

## Document Citation

Title	<b>Abjad</b>
Author(s)	Dimitri Eipides
Source	<i>Toronto International Film Festival</i>
Date	2003 Sep 08
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	2
Subjects	Jaløiløi, Abøu al-Fazl (1957), Saveh, Iran
Film Subjects	Abjad, Jaløiløi, Abøu al-Fazl, 2003

**TORONTO  
INTERNATIONAL  
FILM  
FESTIVAL**  
2003 SEPT 4-13

- Home
- Festival Information
- **Films & Schedules**
- Box Office Information
- Live From The Festival
- Media Centre
- Get Involved
- Up To The Minute
- Publications & Merchandise
- TIFFG Year-Round



Contact Us | General Policies

The official website of

The Toronto International Film Festival®

## Film List

[Home](#) > > [Film Schedules](#) > [Film List](#)

[Programmes](#) [Festival Insights](#) [Film List](#) [Screening Schedules](#) [Search for a Film](#) [My Film List](#)



### FILM TITLE:

Abjad

**Programme:** Contemporary World Cinema

**Director:** Abolfazl Jalili

**Country:** Iran

**Year:** 2003

**Time:** 100 minutes

**Film Types:** Colour/35 mm

- Best Bets
- Search for a Film
- My Film List
- TIFF Alerts
- Festival Insights

### SCREENING TIMES:

Monday, September 08 07:15 PM VARSITY 2

Thursday, September 11 09:15 AM UPTOWN 3

**Production Company:** Novem Productions

**Executive Producer:** Emmanuel Benbihi, Mel Gee Henderson

**Producer:** Emmanuel Benbihi

**Screenplay:** Abolfazl Jalili

**Cinematography:** Mehdi Majde Vaziri

**Editor:** Abolfazl Jalili

**Production Designer:** Mohammadtaghy Jalili

**Sound:** Mazyar Sheikh Mahbooby

**Music:** Jean-Claude Ghrenassia

**Principal Cast:** Mehdi Morady, Mina Molania, Sharare Roohy, Fariba Khademy, Abdolreza Akbary

Abolfazl Jalili's documentaries and feature films have captivated Festival audiences for more than fifteen years and now, with *Abjad*, he moves into autobiographical territory for the first time. Jalili is an impeccable visual storyteller and he infuses the film's luminous images with the exquisite truth of memory.

Outside Tehran, in the town of Saveh, fourteen-year-old Emkan is torn between his deep, instinctual passion for artistic expression and his parents' conviction that his creativity is an offence against their Muslim faith. When Maassoum, a girl of his age, moves into the neighbourhood, they strike up a tender friendship which will develop into love. This relationship feeds Emkan's burgeoning desires to explore his talents and experiment with arts he has not encountered before – photography and motion pictures. However, his father's ongoing disapproval – and a changing political climate – present Emkan with the increasingly difficult task of negotiating the family's traditions, his own faith, his irrepressible nature and his feelings for Maassoum.

*Abjad* begins in the late seventies with the outbreak of the Iranian Revolution looming. A story which might, in the hands of a Western romantic, centre around Emkan's attempt to project his ego into the world, focuses instead on his struggle to discover – through politicized action and his interactions with others – what is best in the society in which he is rooted. Jalili's portrait of the father-son relationship is especially well-rounded – the man's urge to determine Emkan's path, in light of the nepotism he has encountered in the workplace, not so much autocratic as protective.

As Jalili excavates the early moments of his own artistic development, he combines an incisive yet compassionate view of spirituality and inter-generational conflict with a glorious visual sense. The rather abstract spaces of

some shots transform their objects – a light bulb, a group of running boys – into tiny lyric poems capturing moments of experience. The film is a lovely autobiographical work that starts with an individual, but opens up to provide a perspective on a much wider milieu.

– **Dimitri Eipides**

**Abolfazl Jalili** was born in Saveh, Iran and began making 8mm films as a teenager. He was a painter and calligrapher before attending the Iranian College of Dramatic Arts to study film; he then joined IRIB, the Iranian television network, where he produced children's programs and short documentaries. Jalili's distinctive and daring films have been acclaimed around the world and several have appeared at the Festival, including *Scabies* (87), *A True Story* (96), *Dance of Dust* (98) and *Delbaran* (01). His other films include *Milad* (83), *The Spring* (85), *Dorna* (90), *Det Means Girl* (95), *Don* (98), *The Tales of Kish, Episode 2* (99) and *Abjad* (03).

• [Add This Film To My Film List](#)

[Back To Film List](#)