



NO NAME RESTAURANT

one mission, two men, three religions



enigma film GmbH
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FACTS

Genre:	Culture-Clash-Comedy
Writer/Director:	Stefan Sarazin
Writer/Co-Director:	Peter Keller
Cast:	Luzer Twersky (BEN), Hitham Omari (ADEL), Makram Khoury (GAON), Raida Adon (ADA)
Awards:	LOLA (German Film Award): Best Unfilmed Script
Funding:	Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, FFF-Bayern, FFA, DFFF
Format:	Color, digital, Cinemascope
DoP:	Holger Jungnickel
Editor:	Hansjörg Weißbrich, Patricia Rommel
Casting:	Judy Henderson
Producer:	Fritjof Hohagen (enigma film)
Co-Producer:	Christoph Fisser (Studio Babelsberg)
Broadcaster:	Bavarian Television (BR), arte
Locations:	Jerusalem, Wadi Rum (Jordan), Palestine

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SHORT SYNOPSIS



Alexandria, Egypt. To save the synagogue of the once largest Jewish community in the world from being shut down, Ben, an ultraorthodox Brooklyn Jew visiting Jerusalem, is sent out to be the desperately needed tenth man for the ceremonies of Pesach. Having missed his plane and been kicked out of the bus in the Sinai desert, his last hope is Adel, a grumpy Bedouin looking for his camel. When their car breaks down, it becomes a matter of their very survival. Though rescued by the monks of St. Catherine, Ben is too sick to go on. It is the Bedouin disguised as Ben who rushes on toward Alexandria, to save the Jewish community.

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SYNOPSIS (1/2)

After the death of their tenth male member, indispensable for religious services, the steadily declining Jewish congregation of Alexandria faces the final curtain. All the property and possessions of the once largest Jewish community in the world is now due to turn over to the Egyptian state after the upcoming feast of Passover – to the great delight of the Alexandrian city administrator, who nourishes a refined hostility with the Jewish community's president.

The cry for help reaches his brother-in-law Yechiel in Jerusalem at the worst possible moment: his wife is heavily pregnant, the holiday business is in full swing and a family visitor is on his way from New York. Hence, it comes in handy that this visitor, Yechiel's ultra-orthodox nephew Ben, is only too willing to go on this historic mission, even if secretly it is only to escape, once again, the matchmaker. Unfortunately, due to his passion for all things culinary, Ben misses his fight. Naively, he decides to make the journey overland. Ben's trip ends abruptly, however, when his fellow Arabic travelers, after a heated argument about Ben, kick him off the bus in the middle of the Sinai Desert.

Ben gets picked up by Adel, a grumpy Bedouin in his ramshackle Renault 4, who promises to take Ben to far-away Alexandria, provided he first finds his run-away camel. Ben's initial sense of relief turns into anxiety, as they follow the camel tracks ever deeper into the desert. Adel's taciturnity and a strange encounter with three not-quite-kosher Bedouins, lead Ben to attempt an escape using Adel's car. It turns into a miserable failure. Barely has Adel's anger dissipated when only a little later the motor of the R4 seizes, not the least because of Ben's careless water consumption.

A two-day hike is supposed to lead them to a water hole. While this is to become a trip into Adel's past, for Ben it turns out to be a journey to the roots of his beliefs. They pass a mysterious ship, rotting in the sand, where Ben hears of Adel's family feud and his grappling with modern Bedouin life. Despite dissension and dispute they slowly draw closer. At the mythical "Sleeping Dragon" they prepare a meager last meal from their dwindling food supplies and Adel learns not only of Ben's unusual penchant for cooking, but also of his forbidden love for Rahel, a non-Hassidic Jewess.

When they finally reach the well, disaster strikes again. Because of their careless cockiness and a rotting pulley device they tumble headlong into the well. Saving themselves on their own accord proves to be impossible. Both of them begin to believe, that through their misdirected lives, they have angered their Gods. Almost on a side note they make the seemingly banal discovery that they are worshiping the same "nameless" God. Adel swears an oath to this "No Name", that, should they miraculously be rescued, he will fix the rotting boat just as he once promised his brother, and he tricks Ben into the deal by making him promise to declare his love to Rahel.

SYNOPSIS (2/2)

The miracle, which promptly saves them, appears in the shape of Adel's thirsty camel with whose assistance they manage to free themselves. Although feverish and a physical wreck, Ben insists on searching for a Greek monastery Adel has heard of, as his last hope of fulfilling the mission. Ending up lost in the valleys surrounding Mount Sinai, they are found by a hermit monk of St. Catherine's Monastery, where a sickbed is prepared for Ben.

As Adel spends the night on the Holy Mountain, a plan forms in his mind. While Ben is still unconscious, Adel cuts off his companion's side locks, takes his clothing and speeds to Alexandria in the monastery's company car, an official permit from the abbot aboard.

