

PICTURE TREE INTERNATIONAL  
PRESENTS

INSPIRED BY TRUE EVENTS

Official Selection



A dark, moody photograph of a person's face, partially obscured by shadow. A single beam of light illuminates the person's eye and forehead, creating a dramatic and intimate atmosphere. The title "FARHA" is overlaid on this image in a stylized, flowing white font.

# FARHA

A FILM BY DARIN J. SALLAM

PICTURE TREE  
INTERNATIONAL



**Countries of Production:** Jordan/Sweden/KSA  
**Specs:** DCP/ Scope/ 5.1 / 7.1/Color  
**Genre:** Coming of Age/Identity/Exile  
**Duration:** 92'  
**Year of Production:** 2021  
**Written and Directed by** Darin J. Sallam  
**Produced by** Deema Azar  
**Produced by** Ayah Jardaneh  
**Co-Produced by** William Johansson Kalén  
**Production Company:** TaleBox (Jordan)  
**Co-Production Company:** Laika Film & Television (Sweden)  
**In co-production with** Chimney (Sweden)  
**International Sales:** Picture Tree International  
**Distribution:** Folkets Bio (Scandinavian Territories)  
**Publicist:** Required Viewing

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"FARHA is a story about friendship, aspiration, separation, rite of passage, exile, survival and liberation in the face of loss, all seen through the eyes of a young girl."  
Darin J. Sallam

## AN *intimate* COMING OF AGE STORY

Inspired by true events,  
FARHA tells the story of a young girl  
whose dreams change from seeking  
an education in the city  
to survival in Palestine 1948.



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## *SYNOPSIS*

Farha is a 14 year old girl who lives in a small village in Palestine, 1948. Girls her age are traditionally married off or spoken for yet Farha wants to continue her education despite traditions and the restrictions of schooling in her village for boys only. Inseparable from her best friend Farida, who lives in the city but who spends weekends in the village, Farha dreams of joining her at a school in the city. Life in the village is threatened and aggressively changed by the looming danger. Just when Farha's father is finally convinced and Farha's dream is at last coming true, the danger comes closer to their village. As violence escalates, Farha is brutally separated from Farida. Ter-

rorized for his daughter's safety and fearing for her life, Farha's father locks her up in a concealed, small food storage space by the house, promising to return. But he never does.

Over the course of the next few days, Farha undergoes a life-changing experience while buried in the tight dark space, her only connection to the outside world is a small hole in the wall and a few cracks in the wooden door. Farha witnesses a lot of events, outside and inside the room, setting off her journey of transformation and forcing her to grow up and leave her childhood behind.

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## DIRECTOR STATEMENT

Like many Jordanians with Palestinian roots, I exist today because my father was one of the people who survived the events of Al-Nakba (the Catastrophe) in 1948. Sadly however, many Palestinians did not survive and those who did were never able to return to their homes. I grew up listening to many stories about life back then. One of them, shared by my Syrian mother who met the real character after she made it to Syria, struck a chord with me: a young girl who was locked up by her father in a pantry fearing for her life and family honor when the violent events started in Palestine 1948, promising her to come back, but he never does.

I couldn't take that girl out of my mind, I kept thinking of how she felt in this small dark room, especially because I have a fear of tight and dark places. Over the years, all these stories, people, their lives, happy and sad moments in history came together in my mind, slowly forming the story of FARHA.

I didn't want to treat Farha as just a number, one of the 700,000 that were forced into exile, I wanted to focus on her personal journey and dreams that changed from fighting to learn, to fighting to survive, always keeping the war in the background. It's a story about friendship, aspiration, separation, rite of passage, survival and liberation in the face of loss. All seen through the eyes of 14-year-old, Farha.

Any time I thought of her a feeling of suffocation would come over me. The urge to share her story and journey continued to grow. I wanted to convey



"This girl's harsh experience travelled over the years to reach me, now it is time to share it with you"  
Darin J. Sallam



## DIRECTOR/WRITER DARIN J. SALLAM

Jordanian writer and director Darin J. Sallam holds an MFA in Cinematic Arts from the Red Sea Institute for Cinematic Arts (RSICA), affiliated with the University of Southern California (USC). To her credit are five award winning short films including STILL ALIVE (2010), THE DARK OUTSIDE (2012) and THE PARROT (2016), all of which received multiple awards and screened in internationally acclaimed film festivals worldwide. A Berlinale Talent 2021, Sallam is the recipient of the 2015

Film Prize of the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the 2017 Artist in Residency Fellowship at La Cité Internationale des Arts and the 2018 Global Media Makers Fellowship by Film Independent. She has been a jury member on several international film festivals and is also co-founder and managing partner at TaleBox, a Jordanian production and training company based in Amman. Her debut feature film, FARHA, will have its world premiere in 2021 at the 46th Toronto International Film Festival.

