

Iraqi Jewish Film Series 1999 - 2020

All Films Directed and Produced by Carole Basri & Adriana Davis

*except "Abdallah Simon: An Officer and a Gentleman Always" Directed/Produced by Carole Basri

"The Life of Frank Iny: A Granddaughter's Journey"

Released 1999/2001 35 minutes

Frank Iny spent his life on a journey to find religious freedom and did so with impeccable timing and often at great personal risk. Born in Baghdad in 1893, he was known as a highly respected Iraqi Jewish businessman, philanthropist and community leader. Speaking eleven languages, his work took him to India, Belgium, Berlin, Israel and, eventually, New York. In the 1930's, while living in Belgium with his wife and children, he intuitively realized to survive, they must escape Europe. Within just a few weeks of the Nazi's entering Belgium, he moved the family to his ancestral home of Iraq. As World War II raged on, antisemitism and Arab nationalism swelled in Iraq, making daily life for its Jews increasingly dangerous and precarious. After the 1941 vicious pogrom that killed hundreds of Iraqi Jews, the state-run schools began banning Jewish children from attending; Frank knew it was time to act even as he faced threats from the Iraqi government. He used all his resources to establish a successful educational and cultural center for his community. Remaining open until the mid-1970's, students of the Frank Iny School excelled and today alumni still hold reunions, throughout the world. Frank Iny believed that education, health and peace should be the cornerstones of Jewish life. This film is a tribute from his granddaughter.

"Searching for Baghdad: A Daughter's Journey"

Released 2001/2002 48 minutes

Journey with Carole Basri, as she travels to find the remnants of her Iraqi-Jewish heritage, outside of Iraq, which is inaccessible under the leadership of Saddam Hussein. With an eye toward history, her 21st century search leads her to Iraqi-Jewish outposts in the Far East, established during the 19th century. While visiting India, Hong Kong, Singapore and Myanmar she seeks out the people, culture and contributions left by Iraqi-Jews who ventured far from Baghdad longing for a better life. What she finds among the food, architecture and religious artifacts of these Iraqi-Jewish communities in diaspora, is more than just a history of her people. She reconnects with long lost members of her own family, in unexpected places, who played important roles to establish and secure a legacy so far from the Tigris and Euphrates. Shot shortly after her own father's passing, this film is a moving and relatable experience for anyone who has ever asked, "Where do I come from?"



D-Squared Media NYC 480 Main Street, Suite 16G New York, NY 10044
Phone: 917.705.3499 adavis@dsquaredmedia.com

"Carole Basri in Baghdad"

Released 2003 15 minutes

With war raging in Iraq, Ms. Basri, an American attorney from two prominent Iraqi-Jewish families risks it all to continue her personal journey of discovery. Her goal: to finally walk the streets of her ancestors while lending her legal expertise as a new Iraq is formed. Various Screenings throughout the US and other territories.

"The Last Jews of Baghdad: End of an Exile; Beginning of a Journey"

Released 2005 105 minutes

Iraq was once home to 160,000 Jews – descendants of a people who flourished there since 586 BCE. In 2005, just 22 remain. This documentary film is an historical, socio-cultural, and personal narrative told by the voices of this once thriving community now in exile all over the world. Through their memories and adversities, we learn what it means to be both Jewish and Iraqi. Although stories of picnics on the Tigris juxtapose with Saddam Hussein's discrimination and terror, Iraq is still their cherished, ancestral home. Based on a Fordham University Law Review article, written by Carole Basri, this film is the first to explore and verify the legal decimation and expulsion of Iraq's Jews. "The Last Jews of Baghdad" journeys within the heart and soul of a community struggling to bear witness to its past, in the face of a changing Iraq, for their future generations.

"Meir Basri: A Tribute"

Released 2006 20 minutes

An author, a poet, an economist, historian and the last President of the Jewish community in Iraq, Meir Basri was truly an eminent man of letters. His life parallels some of the most important and traumatic milestones for Iraqi-Jews yet his outlook remained hopeful as in the title of his 1991 poetry anthology "Songs of Love and Eternity" This film details a life that meant so much to so many. Screened at Center for Jewish History, NYC, August 2006.

"Abdallah Simon: An Officer and a Gentleman Always"

Released 2012 6 minutes Directed/Produced by Carole Basri

Meet Abe, as he was known. His journey began in Iraq, but he left at 21, after serving in the Iraqi Army, he relocated to America and served with the US Army in WWII. Eventually, he attained success in the wine importing business and founded the Chateau & Estate Wines division of world-renowned Seagram. His motto: "My word is my bond" and he sealed a deal with a handshake, not a written contract. Learn how this "Officer and Gentleman" kept family and faith at the center of his life. Screened at Center for Jewish History, NYC, May 13, 2014, sponsored by The American Sephardi Federation.



D-Squared Media NYC 480 Main Street, Suite 16G New York, NY 10044
Phone: 917.705.3499 adavis@dsquaredmedia.com

"Saving the Iraqi Jewish Archives: A Journey of Identity"

Released 2020 56 minutes

In 2003, a few courageous individuals, with the cooperation of the US military, ventured into the basement of Saddam Hussein's secret police headquarters in Baghdad. There they found, and rescued, nearly 20,000 confiscated personal and religious artifacts from Iraq's 2700-year-old Jewish community. Severely damaged by water and poor storage, it took a series of miracles to restore and partially digitize the items including religious books, some dating back to the 1600's, marriage and birth certificates as well as educational records and library books from the last Jewish school in Iraq, The Frank Iny School. Today the collection, known as the Iraqi Jewish Archives, are in peril once again as the US and Iraqi governments have agreed, within the next year, to return the entire Archives to a politically unstable Iraq. If this happens, there will be little hard evidence for the community to prove they ever existed in Iraq and certainly nothing to cling to for future generations. "Saving the Iraqi Jewish Archives" is a journey to rescue the identity of Iraqi Jews and a story for all those determined to preserve their unique religious and cultural heritages. Audiences will be emotionally rapt as they witness Iraq's Jews literally come face to face with a past, they thought long ago lost or destroyed when they were forced from their homeland. In 2020, only five Jews remain in Iraq, making this issue more than a race against time; it is a rescue of time itself.



D-Squared Media NYC 480 Main Street, Suite 16G New York, NY 10044
Phone: 917.705.3499 adavis@dsquaredmedia.com