



PRIX DE LA LIBERTÉ  
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

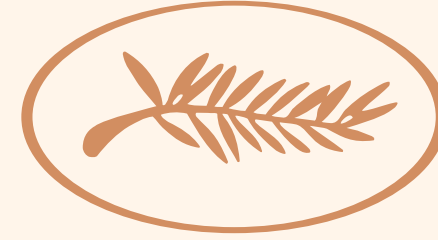
وداعاً جوليا  
GOODBYE JULIA

EIMAN YOUSIF SIRAN RIAK NAZAR GOMAA GER DUANY

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY  
MOHAMED KORDOFANI



STATION FILMS  
presents



PRIX DE LA LIBERTÉ  
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

وداعاً جوليا  
GOODBYE JULIA

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY  
MOHAMED KORDOFANI

***For Sales and Distribution***

***MAD Solutions***

18 Salah El-Din St., 3rd fl., Zamalek,  
Postal Code: 11211, Cairo, Egypt  
Tel: +2 0227357937  
+2 0227363505 / +2 0227369130  
Distribution@mad-solutions.com  
Info@mad-solutions.com  
<http://mad.film>

***International Press***

***Alibi Communications***

Brigitta Portier & Gary Walsh  
brigittaportier@alibicomunications.be  
garywalsh@alibicomunications.be

Whatsapp Numbers

+32477982584  
+32495773882

A woman in a pink robe is seated on the left, holding a woven basket. She is looking towards the right. On the right, another woman in a patterned dress is seated, looking down. The background is a wooden lattice wall with some flowers.

## Logline

Just before the secession of South Sudan, a married former singer from the north seeks redemption for causing the death of a southern man by hiring his oblivious wife as her maid.

A woman in a blue headwrap and purple shawl is carrying a child on her back. She is looking off to the side with a serious expression. In the background, a man is blurred.

## Synopsis

Wracked by guilt after covering up a murder, Mona – a northern Sudanese retired singer in a tense marriage – tries to make amends by taking in the deceased's southern Sudanese widow, Julia, and her son, Daniel, into her home. Unable to confess her transgressions to Julia, Mona decides to leave the past behind and adjust to a new status quo, unaware that the country's turmoil may find its way into her home and put her face to face with her sins.



About  
*Mohamed Kordofanit*

- A Sudanese filmmaker who made NYERKUK, KEJERS PRISON, and A TOUR IN LOVE REPUBLIC
- NYERKUK won the Black Elephant Award for Best Sudanese Film, NAAS Award for Best Arab Film at the Carthage Film Festival, Jury Award at the Oran International Arab Film Festival, and Arnone-Belavite Pellegrini Award at the FCAAA in Milan
- KEJERS PRISON was screened during the Sudanese revolution at the sit-in square in front of thousands of protesters
- A TOUR IN LOVE REPUBLIC was the first pro-revolution film to be broadcasted on Sudan's national TV
- His latest film THIS IS SUDAN was commissioned by Sudan's former prime minister to promote Sudan's potential for investment



## Director's Statement

The racism that was practiced for many decades from most Northern Arabs, government and people, was a major reason for the southerners choosing to secede. This was most evident when the results revealed a whopping %99 of Southerners wanted to separate. It is not possible for an entire people to choose secession for any other reason.

I realized then that I was somehow responsible for that decision, for all my life in Khartoum I had known no one from the south except for some domestic workers as if we had practiced social apartheid.

Writing this film was part of a continuous effort to get rid of that inherited racism, motivated by a sense of guilt and a desire for reconciliation and a call for it, even if it seems late.

Reconciliation is not only necessary with Southerners, but we need it as a national project to preserve what is left of Sudan and to build a new national identity that is proud of the values of humanity, coexistence, and justice instead of race, tribe, and gender.

Additionally, my duty as an artist made it imperative for me to document history from a societal angle rather than political narratives, in which the picture alone is not complete.

