

Sharmill Films presents

# AMREEKA

*A film by Cherien Dabis*



## ***Amreeka***

### **SYNOPSIS**

Amid the daily grind of West Bank checkpoints, the constant nagging of a controlling mother and the shadows of a failed marriage, MUNA FARAH (Nisreen Faour) merely survives life. But all of that changes when one day she receives a letter in the mail informing her that she's received a U.S. Green Card. Heartbroken at the prospect of leaving her home, yet aware that it may be the only way to ensure a secure future for her son FADI (Melkar Muallem), Muna decides to quit her dead-end bank job and start anew.

Surrounded by the flag-bearing front porches of small town, rural Illinois, Muna and Fadi settle into their new home with Muna's sister RAGHDA (Hiam Abbass), her husband NABEEL (Yussef Abu-Warda) and their three young daughters. Only then does Muna realize that what little money she brought with her was confiscated with a tin of cookies at customs. Completely broke yet too ashamed to tell her family, she begins her job search, but her bank experience seems irrelevant and her heavy accent doesn't get her very far. Then Muna discovers that Nabeel's patients – fueled by wartime patriotism - have abandoned his medical practice. Unable to pay their mortgage, Raghda and Nabeel risk losing their home. Caught in the middle of their financial crisis, Muna takes matters into her own hands and gets a job flipping burgers at White Castle. To avoid disappointing the family, she keeps the job a secret and passes herself off as a bank employee.

Meanwhile, Fadi is ostracized at his new high school because of a rumor that he's a terrorist. Anxious to fit in, he befriends his rebellious cousin and her boyfriend and soon finds himself getting into trouble at school. Worried about what's happening to her son, Muna marches into the school principal's office in search of answers. Instead, she finds the comfort of an unexpected friend.

Then the inevitable happens. Muna and Fadi's worlds collide, and Muna's secret is revealed. When Fadi seeks revenge on the one person he deems responsible for their hardship, Muna realizes that it's time to set her son straight. And ultimately, she teaches him a lesson that even she'll never forget.

A lighthearted drama full of humor, *Amreeka* is the story of one Palestinian family's sense of displacement, nostalgia for a home that exists but in their collective memory and struggle for a sense of belonging in a country that gives all newcomers a run for their money. It is also a glimpse into the secret lives of the first generation teenagers caught between their parents' ethnic heritage and the Western world in which they live.

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### CAST

#### **NISREEN FAOUR** (“Muna Farah”)

Actress/Director Nisreen Faour was born in the village of Tarshiha, and traveled to the U.S. to study arts and performance at the age of 16. Since then, she has gained expertise in theatre, cinema and on television.

On stage, she has performed in more than 15 plays for adult and children, and at international theatres all over the world. She played in *Sarhan and the Seniorita*, which won the Best Acting award at the Monodrama Festival in 1996; *Nono colors* from the deaf theater, which won first place in the Public Stage Festival in 2002; *Don Kichote* for Haifa international festival; *Albab Alaali* by the European Union production, written by the Jordanian writer Hisham Yanis; and *Happy Woman* by DarioFu and Franka Rama, produced by the national Palestinian theater and directed by Kamel al Basha.

On the big screen, her first cinema experience was *In the Eighth Month* with director Ali Nassar. This film was shown in the largest cinema houses both domestically and abroad in Los Angeles, Paris, Cartage, Iran, and at the Nazareth Film Festival where she received a Medal of Excellence for her distinguished work. Her second film as a leading actress is *Jamr Alhikaya (Whispering Embers)*. On television, her first roles were in the series *Family Deluxe* and *Mishwar Al-Joma*. A documentary film directed by Iraqi artist/director Mohammed Tawfiq features some stories about Nisreen’s life.

Nisreen practiced drama mentoring in schools and foundations for the special needs and in educational institutions, and took part in preparing women groups for plays. She recently finished her high studies in theater directing at Haifa University. She directed and acted in the play *The Princess That Hates Men*, and directed the novel *Anna Karenina* by the Russian author Tolstoy, which won an award in the Akko Festival in 2006.

