

EL HARA  
a short documentary film

TRT: 16 minutes  
language: French  
countries of Production: Tunisia, France

**LOGLINE**

El Hara poetically explores how the places we grow up in haunt who we become, forever.

**SYNOPSIS**

For more than 700 years, thousands of Jews lived in the Islamic city of Tunis. Most of them lived in a 'city within a city,' a neighborhood called the Hara.

One conflicted young boy who grew up in the Hara recognized how the French colonial power was impacting his community — and his sense of self. This boy grew up to become the most celebrated Tunisian writer of the twentieth century, a contemporary of French philosophers Jean Sarte and Albert Camus. His name is Albert Memmi.

Memmi left the Hara as a young adult; but the Hara never left him. The enclosed Jewish quarter and his complicated nostalgia for this place would haunt his writings for the next 60 years.

In 2016, there are no Jews living in the Hara. Traces of the Jewish community in Tunis are faint, their imprint upon the social and political landscape hardly visible. But the ghosts of this neighborhood remain...

Through a cinematic journey of the Hara today, punctuated by an exclusive interview with Memmi and readings of his lyrical prose, EL HARA explores how the places we come from shape who we become.



## FILMMAKER BIOS

**Margaux Fitoussi** is an aspiring anthropologist, filmmaker, and writer. She graduated from UC Berkeley in 2011 and is currently a Presidential Scholar at Harvard University. While living in southern and central Africa from 2011-2014, Margaux researched armed groups and implemented civilian projection projects. Her multi-media exhibition about the Hara of Tunis was shown at the Dar Ben Achour Library, the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University, and at the University of Manouba. Her research focuses on historical memory, Judeo-Muslim relations, and the impact of French colonization in North Africa.

**Mo Scarpelli** is a Director and Cinematographer of non-fiction cinema. Her work seeks to capture the innate poetry of human life, while allowing observation to poke holes in prevailing myths or ready-made assumptions of the world. Mo's debut feature-length documentary FRAME BY FRAME screened at SXSW 2015, Hot Docs, BFI London Film Festival, AFI DOCS, and has won more than a dozen jury and audience awards on the festival circuit since, as well as a Cinema Eye Honors nomination. The film will have its digital and TV release by TIME, Inc., in 2016. Mo is a recipient of the Speranza Foundation Female Filmmaker Award, the Lena Sharpe Award for Persistence of Vision and the Reel Women Direct Prize (Cleveland Intl Film Festival).

## CREDITS

Directors	Margaux Fitoussi Mo Scarpelli
Producers	Margaux Fitoussi Mo Scarpelli
Cinematography	Mo Scarpelli
Starring	Albert Memmi as Albert Memmi Youssef Ben Ismaïl (voice) as Albert Memmi's writings
Editing	Mo Scarpelli Iva Radivojevic
Translation	Margaux Fitoussi

A Rake Films Production