

## Document Citation

Title	<b>Angel on the right</b>
Author(s)	Jamshed Usmonov
Source	<i>Publisher name not available</i>
Date	2002
Type	distributor materials
Language	French English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	18
Subjects	Xavier, Waldir Lagriffoul, Pascal Comets, Jacques Usmonov, Jamshed (1965), Asht (former Tadjhik Republic), Tajikistan Farzanehpour, Dana
Film Subjects	Fararishtay kifti rost (Angel on the right), Usmonov, Jamshed, 2002



Angel  
on the  
right

A film by Djamshed Usmonov

L'angelo della spalla destra

Cannes Film Festival 2002  
Official Selection Un Certain Regard

**Farishtai pasti rost**

**L'angelo della spalla destra**

**Angel on the right**

**L'ange de l'épaule droite**

A film by Djamshed Usmonov

**A production of**

Fabrica Cinema Rai Cinema  
ventura film TSI-Televisione svizzera  
Artcam International Asht Village

**With participation from**

Fonds Sud (Ministère de la Culture -  
Centre National de la Cinématographie,  
Ministère des Affaires étrangères)  
Ufficio Federale Svizzero della Cultura

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Hubert Bals Fund  
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**International sales**

Celluloid Dreams

**Italian distributor**

01 Rai Cinema & Studio Canal Distribution

**French distributor**

Haut et Court

[www.angelontheright.com](http://www.angelontheright.com)

Handwritten text in a cursive script, possibly a signature or name, written in black ink on a blue background. The text appears to be "Fayru urtan qoSu p 5".

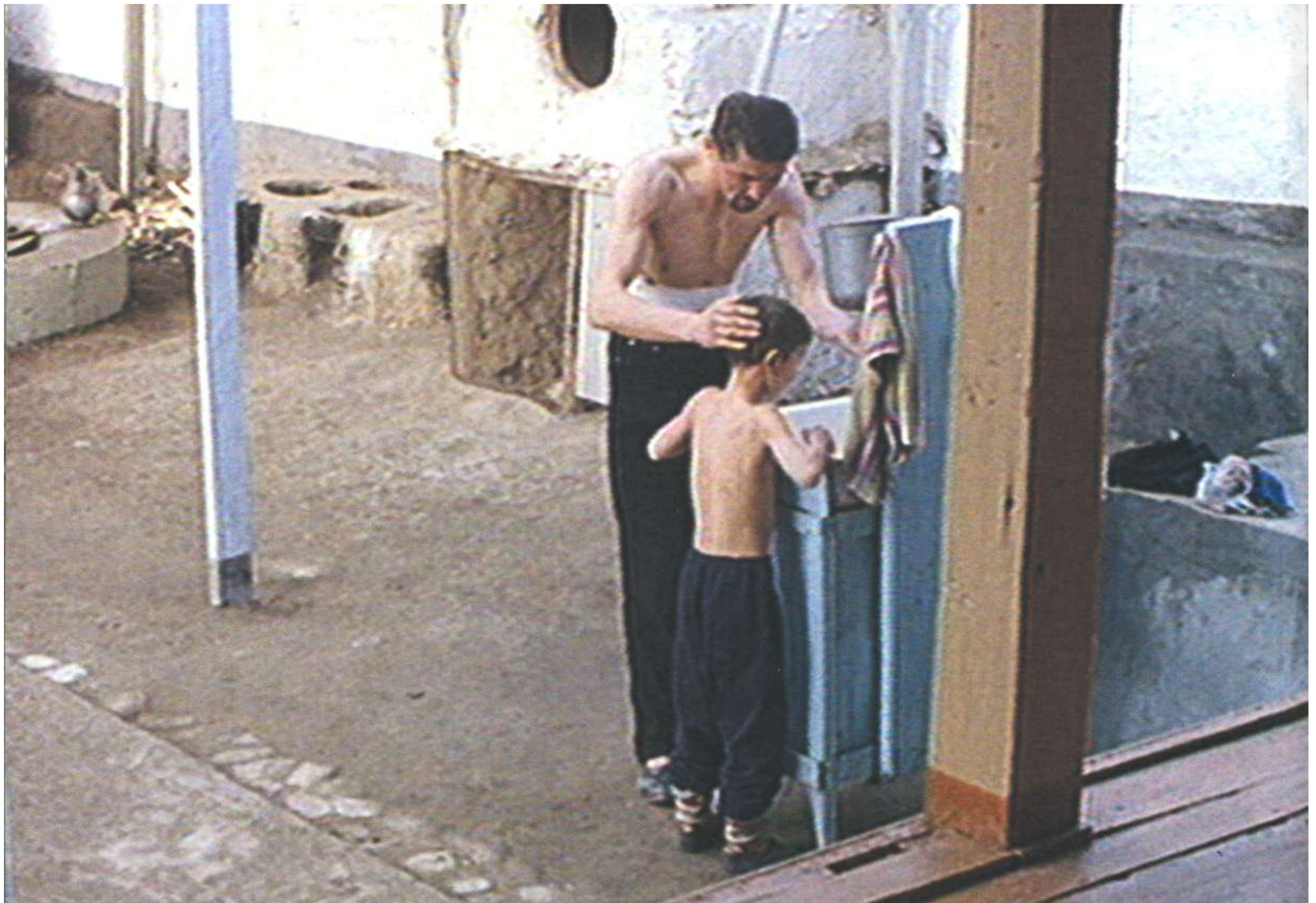
Handwritten text in a cursive script, possibly a signature or name, written in black ink on a blue background. The text appears to be "qunom Yomuy Yemous".



