

MOHAMMAD HOSSEIN NIKZAD
INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER
WRITER | DIRECTOR



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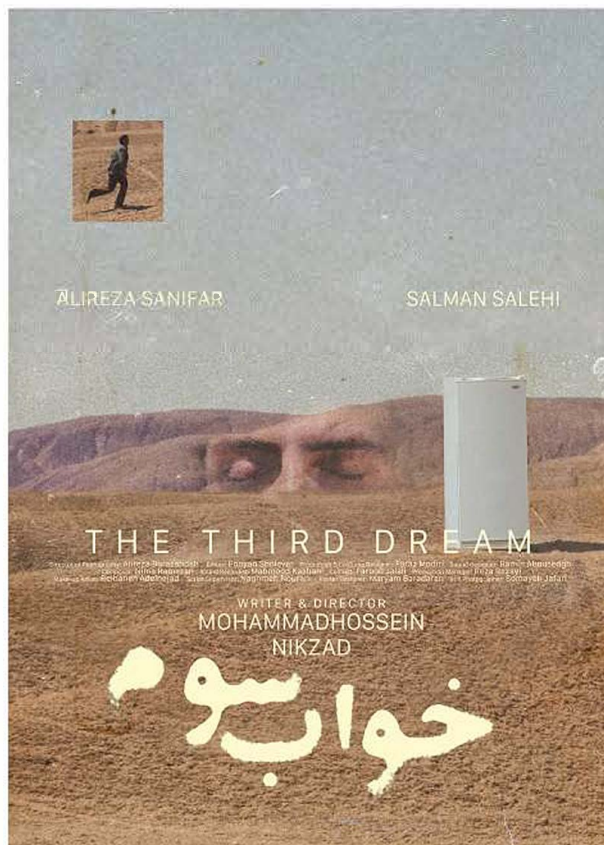
I am an independent filmmaker based in Tehran, Iran, born in 1997. I hold a Pharm.D. from Tehran University of Medical Sciences, but my passion for cinema has guided the past five years of my life—developing skills in writing, directing, editing, and producing. I've made three short films: The Trail (2022) and The Alienation (2023) as student projects, and The Third Dream (2025), my first professional short, which I self-distributed. Alongside fiction, I have directed commercial and promotional teasers for companies and academic events.



My cinematic education has been largely self-directed, shaped through workshops, film institutions, and immersive study of world cinema. My work explores psychological and sociopolitical themes through stylized, often surreal narratives that reveal hidden tensions beneath the surface. I'm particularly drawn to stories where power, identity, and the human psyche converge, creating layered experiences that invite reflection and interpretation.

IMDb Link





THE THIRD DREAM **Writer | Director | Distributer**

Year of Production: 2025

Genre: Drama, Psychological Thriller

Duration: 18:42

Budget: 8000 USD

Festival Selections:

Tryon International Film Festival (USA, 2025)

Silver Wave Film Festival (Canada, 2025)

Iranian Short Film Association (Iran, 2025)

Tehran International Short Film Festival (Iran, 2025)

• **Nominated for Best Sound**

Canadian International Film Festival (Canada, 2025)

• **Best Foreign Short**

Accolade Global Film Competition (USA, 2025)

• **Best Asian Filmmaker**

The European Independent Film Festival (France, 2026)

• **Best Non-European Dramatic Short Film**

WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival (USA, 2026)

• **Gold Remi Award Winner for Best Thriller Short**

Capital City Film Festival (USA, 2026)

Persian Film Awards (Canada, 2026)

Trailer Link

Screeners Link

Password:

TheThirdDreamFestival

Synopsis: A dreamer resists interrogation by a relentless doctor determined to extract the truth about his dream by coercive use of psychoanalysis. As pressure deepens, memories are altered, erased, and rewritten at will. With no escape from the authority's reach, he realizes the truth was never his to protect, and confession was inevitable from the beginning.



Director Statement

The Third Dream explores the tension between surface narrative and hidden truths, examining how meaning is shaped, controlled, and rewritten by power. Set against the sociopolitical aftermath of the Women, Life, Freedom movement in Iran, the film interrogates reality and repression through the symbolism of dreams.

