

A NORUZ FILMS PRODUCTION

AHMAD RAZVI
LETICIA DOLERA

MAN PUSH CART

DIRECTED BY RAMIN BAHRANI

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CAST

Ahmad	AHMAD RAZVI
Noemi	LETICIA DOLERA
Mohammad	CHARLES DANIEL SANDOVAL
Manish	ALI REZA
Duke	FAROOQ “DUKE” MOHAMMAD
Noori	UPENDRAN K. PANICKER
Father-in-Law	ARUN LAL
Mother-in-Law	RAZIA MUJAHID
Ahmad’s Son	HASSAN RAZVI
Pakistani Driver	MUSTAFA RAZVI
Altaf	ALTAF HOUSSEIN
Final Customer	BILL LEWIS

with

Friend at Bar	ABDELRAHMA ABDELAZIZ
Newsstand Worker	RONAK “RICKY” PATEL
Club worker	SHAANA DIYA
Ahmad’s Wife	BHAVNA TOOR
Ahmad’s Baby	ADRIAN QUEZADA
Atif the Stab Victim	ATIF MUHAMMAD MIRZA
Veterinarian	RN RAO
Push Cart Garage Owner	ISSAM ABDELKADER
Guys in Karaoke	QAMAR BUKHARI
	ASIM MUJAHID
	MOUSA KRAISH
Customers	MARIAM SOLOGASHVILI
	THOMAS RUSSO
	MARCUS BONNEE
	PAUL ROSS
	DARRYL MEADOWS
	LINDA K. ALEXIS
	DAMITA SPENCER
	KATHERINE & DAVID BOYLE
	EDWARD HARPER
Girl Outside Club	ANA BRZOVA
Karaoke Waitress	KATHARYN YEW
Girls in Limo	CYNTHIA MARTIN
	SYBIL PRINCE
Falafel Customer	NICHOLAS ELLIOTT

FILMMAKERS

Written and Directed by	RAMIN BAHRANI
Producers	RAMIN BAHRANI PRADIP GHOSH BEDFORD T. BENTLEY III
Co-Producers	BRIAN BELL
Executive Producers	VINAY JAYARAM SCOTT BOOTH STEVE SABBA SANJAY MOTWANI LISA MUSKAT
Director of Photography	MICHAEL SIMMONDS
Original Music	PEYMAN YAZDANIAN
Assistant Director	NICHOLAS ELLIOTT
Editor	RAMIN BAHRANI
Sound Mixer	CHRISTOF GEBERT
Costume Designer	ELENA KOUVAROS
Assistant Camera	KATHARINA ROHRER
Gaffer	MARK KOENIG
Art Director	CHARLES DAFLER
Production Manager	NICHOLAS FRAYN
Production Assistants	ADEN HAKIMI JESSE LEHRHOFF
Still Photographer	JON HIGGINS
Interns	SYBIL PRINCE HIMKAR TAK
Noruz Films Manager	HOOMAN BAHRANI
First Assistant Editor	JOHN WU
Assistant Editors	CHRISTINA KELLY BENJAMIN STARK
Titles	DAVID FRISCO
Post Production Supervisor	JOHN FREUND
HD Online Editor	JOHN REHBERGER
Color Correction	MIKE MAGUIRE
VP of Video Operations, DuArt	JOE MONGE
DuArt Account Executive	MATT LUXENBERG
Sound Supervisor/Re-recording Mixer	TOM EFINGER
Sound Designer	ABIGAIL SAVAGE
Music Supervisor	SANDRA TRUJILLO
Assistant Sound Editor	JOHN MOROS
Foley Artist	BRIAN VANCHO
Additional Foley Editor	DAVID CRABB
ADR Editor	NICHOLAS SCHENCK
Audio Assistant	GREG BITTAR
Audio Post Facility	DIG IT AUDIO, INC.
Additional Original Music	DUAL

“MAN PUSH CART”

The life of a former Pakistani rock star who now sells coffee from his push cart on the streets of Manhattan.

* * *

Every night while the city sleeps, Ahmad, a Pakistani immigrant, struggles to drag his heavy cart along the streets of New York to his corner in Midtown Manhattan. And every morning, from inside his cart he sells coffee and donuts to a city he cannot call his own. He is the worker found on every street corner in every city. He is a man who wonders if he will ever escape his fate.

