

OMI MOUNA'S SECRET

A Film By MOHSEN EL GHARBI



SCRIPT MOHSEN EL GHARBI IMAGES XAVIER VAN DEN DOOREN MUSIC MOUSTAPHA BEN MESSAOUD
SOUND XAVIER VAN DEN DOOREN & YECINE MELJANI SOUND-MIXING FRANCIS GAUTHIER ADVISER BACHIR BENSADDEK
PATRICK CADY HAJER TEBINI PRODUCTION TUKABE COPRODUCTION XAVIER VAN DEN DOOREN PRODUCTION / SN PRODUCTION

tukabe XYDD PRODUCTION SN PRODUCTION

A faded, purple-tinted photograph of a man in a suit walking through a field. The man is seen from the side, walking towards the left. The background is a soft-focus landscape with trees and a bright sky.

Synopsis

A man attempts to work his way toward the source of the violence he suffered in his youth at the hands of his father.

He fears he may have inherited this violence within himself. Thus ensues an encounter with Omi Mouna, the man's 100-year-old great-grandmother, who holds the scars of this tale hidden in the fog of her memory.



Director's note

I always felt that my life was in danger from my father. No one was allowed to say a word. That may be why I have written and performed monologues. Today, I am once again poring over archival images that were the starting point of my series of shows and that will be the starting point of a larger theatrical production I have in the works, titled Karma.

In March 2000, I traveled to Tunisia with the intention of producing a documentary about my great-grandmother. I was drawn to this cheerful one-hundred-year-old woman whom everyone admired for her courage.

That is when I traced the source of the violence I had suffered. Omi Mouna did not have much to say on the topic. Was this because of her foggy memory, or because she wanted to forget the history I was seeking to uncover? I had to turn to other witnesses to uncover the root of the evil. First I had to understand that I was venturing into a minefield, because one does not speak ill of the dead. It is simply not done. Worse still, it brings ill fortune to the dead! Faced with this cultural impasse, I decided not to make the film I had hoped to create, for lack of material. I did weave the stories I had been told in Tunisia into my monologues, *Omi Mouna I* and *Omi Mouna (II) ou ma recncontre fantastique avec mon arrière-grand-mère*.

Today, as I decide to revisit these images, I rediscover the consequences that can flow from the abuse inflicted by the head of a clan on his family. Violent abuse that my great-grandmother, Omi Mouna, and her children experienced until my great-grandfather's death. I discover how Omi Mouna rejected this violence and how, despite her best efforts, the abuse was handed down to me by my own father.

All I can do is strive to understand how abuse is perpetuated throughout the world. I can't help seeing all violence as part of the same phenomenon, be it the abuse exerted by the head of a clan over his people, that of a tyrant over his country or that of a self-proclaimed group that enforces its power with barbaric acts.



Mohsen El Gharbi

Biography

Born in Antwerp to a Belgian Flemish mother and a Tunisian father, Mohsen El Gharbi graduated from LASSAD, the International School of Theatre in Brussels. He went on to perfect his craft under masters of the theatre: Ariane Mouchkine, Dario Fo and Yoshi Oida. Having settled in Montreal in 1997, he wrote his first drama two years later: *Arlequin et Tyrano* was directed by Yves Dagenais. In 2000, he joined the Pol Pelletier theatre company, after which he left for Brussels to create – after a year of improvisation – *Omi Mouna*, his first monologue written in Dutch. This was followed two years later by *Omi Mouna ou ma rencontre fantastique avec mon arrière-grand-mère* (Omi Mouna or my fantastic encounter with my great-grandmother), a tragicomedy that he wrote, performed and directed. In 2008, this one-man band put on the ironic monologue *Juste pour mourir – monologue d'un kamikaze raté* (Just for death - monologue of a failed kamikaze) at the Festival du Monde Arabe de Montréal. He played the lead in the Quebec television series *Mon meilleur Ennemi*, *Watatatow* and *450 chemin du Golf*, as well as in *La neige cache l'ombre des figuiers*, a short film directed by Samer Najiri that won several awards, including at the Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois in 2010. He created *Le dernier rôle* (The last role) in 2014, his fifth work as a playwright and his third as a director. He is one of the 43 cast members of Mani Soleymannou's most recent work, *Trois*. He recently performed in *L'énigme de Camus - une passion algérienne* by Jean-Marie Papapietro and in *Les trois mousquetaires, plomberie* by Satellite Théâtre. His short film *Omi Mouna's Secret* marks his first foray into the film world.