Just in the nick of time, Adel hurries toward the synagogue gate. The fabbergasted Egyptian policemen, having no reason to detain this strange-looking Jew, must let him pass, much to the delight of the community members.

Meanwhile, Ben regains consciousness dressed in a monk's habit. Horrified, he discovers his naked temples. Only as Adel's plan begins to dawn on him he does calm down as he contemplates his reflection in the mirror.

The Alexandrian city administrator, already seeing himself defeated, gets hold of the monastery's driving permit exposing Adel as a fake Jew, thus passing the community's fate back into his hands. As he lights a victory cigar, he decides instead to pursue his cherished enmity with his Jewish counterpart and smilingly burns the compromising document.

Some time later. In a letter to Adel, Ben tells him of an incredible dream he has had the other night: the boat in the desert has been remodeled and turned into a restaurant. Adel welcomes his brothers' caravan. Newspaper articles taped onboard the restaurant show photos of Ben's wedding with Rahel as well as the restaurant opening with high-placed representatives of the three world religions. In the shade of the boat, Rahel is serving an Israeli family engaged in a lively discussion with Egyptians sitting at their table. Ben, his side locks re-grown and his head covered by a kippah, is re-writing the daily menu: "Adel's grilled fish" turns into "Ben's gefilte Fish". Fade to black.

Postscript: "...Defying all cultural and political boundaries, Ben's & Adel's NO NAME RESTAURANT with its unique blend of Yiddish and Arab cuisine is definitely the most exciting eatery between Tangiers and Baghdad. This boat rocks!"

CAST & CREW



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CAST „BEN“



Luzer Twersky

Born and raised in Brooklyn as a Hasidic Jew, Twersky left the community in 2008, after struggling with his faith. His first acting role in 2010. By 2012, he was cast in his first leading role, in the film „Where Is Joel Baum?“ In 2017, he appeared as one of the main characters in the Netflix documentary „One of Us“, which follows him years after he leaves his Hasidic community in Brooklyn, New York.

2018: „La grande Noirceur“

2017: „One of Us“ - Netflix

2015 „Transparent“ (3 Episodes)

2014: „Felix et Meira“

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CAST „ADEL“



Haitham Omari

- 2021 „The Stranger“ („Al Garib“)
- 2020 „Gaza Mon Amour“
- 2020 „Valley of Tears“ - TV-Series
- 2019 „Crescendo“
- 2018 „Acre Dream“
- 2016 „Sand Storm“
- 2013 „Bethlehem“

CAST „GAON“



Makram Khoury

Makram Jamil Khoury is a Palestinian born Arab-Israeli actor, born 30 May 1945 in Jerusalem. He was the youngest artist and the first Arab to win the Israel Prize, the highest civic honor in Israel.

2021 "The Way of the Wind"

2020 „Messiah“ - TV-Series

2019 „Spider in the Web“

2017 „Unlocked“

2015 „Homeland“

2015 „A Tale of Love and Darkness“

2004 „The Syrian Bride“

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CAST „ADA“



Raida Adon

2019 „Sabri Maranan“ - TV-Series

2017-18 „Fauda“ - TV-Series

2015 „3000 Layla“

2010 „Od Ani Holeh“

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WRITER / DIRECTOR

Stefan Sarazin (Writer / Director)



Stefan Sarazin finances his acting studies in Munich, by working as an assistant to various photographers. After his stage debut under the direction of Ingmar Bergman, he moves on to the HB Actors' Studio in New York. Because of a simple technical error on his Green Card, he misses out on a decisive part in a movie, playing alongside Jody Foster. This incident, along with several weeks spent on the set of "The Godfather, Part III", strengthens his long-cherished desire to switch behind the camera. On a scholarship for outstanding talent, he attends film school in Munich and Rome. As early as his first film, he addresses multi-ethnic conflicts, when he shoots his documentary "FILM FOR A FATHER" in the middle of the Balkan war in 1992. During filming he comes to realize that his father is not, as he had always believed, a Catholic Croatian but, instead, an Orthodox Serbian from the other side of the fence. "NITSCHOW", his first feature-length drama follows up in 2001 and wins several international awards. During numerous travels to the Middle East, inspired by an abandoned boat in the desert and the friendship to an elderly Bedouin, the idea for "NO NAME RESTAURANT" is born.

Peter Keller (Writer / Co-Director)



Peter Keller grows up in Munich, part Greek, part German, which may be a possible explanation for his pronounced interest in foreign cultures and languages. He quenches his thirst for knowledge, at least temporarily, by attending medical school in Germany and Ireland. Further medical studies take him as far as Cuba. The creative energy of this passionate cineaste, however, has always pushed him towards filmmaking. First small opuses are shot while still enrolled in university; financially he keeps his head above water by working as swimming instructor, taxi driver, waiter and opera dancer. After graduating from medical school, the fledging doctor finally decides to subject himself to yet another hard grind, i.e. from cable carrier to director. Of various projects, the well-traveled short film SHIFT (2002) is his first professional footprint, followed by LAST RIDE UP (2008).