For the past two years, Nisreen has focused on accomplishing her dream of increasing awareness of quality of life and the state of environment.

#### **MELKAR MUALLEM** (“Fadi Farah”)

Born in Jerusalem in 1993, Melkar Muallem is a talented young man who has been participating in drama workshops and playing in various productions since he was eight years old. At the age of 12, he won the Best Young Actor award at a children’s festival in Ramallah, Palestine. In 2008 he won a three-year spot at MEET, an MIT University program, for young people in computer science and business studies. *Amreeka* is his first movie.

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Cast continued...

### **HIAM ABBASS** (“Raghda Halaby”)

Hiam Abbass was born in Nazareth. She studied photography in Haifa and theatre in Jerusalem where she worked mainly on stage with different theatre troupes until she left her country in 1988. After a stay in London she settled in Paris, where her acting career in cinema began. She worked early on in French and Middle Eastern movies.

Her feature credits include *Azur Et Asmar (Free Zone)* co-starring with Natalie Portman; *Désengagement* with Juliette Binoche; *Aime Ton Père* with Gérard Depardieu; *Haïfa* with Mohammed Bakri; *Dialogue Avec Mon Jardinier* with Daniel Auteuil; *Vivre Au Paradis, L’Ange Du Goudron* by Quebequois Denis Chouinard; *Satin Rouge, The Syrian Bride* by Eran Riklis for which she was nominated for a European Film Award; *Munich*; *The Nativity Story*; and the Golden Globe winner and Academy Award nominated *Paradise Now*.

She also starred in Eran Riklis’ *Lemon Tree*, *La Fabrique Des Sentiments* with Elsa Zylberstein, *Un Roman Policier* with Olivier Marshal, and *Kandisha* with David Carradine and Saïd Tagmaoui. Prior to filming *Amreeka*, Hiam finished shooting Rie Rasmussen’s movie *Romance In The Dark* as well as Jim Jarmuch’s film *The Limits of Control*.

Hiam has written and directed two short films, *Le Pain* in 2000, and *La Danse Eternelle* in 2003. She worked as an acting coach on *Munich*, *Babel* by Alejandro Gonzales Innaritu, *The Nativity Story*, and *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* by Julian Schnabel, often helping children and other first-time actors to access their emotions for the camera.

### **ALIA SHAWKAT** (“Salma Halaby”)

Her career began at the young age of 11 when she landed a role on the ABC Family series *State of Grace*. However, she is best known for her role as Maebry Funke on Emmy award winning *Arrested Development*, where she portrayed a rebellious and mischievous member of a dysfunctional Orange County family trying to adjust to their loss of wealth. Most recently Shawkat was seen opposite William H. Macy and Cheryl Hines in the high-school comedy *Bart Got a Room* which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in April.

Shawkat can be seen in *Whip It*, a dramedy from first time director Drew Barrymore, about a misfit teenager who discovers herself through joining a roller derby league. She stars alongside Ellen Page as Pash, the funny and charming best friend of Bliss (Page) who helps keep her in check. Shawkat’s additional film credits include *Prom Wars*; *Rebound* opposite Martin Lawrence; the ensemble family comedy *Deck the Halls* with Matthew Broderick, Danny DeVito and Kristin Chenoweth; *Three Kings* opposite George Clooney; and the supporting lead in Ron Pearlman’s *Trail of Old Drum*.

### **YUSSEF ABU WARDA** (“Nabeel Halaby”)

Yussef Abu Warda is a theatre actor from Haifa. He has been in numerous musical theatre productions performing in both Hebrew and Arabic, and in theatres in Haifa, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. In 2002 he was nominated by the Israeli Film Academy for the Best Supporting Actor in the film *Kedma*, about immigrants from across Europe arriving in Palestine in 1948.