GOODBYE JULIA is a difficult journey through the collective memory of Sudanese and South Sudanese peoples that deals with the normal everyday living of two women linked together by unusual social and political situations that impacted them greatly. Its narrative is inspired by the stages of reconciliation, and it discusses themes such as remorse, compensation, disclosure, confession of guilt, and repentance for it.

The film examined the dynamics of the complicated interaction between northerners and southerners, as well as the conflict between progressivism and conservatism, in its models, and addresses the process of change that we must go through in order to reconcile and heal as people and as a society. The film was also quite challenging to make, as we had to contend with a military coup and non-stop protests as well as the lack of infrastructure. But at the same time, this revolution is trying to change concepts first before changing the regime, which makes the timing ideal for showing the film not only to the Sudanese audience but to the entire world, as many societies of all kinds are suffering in one way or another from the absence of justice and the problems of coexistence and polarization.



Interview with  
*Mohamed Kordofani*




*Why did you decide to address the issue of the separation of North and South in your film?*

The film deals with separation more comprehensively, not only the separation of the South. It also deals with the separation of husbands, children, friends, and loved ones. But when talking about the secession of the south, I think that it was the most important evidence of the problems of partisanship in all its forms and the crisis of cultural and religious identity that Sudan suffers from.

This is a call to maintain the unity of what remains of Sudan, which is still mired in the same dilemma that must be handled on several levels. The most important of which is the social level and the desire for reconciliation as citizens and abandoning unfair privileges for the sake of a better homeland for all, which requires opening the wound to clean it and then treat it. It needs people to talk about it. This is the role of art in general, and cinema in particular, as it is the most effective in addressing the conscience of societies.

I also want this to happen before it is too late, and before history repeats itself. Marginalization, oppression, absence of justice, masculinity, tribal, and religious and racist bigotry are all problems that Sudan still suffers from and the result of their continuation is always bad.





*Do you have any concerns because you are dealing with a very sensitive subject?*

Certainly, I am terrified; fear is inevitable in these situations; yet, my belief in my viewpoint and conviction about the importance and urgency of the subject outweigh my anxiety. That was before the conflict, which erupted the day after the film was unveiled at Cannes.

Now, while I worry for my family, friends, and colleagues in Sudan, I'm worried that some people may take this film out of context and relate it to the conflicts between the army and the Rapid Support Forces. The war in the South was due to racism, marginalization, and identity fanaticism. As for what is happening now, it is a struggle for power to preserve the interests of individuals.

The army is still led by the security committee that used to protect the ousted Omar Al-Bashir at the time of the Islamists. As for the Rapid Support Forces, it is a militia that earns its living from wars made by the same army that is fighting it now. Both of them do not care at all about the people and the interest of the country, they only care about their wealth.

*What was the biggest challenge you had in mind before working on the film and how did you avoid it?*

The most difficult aspect of filmmaking for me was balancing the styles of art house cinema and mainstream cinema. We don't have our own cinema in Sudan, so the public is used to Bollywood and Hollywood. I wanted to address them in the language they liked. I did not want to make a film that only festival audiences and juries would see or understand.

I wanted to develop a film that everyone could see, even if they were merely looking for entertainment. I wanted the film to be thrilling; with a storyline that is mysterious, has an appealing rhythm, murder, and music, but not at the expense of its artistic value and not to deal with complicated subjects like identity, racism, and the conflict between conservatism and progressivism in a shallow or naïve way, which I always kept in mind in my writing and directorial choices.

This combination is not easy and involves a lot of experimentation and risk, and the film may lose both audiences. I also wanted to present a film starring women who suffer from societal oppression, but despite that, they are strong, interesting, and admirable. On a personal level, making a feature film needed dedication, and I was initially an aviation engineer who worked fulltime at Gulf Airlines for 16 years, and while art has always been my passion, aviation has a solid financial return, which made leaving tough, especially because I had two daughters. However, in 2020 I decided to leave aviation completely to focus on making this film and supporting the cinematic movement in Sudan. So I returned to Khartoum and established Klozium Studios, in which I invested what I owned and participated in the production of this film in terms of execution and financing, which made my financial situation very critical in the last two years. So, leaving a field such as aviation and establishing a production company, writing and directing the first film, all at the same time seemed like a great risk or a reckless adventure.