## FILMOGRAPHY

FARHA (2021) – Feature Fiction Film	Director/Writer
THE PARROT (2016) – Short Fiction Film	Director/Writer
THE DARK OUTSIDE (2012) – Short Fiction Film	Director
STILL ALIVE (2009) – Short Fiction Film	Director/Writer/Producer
THE BALCONY (2008) – Short Fiction Film	Director
THE MOMENT OF NIDAL (2006) – Short Fiction Film	Director/Writer/Producer
ALRAWABI SCHOOL FOR GIRLS (2021) – Netflix Original	Second Unit Director
AHLAN SIMSIM   SESAME WORKSHOP (2019-2021) – TV Series	Director

## PRODUCER DEEMA AZAR

**D**eema Azar is a Jordanian film producer and script consultant. She is also co-founder and managing partner at Tale-Box, a Amman-based production and training company which fosters and nurtures new talents in Jordan and the Arab World. Azar occupied the position of Regional Training Manager at the Royal Film Commission – Jordan between 2012 and 2016. She was also Head of Industry at the inaugural edition of the Amman International Film Festival in 2020.

Azar's producing credits include Jordan's Darin J. Sallam's bold

debut feature film FARHA (2021), selected for its world premiere in the official selection of the 46th Toronto International Film Festival, as well as the short film THE PARROT (2016), recipient of the 2015 Film Prize of the Robert Bosch Stiftung. A Torino Film Lab Story Editing program alumna, Azar is also a script consultant who advised for several film entities regionally and internationally (Hubert Bals Fund, Red Sea Lodge, Doha Film Institute among others) in addition to privately consulting on film projects.

## PRODUCER AYAH JARDANEH

**A**yah Jardaneh is a Palestinian/Jordanian Producer. She holds a B.A. in Interactive Multimedia and Design from Carleton University and Algonquin College, Canada. She also obtained certificates in producing from New York Film Academy, PGA certificate, and 3D intensive from VanArts.

Jardaneh started her career in film by joining the Royal Film Commission - Jordan (RFC). She then launched her career as

a freelancer in the production department by working on numerous productions including: UNDER THE SHADOW (2016), winner of BAFTA for Outstanding Debut; THE PARROT (2016) which premiered at the 2016 Dubai International Film Festival and THE GREAT ARAB REVOLT. Jardaneh produced FARHA (2021), in addition to currently working on other projects in the development stage.

## CAST



**Karam Taher**  
as FARHA

The lead Karam Taher is a non-actress who showed unwavering commitment throughout the coaching sessions with the director Darin J. Sallam, until she was ready to embrace the challenging role of Farha. Working closely with Sallam, Karam transcended obstacles to deliver a touching performance, the role and the process transformed her into a budding actress and young woman.

**Biography:** In her first ever onscreen appearance, Karam Taher (born in 2004, Jordan) was 15 years old when she played the titular role in FARHA by Darin J. Sallam (TIFF 2021). She underwent intense acting training for several months with the film's director, leading her to transform into FARHA and embody a character in a period piece.



**Tala Gammoh**  
as FARIDA



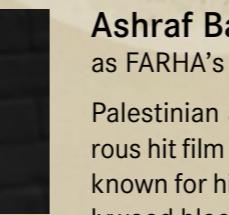
**Sameera Asir**  
as UM MOHAMMAD



**Majd Eid**  
as ABU MOHAMMAD



**Firas Taybeh**  
as FARIDA'S FATHER



**Ashraf Barhom**  
as FARHA's FATHER

Palestinian actor Ashraf Barhom starred in numerous hit film and television productions. He is mostly known for his roles in the series *Tyrant* and the Hollywood blockbusters *The Kingdom*, *300* and *Agora*.



**Ali Suliman**  
as ABU WALID

Ali Suliman is a Palestinian actor known for his work on the series *Jack Ryan* and the films *Paradise Now*, *The Attack* and *Rattle the Cage* among others.



**Batoul Ibrahim**

as FEMALE SOLDIER



**Leanne Katkhuda**  
as FARIDA'S MOTHER

# CREW

**Cinematography:** Rachel Aoun  
**Production Designer:** Nasser Zoubi  
**Editor:** Pierre Laurent  
**Costume Designer:** Jamila Aladdin  
**Sound Designer:** Rana Eid  
**Re recording Mixer:** Florent Lavallée  
**Music:** Nadim Mihslawi  
**Hair & Make Up Designer:** Farah Jadaane  
**Lighting Designer:** Ferenc Radnai  
**Colorist:** Antonio Ikovic  
**Casting:** TaleBox

**WORLD SALES**  
**PICTURE TREE INTERNATIONAL**

Picture Tree International (PTI) is an energetic world sales and production company with its headquarters in Berlin. PTI's line-up of up to 15 films a year is designed to ensure the right mix of arthouse and crossover productions to fully maximize the artistic and financial potential of each film. Picture Tree International was founded in December 2012 by Andreas Rothbauer and has been run jointly by his partner and Co-Managing Director Yuan Rothbauer since 2017.

TALEBOX PRESENTS LAIKA FILM & TV PRODUCTION CHIMNEY DIRECTOR DARIN I. SALLAM "FARHA" ASHRAF BARIOM KARAM TAHER TALA GAMMOH WR ALI SULEIMAN  
PROD JAMILA ALADDIN ED NADIM MISHLAMI PROD PIERRE LAURENT PROD NASSER ZOUBI PROD RACHELLE AOUN PROD RANA EID PROD FARAH JADAANE  
PROD DEEMA AZAR PROD JYAH JARDANEH PROD WILLIAM JOHANSSON KALEN  
WR DARIN I. SALLAM



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