* * *

“Man Push Cart,” a new film from writer/director Ramin Bahrani, focuses on the unnoticed immigrant workers who populate our lives. The central character of the film is Ahmad (a powerful debut by Ahmad Razvi, a non-professional actor), a push cart vendor who sells coffee and donuts. The push cart vendor is a New York institution, and this is the first film to focus on him as a central character.

Ahmad’s day begins in the early morning darkness of a warehouse where he collects his supplies and his push cart. While other vendors speed by in vans, with their carts hitched behind, Ahmad struggles to drag his cart on foot to his quiet Midtown Manhattan corner, where he prepares for the day ahead. The sun rises and Ahmad quickly serves coffee and donuts to the morning rush of busy white-collar workers. After selling his wares, he hauls his cart through New York City traffic back to his garage, and then roams the streets, lugging his gas tank and peddling bootleg pornographic DVDs for extra cash.

It is a harsh, often humiliating life, but Ahmad carries on with a stoic dignity, seemingly determined to find his way. We soon discover that he is mourning for his deceased wife, and that his continued attempts to see his estranged young son are prevented by his in-laws. Ahmad does not seem to belong anywhere, and the only companion he finds is a stray kitten he discovers in an alleyway, which he brings home to his tiny basement apartment.

Then Ahmad’s fortunes take a turn for the better when he meets two people. Mohammad (Charles Daniel Sandoval), is a successful Pakistani investment banker who hires Ahmad to renovate his luxury high-rise apartment. Mohammad recognizes Ahmad as a once renowned figure from their hometown of Lahore, and promises to help get Ahmad out of his push cart. Ahmad then stumbles upon Noe (Leticia Dolera- “Imagining Argentina”), a charming young Spanish woman spending a few months in New York and working in a newsstand that belongs to her uncle. Ahmad is drawn to Noe’s simple beauty and guileless personality, and her unexpected appearance seems to be the perfect muse to lift his deflated spirits.

Just as Ahmad has begun to envision the possibility of a different and better life, his push cart is stolen, and he finds himself scrambling to regain the very thing that he is trapped inside of. As various strands of his life close in on him, he must try and prevent his fate from turning into tragedy.

“Man Push Cart” is a humanist and lyrical film that presents a new vision of New York and America. With an unforgettably real and complex performance by Ahmad Razvi, we witness a worker whose dignity and inner strength never waver as he goes unnoticed, struggling to drag his cart - his fate- along the streets of New York.

MAN PUSH CART is written and directed by Ramin Bahrani, and produced by Ramin Bahrani, Pradip Ghosh and Bedford T. Bentley III, and executive produced by Lisa Muskat and Vinay Jayaram.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

“At the end of our film, you will hopefully care for and empathize with this [Pakistani] man whom in today’s world we have been trained to hate and fear.”

-- Ramin Bahrani

“It was tough for me to go back into that cart. My past always comes back to me.”

-- Ahmad Razvi

In January 2002 Ramin Bahrani began working on **MAN PUSH CART**, which evolved over two years of research. “I wouldn’t say research exactly,” Bahrani explains. “I was just hanging out with push cart vendors and guys on the street that I met. I did that for two years.” The idea for film, inspired in part by the true story of Ahmad Razvi (a former push cart vendor), was shaped with Bahrani’s interest in Albert Camus and Persian poetry.

“Ahmad dragging that cart on New York’s streets is why we made the film,” says Bahrani. “That evocative image, which is so real, seems to me to be what life is about.”

Recently, Bahrani and his collaborators gathered in NYC after seeing the finished film together for the first time. “Ahmad is what impressed me and surprised me the most,” says Bahrani. “His presence is so complex and so powerful, that during editing, the film became increasingly about him. I knew he would be good, but I didn’t know he would be such a commanding presence.”

Together with his team, Bahrani sought out to bring new characters, locations and story to the often-filmed city of New York.

“I’m interested in whatever we don’t see in cinema” says Bahrani. “For me, the story must come from reality, a sense of location and character that is rooted in today’s society, not some computer generated world. I want my cinema to be connected specifically to my generation, the way American films were in the 60s and 70s or current East Asian and Middle Eastern cinema is today.”

MAN PUSH CART is set on the streets of New York, and focuses mainly on the South Asian immigrant workers that populate the city. Bahrani has lived on and off between Manhattan and Brooklyn for nearly a decade. He has witnessed many changes in the city, especially since 9/11, and says that living overseas for three years after college helped him see America with fresh eyes.

