

OFFICIAL SELECTION

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TORONTO INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL 2026

خيوط رقيقة
a tenderness

A FILM BY sabrine khoury

FILM INFORMATION

YEAR

2026

LANGUAGE

Palestinian Arabic

RUNTIME

17 min

SUBTITLES

English

GENRE

Fiction

ASPECT RATIO

16:9

PRODUCTION COUNTRIES

The Netherlands / Palestine

SHOOTING FORMAT

Digital (color)

FILM FUND SUPPORT

**Supported by the Netherlands
Film Fund**

WORLD PREMIERE

**Toronto International Film Festival
2026 — Short Cuts**

DEVELOPMENT

**Developed through the Doha Film
Institute Short Script Lab**

PRODUCTION COMPANY

**Buddy Film Productions
The Netherlands**

A man and a woman are standing under a large, open red umbrella at night. The man, on the left, is wearing a dark turtleneck and looking off to the side with a serious expression. The woman, on the right, is wearing a dark top and looking towards the camera with a somber expression. The background is dark and blurry, suggesting an outdoor setting at night.

LOGLINE

During her parents' visit to Amsterdam, a new Palestinian mother seeks to bond with her newborn.

SYNOPSIS

During her parents' visit, a new Palestinian mother living in Amsterdam struggles to connect with her newborn. As family dynamics unfold, postpartum challenges and family expectations grow.

Through unspoken tensions, small gestures, and moments of care, the film explores the quiet suffocation that can exist within love.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

"Tomorrow, when you become a mother, you will understand what I mean."

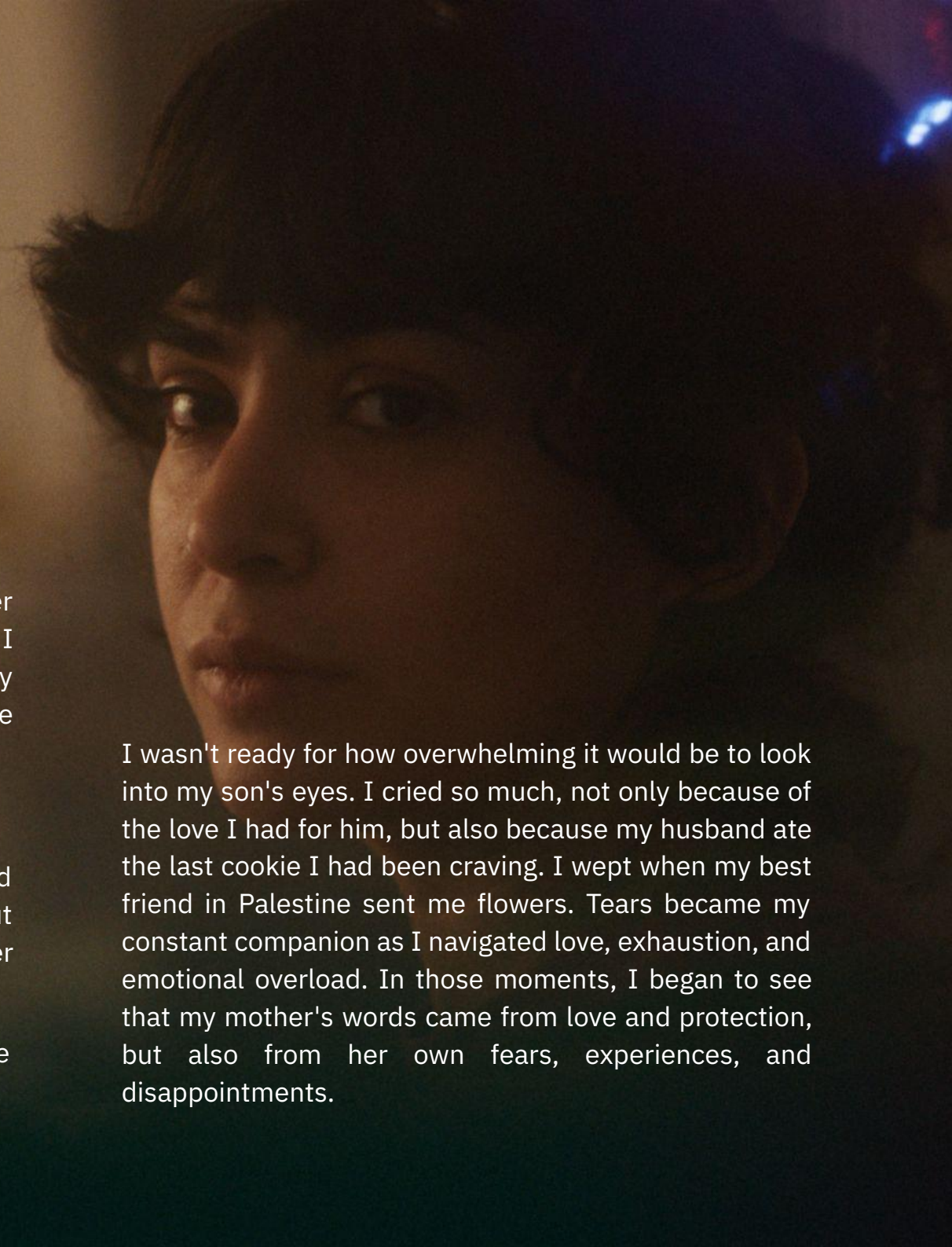
That sentence used to irritate me. It felt like my mother believed I knew nothing about life simply because I wasn't a mother yet. As if my experiences, my understanding, and even my choices would only become valid once I had a child.

