

TAKING OVER THE KING'S LAND

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BRIEF PITCH

London Summer 2012. It's Jubilee year, Olympic year.

And in a forgotten corner of East London, in the shadow of the Olympic site, Egyptian artist Nazir Tanbouli is battling weather, vandalism and lack of funds, to create a massive mural installation throughout a semi-derelict housing estate.

One man, one brush. **Taking Over the King's Land** follows Nazir through his self appointed task on the Kingsland estate. Can art counter the urban atmosphere of deprivation, blight and neglect?

SYNOPSIS

Taking Over The King's Land is a documentary film about artist Nazir Tanbouli and his self appointed task to take over a whole semi-derelict housing estate in East London and cover it with art. The social housing estate, begun after WW1, was finally completed in 1952, the year of the Queen's coronation. In 2012, the year of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, it began to come down. That period encapsulates the whole narrative of postwar hope and determination to wrest a decent world out of the ruins of war. And after the golden age, the deluge; the shiny new flats were neglected and ruined, the once-proud estate became synonymous with crime and brutality. Can art counter the urban atmosphere of deprivation, blight and neglect? Nazir seems to think so, and so we follow him as he embarks on the project, battling the endless rain and the bitter weather of the "British summer." What on earth is an Egyptian doing painting the walls of a condemned block of flats in East London? Unusually, Nazir has no funding, no support and no validation from any arts or culture organisation. Only the neighbours know he is there. As he says "people here think I'm either rich or crazy." Rich, he is not. Crazy, maybe. Fiercely independent, opinionated and immensely talented, Nazir Tanbouli takes over the King's land.



LONG SYNOPSIS:

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Taking Over The King's Land is a portrait of an artist, a social documentary about regeneration, and maybe even a love-letter to London's diversity. It is film about the potential power of art to transform not just places, but lives. Tanbouli reflects on how he is using art to integrate himself, as an "Arab, Muslim immigrant," into the fabric of London. The artist is a unique and fascinating character, and the film offers a very different view of London than is normally on offer.



DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Gillian McIver was raised in Vancouver, Canada and graduated from the University of British Columbia with a degree in History. During her MA at the University of Toronto, she was involved in the city's underground scene, and quickly picked up a camera and started doing still photography, followed by experimenting with VHS tape. Relocating to Europe, she trained in film making at the University of Westminster. In her last year at film school, she went to Russia to videograph a physics conference, which turned into her first independent short documentary *River Physics*. She followed this by working in Russia with independent TV company Volga TV, developing two arts-based series.

Her focus then turned to experimental approaches to documentary; founding the Luna Nera group of site-specific artists, she made a number of films documenting unusual projects and strange places, culminating in an MFA thesis. She is interested in making films about how art is a lens through which we can see life, and how art is instrumental in changing our way of seeing the world.