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## Synopsis

After 10 years in Moscow, broke thug Hamro returns to his native Tajikistan village to tend to his dying mother Halima. Hamro realizes that he must sell her house and belongings as quickly as possible. His debts are long overdue and the townspeople are as tough as the big city crowd he now frequents.

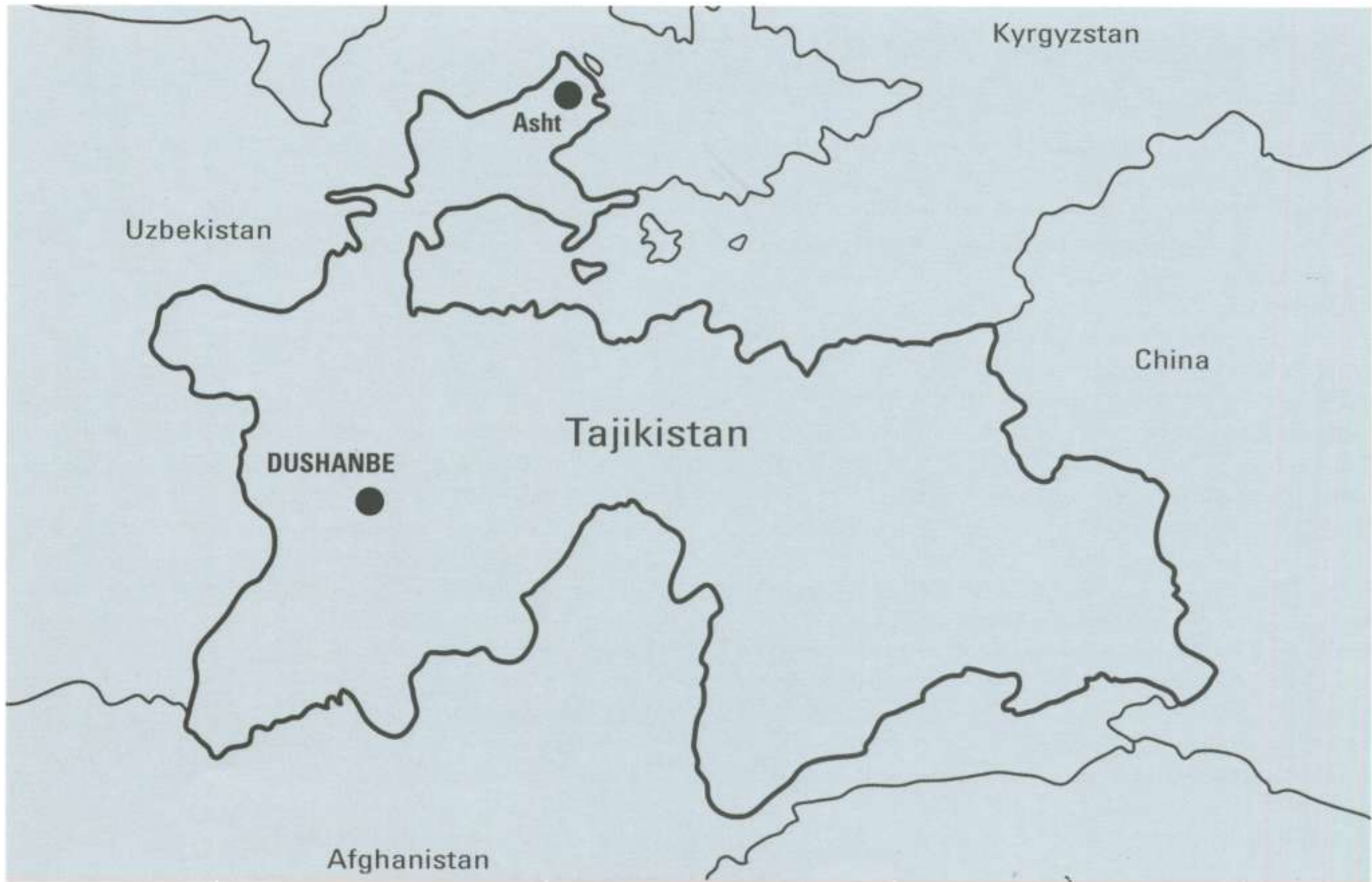
Hamro immediately starts renovations to his mother's house. Of course, to get a better selling price, but also to grant his mother's wish for a decorative double gate, one that will allow her coffin to exit with dignity and not be lifted over the wall in humiliation.

Hamro soon gets more than he expected from the quiet countryside village. Savri, his mother's pretty nurse, eventually comes around to his boorish advances. A tough family violently forces Hamro to recognize the 10-year-old son he didn't even know existed. And to top it all off, Hamro discovers he's been tricked by his own mother and the crooked mayor...

With mafia-types on his back for money, desperate Hamro will realize that a mother's love is sometimes the only thing a guy can count on. It's about time he started listening more to the angel on the right...

## Synopsis

Après dix ans d'absence, Hamro, rentre dans son village (Asht) pour veiller Halima, sa mère mourante. Mais, en réalité, Halima est tout à fait vivante. Hamro est piégé à Asht, où il doit de l'argent à tout le village. Menacé, aux abois, seul un miracle pourrait le sauver. Mais Hamro ne croit pas aux miracles.



ANGEL ON THE RIGHT

# Words from the Director

## Angels on shoulders

According to an old Islamic legend, everyone has two invisible angels, one on each shoulder. The angel on the right records good deeds and good thoughts, while the angel on the left takes note of bad deeds. On Judgment Day, a person's good deeds are weighed against the bad on the scales of Justice. The person is then sent to Heaven or Hell. This story about the angels is told to children to encourage them to be good. It has left a lasting impression on me. My next film might be about the "Angel on the left."

## The true story of Attar

I have also been very struck by a true story about the XIIIth Century poet Attar. Before becoming a great poet, Attar lived a quiet and comfortable life as an apothecary in Nishapur. One day, after he had refused to give alms to a dervish, the latter showed him that, although poverty-stricken, he possessed immeasurable wealth. Did the apothecary hope to take his possessions with him into the other world?

