie... The exception is Rachel Leah Jones’ 500 Dunam on the Moon. Jones had the wit to seize on a revelatory topic for her picture and the patience to develop it fully.”

—Stuart Klawans, The Nation.

“Rachel Leah Jones’ dispassionate tour of the village Ein Hod, nee Ayn Hawd, encapsulates the most bitter of Israel’s ironies: how a place of refuge created its own refugees.”

—Jessica Winter, The Village Voice.

“During the ongoing fever-pitched crisis in the Middle East, a film like 500 Dunam on the Moon seems essential... The movie is free of the usual rhetoric and hyperbole (from both sides), and shows one neighbor struggling along while the other prospers.”

—Seth Bookey, Gay City News.
SCREENINGS (AS OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2002)

- San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, California. July 2002.
- FotoFest, Texas. September 2002.
- San Francisco Arab Film Festival, California. November 2002.

BROADCASTS

France 2. TBA.
Sculpture with Palestinian house. Ayn Hawd/Ein Hod, 1954

Israeli artist paints Palestinian house. Ayn Hawd/Ein Hod, 1954