# The Cast



## *Eiman Yousif* (Mona)

- Sudanese theater actress and singer
- Acted in a number of plays that raised awareness and discussed social issues in Sudan, including *ALF LAILA WI LYLA* by Walid Al-Alfi
- A qanun player and vocalist in Bait Al Oud, which performed at the Opera House in Cairo



## *Siran Riak* (Julia)

- A supermodel from South Sudan
- Pursued a career in modeling after university and was crowned Ms. South Sudan in 2014 and Ms. Africa/Malaysia in 2017
- Represented BVLGARI in Dubai, where she wore a dress worth €15m
- Modeled for major brands like Tiffany & Co and appeared in VOGUE and BAZAAR



## *Nazar Gomaa* (Akram)

- A graduate of the Sudan Academy for Telecommunication Science and has been an actor and director since the 1990s
- Worked on a number of TV series, such as *HIKAYAT SUDANIYA*
- Acted in multiple theater productions, including *KANABAT HABEBTI* and *MASAT AL HALAJ*



## *Ger Duany* (Majier)

- A former child soldier and refugee
- Built a career in the US, appearing in a number of films, including *THE NILE HILTON INCIDENT* and *THE GOOD LIE* alongside the award-winning Reese Witherspoon
- Co-produced and starred in the documentary *GER: TO BE SEPARATE.*
- Was appointed the UNHCR's Goodwill Ambassador for the East and Horn of Africa Region on 2015's World Refugee Day



## Main Producer

### *Amjad Abu Alala*

- A Sudanese director and producer whose first feature film was *YOU WILL DIE AT TWENTY*
- The film won the Lion of the Future Luigi De Laurentiis Award for Best Debut Film in Venice and the El Gouna Golden Star for Best Film among others. The film was also Sudan's first-ever submission to the Oscars
- Directed and produced many short films, including *ORANGE AND COFFEE* (2004), *FEATHERS OF BIRDS* (2007), *TEENA* (2009), and *STUDIO* (2012)
- Co-produced Amr Gamal's *THE BURDENED*, which was the first Yemeni film to be featured at the Berlin International Film Festival's Panorama section
- Produced Mohamed Kordofani's *GOODBYE JULIA*, which is the first Sudanese film to be featured at the Cannes International Film Festival

### *Why GOODBYE JULIA?*

I was drawn to *GOODBYE JULIA* from the beginning of its development phase and was simply blown away by what it set out to achieve in terms of its vision and story. And now that we're at this point, it's clear that I bet my money on the right horse.

After the success of *YOU WILL DIE AT TWENTY*, I decided that everything I would do beyond that point would be for the sole purpose of elevating Sudanese cinema to new heights and marketing it more effectively to the rest of the world. Me and my compatriots some of whom I've worked with on *GOODBYE JULIA* are adamant that we achieve this end and tell these stories from a part of the world that is often overlooked.



## Producer

### *Mohammed Alomda*

- A Sudanese producer, director, and film programmer for the Sudan Independent Film Festival
- Directed the short film THE LAST GAME, which was screened at the Doha Tribeca Film Festival
- Co-produced YOU WILL DIE AT TWENTY with Abu Alala and Amr Gamal's THE BURDENED which was the first Yemeni film to be featured at the Berlin International Film Festival's Panorama section
- Co-produced Mohamed Kordofani's GOODBYE JULIA, which is the first Sudanese film to be featured at the Cannes International Film Festival
- Currently working as a producer for the Egyptian film "Ravens of the City" directed by Adham El Sherif

