

Becorp Inc.
Presents

(إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

*BENEATH
WHICH RIVERS
FLOW*

Film By Ali Yahya

World premiere at the 75th Berlin International Film Festival - Berlinale

Generation 14plus

Official Selection



(Iraq, 16 min, Documentary, 2025)

SHORT SYNOPSIS

In the marshlands of southern Iraq, Ibrahim feels like a stranger in the world. His sole companion is his faithful buffalo. But a looming environmental catastrophe threatens the only life he knows and the one living being he truly understands.

SYNOPSIS

In the marshlands of southern Iraq, Ibrahim and his family live isolated from the rest of the world, deeply intertwined with the river, the reeds, and the animals they tend. The quiet and withdrawn Ibrahim finds solace only in his buffalo, his one true companion. One morning, a dense fog blankets the marshes, and Ibrahim senses an ominous shift in the land. The rivers begin to dry up, and the earth cracks. As Ibrahim's world collapses, he must confront forces beyond his control that threaten not only his way of life but also the one living creature he truly understands



BENEATH WHICH RIVERS FLOW (إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When I first visited the marshlands of Southern Iraq, I had no intention of making a film. I was there with friends, documenting the severe drought through photography. During this journey, I encountered Ibrahim, a young buffalo herder whose reaction to the camera immediately caught my attention. He refused to be photographed, pulling a blanket over himself in an effort to avoid being seen. His response fascinated me. I wondered, why is he afraid in this way? Later, I realized that Ibrahim faces mental challenges, yet despite these challenges, he lives in his environment without fear of its natural elements. I understood then that Ibrahim's fear wasn't of his surroundings, but of things that don't resemble his world.

This led me to see that Ibrahim is someone profoundly connected to his world in the most genuine way—he perceives what we cannot see. This realization drove me to explore Ibrahim's world, his fears, and the life he inhabits. He was silent most of the time, lost in thought, as if his mind wandered to places beyond our understanding. I felt a deep urge to discover what was going on in his mind, as if he was aware of something invisible to others. This curiosity became the seed for the film.

I wanted to structure the film in a way that mirrors the reality of his life. Time in the film reflects his experience—death repeats itself for him, as his buffaloes die one after another. This led me to construct the film through three intertwined timelines: past, present, and future. These temporal layers merge with the landscape, creating a narrative that resonates with the cycles of loss and endurance.

Life in the marshes is harsh. I saw how drought and the loss of livestock deeply affected Ibrahim and his family, yet they clung to their ancient way of life with quiet perseverance. The people of the marshes feel that silence is their last form of resistance in the face of what is happening. Ibrahim, too, remained mostly silent, expressing his emotions through his presence rather than words. I wanted this silence to shape the film's narrative.

I decided that no one in the film should speak, just as in the marshes, people do not articulate the depth of their suffering—they simply feel the weight of the catastrophe. Instead, I sought to translate their emotions into a language of sound. The film's imagery remains grounded in realism for the most part, but it is not purely realistic. I wanted to visualize Ibrahim's fears—the looming presence of an external world that he feels is encroaching upon them. I

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

tried to depict this fear in a way that immerses the audience, allowing them to experience his anxieties about what is coming. The soundscape becomes an internal expression of Ibrahim's emotions and the collective grief of the marshland people. Through sound, I aimed to convey an emotional language of death, loss, and resistance.

Working with Ibrahim and the marshes has been a journey of discovery—not just of his world, but also of my own creative instincts. I aim to approach my work with curiosity and openness, driven by a genuine desire to understand and document human experiences with honesty. Ultimately, my goal is to immerse viewers in Ibrahim's world, to share in his sorrow and uncertainty, and to evoke the profound sense of loss that comes with watching an ancient way of life fade away.

CREDIT:

A Film By: Ali Yahya

Produced By: Becorp Inc.

Producer: Jafar Sadik

Screenplay: Ali Yahya/ Mohammed Baz

Cinematographer: Ali Ameer

Editor: Akram Sadoon

Music by: Khayam Al Lami

Sound Design: Ahmed Raed / Munaf Mohammed

Colorist: Tony Ameer

Line Producer: Ali Falah

Concept art: Moharek Studio

Location Manager: Mohammed Mlaghy

Production Manager: Mohammed Abo Ragheef

VFX & CGI by: Timeline Studio

1st Assistant Camera: Saif Zayed

2nd Assistant Camera: Mohammed Jabbar

Graphic Designer: Mohammed Ameer

Transportation Coordinator: Oday Jasim

Equipment Transportation: Shamil Mlaghy

Special thanks to the World Health Organization in Iraq
for licensing footage featured in this film