He finds it “unfortunate” that so many filmmakers use New York City as a backdrop, but never actually incorporate the city into their stories. “There are such amazing films like Raoul Walsh’s “Regeneration” and of course “Taxi Driver” [Martin Scorsese], where New York City is a character that impacts the people living in it. Walk in Midtown late at night, or anywhere in Brooklyn, and you will find new images, unused locations, and fresh voices and faces. If you see everyone staring in one direction, just turn your head and look the other way. In NYC you will see something new. So why keep making the same movie again and again?”

In fact searching for location is how Bahrani first met Ahmad Razvi, the star of the film. “I saw this guy walking around my neighborhood, looking around,” says Razvi. They began talking, and before he knew it, Razvi had been wrangled into showing Bahrani the hidden corners of his community and introducing him to all his friends in the neighborhood. “He was always coming around to see something new. After looking at locations, I used to take him drinking at the lounge you see in the film. All those guys in the film are my real buddies and Ramin’s now too! The stab victim you see in that bar, that’s a true story.”

After one year of talking with Razvi about his life and past, and seeing how and where he lived, Bahrani suddenly revealed to Razvi that he had written the main part based on his life and asked him if he would like to play the role. “I had a feeling he might ask me that. I was pretty excited and said, yes!” says Razvi.

“It was interesting to me that someone as tough as Ahmad, and with such a physical and hard life, was also so sensitive.” Bahrani wanted this contradiction to be in the film. He continues, “People are not what they seem. The South Asian guy who busses your table at a restaurant is not *just* a guy who cleans your table. I know so many push

cart vendors in New York. I have been to their homes, met their families, had meals together. One was a journalist, the other an engineer, one had worked in TV in Afghanistan. Some had wives, others had several girlfriends. There is more to them than just selling us coffee and donuts. And everyone who looks like them, or like me or Ahmad in a post 9/11 world are not terrorists.”

Simmonds is quick to add, “I knew Ahmad walking with that gas tank might be a problem, but not as bad as it was.” He explains that on six occasions passers-by called Razvi a terrorist or accused him of “funding a Bin Laden training camp! We were even forced out of one location it became such a problem,” says Simmonds. Nicholas Elliott adds, “I remember how upset it made Leticia [Dolera]. She was surprised something like that would happen.”

“My character is not fazed by such things,” says Bahrani. “Despite the global politics surrounding us today, Ahmad picks himself up day after day, gets back in his cart, and works with a quiet dignity and humility to survive. This is the fate of countless workers in cities around the world.”

From early on Bahrani and Simmonds decided to reveal Ahmad’s character very slowly. “These workers, we see them everyday, but we don’t really see them,” says Bahrani. “So Simmonds and I decided to show only Ahmad’s hands, part of his face or his back early in the film.” Simmonds adds, “We wanted to know how long we could go before revealing Ahmad in what was already such a minimal film. It was a risk for both of us, but Ramin and I agreed from day one to risk as much as possible. We wanted the film to reveal itself as life does.”

Razvi, who had actually worked as a push cart vendor for one year, hadn’t been inside a push cart in nearly a decade. “Yes it was tough at first, to go back into it,” Razvi says. “That had been a hard time in my life, both for me and for my family. But it’s like riding a bike. Soon I was back into the rhythm of it. In general my character felt very real to me.” Razvi pauses and adds, “My past is always coming back to me, you know?”

And dragging the cart? “I hated Ramin for that!” exclaims Razvi. “The scene where I fall, that wasn’t scripted! I was about to get run over by the cart, then by that taxi! I didn’t talk to him the rest of the night. I only kept going because by then I could feel we were making something good. And Red Bull! Red Bull saved me those nights!”

* * *

“In struggling to make this film I have learned how to be hopeful nevertheless!”

-- Ramin Bahrani

Bahrani often cites Albert Camus’ important work, “Myth of Sisyphus,” as an inspiration. Bahrani explains, “Camus has taken that myth, of a man whose eternal fate is to push a rock up a hill only to have it roll back down again, and used it to encapsulate his philosophy of the absurdity of life. When I look around, today seems as absurd- if not more- than any other era. The image of a lone man, a middle-eastern man in a post 9/11 New York, dragging that cart along the streets, seemed to be a modern day version of that myth.”

