

WHEN WE WERE PIRATES

A FILM BY

FATIMA ABDULAZIZ ALSHAMSI

LOGLINE



TWO ARAB-AMERICAN CHILDHOOD FRIENDS REUNITE AT THIRTY, AFTER ONE OF THEM UNEARTHS A MARRIAGE PACT THAT THEY HAD MADE AS TEENAGERS AND DECIDES TO CHECK ON ITS VALIDITY.

SYNOPSIS



WHEN WE WERE PIRATES, IS A SNAPSHOT OF A POTENTIAL TURNING POINT IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AMINA AND ISSA, TWO ARAB-AMERICAN CHILDHOOD FRIENDS.

THE STORY EXPLORES ISSA'S DECISION TO TELL AMINA THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO MOVE THEIR RELATIONSHIP FROM PLATONIC TO ROMANTIC AFTER COMING ACROSS AN OLD "MARRIAGE PACT" THEY HAD PENNED AS TEENS. THE LETTER STATES THAT THE TWO WOULD GET MARRIED IF THEY ARE BOTH STILL SINGLE AT 30, AND ITS TERMS HAVE NOW COME INTO EFFECT. WHEN ISSA FINDS OUT THAT AMINA IS MOVING AWAY FOR A NEW JOB, HE REALIZES THIS MAY BE HIS LAST CHANCE TO CONFESS HIS FEELINGS. WHAT BETTER WAY TO DO SO THAN USING ROMCOM TACTICS?

AMINA IS INITIALLY BLINDSIDED BY THE WHOLE SITUATION AND WEARY OF ISSA'S GRAND GESTURE. GIVEN THEIR HISTORY, AMINA FINDS HERSELF NOT ONLY TRYING TO DECIPHER IF ISSA IS SERIOUS, BUT ALSO FIGURING OUT IF THIS IS SOMETHING SHE EVENT WANTS.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

WHEN COVID-19 LOCKDOWNS AND RESTRICTIONS BROUGHT MY ORIGINAL PRODUCTION TO A HALT, I KNEW I NEEDED A CONTINGENCY PLAN. STILL DETERMINED TO FILM, I FOUND MYSELF DRAWING INSPIRATION FROM MY SISTER'S LOVE OF '90S ROMANTIC COMEDIES. IT HAD BEEN MORE THAN A YEAR SINCE I LAST SAW HER, AND IN DEALING WITH HER ABSENCE, HER GUILTY PLEASURE BECAME MY SOURCE OF COMFORT. *WHEN WE WERE PIRATES* IS THE RESULTING LOVE LETTER WRITTEN FOR HER.

REVISITING SOME OF OUR FAVORITE MOVIES REMINDED ME THAT ROMCOMS ARE LACKING IN REAL VARIETY. WHILE THE TREND IS SHIFTING AND MOVIES ARE STEADILY BECOMING MORE REPRESENTATIVE OF THEIR DIVERSE AUDIENCES, IT'S STILL VERY LIMITED. NOT ONLY IS IT RARE TO FIND ARAB OR MUSLIM CHARACTERS PLAYING THE LEAD ROLE IN A ROMANTIC COMEDY, BUT THE MINIMAL ROLES THAT DO EXIST ACROSS GENRES ARE OVERWHELMINGLY ONE-DIMENSIONAL AND STEEPED IN NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES.

WHAT ORIGINALLY BEGAN AS A COPING MECHANISM FOR THE ISOLATION I FELT DURING THE PAST YEAR TURNED INTO A MISSION TO REMIND EVERYONE THAT ARABS AND MUSLIMS HAVE STORIES TO SHARE BEYOND WAR AND VIOLENCE AND DESPAIR—WE ALSO LOVE, LAUGH, AND DREAM.

EQUIPPED WITH THIS NEW STORY AND THE DIY ETHOS OF THE '90S, WE SET UP SHOP IN A FRIEND'S BACKYARD AND MADE A MOVIE OVER A SINGLE WEEKEND. (I AM FOREVER GRATEFUL FOR THE HARD WORK AND DILIGENCE OF THE ENTIRE CAST AND CREW WHO MADE SURE WE WERE ABLE TO DO THIS SAFELY.)

DEEPLY FASCINATED BY HOW TIMING AFFECTS OUR CHOICES AND HOW MONUMENTAL THESE DECISIONS CAN BE, *WHEN WE WERE PIRATES* DRAWS FROM EXPERIENCE TO CAPTURE MOMENTS WHEN RELATIONSHIPS TWIST OR EVOLVE. MY HOPE IS THAT AMINA AND ISSA, IN ALL THEIR AWKWARD NERDINESS AND PLAYFUL FLIRTATIONS, WILL ADD SOME NUANCE TO HOW ARABS AND MUSLIMS ARE PERCEIVED AS WELL AS INSPIRE MORE POSITIVE REPRESENTATION IN POP CULTURE AND MASS MEDIA. MORE IMPORTANTLY, I HOPE THAT IN SHARING THEIR STORY, SOMEONE OUT THERE WHO MAY IDENTIFY WITH THEM FEELS SEEN AND HEARD.

