





INTERNATIONAL PR

**THE PR CONTACT**

PHIL SYMES - + 33 (0)6 09 65 58 08

RONALDO MOURAO - + 33 (0)6 09 56 54 48

festival@theprcontact.com

INTERNATIONAL SALES

**wild bunch**

CAROLE BARATON - cbaraton@wildbunch.eu

GARY FARKAS - gfarkas@wildbunch.eu

VINCENT MARAVAL - ndevid@wildbunch.eu

SILVIA SIMONUTTI - ssimonutti@wildbunch.eu



SÉLECTION OFFICIELLE  
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

QUAD AND KISSFILMS PRESENT

TEWFIK  
JALLAB

JAMEL  
DEBBOUZE

# HOMELAND

A FILM BY MOHAMED HAMIDI

NÉ  
QUELQUE  
PART

WRITTEN BY MOHAMED HAMIDI AND ALAIN-MICHEL BLANC

FATSAH BOUYAHMED ABDELKADER SECTEUR MALIK BENTALHA FEHD BENCHEMSI  
MOURAD ZAOUÏ MILOUD KHETIB MOHAMED MAJD JULIE DE BONA ZINED OBEID

2013 – FRANCE – 1H27





## SYNOPSIS

26-YEAR-OLD LAW STUDENT FARID HAS TO GO TO ALGERIA TO TRY AND SAVE HIS FATHER'S HOUSE FROM DEMOLITION.

HE DISCOVERS A COUNTRY WHERE HE HAS NEVER SET FOOT AND IS GRADUALLY WON OVER BY A GALLERY OF EXTRAORDINARY CHARACTERS WHOSE HUMOR AND STRAIGHTFORWARDNESS GO STRAIGHT TO HIS HEART. AMONG THEM HIS COUSIN, A QUICK-WITTED WHEELER-DEALER WHO DREAMS OF MAKING IT TO FRANCE.





## A CONVERSATION WITH MOHAMED HAMIDI

DIRECTOR AND CO-WRITER

### HOW WOULD YOU SUM UP THE FILM?

Farid, a young law student, has to go to Algeria where he has never been, to save his father's house. While there his cousin - who shares the same name - steals his passport and goes to France under his name. Stuck in a country he doesn't know, Farid will discover the story of his father and his family, triggering issues about his own identity. This is the story of a character born out of the new generation of French people who question their identity.

### WAS HOMELAND INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY?

The starting point is linked to personal events. When I began to think of this story my own memories of Algeria were remote. I hadn't set foot there since I was 11 years old and that trip didn't make me want to go back. This was 1984, my father had just lost his job with Peugeot and was starting to build his house: 45° in the shade, no electricity, no television, water had to be drawn from the well... I had spent two months running after lizards and throwing stones. After that I preferred to stay in France, in the suburbs of Paris, with my brothers and sisters, while my father returned to his village to build a house we only knew from photos.

In 2005 my father fell ill and I realized we might never enjoy this house with him. So I went to Algeria with my parents, my two brothers and one of my sisters. For me it was a return to my homeland, after 21 years of absence. When I saw my cousins again I wondered: "What if my father had stayed here? What if I

had been born here? What would my life have been without school, cinema, anything?" The story was built around this. In real life I have, like in the film, a first cousin who has the same name and looks like me. He's quick-witted like the character and has always wanted to make it to France. But that's where the comparison stops. He never stole my passport!

### YOU'VE TAUGHT BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, YOU WERE ONE OF THE PEOPLE IN CHARGE OF BONDY BLOGS, THEN YOU BECAME JAMEL DEBBOUZE'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR. HOW DID YOU END UP IN FILM?

First of all I wrote a story I felt very close to - "Nedroma City" - which is the name of my father's village. But I didn't know if it would become a short story or a film. Jamel read it, found it moving and asked me to work with him. Later, Olivier Nakache and Eric Toledano, who were in the process of beginning their work on THE INTOUCHABLES, also encouraged me to write a screenplay. But I needed a co-writer.

I'd noticed Alain-Michel Blanc's name in the credits of several films that I had really liked. He didn't know Algeria and we went together. We talked a lot with my family and met people who have become characters in the film. To begin with I thought I'd only write a screenplay, but Alain-Michel, Jamel and the producers at Quad encouraged me to direct it.



## WHY THE (ORIGINAL) TITLE “NÉ QUELQUE PART” (LITERALLY - BORN SOMEWHERE)?

Because of a crucial scene in the film: when Farid and his cousin share a joint after they've been involved in some petrol trafficking. The cousin, played by Jamel, tells him: “I too should have been born in France. My father was supposed to go but he got scared, so your father went instead of him. You were born there and I was born here.” And this is true for many families. One had to go to France to work to support the others. It so happened that it was my father who left while all his brothers stayed. So very few things shape our destinies: the place where you are born.

