

**MILANO FILM FESTIVAL 2009
PRESS RELEASE**

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Avi Mograbi – a Master Class at Milano Film Festival

To support the retrospective dedicated to his films, Avi Mograbi will hold a master class on his working style during Milano Film Festival, that will take place on September 11-20 at Teatro Strehler, Teatro Studio, Parco Sempione, Teatro Dal Verme and more city venues. Through the analysis of eight scenes from his own films – selected by the director himself – Mograbi will face his doubts as a film-lover and filmmaker at an open-meeting, for all who would like to learn about his film making style. It is a workshop to discover one of the most innovative documentary-making techniques.

The three-hour-long master class is opened to everyone, and will be held on Sunday September 13th at 3 p.m. at Teatro Studio. Booking is required and the registration fee amounts to € 10.

For further information and booking, please contact us at info@milanofilmfestival.it

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AVI MOGRABI, “Details of the Times” – retrospective

by *Alessandro Beretta*

Documentary film making is today's film making.

In a world more and more saturated with invasive images and information, the skill to find the right break, **the right detail to introduce a new concept** and to make people think without imposing beliefs, is becoming increasingly rare.

This is how the Israeli filmmaker Avi Mograbi allows us **to consider the present time**.

Mograbi makes first-hand films, in which he is the ironic protagonist of the work, not hesitating to get his hands dirty to discover the reality of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and of Israel's political identity. From his debut with *How I learned to overcome my fear and love Arik Sharon* (1997), a careful consideration on a leader's equivocalness, to *Happy Birthday Mr. Mograbi* (1999), on the 50th anniversary of his and Israel's birth, to *August – A Moment Before Eruption* (2002), dedicated to the relative quietness of a sunny month in Tel Aviv. In all these films Mograbi publicly discusses the topic of his work, playfully tricking the audience through the filmmaking medium. Laughter and doubt allow to touch on key issues ranging from violence in history to ancestral violence.

An example is *Avenge But One of My Two Eyes* (2005), shot during the second Intifada, in which the conflict within the occupied territories is conceptually re-opened by the ancient biblical myths of Samson and Masada, that taught Jewish people to sacrifice themselves for their homeland.

Another example is the recent masterpiece *Z32* (2008), that tells of a punitive expedition by the Israeli army, and in which self-confessed criminals are digitally disguised.

The use of technology for an essential detail, such as the murders' face expression that triggers a consideration on reality.

Mograbi's films have been featured in Cannes, Berlin, and Venice, but even though there is an international praise by critics, the films are little known in Italy, where a single title – namely *Avenge But One of My Two Eyes* (2005) – has been distributed.

This section, including short and feature films, is **the first complete retrospective of this kind**, and for the occasion the filmmaker will come back to Milan, after having received the Aprile Award at the 2004 edition of Milano Film Festival with his short film *Detail*.

Besides the screenings, this section will introduce Mograbi's short films as part of some **video installations**, as their director originally meant them and presented them on several occasions.

Finally, Mograbi himself will discuss his films during a master class at Milano Film Festival.

Avi Mograbi was born in 1965 in Israel. He is a filmmaker and video artist, and his father was the manager of the largest cinema in Tel-Aviv. As a kid, he started to be fond of films, but he rediscovered them only after his Art and Philosophy studies. Ever since then, Mograbi has been living in Israel and kept analysing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with a harsh look that aims at peace without forgetting the conflict's ambiguity.