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### **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

#### **CHERIEN DABIS** (Director/Writer)

Born to Palestinian/Jordanian immigrant parents, award-winning independent filmmaker Cherien Dabis is a 2004-alumni of Columbia University's Masters of Fine Arts film program. She's made several short films, which have screened at some of the world's top film festivals. Her most recent, *Make A Wish* (2006), premiered at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival, Berlin International Film Festival as well as Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival where it won the Prix de la Presse and Mention Spéciale du Jury. The film went on to win top awards in Dubai, Rotterdam, Cairo, Big Bear Lake, Chicago and Aspen. Dabis received several generous grants in support of the film, including the National Geographic's All Roads Film Project Seed Grant, the Jerome Foundation's New York City Media Arts Grant as well as the New York State Council on the Art's Electronic Media and Film Distribution Grant.

A Sundance Middle East screenwriting fellow and IFP/LA Director's lab fellow, Dabis makes her feature film writing and directing debut with *Amreeka* (2009). The project was selected to participate in the 2006 Cannes Film Festival's Mediterranean Films Crossing Borders program and 2007 Berlinale Talent Project Market. In 2007, Dabis was honored with the L'Oréal Paris Women of Worth Vision Award at the Tribeca Film Festival. And last year, she won the Dubai Co-Production Market's top award. She is the recipient of an Artist Fellowship in Playwriting/Screenwriting from New York Foundation for the Arts, and more recently, Renew Media/Tribeca Film Institute's prestigious Media Artist Fellowship, founded by the Rockefeller Foundation.

Also an accomplished television Writer and Co-Producer, Dabis worked on Showtime Network's original hit series *The L Word* for three seasons. As a feature film screenwriter and graduate student at Columbia University, she was awarded several distinguished awards, including the Zaki Gordon Award for Excellence in Screenwriting, the Institute for Humane Studies Film and Fiction Scholarship and the New York Women in Film and Television Scholarship.

#### **CHRISTINA PIOVESAN** (Producer)

Christina Piovesan founded First Generation Films in 2007. Committed to producing quality film and television projects, *Amreeka* is FGF's first feature film. A US/Canada/Kuwait co-production, written and directed by Cherien Dabis, *Amreeka* was developed through the Sundance Screenwriter's Lab.

Other projects include *The Whistleblower*, a true life drama set up at HBO Films; an adaptation of Robert Hough's acclaimed novel *The Stowaway*; and a teenage drama titled *White & Rice* which recently won an honorable mention for Best Screenplay at the Tribeca Film Festival.

#### **PAUL BARKIN** (Producer)

A graduate of the Canadian Film Centre and champion of director driven films, Paul has produced for some of Canada's most talented directors through his company Alcina Pictures. Selected credits include *Night of the Living* by Andrew Currie (*Fido*); *Apartment Hunting* by Bill Robertson; *Kardia* by Su Rynard, recipient of the Alfred P. Sloan Film Prize at the 2005 Hamptons International Film Festival; and the critically acclaimed award-winning *The Tracey Fragments* by Bruce McDonald and starring Oscar® nominee Ellen Page.

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### ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

*Amreeka* is a story familiar to many immigrants who come to North America in search of a 'better' life. As so often happens, they find themselves nostalgic for 'home,' as they struggle to fit in and search for a sense of belonging in their new country. The film is based loosely on the experiences of Director/Writer Cherien Dabis and her Palestinian/Jordanian family.

"When people ask me where I'm from it's always kind of a confusing question," Dabis explains. "My parents immigrated to the U.S. right before I was born. I was born in Omaha, Nebraska, and grew up in rural Ohio, yet going back and forth to Jordan every summer. I wasn't American enough for the Americans, nor was I Arab enough for the Arabs. Or at least that's how I felt. So I never really felt like I was at home anywhere. My own desire for a place to call home, a place where I felt that I belonged, was always a very big part of my identity. On top of that, as a Palestinian, I inherited my father's identity crisis in not having a nation and not having a national identity, which only exacerbated my sense of not belonging anywhere."