## HOW DOES FARID FEEL ABOUT HIS FAMILY AND HIS COUSIN IN PARTICULAR?

Guilty. The cousin lives in a run-down house, he owns one or two tracksuits, a pair of trainers, no phone, no job, he struggles to buy cigarettes... My own cousin, who has a few teeth missing, is five years younger than me yet looks ten years older. How can you not feel guilty in front of such discrepancy, knowing we're both from the same roots? Some Algerians from France arrive there laden with presents but that isn't a solution either: it makes them feel like they're redeeming themselves. Farid is a good example of someone who has these ambiguous feelings.

## “ONE IS NEVER CURIOUS ENOUGH WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR OWN STORY,” SAYS FARID'S VOICE-OVER. AND YET AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FILM HE ISN'T CURIOUS AT ALL ABOUT THE LAND OF HIS FATHER, HE DOESN'T SPEAK ARABIC AND HAS NO DESIRE TO LEAVE FRANCE...

Something his father tells him makes him aware of his ties to that country: “You'll have to go there one day to bury me anyway!” This has happened to many

people I know and they've all regretted discovering only too late just how much that country had remained the land of their parents and consequently - at least a little - theirs as well. When I went back to Algeria in 2005, I don't know how to explain this but I felt strangely at home. I saw people who were members of my family and who were expecting me, I discovered a house that was ours and was waiting for us too...

## LET'S TALK ABOUT THE HOUSE - IT'S ALMOST THE LEAD CHARACTER...

You could say that. The family house is threatened with demolition and Farid's very anxious, sick father tells him: “You are a law student, you have to go and fix this.” In the 80s people started to build houses in Algeria; like my father, they thought that if they lost their jobs they would go back to their country. For all immigrants - Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, Algerian, whatever - the house in the homeland was what you'd fall back on in the event that Jean-Marie Le Pen got into power. It sounds like a joke today but that's exactly what they thought. To his surprise, Farid discovers that his father has built a house that, if modest, has a bedroom for each of his children. And when his uncle explains to him that he built it brick by brick, Farid understands what it implies: “Your father built this house for you with sweat and blood and you've never bothered to come and see it.”

But in a broader sense this house represents our roots. We all come from somewhere and what is left of that place is often a house or a bit of land. It is the witness of a past that links the generations to one another.

## “FRANCE SPENDS HER TIME SENDING US REGRETS”. THE WORD “REGRETS” COMES FROM VISA REFUSAL LETTERS WHICH ALL START WITH “WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU...”

## FARID FINDS HIS PARENTS' WEDDING PICTURE IN HADJ'S HOUSE AND BECOMES CURIOUS ABOUT THEIR STORY, HE STARTS ASKING QUESTIONS HE HAS NEVER DARED TO ASK THEM...

It is a sense of propriety, particular to the relationship we have with our parents. I started to talk with my father when I began to write this story. After his death in 2007, I kept on with my mother. Alain-Michel Blanc, my co-writer, asked her questions I would have never dared to, such as: “What did you think of your husband when you saw him for the first time? Was he handsome?” It was very moving because my mother replied happily and sincerely.

## PLEASE TELL US ABOUT THE ALGERIAN COUSIN PLAYED BY JAMEL DEBBOUZE.

He is a bit of a hoodlum, a wheeler-dealer, a smooth-talker nicknamed *chaouchi*, which means the crafty one, the swindler. He always held against his father the fact that he didn't have the guts to go to France, which condemned him to growing up in this small Algerian village. As a result, he has made his father's life a misery. The whole village likes him because he's funny, never at a loss for words. But everyone is also aware that he could rip you off at any given moment. When he goes to France with his cousin's passport, some support him while some others disapprove. Even Farid forgives him because he thinks that had he been in his place he would have probably done the same thing.

## DID YOU HAVE JAMEL IN MIND FOR THIS ROLE RIGHT FROM THE START?

When I started to work on the screenplay I didn't dare to imagine that, even though I've been working with him for years. It was Jamel himself who after having read the screenplay saw himself in the role. It was a great surprise for me and allowed me to write bespoke dialogues and situations. He lends the

character the humour, the craftiness and the flaws I wanted him to have. So much so that no one holds the fact he ran away to France with his cousin's passport against him. I think this is the first time Jamel has played a likable rogue in a film.

## AND THE SUPPORTING CHARACTERS FROM THE VILLAGE?

From the moment his passport is stolen Farid gradually takes his cousin's place and starts hanging around the café, the nerve center of the village. There he sees Nordine, an over-informed computer specialist who, like so many Algerians, is outraged, politically aware, disenchanted. Open to the outside world, he reads newspapers and watches French news on television. He decides to stay behind when all the others leave for France, when he in fact was the instigator. He stays because he is more aware than any of them, probably because of his father, a Mujahid who had fought for independence. When it's time to board the boat, I imagine Nordine thinks, like his father years before him, that if everyone leaves, Algeria will never get anywhere.