Then, in May 2024, I became a mother.

To my surprise, I began to understand what she had meant, not because motherhood made me wiser, but because it introduced me to emotions I had never known before.

Suddenly, I was that new mother, unprepared for the depth of love I would feel.

I wasn't ready for how overwhelming it would be to look into my son's eyes. I cried so much, not only because of the love I had for him, but also because my husband ate the last cookie I had been craving. I wept when my best friend in Palestine sent me flowers. Tears became my constant companion as I navigated love, exhaustion, and emotional overload. In those moments, I began to see that my mother's words came from love and protection, but also from her own fears, experiences, and disappointments.





Now that we're both mothers, I don't hear that sentence anymore, lucky me. But motherhood didn't erase the generational gap between us. Their way of caring didn't always leave room for me to become a mother in my own way, especially while living far from home in the Netherlands.

That realization became the starting point for *A Tenderness*.

When my parents visited us after my son's birth, I found myself living in two roles at once: I had become a mother while still being someone's daughter. Their love was generous and unconditional, yet at times it left little room for me to discover motherhood on my own terms. That contradiction fascinated me, the idea that love can nurture us while also quietly suffocate us.

With *A Tenderness*, I wanted to explore that fragile transition. While rooted in the experience of a Palestinian family in the Netherlands, the film reaches beyond cultural specificity. It is about the invisible ways we inherit love, care, and fear across generations, and the delicate process of finding ourselves within them. Through Reema's journey, I wanted to portray a woman discovering motherhood while trying to hold on to her sense of self, in a space where tenderness and pressure, protection and control, exist at the same time.

I hope *A Tenderness* invites audiences to recognize themselves in this fragile moment of transition, and to reflect on how love can both nurture us and leave little room for us to become ourselves.



ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

SABRINE KHOURY

A Palestinian filmmaker and producer based in the Netherlands. Her work is rooted in intimate spaces, the female body, the home, and family relationships, through which she explores identity, political and social realities, and challenges stereotypes. For her, filmmaking is a way of making sense of the world and understanding what she truly believes in.