CAMERA AND IMAGE SPECIFICATIONS:

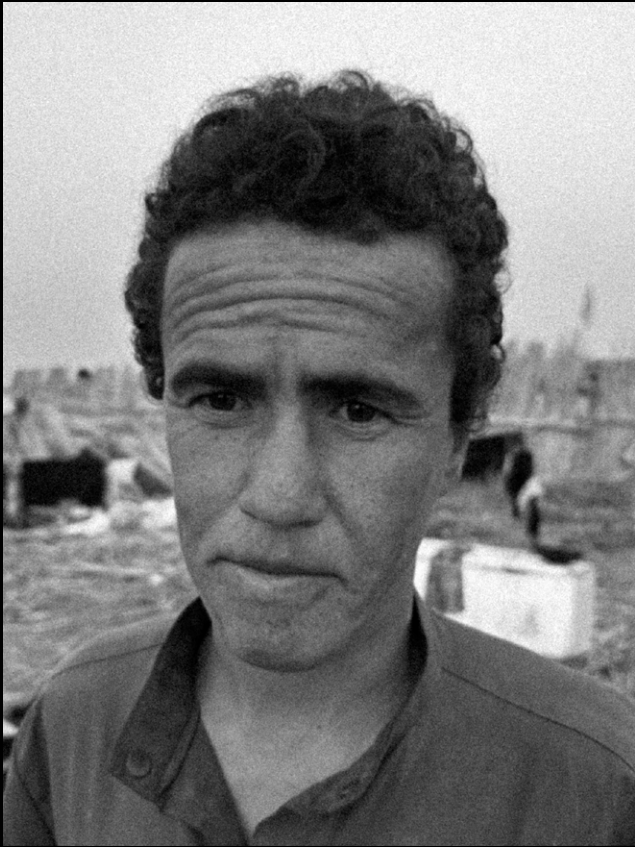
Camera: ARRI Alexa Mini

Image Format: ProRes 444

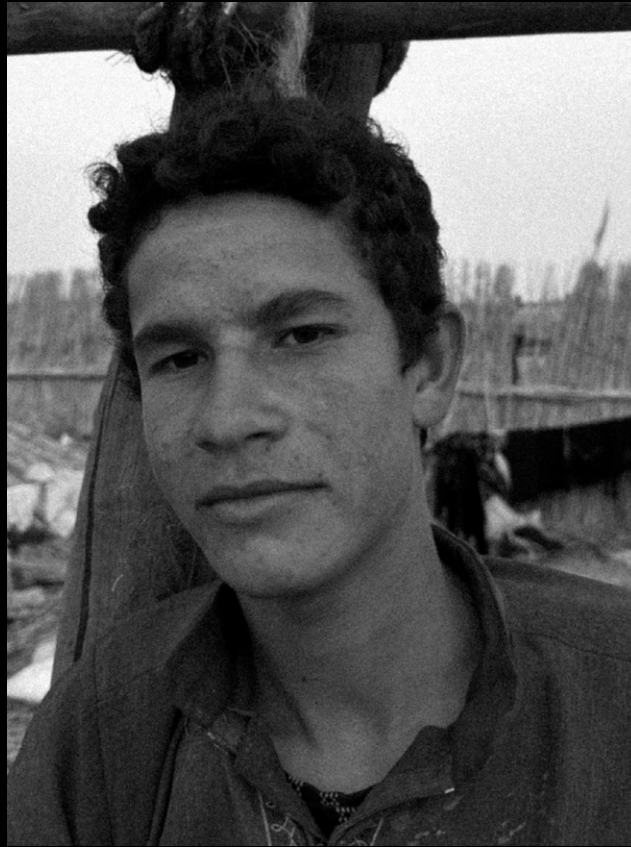
Aspect Ratios: 3:4 and 16:9

Color: Black & White and Color

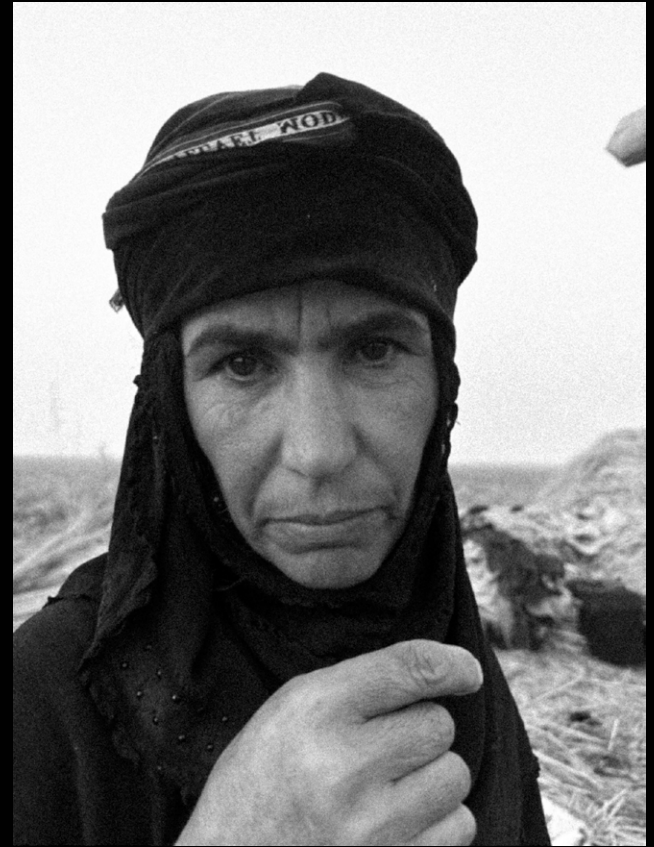
CAST:



Ibrahim Halim



Karim Halim



Hakima Ali

BTS:





BENEATH WHICH RIVERS FLOW (إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY:

Ali Yahya is an Iraqi filmmaker. Born in 1994, he has lived and worked his entire life in Baghdad—a city where history and chaos intertwine, shaping both memory and identity. His journey into storytelling didn't begin with cinema but with an exploration of the human mind, studying mental health and psychology to understand the silent battles we carry within.

For seven years, he navigated the world of ideas as a Creative Director at one of Baghdad's leading creative agencies. There, he discovered that storytelling isn't just about crafting narratives; it's about capturing fleeting moments of existence—the echoes of voices often unheard, the spaces between words, and the emotions that resist definition.

Ali's first step into filmmaking came with "Beneath Which Rivers Flow", a film born not from ambition but from curiosity—a desire to explore the fragile threads that connect humanity to nature, fear to belonging, and life to its inevitable transformations. For him, cinema is not merely a medium; it's a vessel to question, to feel, and to exist beyond the tangible.

Through his work, Ali does not seek to provide answers but to illuminate the questions that define us—the quiet struggles, the overlooked beauty, and the existential weight of simply being. To him, cinema is an invitation: to witness, to reflect, and to discover the unseen layers of both the world and ourselves.





BENEATH WHICH RIVERS FLOW (إبراهيم)

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY:

