

A FILM BY SEREN YÜCE

# majority



**tiff.** toronto  
international  
film festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION 2010



GIORNATE  
DEGLI AUTORI  
VENICE DAYS



# SYNOPSIS

Twenty-one-year-old Mertkan has a stable but unfulfilling life in Istanbul: living at home with his parents, working as an office boy in his father's construction company, hanging out with his buddies in shopping malls and discos. When he meets Gül, a Kurdish girl from eastern Turkey, awkward Mertkan starts to become a bit more self-confident, and it seems possible that he could break away from his oppressive parents. But Mertkan's domineering father opposes any association with "those people who only want to divide our country". Will Mertkan be strong enough to avoid becoming the kind of man that his father wants him to be?

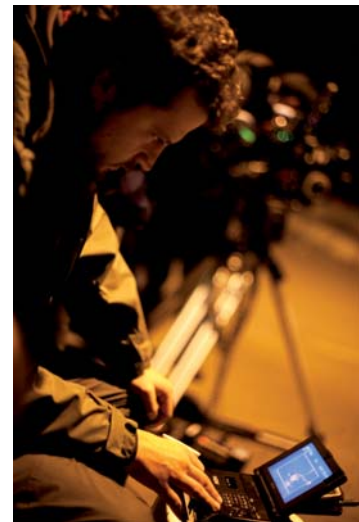






# SEREN YÜCE / BIOGRAPHY

Seren Yüce was born in Istanbul in 1975. He graduated from Bilkent University of Ankara, Archeology Department. Between 1999- 2005 he worked as 1<sup>st</sup> AD on television series. In 2006, he was the 1<sup>st</sup> AD in Ozer Kiziltan's *Takva / A Man's Fear of God* and 1<sup>st</sup> AD in Fatih Akin's *The Edge of Heaven*. Recently, he was the 1<sup>st</sup> AD for Yesim Ustaoglu in *Pandora's Box*. *Majority* is his first feature length film.





# DIRECTOR'S VIEW

The complicated way mankind structures its society, often covered under “Technology”, is principally driven by the power of Masculinity. *Majority* is a piece of self-criticism: of myself, and of the Turkish society of which I am a member... My aim is to take a look at “us” through the story of a family: “Family” is the core of our society. There are three axes by which I could further explain my film.

## “A MAN”

The film tells the story of how Mertkan, our main character becomes a “man” in mainstream society. This story is told along Mertkan’s relationship with his father, from the time he is a small boy to the life he leads now in his 20’s. Kemal, Mertkan’s father, is an upper-middle class citizen with high consumer power, narrow-minded and uncompromising in his beliefs. Naturally Kemal wants to raise his son to be like himself, but Mertkan is a passive, clumsy and cowardly boy. He is weak and lacking in self-confidence, as he has not been free to make any decisions on his own since childhood. He was always bent to his father’s demands.

Until now, Mertkan has lived “fear” more than he has lived “love” in his life. As he grows older and starts to join mainstream society, he becomes acquainted with discrimination, reminded in no uncertain terms by his father to be “careful” about his new friendships.

For Kemal, every Turk must be a patriot. The way to prove it is by joining the army. Every Turkish adolescent must know how to hold a gun. Mertkan however, thinks of joining









the army as the possibility also to be wounded, become crippled or die. There is no choice for him or any other adolescent, to indulge in their fear of death is not an option open to them. He will have to deal with an authority in his life, whether it be his father or the government.

## **WOMEN**

In the male-dominated world, women have always had to struggle for existence. It is a distressing fact that women in Turkey are faced with different levels of violence everyday. Mertkan had been brought up with this fact. His first girlfriend, Gül, is a Kurd. She had also been oppressed by her family and escaped to Istanbul to live an independent life, putting herself through university by working as a waitress. Mertkan does not know anything about her world or the rules of it. They discover their late-blooming sexuality together. Gül is a braver person than Mertkan. When Kemal intervenes, as soon as he finds out about the relationship, Mertkan starts to stay away from Gül. Without scruples, he breaks up with her and leaves her on her own. Love throws people together and can provide protection and strength for both. If Mertkan had the courage to really care for his girlfriend, she wouldn't be taken away against her will into a fate she does not want.

In our society, motherhood is a duty imputed to a woman before even allowing her the time to become a woman. Nazan, Mertkan's mother, is just like the other women in the story, stuck among men, unhappy with her life but bows to the only option open to her. She is attached to Kemal's economical power, therefore she does not raise any questions and does not seek any answers. She's just a wife to her husband and a mother to her children.

## **THE LOCATION**

The film is set in the most crowded, complicated and developed city in Turkey: Istanbul. Istanbul is not only on the two sides of Bosphorus anymore. Left with only a small green area in the north, the city is now littered with a dusty mixture of yellow and grey concrete. It has the typical silhouette of any developing country's metropole. Kemal is one of the architects of this concrete structure. Soon Mertkan will become one as well.

I feel that Architecture is the clothing of a society. The way the city is clothed tells a lot about the place, its inhabitants, and affects their lifestyle, their interactions with fellow inhabitants, their mental attitude and their attitude in life. This "clothing" is therefore very important to me when thinking of the visual composition of the film.

It would be wrong and inadequate to generalise and summarise Turkish society by Mertkan and his family's story. Turkey is built on many economic and cultural levels, it is composed of many diverse ethnic groups. The mentality of the ruling class is perpetuated widely into the society. Mertkan and his father are examples of this mentality and products of this perpetuation. At the moment there are numerous movements in Turkey which must be reckoned with in order to break this oppressing mentality. Through the film *Majority*, I sincerely hope to create some awareness among today's youth and the upcoming generations, reminding all of us that education and social change start, first and foremost, in the family.











# CAST & CREW

*Mertkan* – Bartu Küçükçağlayan

*Kemal* – Settar Tanrıöğen

*Mother* – Nihal Koldaş

*Gül* – Esmem Madra

*Ersan* – İlhan Hacıfazlıođlu

*Necmi* – Cem Zeynel Kılıç

*İrfan* – Feridun Koç

*Kurdish worker* – Mehmet Ünal

*Sukriye* – Guzide Balcı

*Taxi driver* – Erkan Can

*Scriptwriter-Director* – Seren Yüce

*Line Producer* – Özkan Yılmaz

*Director of Photography* – Barış Özbiçer

*Editor* – Mary Stephen

*Art Director* – Meral Efe

*Sound* – Mustafa Bölükbaşı

*Lighting* – Ersin Aldemir

*Assistant Director* – Ahmet Yılmaz

*Producers* – Sevil Demirci, Önder Çakar

*Production* – Yeni Sinemacılık

*World Sales* – The Match Factory

# TECHNICAL DETAILS

2010 - Turkey

*Length* – 102 min

*Picture Format* – 35mm, 1:1,85

*Sound Format* – Dolby Digital

*Language* – Turkish



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