

MORTICIAN

A FILM BY ABDOLREZA KAHANI

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: CANADA
PRODUCTION COMPANY: NIVA ART
PRODUCTION SUPPORT: MOJAN SAFARI
SOUND DESIGNER & RE-RECORDING MIXER:
ALIREZA ALAVIAN
SOUND EDITOR: SANA ALAVIAN
FOLEY ARTIST: SOROOSH AREFI
SOUND STUDIO: SANA STUDIO
COLORIST: FARHAD GHODSI
SONGS: BY GOLA IN COLLABORATION
WITH SCHUBERT AVAKIAN



DIRECTOR & WRITER: ABDOLREZA KAHANI
CAST: NIMA SADR, GOLA, POUYA RAZAVI,
ERFAN BOKAEI, RAHIM BAHRAMI, HAMIDREZA
HOSSEINI, SRWA HASSANI, KIMIA MOTEVALLI,
FATIMA ROUZI, MEHDI SALAR, SHIMA SABER,
MAHMOUD RAMEZANPOUR, KAMELIA SIMAB,
HESSAM SOBHANI, MISA TABARZADI
LANGUAGE: PERSIAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
COLOR: COLOR **FORMAT:** DIGITAL
ASPECT RATIO: 2K Flat 24 fps
SOUND: DOLBY DIGITAL



Overview

Title: MORTICIAN

Country of Origin:

CANADA

Production Company:

NIVA ART

Director & Writer:

Abdolreza Kahani

Cast: Nima Sadr, Gola

Runtime: 94 Minutes

Language:

Persian With English Subtitles

Color: Color

Technical Specifications:

Format: DIGITAL

Aspect Ratio: 16:9

Resolution: 2K Flat 24 fps

Sound: Dolby Digital

Synapses:

In Canada, Mojtaba, an Iranian mortician, meets Jana, a defiant protest singer in hiding. As their bond grows, secrets emerge — and he's drawn into a chilling act that challenges everything he thought he knew.

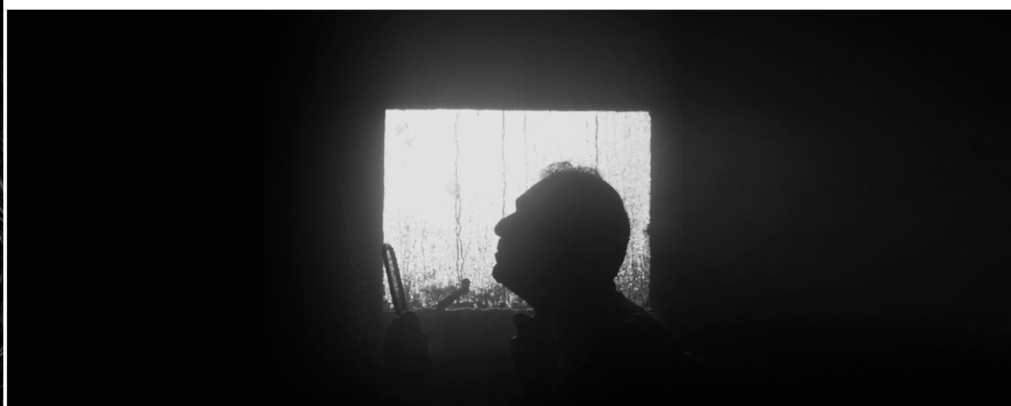
Inspired by real events, *Mortician* exposes the reach of the Iranian regime beyond its borders. Brought to life through one-man cinema, this story demanded to be told — urgently and without compromise.

