



SIFF / 2021

金爵奖参赛影片

GOLDEN GOBLET AWARD
COMPETITION



MERT FIRAT

ECE G SMIO LU

PURE WHITE

A Film By
NECİP CA HAN  ZDEMİR



ABOUT THE FILM

The crime drama PURE WHITE (BEMBEYAZ), shot in a richly chilly colour palette with long contemplative takes, tells the story of Vural, a man caught between his obligations as a religious family man and his concealed desires in the form of a love affair. The actions he must undertake to preserve the one at the expense of the other lead him down a path of lies, betrayal and deceit.

The completely self-financed first feature, directed by Necip Çağhan Özdemir, deals with the big questions of guilt and atonement in intense images and exciting interrogation scenes. The film is particularly impressive for its critical view of religious topics, in which it locates the personal failure of the individual in the context of faith and social morality.

PURE WHITE is the second mutual production of the director with his brother Ahmet Berk Özdemir under their US/Turkey based production company Ganador Film. Their first collaboration and Çağhan's directorial and authorial debut, the short film HAPPINESS (MUTLULUK), premiered at the 23rd Sarajevo Film Festival, followed by screenings in festivals around the world. PURE WHITE is celebrating its world premiere at the 23rd Shanghai International Film Festival in competition.

LOGLINE

Vural, a husband and a father who was raised in faith, leads a seemingly pious and conformist life. Yet, everything takes a sudden dark turn when he learns a truth that will force him to confront his views on religion and morality.

SYNOPSIS

Vural's life is the epitome of mundanity. Born and raised in a pious family, he performs his duties as a father to a young boy, a breadwinning husband, and a caring son to his sick father, with whom he runs a photography shop across the American Consulate in Istanbul. Continuing the family traditions, he preaches the lessons of the righteous life to his son. Yet, Vural has a secret, a minor transgression of his faith: An affair with Sonay, a young woman who visits his shop for passport pictures she needs in order to apply for a visa to the US.

Sonay dreams of leaving and finding her luck elsewhere. Her dreams, however, shatter. In her emotional distress she confronts Vural, putting a threat on his uncomplicated living. Vural is faced with a hard choice: to deal with the consequences of the sin he committed or to cover it up and go down the dark path of dealing with his complete loss of morality.





CREDITS

FILM INFO

Film Title:	Pure White
Original Film Title:	Bembeyaz
Language:	Turkish
Subtitles:	English
Category :	Feature
Genre:	Crime, Drama
Country of Production:	Turkey
Complition Date:	2021

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Total Running Time:	97 min.
Picture:	Color
Aspect ratio:	2:39 (Scope)
Sound Format:	Dolby
Frame Rate:	24FPS

CAST

Mert Fırat	Vural
Ece Çeşmioğlu	Sonay
İnanç Konukçu	Kartal
Rıza Akin	İbrahim
Kubilay Tuncer	Captain Ekrem

CREW

Director:	Necip Çağhan Özdemir
Producer:	Ahmet Berk Özdemir
Production Company:	Ganador Film Production Company
Screenwriter:	Necip Çağhan Özdemir
Cinematographer:	Hayk Kirakosyan
Editor:	Ali Aga
Production Designer:	Osman Özcan
Sound Designer:	Suat Onur Ayas
Art Director:	Osman Özcan
Costume Designer:	Seda Yılmaz
Casting Director:	Harika Uygur
Gaffer:	Eser Turan

PRESS MATERIALS

[Click here for the press materials](#)

TRAILER

[Click here for the trailer](#)







NECİP ÇAĞHAN ÖZDEMİR
DIRECTOR

BIOGRAPHY

Necip Çağhan Özdemir is a Writer/Director/Producer who resides in Los Angeles, California. After his graduation from the Bilkent University (Political Science and International Relations) Çağhan has moved to the United States where he studied Film and Theater under various programs between 2011-2015, concurrently working in commercial films productions, among others, as the co-producer on the TV series THE FOOTBALL SHOW (2013). In 2015 he began working on his own projects as writer and director.

