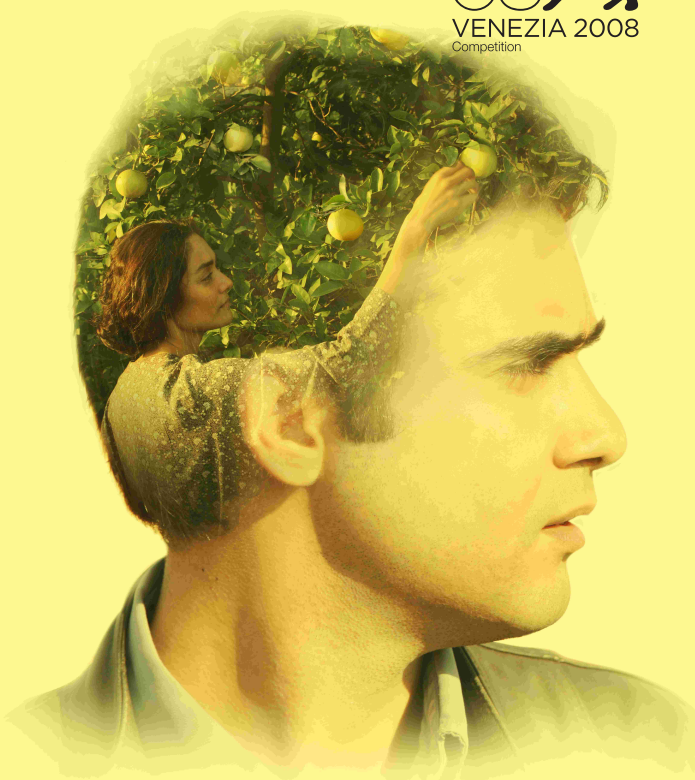


Yusuf Trilogy

SÜT

A FILM BY SEMİH KAPLANOĞLU

65 
VENEZIA 2008
Competition





“We do not only see the world with our eyes, but also with our dreams. We cannot limit the answers to our existential questions within this physical world we see.”

“Noi non vediamo il mondo solo con i nostri occhi, ma anche con i nostri sogni. Non possiamo limitare le risposte sulle nostre domande esistenziali entro questo mondo fisico che vediamo.”

SYNOPSIS

Recent high school graduate Yusuf is uncertain about his future in the provincial countryside. Writing poetry is his greatest passion and some of his poems are starting to be published in obscure literary journals. But for the time being, he continues working in his single mother's village milk business, also with an uncertain future.

Up until now, Yusuf's widowed mother Zehra has focused all her attention on her only child. Still a young and beautiful woman, Zehra is having a discreet relationship with the town station master. His mother's affair, and his being named unfit for military service due to a childhood illness, make Yusuf even more anxious about making the sudden jump toward manhood.

Will young Yusuf be able to handle the changes in his peaceful existence? Can he survive on poetry and working alongside his mother in her small-time milk business? Or will he be forced to move to the big city or seek a job in one of the many factories threatening the unspoiled landscape?



SINOSSI

Yusuf, diplomato recentemente al liceo è insicuro per quel che riguarda il suo futuro nella campagna di provincia. Scrivere poesie è la sua più grande passione ed alcune sono state pubblicate nei giornali letterari più sconosciuti. Ma per adesso continua a lavorare nel villaggio di sua madre nel commercio del latte, quindi in un lavoro che ha un futuro insicuro.

Fino ad adesso, Zehra, la madre di Yusuf è vedova e ha rivolto tutte le sue attenzioni sul suo unico figlio. Ma Zehra, ancora una donna giovane e bella ha una discreta relazione con il capostazione. La relazione di sua madre ed il suo esonero dal servizio militare dovuto per una malattia durante la sua infanzia hanno fatto diventare Yusuf ancora più ansioso di fare il passo verso la sua età virile.

Sarà il giovane Yusuf capace di elaborare i cambiamenti nella sua vita tranquilla? Sarà capace di sopravvivere con le sue poesie e lavorare accanto a sua madre nel suo insignificante commercio di latte? O sarà costretto a trasferirsi in una grande città o cercare lavoro in una delle fabbriche che minacciano la campagna intatta?





SEMİH KAPLANOĞLU

Semih Kaplanoğlu was born in 1963, in Izmir. He received BS in Cinema- Television from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Dokuz Eylül University, Izmir in 1984.

Worked as an Assistant Cameraman for award winning documentaries "Old Houses - Old Masters: Houses of the Western Mediterranean" and "Mimar Sinan" by Süha Arin.