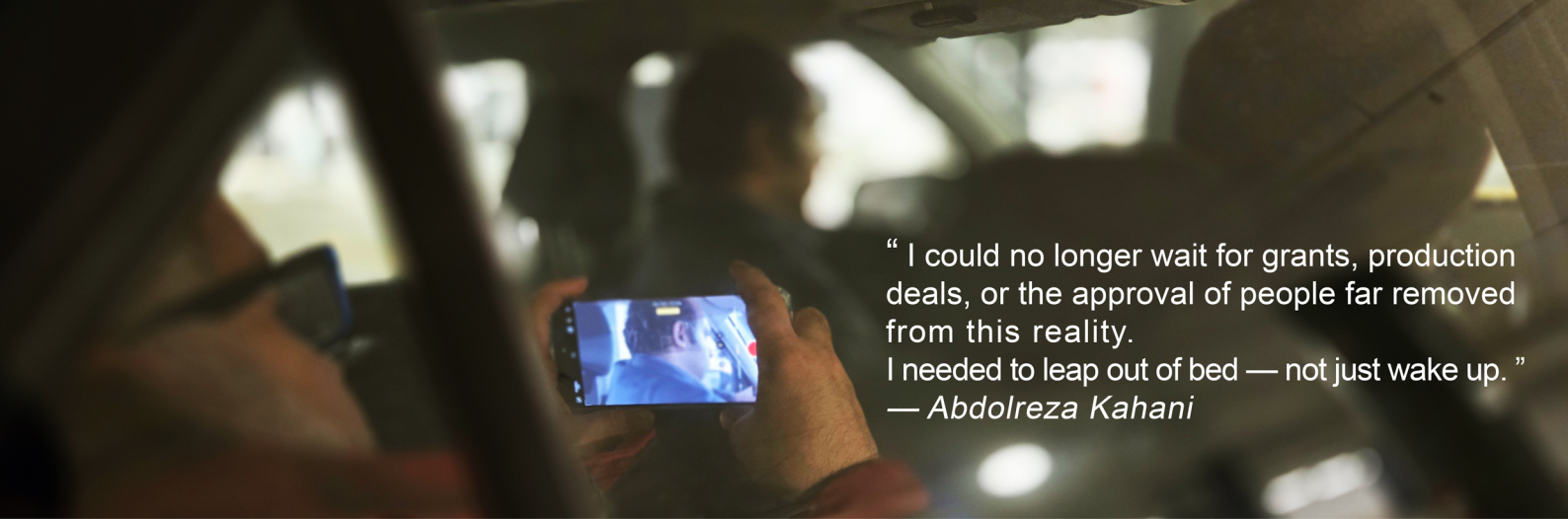
Director's Statement

I had to make *MORTICIAN*.

As an Iranian living in Canada, I've seen firsthand how the Islamic Republic quietly and persistently expands its reach — even here. Although the Canadian government imposed sanctions and designated the IRGC as a terrorist organization following the Woman, Life, Freedom movement, the threat hasn't vanished. Regime operatives remain active: they surveil, intimidate, disrupt lives — and in some cases, even carry out assassinations. As a filmmaker, I couldn't stay silent. This was bigger than me — a quiet crisis that needed a voice. Because film has the power to reach where politics cannot — to stir empathy, awareness, and action. Storytelling is my responsibility, and this film is my response.

As I began shaping this film, I heard the story of Gola — a female protest singer living in exile, whose life is still marked by surveillance and threat. Her experience was not only a reflection of the reality I was trying to capture — it sharpened it. The urgency became impossible to ignore.





“ I could no longer wait for grants, production deals, or the approval of people far removed from this reality. I needed to leap out of bed — not just wake up. ”
— *Abdolreza Kahani*

Building on a Solo Vision

After the critical success of *A Shrine*, my first step into mobile, crew-free filmmaking, I returned once more to the wilderness — both creatively and literally — to make *MORTICIAN*. But this time, I wasn't just exploring a method. I was committing to a movement. I made this film entirely alone. No production companies. No funding bodies. No one asking for revisions, waiting on approvals, or weighing cost against courage. Just me, a mobile phone, a recorder, and a story that demanded to be told. There were no artificial lights, no crew, no CGI, no post-production gimmicks — only snow, cities, cottages, roads, and the raw, unfiltered connection between filmmaker and actor. Filmmaking at its most stripped down — and its most powerful: direct, urgent, and true.

A Political Urgency

MORTICIAN is more than a film — it is a scream. What's unfolding isn't just an Iranian issue; it's a global warning. This threat isn't distant — it's here, and it's now. This film is my cinematic act of resistance.

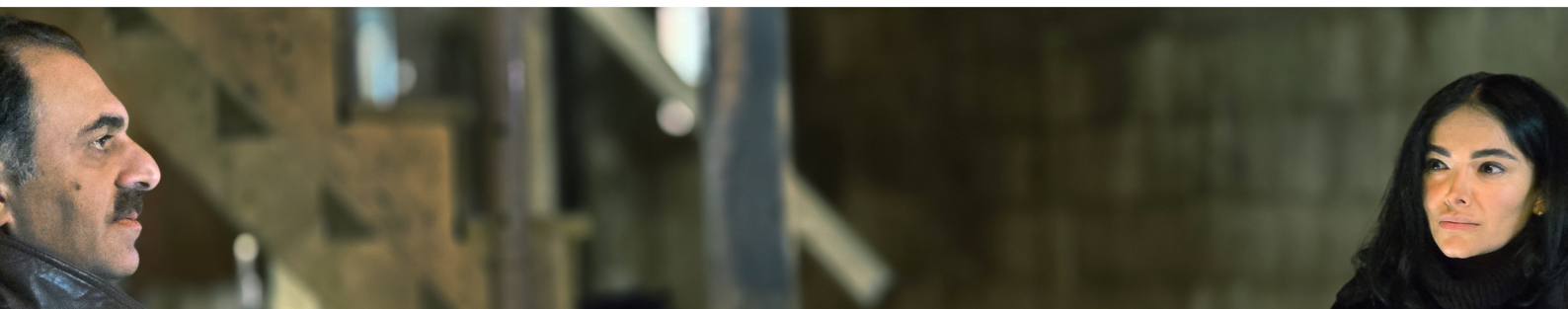
I hope *MORTICIAN* not only reaches audiences but empowers them to speak, resist, and act. Because the agents of fear are global — and so must be the voices of freedom.

