

# TFFF

30 TORINO FILM FESTIVAL

ITALIANA.DOC

***"I DON'T SPEAK VERY  
GOOD, I DANCE  
BETTER" /  
"NON PARLO BENE,  
DANZO MEGLIO"***

di Maged El-Mahedy

## **SYNOPSIS**

"I Don't Speak Very Good, I Dance Better" Non Parlo Bene, Danzo Meglio is a film, or better a documentary that alternates real and fiction moments; it is a complex picture of today's Egypt, a country crushed between military power and religious force.

The narrative starts on the 11th of February 2010 with Maged receiving a phone call from his house in Rome. It is the news that his brother suffers from hepatitis C and needs an immediate liver transplant. Unfortunately, about one year later and after having already lost a brother, Maged discovers that his sister is affected by the same disease. He decides to go to Cairo, even though he was advised not to do so. Upon arrival, in addition to having to address the difficulties relating to his family, he finds himself involved in the Tahrir Square movements.

He will be able to get important stories among demonstrators, journalists and exponents of the culture, but he will also investigate on the widespread phenomenon of hepatitis C that kills, together with other causes connected to hygienic degradation, 25% of the Egyptian population; a phenomenon that has always been kept hidden during the last years by the power that wanted to present a positive image of Egypt.

The glue between these different events and registers - a press story (the revolution); private drama (the brothers' disease); the exposure (health tragedy of the country) and political thriller (islamist danger) - are the dance and the music. The dance is represented by the artist Mahmoud Reda, one of the biggest Egyptian dancers, and by Farida Fahmy queen of the popular dance. We see some images of them that are taken from a 1965 musical and recent images (2010). Dance is a positive energy element and it exists in most of the film, from the square (in the body's movements during the collective prayer) until the intimate moments where music is always in the background. The very hepatitis C is a threat to revolution and to the energy expressed by the million people in Tahrir Square. The dialectics is that of vital energy/disease, revolution/conservation, life/death.

## **CHARACTERS**

### **MAHMOUD REDA**

Famous dancer of popular Egyptian dance and founder of the legendary group "Reda Troupe".

### **FARIDA FAHMY**

Queen of popular Egyptian dance and star together with Mahmoud in the "Reda Troupe".

### **MAGED EL MAHEDY**

Director and author of the film.

### **PIERRE SIOUFY**

Artist living near Tahrir Square. He has documented various moments of the "Arab spring".

### **REFAAT KAMEL**

Surgeon specialised in liver transplantations and hepatobiliary surgery.

## **THE AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

Revolution is a collective and spontaneous form of energy. The result of the revolution itself is challenged both by the health epidemic and the power. The strong idea of the film is that of building a story by images; a story that talks neither the language of mere documentation, nor the classic narrative one. There are different temporal jumps (flashbacks, almost dreamlike visions): the film follows a musical rhythm made of sounds and movements according to a rhythmic swing that is linked together with the different events that are shown. In the film there is the figure of the dervish rotating around itself until reaching a trancelike state. In the same way the film itself is moving within a circularity that escapes from a western filmic vision, disorientating the spectator, making himself loose and find again continually within an harmony that has a beginning and an end converging in a flight, symbol of freedom.

## **DIRECTION**

**MAGHED EL MAHEDY**

Maged El-Mahedy, director, writer and film producer, was born in Egypt in 1958. He graduated in Philosophy at Alexandria University in 1983 and moved to Rome in 1990, where he achieved the diploma at the National Institute of Cinematography in 1994. In 1996 he directed the short movie "Ritratto di un giovane immigrato" (TFF - Turin Film Festival '96) and between 1998 and 2000 he moved back to Egypt to work as television director for the Nile TV Channel; documentary in 4 hours (the Nile and Cinema) is a story of Egyptian cinema from its origins to today. He is the author and scriptwriter of the film "Il Girasole" (2001), and in 2002 the medium-length film "Salam Viterbo" participates at the Locarno Festival. In 2006 he published the book "Diario di un regista extracomunitario" with the University of Cagliari, Italian and Arabic. In 2010 "Salam Viterbo" achieves best documentary De MEDF, Mediterranean Film Festival in Reggio Calabria. In 2012 he directed the film "I don't speak very good, I dance better" - Non parlo bene, danzo meglio".