He was the scriptwriter and director of the 52 Episode TV serial "Şehnaz Tango" which was a prestigious work broadcast on Show TV and Inter Star TV Channels at the time.

Semih Kaplanoglu, apart from being a director, wrote many articles based on contemporary plastic arts and cinema which were translated into several foreign languages and published in many well known magazines and journals between 1987 and 2003.

SEMİH KAPLANOĞLU

Semih Kaplanoglu è nato a Izmir nel 1963. Nel 1984 si è laureato in "cinema e televisione" alla facoltà di Belle Arti dell'Università Dokuz Eylül di Izmir.

Ha lavorato inoltre come assistente camera per documentari premiati come "Vecchie case - Vecchi Maestri: case del Mediterraneo dell'Ovest" e "Mimar Sinan" di Suha Arin.

E' stato sceneggiatore e regista dei 52 episodi della serie televisiva "Sehnaz Tango" che al tempo ottenne prestigioso successo trasmessa dai canali Show TV e Star TV.

Semih Kaplanoglu, oltre al fatto che è un dirigente, ha scritto molti articoli che riguardano l'arte di plastica ed il cinema e che sono stati tradotti in lingue straniere e pubblicate in tantissime riviste e giornali conosciuti tra il 1987 ed il 2003.

Comments from Semih Kaplanoğlu

ANATOLIA

I shot both YUMURTA (EGG) and SUT (MILK), the first two parts of what I call my "Yusuf" trilogy, in the region of Anatolia, the hinterland of the Aegean Coast. This is a region of mainly olive trees, fig trees and vineyards. Both films predominantly take place in the small town of Tire, a rural community that reflects perfectly the historical, cultural and artisanal characteristics of that region and which is recently subject to rapid change and modernization. My father was born there. The house in which he was born still stands. Today, this little town contains many traces and forms from its past. On one end we have the custom-tailored, traditional handicraft shops, and on the other end, the factories and mines which started recently to replace the fertile farmlands. This town, where considerable Rourm (Anatolian Greek) and Jewish communities lived until 30 to 40 years ago, has also been an important center of Sufism with its religious schools and communities. In this region, the modern and the traditional coexist; this fact helped me find everything I was looking for in one single place.

CHANGES IN RURAL AREAS

Turkey's rural areas, especially that of Central Anatolia, have been undergoing huge social, economic, and cultural changes during the past several years. A new way of life has awakened in those towns and villages that used to rely solely on agricultural pursuits and animal husbandry, due to the factories and the dams being built in the areas, and/or the mines being opened. The new employment opportunities and the dynamics brought about by widespread migration have deeply affected family structure, a structure that was traditionally the unassailable fortress of the entire region.



THE CLASH BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND NEW

I implanted these changes in the heart of our young poet Yusuf and in the heart of his mother, Fatma, a woman who yearns for a new way of life. As each character assumes his or her own place in the events that are being lived out, the conflicts that Yusuf faces in the turmoil wrought by the clash of the traditional and the new are also being experienced by countless young people in Turkey. These new ways of living have not only changed the area economically speaking, but have also forced a change to traditional mores. While some view this transformation from soil to industry, from field to factory, as a ray of hope, god-sent vehicle towards a 'bright future,' for others these major changes have brought about 'chaos and strife.'

MOTHER-SON RELATIONSHIPS

I wanted to focus on a painful change that is currently being played out within the mother-son relationship in Turkey. The mother-son relationship is sometimes difficult and sometimes surprising, sometimes happy and sometimes sad. I too have at times been caught up in these inextricable contradictions. These waves of changes not only send our identities crashing into walls, they also become springboards from which we can write stories of percolating change. We may describe the mother-son relationship in Anatolian culture as being very different from, and much deeper than, mother and son relationships in many other cultures. In our culture the mother figure symbolizes such concepts as earth and nation and carries a sacred value. The heart of the notion of 'mother' is based on family honor, morality, customs and traditions and the mother is the representation of purity and chastity. The concept of a mother's 'woman-ness' is almost never touched upon.



MILK

Throughout his life, the son is always dependent upon his mother for his 'milk', and no matter what his age he can always demand and receive succor from his mother's breast (figuratively speaking). He is always given preferential treatment and protection. Being weaned from the breast is one of the prices he must pay for a modern life. Naturally enough, this societal change and new life leads the mother to discover her woman-ness. With her son's maturity, this new woman can redirect her interests from her son into other directions. When this happens, can the son manage to stand on his own two feet? I believe that the mother-son relationship of the Turkish traditional society is one of the reasons why Turkish youth have such a difficult time making the mental transition from childhood to adult.