"During the first Gulf War, we were very much scapegoated. We got death threats on a daily basis and the secret service came to my high school – this is how bad it got – to investigate a rumor that my older sister, my 16-year-old sister, threatened to kill the president. I was 14 years old at that time, and I sort of took everything that I'd learned in my travels back and forth from the Middle East to the U.S., and all the various news channels I'd watched from Arabic satellite to English news, and I started really questioning what people were telling us. I started seeing how the media was perpetuating the stereotypes that were directly affecting me in high school, and my family, in this small town."

In addition to becoming more media savvy from the experience, Dabis also began paying attention to movies, how they depicted Arabs in particular: "If we were ever depicted in Hollywood films, we were always terrorists. We were always the bad guys. I didn't see any portrayal of Arabs as regular people, as human. And I certainly didn't see my experience anywhere, so I set out to change that over the years, through many different incarnations."

"My experience as a 14-year-old during the first Gulf war was really what inspired *Amreeka*, and I carried that story with me throughout the years. When I finally went to film school in New York City in September 2001, and 9-11 hit and shortly thereafter, the U.S. was invading Iraq again, history was just repeating itself. I was hearing all these stories of backlash against Middle Easterners, and that was it. That was when I realized that it was time to sit down and write my version of the first ever Arab American coming-to-America story."

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### Developing the film

In the way that it was inspired, and in many other ways, *Amreeka* represents a very personal story for Cherien Dabis. Even the title she chose for the film – which means America in Arabic – can be related back to her personal experience as a young child. Dabis explains:

“My parents spoke Arabic at home, so I only learned English when I started school. I was really confused at first. In kindergarten I was sort of mixing Arabic and English. I would add i-n-g endings to the end of Arabic verbs, so I kind of had my own language. When I got older I started making fun of myself and saying that I speak Arabish.”

“*Amreeka* was my way of finding a title that for me was in the language I’m most comfortable speaking, in a movie that’s really this melding of two cultures, depicting my experience and the experience of so many other first generation immigrants.”

Cherien Dabis found a kindred cultural spirit in Producer Christina Piovesan of First Generation Films. Piovesan came across Dabis while searching for a project that would reflect her own experience of having immigrant parents:

“A lot of my films are foreign films or cultural films. It’s just something I’m interested in” says Piovesan. “My mother is Palestinian-Lebanese and my father is Italian. Even though I was born and raised in Toronto, I grew up in a culturally rich, mostly Arab home, so that is what I sought.”

Piovesan had been developing several feature projects and after a year of overseeing production of other people’s movies for Telefilm Canada, she was posed to make her first. Because of her own heritage, she became motivated to tell a story that reflected Arabic culture: “I decided that I wanted to see more films that reflected my cultural roots. Because my parents hadn’t been back to the Middle East since immigrating to Canada in the 1970’s, I had never experienced the culture first-hand. I felt that making a movie set in the world, about the culture, would give me the experience I craved. And it did.”

“I started to look for filmmakers who were Middle Eastern, Arab, or Arab Americans, and I found Cherien in a Filmmaker Magazine article. I emailed her, asked to read her script and loved it. From there we started talking and about 3 years later...here we are.”

Once on board as producer, Piovesan approached Kuwaiti-based Co-Producer Al-Zain, Al- Sabah. Former colleagues at USC film school, Piovesan hoped that Al-Sabah would help them source financing from the Middle East: “When figuring out the finance plan, I knew some of the funds had to come from the Middle East. As a cross-cultural film, the business needed to reflect the content. After knocking on a lot of doors, Zain brought us to Showtime Arabia and Rotana Studios. They ended up pre-buying the film for the Middle East.”

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### Telling the story

Despite the complexities of getting *Amreeka* off the ground and ready for camera, at the heart of it all remained a strong script that held tremendous meaning for Christina Piovesan: "Being able to tell a story that is from the culture that I grew up in is really exciting. It's what I know, and I feel so much a part of it. Most of our investors are Arabs or Arab-Americans, who are totally behind us, and we feel like we're nurturing a strong, clear Arab American voice that is bringing forward a positive representation of Arabs in the media."

