

PICTURE TREE INTERNATIONAL
PRESENTS

W I T H O U T

H E R

 PICTURE TREE
INTERNATIONAL



Original title: WITHOUT HER
Director: Arian Vazirdaftari
Cast: Tannaz Tabatabaei, Saber Abar, Shadi Karamroudi, Farnak Kalantar
Genre: Drama
Length: 110 min
Country of Origin: Iran
Language: Persian, Danish
Production Company: Fadak Film Company
World Sales: Picture Tree International



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S H O R T

Just two weeks before Roya is set to emigrate from Iran to Denmark, she encounters a quiet young girl who appears lost and doesn't remember anything. Roya takes her in, providing her with a home and introducing her to her husband, family and friends – all the while blissfully unaware that this girl has come to replace her.

S Y N O P S I S



L O N G

Just two weeks before Roya, a banned Iranian journalist, is set to emigrate from Iran to Denmark at her husband's insistence, she encounters a quiet young girl. The girl seems lost and doesn't remember anything. Roya takes her in, unaware that the girl has abandoned her previous life and now come to replace Roya.

A couple of days later, Roya finds out that she will be prohibited from leaving Iran unless she sells out a colleague to the government authorities. Soon after Roya refuses to betray her friend, the young girl steals Roya's identity and takes over her life with the assistance of Roya's husband, Babak.

As Roya fights to recover her identity, she realizes, to her surprise, that no one remembers her anymore and that everybody takes the lost girl to be her. Babak throws Roya out of the house, at which point the authorities decide that Roya is to be exiled to another life as a passive housewife named Hanieh.

S Y N O P S I S



THE PRODUCERS

Saeed Saadi / Houman Seyedi

Producer's Statement

WITHOUT HER is a story that truly reflects its own era. We believed it was essential to tell this story both for the innovation of its narrative approach as well as for its theme of identity. It was our pleasure to support a young and talented director in completing his debut film. Furthermore, we think of this film as expressing an idea that can connect to all types of national and international audiences on a number of different levels.

Due to the COVID crisis, we struggled really hard to finance the film. The film's unique style and approach, which is unlike the typical Iranian social dramas, made it even harder to get it produced.

Overall, we see this film as a perfect example of an emerging generation of young Iranian filmmakers who are unafraid and daring enough to try out different styles and hopefully thereby introduce new aspects of Iranian cinema to the world.

Production Company Boiler Plates

Fadak Film Production is a company based in Tehran, Iran. The company was founded by Iranian producer Saeed Saadi in 2004. GILANE (2005), directed by the acclaimed Iranian filmmaker Rakhshan Banietemad, was among its first productions and helped to establish the company's profile at the time. Fadak Film has produced several acclaimed Iranian films since, the main focus of which being to bring high quality products to screens and establish long-term partnerships with Iranian directors – both from the younger generation as well as more established and acclaimed ones. Bahram Tavakoli, Hamid Nematollah and Houman Seyedi are among the well-known Iranian filmmakers who began their career at the company and went on to collaborate over the years.

THE DIRECTOR

Arian Vazirdaftari

Director's Statement

The story of someone actually losing her identity may seem surreal at first glance, but I guess coming from a background where you're usually blamed for who you are, it's as vivid and realistic as it can get.

Roya, the protagonist, stands for her beliefs, but soon finds out that individual choice is merely an illusion, especially if the system is determined to define you in its own preferred way. In the course of the story, Roya loses her true identity and learns a simple, tragic lesson: either you alter yourself and adapt or you will be eliminated and replaced by those who do.

I tried to portray this imaginary storyline in the common realism of Iranian cinema as a tribute to those intellectuals who sometimes appear to be lost maniacs in a city supposedly ruled by the wise men.

Director's Bio

Arian Vazirdaftari was born in 1988 in Tehran, Iran. He has a BA in Industrial Design and graduated from the MFA program in Directing at the Art University of Tehran.