## WHAT ABOUT MUSTAPHA, THE MECHANIC?

He's the romantic of the group. He met a female cousin who lives in Northern France and wants to join her. He regularly applies for visas that are invariably refused. I met a lot of boys like Mustapha in the film, who say: “France has only regrets to send us.” The word “regrets” comes from the visa refusal letters, all of which start with: “We regret to inform you...” Then at some point Mustapha can't take it anymore and decides to leave, also illegally. This was inspired by one of my cousins. To start with, Alain-Michel and I had met him to ask him if he knew of any village youth who had tried to get away by boat. He said: “Yes... me. Three times.” Even though he's a mechanic, makes a living, gets along really well with his parents... He told us about his attempts, particularly the last one, when he nearly died. Mustapha my cousin is still in Algeria. The elders also play an important role. The old Hadj is the connection with Farid's father.



He's the memory of the village and has seen war, immigrants leaving the country, then returning. He talks to Farid about his father's youth, his parents' wedding, things he didn't know at all. As for Uncle Brahim, he is a man resigned to his fate, who carries the burden of having renounced to leave for France when he was young.

#### APART FROM SAMIRA, THE HADJ'S GRANDDAUGHTER, WE SEE VERY FEW WOMEN IN ALGERIA IN THE FILM. WHY?

You see them in cafes, in the streets, and bars when the two cousins are in Oran. But things are different in the countryside. It's a conservative world where men and women are still segregated. I wanted to keep the country's reality, even if it is archaic. Men and women rub shoulders in the family context or when you have been accepted into the circle like Farid. If he visits the Hadj often it is because he likes to listen to the old man but also because of Samira's beauty: this is the only place where he can hope to see her.

#### FARID HAS A GIRLFRIEND IN FRANCE - AUDREY, A LAW STUDENT LIKE HIM...

She has no problem with having a boyfriend of Algerian descent. But he does because he knows it's going to cause problems with his family. At the beginning of the film she asks him: "So what do we do about your parents?" to which he replies: "Now isn't a good time, we'll deal with that when I come back." This is still true today even though, for the past 10 years or so, there's at least one mixed couple in each North African family, and the same with French families. It's Audrey who goes to get him out of the detention centre at the end of the film. She is very attached to him and what he goes through in Algeria will reveal how much, in fact, he is attached to her too. He wants to live with her without having to renounce his family history.

IS HIS INTEREST IN SAMIRA GENUINE OR A FANTASY? THESE MOMENTS ADD TO HIS GENERAL QUESTIONING: "I COULD HAVE LED THIS LIFE WHICH, AFTER ALL, HAS SOME VERY PLEASANT ASPECTS."

#### BUT TOWARDS THE MIDDLE OF THE FILM WE THINK FARID IS FALLING IN LOVE WITH SAMIRA.

Is his interest in Samira genuine or a fantasy? These moments add to his general questioning: "I could have led this life which, after all, has some very pleasant aspects: the weather is great, I feel very good with these people... Why not Samira?" Yet he will decide to leave. Firstly because he wants to see his father again very soon, since he is getting worse, but also because unconsciously, he needs to get closer to what his father went through: he needs to prove to himself that he too is capable of facing danger.

#### HOW DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR ACTORS?

That was the most interesting aspect of the film's preparation. Since my background is live shows I needed the actors to pull me into the story. Tewfik Jallab has the sensitivity, the fragility and a certain sort of self-confidence that characterize Farid, the lead character. And on top of that, he's good-looking. But most importantly, we had to be able to tell from the word go that he was not an Algerian from Algeria. Mohamed Madj who plays the Hadj is a great actor in Morocco and in the Arab world. I had seen him in INCENDIES and THE SOURCE and really wanted to work with him. To my great sadness he died last winter without have seen the film.

Fatsah Bouyahmed, the telephone operator, and Secteur, the café owner, are both actors I've worked with on-stage. To me, they typify Algerian humor. Algerians are great at self-deprecation and at defusing tragic situations. Fatsah, like Secteur, can talk about horrible things and make you cry with laughter.





I wanted this tone in the film and moments when everyone laughs heartily, including Farid, making him forget what's happening to him.

## WHY WAS THE FILM SHOT IN MOROCCO AND NOT IN ALGERIA?

I really would have loved to shoot in Algeria but it was very complicated as far as production structures and authorizations over there. I hope I can do it one day. The film was shot in the Moroccan countryside that looks very much like Algeria, particularly after we recreated a few things. Houses for example were re-painted yellow and green because they're red in Morocco. The set designers and prop people went to Algeria to buy things like drinks, cigarettes etc... but it doesn't matter since this is not only an Algerian story, it's more universal.

## ARABIC IS SPOKEN OFTEN IN THE FILM, HOW DID YOU MANAGE WITH THE MOROCCAN ACTORS?

This was a real problem since they had to speak Algerian Arabic from my region. First I translated all the texts, then I had them transcribed phonetically since some couldn't read Arabic - including me! After that I had them recorded by people with the local accent. We gave each actor a CD and told them: "These are your lines, you have to say them like this." Finally, during the shoot, I paid great attention to the pronunciation of each word. After they watched the film, my family members told me they really thought they were in our village.

## WHAT INSTRUCTIONS DID YOU GIVE ALEX LAMARQUE, YOUR DP?

I wanted the difference in light and atmosphere between France and Algeria to be very strong, so we worked to obtain an image that would be neither 'cheap' nor mannered. Alex's suggestions were really interesting. We opted for steady and well thought out scenes with no 'effects' like handheld camera or long traveling shots. This is a simple story and we wanted to film it in a simple way.

