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'Cairo Conspiracy' - a spy thriller in today's Egypt

By *Sophie Braccini*



Photo provided

Islamic countries come to further their religious study. It is a place of knowledge whose intellectual power radiates widely.

When the Imam leading the school dies, the fight for his succession starts among candidates from different obediences, some strongly against the current power structure and one in particular a close supporter of Al-Sisi. The government will try to help that man win the election. The naive fisherman's son will be manipulated and blackmailed into becoming its spy and later its agent.?

The movie is a true thriller, full of mysteries, twists and rebounds. Adam, the central character, is not really charming but he is touching and as the trap closes around him, the spectator roots for the underdog. Ibrahim, the government representative who manipulates Adam, is an excellent bad guy and a remarkable actor (Fares Fares). He is nuanced, however; he has a conscience, and as a result may also get crushed by the determined state's machinery.?

The purpose of the film is certainly to entertain as a very good thriller. The audience will fear that Adam's double game be discovered, and will enjoy the series of dirty tricks and dramatic shifts. But it is also an excellent demonstration of what it is for ordinary citizens to live under a military regime, with the oppression and dangers that come from it.

In an interview, Saleh explained that he understands that the Egyptian government has had to deal with Muslim extremism, which he says is not an easy task. It was one of the promises of Al-Sisi when he seized power that he would dismantle the Muslim Brotherhood, a transnational Islamist organization that Al-Sisi accused of inciting violence and terrorism. In the movie, a small group of the Brotherhood is present and it is one of Adam's jobs to infiltrate and help neutralize it.

The movie was filmed in Turkey since Saleh wanted to avoid what happened with the shooting of his previous film, which was interrupted by the Egyptian authorities and he was forced into a difficult reorganization. "Cairo Conspiracy" was awarded Best Screenplay at the Cannes Film Festival and made the short list for foreign films for this year's Oscars. It is brought to Lamorinda by the International Film Showcase and will open at the Orinda Theater on March 24. Tickets at <https://www.orindamovies.com/>

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