

# THE OATH OF CYRIAC

A FILM BY  
Olivier Bourgeois

LA CAIXA DE LA LLUM PRESENTS  
AN OLIVIER BOURGEOIS FRANCK MEYER & HOUMAM SAAD PRODUCTION  
ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS LAURENT WOLF & LUIS KINDER  
WITH DR. MAAMOUN ABDULKARIM MOHAMAD BASHIR SHABANI -  
DESBINA BASLAN - NAWROUZ TOBAL HAMO - RAHAF HAMWI - NAZIR AWAD  
DR. AHMAD DEEB - AHMAD OTHMAN - KHALED AL MASRI - TAREK ABU ALI  
MUSIC BY LAURENT WOLF - EDITED BY FRANCK MEYER  
WRITTEN BY YASMINE MAHMOUD & OLIVIER BOURGEOIS

[WWW.THEOATHOFCYRIAC.COM](http://WWW.THEOATHOFCYRIAC.COM)





**A breathtaking true story that will challenge your vision of archaeologists.**

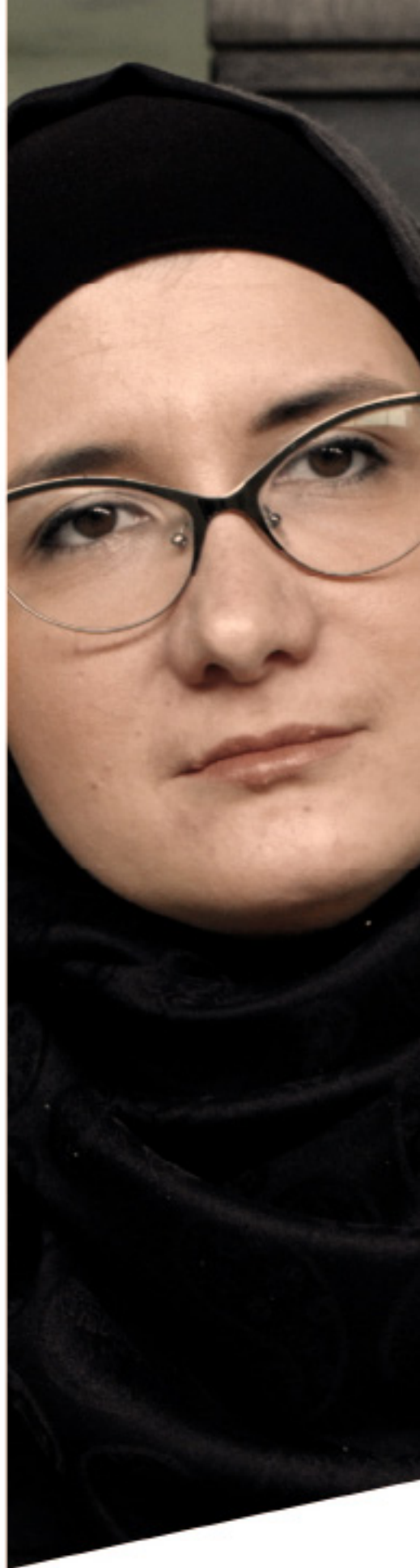
# SYNOPSIS

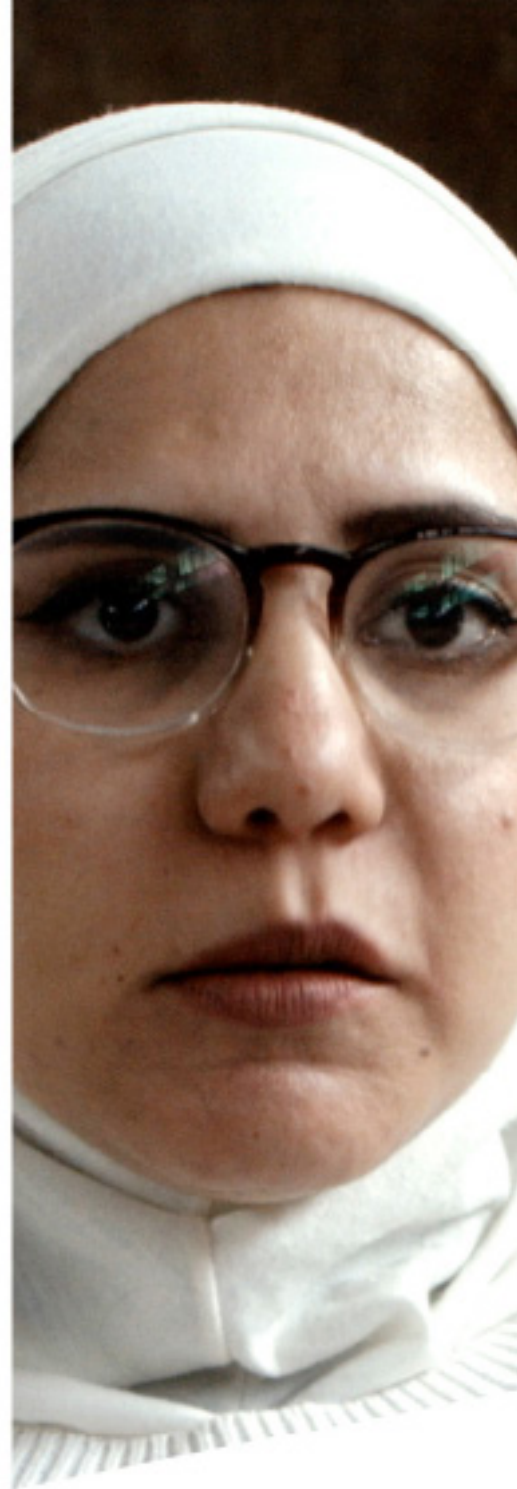
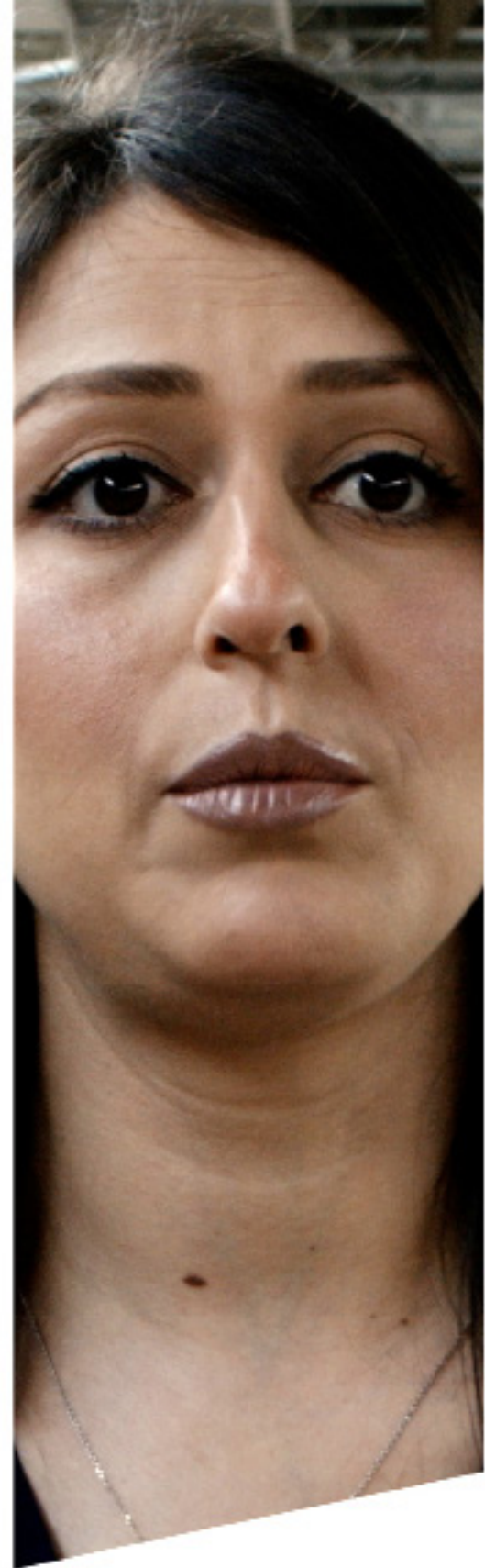
As the war rages around them, a small group of archaeologists, museum curators and attendants struggle to preserve the monumental collections of antiquities at the Aleppo National Museum during the Syrian conflict.

For years, these women and men will bid farewell to their families every morning before heading to the museum under a hail of shells, facing sniper fire, often sleeping on the ground of the museum for several days in an attempt to accomplish their mission.

Without electricity, without water, without means, they empty the showcases, pack antiques with pieces of clothing, dismantle false ceilings to protect them in makeshift boxes, build concrete walls to hide ancient statues from looters...

But in 2015, the Museum has become a front line and the risk of seeing these treasures disappearing is greater every day : **how to evacuate 50,000 artifacts in a besieged city?** In this race against time, nothing is guaranteed, nothing is certain, the only certainty lies in one fact: if the museum's collections are lost, a whole part of human history will disappear with them.





**Production** : La Caixa de la Llum Produccions  
**Nationality** : Andorra  
**Year of production** : Delivery 2021  
**Running time** : 74'



# Director

## **Olivier BOURGEOIS**

Olivier started his career as a commercial TV producer for major companies. In 2004 his passion for culture and the environment led him to produce, direct and write the first opus of the documentary trilogy «HERITAGE».