Theatrography

Arlequin et Tyrano

Author and actor
Montreal, 1999

Omi Mouna (partie I)

Author and actor
Brussels, 2001 - tour in Flanders

Omi Mouna

ou ma rencontre fantastique avec mon arrière-grand-mère (partie II)

Author, actor and director
Brussels, 2002 - tour in Québec and Montreal

Juste pour mourir - monologue d'un kamikaze raté !

Author, actor and director
Montreal, 5e salle de la Place des Arts, 2006 and 2007 - Tunisia 2008

Le dernier rôle

Author, actor and director
Montreal, 2014



Press review

TV5MONDE - Report of Catherine François broadcast on the news and in Maghreb-Orient Express.

Nomad TV -Report on nomadlive.tv

Revue Liberté (Art et politique) n° 313 - Les Créatifs culturels, Êtes-vous un CC ? -Suzanne Jacob

WHO DOES WHAT - Vues d'Afrique : 16 ans plus tard - Article Justine Baillargeon.

VM Radio: 91.3 FM - Interview with Marilou Brousseau

CFMB Radio: 1280AM - Interview with Silvio Orvieto

To see and hear the interviews go on <http://tukabe.com/medias/>

Technical Sheet

Omi Mouna's secret

Short documentary - 25 min - Canada 2016

ProRes 422 : Originale version in french and arabic - with french subtitles
(english subtitles available)