The choice of DP and first assistant were crucial to me since this is my first film. We had many discussions beforehand; then we edited the film together. I had a pretty precise idea of what I wanted to see on screen and they helped me to give it shape.

## DID YOU HAVE ANY FILM REFERENCES IN MIND?

For practically every scene! For one single eye contact I could show Alex three different film sequences. For the scene when Farid discovers his parents' and grandfather's village I thought of INTO THE WILD by Sean Penn or THE STRAIGHT STORY by David Lynch. For the scenes in the café and around tables, I drew inspiration from Italian comedies and from the outstanding dinner scene in John Cassavetes' A WOMAN UNDER THE INFLUENCE. For greater simplicity, and the more serious scenes, I was inspired by Ken Loach, in particular CARLA'S SONG for the homecoming. I drew inspiration from directors who touch me, to make something that resembles me.

## YOU'RE A MUSICIAN AND COMPOSER. WHAT ROLE DID YOU PLAY REGARDING THE FILM'S SCORE?

I wrote some of the scenes while listening to certain tracks that are in the film today. For example, tracks by Lofti Double Canon, an Algerian rap artist, or Cheikha Rimitti, the Algerian Cesaria Evora, who was my fathers' favorite. For the rest I had an idea of the kind of music I wanted but didn't think I should write it myself. So I let Armand Amar do his job. I loved what he did for DAYS OF GLORY and LIVE AND BECOME. He is a very sensitive musician and has traveled extensively in India and Africa. He has a very particular style. One of his great finds for this film was Ibrahim Maalouf, an amazing Lebanese trumpet player of 30 whose sound makes me melt each time I listen to it. I was present for most recording sessions, including that with the full orchestra in Prague.

## WHAT WAS THE MOST TOUCHING MOMENT DURING SHOOTING?

The first day of shooting, the first time I said: "Camera, action, cut". We were filming sequences in the vast Moroccan landscapes where Farid rides a moped with his father. They are the last images in the film.

## DID YOU WANT TO CONVEY A MESSAGE WITH HOMELAND?

Mostly, I tried to explain why men and women take such great risks to leave their countries and families. It's not to secure social security and paid holidays! It's only to allow their children a better future. We always talk about immigration in a general way but we forget that behind each family there are myriad personal stories and life paths. It is a film about identity and roots. When I speak like that it sounds like I've made a drama! But that would be to forget my Algerian roots.

## MOHAMED HAMIDI BIOGRAPHY

### CINEMA

**2012** **HOMELAND**  
(Director and co-writer)

### SHOWS AND MEDIA

Mohamed Hamidi was the director and co-writer of Jamel Debbouze's show "All About Jamel". He also co-wrote and directed the one-man shows "Malik se la raconte" by Malik Bentalha, "Vie de chien" by Abdelkader Secteur and "Dans la tête" by Redouanne Harjane. He has taken part in numerous diverse media, radio and TV projects, including the artistic direction and direction of the Marrakesh Laugh Festival, "Made in Jamel" DVD (TF1 Video), "All About Jamel", and regular slots on Pascale Clark's radio and Canal+ television programs.

A qualified business and management teacher, he taught in Bobigny, in the suburbs of Paris, for over ten years. Mohamed Hamidi has also lectured on New Media at Science Po Paris. He is chairman and co-founder of the Bondy-Blog, where he was also editor in 2006 and 2007. Mohamed Hamidi was the co-founder and chairman of the Alter-Egaux Association, helping youth from deprived areas with their educational and professional choices, fighting against self-censorship among others and helping them to structure positive networks.



# A CONVERSATION WITH ALAIN - MICHEL BLANC

## CO - WRITER

### WHAT WAS IT IN MOHAMED HAMIDI'S STORY THAT MADE YOU WANT TO CO-WRITE THE SCREENPLAY?

The universality of the subject. No one in the world can free himself or herself from looking into their origins, their roots, particularly if they have been deprived of them. In addition, the director is pretty much the subject of the film, which is rare.

His implication is written in his genes, in his nature. It's the first time I've worked this way. When we wrote the screenplay we started from his story then, as in all dramas, we looked for obstacles - the stealing of his passport, the illegal immigrants' departure by boat, the encounter with Samira, the relationship with the French girlfriend... But the real jewel is the metaphor of the house built by the father. The soul of these houses contains the recent history of Algeria.

### DID YOU DO ANY RESEARCH BEFORE WRITING?

Yes and no. I was born in 1945 in a remote corner of Brittany. Growing up I used to hear that Algerians were first and foremost terrorists in a land that belonged to us. At the time there was no awareness of the possibility of an Algerian identity, which wasn't helped by the fact we didn't know any Algerians at all. In 1962, just as I was getting ready to do my military service in Algeria, the Evian agreements were signed and the war was over. I was sent to Germany where I was under the command of Pied-Noir officers who had been demoted. You can

imagine their lack of objectivity on the subject! When I came back I had still never met a single Algerian! I started to read all I could find about the subject and haven't stopped since. So I didn't need any research on a historical level. But I didn't know the country so I told Mohamed that I wouldn't start writing before going there with him.

### WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE DID YOU MEET?

This was summer holiday time so we lived in the family house with his mother, his sisters, his two brothers-in-law, his nephew... the uncles, the neighbors would drop by... Every day, twenty-five of us sat around the table! So I lived with the film's characters, on the film sets. I have traveled a lot in the Maghreb and in Africa but I've never been in a country where France was so present. It was important to show that in the film. I needed this trip to understand to what degree emigration is a tragedy. To be forced to abandon what is most central to your being to try and live and feed your children is a total injustice.

IN THE 'MAKING-OF', YOU CAN HEAR ONE MAN TALK ABOUT LEAVING ILLEGALLY: "WHAT DO I RISK? DEATH? I'M ALREADY DEAD ANYWAY."

### DID YOU MEET ANY YOUTHS OVER THERE WHO, LIKE THOSE IN THE FILM, RISK THEIR LIVES TO REACH FRANCE?

Of course! 33% of young Algerians today are unemployed. To them France is Eldorado, even if they know there's an economic crisis, the National Front... They say: "We have nothing so we can't have less!" They see their cousins coming from France with trendy Nike trainers, brand new tracksuits, mopeds...

### HAS THIS FILM A MILITANT SIDE TO IT?

No, I wouldn't say that. Unless you call a film that talks about the love you have for your parents, for your father militant; unless you call a film that talks about survival militant. In the 'Making-Of', filmed while we were shooting, you can hear one man talk about leaving illegally: "What do I risk? Death? I'm already dead anyway."

## ALAIN-MICHEL BLANC FILMOGRAPHY CINEMA

2012	HOMELAND by Mohamed Hamidi - screenwriter - co-written with Mohamed Hamidi
2011	LE PETIT LION - screenwriter - co-written with Radu Mihaileanu EN SOLITAIRE - writer
2009	THE CONCERT by Radu Mihaileanu - screenwriter -co-written with Radu Mihaileanu COMME NOS ENFANTS by Israel Ferroukh Screenwriter in collaboration with Israel Ferroukhi
2008	LA CARPE DANS LA BAIGNOIRE - screenwriter Consultation on re-writing and finalization of screenplay in collaboration with Jessica Vaturi Dembo
2007	THE SOURCE by Radu Mihaileanu - screenwriter - co-written with Radu Mihaileanu
2006	LE DROIT DU SANG by Eleonore Faucher - co-screenwriter ELLE MENT - screenwriter, in collaboration with Radu Mihaileanu
2005	LIVE AND BECOME by Radu Mihaileanu - screenwriter co-written with Radu Mihaileanu
2004	BILLIE CHÉRIE - screenwriter — co-written with Pierre Mathioté
1997	LE JUGEMENT DE LA TORTUE - screenwriter
1993	GUARDIAN ANGELS by Jean-Marie Poiré - 2 <sup>nd</sup> unit director
1992	2 HEURES 58 by Pierre-William Glenn - 2 <sup>nd</sup> unit director
1989	OPERATION CORNED-BEEF by Jean-Marie Poiré - 2 <sup>nd</sup> unit director
1985	RIVE DROITE RIVE GAUCHE by Philippe Labro - Assistant director
1984	LA SMALA de Jean-Loup Hubert - 2 <sup>nd</sup> unit director Technical advisor
1983	COVER UP by Philippe Labro - Assistant Director NOBODY'S WOMEN by Christopher Frank - Assistant Director
1981	LE BOULEVARD DES ASSASSINS by Boramy Tioulong - Assistant Director
1981	NEXT YEAR IF ALL GOES WELL by Jean-Loup Hubert - Assistant Director
1978	RAS LE CŒUR by Daniel Colas - Assistant Director Technical Advisor to Daniel Colas LAURA by David Hamilton - Assistant Director LA BANDE DU REX by Jean-Henri Meunier - Assistant Director AU BOUT DU BOUT DU BANC by Peter Kassovitz - Assistant Director
1977	THE PINK TELEPHONE by Edouard Molinaro - Assistant Director AND LONG LIVE LIBERTY by Serge Korber - Assistant Director
1976	THE EAGLE AND THE DOVE by Claude-Bernard Aubert - Assistant Director
1975	THE DOMINICI AFFAIR by Claude-Bernard Aubert - Assistant Director
1970	RUE DE LA SOIF - screenwriter





# A CONVERSATION WITH TEWFIK JALLAB

## A C T O R

**THIS IS YOUR FIRST MAIN ROLE IN A MOVIE AND YOU'RE STARRING BESIDE JAMEL IN A SUPPORTING ROLE: WAS THIS A DOUBLY-STRESSFUL SITUATION?**

On the contrary, I felt protected. Perhaps because we shot the film in a foreign country and we all slept in the same hotel, cut off from the world. I have to say Mohamed Hamidi helped me so much by giving me the story he wrote before it became a screenplay. There was a huge amount of information about the character, details on the way he functions, his relationship with his girlfriend and his friends who were all from well-off backgrounds, etc... As for Jamel, I grew up watching him on television and in films and even though I hadn't met him before making this film, I always felt a close relationship with him, as if we belonged to the same family, like he was a young, successful uncle whom I wanted to be like. Of course before shooting I was slightly intimidated but Jamel has this wonderful quality - shared by all the greats - which is to make you feel at ease right away. He likes people; he wants everyone to feel relaxed and is very good at making that happen.

