

Oriented

Movie Guide

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Director: Jake Witzenfeld

Release Date: 2015

Runtime: 1h 26m

Content Warnings: Homophobia, Scenes of war and violence, Racism, Use of Drugs, Consumption of Alcohol, Smoking

Accessing the Movie

Oriented can be streamed on [YouTube](#) or [Amazon Prime Video](#) with a Dekkoo subscription. It can also be rented on [YouTube](#) for \$3.99 SD/\$4.99 HD, [Amazon](#) for \$4.99 HD, or [Vudu](#) for \$2.99 SD/\$3.99 HD.

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This guide provides content that may be helpful in understanding the film and additional interesting information. We also recommend reviewing IATF and iCenter's worksheet [Exploring the Topics of Arab Citizens and Jewish-Arab Relations in Israel](#) for introductory background information on Arab Citizens of Israel. The source sheet companion is [here](#).



Movie Information

- Director Jake Witzenfeld, worked closely with Khader Abu-Seif, who starred in the film. Khader remains an activist and civil society leader in Jaffa.
- While the cast lives in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, they come from villages in Northern Israel. Most Arab citizens live in the Northern and Southern peripheries in Arab communities.
- Early in the film, a Jewish-Israeli asks Khader about his political identity. Among Arab citizens of Israel, answers range and fluctuate over time, context, and political discourse. With Israeli citizenship, and Arab and Palestinian cultural, historical, ethnic, and family connections, Arab citizens of Israel are at once Israeli, Palestinian, Arab (male, female, Muslim, Christian, Druze, and more).



Tel Aviv Street Art (Top), Jaffa Street Art (Bottom)

Historical Context

- Much of the film takes place during summer 2014, a challenging period in Israel that shapes the character's lives but is not explained in detail.
- In June 2014, three Jewish teens, Naftali Fraenkel, Gilad Shaer and Eyal Yifrah, were kidnapped in the West Bank and murdered by Palestinians with connections to Hamas. In July, a Palestinian teenager, Mohammad Abu Khdeir, was kidnapped and murdered by extremist Jewish Israelis. These events contributed to the outbreak of the 2014 Gaza War.

Recent Developments

A number of events happened in recent years that made the topic of LGBTQ+ inclusion in Arab society in Israel more widely recognized and discussed:



Julia Zaher, an Arab citizen who owns one of Israel's most successful Tahina companies, made a large donation to [The Agudah Association for LGBTQ Equality in Israel](#) to open an Arabic-language hotline. This [proved controversial](#) in Arab society but also generated important community conversations.



The Knesset passed a bill banning gay conversion therapy. Ayman Odeh, the head of the Joint List, which, at the time, included four Arab political parties, [voted for the bill](#). Some members of the Joint List joined him, some abstained, and others voted against it. At the time, this was a rare display of disagreement and disrupted politics in Arab society in Israel.



In 2021, Ra'am this Islamic Movement, [split from the Joint List](#). One of the numerous reasons for the split was divisions on support for LGBTQ+ issues.

3 Organizations Supporting LGBTQ+ Arab Citizens of Israel

- The Agudah Association for LGBTQ Equality in Israel, which was featured in the film, has specific culturally sensitive programs for Arabic speakers.
- [Al Qaws](#) (rainbow in Arabic) is an organization founded by Arab citizens of Israel. A strong Palestinian identity is core to their work.
- [Aswat - Palestinian Feminist Center for Gender and Sexual Freedom](#), founded by Arab citizens of Israel, defines itself as, "a vibrant feminist-queer movement for sexual and gender freedoms in Palestinian society."



Discussion Questions

1. What is one image or moment that stuck out to you from the documentary. Why?
2. Did anything the cast experienced feel familiar to you or people in your life? What felt different?
3. Khader describes his social circle as, “a new Palestinian generation you haven’t yet had a chance to meet.” What is your familiarity or experience with Arab society in Israel? Did anything surprise you about any of the people presented in the film?
4. If you had the opportunity to ask Khader, Fadi, Naeem, or Nagham a question what would you ask them? Why?
5. Khader, Fadi, and Naeem identify as Palestinian-Israeli, expressing that they feel they are minorities within a minority. How do you think their LGBTQ+ identity and political and national identities might inform and shape each other?
6. During the film, the cast engaged in political debates, engaged with their families, and evolved in their perspectives. What diversity within Arab society did you see in the film? How did the characters change?



Further Resources

- ['We're Fighting Two Fights Here': Being Gay and Palestinian in Israel - Vice - Matthew Schultz - 11.29.2015](#)
- [What It Really Means to Be Queer and Palestinian in Israel and the West Bank - Haaretz - Sheren Falah Saab - 6.9.2022](#)
- [We Cannot, as Arabs, Ignore the LGBTQ Fight – Haaretz - Ibtisam Mara'ana- 1.5.2023](#)