



A film by  
**HINER SALEEM**

Autonomous Region of Kurdistan/France/Germany 2006  
[Drama, Kurdish/Turkish with English subtitles.  
35 mm/Dolby SR/90 min/colour]

Produced by HS Productions and mítosfilm

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## ABOUT DOL



The title of the film "DOL" refers to a traditional Kurdish tambourine which is used for festivities as well as for funerals in the Middle East. This direct intimacy between happiness and sadness is a leading thread throughout the movie.

Once again, the Kurdish director Hiner Saleem makes the viewers pay attention to his people, the Kurds, who are living between borders.

Even if Hiner Saleem throws a fierce gaze at the political reality, the filmmaker never forgets his artistic style. In teamwork with Andreas Sinanos, the long-time director of photography of Theo Angelopoulos, Hiner Saleem manages to capture minimalist and nearly choreographic pictures of a wounded earth. DOL is not only a journey through the fascinating landscape of the Kurdish mountains, but also a portrait of how war influences the life of uncomplicated people.

## CREW

Writer and Director  
**Hiner SALEEM**

Production  
**HS PRODUCTIONS**

Co production  
**mítosfilm – Mehmet Aktaş**

Producer  
**Sivan SALIM**

Director of Photography  
**Andreas SINANOS**

Sound Designer  
**Behmen ERDELANI**

Art Director  
**Saman SABUNCI**

Music  
**Vedat YILDIRIM**  
**Özgür AKGÜL**  
**Mehmet ERDEM**

Costume Designer  
**Belçim BILGIN**

Special Effects  
**Haji TAJIK**

Editor  
**Dora MANTZOROS**  
**Bonita PAPASTATHI**

Sound Editor  
**Emmanuelle LALANDE**

## BIOGRAPHY



Hiner Saleem was born 1964 in Iraqi Kurdistan – in north Iraq.

At the age of 17, he escaped via Syria to Italy. In Italy he continued his education and studied later

political science in Milan.

Today Hiner Saleem lives as filmmaker, painter and author in Paris. In April 2004 his autobiographical book "My Father's Rifle – a childhood in Kurdistan" was published, and has already been translated to several languages.

In frame of Festival de Cannes in 2005 Hiner Saleem was awarded with the „Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres“ by the French minister for education Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres. For his last two films KILOMETRE ZERO and DOL Hiner Saleem returned to his Kurdish homeland.

