



# Day Break

Directed by Hamid Rahmanian



Iran / 2005 / Farsi with English subtitles / 85 min.

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## **SYNOPSIS**

In Iran, capital punishment is carried out according to Islamic law, which gives the family of the victim ownership of the offender's life. Day Break - based on a compilation of true stories and shot inside Tehran's century-old prison - revolves around the imminent execution of Mansour, a man found guilty of murder. When the family of the victim repeatedly fails to show up on the appointed day, Mansour's execution is postponed again and again. Stuck inside the purgatory of his own mind, he waits as time passes on without him, caught between life and death, retribution and forgiveness.

## **CAST AND CREWS**

### **Cast**

Hossein Yari	Mansour
Zabi Afshar	Hashem
Hoda Nasseh	Atifeh
Atash Taghipour	Heydar
Maryam Amirjallali	Mother

### **Crew**

Director, Producer	Hamid Rahmanian
Writers	Mehran Kashani, Hamid Rahmanian
Managing Producer	Vahid Nikhah Azad
Director of Photography	Byrom Fazli
Visual and Sound Editor	Ebrahim Saeedi
Original Score and Music	David Bergeaud
Duduk Solo performed by	Fred Seldon
Art Director and Costumer	Ahmad Saket
Production Manager	Hamid Molavi
Make Up Artist	Reza Rodmanesh
Sound Recordist	Hassan Zahedi
Sound Mixer	Tony Volante / Soundtrack NY
Artist Consultant to the Director	Melissa Hibbard

## **FILM FESTIVALS**

Toronto International Film Festival  
Reykjavik International Film Festival (Iceland)  
Festival du Nouveau Cinema (Montreal)  
Flanders International Film Festival (Belgium)  
International Film Festival of Kerala (India)  
Helsinki International Film Festival  
Tribeca Film Festival

## Director's Biography

Hamid Rahmanian is a filmmaker and graphic designer. He holds a B.F.A. from the University of Tehran in Graphic Design and earned a M.F.A. in Computer Animation in 1997 from Pratt Institute in New York City. He received “The First Place College



Award” (a student Emmy) from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and was nominated for a Student Academy Award for his animation, *THE SEVENTH DAY*, among other awards in 1997. His first 35 mm film, a 19 minute experimental short, *AN I WITHIN*, received Kodak’s “Best Cinematography Award” and “Best American Short” from the LA Int’l Short Film Festival. Mr. Rahmanian has made three documentaries on video: *BREAKING BREAD*

(2000), *SIR ALFRED OF CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT* (2001) and *SHAHRBANOO* (2002), all of which have been well received by the media and worldwide audiences. In 2003, Mr. Rahmanian co-established ARTEEAST. He works as the curator of film programs for Cinema East, which is now in its 5<sup>th</sup> season. He has currently completed his first feature length film entitled *DAY BREAK*.

## ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

### Director's Statement:

“When I started working on the story for this film in 2002, the thing that I was most attracted to was not necessarily the character of Mansour and who he was or where he came from but rather the situation that he found himself in. I wanted to make the story communicate universally to the audience. I wanted them to relate to Mansour’s dilemma. Not everyone has committed murder but we have all made wrong choices, choices that perhaps were rash and passionate, propelling us into situations that we could not have imagined and for which we have not control over.

It was important that I convey the passage of time and the physical space that Mansour was trapped in while waiting for his execution day to arrive. The psychological intensity of not knowing his fate dragged him through each and every moment of that experience with minute detail. It is the details of Mansour’s day-to-day experiences that propel the story along. The struggle inside his mind to come to terms with what he has done and how he has affected his family are ubiquitously experienced by the audience. It is this commonly understood situation that brings out the universality of the story makes the film imminently imperative for everyone.”

*- Hamid Rahmanian (Director)*

## BACKGROUND ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN IRAN

Under Islamic law, as set forth in the Qur'an, a *qasas* crime is a crime that warrants retaliation (*i.e.*, “an eye for an eye”). If a person is murdered in Iran, the victim’s family can have the offender executed or, conversely, may accept *diya*, a payment to the victim’s family as compensation for their loss. The family may even grant the murderer a pardon.

Before a condemned man can be executed, he must meet with the family of the victim to provide them one last opportunity to administer a pardon, or exchange *diya* for execution. The offender cannot be executed until this meeting takes place. If the family chooses to proceed with the death sentence, the victim’s next of kin must participate in the actual execution. If the family grants a pardon, or accepts *diya*, the offender’s life is spared, but he will serve jail time as decided by the court.

### ABOUT FILM MOVEMENT:

Film Movement is a distributor of award-winning independent and foreign films. Film Movement releases films both through traditional windows and simultaneously via a first-of-its-kind subscription service called the Film Movement Series. Film Movement Series members receive an award-winning feature direct from the world’s top festivals, along with a bonus short film, on DVD to own every month.

For more information, please visit [www.filmmovement.com](http://www.filmmovement.com).

### Photo Credits:



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