MORTICIAN is not just a continuation of *A Shrine* — it's a bolder step, a stronger voice, and a call to all filmmakers: Tell the stories you must, no matter the size of your team.



Solo Filmmaking, Reimagined

Once again, I worked without a crew — only a mobile phone and a recorder. No artificial lighting, no CGI, no post-production gimmicks. Just instinct, risk, and presence. Filmmaking this way demands energy. It demands you leap, not simply rise. And from that leap comes truth.





Director's Biography:

Abdolreza Kahani, born in Nishapur, Iran, is an acclaimed filmmaker known for his insightful and unconventional storytelling.

His works explore themes of deception, truth, and human nature, earning international recognition. Notable early films include *Over There* (2008), which received the Golden Alexander at the Thessaloniki International Film Festival, and *Twenty* (2009), which won the Special Jury Prize at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival.

Despite ongoing censorship in Iran, Kahani has consistently challenged boundaries through bold and controversial subjects, maintaining an unwavering commitment to artistic freedom. Over the years, his films have been featured in numerous international film festivals around the world, solidifying his presence as a singular voice in global cinema.

In recent years, Kahani has pioneered a one-man, minimalist approach to filmmaking, using mobile phones and limited equipment to craft personal, urgent narratives. His 2023 film *A Shrine*, made entirely with a mobile phone, premiered at the Edinburgh International Film Festival and was screened at several international festivals. It is set for release on Apple TV this summer.

His latest film, *MORTICIAN*, continues this innovative and independent cinematic journey. Also shot solely with a mobile phone, *MORTICIAN* reflects Kahani's deep belief in accessible, democratic filmmaking. The film will have its world premiere at the 2025 Edinburgh International Film Festival, further establishing his unique, self-sufficient approach to storytelling.

Kahani's filmmaking style often blends naturalistic performances with dark comedy and absurdity, weaving everyday situations with philosophical reflection. His work draws comparisons to socially conscious, thought-provoking cinema, offering audiences a deeply human exploration of contemporary life through a distinctive and compelling lens.



— Real Lives Behind the Lens —
MORTICIAN is a story lived

Lead Actor — Nima Sadr (Mojtaba)

Nima Sadrzadeh is an Iranian–Canadian actor and a member of the Bahá'í faith — a religious minority systematically persecuted by the Islamic Republic. In Iran, he endured discrimination, constant pressure, and severe limitations on his freedom, which ultimately forced him into exile in Canada. His performance as Mojtaba is grounded not only in craft, but in the firsthand experience of someone who has endured the very silencing this story exposes.

Lead Actress — Gola (Golazin Ardestani) (Jana)

Gola is an Iranian–British singer, actress, and human rights activist who fled Iran in 2011 to pursue the basic right to sing. In Iran, women are banned from performing solo. Now living in exile, she uses her music as a tool of resistance. Her protest songs have gone viral during uprisings. Her continued activism led to heightened threats, prompting protective involvement from U.S. and U.K. authorities. “Jana is not just a character I played — she’s the echo of my own voice, shaped by years of resistance, exile, and the fight to sing freely as an Iranian woman. To have *Mortician* premiere in the UK, the country I now call home, is deeply personal.”

Gola has been profiled by leading media outlets including *The Times*, *VICE*, *Ms. Magazine*, *i-D*, and the *BBC*, and was featured in the inaugural edition of *Beyoncé and Gucci’s Chime for Change*. Her international performances span from Scotiabank Arena in Toronto to *Vital Voices* in Washington D.C., where she shared her voice alongside global leaders including Hillary Clinton.

MORTICIAN is a film shaped by voices that have paid the price for freedom. Their presence on screen is a quiet act of resistance, and a testament to the lived reality this film refuses to turn away from.