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†ΣΧΛΛΣ ΣΧΟ.Ι

Tigmi n Igren

House in the Fields

Tala Hadid

Producer Tala Hadid. **Production company** Kairos Films (Marrakesch, Morocco). **Director** Tala Hadid. **Director of photography** Tala Hadid. **Editor** Tala Hadid. **Music** Richard Horowitz. **Sound design** Thomas Robert, Jean Guy Veran. **Sound** Tala Hadid, Khadija Elgounad, Larbi Idmansour.

Colour. 86 min. Tamazight, Central Atlas.

Premiere February 13, 2017, Berlinale Forum

World sales Alpha Violet

A remote village in the High Atlas Mountains in Morocco. The winters here are so cold that people barely leave their houses, and the children stop going to school. Beauty returns with the spring, says 16-year-old Khadija, from whose perspective the film is narrated. Her elder sister Fatima is to be married at the end of the summer, and an air of melancholy hangs over this last time they'll spend together, in the bed they share, while doing housework, out in the fields and in nature.

Khadija likes going to school and dreams of becoming a lawyer – provided the male elders let her! Fatima is supposed to move to Casablanca with her husband. She's afraid of getting married, of the unknown, and she also wants to work, whatever happens.

Established surroundings and how to extricate oneself from them are at the heart of Tala Hadid's sensitive portrait of a Berber community whose social fabric and centuries-old traditions are gripped by change. With long, portrait-like takes, precise observations of daily life, and strikingly photographed images of the lush green surroundings and the majestic red of the massif, she manages to bring a faraway world up astonishingly close.

Hanna Keller

A vanishing way of life

Tigmi n Igren is the first film of a triptych set in Morocco that starts in the Atlas Mountains, journeys through Casablanca and finishes beyond the borders. The film examines the life of an isolated rural Amazigh [North African ethnic group, -Ed.] community in the south-west region of the High Atlas Mountains. The thousand-year history of the Amazigh in Morocco has been, for the most part, recounted, preserved and transmitted by bards and storytellers in oral form among Tamazight-speaking pastoral communities. *Tigmi n Igren* continues this tradition of transmission, in an audio-visual form, in an attempt to faithfully document and present a portrait of a village and community that has remained unchanged for hundreds of years despite being confronted with the rapidly changing socio-political realities of the country at large. The film follows the lives of certain villagers, most specifically two teenage sisters: Fatima, who must give up school to prepare for her wedding, and Khadija, who dreams of becoming a judge.

A portrait of an individual is also a portrait of a family, of a community, of a people and of a nation. In the remote and isolated farming communities of the High Atlas Mountains what is key is the social body of the 'village'. And yet, within the heart of each person in this body politic lie dreams and aspirations, fears and regrets. *Tigmi n Igren* is at once a tableau of a community and an intimate portrait of individuals. It is a chronicle of a vanishing way of life that is not only profoundly defined by the relation between man and nature, but also holds the key to an entire heritage of local dialects, rituals and culture. Living, sharing bread with and filming these farmers over the course of five years also meant an intimate participation in their lives. And they in turn participated in the construction of their own representation. Realities, as filmmaker Jean Rouch reminds us, are always co-constructed, and the presence of the camera, like the presence of the filmmaker, naturally stimulates, modifies and catalyses. People respond by revealing themselves, and begin, eventually, to participate in their own 'story-telling'.

Participating in the telling of their story

This participatory aspect of the film is central to its essence. What is also particular in the experience of living with and filming individuals over the course of a long period, due perhaps in part to a certain intimacy and comfort between photographer, camera and subject, is that spaces are opened up, wherein the parallel unfolding of time, duration and reality merge to create what can only be described as moments that transcend the pure recording of reality, moments of 'poiesis', moments where, again, people participate in the construction of the telling of their story, in the creation of their myths.

In the words of Gilles Deleuze: 'The author must not, then, make himself into the ethnologist of his people, nor himself invent a fiction which would be one more private story: for every personal fiction, like every impersonal myth, is on the side of the "masters" (...) There remains the possibility of the author providing himself with "intercessors", that is, of taking real and not fictional characters, but putting these very characters in the condition of "making up fiction", of "making legends", of "story-telling". The author takes a step towards his characters, but the characters take a step towards the author: double becoming. Story-telling is not an impersonal myth, but neither is it a personal fiction: it is a word in act, a speech-act through which the character continually

crosses the boundary which would separate his private business from politics, and which itself produces collective utterances.' (Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, transl. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989, 222)

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Tala Hadid was born in 1974 in London as the daughter of a Moroccan-Iraqi couple. Hadid studied Visual Art and Philosophy at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. She then enrolled in the film graduate program at Columbia University in New York, where her graduation project was the film *Tes Cheveux Noirs Ihsan*. In addition to making films, Tala Hadid works as a photographer. She currently lives in Marrakech, Morocco.

Films

1996: *Sacred Poet: a Portrait of Pier Paolo Pasolini* (60 min.). 2000: *Kodaks* (10 min.). 2001: *Windsleepers* (13 min.). 2005: *Tes Cheveux noirs Ihsan/Your Dark Hair Ihsan* (14 min., Berlinale Panorama 2006). 2014: *Itar el Layl/The Narrow Frame of Midnight* (93 min.). 2017: *Tigmi n Igren / House in the Fields*.