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM HIM?**

Precision. To the millimeter... He also taught me how to work free of stress, to be in a kind of active relaxation.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE FARID, YOUR CHARACTER?**

He's in his twenties, studies law, wants to become a barrister and feels 100% French. He thinks he knows everything but hides a kind of weakness connected to the fact that he is not completely comfortable with his origins. Like everyone who has never set foot in a country, he's full of preconceived ideas that are going to start unraveling as he starts meeting the characters of the film.

**HOW DID YOU WORK ON YOUR CHARACTER?**

I made the same journey Farid embarks on with my Algerian-Tunisian father when I was 23. We took the ferry from Marseille, arrived in the port of Algiers and went all the way down south into the Algerian desert. It was an extraordinary time, and also very strange. Everything seemed familiar to me. For Farid's return to the country of his parents, I had only to draw on my own feelings. Since Farid still lives with his parents in France, I also went back to mine in Argenteuil (a suburb of Paris) to immerse myself in a family atmosphere. As Farid is a student, I went to lectures for a month. To understand Farid's reluctance to introduce his girlfriend to his parents I drew on the experience of some of my friends, those whose parents are older and stricter than mine.



## HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THAT HIS COUSIN AND ALL HIS FRIENDS TAKE SO MANY RISKS TO GO TO FRANCE?

I remember something that happened two years ago. I was in a play in Tangiers, Morocco. One evening I went to a café at the bottom of a hill from where you could see Spain perfectly. There were groups of boys and girls sitting still, looking at that country. I was struck by their silence. In their eyes you could see it all: sadness, longing, dreams. When Farid boards a boat in the middle of the night to go to France I thought of these youths.

## WHAT IS YOUR STRONGEST MEMORY OF THE SHOOT?

Coming out of Marseille detention centre: it was the last day of shooting with the Moroccan unit and even though we had a few more days to go in France I think we had the same feeling, that these were the final moments. It was very powerful.

## TEWFIK JALLAB FILMOGRAPHY

### CINEMA

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 2012 | <b>HOMELAND</b><br>by Mohamed Hamidi                              |
| 2011 | <b>UN NUAGE DANS UN VERRE D'EAU</b><br>by Srinath Samarasinghe    |
| 2008 | <b>L'ANNEE DE L'ALGÉRIE</b><br>by May Bouhada                     |
|      | <b>DEMAIN J'ARRÊTE</b><br>by Léa Fazer                            |
| 2007 | <b>LES BONNES MANIÈRES</b><br>by Emilie Deleuze                   |
|      | <b>LA COLLECTION</b><br>by Patrick Guedj                          |
|      | <b>COLINE : LES AMIS DE MES AMIS</b><br>by Etienne Constantinesco |
| 2005 | <b>QUI DE NOUS DEUX</b><br>by Charles Belmont                     |
| 2004 | <b>STEREOTYPES</b><br>by Anthony Decady                           |
|      | <b>LA NUIT TOMBE</b><br>by Vincent Mariotte Femis                 |
| 1994 | <b>KILLER KID</b><br>by Gilles de Maistre                         |







## A CONVERSATION WITH JAMEL DEBBOUZE

### ACTOR

#### HOW DID YOU LAND THE FILM?

It's more a case of the film landing in my life! Often, beautiful things happen when you least expect them! Mohamed Hadimi gave me his screenplay but I didn't read it right away. I wanted to get to know him first. I discovered a very human artist, deep, funny and equipped with true political awareness. His screenplay was a wonderful surprise. This is exactly the kind of cinema I love.

#### WHAT ATTRACTED YOU IN THE STORY?

I'll say it again - first of all, it was Mohamed. I trust him completely. The proof is that I put him in charge of directing my one-man shows, which is what I hold most dear in my professional life. I also like the truthfulness of his intentions. **HOMELAND** is a true story and I love true stories. They're hard to beat! I'm in complete empathy with a subject that talks about us, children of immigrants, a subject not often enough dealt with or emphasized in French cinema. We don't have a director like Martin Scorsese who talks about Italian immigration in the US like no one has. We need our cinema to get a hold of stories like those of Farid and his French cousin, to help change attitudes and try to make people understand who these people (us!) are, and learn not to fear us.

#### DO YOU UNDERSTAND FARID, THE CHARACTER YOU PLAY, WHO STEALS HIS COUSIN'S PASSPORT AND ESCAPES TO FRANCE?

Absolutely, and I think I would have done the same. Terrible things are born out of frustration. If a guy isn't happy in his country, how can we hold against him to try to be happy somewhere else? Governments have to understand this. It's thanks to cinema and stories like this one that we can show what happens in real life. It is our responsibility and Mohamed brought it all to light very well.