## CAST

Azad  
**Nazmî KIRIK**

Taman  
**Belçim BILGIN**

Ahmed  
**Omer ÇIAW ŞIN**

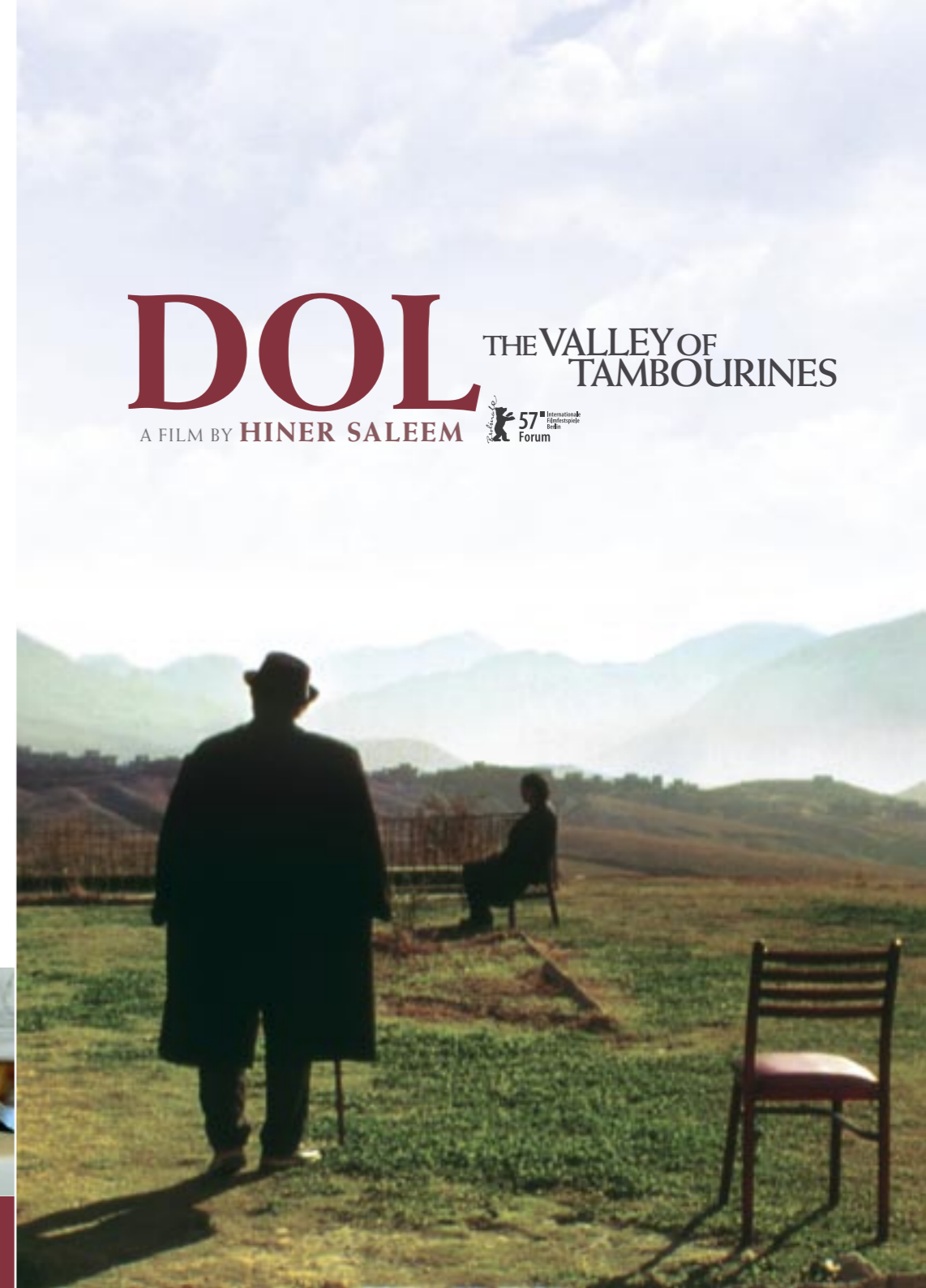
Jekaf  
**Rojîn ULKER**

Ceto  
**Abdullah KESKÎN**

Nazenin  
**Sipel Dogu Lesar ERDOGAN**

Ciwan  
**Ciwan HACO**

**DOL** THE VALLEY OF  
TAMBOURINES  
A FILM BY **HINER SALEEM**



## SYNOPSIS

It is the year of 2005 in the small Turkish-Kurdish village Balliova at the border of Iran and Iraq. The area, shattered by boundary disputes, is controlled by the Turkish military. After frequent armed hostilities with Kurdish guerrilla fighters, the Turkish military is now repressing the villagers.



Despite the difficult circumstances in the village Azad and his fiancée Nazenin want to marry. During the wedding ceremony a fight with the Turkish military takes place. Azad shoots at the Turkish commandant and escapes from the village Balliova, leaving his fiancée behind.

Azad reaches the Autonomous Region of Iraqi-Kurdistan by hiding in the back of a truck. Here his path crosses other destinies from the different regions of the divided Kurdistan.

He meets Ceto, who is coming back to his homeland from Paris because the corpse of his sister was found in an Iraqi common grave, and he meets Jekaf who as a little girl was kidnapped by Iraqi soldiers.

Azad also comes to know Taman who brings him along to a guerrilla camp in the Kurdish mountains. There, Kurds are fighting the Iranian government. Just like Azad, Taman wants to marry her fiancé, but the wedding ceremony is interrupted by a bombing raid.

Azad decides to bring Nazenin from their home village to the mountains, but he is ambushed by the Turkish army.

## HINER SALEEM ABOUT DOL – THE VALLEY OF TAMBOURINES

### Political background

When I visited North Kurdistan (southeast of Turkey) for the first time, I saw with own eyes *happy are those, who can call themselves Turks* written in the cities and also on the mountains. That was for me a reason for laughter, a laughter connected with tears. I could not believe it before I had seen it with my own eyes - a state which publicly says that its humans are better than other humans. It is obvious that it refers to the Kurds.

I felt it as dishonour for mankind, but at the same time, it is also a kind of comedy. It was somewhat a visual and simultaneously a bitter truth of our people and a very bitter truth about the Turkish state.

### Location

Kurdistan is not Iraq, meaning, that there you don't have the security problems as in the rest of Iraq. It is a peaceful country which tries to reconstruct itself. There is a kind of rebirth and reconstruction. I shot DOL not far away from the „Bermuda triangle“, at the border to the Iranian, Iraqi and Turkish Kurdistan. My decor was a real village. When we arrived we first built a Turkish flag for the shooting. By daybreak I walked to the scene and gazed to the mountains: my flag was no longer there! The village inhabitants had destroyed it during the night. Fortunately I succeeded in persuading them that the flag is only a requisite for my film and that it will be removed the day after the shooting.



### Kurdish cinema

There are some specific characteristics for producing films in Kurdistan. The countries which brought Kurdistan under their rule with force have hindered a development of a cinema culture in Kurdistan, particular in south Kurdistan (Iraq). There is a lack of film education and technical equipment.

That was an enormous problem for us.

Kurdish cinema strives to go in the direction of the sun and the spring.

Not only for me, but for all Kurdish filmmakers

it is a big challenge to work in this industry. Governments dominating Kurdistan have always expressed themselves against the cinema and the establishment of the Kurdish culture in general. Like that cinema reached Kurdistan very late. But I am happy that the Kurdish cinema becomes more important every day.

Now we have a government and an elected parliament in Iraqi Kurdistan and the total liberty to film, to write, to create. Thus, the autonomous government of Kurdistan also supported us financially and materially.



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# Love, Flight and Passion