

# Neighbors

(GIRAN)

by Tahani Rached

PRESS KIT

## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- 1- Film Info
- 2- The "Neighbors" in order of appearance
- 3- Credits
- 4- Director's Biofilmography
- 5- Producer's Biofilmography
- 6- Press coverage
- 7- Festivals
- 8- Studio Masr: Historical Background
- 9- Studio Masr: Description and contacts



*Neighbors* (GIRAN)  
by Tahani Rached

**SYNOPSIS**

Garden City, a small but pivotal neighborhood. Since the turn of the 19th century, it has been the seat of the world's political powers in the Egyptian capital.

The film takes us on a journey through abandoned villas, opulent salons, foreign embassies, threatened businesses and rooftop living rooms. Houses turn into witnesses as they make flesh of history's turmoil. Residents and dwellings become a voice telling a story of hope, rupture and endurance.

Far from political correctness, all stereotypes dropped, a glimpse of truth comes into view. An allegory of contemporary Egypt, the film challenges us to reflect as well on the security obsessions of our world today.

**CREDITS**

Director : Tahani Rached  
Producer : Karim Gamal El Din  
Research & Script: Tahani Rached, Mona Assaad  
Camera: Nancy Abdel-Fattah  
Editor: Mohamed Samir  
Music: Tamer Karawan  
Sound Recorder : Sameh Gamal  
Sound editing : Salma Radwan, Islam Gouda, Mohab Marwan  
Sound mixing : Ahmad Gaber  
Co-director & line producer: Mona Assaad

**TECHNICAL DATA**

Feature-long documentary  
105 minutes, Color & B/W, 16/9  
Languages: Arabic, French, English  
Shot on HDV  
HDCAM & Digital Beta Pal copies  
Production company: Studio Masr  
© 2009 Studio Masr































**WORLD SALES**

Studio Masr

[sales@studiomasr.com](mailto:sales@studiomasr.com)

[www.studiomasr.com](http://www.studiomasr.com)

The *Neighbors* in order of appearance:

Mursi Saad El Din Writer			Mostafa Serageldin Banker
Aleya Rashad			Wafeya Khairy Writer
Dominic Asquith British Ambassador to Egypt (2008)			Hassan Abdel-Hamid Fruit vendor
Ahmad Farid Take-away owner			Francis Richardoni American Ambassador to Egypt (2008)
Mahmoud Sabit Writer			Nadia Ojeh
Fayza Hassan Journalist			Rabie Gouda Porter
Selim Sednaoui Musician			Nicholas & Jocelyn Baskey Minister Counselor for Management FSO, US Embassy in Cairo (retired)
Essam Abdel-Fattah Police General (retired)			Irène Rostom
Badreya Vegetable vendor			Rawya El-Menesterly Journalist
Saad Aly Shlo Farmer, land guard			Denis & Maria Knobel Deputy Head of Mission, Swiss Embassy in Cairo
Ahmad Bindari Researcher			Pierre Gazio Writer, teacher
Ibrahim Abdel-Fattah Street valet			Adel Siwi Artist painter
Azza & Emad Baraka Lawyer			Ahmad & Badreya Baraka Khalaf Baraka Orthopedist
Alaa Al Aswany Dentist, novelist			Hani & Hisham El-Gabry Bazar owners
Robin Lerner Assistant Press Attaché, US Embassy in Cairo(2008)			Mahmoud Amin El Alem Political writer

## CREDITS



Karim Gamal El Din presents

**Neighbors** "GIRAN"

co-director & line producer **Mona Assaad**

a film by **Tahani Rached**

camera **Nancy Abdel-Fattah**

sound **Sameh Gamal**

editing **Mohamed Samir**

music **Tamer Karawan**

sound mix **Ahmad Gaber**

executive producer Studio Masr  
**Nabil Sobhy**

additional camera  
**Victor Crédi, Karim El-Hakim**

additional sound  
**Mohamed Gaber**

direction of production  
**Mohamed Tohami, Mohamed El-Masry**

sound editing  
**Salma Radwan, Islam Gouda, Mohab Marwan**

research & script  
**Tahani Rached, Mona Assaad**

The "Neighbors" in order of appearance  
(see previous)