He, this poverty-stricken beggar, was master of his own life and death: having said this, the dervish lay down on the ground, called upon God and died. Profoundly moved by this miracle, Attar relinquished his past life to become a poet and wanderer.

These two stories form the basis and heart of "Angel on the right".

## The light of winter

The film was shot in winter was because life is more harsh and also because despair is more visible. I love this cold light stripped of colors of summer when trees are full of ripe fruit or flowers burst with light. I wanted to concentrate on my characters in the most humble setting possible.

## A product of events

The screenplay reflects the problems of present-day Tajik society, which is facing profound social and political upheavals and a seven-year civil war. The main character Hamro is the product of these events. He is selfish and cruel. Nothing is sacred to him and he would sacrifice anything to satisfy his desires. This fallen man puts his mother's unselfish love to the test... I wasn't worried about the character of Hamro becoming too mean to be appealing. Since he is played by my brother, that wouldn't be possible. Despite his tough exterior, he's very intelligent and sensitive. And since I was directing my own brother, I wasn't capable of rendering the character unlikable. I was both director and spectator at the same time.

## Halima and miracles

The main female character, Halima, is no angel. A person like any other, she has worries and simple aspirations. Deep-rooted within her soul are ancestral laws and values. She carries within her the wisdom of past centuries, ancient beliefs and legends and a naïve faith in

good, evil and miracles. Death, to her, is like passing to another world as visiting friends in a neighboring village. She's a character who has faith and finds her force in her self-developed will... In Tajikistan, miracles and magic are part of daily life, as opposed to the pragmatic cultures of Western Europe. People live with their numerous tales and miracles resonate daily.

#### **Asht: Real or imaginary?**

The characters are based on the present-day inhabitants of the village of Asht, in Tajikistan, the village where I was born and where I have shot three films. As a director, I continue to pursue in "Angel on the right" the following themes: the nature of man, solitude and religion. I am convinced that a director should make films about things he knows and about which he feels strongly. For my films, my family members are my guardian angels. I like directing non-professional actors. I like the naivete and the spontaneity of their acting. I like this way of acting. In "Angel on the right", my mother plays Halima, my brother plays Hamro and my father has a part as the doctor, the major is my uncle and the little boy is the son of a cousin. I know Asht; I know every stone and every tree in this village. I wanted my film, although a fictional story, to have some documentary value. But although Asht is real, this village represents for me an imaginary world like Macondo for Garcia Marquez or Yoknapatawpha for Faulkner.

#### **Negotiation**

Negotiation rules society. Everything has become negotiable. Negotiation seals both economic and human relationships. In "Angel on the right", this principle becomes sacred. On earth as in heaven, negotiation makes the rules. Life is negotiated. One's own death and place in heaven is negotiated.

#### **Nostalgia**

My first feature, "The flight of the bee", was dedicated to Satyajit Ray. During the editing of "Angel on the right", I remembered a poem written for Satyajit Ray by Rabindranath Tagore when he was six years old:

*I have surveyed roads, mountains and rivers.  
My road was often blessed.  
I have seen all that a man can see.  
I have seen the world.  
But I forgot the blades of grass near my home.  
Dew drops cover the grass  
And the universe looks upon me.*

When Hamro comes home to the village, he is recaptured by his past. He who speaks of the past opens the breach of nostalgia. I think I fluctuate between being a nostalgic realist and a person who is realistically nostalgic...

Djamshed Usmonov

**ANGEL ON THE RIGHT**

## Entretien avec le réalisateur

### L'ange de l'épaule droite

Selon une vieille légende de l'islam, chaque homme a sur ses épaules deux anges invisibles. L'ange de l'épaule droite consigne les bonnes actions, tandis que l'ange de l'épaule gauche note les mauvaises.