His debut short film, HAPPINESS (2017), premiered at the 23rd Sarajevo Film Festival and was nominated for the Heart of Sarajevo (Best Short Film) followed by screenings in various festivals around the world. PURE WHITE (2021) is his debut feature.

FILMOGRAPHY

THE FOOTBALL SHOW (2013) - Executive Producer
HAPPINESS (SHORT) (2017) - Director, Writer, Producer
PURE WHITE (2021) - Director, Writer, Producer





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

It is my observation that living with the belief that there is a price to pay for each wrongdoing and sin, and that the consequences for all human deeds are connected to a heavenly or divine justice mechanism became a necessity for many people.

Under this conviction, losing faith in a working cause-effect law as a fundamental law of the very human existence, and even the creation of the universe, may have a negative impact on the source of causality for the actions of an individual.

My aim with PURE WHITE is to examine the actions of subjects in a situation when the cause-effect law seems to not be working in order to display the changes in their emotional state, which I would call "conscience". I want to investigate where, who and what notions they need to resort to when they experience internal and external conflicts as a result of a major sin committed despite a deep religious faith.

As a storyteller, I have an interest in the ruthless inner confrontations of individuals whose life is derailed by their actions and who were once convinced to be living by ethical and moral values and were used to preaching the same attitude to the next generation. My objective is to present a robust example for emotional realism in which the characters in the story cannot be described as either absolutely good or absolutely bad. I believe that all people possess a human soul and share certain emotions no matter their geographic location. Therefore, I strongly believe that the concepts we have touched and explored with this film are universal and will draw the attention of local and global audiences, reach out to them in an openhearted manner and will be well received on international platforms.

INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR

The film is called BEMBEYAZ, or PURE WHITE in its English version, what was the significance of this colour to the film?

I'm not sure if I have a direct answer. All I can say is that I wouldn't have the desire to name a film with a colour, just for it to symbolize one single thing. It might be the idea of contrast that I was interested in, using the PURE WHITE colour as a name when telling a relatively dark story.

You are the writer, director and one of the producers of the film, why was this story so compelling to you that you chose to take on so many roles to get it made?

I think it happened step by step. First, I wrote the story, and found it personal so I decided to write the script myself. Then I found the script extremely personal and decided to direct it myself. When it comes

to the producing part, unfortunately this is rather a must than a choice when institutional support is unavailable for your film and you don't have any studios or producers to support you financially, especially if you are making an independent film. Yet, I think this is the nature of making independent films and it is normal. Thankfully, I got the chance to find talented and hardworking co-producers to cooperate with after I decided to become the producer of the film.

This is also your first feature, how long was this story in development and were there any complications to get it made?

It was sometime around 2016 when I first had the idea in my head. But of course, it was a long way before I sat down to write it. The script was ready at the end of 2018 and the film was ready at the end of 2020, after





production and quite a long process of editing. Like most of the independent films, the financing part was a bit challenging for us since we didn't have support from any film institutions or film labs.

What inspired you to create this story, was it a personal experience, local events or some influential works of art?

I can say that I see myself as a curious observer. I've been observing what's happening around me and around the people I personally know. I was also reading and thinking about human relations, sociology and morality. I think as I grew older, those observations and readings got in some sort of interaction and started to manifest themselves as stories in my head. Sometimes a story in a newspaper and sometimes a story you heard from someone

you know will inspire you to create a story. When it comes to the influential works of art, of course they have always been huge inspirations for me.

You are an LA based filmmaker, but the film takes place in modern day Turkey. Do you feel that living outside of your native country gave you a special perspective on the social issues in Turkey?

I am honestly not sure if it's a privilege to live outside the country that you are from when it comes to telling stories from there. It can easily turn into a disadvantage since you are far away from the country to keep making observations. It is even harder when you are trying to make a sociological based neo-realist film like the one I was making. So even if living outside of Turkey gave me a special perspective, I can not

say that I feel that way. I think most of the people who live in Turkey see what I see as well.

What do you hope the audience might take away from your work? What questions do you wish to raise in their minds?

