



FEATHERS

by Omar El Zohairy

France, Egypt, The Netherlands, Greece
2021 | 112' | Drama



SYNOPSIS

When a magic trick goes awry at a children's birthday party, the authoritative father of the family turns into a chicken. An avalanche of coincidental absurdities befalls everyone; the mother, whose mundane life was dedicated to her husband and children, is now urged to come to the fore and take care of her family. While moving heaven and earth to bring her husband back and secure their survival, she goes through a total transformation.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Omar El Zohairy studied film directing at the High Institute of Cinema in Cairo and worked as an assistant director on feature films of Egypt's most prominent filmmakers, including Yousri Nasrallah. Zohairy's first short film, *Breathe Out (Zafir)*, premiered at the 8th Dubai International Film Festival and won the Muhr Special Jury Prize for Short Films. His second short film, *The Aftermath of the Inauguration of the Public Toilet at Kilometre 375*, was the first Egyptian film to be selected for the Cinéfondation competition at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival, the film went on to win several awards around the world. His first feature film, *FEATHERS*, will premiere in the competition of the Critics Week of Cannes in 2021.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

After studying film directing at the Egyptian Academy of Arts – Higher Institute of Cinema, I directed two short films, *Breathe Out (Zafir)* and *The Aftermath of the Inauguration of the Public Toilet at Kilometer 375*, the first Egyptian film to compete in the Cannes Film Festival Cinéfondation in 2014.

Feathers started from a very simple idea I had six years ago. It is the story of a man who turns into a chicken and there's serious evidence of it; it is neither a joke nor a conspiracy. Through this parable, I wanted to capture a part of the difficult life an ordinary Egyptian family leads. Having to face this absurd situation, the members of this family reacts without really thinking. But they're actually stuck. Exactly because they are anti-heroes, nobody cares about them or their issues. I feel very close to that situation and therefore, from the moment the idea of making the film came to me, I became completely obsessed.

I was inspired by many things and I have a deep connection with the Egyptian culture, especially with its cinematic and music heritage. Filmmakers, such as Youssef Chahine, Mohamed Khan, Khairy Beshara, Yousry Nasrallah, Oussama Fawzy as well as Robert Bresson, Aki Kaurismaki and Jacques Tati inspired me for this film. It is built as a poem, through which I try to make the audience feel the essence of our lives. In directing the film, I tried to build a bridge between the characters and us so that we can feel what they feel. I wanted to be as sincere with them and their fears as I could, without labelling or judging them.

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

Breathe out | 2011 | short

The Aftermath of the Inauguration of the Public Toilet at Kilometre 375 | 2014 | short

Feathers | 2021

MAIN CREDITS

Title: Feathers

Original title: Feathers

Directed by: Omar El Zohairy

Written by: Ahmed Amer, Omar El Zohairy

Cast: Demyana Nassar, Samy Bassiouny, Fady Mina Fawzy, Abo Sefen Nabil Wesa, Mohamed Abd El Hady

Produced by: Still Moving (France)

Co-produced by: Film Clinic (Egypt), Lagoonie Film Production (Egypt), Kepler Film (The Netherlands), Heretic (Greece)

Producer: Juliette Lepoutre

Co-producers: Mohamed Hefzy, Shahinaz Al Akkad, Derk-Jan Warrink, Koji Nelissen, Giorgos Karnavas, Konstantinos Kontovrakis, Verona Meier, Pierre Menahem

Associate Producer: Daniel Ziskind

Countries of production: France, Egypt, The Netherlands, Greece

Cinematography by: Kamal Samy

Editing by: Hisham Saqr

Production design by: Asem Ali

Costumes by: Heba Hosny

Make-up by: Eslam Alex, Donia Sedki

Assistant director: Ahmed Emad

Sound by: Ahmed Adnan

Sound mix by: Niels Barletta

Head of production: Samer Salah

Executive Producer: Mohamed El Raie

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