Au jour du Jugement dernier, les bonnes et les mauvaises actions de l'homme sont pesées dans la balance de la justice. L'homme est alors envoyé au paradis ou en enfer.

On raconte cette histoire aux enfants pour qu'ils apprennent la notion du bien et du mal. Cette histoire a profondément marquée mon enfance.

Ce film est la première partie d'un diptyque, il sera suivi par "L'ange de l'épaule gauche".

### L'histoire vraie du poète Attar

Une autre histoire se déroulant au XIIIe siècle, s'inscrit aussi dans ce récit. Avant d'être poète, Attar, menait la vie tranquille et aisée d'un apothicaire à Nichapour. Un jour, alors qu'il avait refusé l'aumône à un derviche, celui-ci lui montra que, bien que miséreux, sa richesse était incommensurable. L'apothicaire espérait-il emporter ses biens dans l'autre monde? Alors que lui, derviche, possédait un bien plus précieux, il était maître de sa vie et de sa mort: ceci étant dit, le derviche s'étendit par terre, appela Dieu et mourut.

Bouleversé par ce miracle, Attar renonça à sa vie passée pour devenir un poète errant.

Ces deux histoires forment le socle et le cœur de "L'ange de l'épaule droite".

### La lumière de l'hiver

Le tournage a eu lieu en pleine hiver car, non seulement, la vie est plus rude mais le désarroi des hommes est plus visible. J'aime cette lumière froide dénuée des couleurs de l'été où les arbres sont gorgés de fruits mûrs, où les fleurs éclatent à la lumière. J'avais envie de me concentrer sur mes personnages et que le décor soit le plus humble possible.

### Hamro

Le scénario reflète les problèmes de la société tadjike actuelle, confrontée à des bouleversements sociaux-politiques profonds et à une guerre civile de sept ans.

Le personnage principal, Hamro, est la résultante de ces événements, il est cruel. À ses yeux, rien n'est sacré, et, pour satisfaire ses désirs, il sacrifierait n'importe qui. Cependant cet homme cruel et perdu, éprouve l'amour désintéressé de sa mère. Hamro est interprété par mon propre frère, c'est un personnage complexe et sensible.

### Halima et les miracles

Halima est une femme aux soucis et aux désirs simples. Au fond de son âme reposent des lois et des valeurs ancestrales. Elle est porteuse de la sagesse des siècles passés, des vieilles croyances et légendes, de la foi naïve du bien et du mal et des miracles. Pour sauver son fils, elle se sacrifie et meurt miraculeusement.

Comme si elle était partie, non pas pour l'autre monde, mais pour rendre visite à des amis dans un village voisin.

### **Asht: réel ou imaginaire**

Les personnages sont les habitants du village de Asht, au Tadjikistan, aujourd'hui. Village où je suis né et où j'ai tourné trois films. J'aime diriger des acteurs non professionnels, j'aime la naïveté et la spontanéité de leur jeu. Dans ce film, ma mère interprète Halima, mon frère est Hamro, mon père joue le rôle du docteur, le maire est un oncle, le petit garçon le fils d'un cousin. Asht, bien que réel, représente pour moi un monde imaginaire tout comme Macondo pour G.Garcia Marquez ou Yoknapatawpha pour W.Faullkner.

### **Négociation**

Dans mon film ce principe est sacralisé. Sur terre comme au ciel, la négociation fait loi. On négocie sa vie, on marchandé sa propre mort et sa place au paradis.

### **La nostalgie**

"Le vol de l'abeille", mon premier long-métrage est dédié à Satyajit Ray. Lors du montage de "L'ange de l'épaule droite", je me suis souvenu d'un poème écrit par Rabindranath Tagore pour Satyajit Ray lorsqu'il avait six ans.

"J'ai arpenté les routes, les hautes montagnes et les rivières  
Ma route fut souvent argentée  
J'ai vu tout ce que l'œil humain peut voir  
J'ai connu le monde.  
Mais j'avais oublié le brin d'herbe près de ma maison.  
Posée sur l'herbe - une goutte de rosée  
Et l'univers qui me regardait".

