



TOOMAN



Director's Biography



Morteza Farshbaf made his first feature film, titled *Mourning*, at the age of 24 and was able to receive the award at Busan International Film Festival. He was a student in Abbas Kiarostami's workshops and served as his assistant in the final decade of the late master's life. He developed the screenplay for his second feature film *Avalanche* at the 2015 Sundance Screenwriters Lab under the guidance of some of the world's most renowned screenwriters, including Marcos Bernstein, Susanna Grant, Howard Rodman and Erin Crassida Wilson. *Avalanche* was shot in Tehran and went on to receive the Best Actress award for its female lead from Asia Pacific Screen Awards. For his third film, Farshbaf went back to his native Turkmen Sahra region where he will tell the story of his people's favorite past-time of sports betting set against the backdrop of gorgeous landscapes.

Tooman Synopsis



Tooman



بهار

SPRING

Spring:

Best friends Aziz and Davood are workers in a dairy factory in Gonbad-e Kavos. The story begins one spring on Eid-e Ghorban, the feast of sacrifice. On this day, all the men are busy making wagers in a local betting pool for the week's forthcoming soccer games. Davood is unlike the others in that for him betting is a very serious matter. He's intent on changing his circumstances and firmly believes that gambling is a way to achieve whatever goals he has. For the first time Davood wins the pool and collects twenty million tomans. He decides to get it together, to start a new life with his fiancé Eileen.

Tooman



تابستان

SUMMER



Summer:

Three months have passed and Davood has made so much money that he's rented a house on the water, a home only accessible by boat. Davood's closest friend, Aziz, continues to be by his side. The two are now professional gamblers. Davood has set certain rules to minimize his risk. He has hired two associates, Ali and Mohammad to gather information about each soccer match.

In order to increase his winnings, Davood needs to make a very large and risky bet. He needs to win this bet to secure the funds necessary to continue his gambling enterprise. Eileen watches with increasing fear and concern as Davood sinks deeper by the day into his obsession with gambling. She demands that he choose between her and placing his big bet. Meanwhile, in an attempt to emulate Davood's success Aziz's younger brother Younes, a jockey, takes a bribe from a betting agency run by Arabs to throw a horse race. During the contest Younes has an accident, severing his spinal cord. The incident leaves him paralyzed.



Tooman

SUMMER

FALL پاییز

Tooman



Fall:

In this season, Davood's gambling enterprise grows as he wins one wager after another but Eileen has left him. Aziz is the only one who remains by his side. Davood is dissatisfied and bets more out of habit than anything else. As time passes, Aziz finds himself growing apart from Davood. Aziz is now guardian and caregiver of Younes, who is confined to a wheelchair. Aziz has begun a relationship with a woman, a fact that he hides from Davood. One day, Aziz and Davood head to the city for a poker game and on that day Younes drowns himself in the sea.

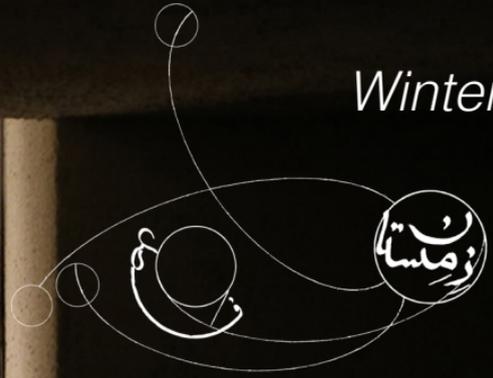
FALL

Tooman



Tooman

Winter



Winter:

After Younes's death, Davood and Aziz's relationship declines such that Davood doesn't even attend Younes's funeral. Davood, who is drowning in winnings no longer has a taste for victory. Rather, it seems he takes pleasure in losing and soon he squanders his assets. Aziz's fiancé becomes pregnant and the two decide to wed. On the eve of the ceremony, Aziz goes to Davood to tell him he is getting married. Davood, angry that Aziz is again a factory worker, plays an unusual game with his friend. He insists that they take his last assets and place a bet in partnership with each other against the Arab owned betting agency. Davood does not attend Aziz's wedding. He decides he will bid Aziz a final farewell after he has placed his last bet in Gonbad and right before he leaves the city. Davood and Aziz go to the final race of the season and Davood is able to take his revenge on the Arab agency, collecting a large sum from them. But this contest and all others have no meaning for Davood. Davood, who is on the run from the Arabs, leaves the city in his boat under cover of darkness.

Tooman

Winter



Tooman



بهار

Spring Again

Spring Again:

On the hunt for Davood, his pursuers capture Aziz and kill him. But Davood has left to Tehran to gamble away whatever he has won from the Arabs. In Tehran he places a bet on game which ends in a nil-nil tie. Two periods of overtime remain. It's a risky bet— if Davood wins he will receive thirteen billion tomans. Davood is certain he will lose and so he closes his eyes waiting for the result. But in the end, he wins again. We encounter a champion who in winning suffers defeat—accursed by victory, caught in its trap.

Note



In a narrative review of *Tooman*, we realize that it has taken a different path than the apartment-based films of the day. The socio-psychological drama takes place in a variety of locations including a horse racing track, beach-front villas and the lush green roads of the Turkmen Sahra region. The film features a hardworking and determined hero similar to those of the classical cinema, in a series of never-before-seen imagery about soccer betting and horse races, and in doing so becomes an original story in an Iranian cinema that these days features no heroes and is set in a handful of locations.

Morteza Farshbaf's skillful grasp of the environment, culture and traditions of the characters, protects the film from the threats imposed by films with these particular cultural, economical and geographical traits. Without such a grasp, a writer-director in this cinematic genre risks recording tourist-like inauthentic imagery.

Morteza Farshbaf however, is born in Gonbad Kavous, and has been living and breathing with the locals and is familiar with the plight of the workers there. With his background and drawing up from his memories of growing up in Gonbad, he can have a truthful depiction of the environment, and this familiarity gives the film a backbone and lets the heart of the narrative get close to reality and blocks any paths towards exaggerations and misunderstandings and increases the film's chances for success.

Tooman



Writer and Director: **Morteza Farshbaf**
Producers: **Saeed Malekan, Saeed Saadi**
Production Manager: **Asma Ebrahimzadegan**
Assistant Director: **Hasan Labafi, Mohammad Saghafi**
Costume Designer: **Maral Jeyrani**
Set Designer: **Morteza Farbod**
Sound Recordist: **Rashid Daneshmand**
Sound Mixing: **Amin Sharifi, Babk Shakiba**
Make-Up: **Saeed Malekan**
Music: **Mohammadreza Heydari**
Editing: **Mehdi Saadi**
Cinmeatorapher: **Morteza Najafi**