Her previous short documentary, *The Miracle of Life* (2025), screened internationally, including at CPH:DOX and Galway Film Fleadh, where it won Best Documentary. The film also received Best Documentary and the Audience Award at IFF Integrazione. Her latest fiction short, *A Tenderness*, developed through the Doha Film Institute Short Script Lab and supported by the Netherlands Film Fund, premiered at the 2026 Toronto International Film Festival. She is currently developing her debut feature film.

CAST

RAND ABOU FAKHER

reema

SALIM DAW

imad

AREEN OMARI

salma

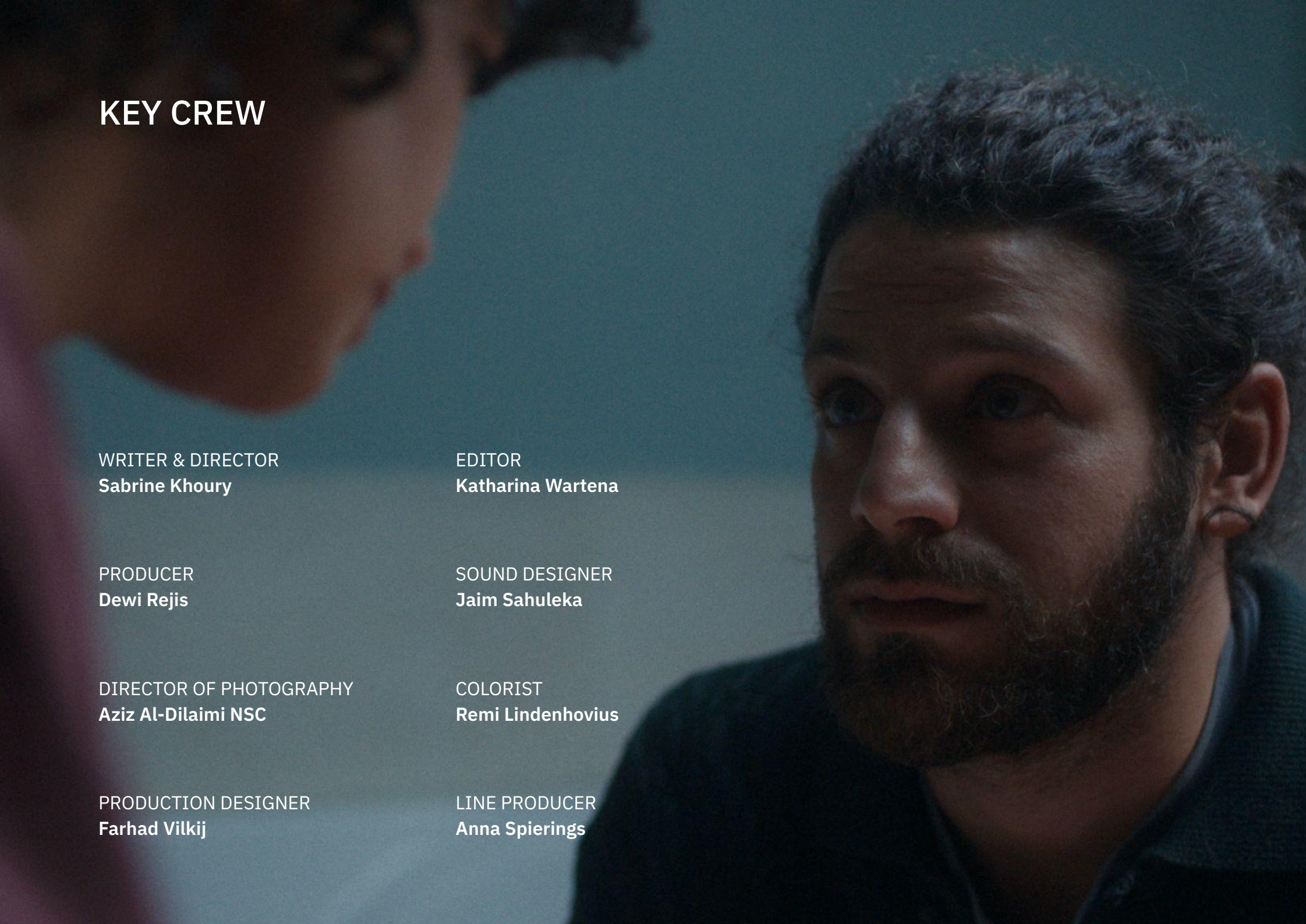
KARIM DAOUD ANAYA

amir

AXEL MAESSEN

zain





KEY CREW

WRITER & DIRECTOR
Sabrine Khoury

EDITOR
Katharina Wartena

PRODUCER
Dewi Rejis

SOUND DESIGNER
Jaim Sahuleka

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY
Aziz Al-Dilaimi NSC

COLORIST
Remi Lindenhovius

PRODUCTION DESIGNER
Farhad Vilkiij

LINE PRODUCER
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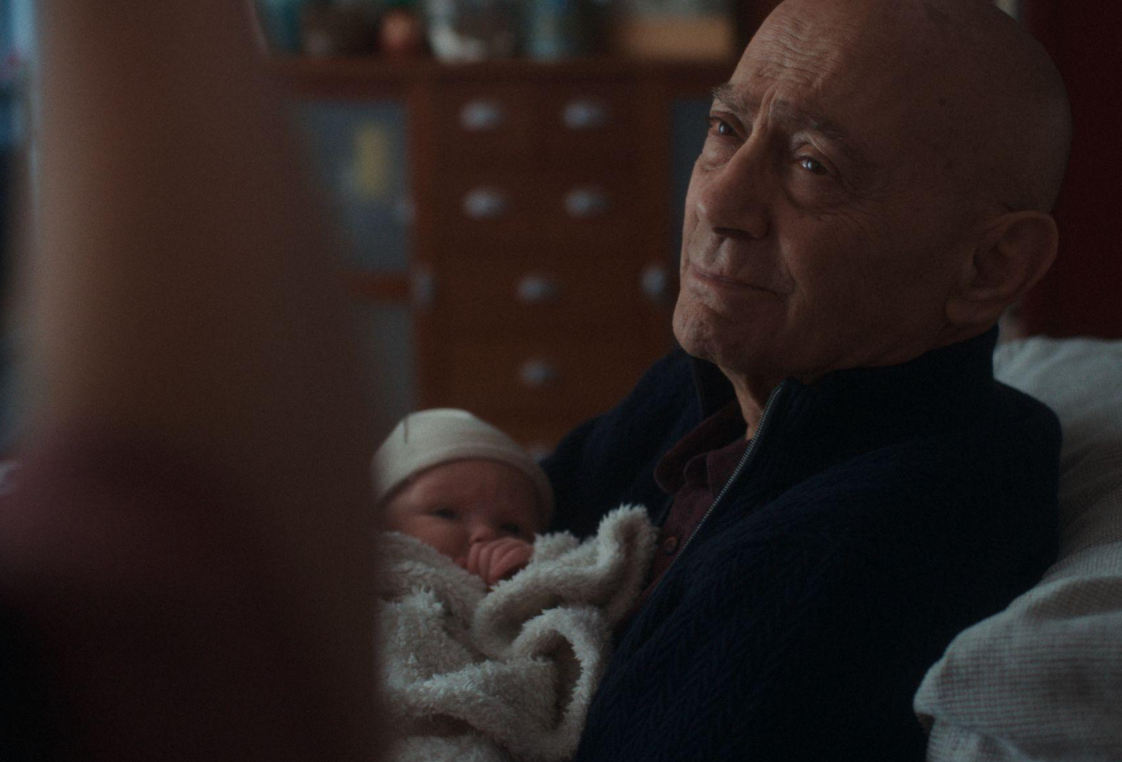
DIRECTOR • SCREENWRITER • CO-PRODUCER

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