## The Cinematographer



### *Pierre de Villiers*

- A South African cinematographer with multiple awards
- His short MTHUNZI premiered at the Locarno Film Festival and won Best Cinematography at the European Film Awards
- Worked on the feature film THIS IS NOT A BURIAL, IT'S A RESURRECTION directed by Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese
- The film won the Special Jury Award for Visionary Filmmaking at Sundance and Best Cinematography at the Montclair International Film Festival and African Movie Academy Awards. It was also Lesotho's first-ever entry to the Oscars and the Golden Globes

## The Editor



### *Heba Othman*

- An Egyptian editor who worked on a number of feature films, including COMING FORTH BY DAY, OUT OF ORDER, and YOU WILL DIE AT TWENTY
- Worked on CURFEW by Amir Ramses, which premiered at the Cairo International Film Festival
- Edited THE BURDENED — the first Yemeni film to screen at the Berlin International Film Festival
- Edited GOODBYE JULIA — the first Sudanese film to screen at the Cannes International Film Festival

The background image shows the interior of a church with high, vaulted ceilings and arched windows. Two women are seen from the back, looking towards the altar area. The lighting is warm and dim, creating a serene atmosphere. The ceiling features decorative elements like a hanging basket and framed pictures. The walls are light-colored with dark wood accents.

## *Workshops*

- EAVE Workshop at the Cairo International Film Festival
- Cinephilia Bound at the Cannes Film Festival
- Follow The Nile Workshop by Robert Bosch
- Durban Film Mart
- Cinegouna at El Gouna Film Festival

## *Funds & Grants*

### *Development*

- New Directors New Films Festival - Pitching Competition Prize
- Arab Fund For Arts & Culture - Development Grant
- Malmö Arab Film Festival - Development Grant
- Participation in the Global Media Makers Program organized by Film Independent, Los Angeles
- Four awards at El Gouna Film Festival's CineGouna Platform
  - MAD Solutions award at the CineGouna SpringBoard
  - A certificate from the El Gouna Cinema Platform
  - New Century Prize (\$10,000)
  - The Mentorship Prize presented by IEFTA

### *Production*

- Supported from the Red Sea Fund
- Supported by Paris Region
- Supported by ARRI - International Support Program
- Supported by the Film und Medienstiftung NRW

## *Festivals*

- 2023 Cannes Film Festival  
**(World Premiere - Un Certain Regard section)**
- 2023 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival,  
**Horizons Section**
- BFI London Film Festival
- Melbourne International Film Festival
- The Border Mail International Film Festival
- BOFA Film Festival Tasmania
- Vancouver International Film Festival
- Darwin International Film Festival
- Arab Film Nights in Denmark
- Warsaw Film Festival
- European Film Festival in South Africa
- Paysages de Cinéastes in France
- Septimius Awards
- War on Screen Film Festival in France
- Chicago International Film Festival
- Belfast Film Festival
- Cyprus International Film Festival
- Muslim International Film Festival
- Mostra de Cinema Àrab i Mediterrani
- Singapore International Film Festival
- Africa Rising International Film Festival
- Leeds International Film Festival
- Tarragona International Film Festival in Spain
- Singapore International Film Festival
- El-Gouna International Film Festival
- Afrykamera Film Festival in Poland

## *Awards*

- Cannes Film Festival  
**(Freedom Prize - Un Certain Regard section)**
- Paysages de Cinéastes in France  
**(Audience Award, Youth Jury Award, and Women's Jury Award)**
- Septimius Awards **(Best African Film)**
- War on Screen Film Festival in France  
**(Press Jury Award and Audience Award)**
- Chicago International Film Festival  
**(Roger Ebert Award)**
- Belfast Film Festival **(Best Film)**
- Cyprus International Film Festival  
**(Best Director in a Debut Feature Film Award and Best Leading Actress Award)**
- Muslim International Film Festival  
**(Best Actress Award and Muslim Excellence Award)**
- Mostra de Cinema Àrab i Mediterrani  
**(Audience Award)**
- Leeds International Film Festival  
**(Audience Award)**
- Tarragona International Film Festival in Spain **(Cineclub Jury Award, Audience Award, and Special Mention from the Youth Jury)**
- Singapore International Film Festival  
**(Audience Choice Award)**
- El Gouna International Film Festival **(Variety's MENA Talent of the Year for Mohamed Kordofani & Cinema for Humanity Audience Award)**
- Afrykamera Film Festival in Poland **(Best Feature Film)**



