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Salaam Cinema

Iran, 1995, 75 minutes

Director: Mohsen Makhmalbaf

Cast: Azadeh Zangeneh, Maryam Keyhan, Feyzolah Ghashgai, Shaghayegh Djodat

Executive Producer: Amir Lavasani **Producer:**

Abbas Randjbar **Screenplay/Editor:** Mohsen Makhmalbaf **Cinematographer:** Mahmoud Kalari

Music: Shahrdad Rohani **Production Company:**

Green Film House **Print Source/Sales Agent:**

MK2 Diffusion

As a child, Mohsen Makhmalbaf would stop talking to his mother when she went to the cinema. As a teenager he joined a militant anti-Shah group, and at 17 was arrested and imprisoned. Only after his release in 1979 following the revolution did he enter a cinema. Now a well-known director of post-revolutionary cinema, Makhmalbaf plans a film tribute to cinema's centenary. He places an ad to find actors—5,000 turn up and a riot ensues. The auditions that follow and comprise the body of his tribute are alternatively amusing and sad as the "misanthropic humanist" director orders the actors to cry, to.... Besides everyone's desire to be a star, and the similarities with Paul Newman and Marilyn Monroe eagerly pointed out, Makhmalbaf's docudrama reveals much about acting, directing and "cattle calls." The auditions also speak of the realities of life in Iran, and we hear voices seldom allowed to publicly speak, as intellectuals, students, boys and especially women, talk about their lives. One woman confides she simply wants the role in order to obtain a visa and a trip to Cannes.

"Paying tribute to the 100th anniversary of the movies ... Mohsen Makhmalbaf fashions a delightful, vérité-like birthday card out of the auditions for a film we never see. Witty and slyly resonant, the simple premise turns into a reflexive treat." —Godfrey Cheshire, *Variety*

Selected Filmography: *Nassoooh's Repentance* (82), *Boycott* (84), *The Peddler* (87), *The Cyclist* (88), *The Marriage of the Blessed* (89), *Time of Love* (90), *Once Upon a Time* (91), *The Actor* (92)