“Camus says that, ‘The struggle itself towards the heights is enough to fill a man’s heart.’ And he also writes in the last sentences of his book that, ‘he leaves Sisyphus at the foot of the mountain, where one always finds one’s burden again. But that one must imagine Sisyphus happy.’ Ever since I read this book when I was a teenager I found it such a bizarre statement. But the older I got, the more this vision of the world seemed to make sense to me. I have never been able to accept false hope. But I do not see that as dark, or despairing. In fact, I see it as the opposite! We are all trapped by our fate *and* our own limitations. I am still trying to accept my fate, yet struggle to ‘reach the heights’ at the same time. And in struggling to make this film I have learned how to be hopeful nevertheless!”

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“Ramin would yell at me, ‘Stop acting cool! This is not a Bollywood film!’ He always wanted me to do less, to be still...”

-- Ahmad Razvi

Bahrani explains the way he casts actors by saying, “I try and find the most interesting people and build the character around them. If they resemble what I have written, so much the better. If not, then I change the character to better match the person.”

The director tends to avoid extended rehearsals and going into the psychology of the actors. Says Razvi: “He showed me a draft of the script a few months before shooting, but never again. We talked about it for a couple years, but he refused to show me the final script. In fact, other than Elliott, nobody was allowed to have a script on set!”

Razvi seems upset by that. “Yes, usually he would only tell me 15 minutes in advance what scene we were filming, what my lines were and what I was supposed to do,” Razvi laughs. “At that time, I found it annoying. But looking at the film, he was right to do that.” Razvi laughs, “Sometimes Ramin would yell at me, ‘Stop acting cool! This is not a Bollywood film!’ He always wanted me to do less, to be still. A lot of the time, Ramin and Mike were filming and I didn’t even know it.”

In fact Razvi did more than just star in the film. He also helped find extras, load and unload the truck, secure locations, vehicles, arrange for food in his neighborhood. “I knew I needed Ahmad’s help with those things,” says Bahrani. “But really I didn’t want him to have a spare moment to think about his role. I gave him as much physical work as possible. I wanted him to look more and more beaten as shooting progressed. I think it worked!”

“I slept about two hours a night,” says Razvi. “Ramin will tell you, because he made me sleep on his sofa the entire shoot! He wouldn’t let me go home, or see my family or girlfriend. He wanted me to be like a boxer!”

“It is clear that Ahmad has something unique that Ramin was able to pull out in his performance,” says Muskat. “Ahmad is a real find.”

Simmonds adds, “Ramin is really a perfectionist. He knew what he wanted and he never quit on anything. But he is also very patient with his actors and the location. He did take after take until everyone was happy with the scene. Then he would do it again just to see if some magic accident would happen. A few times it did!”

Working with trained actors was a new experience for the director, who had made all his shorts and his first feature with non-professional actors. “I really want to begin working with trained actors, so I mixed it up with this film. I found it to be a great pleasure and a challenge,” says Bahrani. “It was amazing to me how quickly someone like Leticia was able to arrive at what I wanted, and how she could maintain energy take after take.”

Leticia Dolera, who was cast in the part of Noemi, is a rising star in Spain. She came to prominence with her co-starring role in “Imagining Argentina” with Antonio Banderas and Emma Thompson, and stars in the hit new comedy, “Semen: A Love Story,” which opened in Spain in July 2005.

The character of Noemi was also based on someone Bahrani knew. “I had come to know many newsstand workers in Midtown; they were mainly run by Indian families. One of them had married a Spanish woman, and when his niece came from Spain for the summer, she began working in his newsstand to make some extra money. It was uncanny how her job and location paralleled that of the push cart vendor, so I wrote her into the film.”

And since the real girl had returned to Spain, Bahrani did an extensive search before he found Leticia Dolera to play the role. “I was lucky to find her,” says Bahrani. “She really adds a warmth to the film, and gave such a natural performance.”

“It is clear she is going to be a big international star,” muses Muskat about Dolera. “Her performance proves that Ramin knows how to work with trained actors as well.”

Ramin adds about Leticia, “She has a face like a candle, so warm and expressive. You know, she could have been a great silent movie star.”

* * *

“I was interested in the details in small actions and of a person’s interior self rather than dialogue or melodrama. The film is made of the moments we rarely see, rather than the clichés we have seen too many times.”