One of the best things I like about films is that every single one of us can take away different thoughts and ideas from them. I think it's very subjective. So all I can say is that it still raises some powerful questions in my mind and they still make me think about them. I hope it's going to happen to the audience as well but honestly, I wouldn't want to affect anyone by talking about the questions the film raised in my mind. Since the time has come for our film to reach the audience, from now on it's all about what the viewers take away from it.





AHMET BERK ÖZDEMİR
PRODUCER

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Ankara in 1985, Berk graduated from the Bilkent University Law School in 2006 and finished his postgraduate studies in the City University London in 2008. After practicing law in several law firms and multinational companies in Istanbul until 2017, Berk accepted the role of CEO at his family business Gena Construction Company and started investments in various fields including film production.

In 2017 Berk founded Ganador Film Production Company in Ankara, Turkey and produced the short film HAPPINESS (MUTLULUK) that won multiple awards in Turkey and competed in various international film festivals. PURE WHITE, completed in 2021, is Berk's first feature film production.

FILMOGRAPHY

HAPPINESS (SHORT) (2017) - Producer

PURE WHITE (2019) - Producer





PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

PURE WHITE is a film that poses questions and allows them to linger in the viewers' minds throughout the film. If a person does something bad, up to which point do we regard them as evil? Can we deem that person good once they repent and do not repeat their mistakes? Or does that person have to do good deeds until their wrongdoings are evened-out? Is that person redeemed when they pay a price for their actions? But who are we to decide? Does God get to decide?

When I first read the script of PURE WHITE, I was not only moved by the depth of the script as a film-lover, but I also sincerely believe that this film will achieve the international success we aim for.

I must admit that the current political atmosphere may cause some viewers to miss out on the underlying messages of the film. It might even make them agitated to see a very devoted Muslim shown as being capable of diverting from the path of virtue. However, what we tried to emphasize in PURE WHITE is that by nature, no person is pure good or pure evil and that every human lands somewhere on the spectrum of "grey".

I believe that if you are making a film exploring the depths of human nature, viewers are more attracted to the stories in which characters act in ways that the viewers can empathize with and understand why they act that way, not a struggle between the protagonist representing good and the antagonist representing evil.

Production process is never easy when you have a modest budget and a limited filming time of 28 days. However, thanks to the sacrifices of our actors and the tremendous effort of the whole crew, not a single penny or a single working hour has gone to waste. We are all proud of what we achieved and excited to share our film with the viewers around the world.



MERT FIRAT

The Ankara born actor and screenwriter is famous for his work in films and TV series as well as on the theater stage. He first gained recognition with his role on the popular TV series BİNBİR GECE and later co-wrote and starred in the breakthrough film LOVE IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE.

FILMOGRAPHY

LOVE IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE (2009)
MERRY-GO-ROUND (2010)
THE BUTTERFLY'S DREAM (2013)

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ECE ÇEŞMİOĞLU

A 2015 graduate from the Mimar Sinan Fine Arts Faculty Theater Department, the young actress Ece Çeşmioğlu started her acting career as a child actor in 2002 on the TV series ÇOCUKLAR DUYMASIN. Since then she gave life to different characters in numerous projects.

FILMOGRAPHY

İKİ AİLE (2006)
SÖZ (2017)
BİR DENİZALTI HİKAYESİ (2021)

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KUBİLAY TUNCER

An academic, stage magician, playwright, screenwriter, theater, TV series and film actor. A lecturer at the Istanbul Bilgi University MBA program and the 2003 best writer award winner of Afife Jale for the play OLAĞAN MUCİZELER. Tuncer continues to perform both on stage and on screen.

FILMOGRAPHY

ONCE UPON A TIME IN ANATOLIA (2011)
WILD PEAR TREE (2018)
A TALE OF THREE SISTERS (2019)

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İNANÇ KONUKÇU

Theater, cinema, and TV series actor. Graduated from the Ankara University DTCF Theater Department, Acting Department and started his television career in 2005 with the TV series KARANLIKTAKİ UMUT on TRT. He is known for his character "Ghost" from the TV series "BEHZAT Ç".

FILMOGRAPHY

WEDDING DANCE (2015)
YOU KNOW HIM (2020)
BEHZAT Ç. BİR ANKARA POLİSİYESİ (2010-2019)

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