Through layered dualities—imagery and sound, repression and regression, dreamer and prisoner, doctor and interrogator—the film constructs a world where even dreams are not free. They are monitored, distorted, and repurposed through the lens of authority. In this space, concealment is futile; power reaches even into past dreams, uncovering what is meant to remain hidden. The only thing left is the inevitable confession.

Shifts in lighting and set design dissolve the examination room into an interrogation chamber, mirroring the metamorphosis of the dreamer into the prisoner, and the doctor into the interrogator. The camera follows this shift, moving from rigid compositions to handheld urgency, until the film circles back to its opening—altered, distorted, inevitable.

Rejecting conventional portrayals of Iran's charged sociopolitical landscape, The Third Dream resists linear storytelling in favor of a multi-layered structure that dances on the threshold of reality and dream, truth and deception, oppression and resistance. Meaning is displaced into symbols, drawing the audience into the heart of the interrogation—a space they never imagined entering, even in their dreams.



*My connection to **The Third Dream** is rooted in the lived experience of repression in Iran—particularly the psychological violence of political interrogation. In these interrogations, truth is irrelevant; the narrative has already been written. The process isn't about uncovering facts but enforcing obedience. Every denial confirms guilt, every silence speaks volumes, and every confession has already been authored by the regime. This warped dynamic became the emotional architecture of the film. The dreamer, like so many silenced voices, is dragged into a ritual of distortion where language collapses and even memory is repurposed by power. Dreams, once private and sacred, become contested terrain—spaces no longer safe from control.*

*Building the team for **The Third Dream** was an instinctive process rooted in trust. I shared the script with my cinematography supervisor, Alireza Barazandeh, who immediately joined as both producer and DoP. His support set everything in motion. Alireza Sanifar and Salman Salehi brought raw emotional depth to the lead roles. Faraz Modiri's production design captured the psychological weight of the setting. In post, Pooyan Sholevar shaped the film's rhythm as editor and executive producer, joined by Ramin Abousedgh on sound and Farbod Jalali on color. Composer Nima Ramezan gave the film its pulse—intimate, intuitive, and haunting.*

*The **Third Dream** redefined how I understand cinema. It taught me how to collaborate with top-tier artists while staying true to a personal vision. It marked the moment I stopped mimicking influence and began carving out a voice. The film wasn't just a creative turning point—it was a confrontation, and it set the path I now walk with clarity and conviction.*



THE ALIENATION

Writer | Director | Editor | Producer

Year of Production: 2023

Genre: Horror, Thriller

Duration: 13

Budget: 100 USD

Logline: Sheida's birthday night takes a sinister turn when her partner arrives with a surprise that unravels into something far darker.

Trailer Link

Screener Link



Festival Selections: Festival Angaelica (USA, 2025),
Kuala Lumpur International Film Awards (Malaysia, 2025),
Yes! Let's Make a Movie Film Festival (Canada, 2023)