Director / Screenwriter : Mohsen El Gharbi

Producers : Mohsen El Gharbi and Xavier Van Den Dooren

Original music : Moustapha Ben Messaoud

Adviser, directing and screenwriting : Bachir Bensaddek

Artistic advisers : Patrick Cady

Images and sound : Xavier Van Den Dooren

Editing : Mohsen El Gharbi

Voice-over recording : Yecine Meliani

Sound mixing : Francis Gauthier

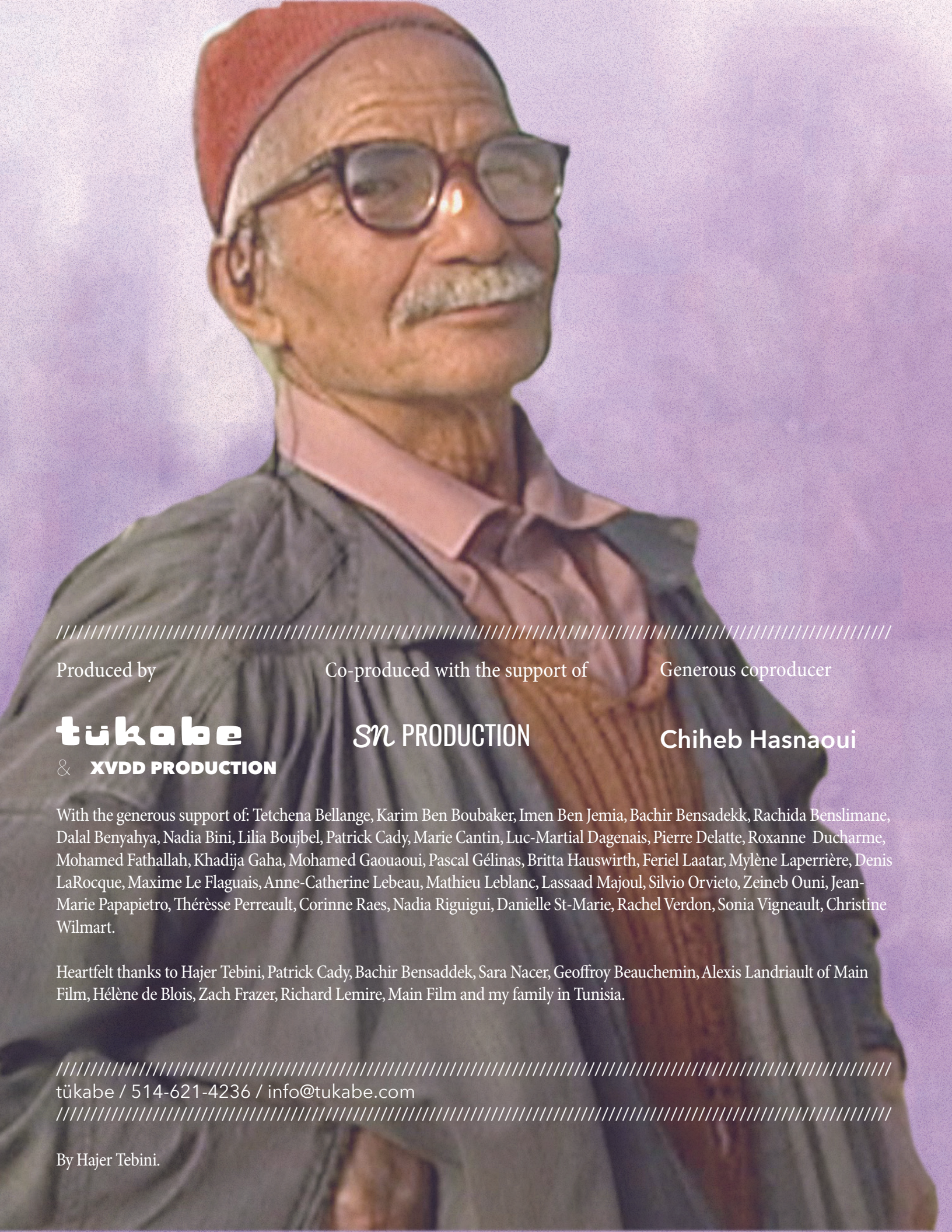
English translation : Joan McCordick

Production : tükabe and XVDD Production

Coproduction : SN-Production

Trailer, photos, downloadable poster and press kit on our website : <http://www.tukabe.com/le-secret-d-omi-mouna>

Request the password to view the film on Vimeo : <https://vimeo.com/156968276>



Produced by

Co-produced with the support of

Generous coproducer

tukabe
& **XVDD PRODUCTION**

SN PRODUCTION

Chiheb Hasnaoui

With the generous support of: Tetchena Bellange, Karim Ben Boubaker, Imen Ben Jemia, Bachir Bensaddek, Rachida Benslimane, Dalal Benyahya, Nadia Bini, Lilia Boujbel, Patrick Cady, Marie Cantin, Luc-Martial Dagenais, Pierre Delatte, Roxanne Ducharme, Mohamed Fathallah, Khadija Gaha, Mohamed Gaouaoui, Pascal Gélina, Britta Hauswirth, Feriel Laatar, Mylène Laperrière, Denis LaRocque, Maxime Le Flaguais, Anne-Catherine Lebeau, Mathieu Leblanc, Lassaad Majoul, Silvio Orvieto, Zeineb Ouni, Jean-Marie Papapietro, Thérèse Perreault, Corinne Raes, Nadia Riguigui, Danielle St-Marie, Rachel Verdon, Sonia Vigneault, Christine Wilmart.

Heartfelt thanks to Hajer Tebini, Patrick Cady, Bachir Bensaddek, Sara Nacer, Geoffroy Beauchemin, Alexis Landriault of Main Film, Hélène de Blois, Zach Frazer, Richard Lemire, Main Film and my family in Tunisia.

tukabe / 514-621-4236 / info@tukabe.com

By Hajer Tebini.