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CASTING / EDITOR

Judy Henderson (Casting)



The Ross Reports honored her as one of the top 20 US Film Casting Directors. Highlights include: Emmy Award -Outstanding Casting in a Drama Series. She lives in New York City and has over 100 films, including Linklaters „Before Sunrise“ and the whole series „Homeland“, for which she received an Emmy Award in 2012.

Hansjörg Weißbrich (Editor)



Hansjörg Weißbrich is a German film editor. He contributed to more than sixty films since 1995 including „Colonia“, „Trade“, „Night Train to Lisbon“, „3 Days in Quiberon“ and the Emmy Award-winning Netflix-series „Unorthodox“.

Hansjörg won numerous german and euopean film awards and is member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Patricia Rommel (Editor)



One of the most renowned german editors, born in France. She lives and works now in Berlin and Los Angeles.

Patricia contributed to some of the most succesful german films as Caroline Link's Oscar Winning „Nowhere in Africa“, Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's Oscar Winning „The Lives of Others“, „The Tourist“ and „Never Look Away“. She was also editor for Angelina Jolie's films „In the Land of Blood and Honey“ and „By the Sea“.

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PRODUCTION

Fritjof Hohagen (Producer)



Fritjof Hohagen is, as writer-producer, the creative force at enigma film which he founded in 2006.

Since then he produced or coproduced more than 10 feature films including the Swiss box-office hit **THE BLACK BROTHERS** (2014) directed by Academy Award winning director Xavier Koller, the film adaptation of Noble Price winner or Elie Wiesel's novel **DAWN** (2014) starring Jason Isaacs ("Fury", "Harry Potter"). Fritjof produced the Int. Emmy-winning **UNDER THE RADAR** (2015) and Golden Goblet-winner **HANNA'S SLEEPING DOGS** (2016).

Most recently he produced **NO NAME RESTAURANT** and the Near-Future-Thriller **ZERO** directed by Academy Award winner Jochen Freydank.

Christoph Fisser (Co-Producer)



Christoph Fisser is COO of Studio Babelsberg AG. In 2004, he and Carl Woebcken, his business associate and present CEO acquired Studio Babelsberg from the French media group VIVENDI. Together, they have restructured the studio complex and positioned it as a successful full service production partner for international feature films.

Among others, his co-producer credits include: George Clooney's *The Monuments Men*, Wes Anderson's „*The Grand Budapest Hotel*“, „*Unknown Identity*“, „*Hanna*“ and Quentin Tarantino's „*Inglourious Basterds*“.

Ossama Bawardi (Line-Producer Palestine & Jordan)



Ossama Bawardi is an independent producer working in Palestine and Jordan. He produced Annemarie Jacir's *Wajib*, winner of thirty-six international awards including Best Film in Mar Del Plata, Dubai, Amiens, Washington DC and Kerala.

Bawardi is also an executive producer on *The Mountain* by Faysal Atrash, *The Translator* by Syrian filmmakers Rana Kazkaz and Anas Khalaf, and the highly anticipated *Huda's Salon* by Hany Abu Assad as well as *Kazoz* by Amira Diab and *A Gaza Weekend* by Basil Khalil. Most recently, he produced the Oscar nominated and BAFTA winner film *The Present* by Farah Nabulsi.

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ENIGMA FILM

Located in Munich, Berlin and Cologne, enigma film is a creative forge for sophisticated commercial feature films and TV-movies for the German and European market.

Since its founding in 2006 enigma film produced a line of acclaimed and successful films, thus established itself as a major production company in the local scene, as well as a first choice address for European co-productions.

The portfolio of enigma film include, among others, the swiss box-officehit THE BLACK BROTHERS (2014) directed by Academy Award winning director Xavier Koller starring Moritz Bleibtreu („Bader Meinhof Complex“), the film adaptation of Noble Price winner Elie Wiesel’s novel DAWN (2014) starring Jason Isaacs („Fury“, „Harry Potter“) or the german box office success RUN FOR YOUR LIFE (2008) starring Max Riemelt („Sense 8“).

enigma film completed the political Thriller Movie UNDER THE RADAR by Elmar Fischer which won the International Emmy Award 2016 for Christiane Paul („Best Performance by an Actress“). The historical feature film HANNA’S SLEEPING DOGS by Andreas Gruber won the Golden Goblet Award 2016 for „Best Screenplay“ at the Shanghai International Film Festival 2016.

Most recently enigma film produced the international Culture Clash comedy NO NAME RESTAURANT with NETFLIX star Luzer Twersky (ONE OF US) in Jordan and Israel and the Near Future-Thriller ZERO based on the bestsellin novel by Marc Elsberg starring Heike Makatsch („Love Actually“) directed by Academy Award winning director Jochen Alexander Freydank.



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