

UNSETTLED

a film by Adam Hootnick

Opens in NYC Friday, May 9, 2008
Pioneer Theater

Opens in LA Friday, May 16, 2008
Laemmle's Music Hall 3

Publicity:

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A RESONANCE PICTURES RELEASE

Resonance Pictures Presents

UNSETTLED

a film by Adam Hootnick

Before summer ends, three young Israelis will be forced from their homes, two soldiers will be sent to evict them, and one activist will fight to help her country avoid a war.

Featuring music from reggae superstar Matisyahu, **UNSETTLED** is the true story of six people in their twenties, facing each other on the front lines of a battle where there is no enemy.

SYNOPSIS

UNSETTLED is the story of a generation on the front lines of a nation's battle against itself.

When the Israeli government announces that it will withdraw from the Gaza Strip, it means lifeguards Lior, 21, and Meir, 27, will be forced to leave their home – Gaza's "Palm Beach" – forever. They and their surf posse could be characters on MTV's *The Real World*, but in the blink of an eye it becomes obvious that the danger is all too real.

For Neta, 20, a religious filmmaker, the pullout plan sets off a desperate struggle to convince Israelis and the world that the withdrawal is a crime against God.

Soldiers Yuval, 21, and Tamar, 20, must prepare for a mission against other Israelis, putting aside their own emotions to face angry protestors and the prospect of attacks.

Ye'ela, 21, joins a cross-country tour in support of the withdrawal, even as she mourns a sister killed by Palestinian terrorists.

For young Israelis, the summer of 2005 will change the meaning – and for some the very location – of home.

UNSETTLED is a story about religion and democracy, soldiers and civilians, and the kids on the front lines of a battle where there is no enemy.

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260 Devoe St. #3R • Brooklyn, NY • 11211

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

"If it bleeds, it leads." It's a disturbing phrase I heard for the first time when I worked in television news; disturbing because it is morbid, and disturbing because it is accurate. As the Middle East descends once more into killing and kidnapping, missile strikes and artillery fire, the region maintains a firm grip on headlines worldwide. In a sense, though, these stories are old news – the same wars have continued, with varying intensity, for at least half a century.

Yet one of the most important Mideast stories of the last fifty years didn't gain much media traction, because there wasn't much bleeding. In retrospect Israel's withdrawal from Gaza seems to have been relatively peaceful and efficient, but the operation's success was not a foregone conclusion. Having lived in Tel Aviv for a year, I knew that Israel was a nation with deep divisions that surfaced primarily during moments when the nation's external threats were in remission, however temporarily.

Living in the nation's secular center – both geographic and political – my experiences in Israel rarely brought me into contact with settlers and members of ultra-religious groups. Most of *my* friends were totally "normal" – meaning "like me." They listened to Pink Floyd and went out to bars and nightclubs. They spoke perfect English. Yet at some point there was an end to the suburban similarities; most of my Israeli friends had just left active military service, and for them there was nothing strange about the fact that on any given day they might be called to combat duty within a few miles of their homes.

When it became certain that Israel would leave Gaza – a move supported by the majority of the country but opposed by a significant minority – I decided that I had to return. I wanted to tell the story of soldiers like my friends, most of whom wanted security, but not occupation. I wanted to hear the settlers talk about the faith that guides them, about the land they claim as a birthright, and about the Palestinians whose claims they reject. I wanted to see what would happen to their country if Israelis were ordered to point guns at Israelis. In this battle over coexistence with the Palestinians, what would happen if someone pulled the trigger?

But **UNSETTLED** is not a political story. It is a story of young people in conflict, told in their words, seen through their eyes, and heard to the beat of their music. And it is not just an Israeli story – it is a story about trying to find peace by combating extremism at home – perhaps the only strategy that will ever break endless waves of attack and reprisal. Conflicts between a moderate, tolerant majority and a vocal, fundamentalist minority are seen throughout the world – rarely are such conflicts resolved peacefully. Israel is only one of many places where the first battle for peace must be fought at home. And the story of that battle may be the most important story of all.

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FESTIVAL SCREENINGS

Slamdance Film Festival (World Premiere)
Thessaloniki Documentary Festival (International Premiere)
Florida Film Festival
Syracuse International Film & Video Festival
Nashville Film Festival
LA Jewish Film Festival
Newport Beach International Film Festival
Rhode Island International Film Festival
Jersey Shore Film Festival
Movies That Matter
Temecula Valley International Film Festival
Warsaw Jewish Film Festival
Central Florida Jewish Film Festival
New Filmmakers Series
Washington Jewish Film Festival
Miami Jewish Film Festival
Philadelphia Jewish Film Festival
Pacific Jewish Film Festival
Sonoma Valley Film Festival
Edmonton Jewish Film Festival

SELECTED QUOTES

“Remarkable for the balance of its compassion, and for the range of youthful intelligence it reveals on both sides of a heartbreaking issue. An extraordinary film.”
- **Kurt Loder, MTV**

“A well-made film that every person interested in Israel, the Middle East, and, by extension, world politics, should see.”
- **P. Scott Cunningham, Miami New Times**

“Like some of the most accomplished documentaries of the past few years – “Capturing the Friedmans,” or “Metallica: Some Kind of Monster” –
UNSETTLED *has the capacity to ignite a remarkable cognitive dissonance.”*
- **Steven Zeitchik, The Forward**

“Hootnick manages the near-impossible: He delivers a film that is fair to both sides in the heart-rending debate, one that captures with honesty and intimacy the bonds that unite all Jews even as they wrestle with one another.”
- **Lyn Payne, Heritage Florida Jewish News**

“I think this film is very important for people in the Muslim world to see, because they will see Israeli people – Jewish people – as human.”
- **Professor Akbar Ahmed, former Pakistani Ambassador to the UK**

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CREDITS

Directed, Produced, Written, and Edited by
Adam Hootnick

Co-Producer
Mickey Elkeles
Tony Felzen

Cinematography
Mickey Elkeles
Adam Hootnick

Original Score Composed by
Jon Lee

Additional Editors
John Balcom
Rachel Kittner
Molly McEwan
Ken Roeser
Yossy Tessone

Additional Cinematography
Ilan Rinat
Neta Sternberg

Associate Producers
Kevin Mangini
Yossy Tessone

DIRECTOR'S BIO

UNSETTLED is Adam Hootnick's first film. Previously Adam covered politics and international affairs as a producer at MTV News & Docs, focusing on the war in Iraq and MTV's Choose or Lose coverage of the 2004 US Presidential election. Adam has also worked at NBC News and MSNBC, and has covered stories for broadcast and print media in India, South Africa, Cuba, and Israel, where he lived in 1997-98. Before working in film and television, Adam also worked for the South African Parliament's Justice Committee and for the Boston Consulting Group. Adam is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School.

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EXHIBITION

Exhibition Format: Digibeta, 4:3, NTSC 30i from 23.976 fps, TRT 80 minutes
Sound Format: Stereo Full Mix
Production Format: Mini DV 4:3 on Panasonic DVX100A
Release Date: 2007 USA
Language: English and Hebrew with English Subtitles
Rating: Not Rated

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