



ALIREZA SANIFAR

SALMAN SALEHI

THE THIRD DREAM

Director of Photography: Alireza Barazandeh Editor: Pooyan Sholevar Production & Costume Designer: Faraz Modiri Sound Designer: Ramin Abousedgh
Composer: Nima Ramezan Sound Recordist: Mahmood Kashani Colorist: Farbod Jalali Production Manager: Reza Rezayi
Make-up Artist: Reihaneh Adelnejad Script Supervisor: Naghmeh Nourani Poster Designer: Maryam Baradaran Still Photographer: Somayeh Jafari

WRITER & DIRECTOR
MOHAMMADHOSSEIN
NIKZAD

خواب سوم

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Production Date: June 2025

Genre: Psychological Thriller

Duration: 18:42

Country: Iran

Language: Persian

Aspect Ratio: 2.39:1

Budget: 8000USD

Camera: ARRI Alexa LF

Awards and Nominations:

Tehran International Short Film Festival (Iran, 2025 – Nominated for Best Sound)

Tryon International Film Festival (USA, 2025 – Nominated for Best Short Narrative)

Silver Wave Film Festival (Canada, 2025 – Nominated for Best International Short Film)

Canadian International Film Festival (Canada, 2025 – Best Foreign Short)

Accolade Global Film Competition (USA, 2025 – Best Asian Filmmaker)

European Independent Film Festival (France, 2026 – Best Non-European Short)

WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival (USA, 2026 – Gold Remi Award)

Touchstone Independent Film Festival (USA, 2026 – Best Original Story)

IMDb Link Instagram





There are three kinds of dreams
One you see and remember,
One you see and forget,
And one you wouldn't even dream of.

Logline

While being interrogated by a doctor, it's unclear whether the dreamer is concealing the truth or being compelled, as what's dreamt must not be uncovered.

Short 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.

Long Synopsis

A dreamer finds himself trapped in an interrogation room, facing a relentless doctor determined to extract the truth about his dream. Resisting the pressure, the dreamer clings to secrecy, evading questions and retreating into intentional oblivion to protect the secrets of the world within his mind. But in this controlled space, even dreams are not beyond the authority's reach. They are altered, erased, and rewritten at will. The doctor's insidious manipulation runs deeper than memory, exposing what was meant to remain hidden. As his defenses collapse, the dreamer realizes the truth was never his to protect. His confession was inevitable from the beginning.

Director's 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.

Director's Biography

Mohammadhossein Nikzad was born in 1997 in Tehran. A self-taught filmmaker with a deep passion for cinema, he earned his Pharm.D degree from Tehran University of Medical Sciences in 2022. Despite not attending formal film school, he has pursued filmmaking and storytelling with unwavering determination.



During his university years, Mohammadhossein actively engaged in artistic and cinematic projects, producing promotional teasers for scientific conferences and seminars, as well as commercial videos for health companies. He further honed his craft through workshops, internships, and extensive self-study. As part of his academic journey, he worked on two unreleased short films as course projects, which helped shape his creative vision. His passion for cinema ultimately led him to create his first short film, *The Third Dream*.

IMDb Link

Thematic Connection

My connection to *The Third Dream* stems from the lived realities of the Women, Life, Freedom movement and the broader experience of political interrogation in Iran. In such interrogations, truth is irrelevant—interrogators already have their version of the story. The process is not about extracting information but about enforcing submission. The accused must navigate a space where every response is futile, every denial pre-written, and every confession inevitable.

This cycle of control and coercion deeply informs the film's atmosphere. The dreamer, like countless political prisoners, faces an authority that distorts reality, repurposing words and thoughts to fit its predetermined script. Dreams—once private sanctuaries—become battlegrounds where power intrudes, demanding compliance even in the subconscious.



As an artist living in the aftermath of the Women, Life, Freedom movement, I sought a different approach to representing political repression in Iran. Rather than traditional portrayals, I chose to encapsulate meaning within codes—fragments of imagery, symbols, and subconscious whispers that demand interpretation. In *The Third Dream*, truth does not announce itself; it must be uncovered, deciphered like a dream. This film is not just about interrogation—it is an interrogation in itself, asking the audience to navigate between what is seen and what is hidden, between what is said and what is meant.

Storytelling Against Control

Building the production team for The Third Dream was an instinctive, deeply personal journey. In the wake of the Women, Life, Freedom movement, I wrote the script with a need to express the inexpressible—to encode resistance into something that could slip past the surface. I sent it to Alireza Barazandeh, my cinematography professor at Karnameh Institute and a well-known DOP in Iran. He connected with the story immediately and came on board as both producer and cinematographer.

After extensive casting, I chose Alireza Sanifar as the doctor and Salman Salehi as the dreamer. Their performances captured the tension and inevitability of the interrogation—not as a staged event, but as something lived and inescapable.

Faraz Modiri, my production designer, played a crucial role in reinforcing the film's themes visually. Through his design, the examination room subtly dissolves into an interrogation chamber, blurring the lines between medical authority and state control, reality and dream.