Lorsque Hamro rentre au village, il est rattrapé par son passé. Et qui parle de passé ouvre la brèche de la nostalgie.  
Je crois que j'oscille entre le nostalgique réaliste et le réaliste nostalgique.

Djamshed Usmonov

**ANGEL ON THE RIGHT**

# Djamshed Usmonov

Born in Asht, Tajikistan in 1965.

Graduated Dushanbe Fine Arts School, Theatre Section (Tajikistan).

Has been working in the film industry since 1986: as a director, producer, screenwriter, editor for fiction, animation and documentary films. Worked at the "Tajikfilm" Studio in Dushanbe.

He has also appeared as an actor in 1990's "Yellow Grass Time" (dir. Mariam Yussupova, Tajikistan) and 2000's "The Road" (dir. Darezhan Omirbaev, Kazakhstan).

## Filmography

2002 "Angel on the right" ("Farishtai pasti rost")

1998 "The flight of the bee" ("Parvozi zanbur")

(Torino - Best Film, Audience Award, FIPRESCI Prize;  
Thessaloniki - Silver Prize)

1991 "The Well" ("Choh") (medium-length film)

Né à Asht, Tadjikistan en 1965.

Diplômé de l'École des Arts de Duschambe, (Tadjikistan)  
section Théâtre.

Depuis 1986, il réalise, produit, écrit et monte des films de fiction, d'animation et des documentaires. Il a travaillé pour le "Tadjik film Studio" à Duschambe.

En 1990, Il interprète un rôle dans le film de Mariam Yussupova "Yellow Grass Time" et obtient en 2000, le rôle principal dans le film de Darezhan Omirbaev "La Route".

## Filmographie

2002 "L'ange de l'épaule droite" ("Farishtai pasti rost")

1998 "Le vol de l'abeille" ("Parvozi zanbur")

Festival de Turin - Meilleur Film, Prix du public, Prix FIPRESCI

Festival de Thessalonique - Trophée d'argent

1991-2000 "Le puit" ("Choh") (moyen métrage)



ANGEL ON THE RIGHT



# About the filmmakers

## **Jacques Comets (Editor)**

Jacques Comets has regularly worked with the following directors, Christine Pascale, Tonie Marshall, Raoul Peck and Bernard Stora. He recently edited Tonie Marshall's upcoming "Au plus pres du paradis, starring Catherine Deneuve and William Hurt. He currently directs the Editing Department at the FEMIS (French National Film School).

## **Dana Farzanehpour (Sound engineer)**

Dana Farzanehpour's credits include "Ce vieux reve qui bouge" (dir. Alain Guiraudie), "Les filles de mon pays" (dir. Yves Caumon), "Dream dream dream" (dir. Anne Alixe), "Le dernier des immobiles" (dir. Nicolas Sorgana) and the award-winning documentary "Honi Ftana". He recently completed the Iranian shoot of "Nour" (dir. Bahman Giarostami). Born in Teheran in 1967, he was the assistant of Jean-François Chevalier and is a member of "Samedi 14", the French sound engineers association.

## **Pascal Lagriffoul (Camera operator)**

Pascal Lagriffoul worked as camera operator on the recent French features, "Le chignon d'Olga" (dir. Jérôme Bonnel) and "Sexy boys" (dir. Stéphane Kazandjian). He also worked on "Qui plume la lune" (dir. Christine Carrière), "Lili" (dir. Marie Vermillard), "L'annonce faite a Marius" (dir. Harmel Sbraire). En 1997, he received the Nestor Almendros Prize. He studied at the Ecole Louis Lumiere and was the assistant of Denis Lenoir.