photography **Randa Shaath, Victor Crédi**

color grading **Ateya Amin**

Egyptian cinema research  
**Sameh Fathi, Mahmoud Lotfi**

assistant editor **Haytham Karam**

production coordinator Studio Masr  
**Mohsen Osman**

financial department Studio Masr  
**Amin Marei**  
**Emad Abdel-Latif, Mohamed Hussein**

gaffer **Hassan El-Sayed**  
**Ahmad Shaaban, Ahmad Mekki**  
grip **Ayman Saoudi**

steadijEEP **Ahmad El-Nemr**  
driver **Hamdy Abdel-Maksoud**

musicians  
violins: **Mounir Nasr El-Din, Khaled El-Showeikh, Fawzy Ibrahim, Emad Azmy, Yasser Ghoneim, Mostafa Ismail, Ziad Hassan, Mahmoud Saïd**  
clarinet: **Omar Emam**  
English horn: **Mostafa El-Arabi**  
saxophone: **Ahmad Badr**  
cello: **Mahmoud Saleh, Mohamed Hamdi**

music mix **Tarek Hassanein**

music recording **Studio Solo**

special thanks to  
**Salah Marei**  
**Mohamed Mamdouh El-Shazly**

we would like to thank:  
**Eglal Rached**  
**Margaret White**  
**Paul Smith**  
**The Ministry of Interior**  
**Kasr El-Nil Police Station**  
**Nour El-Khodary**  
**Egyptian Arab Land Bank**  
**Mahmoud Ahmad Mahmoud**

our thanks to the "Neighbors"  
who did not appear in the film:

**Abu Karima**  
**Alistair Baskey**  
**Araby Abdel Hamid**  
**Atef Baraka**  
**Ayten Amin**  
**Badr Eddine Arodky**  
**Hassan Gueddawy**  
**Hussein El-Haddad**  
**Hussein Fakhry**  
**Karam Madbouly**  
**Mahdy Mohamed**  
**Mohamed Abdeen**  
**Mohsen Said**  
**Mostafa Mohammed**  
**Shahira Nassef**  
**Shaymaa Baraka**  
**Shirin Baskey**  
**Sophie Aranguy**

we thank **Rotana Studios** for offering the clips from  
the Egyptian movies:

**Al-less wal-Kelab**  
**Haya aw Moat**  
**Shara'a al-Bahlawan**  
**Sarsara foak el-Nil**  
**Aida**  
**Hallak el-Sayyedate**  
**Gharam wa-Entekam**

A. V. document on American Embassy in Cairo  
(1985) courtesy of **Jocelyn Baskey**

clips from the Egyptian movies:

**Ah ya leil ya zaman**  
**Laebat el-sett**  
from Sunnyland Co. (ART)

color grading **2K**

editing **DayDreams (Mohamed Samir)**

sound editing and mixing **Studio Masr**

in memory of  
**Mahmoud Amin El-Alem**  
**Badreya Baraka**  
**Fayza Hassan**  
**Ahmad El-Nemr**

producer **Karim Gamal El Din**  
director **Tahani Rached**

**Neighbors ©2009 Studio Masr**

## DIRECTOR'S BIOFILMOGRAPHY

### TAHANI RACHED

Born in Cairo (Egypt) in 1947, Tahani Rached spends two years in Montreal School of Fine Arts before she actively engages in community organizations, then in cinema. She starts her career as a filmmaker in 1973 with ***Pour Faire Changement (To Make A Change)***, a documentary produced by Le Vidéographe. In 1976, she implements with the Suco a video production unit for the Tunisian Federation of amateur filmmakers.

As a full-time filmmaker in the Office National du Film in Canada from 1981 till 2004, she directs eleven films.

In 2005, she comes back to Egypt and directs ***El-Banate Dol (These Girls)*** produced by Studio Masr. In 2007, she starts her latest film ***Giran (Neighbors)***, also produced by Studio Masr.