Since 2012, he has written, directed and produced 5 short films that have enjoyed success and won prizes at local and International film festivals.

His most recent short film LIKE A GOOD KID premiered in the Cinefondation Competition at the 70th Cannes International Film Festival in 2018.

WITHOUT HER marks his feature film debut. His script for his second feature film was selected for the 2021 Berlinale Script Station.



THE KEY CAST

Tannaz Tabatabaei Saber Abar Shadi Karamroudi
Faranak Kalantar Mojaba Fallahi Reza Davoudnezhad Maedeh Tahmasbi

ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES



Tannaz Tabatabaei as Roya

Tannaz Tabatabaei (born 1983) is an Iranian actress known for her work in films such as **SALVE** (2010) and **HARD MAKEUP** (2014). She also played the lead role of Shirin in the multi-award winning film **HUSH! GIRLS DON'T SCREAM** (2013), for which she won the Best Actress Award at the Women's Independent Film Festival. Tannaz has also performed in many Iranian theater productions, such as **TINTIN AND THE SECRET OF MOUNDAS CASTLE**. In 2020, she won the Best Supporting Actress Award at the Fajr Film Festival for her performance in **GLOSBE** (2020).



Saber Abar as BABA

Saber Abar (born 1975) is an Iranian actor, theater director and writer best known for his role in Asghar Farhadi's, **ABOUT ELLY** (2009). Abar has received two Crystal Simorgh Award nominations, both for Best Supporting Actor at the 25th and 27th Fajr International Film Festival. He began his career hosting television shows such as RAINBOW, a children's TV show, and a game show called **IN 100 SECONDS**. He later gained recognition with Series **THE FROG** directed by Houman Seyedi.



Shadi Karamroudi as ZIBA

Shadi Karamroudi (born 1990) is an Iranian actress, director and screenwriter. She learned the basics of filmmaking and acting at Karnameh Film School in Tehran. In 2020, she graduated with a master's degree in Dramatic Literature from Sooreh University in Tehran. She has performed as an actress in 6 feature films, 6 short films and 2 theater productions and participated as a producer and screenwriter in the making of 4 other short films. She began her work as an actress with a role in the internationally acclaimed Iranian film **FISH & CAT** (2013). She went on to win acting awards for her performance as Sara in the short film **LIKE A GOOD KID** (2018) directed by Arian Vazirdaftari. **ALL THE TIME** (2020), which premiered at 25th Busan International Film Festival, is Karamroudi's most recent short film as both actress and director.

COMPLETE CREW LIST

Director	Arian Vazirdaftari
Screenplay	Arian Vazirdaftari
Producers	Saeed Saadi Houman Seyedi
DoP	Alireza Barazandeh
Editor	Mehdi Saadi
Composer	Bamdad Afshar
Casting directors	Hossein Khozoui Niloufar Koukhani
Production designer	Mohsen Nasrollahi
Line producer	Yaser Soleimani
Sound design	Zohre Aliakbari
Sound recordist	Rashid Daneshmand
Costume designer	Elham Moein

CREW BIOGRAPHIES

Saeed Saadi – Producer

Saeed Saadi (born 1962) is a well-known Iranian producer. After gathering many years of experience in the field as an executive and co-producer, he began to work as a main producer in **GILANE** (2005), directed by acclaimed Iranian filmmaker Rakhshan Banietemad. Since then, he has produced numerous Iranian feature films and TV series, such as **HARD MAKEUP** (2014) directed by famous Iranian director Hamid Nematollah. He also produced **SOUND AND FURY** (2015) and **SHEEPLE** (2017), both of which were Iranian box office hits directed by Houman Seyedi

Houman Seyedi – Producer

Houman Seyedi (born 1980) is an actor, writer and director born in Rasht, Iran. He started his career as an actor in **YEK TEKE NAN** (2005) by Kamal Tabrizi. After that, he played a role in **FIREWORKS WEDNESDAY** by Asghar Farhadi. His debut film as writer and director was **AFRICA** (2010). He has won several awards at the Fajr Film Festival, including the Crystal Simorgh for Best Director for **AFRICA**, the Crystal Simorgh for Best Supporting Actor for **I AM DIEGO MARADONA** (2015) and the Crystal Simorgh for Best Script for his last feature film **SHEEPLE**. His most recent work as writer and director is the acclaimed Iranian series **THE FROG. WITHOUT HER** is Seyedi's debut film as producer.

