

**"A CHILLING REMINDER OF A CITY EVERYBODY HAD HEARD OF  
BUT STRANGELY DISAPPEARED FROM THE WORLD HEADLINES."**

—MODERN TIMES REVIEW

# H2

## THE OCCUPATION LAB

A FILM BY  
**IDIT AVRAHAMI  
NOAM SHEIZAF**

Israeli Competition  
**DOCAVIV**

MEDALLA PRODUCTIONS and FILMATION INTERNATIONAL in association with TEMPS NOIR, CLM & OUEL FILMS, HOT & FRANCE TELEVISION, RTBF, MEDITERRANEEAN THEMATICS present "H2: THE OCCUPATION LAB"  
DIRECTED BY IDIT AVRAHAMI AND NOAM SHEIZAF. PRODUCED BY HILLA MEDALLA AND PAUL CADIEUX. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: SERGE GORDEY, MARTIN LAURENT, HANDE PULUPPO, MARISE BOUILLARD, ISABELLE LESHAUT, RINAT ALENI. EDITED BY EREZ LAUFER.  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: AVNER SNAHAF. COSTUME DESIGNER: ERIC STRAIN. SOUND DESIGNER: MARTIN CADIEUX-BOUILLARD. MUSIC BY GORDON NEIL ALLEN. CATERING BY GUILLAUME MILLET. WORLD SALES: METFILM SALES.

FILM MOVEMENT MEDALLA PRODUCTIONS htm tem'noir rbf clm & ouel films hot & france tv NFB rtbf rtrb svt rtrb metfilm

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# H2: The Occupation Lab

Directed by Idit Avrahami, Noam Sheizaf

Produced by Hilla Medalia, Paul Cadieux

Feature Documentary | 94 minutes

## SYNOPSIS

Along a one-kilometer road in the heart of the Palestinian city of Hebron lies H2 — a neighborhood with a Jewish settlement closely guarded and highly surveilled by the Israeli military. At the end of this stretch of road lies the Cave of the Patriarchs, a holy place for both Jewish and Muslim faiths. This is where both the Hebron Massacre of 1929 took place — effectively birthing the Jewish settlement movement — and where the policy of ethnic separation was first implemented by the Israeli military. Rich with history of Jews and Muslims and the only city in the State of Palestine with a Jewish settlement, H2 has acted as both a microcosm for the entire conflict and as a laboratory for the methods of control implemented by the Israeli occupation of the West Bank for over 50 years. H2: The Occupation Lab is a clear-eyed case-study using archival footage and interviews to tell the city's history and how it has fueled the entire Israeli-Palestinian conflict.



## DIRECTORS' STATEMENT



In the photo: Filming Inside the cave of the Patriarchs.

The event that turned our attention to Hebron happened on March 24, 2016, when a couple of Palestinians tried to stab Israeli soldiers at the entrance to a settlers' compound in H2. One soldier was wounded, while his friends shot the attackers. Ten minutes later, as one of the wounded Palestinians was still lying on the ground (along our street), an army medic approached and killed him from close range. This event was captured on camera from multiple angles, and created a political storm in Israel, which ended in the resignation of the minister of defense, who insisted on putting the medic on trial.

The Azaria Affair - as it became known in Israel - happened in the old city of Hebron, in H2. As we researched this affair, we came to realize that the unique feature in it was its location and how it has been the most filmed place in the Middle East for years.

Walking and filming in H2 left us in awe of the surreal reality that has become the norm there. Trying to understand it led us back and forth from its past to its present through the unbelievable stories this place and its people have to tell. The more we researched the more it became clear that there is a unique cinematic way to tell the story of this place and of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as it is reflected in this one-kilometer-long street in the heart of Hebron.

We both grew up hearing about Hebron and its history and were drawn to it for years: Noam has served in the city as an IDF officer, and Idit has roots in the town's ancient Jewish community. Returning to Hebron years later, and witnessing the changes on the ground, was a shocking experience.

However, we also feel an urgency that goes beyond our personal connection to this place, it is about our political activism and point of view and our understanding that the story of Hebron is crucial and not told or discussed enough. Noam is the co-funder of '+972 Magazine', an independent magazine run by a group of Israeli and Palestinian journalists, providing fresh, in-depth reporting and analysis directly from the ground in Israel-Palestine. Idit worked in Haaretz newspaper and her first documentary "The Boy Who Died of Fear" told the story of the death of a Palestinian boy in the hands of a Jewish settler in the west bank.

