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LAND OF DREAMS



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LAND OF DREAMS

A film directed by Shirin Neshat & Shoja Azari

Premiere Berlin October 28, 2022

Review written by Alicja Wawryniuk

Shirin Neshat is present again. Her new film "Land of Dreams" is not only aesthetic, like all her works up to now, but also very topical. Surveillance system of which the individual is completely unaware. Because of its poetic language and meaningful scenes, the art film could also be shown in a

gallery. It is often reminiscent of her earlier installations, such as the one with Mahdokht jumping off the roof. Here the artist works with dreams. Even the intro scene begins with a dream. A young woman gets up from the bed and walks towards a brightly lit exit. She goes against the sun and lands on a desert with a man lying flat in the middle. She reaches the lying person and discovers her father in there. The protagonist Simin works for an American agency that collects the dreams of citizens. She is very committed to her job and takes it seriously. Her boss praises her for her good work. Simin shows her strong personality by approaching and questioning people with determination. She combines her work with her hobby. In addition to recording sound for the agency, she takes photos of the

people she interviews. She then translates the dreams into Farsi, dresses up as the person, and posts the dreams on social media. The protagonist discovers a piece of her own story when she is sent to an Iranian colony with a bodyguard. Only she is allowed in behind an iron gate. There she meets an elderly man who guides her through the complex and accompanies her to the path of the martyrs. Simin goes through a narrow alley along a wall, where the photos of the dead can be seen on the left and right. Through the narrow passage she arrives at a walled courtyard filled with images of martyrs. In the middle she finds the photo of her father.

There she sorts the photos in the form of a circle and lies down in the middle of the circle. Here she is at home. She traces the history of her family. The scene is enhanced by the circling camera rotation to the right, symbolizing the return. The director leaves the viewer with an open ending by sending the protagonist into the unknown desert, also to the right. The dream film captivates the viewer with more than two hours of aesthetic images, none of which is boring. The film can be seen in German cinemas from November 3rd 2022.

LAND OF DREAMS.

SYNOPSIS

"Simin is an Iranian woman on a journey to discover what it means to be a free American. She works for the Census Bureau which, in an



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The older man comes up to her and asks her if she knows the nightingale bird. It would only be active at night. Another powerful scene comes at the end of the film, where Simin is banned from her job for copying other people's dreams. She discovers that she herself has become the victim of the surveillance system. In the final scene, Simin ends up in a desert, where she unpacks her suitcase with her family photographs.

effort to control its citizens, has begun a program to record their dreams. Unaware of this devious plot, Simin is torn between her compassion for those whose dreams she is recording and a truth she must find within. Haunted by the fact that her father was executed by the Islamic regime in Iran, Simin has developed a coping mechanism through a

world of fantasy and playacting. She captures her interviewees' dreams, secretly impersonates them in Farsi and publishes them on social media where she finds a growing Iranian audience. Soon Simin meets Mark; a drifter, a free soul, and a poet who declares his love for her at first sight; and Alan, a cynical cowboy turned detective, full of machismo and the American spirit of adventure. As Simin

the American culture as a French citizen. The narrative is therefore, an expression of our sensibilities and point of views as three foreigners about a country that we all love and yet dare to criticize. Stylistically the film has become a convergence of a deeply personal, visual and conceptual language with Jean-Claude Carrière's legendary signature as a scriptwriter with his sense of wit, humor and



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enters the triad, she finds the two men's competition and conflicts amusing and silently enjoys the ride. Playful and poignant, LAND OF DREAMS acknowledges in a surreal and satirical way, the greatness of the American experiment while offering a warning beacon for what could come."

DIRECTORS NOTE

Shirin Neshat & Shoja Azari

"LAND OF DREAMS was developed out of a collaboration with Jean-Claude Carrière, a journey that began back in 2018 in Paris until his death in January 2021.

The film was inspired by our personal journeys as two Iranian immigrants living in America since the 1970's, and Jean-Claude's grasp of

humanity".

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Autor: Alicja Wawryniuk is an art historian, theologian, film & tv producer and communication manager working in Berlin. She published her work about Shirin Neshats art in 2011 (Vom Kinosaal in die Galerie: Formen der Verwandlung der Kinoästhetik in die Kunstästhetik in den Installationen von Shirin Neshat Paperback – 30 Nov. 2011 ISBN-10 : 384286532) and counts as an expert for Shirin Neshats Art. Her latest article about Shirin Neshat is to read @ <https://imagofeminae.com/interviews-xxxii.html> where she compares the Polish filmmaker Kieslowski with Shirin Neshat.

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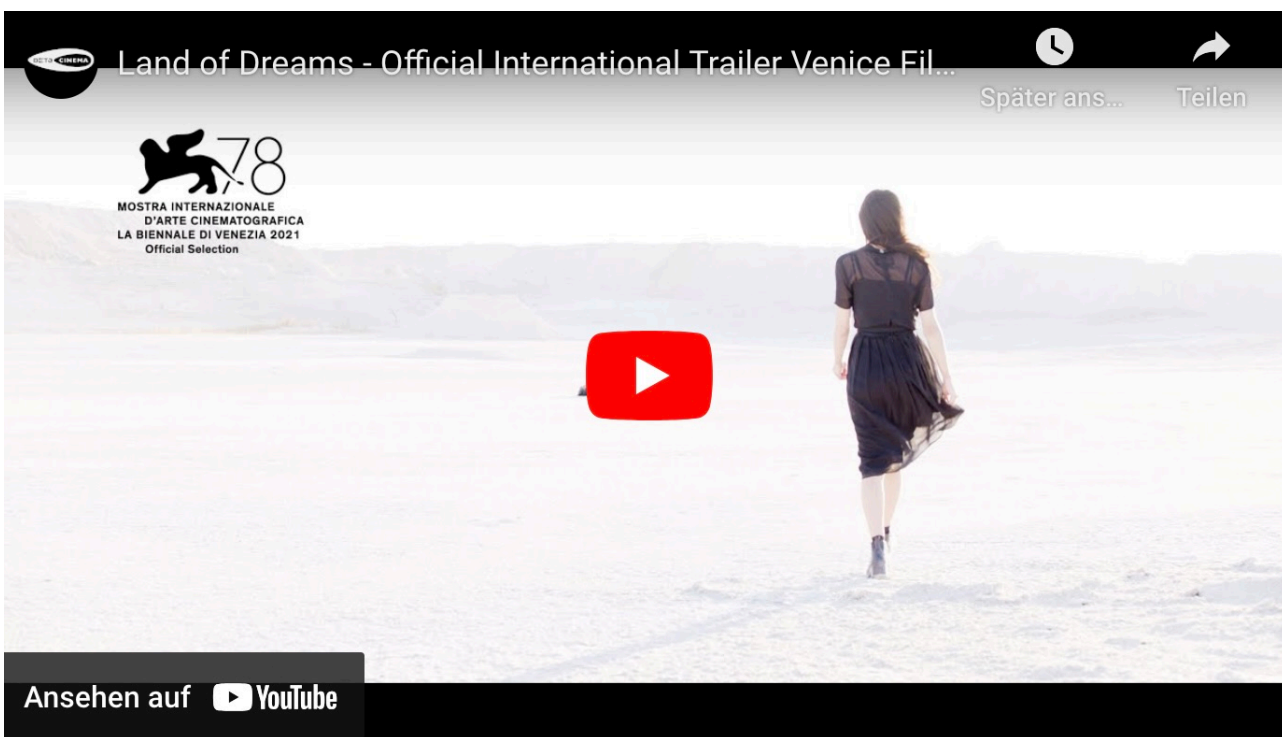


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