Alireza Barazandeh – DoP

Alireza Barazandeh (born 1979) was born in Tehran and holds degrees in cinematography and photography. He has shot over 35 short films and 60 feature films, 30 of which he worked on as director of photography, and the rest as cinematographer, camera operator, gaffer or camera assistant. Barazandeh is a multiple award-winning cinematographer in Iran, where he has garnered several cinematography prizes for his work. He also received two awards for his work as a DoP in Canada and the United States and has been nominated for best cinematography awards several times at International events.

Mahdi Saadi – Editor

Mahdi Saadi (born 1981) was born in Tehran and graduated with a degree in film editing from Sooreh University. He began his career as an assistant editor in Rakhshan Banietemad's **GILANE** (2005). **THE STRANGER** (2014) was his first film as the main editor and since then he has edited 15 feature films and several TV series. Some of his most important films are **SOUND AND FURY** (2015) and **SHEEPLE** (2017) both Iranian Box Office hits directed by Houman Seyedi. Mehdi has been nominated at Fajr film festival and won the editing prize at Iranian Film Critics award for **SHEEPLE. SUBDUE** (2017), **AFLAME** (2018), **TOOMAN** (2019) and **AMPHIBIOUS** (2020) are some of his most recent works.

Bamdad Afshar – Composer

Bamdad Afshar (born 1986) is a multi-talented, Tehran-born music composer, sound designer, art director, record producer and film score composer. He graduated with an MFA in music and has since worked on over forty productions for film and theater. He brought his personal note to many collaborations with artists such as Hooshyar Khayyam, Hossein Alizadeh, Homayoun Shajarian and Amir Reza Koohestani. Bamdad has been conducting research on the urban soundscapes of Tehran for several years. In 2017, when he formed Otagh Band, his work took a turn in a more interdisciplinary direction, combining sound art, electronic music composition and the experimental practice of robotic performance art. In 2020, he won the prestigious prize for Best Score at Fajr International Film Festival.

WORLD SALES

Picture Tree International (PTI) is an energetic and fast-growing world sales company with its headquarters in Berlin. The core business is worldwide licensing across all platforms, with the company maintaining a presence at all the major film and television markets. Alongside licensing, PTI is also able to act as your German co-producer and local distributor via a fully integrated business model that offers producers individual sales and financing strategies in a results-driven and transparent partnership, something essential in today's ever changing audio-visual industry landscape. PTI's line-up of up to 15 films a year is designed to ensure the right mix of arthouse and crossover productions to fully maximize the revenue potential of each film. Picture Tree International was founded in December 2012 by Andreas Rothbauer and has been run jointly by his partner and co-managing director Yuan Rothbauer since 2017.



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A FILM BY

ARIAN VAZIRDAFTARI

DOP ALIREZA BARAZANDE EDITOR MEHDI SAADI COMPOSER BAMDAD AFSHAR PRODUCTION DESIGNER MOHSEN NASROLLAHI
SOUND DESIGNER ZOHRE ALIAKBARI SOUND RECORDIST RASHID DANESHMAND COSTUME DESIGNER ELHAM MOEIN
MAKE-UP ARTIST AZIM FARAYEN 1st ASSISTANT DIRECTOR HOSSEIN KHOZOUJI LINE PRODUCER YASER SOLEIMANI
VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR MOHSEN KHEIRABADI PHOTOGRAPHER MOHAMMAD BADRLOO

PRODUCED BY SAEED SAADI HOUMAN SEYEDI WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY ARIAN VAZIRDAFTARI