## **Waldir Xavier (Sound editor)**

Waldir Xavier's credits include "Madame Sata" (dir. Karim Ainouz), "Abril despedacado, no quarto da vanda" (dir. Pedro Costa), "Lumumba" (dir. Raoul Peck), "Drole de Felix" (dir. Olivier Ducastel and Jacques Martineau), "L'Autre" (dir. Youssef Chahin), "La nouvelle Eve" (dir. Catherine Corsini), "Central do Brasil" (dir. Walter Salles). He was born in Brazil in 1967. He studied social communication at the University of Rio de Janeiro, then philosophy at the University of Strasbourg and cinema at the University of Paris.

## Les techniciens

### Jacques Comets (Montage)

Jacques Comets accompagne un certain nombre de réalisateurs dont il a monté régulièrement les films et en particulier Christine Pascale, Tonie Marshall, Raoul Peck et Bernard Stora. Il vient d'achever le montage de "Au plus pres du paradis" de Tonie Marshall. Il dirige le département montage de la Femis.

### Dana Farzanehpour (Son)

Dana Farzanehpour a travaillé comme ingénieur du son sur "Ce vieux rêve qui bouge" d'Alain Guiraudie, "Les filles de mon pays" de Yves Caumon, "Dream dream dream" de Anne Alixe, "Le dernier des mobiles" de Nicolas Sorgana et "Honi Ftena" de Spedie Farsi, un film documentaire primé au Festival du Réel en 2001. Il vient de terminer le tournage en Iran de "Nour" de Bahman Giarostami.

### Pascal Lagriffoul (Image)

Pascal Lagriffoul a travaillé comme chef opérateur avec de nombreux cinéastes sur des long-métrages et court-métrages dont les plus récents sont "Le chignon d'olga" de Jérôme Bonnel et "Sexy boys" de Stéphane Kazandjian. Il a également, en autres, travaillé sur "Qui plume la lune" de Christine Carrière, "Lili" de Marie Vermillard, "L'annonce faite a Marius" de Harmel Sbraire. En 1997, il a reçu le prix "Nestor Almendros". Formé à l'Ecole Louis Lumière, il a été l'assistant de Denis Lenoir.

### Waldir Xavier (Montage son)

Waldir Xavier a travaillé sur "Madame Sata" de Karim Ainouz, "Abril despedacado", "No quarto da vanda" de Pedro Costa, "Lumumba" de Raoul Peck, "Drole de Felix" de Olivier Ducastel et Jacques Martineau, "L'autre" de Youssef Chahine, "La nouvelle Eve" de Catherine Corsini, "Central do Brasil" de Walter Salles.

ANGEL ON THE RIGHT

**A film written and directed by**

Djamshed Usmonov

**A production of**

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ventura film TSI-Televisione svizzera  
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Hubert Bals Fund  
Résidence du Festival-Cinéfondation

**Cinematography**

Pascal Lagriffoul

**Sound**

Dana Farzanehpour

**Editor**

Jacques Comets

**Sound editor**

Waldir Xavier

**Sound mix**

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Martin Stricker

**Sound effects**

Nicolas Becker

**Script Supervisor**

Mavlodov Farosatshoev

**Costumes**

Marina Yakunina

**Make-up artist**

Ludmilla Sorokopud

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Fabrica Cinema (Italia)

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Andres Pfaeffli  
ventura film (Switzerland)

Joël Farges  
Elise Jalladeau  
Artcam International (France)

Véronique Marty  
Djamshed Usmonov  
Asht Village (Russia/Tajikistan)

