

– Dubai Film Connection –

# GAZA D.C.

(Palestine)

## Synopsis

GAZA D.C. is a love story that takes place in Gaza between a young Palestinian from a refugee camp in the blockaded Strip, and a young American woman from Washington D.C., who arrives with a delegation of international activists in support of the Gazans.

In parallel to the evolving love story between the two, the woman falls in love with the place and the man's simple traditional family. While the two are busy planning for their wedding, the woman's parents and the US government believe she's in Gaza against her will. Despite the woman making enormous efforts to convince her parents that she's not being forced to stay in Gaza and is actually one half of a beautiful and real love story, her parents refuse to believe her because of their fear of losing their only child. Nevertheless, the political tension in the region is neither promising nor comforting; Gaza is being besieged by the Israeli occupation and ruled by the Islamic government of Hamas.

The cultural and political paradoxes and contradictions, the huge differences between the traditions of each family, the series of unpleasant individual misunderstandings and misinterpretation of the reality, and the constant intervention from the Gazan society and the US government, are all elements that add drama yet lightheartedness to the story.

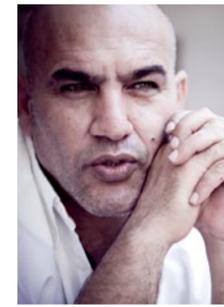
GAZA D.C. is a film inspired by reality. It is about life and love in a place where people and dreams are barricaded.

## Director's Statement

I was born and raised in Gaza. In Gaza, I learned about love... pain... anger and in Gaza I experienced disappointments and discovered how to spell my first cinematic words. My private Gaza has changed its look and its habits. Its siege has worsened; internally by the factional divisions and externally, by the continuing military occupation. And therefore, this city has become estranged from itself and from me; in form and in soul.

The events that take place in this story have imposed themselves on me to become the subject matter of my next feature film. It is as if the time has come to plunge into the small details and to deal with the changes, both the positive and the negative, thus giving Gaza the space to tell the world about itself, as it is. The story of this film is based on Gaza, which has a very unique characteristic that differentiates it from any other city or place.

We are looking at a love story in which one side is not a Palestinian but is entangled in a relationship with the other side, the Palestinian Gazan. This allows us to see ourselves from this external point of view; and to deal with a love story that cinematically translates the place and the people there, because this relationship stumbles before it reaches its climax. So, is it a journey in search of love that might be lost? Or is it an attempt to recapture the place in order to recapture love?



Director  
**Rashid Masharawi**

## Director's Biography

Rashid Masharawi was born and raised in the Shati refugee camp, Gaza Strip. He is a self-taught film-maker.

After a decade of working and establishing a name as a film-maker, Masharawi concentrated on organising workshops to give young Palestinian film-makers a chance to acquire knowledge in the field of cinema by working on actual productions.

Thus, while his fiction features such as PALESTINE STEREO, LAILA'S BIRTHDAY, CURFEW, HAIFA and documentaries like LIVE FROM PALESTINE have received international theatrical and television distribution, awards and critical recognition, Masharawi has continued to live and produce films in Palestine. Although, he considers the value of his international recognition very important in reinforcing his situation as a Palestinian film-maker, he considers himself more as an artist and director, rather than a Palestinian partisan.



Producer  
**Habib Attia**

## Production

### CINETELEFILMS

Since 1983, CINETELEFILMS has been one of the leading production companies in Tunisia and the Arab world.

Over the years, CINETELEFILMS has produced several fiction feature films and documentaries. The fiction film LAILA'S BIRTHDAY, directed by the award-winning Palestinian film-maker, Rashid Masharawi, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and was distributed in more than 15 countries. BAGHDAD'S ANGEL (2009), a documentary film shot in Iraq was selected in several festivals such as the Dubai International Film Festival and won the best prize for documentary in the Al Jazeera Documentary Festival in 2010. The feature-length documentary, NO MORE FEAR directed by Tunisian film-maker, Mourad Ben Cheikh, is about the Tunisian revolution of January 2011 and was picked up in the official selection at the 64th edition of the Cannes film festival. NO MORE FEAR was theatrically released in several countries, including France. The company's 2012 projects include: IT WAS BETTER TOMORROW (2012) by Hinde Boujemaa (Venise, Stockholm, Namur, Best Arab Director in Dubai) and CURSED BE THE PHOSPHATE (2012) by Sami Tlili that premiered at the 6th Abu Dhabi International Film Festival and won the Best Arab Documentary Award. This year, CINETELEFILMS' latest fiction feature film, PALESTINE STEREO by Rashid Masharawi, had its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival where it was part of the official selection.

Habib Attia has been the managing director of CINETELEFILMS since 2007. Working through international co-productions, Attia primarily develops fiction and documentary projects that deal with contemporary socio-cultural issues and demonstrate sincerity, creative freedom or a willingness to tackle taboos and transgressions without censorship or stereotypes.

**Budget:** USD1,435,000

**Finance in Place:** USD310,000

**Partners Attached:** Cinepal Films (Palestine),  
Gaza Media Center (Palestine)

**Shooting Location:** Palestine, Tunisia

**Shooting Format:** PRORESS 444

**Genre:** Drama

**Running Time:** 90 mins

**Languages:** Arabic

**Colour/B&W:** Colour

### Technical & Artistic Team:

DOP: Sofiane En Fani

Sound: Moez Cheikh

Music: Kais Sellami

**Goal at the DFC:** We are currently in the development stage and are looking for international co-producers, funds, broadcasters and sales agents.

### Lead Producer Contact:

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