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THE WIND WILL CARRY US

Directed by Abbas Kiarostami

Cast: Behzad Dourani and the
inhabitants of the Siah Dareh village.

Iran, 1999.
In Farsi with English subtitles.

118 mins. Color.

Rental: Apply.

New Release



In the polls of film critics, archivists, and programmers that commemorated the end of the first cinematic century, the name that most frequently topped the list as the greatest working director was Abbas Kiarostami. In this latest Kiarostami masterpiece, a telejournalist named Behzad arrives at a remote Kurdistan village seemingly carved out of a mountainside into an intricate maze of alleys, steps, and rooftops. An ancient woman is on the verge of dying; Behzad secretly plans to record a local rite in which females scar their faces in mourning. But the deathwatch drags on and the woman stubbornly remains alive; Behzad's producers become impatient, his assistants grumble, and his attempts to befriend the locals meet with mixed results. The rustling wind, golden light, and deep shadows of the village cast an alluring spell, but this outsider remains largely impervious. His estrangement is at first played mainly for comedy (a running gag has him dashing frantically to a nearby hilltop cemetery every time his cell phone rings) but then becomes an increasingly dark commentary on technological man's alienation from tradition and nature. The film's title, taken from a poem by the great modern writer Forugh Farrokhzad, refers to a yearning for the wind of renewal in a stagnant existence. A disaster finally presents Behzad with the possibility of change, but the outcome, as always in Kiarostami's films, is tantalizingly open-ended, leaving us with a haunting and ambiguous image of mortality.

"To my mind, the greatest film by Iranian master Kiarostami. Marvelously assured...extraordinarily subtle and nuanced...a mysteriously metaphysical vision." – J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*.

"A stunningly lyrical and eloquent exploration of both rural village life and the nature of artistic responsibility." – Leslie Camhi, *The New York Times*.

"This is without a doubt Kiarostami's most sheerly beautiful film."
– Kent Jones, *Film Comment*.