2006 ***El-Banate Dol (These Girls)*** (Cannes Official Selection 2006 – Out of Competition)

2004 ***Soraida, A Woman of Palestine***

2001 ***For a Song***

1999 ***Emergency! A Critical Situation***

1997 ***Four Women of Egypt***

1993 ***Doctors with Heart***

1990 ***Au Chic Resto Pop***

1987 ***Haïti, nous là !, nou la !***

1986 ***Bam Pay A ! — Rends-moi mon pays !***

1985 ***Haïti. Quebec.***

1983 ***Beirut ! Not Enough Death to Go Round***

1982 ***La Phonie furieuse***

1980-1981 Six 30 minutes-films series shot within the Quebec Arab community, in the frame of the TV program « **Planète** » for Radio-Canada

1979-1980 ***Les Voleurs de job***

1979 ***Les Frères ennemis***

1976 ***Leur crise, on la paye pas (Their Crisis, We Don't Pay for It)***

1974-1975 ***C'est pas un cadeau (Not a Gift)***

1973 ***Pour faire changement (To Make a Change)***

## PRODUCER'S BIOFILMOGRAPHY

### KARIM GAMAL EL DIN

Born in Egypt, Karim Gamal El Din joins the American University, Cairo till 1984 where he majors in Psychology, Literature and Mass Communication. In 1987, he graduates as a Bachelor of Mass Communication from Menlo College (Paolo Alto, California).

In 1988, he founds the company ORKA for Digital Special Effects, the first of its kind in the Middle East, then in 1990, the company Elixir for Film Production and Distribution.

In 1997, the company Elixir is the first to introduce off-line editing in Egyptian cinema. In the year 2000, Elixir expands by landing lease on the mythical Studio Misr, one of the first and largest film studios in Egypt, and the one that launched Egyptian film industry. Since then, the name was slightly transformed to become Studio Masr of he is the CEO (Misr -or Masr as pronounced by Egyptians - meaning Egypt). But the real transformation of the studio lies in restored buildings, modernized equipment and new technologies introduced, notably at the level of editing and sound.

A cinema passionate by all means, Karim Gamal El Din is a filmmaker, a producer, a foreman and a studio manager – all essential for a film to exist – he doesn't hesitate to borrow whichever hat is needed for films to be made.

As a filmmaker, we owe Karim ***Hassan wa Aziza: Kadeyat Amn Dawla (Hassan and Aziza: A State Security Case)*** in 1999, as well as a number of short documentaries.

He distributed in Egypt the long documentary ***Four Women From Egypt*** by Tahani Rached (ONF production, 1997), of which he was the local producer in Egypt.

As a producer, in addition to ***Hassan wa Aziza: Kadeyat Amn Dawla (Hassan and Aziza: A State Security Case)*** that he also directed, we owe Karim ***El-Banate Dol (These Girls)*** by Tahani Rached in 2006, ***Ehna Etkabelna Qabl Kedah (Have We Met Before)*** by Hisham El Shafei in 2008, and his latest production is ***Giran (Neighbors)*** by Tahani Rached (2009).

## QUOTES FROM PRESS

*"Fascinating viewing and a valuable piece of social history, "Neighbors" is one of the best docs on the changing nature of the Cairo scene (...) neither an empty nostalgia trip nor a starry-eyed look at a gilded era." – Jay Weissberg – Variety*

*"Tahani Rached's camera in Giran revisits Egypt's modern history, and asks major questions about the changes induced by Nasser's Revolution and its reflection on the place and the people (...) while using the Egyptian cinema as an archive." – Vicky Habib – Al-Hayat*

*"Tahani Rached's rich documentary has the rare ability to focus on the streets to achieve an astute and pertinent sense of grander, external national and global allegories of political, social, and class changes across the 20th century." – Daniel Kasman – The Auteurs*

*"Tahani tells the story of Garden City streets transformed into a fortress for the American embassy (...) as a sign of the city's occupation in a sense." – Wael Abdel-Fattah – Al-Akhbar*