"At the heart of it all is Cherien and her vision. As a producer, the most exciting part for me is being able to get behind an artist who is so focused and compelled to tell her story. It's been amazing to witness and be a part of."

The story Cherien Dabis wanted to tell was motivated by her family's own personal experiences. More specifically, certain characters were even inspired by actual family members, as Dabis explains: "The character of Muna is loosely based upon my aunt. By the time she immigrated to the U.S., I was old enough to see her struggle. The movie is a sort of heartbreaking and heartwarming story of a woman who is optimistically trying to start a new life in a climate where the odds are against her. But she's too full of hope to see the odds. That's my aunt, the ever-optimist. It was that quality in her that inspired the character of Muna."

"Muna's not just having to deal with what every new immigrant deals with, fitting into a new culture and environment. She also has to contend with the backlash of living in a country where there are extremely negative stereotypes of who she is and where she came from and where the political climate is not so friendly as a result.

Even though the aunt who inspired Muna immigrated to the U.S. from Jordan, Dabis decided to set the opening of the film in the West Bank. "A lot of Palestinians are leaving Palestine because of the occupation which can make life so unbearable. There's no freedom of movement. There's very little opportunity. The daily humiliations, the military presence, the aggression, the checkpoints, the bureaucracy. I wanted to show all of these reasons for why Palestinians are leaving.

"I also wanted to tell a story about someone leaving but finding that there is no better place. I mean, it is better in some senses, but there's still not that sense of home, there's still not that sense of belonging that we all seek. You're trading one set of problems for another. But I didn't want to end the film on such a depressing note. I wanted to show that ultimately home is wherever we choose to make it. Home is family. Home is the familiar voice of our mothers on the other end of the telephone. I wanted the film to end with the sense that Muna would do whatever she had to do to create a sense of home for both herself and her son. Because home has to be whatever and wherever we want it to be, especially if you're Palestinian."

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### The Cast and Characters

“Casting on this movie was incredibly challenging. I traveled all over North America. I also traveled to Paris and then all over the Middle East to Amman, Beirut, Haifa, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah. But I always knew that this movie really hinged upon finding the right actors.

The character of Muna Farah was especially important to cast correctly: “Muna is adorably naïve yet resourceful and full of hope. She is a really special character, loosely based on someone I love dearly. “Dabis found the right *Muna* in Nisreen Faour from the northern part of Palestine:

Nisreen herself believed in the character of Muna. “She’s very optimistic, a pure human being. She likes life, and survived her life in Ramallah and America. She wants the best for her son. She was raised to be kind to everyone. She’s a lonely person, but she wants to really live.”

Muna’s son is Fadi Farah. Cherien Dabis found the right actor in Melkar Muallem: “The thing about Melkar that really struck me is that he’s unusually intelligent for his age. He understands so much about the world, partly because of the fact that he lives where he lives - in Ramallah. He lives under occupation and understands what that means and what that’s like. He was also a kid who really wanted to leave, but he didn’t want to go to America, he wanted to go to Canada.

“There was something about him that was angry, yet bottled up, and there was something about him that was political, yet refusing to be. You see that he’s a kid, yet he has a maturity about him, and he has the ability to be the man as well, which is what I was looking for.

Muallem wanted to be part of *Amreeka* to positively influence the stereotypes about his culture: “I wanted to change the view of American people about Palestinians. They all think that we all are terrorists, and from an early age we train to make bombs. This is totally wrong – we’re just human beings like anyone else, and learn the same stuff in school. I think you’ve got good people and bad people everywhere.”

Fadi’s aunt in the film is Raghda. She is the sister of Muna, who immigrated to America many years before Muna and Fadi. Cherien Dabis met her Raghda at the Berlin Film Festival, Hiam Abbass, a Palestinian who grew up in Israel before moving to London and eventually Paris.