-- Ramin Bahrani

“With **MAN PUSH CART**, we were trying to avoid relying too heavily on story and dramatic clichés,” says Bahrani. “Those elements can be useful, but for this film they seemed less important. I wanted to use Ahmad’s character, his face, his actions, and the specifics of his daily routine to create the feeling of the film, instead of back story, or love story.”

“You shouldn’t try and make this a movie it isn’t,” Bahrani continues. “I love dramatic story telling in films, but sometimes poetry can be good too. When I see films by Robert Flaherty, Abbas Kiarostami, or Claire Denis, they make me look at my everyday surroundings in a different way. I think that is something very important and part of the job of poetry.”

A big part of accomplishing this task is the look and sounds of **MAN PUSH CART**, which has already garnered high praise. The film’s unique and absorbing look developed from Bahrani’s collaboration with cinematographer Michael Simmonds, who had just finished shooting two films in New York for Iranian director Amir Naderi (“Marathon” and “Sound Barrier”). “Ramin and I agreed that we had no interest in shooting New York as a tourist. We live it, we are a part of the city,” says Simmonds.

“I remember a couple weeks before shooting, Ramin and I went to see “Pickpocket” [Robert Bresson] at Anthology Film Archives. I know it is one of Ramin’s favorite films. That really informed how we shot Ahmad’s apartment. And together we looked at “Kes” [Ken Loach], “Killing of a Chinese Bookie” [John Cassavetes] and some stuff by Alan Clarke. The lighting in those films has always struck me as so real. Obviously we were very interested in the night scenes, and the use of available light. I wanted to capture what night really looks like to a naked eye, rather than a ‘lit’ nighttime scene.”

“The movie is about people working inside boxes, so we shot with a fairly tight frame,” says Simmonds. “We wanted Ahmad to feel trapped in the frame, like he is in the pushcart.”

“Our camera is very objective,” Bahrani adds. “There aren’t that many POV shots, even though it feels like the entire film is from Ahmad’s perspective. Really the camera is indifferent, like life.”

Bahrani also mentions influences such as “Boys From Fengkuei” by Hao Hsiau Hsien and, surprisingly, “Rocky” [John Avildsen], which he says, “has such great use of locations, amazing lighting and -with that one famous and cheesy exception- a great and sparse use of music. In fact I looked at it while editing, and realized the influence of “Rocky” on American independent cinema. For some reason it has become a really undervalued film.”

* * *

“Small crews are great. Just a few friends who trust each other getting to the truth of the moment with the actors and the camera.”

-- Ramin Bahrani

Muskat says, “The more I got to know Ramin’s working style, I realized that Simmonds, Nicholas and Ahmad, even Chris Gebert, were key collaborators in his team. Elliott wasn’t your typical AD; he was a creative source for Ramin from the script all the way through the edit. I remember Simmonds was at Ramin’s apartment for one week straight helping with the cut. This style of filmmaking is something that I am familiar with from having worked with David Gordon Green and is the type of collaboration I like to be a part of.”

“Simmonds and Elliott were excellent bullshit detectors,” exclaims Bahrani. “Whenever something false was happening, these guys would point it out to me in a heartbeat. The same collaboration was true of the actors, Leticia, Ahmad and the others. Small crews are great. Just a few friends who trust each other getting to the truth of the moment with the actors and the camera. Once you cut out all the excess ‘production,’ you are free.”

“Ramin and I have similar taste in movies, and we both wanted to do something interesting with the medium,” says Simmonds. “We were wondering if American independent cinema still existed, and wanted to throw our two cents in. We want to push even harder with our next film.”

* * *

“The film has a great sense of rhythm, one very rare for a director of his age.”
- Lisa Muskat

Muskat was impressed to learn that Bahrani was going to edit the film himself. “I liked the way Ramin slowly revealed the story and the character. He also had a great ability to constantly re-invent the film. It has a great sense of rhythm, one very rare for a director of his age.”

“The film only has about 250 cuts, about a fourth the number of an average feature this length,” says Bahrani. “Going through the various cuts of the film, I realized that fewer images held for a longer period of time gave the film more power, more resonance.”

Though it is used sparingly, music is an important part of **MAN PUSH CART**. After production wrapped, Bahrani was quick to call Peyman Yazdanian, Iran’s leading film composer. Bahrani and Yazdanian first collaborated on Ramin’s debut, “Strangers,” which he made in Iran in 2000.