#### IN THE FILM, YOU SPEAK FRENCH WITH AN ALGERIAN VILLAGE ACCENT. HOW DID YOU WORK ON THAT?

To tell you the truth I didn't need to work on that because it isn't a character role. Inside, I'm an Algerian villager! I grew up with Algerian villagers; I have many friends from Algerian villages who are in France illegally... I know this tune - it's mine! It wasn't difficult to play and I loved doing it. I had great fun working with Rachid Bouchareb on **DAYS OF GLORY** and on **HOMELAND** with Mohamed Hamidi. Their characters are deep, touching and endearing.



## WHY DID YOU WANT TO CO-PRODUCE THE FILM?

Because I think the intention behind it is useful. It's a kind of cinema I love, there's depth to it, the characters are poignant, they tell us something truthful and topical. It's a cinema that allows us to know France better. I've been lucky to portray some very popular characters in films such as HOUBA! ON THE TRAIL OF THE MARSUPILAMI and ASTÉRIX, so when there are subjects such as HOMELAND to stand up for, I do it, without giving it a second thought, because I think it's the best way to try and change attitudes.

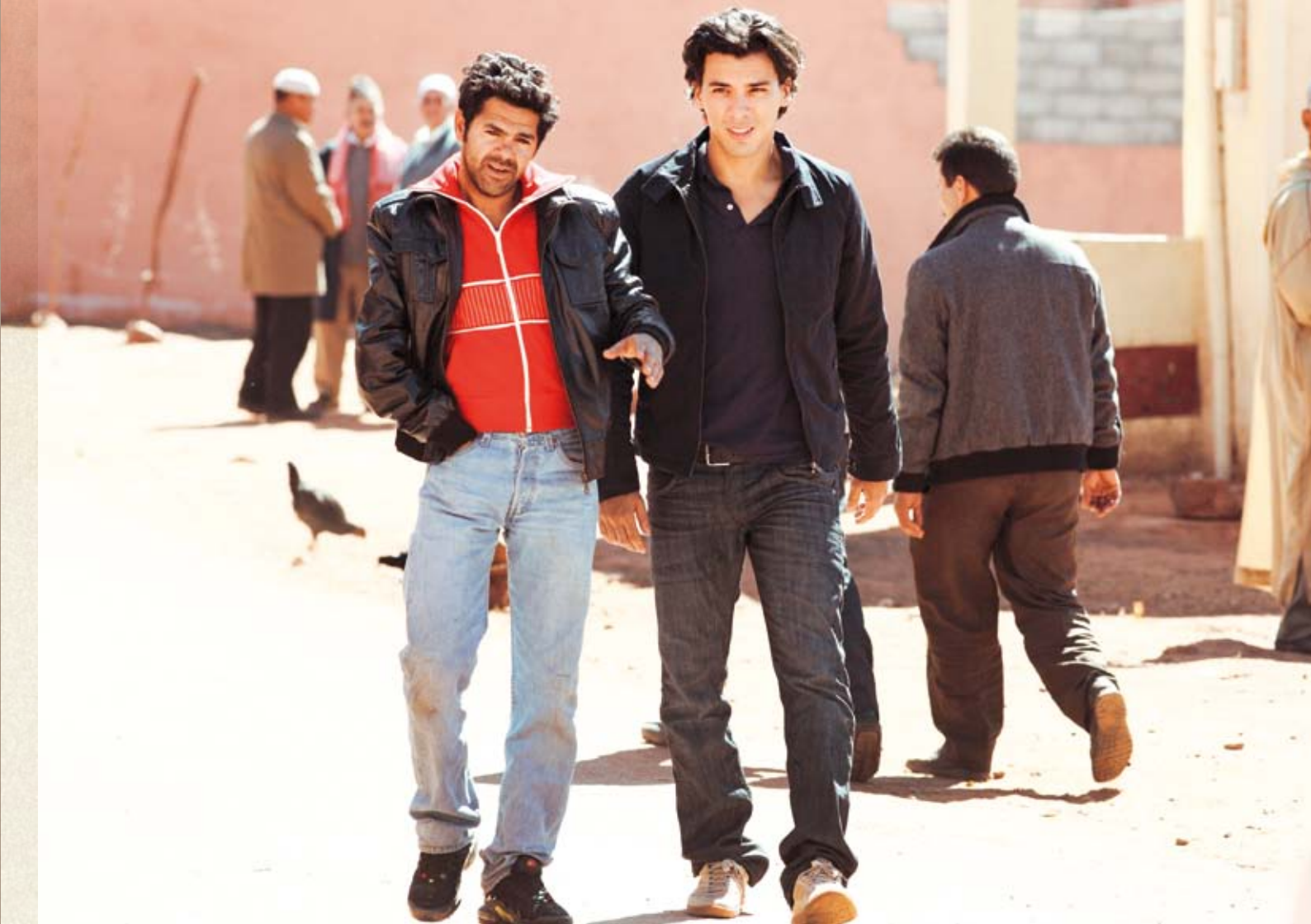
## DAYS OF GLORY, OUTSIDE THE LAW, HOMELAND... DO YOU FEEL A NEED TO TELL THESE STORIES?