*"In every moment of Giran, one will find a valid view point, a message and a value." – Magdy El Tayib – Nahdit Masr*

*"Each of Tahani Rached's three films about Egypt is a milestone in Egyptian cinema." – Samir Farid – Al-Masry Al-Youm*

*"The film does not condemn anyone; it merely records testimonies of 70 years from Egypt's history. The movie deserves to be screened commercially so that people can see it." – Nader Adly – Al Ahram*

*"The most beautiful aspect in Tahani Rached's film is the absence of a preconceived idea about the social transformation Garden City has witnessed. Instead, (the film) is a true research (...) monitoring the changes that occurred in the neighborhood and consequently Egypt from the time of the Revolution up till now." – Safaa El-Leithy – Al Araby*

*"Tahani Rached is making a very powerful documentary and a very contemporary one with a true sense of history; a work that is history-conscious as much as it is present moment-conscious." – Amir El-Ameri – Al Jazeera Documentary*

*"Neighbors is super-savvy in its subtleties. It's not necessarily nostalgic for Cairo's obviously elitist past (...) but it's wary of the strictures of current Egyptian society. This is a definite must-see for fans of architecture." – Susan G. Cole – Now*

*"The ceaseless procession of colorful characters is what makes the film an unforgettable tour de force.....Punctuated with a deft use of archive footage and clips from Egyptian film classics, Rached has created an engaging, entertaining and informative documentary." – Walid Marzouk – Al Masry Al Youm*

*"Tahani Rached does not only discuss politics, art and social and cultural refinement, she also discusses the concepts of justice and freedom." – Salman Kassed – Al-Itihad*

*"Actually, Giran provokes the creative people to retell history from the point of view of the citizens." – Feryal Kamel – Al-Hayah*

*"The production of this film Giran is as much a credit to Studio Masr as its previous production El-Banate Dol by the same director Tahani Rached." – Amal Fawzi – Sabah El-Kheir*

## LINKS TO ARTICLES

Middle East International Film Festival: "Neighbors" (Tahani Rached, Egypt)

By Daniel Kasman – The Auteurs

<http://www.theauteurs.com/notebook/posts/1143>

Neighbors *Giran*

By Jay Weissberg - Variety

[http://www.variety.com/index.asp?layout=print\\_review&reviewid=VE1117941513&categoryid=31](http://www.variety.com/index.asp?layout=print_review&reviewid=VE1117941513&categoryid=31)

Tahani Rached: *Giran* Criticizes Nasser From The Inside

By Vicky Habib – Al-Hayat

<http://daralhayat.com/portalariclendah/68678>

Nostalgia

By Hani Mustafa - Al-Ahram Weekly

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2009/970/cu3.htm>

*Giran* Tells Egypt's History From Garden City

By Nesrine El-Zayyat – Rosa Al-Youssef

<http://www.rosaonline.net/Daily/News.asp?id=23092>

A Scene From The Documentary *Giran* By Tahani Rached

By Nadim Jarjoura – Al-Safir

<http://assafir.com/WeeklyArticle.aspx?EditionId=1372&WeeklyArticleId=61585&ChannelId=8121&Author=%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%85%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%87>