We believe films can help make sense of the world and change it for the better. Hebron holds the key to understanding the failures of the past - and the risks of the future.

In a world that manipulates and controls people through technological means, military power, fences and walls, H2 feels like a message from a dystopian future – and not one just aimed at Israelis and Palestinians. It shows what happens when institutions fail, when the law gives way to power, when religious extremism is becoming a political resource, and when equality gives way to ethnic control. And it demonstrates the urgent need for a new kind of political thinking - one which is founded on equal rights, respect and cooperation.

Our film aims to go beyond describing this reality. We want to put H2 in historical and political context – to understand how the choices of individuals led us here, and where they might take us in the future. We believe that such an understanding is the only way to move forward, to a better future.

## BIOS

### **Idit Avrahami – Director**

Idit Avrahami is the director and co-creator of several documentary series and films that have been screened in Israel's leading TV channels and gained critical acclaim. Her short documentary 'Institutional Abduction' (2019) showed at the Venice Biennale 2019. Idit was a journalist and newspaper editor, serving as a reporter and as the head of Haaretz news desk. She graduated with honors from the Sam Spiegel Film and Television School in Jerusalem and currently teaches Documentary Film Direction there.

### **Noam Sheizaf – Director**

Noam Sheizaf is a documentary filmmaker and scriptwriter. Noam was the director of "Meshulam", head of research and content for Dror Moreh's 'The Corridors of Power', 'The Human Factor'; and scriptwriter for 'Lieberman' (Dir. Nurit Keidar) Noam was an editor and writer for Israeli daily papers, and the founder of the online magazine "+972".

### **Hilla Medalia – Producer**

Peabody Award-winning filmmaker and producer has received four Emmy® nominations. Her projects have garnered critical acclaim and screened internationally in theaters and on television including HBO, MTV, BBC, Netflix and ARTE. Her range of titles include: 'Innocence' 2022 (Venice International Film Festival), 'H2: The Occupation Lab' 2022 (DocAviv), 'The Reason Why' 2021 (Jerusalem Film Festival), 'Love & Stuff' 2020 (HotDocs, DOCNYC), 'Leftover Women' 2019 (Tribeca, ARTE), 'Transkids' 2019 (a 5 episode series for yesDocu and film), 'The Oslo Diaries' 2018 (Sundance, HBO), 'Muhi - Generally Temporary' 2017 (San Francisco Film Festival, Hot Docs), 'Censored Voices' 2015, (Sundance Film Festival and Berlinale), 'The Go Go Boys' 2014 (Cannes Film Festival), 'Web Junkie' 2014 (Sundance Film Festival, POV, BBC), 'Dancing in Jaffa' 2013 (Tribeca, IFC Sundance selects), 'Numbered' 2012 (ARTE), 'After the Storm' 2009 (MTV), 'To Die in Jerusalem' 2007 (HBO). Hilla is a member of the American Academy of Film and Television and she holds an M.A. from Southern Illinois University.

### **Paul Cadieux – Co-Producer**

Paul Cadieux is one of Canada's leading and most active film and television producers. Among numerous other awards, he has won a Genie Award for Best Motion Picture for the Oscar-nominated LES TRIPLETTES DE BELLEVILLE. In his more than three decades as a producer, co-producer, executive producer and distributor, Paul often prefers to operate out of the limelight yet has been centrally involved in dozens of major Canadian and international projects. His more recent documentary accomplishments include: P.S. JERUSALEM (TIFF 2016, Berlin 2017), THE SETTLERS (Sundance 2017). A SISTER'S SONG (DocNYC, IDFA, DocAviv, RIDM), GAZA & ADVOCATE (SUNDANCE 2019).

## MAIN CREDITS

Directors	Idit Avrahami Noam Sheizaf
Producers	Hilla Medalia Paul Cadieux
Executive Producers	Serge Gordey Martin Laurent Hanne Phlypo Maryse Rouillard Isabelle Legault Rinat Klein
Production Companies	Medalia Productions FilmOption International
Editor	Erez Laufer
Director of Photography	Avner Shahaf
Research	Idit Avrahami Noam Sheizaf
Script	Noam Sheizaf Idit Avrahami
Sound Design	Martin Cadieux-Rouillard
Original Music	Eric Shaw

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