THROUGH THE EYES AND HEART OF A POET

During my youth, I wrote poems most of which were not read by anybody and a few of which were published in literary reviews. For me, poetry has always been an instinct, a unit of internal measurement. That might be the reason why my character Yusuf is a poet. Another reason is my urge to depict rural temporality, the loss of the mother figure through the eyes and heart of a poet.

HARMONY BETWEEN ELEMENTS

The characters, the faces, the places, the season, the light, the camera movements and the script should act in integrity, create a unity, melt into each other and should engender a certain feeling from this fusion. The harmony between the elements is essential. Then, the image can contain the invisible. Yusuf is a young man who cannot take a decision between nature and modern life. While everything,



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all change blows him away from traditional life style, from the earth he takes a journey by which he explores the nature within him. What will keep him away from violence and crime is also a gift of Nature. What makes an image something more than simply a photo or a landscape is the sensed existence of the invisible. That is what I humbly try to capture in my films.

NOT BOUND WITHIN THIS WORLD

I think that cinema's raw material is time. Our approach towards time defines us. I believe that human life is not bound within this world only. There is a before and after to that. The factors that determine our present are firmly related to the past and the future. We cannot limit the answers to our existential questions within this physical world we see. We do not only see the world with our eyes, but also with our dreams. I think faith or the absence of it has an important effect on the decisions my main characters take regarding their existence. I want my characters to explore, discover and show the beauty and the soul which was blown into us and which we brought to this world through our births. There is a common point, a unique source to which all cultures, traditions, dreams and faiths are related to. That is our closeness to or distance from that point which helps us understand each other or which drives us to a sense of futility.



FILMOGRAPHY

SÜT (2008)

YUMURTA (2007)

World Premiere in the 60th Cannes

Film Festival Quinzaine des Réalisateurs

Istanbul International Film Festival

2008 – Best Film

Nurnberg Filmfestival Turkei-Deutschland

2008 – Best Film

Ravenna Mosaico d'Europa Film Festival

2008 – Best Film

Seoul International Film Festival

2008 – Best Film

Bangkok World Film Festival

2007 – Best Director

Valdivia International Film Festival

2007 – Best Director

Fajr International Film Festival

2007 – Best Director

MELEĞİN DÜŞÜŞÜ

ANGEL'S FALL (2004)

World Premiere in the 55th Berlin Film Festival

Forum Section

Nantes 3 Continents Film Festival

2005 – Best Film

Barcelona Independent Film Festival

2005 – Best Film

11th International Film Festival of Kerala

2006 – Best Film

HERKES KENDİ EVİNDE

AWAY FROM HOME (2000)

International Singapore Asia Film Festival

2001 – Best Director



CREW

DIRECTOR

SEMİH KAPLANOĞLU

SCREENPLAY

SEMİH KAPLANOĞLU - ORÇUN KÖKSAL

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

ÖZGÜR EKEN

ART DIRECTOR

NAZ ERAYDA

SOUND

MARC NOUYRIGAT

UNIT PRODUCTION MANAGER

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GUILLAUME DE SEILLE - ARIZONA FILMS

CO-PRODUCER

BETTINA BROKEMPER,

JOHANNES REXIN - HEIMATFILM

PRODUCER

SEMİH KAPLANOĞLU - KAPLAN FILM PRODUCTION

CAST

MELİH SELÇUK YUSUF

BAŞAK KÖKLÜKAYA ZEHRA

RIZA AKIN ALİ HOCA

SAADET IŞIL AKSOY SEMRA

TÜLİN ÖZEN GIRL FROM VILLAGE

ALEV UÇARER KEMAL

ŞERİF EROL CHIEF OF STATION

TANSU BİÇER POSTMAN

ORÇUN KÖKSAL ALPAY

SAHRA ÖZDAĞ GIRL IN ALLIANOI

SEMRA KAPLANOĞLU OLD ZEHRA

BURCU AKSOY AYŞE NUR



SÜT/ Technical Info

Film Title Süt

Type of Film Feature

Format 35 mm.

Running Time 102 min.

Length 2798 m.

Number of Reels 6

Color Color

Original Film Language Turkish

Subtitles Italian

Screening ratio 1,85

FPS 24

Sound Dolby Digital Surround

Countries of Production Turkey- France- Germany

Date of production 2008

SÜT / Scheda tecnica

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Genere Lungometraggio

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Numero Bobine 6

Colore Colore

Lingua Turco

Sottotitoli Italiano

Aspect Ratio 1,85

FPS 24

Suono Dolby Digital Surround

Paesi Produttori Turchia - Francia - Germania

Anno 2008



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