

ABBAS KIAROSTAMI

Born in 1940 in Theran, died in 2016 in Paris.

Biography:

The most acclaimed and influential of Iran's major filmmakers, Abbas Kiarostami, was born in Tehran on June 22, 1940. Raised in a middle-class household, he was interested in art and literature from an early age. During and after university, where he majored in painting and graphic design, he illustrated children's books, designed credit sequences for films, and made numerous television commercials. In 1969, he was invited to start a filmmaking division for the government-run Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (an organization Iranians call Kanoon). The ten-minute *Bread and Alley* (1970) was the first of several short films, most centered on children, that he directed over the next two decades, a period during which he also made documentaries, including the feature-length *First Graders* (1984) and *Homework* (1989), both of which take up the subject of education. His first narrative feature, *The Traveler* (1974), about a provincial boy scheming to reach Tehran to see a soccer match, was made under Kanoon's auspices, while his second, *The Report* (1977), an autobiographically tinged story of a collapsing marriage, was made independently.

It was after Iran's 1979 revolution that Kiarostami began his rapid ascent to international renown. *Where Is My Friend's House?* (1987), about a rural boy's effort to return a pal's notebook, won the Bronze Leopard at the Locarno Film Festival. *Close-up* (1990), about the trial of a man accused of impersonating a famous filmmaker, was the director's first film to focus on cinema itself, and the blur the lines between documentary and fiction; it has been voted the best Iranian film ever made by Iranian and international critics. In *And Life Goes On* (a.k.a. *Life and Nothing More...*, 1992), he dramatized a journey he made into an earthquake's devastation zone to discover if the child actors of *Where Is My Friend's House?* has survived. Those two films and *Through the Olive Trees* (1994), which dramatized the making of *And Life Goes On*, have been dubbed the "Koker" trilogy by critics after the name of the village where much of their action was filmed.

After *And Life Goes On* and *Through the Olive Trees* earned Kiarostami wide acclaim at the Cannes Film Festival, his next film, *Taste of Cherry* (1997), became the first – and so far, only – Iranian film to win the festival's top prize, the Palme d'Or. Telling of a man's attempt to gain assistance in committing suicide, a taboo under Islam, the film was one of several by Kiarostami to be banned in Iran while enjoying international success. His final film of this remarkable period, *The Wind Will Carry Us* (1999), which concerns a camera crew on an enigmatic assignment in Kurdistan, won the Silver Lion at the Venice Film Festival.

In the new century, Kiarostami broadened his creative focus, devoting more time to forms including photography, installation art, poetry, and teaching. In cinema, he embraced low-budget digital filmmaking for the feature *Ten* (2002), the documentaries *ABC Africa* (2001) and *10 on Ten* (2004), the experimental films *Five* (2003) and *Shirin* (2008), and several shorts. Beginning at the decade's end, he went abroad to make two dramatic features, both centering on male-female relations: *Certified Copy* (2010), starring Juliette Binoche, in Italy, and *Like Someone in Love* (2012) in Japan. At the time

of his death, he was preparing a movie to be made in China
In March 2016, while he was in the midst of working on 24 Frames, Kiarostami was hospitalized and underwent several operations. He was transferred to Paris in late June of the same year, and died there on July 4th. Charges have been made that his death was caused by medical malpractice by doctors in Iran. He is buried in Lavasan (a small city near Tehran). Posthumously completed, 24 Frames premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2017.

Selected exhibitions:

2016

CerModern, Ankara

2015

Aga Khan Museum, Toronto

2013

Noire Gallery, Turin, Italy

Museum Wiesbaden

Kunstammlungen Chemnitz

2012

Situation Kunst, Kunstammlungen der Ruhr – Universität de Bochum

Galerie Lucy Mackintosh, Lausanne

2010

Galerie de France, Paris

2009

Meem Gallery, Dubai

2008

Santa Maria della Scala, Sienne

CIOCCA, Milan

Musée des Tapisseries, Aix-en-Provence

Southeast Museum of Photography, Daytona Beach, Florida

Beijing Art Museum of the Imperial City, Pékin

2007

The Museum of Modern Art, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Centre, New York

University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles

2006

Akbank Sanat, Istanbul

Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou

Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai
Stenersenmuseet, Oslo
Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires

2005

Victoria & Albert Museum, London
Palazzo d'Accursio, Sala d'Ercole, Bologna
Kumho Museum of Art, Seoul
Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade

2004

Praemium Imperiale Medal, Sakakura Junzo Memorial, Gallery Saka, Tokyo
Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes
Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessalonique
Armando Alvares Penteado Foundation, Sao Paulo
Castel dell'Ovo, Naples
Sociedade Nacional de Belas Artes, Lisbonne
Hakone Museum of Arts, Hakone

2003

Museo Nazionale del Cinema, Turin
Mitsokushi Gallery, Tokyo et Nagoya

2001

Teatro Calderon, Valladolid

2000

Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York
Noire Gallery, Turin, Italy
Fondazione Bevilacqua la Masa, Venice

1996

Reale Albergo dei Poveri, Palerme

1995

Pinacoteca Casa Rusca, Locarno