This film marks my debut as a director and my first experience working with Ibrahim, a young buffalo herder whose life is deeply intertwined with the marshlands of Southern Iraq. It is not a traditional documentary but a blend of documentary and fiction, allowing me to explore the blurred lines between reality and narrative.

As a filmmaker, I am drawn to the experimental and exploratory aspects of storytelling. I see this hybrid form as a medium that offers the freedom to delve into stories and characters in their rawest form, capturing the interplay between their inner lives and their external realities.

Working with Ibrahim and the marshes has been a journey of discovery—not just of his world, but also of my own creative instincts. I aim to approach my work with curiosity and openness, letting the story guide me rather than imposing a rigid structure. This approach allows me to explore both the visible and invisible layers of a narrative, offering audiences an authentic and intimate experience.

This first project has not only shaped my perspective as a filmmaker but also deepened my understanding of the power of cinema to reveal universal truths through deeply personal stories, where fact and fiction intertwine.



BENEATH WHICH RIVERS FLOW (إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

OFFICIAL POSTER:

A Film by
ALI YAHYA



Cinematographer
ALI AMEER

(إِبْرَاهِيمَ)
*BENEATH
WHICH RIVERS
FLOW*

Writer and Director **ALI YAHYA** Co-Writer **MOHAMMED BAZ** Cinematographer **ALI AMEER** Music By **KHAYAM ALLAMI** Editor **AKRAM SADOON**
Line producer **ALI FALAH** Sound Design & Mixing **AHMED RAED** Sound Recorder **MANAF MOHAMMED** Colorist **TONY AMEER** 1st Ac **SAIF ZAYED** 2nd Ac **MOHAMMED JABAR**
Poster Design **MOHAMMED AMEER** Produced By **BECORP.INC**



For Ibrahim, His Family and the People of the Marshes

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