The feature documentary «HERE TO STAY» (Original title « Nous Resterons sur Terre ») which takes an uncompromising look at the state of the Earth, was co-produced with the French film studio GAUMONT FILM COMPANY. Starring Nobel Peace Prize Laureates Mikhail Gorbachev and Wangari Maathai, environmentalist James Lovelock and Philosopher Edgar Morin, the film has been released in 25 countries with support from UNESCO and UNEP.

In 2015, Olivier created and developed an audio-visual archive bringing together an unprecedented number of testimonies from archaeologists, museum curators and attendants who have contributed significantly to the protection and rescue of Syrian Heritage since the start of the armed conflict in 2011.

On numerous occasions, he brought his expertise in the development of tangible cultural heritage as a contractor for various United Nations agencies. During his many stays in Syria, he wrote, directed and produced the second film of the «HERITAGE» trilogy. Based on the incredible true story of ordinary people saving the antique collections of the Aleppo Museum during the war, the docudrama «THE OATH OF CYRIAC» was completed in May 2021.





# Editor

## **Franck MEYER**

After spending over 10 years as an editor, motion designer and senior post-producer in the film industry (advertising, TV programs, live events broadcast) his passion for culture has led him to co-produce various documentary films on heritage, mainly in the middle east.

Since 2017 he has worked with warzone archaeologists, telling their stories through powerful imagery and documenting the impact of conflict on World Heritage. During these last 3 years he has devoted himself body and soul to the production, filming and editing of the docu-fiction «The Oath of Cyriac».

Franck's extensive background in all aspects of content production combined with his mastery of digital grading, takes the look and mood of every single shot to the highest level.

# Co-writer

## Dr YASMINE MAHMOUD

Yasmine Mahmoud is a Syrian archaeologist with a bachelor degree in archaeology from the University of Damascus- Syria and a PhD degree in History from the Università degli Studi di Pavia- Italy, where she focused her research on the anthropomorphic figurines and jewelry from Tell Mozan (ancient Urkesh)- Syria, and important site in Syro- Mesopotamia dating back to the fourth millennium BC, where she worked for many years on the excavations in the field and all the other activities related to the Urkesh archaeological project.

She is currently responsible for the Urkesh archaeological mission's activities in Syria. «The Oath of Cyriac» is her first contribution to a film, but her in-depth knowledge of Syrian archeology and its stakes during the war were a major asset in the cinematic process.

