

Insertfilm presents
a Film by Christian Walther



ارقدة
DIE RÜCKKEHRER

LOGLINE

Iqrit is not to be found on any of today's maps of Israel. Its houses were destroyed, its land confiscated, but the village Church still stands and used for religious services.

SYNOPSIS

Until 1948 Iqrit was a flourishing and prosperous Christian village in northern Galilee. Then came the Israeli War of Independence, named Naqba (Catastrophe) by the Palestinians, because they were forced to leave their villages and towns in hundreds of thousands. Iqrit is one such village. Until the present day no residents have been allowed to return there and rebuild it, despite numerous court rulings being made which specifically allowed this. However, Church services are still permitted to be held there, and on High Feast days thousands make a pilgrimage to the ramshackle Church, the only building still left standing in the village.



ABOUT THE FILM

The once bustling village of Iqrit in northern Israel exists today only with a Christian church and a cemetery remaining, as the Israeli army in 1951 destroyed all its houses and then, 2 years later, confiscated its land. Despite numerous rulings of the High Court, which gave the residents of Iqrit the right of return, the villagers are only allowed spend time there during daylight hours. Since 1971, a permanent return to Iqrit is only possible after death inside a coffin and burial in the cemetery. A group of young men stand at odds with this ruling. Among them, the 22 year old philosophy student Amir, whose grandfather had had to leave the village when he was 19. In 2012 these young men decided to return to Iqrit. They regularly stay overnight in an improvised shelter attached to the church and organise celebrations and activities which include planting trees and shrubs. Amir says they play out 'a cat and mouse game' with the Israeli authorities. "Whenever the authorities confiscate the trees and shrubs we plant new ones again". Like his grandfather, Amir cherishes the hope of returning to live in Iqrit that once was home.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT BY CHRISTIAN WALTHER

«I want to tell the story of a group of people who lived in Palestine before the foundation of the State of Israel. They had nothing to do with the events in Europe in World War Two. But nonetheless had to suffer the consequences of them, as did hundreds of thousands of other Palestinians.

For me, it is not only the theme of the film that is important, but also those who collaborated in the project too. And so I have deliberately chosen to work with a Jewish-Israeli Camara-woman and a Muslim-Palestinian Sound Engineer. For some years now, encounters between Israelis and Palestinians have become increasingly rare. The separation is very noticeable. Neither side hardly knows the other.»



THE PEOPLE



Ma'arouf Ashkar



Amir Ashkar



Abouna Souhail Khoury



Widat & Abdallah Hadaad



Emmanuel Nahshon
Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Niva Grünzweig
Zochrot Organisation

IMPRESSIONS

Film Stills



Iqrit view of the sea



Background, Iqrit Church



Easter Mass



Easter Mass



Market stalls with Jewish and Christian artifacts, Nazareth

A former Palestinian village



Iqrit cemetery



Iqrit



Easter Mass



Easter Mass



CREDITS

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Contributors | Amir & Ma'arouf Ashkar, Abouna Souhail Khoury, Widat & Abdallah Hadaad, Niva Grünzweig, Emmanuel Nahshon |
| Producer | Pedro Haldemann |
| Director | Christian Walther |
| DOP | Tulik Galon |
| 2nd Unit | Avigail Sperber |
| Sound | Sami Darwish Al-Kurd |
| Editor, Colour Grading | Christian Müller |
| Music | Sami Darwish Al-Kurd |
| Sounddesign | himex:sounddesign |
| Audio Mix | Peter von Siebenthal |
| Production Manager | Fränze Aerni |
| Editorial Sternstunde Religion | Christa Miranda |
| Pacte de L'audiovisuel, SRG SSR | Urs Augstburger |

INSERT F E L M

Production

Insertfilm AG, Solothurn

Co-Production

SRF Schweizer Fernsehen

Funded by

SRF Pacte de l'audiovisuel
Lotteriefonds Kanton Solothurn, SOkultur
Succès Passage Antenne
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Caritas Schweiz
Katholische Kirche im Kanton Zürich

Technical specifications

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| Recording | HD-Cam, C300 Canon |
| Broadcasting format | HD, dcp |
| Original language | Englisch, Arabisch (dt. UT) |
| Duration | 32 min |

Contact

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First Broadcast

Schweizer Fernsehen SRF Sternstunde Religion 5th of Mai 2016

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| Screenings | planned |
| Festivals | planned |



Filme für *eine* Welt
Films pour *un seul* monde



DIRECTOR

Christian Walther

Place of origin: Rüegsau BE

1972, grew up and lives in Bern, graduating with teaching diploma at the Teacher Seminar Luzern 1994 subsequent Study of English, Media Studies and History at the University of Bern. From 2005 to 2006 postgraduate studies of European Studies (Master of Advanced European Studies) at the University of Basel.

Works since 1999, as an editor and executor in the cultural department of the Swiss Television, most recently as head of literature at the magazine „Kultur Platz“.

Since 2009, editor and producer for the program „Sternstunden“ and „Literaturclub“. Works since 2010, additionally as a freelance filmmaker and journalist Contributions for swissinfo.ch, EDITO, neuland-mag.net, Labour Assistance SAH and Swiss TV.

Filmography

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| 2016 | Die Rückkehrer, Dokumentarfilm, Prod. Insertfilm, SRF Sternstunden |
| 2013 | Fremd – James Baldwin in Leukerbad, Essay, Prod. Insertfilm AG, SRF |
| 2013 | Der Jura tickt anders, documentary, Dir. Anita Hugli, Christian Walther, Prod. SRF |
| 2013 | Unterwegs zu Richard Wagner, documentary, Dir. J.Hardegger, Christian Walther, Prod. SRF |
| 2012 | Petra – Wunder der Wüste, documentary, Prod. SF Sternstunden, 3sat |
| 2011 | Mit Bach von Leipzig nach Trogen, Prod. SF Sternstunden, 3sat, MDR |
| 2010 | Lonely Pioneers – The Young Gods, documentary, Prod. SF, TSR |
| 2009 til today | Various short films for „mitenand« in Burkina Faso, Togo, South Africa and Vietnam |

Text work

and further information: christianwalther.ch and nordsternmedien.ch



fltr: Sami Darwish Al-Kurd, Tulik Galon, Christian Walther