## *Theatrical Release*

- The film was released in Egyptian theaters, accumulating a staggering sum of over EGP 3m during its remarkable 12-week run
- Across the GCC, the film's captivating narrative has resonated with audiences, resulting in impressive box office earnings of more than half a million dollars within four weeks
- The film is still selling out theaters in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Oman
- So far, GOODBYE JULIA has sold more than 82,000 tickets across the Middle East
- Beyond the Middle East, the film was also commercially released in France, bringing in an astounding 28,500 admissions over the course of its eight-week run
- GOODBYE JULIA is poised to grace screens across Europe, Oceania, and Asia, releasing in Sweden, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Australia, New Zealand, and Taiwan by spring





## *Reviews*

"What makes Goodbye Julia truly remarkable is the level of artistry exhibited throughout the film. It is astonishing to think that this is Mohammed Kordafani's directorial debut, especially considering his lack of formal training in cinema."

*BBC*

"A gut-wrenching and emotionally rewarding tale of religious persecution compounded by entrenched racism."

*Screen Daily*

"Kordofani's fine direction balances the film's multiple modes: It's a drama, with shades of a thriller and a sense of its own politics."

*Hollywood Reporter*

"Manages to strike a perfect balance between an intelligent political and cultural backdrop and a thrilling and highly intimate plot"

*Cineuropa*

"Goodbye Julia will bring to life Sudanese issues for audiences."

*Global Village Space*

"The whole story is enhanced by the beauty of photography and the power of narrative, where emotion comes up without ever sinking into melodrama."

*JMag*

"Kordofani's film is a domestic drama whose characters stand out for their excellent writing."

*Movie Player*

"Kordofani's masterful effort seems built to stand the test of time, not only because it acts as an effective piece of historical fiction from which to learn about Sudan's past, one that is never boring and eminently accessible. More so, it is because its characters are so well-drawn that its potent humanity renders it effectively borderless."

*The National*

## Cast & Crew

Written and Directed by  
**Mohamed Kordofani**

Cast  
**Eiman Yousif, Siran Riak, Nazar Gomaa, Ger Duany, Stephanos James Peter**

DOP  
**Pierre de Villiers**

Editor  
**Heba Othman**

Colorist  
**Dirk Meier**

Music Producer & Composer  
**Mazin Hamid**

Sound Designer  
**Rana Eid**

Sound Mixer  
**Rawad Hobeika**

Costume Designer  
**Simba Elmur**

Production Designer  
**Issa Kandil**

Produced by  
**Amjad Abu Alala**

Producer  
**Mohammed Alomda**

Assistant Producer  
**Rua Osman**

Line Producer  
**Samo Hussain**

Production Company  
**Station Films**

A Co-Production With  
**Red Star Films, Die Gesellschaft DGS, Klozium Studios, Dolce Vita Films, Cinewaves Films, Ambient Light, CULT, and RiverFlower**

Co-Producers  
**Baho Bakhsh, Safei Eldin Mahmoud, Michael Henrichs, Khalid Awad, Mohamed Kordofani, Marc Irmer, Faisal Baltyuor, Ali Elarabi, Adham El Sherif, and Issraa Elkogali Häggström**

In co-production with  
**MAD Solutions, Red Sea, and CANAL+ International**

Worldwide Distribution  
**MAD Solutions**



**PRIX DE LA LIBERTÉ**  
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

# وداعاً جوليا GOODBYE JULIA

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY  
**MOHAMED KORDOFANI**