# Composer

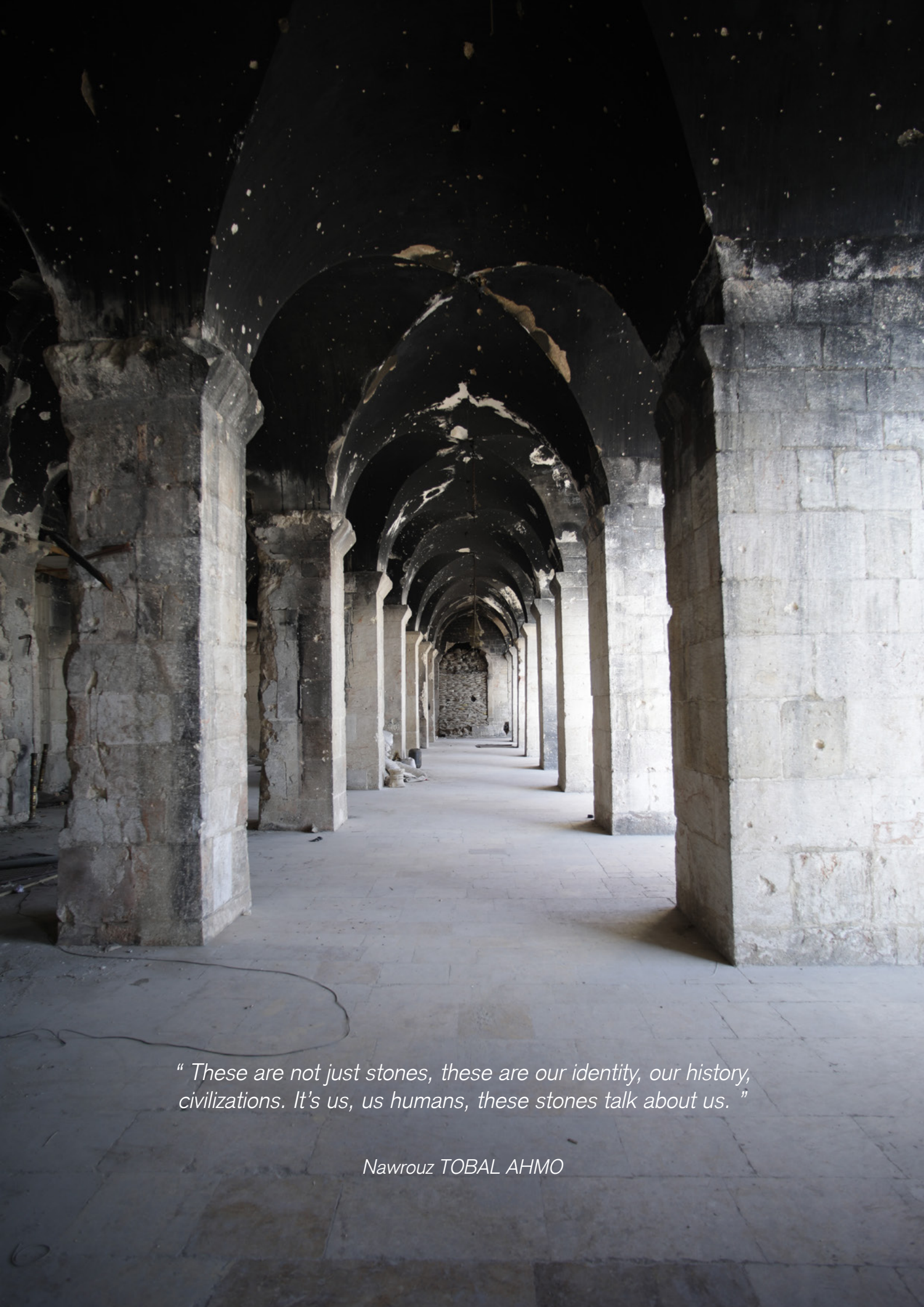
## Laurent WOLF

Laurent Wolf is a French composer, DJ and producer. He is the author of several Hits and albums.

He reached the top of the charts with «No stress», «Saxo» , «Calinda», «Wash my world», «Explosion», «Survive», «Susy», «Walk the line» and many others. Laurent Wolf won the 2008 World Music Awards in the DJ category. Single «No Stress», starring Eric Carter, was number 1 on the world's major charts in October 2008.

In 2009 DJ Mag announces the results of their annual Top 100 DJ, Laurent Wolf is placed in the 66th place, the same year he opens the first part of Madonna's concert in Nice, remixes Beyonce's hit «If I were a boy» and plays in the most legendary clubs of Ibiza, Miami, Moscow, London, Barcelona, Dubai,...

In recent years, he has traveled the world while preparing his next album and composing his first film score for «The Oath of Cyriac».



*" These are not just stones, these are our identity, our history, civilizations. It's us, us humans, these stones talk about us. "*

*Nawrouz TOBAL AHMO*



*“ When we reached the Aleppo National Museum, for a while silence reigned among my colleagues, some were crying but were too shy to show their tears and I was one of them ”*

*Nazir AWAD*



## Director's Statement

Life is made up of meetings, some of which profoundly change you. Everyone of us should have the chance to experience an encounter with Maamoun, Desbina, Mohammad, Rahaf, Nawrouz, Nazir and the others...

These Syrian archaeologists, museum curators and students refused to be contaminated by the surrounding chaos and acted to protect our common heritage.

They do not see themselves as heroes, they have their weaknesses, their failures, their wounds too, but show relentless courage and unwavering dedication to cultural heritage. Their resolutely apolitical fight is an act of resistance which symbolizes the refusal to see disappear before our eyes what has linked men to each other for millennia.

**So, saving our past is also saving our future.**

# More than a movie

The documentary portrays a true story and shows that the moral values, courage and foresight of ordinary people can save the common heritage of the whole of humanity.

## Goals & Keys messages

> **By saving the past**, women and men can restore hope and confidence in the future. In the chaos of war, women and men transcended themselves and risked their lives serving the next generations.

> **The mission** entrusted to these ordinary people seemed impossible to attain. But with their solidarity and mutual trust, they found the solutions. These human solutions in which women occupy a central place.

> **Focus on the key role women** and young people have played in this unbelievable achievement. They acted as leaders, responsible for their own destiny, taking all risks to save these irreplaceable treasures of humanity.





> **Raise the public awareness** of the importance of the struggle for common goods such as heritage. Because a people without meeting places with its history is a lost people and these cultural places without all the people they represent, they become meaningless, they become inanimate.

> **The fight of these archaeologists,** museum curators or directors, students and volunteers is a resolutely apolitical struggle that is an example for all in terms of morale and symbolic meaning. It is the revolt of those who refuse to see disappear before their eyes what has linked us to each other for millennia.

> **Spread a message of peace** across the syrian community and prove that each of them can be a positive force in the process of recovery of the country.

Our goal is to relay the messages of the documentary film to the wide audience on a global scale so that everyone can realize the importance of what these women and men have achieved. Most importantly, our aim is to give to the Syrians citizens inside and outside the country an opportunity to know the role played by the local community in the rescue operation of artifacts in the museum of Aleppo and in Syria in general.

*“ We do not defend the objects as materials, we defend the spirit of the ancestors who made them and all the history and art they contain. ”*

*Ahmad OTHMAN*



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