Egyptian Cinema Regains Its Youth

By Wael Abdel-Fattah – Al Akhbar

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/ar/node/162681>

*Giran* pierces the walls of memory in Cairene neighborhood of Garden City

By Salman Kassed – Al Itihad

<http://www.alittihad.ae/details.php?id=32767&adate=2009>

*Giran* from Garden City to Garden Sitting

By Samir Farid – Al-Masry Al-Youm

<http://www.almasry-alyoum.com/printerfriendly.aspx?>

The documentary *Giran* by Tahani Rached

By Amir El-Ameri – Al Jazeera Documentary

<http://doc.aljazeera.net/followup/2010/04/201042181422490426.html>

Rached's cachet

By Susan G. Cole – Now

<http://www.nowtoronto.com/movies/story.cfm?content=174756>

So spoke His Excellency's neighbors in Garden City

By Feryal Kamel – Al-Hayat

<http://international.daralhayat.com/internationalarticle/135955>

The film document

By Amal Fawzi – Sabah El-Kheir

<http://www.rosaonline.net/Sabah/News.asp?id=59111>



## FESTIVAL SCREENINGS

Middle East International Film Festival in Abu Dhabi (UAE), Oct. 2009  
FIPA (Biarritz, France), Jan. 2010  
Festival International du Cinéma Méditerranéen de Tétouan (Morocco), Mar. 2010  
Egyptian National Festival (Cairo), Apr. 2010  
HotDocs (Toronto), May 2010  
Panorama of Contemporary Arab Documentaries IV edition (Madrid), May 2010  
Tarifa African Film Festival, May 2010  
Semaine du Documentaire de Fès, May 2010  
Beirut DC, Sep. 2010  
Ismailia International Festival for Documentary & Short Films, Oct. 2010  
Festival International du Cinéma Méditerranéen de Montpellier, Oct. 2010  
Les Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage, Oct. 2010  
Rencontres Internationales du Documentaire de Montréal, Nov. 2010

## AWARDS

**TV5 Monde Award** - Festival International du Cinéma Méditerranéen de Tétouan (Morocco), Mar. 2010  
**Best Long Documentary** - Egyptian National Festival (Cairo), Apr. 2010

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



Egyptian cinema has celebrated its centenarian in 1996. Filmmaking in Egypt started as a risky investment based on individual efforts, and was not to be transformed into an industry per se until the involvement of national capital.

In 1920, the economist Talaat Harb founded the first Egyptian bank: Banque Misr (Misr or Masr meaning Egypt). Banque Misr got involved in various economic sectors and industries, its giant cinema project being Studio Masr.

After two years of building and technical staff formation in Europe, Studio Masr was inaugurated on October 12th, 1935, marking the beginning of the Golden Age of Egyptian Cinema and its establishment as an industry.

Studio Masr produced feature films, distributed them and screened them in its own theatre chain: Cinema Masr. It was also considered as the sole Film School in the Middle East, and remained as such until 1959, the year of opening the High Cinema Institute in Cairo.

The first film produced by Studio Masr was *Wedad* starring Oum Kulthoum and directed by the German director Fritz Kramp. From 1935 to 1960, Studio Masr produced feature films that ranked amongst the most important productions in the history of Egyptian cinema, in addition to important productions that were shot in the studio.

In 1961, with the issuing of nationalisation laws, Banque Misr –and consequently Studio Masr– became state property, managed by public sector. In April 2000, Elixir Artistic Services s.a.e. took over Studio Masr in the context of the national privatization program.

The Private Free Zone status acquired in 2006, together with the continuous renovations and development aim to set Studio Masr with the most technologically advanced best-equipped facility in the region, production and post-production wise, giving the studio the edge in its own productions and as a service provider for foreign and local productions.



Studio Masr is today a private Free Zone Area run by Elixir Artistic Services, an Egyptian private film and video production, post-production and distribution company established in 1997.

Studio Masr lot is located on the main road to the Saqqara pyramid, 1.5 km off the Pyramids Road, and less than 3.5 km from the pyramids of Giza.

It consists of five sound stages of different sizes, a state-of-the-art film processing lab, editing suites and sound facilities that are DTS and Dolby-licensed, as well as workshops, stores for equipment and set elements, actors' lounges... It also offers an exterior sets area that can accommodate several productions at the same time. A qualified technical team with hands-on experience works on full time basis for the support of foreign and local productions.

## CONTACTS

Shipping Address:

ELIXIR ARTISTIC SERVICES  
(Private Free Zone Area)  
15 Studio Masr Street, El-Maryouteya  
Giza 12111  
Egypt

Tel: +202 3386 5244

Fax: +202 3742 9772

E-mail:

[info@studiomasr.com](mailto:info@studiomasr.com)  
[sales@studiomasr.com](mailto:sales@studiomasr.com)

[www.studiomasr.com](http://www.studiomasr.com)