“I knew from day one that there was nobody else I wanted to work with other than Peyman.” Bahrani and Yazdanian spoke many times over the phone while Bahrani was editing the footage. There was talk of Erik Satie, of Vivaldi and also of Yazdanian’s own score for Kiarostami’s “The Wind Will Carry Us.” They agreed that there should be only a few instruments used in the score, and one theme that would repeat during the course of the movie, with small variations. Once Bahrani had a rough cut, he sent it to Peyman in Tehran and the music was soon born.

“Peyman’s music doesn’t force you to feel one way or another,” says Bahrani. “His music manages to be both sad and hopeful. It makes you think, and fills you with a sense of nostalgia which I find to be a very tragic emotion. His score is open to interpretation, which is what I like in music and in film.”

“Most folks I know who start out in independent film have this ideal notion that they will change the world- or at least some aspect of it,” says Muskat. “I know that since working on **MAN PUSH CART**, when I walk the streets of New York, my senses are heightened, my attention to detail and the people around me is greater. I look at people, especially those who were once “invisible” to me, differently. Ramin’s work ethic, the performances he inspired, a vision he captured of the city, the intimate collaboration with his team and ultimately the film **MAN PUSH CART** has had its effect. I thank Ramin for that, for in a sense, making me a better person.”

Bahrani concludes, “I have a hard time going to see new movies. It seems that with few exceptions, each film is imitating last year’s ‘hit’ instead of being true to itself or original to the filmmaker. I am striving for each of my films to be more sincere to itself, and original in story and character. I want our cinema to have some relevance to our generation and to see something new up on the screen. Me and my friends, my collaborators, we are pushing for that. If films were more honest, I think the audience would respond to the cinema again.”

ABOUT THE CAST

Ahmad Razvi (Ahmad) - Over the last decade, Ahmad Razvi has been involved with a number of businesses in Brooklyn including a construction company, a Pakistani restaurant, and a pastry shop. After the events of September 11, 2001, Ahmad co-founded **COPO**— *Council of Pakistan Organization*. Based in his Midwood Brooklyn community, **COPO** has already taught tens of thousands of South East Asian immigrants ESL and basic computer courses as well as provided them with pro bono legal services and counseling. In 2002, Razvi initiated a youth basketball program for young adults of all races, religions, and ethnicities. But before all this, Ahmad worked as a push cart vendor on the streets of New York. “Man Push Cart” is his acting debut.

Leticia Dolera (Noemi) – Born in Barcelona, Spain, Leticia Dolera is one of the most promising stars in the Spanish film panorama. After training in several acting academies, she has gone on to appear in many films and television serials. Her professional career combines Spanish box office successes such as “The Other Side of the Bed” (Emilio Martinez Lazaro, 2002) as well as international productions like “The Emperor’s Wife” (Julien Vrebos, 2003) and “Imagining Argentina” (Christopher Hampton, 2003) in which she worked alongside Antonio Banderas and Emma Thompson. This also marked her first appearance in the Venice Film Festival. This year she was seen in the hit Spanish comedy, “Semen, a Love Story (I.Paris & D. Fejerman, 2005)

Charles Daniel Sandoval (Mohammad) - Charles Daniel Sandoval is a New York based actor who has performed on Broadway, Regional Theatres and numerous television shows. His feature film credits include, “West Bank Brooklyn” (2002), and “Over The Mountains” (2005). Sandoval is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Ramin Bahrani (Writer/Director/Producer) Ramin Bahrani was born in North Carolina to Iranian parents. After receiving his BA from Columbia University in New York City, Bahrani moved to Iran for three years and made his first feature film, “Strangers” (2000). He then spent some time in Paris before returning to the states to begin work on his new film, “Man Push Cart.” Bahrani has made several short films, received various awards, grants and fellowships for his films and screenplays, and occasionally teaches acting and screenwriting. “Man Push Cart” is his second feature film.

Michael Simmonds (Director of Photography) Michael Simmonds studied cinematography at The School of Visual Arts in NYC where he received his BFA. Simmonds has shot many features and short films. Most notable is his collaboration with world-renowned filmmaker, Amir Naderi. Together they made two films, “Marathon” (2002) and “Sound Barrier” (2005). Simmonds’ striking B&W photography for these two films has been highly praised by Variety as well as other publications. He also plays banjo and guitar, and is an avid surfer.