Hiam Abbass describes why she wanted to be part of the film: “I like these kinds of scripts because they have a real touch to the human side of people living their life, but at the same time, in the context of a movie about immigration, and how people deal with it. It’s really about their human journey within a period of time in their life. Each character has a part to play where you just sympathize with their human journey of what they have to deal with in that period of time.

“It’s a question of what integrating would be like for them, when society is not really inviting them in much. Especially when you are Palestinian, especially when you come from that country – how do you integrate into a society that doesn’t really want you there? The mixture between religion and identity, religion and nationality, in people’s minds sometimes they get so mixed up that for them, if you’re an Arab, you’re a Muslim. It’s one-sided and they just can’t see the aspects of your humanity.”

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### Making the movie

Accurately reflecting Middle Eastern culture was an integral part of making *Amreeka*. Cherien Dabis explains: “One of the most important things for me in this movie was to create a sense of intimacy and authenticity. I want people to walk out of the theater feeling like they know us; like they’d just celebrated the culture with us. I ultimately want people to walk away with a sense of hope that stereotypes aren’t necessary, that there are all kinds of Middle Eastern people.”

To take on the task of designing *Amreeka* – both in Canada and Palestine – Dabis used Production Designer Aidan Leroux. What he found most interesting was the people story within the movie: “I really liked the human drama between Muna and Fadi, and the struggle that she had in terms of her identity and beliefs, coming from Palestine and moving to America.”

The story of *Amreeka* begins in the West Bank and shifts to Illinois when Muna and Fadi move to the U.S. Filming took place in Winnipeg to double for the look of rural Illinois. When it came to Palestine, though, the unique look of it insisted it really couldn’t be shot anyplace else. So five days were scheduled to shoot in Ramallah after wrap of the Canadian production schedule.

“We location scouted in Ramallah first,” Leroux says. “Just architecturally, you know, Ramallah’s so interesting. It’s so different from North America, so it sets the tone for the whole film.”

“It would have been kind of a desperate situation if we were cheating Ramallah in Hamilton or Toronto. There’s a real kind of uniformity and homogeneity to the architectural and natural landscape, which we found interesting. The quality of light is kind of warmer and nicer. We used that as a starting point and counterbalanced that with more artificial light in some of our institutional-type buildings in the U.S., in which we’re using overhead fluorescent lighting.”

When it came to the inside of Raghda and Nabeel’s house, Leroux explains that he and Dabis wanted it to look authentic and not over the top: “The house was a pretty important set for us. I thought it was going to be a problem because finding a house with the kind of Middle Eastern furnishings that Dabis wanted in Winnipeg was possibly going to be quite difficult, and then we’d have to bring everything in from Toronto.”

“So our strategy was to seek out Arab families in Winnipeg who might be interested in supporting our production. We found a Palestinian family from Ramallah, actually, which was kind of an interesting coincidence. They happened to have three daughters who were roughly the same age as our three daughters in the script. And they had decorated their house and brought in curtains and everything from Ramallah, which would have been pretty expensive for us to do in terms of the art department.”

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### Director's Notes

It took my immigrant father fourteen years to build a successful medical practice in the U.S., but only days for it to crumble when his patients abandoned him during the 1991 Gulf War. Around the same time, the secret service paid a visit to my high school to investigate a rumor that my 16-year old sister threatened to kill the President. Like most immigrants, my family arrived in the U.S. expecting the American dream. But what they were met with was something else entirely. It is precisely this story of immigrant struggle that drove me to write *Amreeka*.

Loosely based on my family's experiences, *Amreeka* delves into the lives of a Palestinian American family living in rural Illinois during the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Exposing the attitudes that wartime patriotism often fuels, the heart of the narrative encapsulates the profound and eternal, yet often-elusive human search for belonging and acceptance. While the story blends drama and comedy, the delicate balance in the crafting of the comedy is the result of ensuring that the humor is directly connected to the humanity and vulnerability of the characters.