In post-production, Pooyan Sholevar, a brilliant editor and a fierce supporter of young filmmakers, joined as both editor and executive producer. She brought in Ramin Abousedgh for sound design and Farbod Jalali for color, both of whom added depth and distortion, heightening the sense of entrapment.

For music, I turned to Nima Ramezan. He's not a film composer, but I knew his sound carried something rare—an emotional pulse that could seep into the cracks of the film and make them resonate. He gave the film an unexpected heartbeat.

This team came together not just with technical expertise but with a shared understanding of the film's world—one where authority dictates reality, and even dreams are not safe from control. The only thing that matters is resistance, and this film itself is an act of defiance, a testament to the power of storytelling against control.





Alireza Barazandeh

Director of Photography / Producer

Alireza Barazandeh is an acclaimed Iranian cinematographer known for his work on *Time to Love* (2015), *Cyanide* (2016), *Invasion* (2017), and *Careless Crime* (2020). With a career spanning over two decades since 1999, he has contributed to numerous acclaimed films. Beyond his work in film, he is actively involved in education, conducting advanced cinematography workshops at the Karnameh Institute of Art and Culture, where he shares his expertise in visual storytelling.

Salman Salehi

Actor – The Dreamer

Salman Salehi is an Iranian actor known for his compelling performances in theater, short films, and television. He gained recognition for his role in a theatrical adaptation of *Hamlet* in Iran and has starred in films such as *They Have Only One Name* (2024) and the *Sam Series* (2024).



Alireza Sanifar

Actor – The Doctor

Alireza Sanifar is an Iranian actor, screenwriter, and director. He began his acting career at 13 in *Death of the Wolves* (1985) and has since worked extensively in film, television, and animation. His notable works include *Cause of Death: Unknown* (2023), *Dressage* (2018), *The Professional* (2021), and *Accomplice* (2023–2024).



Pooyan Sholevar

Editor

Pooyan Sholevar is an esteemed Iranian film editor with over 100 films to her credit since 2011. She was selected as a Berlinale Talent in 2024. Her work includes *Retouch* (2017), *Orthodontics* (2022), *It Turns Blue* (2023), and *Shalal* (2023), which have screened at prestigious festivals such as Cannes, Berlinale, Tribeca, and Palm Springs. With over 500 festival screenings and more than 100 awards, her editing style has earned international recognition.

Faraz Modiri

Production & Costume Designer

Faraz Modiri is a visionary Iranian production and set designer known for his work on *The Great Yawn of History* (2024), *The Steak* (2023), and *Fish & Cat* (2013). He has collaborated with renowned artists, including Saber Abar, Mehrdad Ziaei, and Mohammad Aghebati, contributing his distinctive visual approach to a range of cinematic and theatrical projects.



Ramin Abousedgh

Sound Designer

Ramin Abousedgh is an award-winning sound designer, editor, and composer in Iranian cinema. He began his career at Bahman Studio in Tehran before establishing himself as an independent sound artist. His extensive work spans short and feature films, including *Fireworks Wednesday* (2006), *Exam* (2019), and *The Prophet* (2021).

Nima Ramezan

Composer

Nima Ramezan is a prominent Iranian musician and composer, known for his work in rock, pop, and film music. He co-founded the *Piccolo* band (2004) and *Comment* band (2008) and has collaborated with notable Iranian artists such as Siavash Shams, Fereydoun Asraei, and Mehdi Yarrahi. In film, his compositions include *MostalakTV* (2021) and *I Dream My Mother's Dreams* (2019).



Cast & Crew

Cast

The Dreamer.....Salman Salehi
The Doctor.....Alireza Sanifar

Crew

Writer & Director.....Mohammadhossein Nikzad
Director of Photography & Producer.....Alireza Barazandeh
Editor.....Pooyan Sholevar
Production & Costume Designer.....Faraz Modiri
Sound Designer.....Ramin Abousedgh
Composer.....Nima Ramezan
Vocalist.....Shabahang Aberoomand
Colorist.....Farbod Jalali
Visual Effects.....Mohsen Kheirabadi
Sound Recordist.....Mahmood Kashani
Consultant.....Amirhossein Nikzad
Narrator.....Sonia Sanjari
Production Manager.....Reza Rezayi
Make-up Artist.....Reihaneh Adelnejad
Script Supervisor.....Naghmeh Nourani
Poster Designer.....Maryam Baradaran
Still Photographer.....Somayeh Jafari
Translator.....Sogol Rezvani
Camera Operator.....Hamed Ezzatkah
First Assistant Camera.....Mahmood Khorasani
Gaffer.....Parmida Rezaei
Grip.....Ali Ramezani
Assistant Gaffers.....Mehdi Laali, Davood Emami
Technical Support.....Epic Rental - Hamed Fakheri
Assistant Director.....Sepideh Rostami
Assistant Production Designer.....Omid Moradi
Stage Manager.....Babak Niyoshadan
Assistant Costume Designer.....Iman Masoud
Assistant Sound Recordist.....Alireza Mahabadi
Assistant Make-up Artist.....Sajjad Karimi

LINK TO PHOTOS & DOCUMENTS



Contacts

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Writer and Director

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