A need no, a duty yes. I know what I represent today and I feel I should use my fame to change people's mentalities.

## JAMEL DEBBOUZE FILMOGRAPHY

### CINEMA

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>2013</b> | <b>POURQUOI J'AI (PAS) MANGÉ MON PÈRE</b> by Jamel Debbouze  |
| <b>2012</b> | <b>360</b> by Fernando Meirelles   |
|             | <b>HOUBA! ON THE TRAIL OF THE MARSUPILAMI</b> by Alain Chabat  |
|             | <b>HOMELAND</b> by Mohamed Hamidi  |
| <b>2011</b> | <b>HOLLYWOOD</b> by Frédéric Berthe and Pascal Serieis   |
|             | <b>CHICKEN WITH PLUMS</b> by Marjane Satrapi and Vincent Paronnaud   |
| <b>2010</b> | <b>OUTSIDE THE LAW</b> by Rachid Bouchareb<br><i>Official Competition - Cannes Film Festival 2010</i>      |
| <b>2008</b> | <b>LET IT RAIN</b> by Agnès Jaoui  |
| <b>2006</b> | <b>DAYS OF GLORY</b> by Rachid Bouchareb<br><i>Best Actor Award - Cannes Film Festival 2006</i>            |
| <b>2005</b> | <b>ANGEL A</b> by Luc Besson   |
| <b>2004</b> | <b>SHE HATE ME</b> by Spike Lee  |
| <b>2003</b> | <b>THE CAR KEYS</b> by Laurent Baffie  |
| <b>2002</b> | <b>ASTÉRIX AND OBÉLIX: MISSION CLEOPATRA</b> by Alain Chabat   |
|             | <b>BALL AND CHAIN</b> by Alain Berberian   |
| <b>2001</b> | <b>LA BALLE</b> by Mathieu Kassovitz   |
|             | <b>AMÉLIE</b> by Jean-Pierre Jeunet<br><i>Nominated for Best Actor in a Supporting Role - César Awards</i> |
| <b>2000</b> | <b>DINOSAUR</b> by Eric Leighton<br><i>Voice of Zini</i>   |
| <b>1999</b> | <b>THE SKY, THE BIRDS AND... YO' MAMMA!</b> by Djamel Bensalah   |
| <b>1998</b> | <b>ZONZON</b> by Laurent Bouhnik   |
|             | <b>UN PAVÉ DANS LA MIRE</b> by Bruno Piney   |
|             | <b>DR. DOLITTLE</b> by Betty Thomas<br><i>Voice of Rodney the Hamster</i>                                  |
| <b>1996</b> | <b>TWO DADS AND ONE MOM</b> by Jean-Marc Longval   |
| <b>1992</b> | <b>LES PIERRES BLEUES DU DÉSERT</b> by Nabil Ayouch  |







## C A S T

TEWFIK JALLAB  
JAMEL DEBBOUZE  
FATSAH BOUYAHMED  
ABDELKADER SECTEUR  
MALIK BENTALHA  
FEHD BENCHEMSI  
MOURAD ZAOU  
MILOUD KHETIB  
MOHAMED MAJD  
JULIE DE BONA  
ZINED OBEID

FARID  
THE COUSIN  
FATAH  
SECTEUR  
KIKIM  
NORDINE  
MOUSTAPHA  
HAME BRAHIM  
THE HADJ  
AUDREY  
SAMIRA



## C R E W

### DIRECTED BY SCREENPLAY

MOHAMED HAMIDI  
MOHAMED HAMIDI  
ALAIN-MICHEL BLANC  
ALEX LAMARQUE (A.F.C.)

### DP ORIGINAL MUSIC EDITOR FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CASTING SUPERVISOR PRODUCTION DESIGNER SOUND COSTUME DESIGNER MAKE-UP HAIR STYLIST PRODUCTION MANAGER CO-PRODUCERS

ARMAND AMAR  
MARION MONNIER  
OLIVIER JACQUET (A.F.A.R.)  
GIGI AKOKA  
ARNAUD ROTH (A.D.C.)  
PIERRE EXCOFFIER, OLIVIER VARENNE  
HADJIRA BEN RAHOU  
GHIZLAINE NEJJAR  
GÉRALD PORTENART  
GRÉGORY VALAIS  
SOUÂD LAMRIKI

### ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS

BENEDICTE BELLOCQ  
ERIC TOLEDANO  
OLIVIER NAKACHE  
DOMINIQUE BOUTONNAT  
ARNAUD BERTRAND  
HUBERT CAILLARD  
JEAN-YVES ROUBIN  
DAVID GRUMBACH

### PRODUCERS

NICOLAS DUVAL ADASSOVSKY  
YANN ZENOU  
LAURENT ZEITOUN  
JAMEL DEBBOUZE