My goal in the direction of *Amreeka* was to create a sense of authenticity, realism and intimacy. I looked to auteurs such as John Cassavetes, Mike Leigh, and Robert Altman as models for their verité techniques. The film was shot in a handheld, semi-documentary style with a main cast of Arab and Arab American actors. In working with the actors, I employed improvisational techniques in order to achieve natural performances and capture the honesty of human emotion unembellished. In addition, the blocking of the actors and choreography of the camera was carefully planned so as to feel organic, un-staged and entirely true-to-life.

The familiarity of Muna's West Bank home was realized through warm, washed out tones that capture the earthy color palette of the West Bank, the sage greens, mineral reds and sandy browns of the desert. This was represented in contrast with the vibrant, saturated reds, blues and sterile whites of the American Midwest in the wintertime. The loud colors and blown-out whites signify the unfamiliarity of Muna's new surroundings.

The cool natural light of a gloomy Midwest illuminates the harsh realities of Muna's world. Lonely silhouettes and darkness provide a sense of both intimacy and estrangement. The 2:35 aspect ratio ensures that our characters are always seen in the context of their surroundings. They're rarely alone in the frame. But when they are, the oblong frame really emphasizes the loneliness and isolation that they feel.

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### Main Cast

Muna Farah	NISREEN FAOUR
Fadi Farah	MELKAR MUALLEM
Raghda Halaby	HIAM ABBASS
Salma Halaby	ALIA SHAWKAT
Nabeel Halaby	YUSSEF ABU WARDA
Mr. Novatski	JOSEPH ZIEGLER
Samer	AMER HLEHEL
Lamis Halaby	SELENA HADDAD
Rana Halaby	JENNA KAWAR
Jamileh	SUHEILA MUALLEM
Matt	BRODIE SANDERSON
James	ANDREW SANNIE
Mike	DANIEL BOITEAU
Jason	JEFF SUTTON
Bank Employee	MIRIAM SMITH
Nelson	GLEN THOMPSON
Bank Manager	MIKE O'BRIEN
Police Officer #1	AARON HUGHES
Police Officer #2	CRAIG MATTHEW BARKMAN
Young Israeli Soldier #1	ADHAM NUAMAN
Young Israeli Soldier #2	ABED ABED EL LATIF
Mr. Jones	TOM ANNIKO
Arab Bank Teller	BAYAN SHBIB
Arab Bank Co-Worker	YACOUB ISMAIL
Belligerent Customer	AKRAM MALKY
Cousin #1	BAHA' SALAMEH
Muna's Sister #1	IMAN AOUN
Muna's Sister #2	RAEDA GHAZALA
Ex-Husband	ABDEL FATAH ABU SROUR
Angry Driver	HUSSEIN NAKHLEH
Young Wife	MANAL HILANEH
US Airport Customs Official	WILL WOYTOWICH
Female Airport Official	KRISTEN SAWATZKY
Male Airport Official	ERNIE PITTS
Grocery Store Cashier	MAGALLY ZELAYA

**AMREEKA**  
**CREW**

Written and Directed by	CHERIEN DABIS
Produced by	CHRISTINA PIOVESAN
Producer	PAUL BARKIN
Co-Producers AL-ZAIN AL-SABAH	LIZ JARVIS
Executive Producers CHERIEN DABIS GREG KEEVER	ALICIA SAMS
Director of Photography	TOBIAS DATUM
Production Designer	AIDAN LEROUX
Costume Designer	PATRICIA HENDERSON
Editor	KEITH REAMER
Composer	KAREEM ROUSTOM
Music Supervisor	DOUG BERNHEIM
Production Manager	DAVID TILL
1 <sup>st</sup> Assistant Director	DAVID ANTONIUK
2 <sup>nd</sup> Assistant Director	RICHARD DUFFY DANIELLE DUMESNIL
Art Director	LAURA SOUTER
Graphic Artist	GARY BARRINGER
Art Department Assistant	REED MAKAYEV JASON WILKINS
Set Decorator	SCOTT ROSSELL