-FATIMA ABDULAZIZ ALSHAMSI

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY



FATIMA ABDULAZIZ ALSHAMSI WAS BORN IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND TO A DIPLOMATIC FAMILY ORIGINATING FROM THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES. HAVING LIVED IN FIVE DIFFERENT COUNTRIES BY HER THIRTEENTH BIRTHDAY, FATIMA CALLS NEW YORK CITY AS WELL AS ABU DHABI HOME. WITH A DEGREE IN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND ONE IN GLOBAL AFFAIRS, FATIMA ENJOYED A DECADE-LONG CAREER AS A GEOPOLITICAL ANALYST BEFORE DECIDING TO PURSUE HER PASSION FOR FILMMAKING FULL-TIME.

HER BACKGROUND IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES TO INFLUENCE HER WRITING AS IT'S GEARED TOWARDS REPRESENTATION AND EDUCATION. SHE IS INTERESTED IN EXPLORING AND HIGHLIGHTING THE ADVENTURES OF PEOPLE WHO LIVE OUTSIDE THE MAINSTREAM NARRATIVE. MUCH LIKE HER OWN LIFE, FATIMA'S WORLDS ARE A CAREFULLY THREADED AMALGAMATION OF CULTURES AND CUSTOMS.

FATIMA HOPES TO AMPLIFY THE MUSLIM-ARAB VOICE, PARTICULARLY STORIES TOLD BY AND ABOUT WOMEN, WITH THE GOAL OF RAISING AWARENESS AND BRIDGING THE CULTURAL GAP THROUGH SHARED EXPERIENCES.

FEATURING



MERNA BISHAY IS A LOS ANGELES BASED EGYPTIAN-AMERICAN ACTRESS. SHE DISCOVERED HER PASSION FOR ACTING WHILE ATTENDING COLLEGE FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE AND DECIDED TO PURSUE IT AFTER GRADUATING.



JAMAL WAKED IS A LEBANESE-AMERICAN ACTOR BORN IN PANAMA, WHO GREW UP IN FLORIDA AND IS CURRENTLY IN LA MAKING HIS ACTING AND ATHLETIC DREAMS COME TRUE.

MERNA BISHAY



JAMAL WAKED



06/23/07

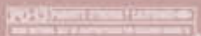
When We Were Pirates

- Jezus and Meana

"MAY THE RUMPUS ENDURE!"



WRITTEN BY FATIMA ABDULAZIZ ALSHAMSI MERNA BISHAY JAMAL WAKED "WHEN WE WERE PIRATES"
DIRECTED BY VIJAY PAUL SINGH CASTING BY AISHWARYA HALDANKAR EDITOR SAMY HARMOUSH PRODUCTION DESIGNER CHANGYI YU
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS AISHWARYA HALDANKAR AASTHA VERMA PRODUCED BY FATIMA ALSHAMSI PRODUCED BY ALYAZIYAH ABDULAZIZ AL SHAMSI
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ALJAWHARA TAREQ AL SERKAL PRODUCED BY YASSER HARMOUSH PRODUCED BY HARSH SHAH PRODUCED BY THANG NGUYEN



COMING SOON

a JAF INK Production

OVERVIEW

RUNNING TIME: 10 MINUTES

GENRE: ROMANTIC COMEDY

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

YEAR: 2021

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: UNITED ARAB EMIRATES / USA

WRITER & DIRECTOR: FATIMA ABDULAZIZ ALSHAMSI

COMPOSER: VIJAY PAUL SINGH

PRODUCTION COMPANY: JAF INK

CAST & CREW

10 MIN | 2:40:1 | STEREO | 23.97 | ENGLISH | 2021

**Amina
Issa**

**Merna Bishay
Jamal Waked**

Writer & Director

Fatima Abdulaziz Alshamsi

Producer

Aishwarya Haldankar

Aastha Verma

Director of Photography

Changyi Yu

Production Design

Samy Harmoush

Editor

Fatima Abdulaziz Alshamsi

Composer

Vijay Paul Singh

1st Assistant Director

Aishwarya Haldankar

1st Assistant Camera

Thang Nguyen

CAST & CREW

10 MIN | 2:40:1 | STEREO | 23.97 | ENGLISH | 2021

Gaffer

Harsh Shah

Key Grip

Vedant Mugalikar

Best Boy Grip

Pruthvi Shah

Grip

Jared Gangadaran

Rodrigo Quezada

Sound Mixer

Yasser Harmoush

Boom Op

Marc Simon Socias

Script Consultant

Alyazyah Abdulaziz Alshamsi

Aljawhara Tareq Alserkal

Unit Production Manager

Samy Harmoush

Production Assistant

Austin Hibbert



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