Lisa Muskat (Executive Producer) Lisa is a New York-based independent film producer whose credits include, David Gordon Green’s debut film, “George Washington” (Cowboy Pictures 2000). The film screened at Berlin, New York, and Toronto, among others. It received the New York Film Critics’ Prize for Best Debut Feature, and was named one of the best films of the year by The New York Times, Time Magazine, and Roger Ebert, among others. “All the Real Girls” (Sony Pictures Classics), directed by David Gordon Green, which Lisa produced with Jean Doumanian, screened at Sundance and Berlin, among others. The film received The Sundance Special Jury Prize for Emotional Truth and The Jury Prize for Performance (Patricia Clarkson). Lisa also executive produced “Crude” directed by Paxton Winters, and the documentaries “The Worlds of Mei Lnfang”, by Mei-Juin Chen (Berlin FF 2000), and “The Rough South of Larry Brown” (2002), by Gary Hawkins. Lisa’s latest collaboration with David Gordon Green, “Undertow” (MGM/UA) produced with Edward Pressman and Terrence Malick, stars Josh Lucas, Dermot Mulroney and Jamie Bell. Lisa is the recipient of the Sundance /Mark Silverman Producing Fellowship 2000. **In Development:** Goat (David Gordon Green); Scars (Leos Carax); Monkey King (Mei-Juin Chen); Marc Singer Project

Brian Bell (Co-Producer): Brian Bell is a New York based producer whose credits include, “All Night Bodega” (2002), line producer for Rebecca Miller’s “Personal Velocity” (United Artists 2002). The film went on to win the 2002 Sundance Grand Jury and Cinematography Prizes, The John Cassavetes award at the Independent Spirit Awards and three prizes at the Istanbul and Locarno Film Festivals. Line producer for Rebecca Miller’s “The Ballad of Jack and Rose” (IFC 2005) starring Daniel Day-Lewis, Catherine Keener, and Beau Bridges. It premiered at

Sundance and Berlin. Co-producer of “Keane,” (Magnolia 2005) by Lodge Kerrigan and produced by Steven Soderbergh. *Keane* screened at Telluride, Toronto, New York and the Director’s Fortnight section of Cannes. Producer of “Twelve and Holding,” by Michael Cuesta (starring Annabella Sciorra), premiering at Toronto this year. Producer of “Before It Had A Name” starring Willem Dafoe and Seymour Cassell. Co-Producing “Beautiful Ohio,” starring William Hurt and produced by Hillary Swank and Mark Burton.

Peyman Yazdanian (Original Music) Peyman Yazdanian is a classically trained pianist and Iran’s leading film composer. He has scored films for master filmmaker, Abbas Kiarostami (“The Wind Will Carry Us” Grand Jury Prize, Venice Film Festival 1999), as well as Jafar Panahi (“Crimson Gold” Un Certain Regard Jury Award, Cannes Film Festival 2003), and many others. He collaborated with Bahrani on his first film, “Strangers,” 2000. Yazdanian has performed piano concerts in Tehran and across Europe. He is currently composing two European films.

Nicholas Elliott (Assistant Director) Currently based in NYC, Nicholas Elliott is a graduate of Bennington College. Following his studies in film and theater, he spent six years living in Paris where he wrote and directed two short films, “Lost Man” and “Sue’s Last Ride”, which screened in Rotterdam and Amiens, among others. He also appeared as an actor in “Shadow of a Vampire”, and produced concert visuals for the rock band Placebo. His most recent project, “shqrurx”, was a performance piece which he wrote and was the sole actor in, premiered at the Odense International Theater Festival in Denmark in 2003. He is currently preparing both a short film and a play that will premiere in Luxembourg in spring 2006. He also records music and sings in the band, Turkish Love Circus.

MUSIC

“Down on the Quay”
Courtesy of Clare Fader and the Vaudevillians
Lyrics and Melodies by Clare Fader
Arranged by Damon Carmona

“Aadat”
Courtesy of Atif Aslam
Lyrics and Music by Atif Aslam

“Slow me Down”
Courtesy of sug[r]cane
Melodies and Arrangement by sug[r]cane

“Dil Nachde”
Courtesy of Signia
Lyrics by Jushar Singh Binning
Music by Sanjay Seran

“Daroo”
Courtesy of Movibox/Brian Engel Publishing
Lyrics by Dev Raj

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Noruz Films



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