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Marco Müller

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**Line producer**

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**1st camera assistant**

Raphaël Cauhepe François

**2nd camera assistants**

Faiz Atoev

Zikriyo Isroilov

**Sound assistant**

Thomas Lascar

**Assistant editor**

Sarah Anderson

**Continuity assistants**

Atham Mamadnazarov

Kosim Salikov

**1st director's assistant (Asht)**

Nosir Rahmonov

**Chief machinist**

Sahob Djuraev

**Machinist**

Samir Kabilov

**Chief electrician**

Asad Kamolov

**Production coordinator**

Loredana Rigato

**Production assistants**

Eugenia Gaglianone

Pierre Jalladeau

Juliette Grandmont

Carole Hercovici

Khusrav Sultonov

Khurshed Golibekov

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Caroline Roussel

Rebecca Houzel

**Administration**

Federico Mariotto

Sahob Juraev

**Press book design**

Omar Vulpinari

Ramon Marin

Emmi Salonen

**Cast**

Halima - Uktamoi Miyasarova

Hamro - Maruf Pulodzoda

Yatim - Kova Tilavpur

The Mayor - Mardonqul Qulbobov

Savri - Malohat Maqsumova

The Barman - Furkat Buriev

The Young Man with the Goat - Orzuqul Kholikov

Dervish - Hokim Rakhmonov

The Millionaire - Tolib Temuraliev

The Doormaker - Davras Azimov

ANGEL ON THE RIGHT

# Fabrica Cinema

"Fabrica Cinema" is the film production unit of Fabrica, the research center on communication of the Benetton Group. Founded and directed by producer Marco Müller, "Fabrica Cinema" has been active in international productions and co-productions since 1997

"Fabrica Cinéma" est l'unité de production cinéma de Fabrica, le département communication du Groupe Benetton. Fondée et dirigée par le producteur Marco Müller depuis 1997, "Fabrica Cinéma" intervient comme producteur et co-producteur internationaux.

## **Fabrica Cinema: the films**

### **Angel on the right**

Directed by Djamshed Usmonov  
(Tajikistan)

Cannes 2002 - Official Selection - Un Certain Regard

### **Secret ballot**

Directed by Babak Payami  
(Iran)

Venice 2001 - Official Competition  
Silver Lion Best Director Award

### **Brainstorm**

Directed by Laís Bodanzky  
(Brazil)

Locarno 2001 - Official Competition  
Youth Award

### **No man's land**

Directed by Danis Tanovic  
(Bosnia)

Cannes 2001 - Official Competition  
Best Screenplay Prize

Golden Globe Award 2000 - Best Foreign Film  
Oscar 2002 - Best Foreign Film  
César 2002 - Best First Feature

**First death experience**

Directed by Aida Begic  
(Bosnia)  
Cannes 2001 - Short Film Competition

**Adanggaman**

Directed by Roger Gnoan M'Bala  
(Ivory Coast)  
Venice 2000 - Cinema of the Present

**Afterwords**

Directed by Gianfranco Rosi  
Jean Sébastien Lallemand - Carlos Martinez Casas  
(Italy)  
Venice 2000 - New Territories

**Blackboards**

Directed by Samira Makhmalbaf  
(Iran)  
Cannes 2000 - Official Competition - Special Jury Award

**Seventeen years**

Directed by Zhang Yuan  
(China)  
Venice 1999 - Official Competition  
Silver Lion Best Director Award

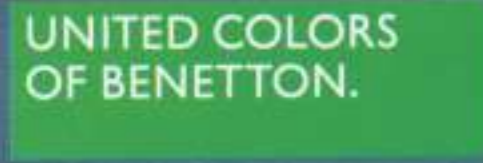
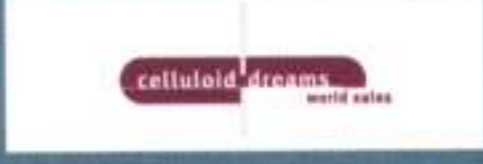
**Moloch**

Directed by Alexander Sokurov  
(Russia)  
Cannes 1999 - Official Competition  
Best Screenplay Prize

**Journey to the sun**

Directed by Yesim Ustaoglu  
(Turkey)  
Berlin 1999 - Official Competition  
Best European Film Award and Peace Prize

**ANGEL ON THE RIGHT**



## Contacts

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