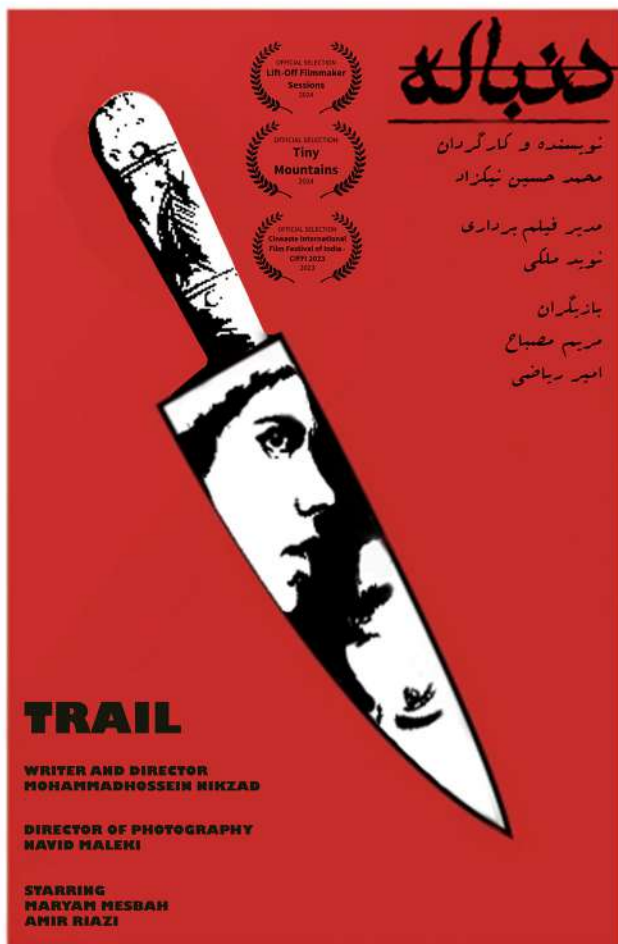


I made Alienation as part of my directing diploma at Karnameh Institute of Arts and Sciences, under the guidance of Shahram Mokri. The idea began with a haunting question: is suicide ever truly an individual act, or is it a symptom of a society failing its people? I believe the environment plays an undeniable role. The film emerged from this tension, exploring suicide not as a solitary tragedy, but as a consequence of collective neglect. Inspired by the phrase “suicide as murder,” I built the narrative around a POV structure, making the audience complicit in what initially appears to be a slasher-style killing—but ultimately reveals itself as self-destruction. Cultural norms, ritual, gender, and religion all appear as subtle accomplices. By framing the story within the horror genre, I wanted to subvert familiar tropes—the blonde victim, the unseen killer—and replace the villain with something less tangible: societal silence.

Unlike my previous projects, this film involved a larger team. My lead actress, Marjan Sadeghi, brought prior on-screen experience, and my DoP, who also performed as the protagonist, had worked on several shorts. We used a helmet-mounted camera to achieve a first-person view, turning the DoP into both lens and performer. With a dedicated sound recordist, costume designer, and two assistants, this was the most structured set I had worked on. The decision to film in long takes—a tribute to Mokri’s influence—unlocked something in me. I felt, for the first time, fully immersed in the rhythm and choreography of filmmaking.

Looking back, Alienation carries its share of imperfections. The soundscape is riddled with noise I couldn’t fully fix, focus drifts in key moments, and the story could have benefited from another round of refinement. But despite—or maybe because of—these flaws, the film remains deeply personal, and a turning point in my artistic journey.





THE TRAIL

Writer | Director | Producer

Year of Production: 2022

Genre: Thriller

Duration: 4:23

Budget: 50 USD

Logline: In the dark woods, Sarah discovers Amir beside a lifeless body and flees, with him chasing her through the trees.

[Trailer Link](#)
[Screener Link](#)

Festival Selections:

Cineaste International Film Festival of India (India, 2024),
Tiny Mountains Collective Film Festival (Australia, 2024),
Lift-Off Filmmaker Sessions (UK, 2024)



I created The Trail as part of my cinematography diploma at Karnameh Institute of Arts. The idea grew out of my fascination with paradisiacal fairy tales and the power they hold to shape moral perception. At its heart, the film is a reinterpretation of the Adam and Eve myth—an allegory of blame, guilt, and divine absence. The narrative follows a repeating loop in which the characters are trapped, with each cycle triggered by a mysterious figure—the “vanishing mediator”—who then vanishes, perhaps a metaphor for God or fate. Structurally, the film unfolds in two sub-loops: one familiar, the other inverted, where roles of victim and perpetrator shift, and good and evil blur. This reversal was central to my goal of challenging the audience’s assumptions and inviting them to question what is just, true, or inevitable.

The film was made with a small team of five: two close friends from pharmacy school who also played the lead roles, my cinematography classmate who served as DoP, my directing classmate as assistant director, and myself. Despite our limited resources, it became one of the most fulfilling experiences of my filmmaking journey—it was my first time leading even a small crew. I worked entirely with natural light, learning to direct based on the sun’s movement—a lesson that reshaped my visual storytelling. The project was later recognized by my professor, Alireza Barazandeh, which gave me the confidence to continue pursuing this path.

What I learned most from The Trail was how to collaborate and communicate under pressure. I also came to appreciate the crucial role of post-production and sound—areas I hadn’t given enough attention. With just one day of location access and virtually no budget, much was out of my control. But those very constraints became the foundation of my growth as a filmmaker.





COMMERCIAL TEASER

Writer | Director

Year of Production: 2022

Produced a commercial teaser for Seylانه Sabz Holding's Zenon brand to promote the launch of a new toothpaste product.

The teaser guided the company's creative direction and campaign rollout, leading to a 257% increase in Instagram engagement.

Screener Link

