



Movie Guide for Bar Bahar (In Between)



A promotional picture for Bar Bahar.

Bar Bahar (In Between)

Director: Maysaloun Hamoud; Release Date: 2016; Run time: 1h 42m

Content Warnings: Sexual Assault, Racism, Mentions of Violence, Homophobia, Use of Drugs, Consumption of Alcohol, Smoking

Accessing the Movie

In Between (Bar Bahar) can be viewed for free with ads on Vudu [here](#) or Prime Video with an Amazon Prime membership [here](#).

Movie Guide

This guide provides content that may be helpful in understanding the film and additional interesting information. We also recommend reviewing IATF and iCenter's worksheet [Exploring the Topics of Arab Citizens and Jewish-Arab Relations in Israel](#) for introductory background information on Arab Citizens of Israel. The source sheet companion is [here](#).

Movie Information:

- Maysaloun Hamoud is a Palestinian Israeli filmmaker. Bar Bahar (2016) was her first feature film and debuted to critical acclaim. She has received recognition for her projects exploring Palestinian identity and taboo topics.
- Bar Bahar experienced backlash from the city of Umm al-Fahm, where Bar Bahar protagonist Nour hails from. Umm al-Fahm's municipal government campaigned against the film with the Islamic Council (Israel's senior Muslim body) and called for residents to [boycott the film](#). The



Higher Islamic Council issued a fatwa against Hamoud, alleging the film harmed Islam, leading to [death threats](#).

- About the Characters:
 - Salma, a secular Muslim is from Ma'alot Tarshiha and Nour's cousin Rafif is from Haifa. Ma'alot Tarshiha, and Haifa are considered "mixed cities," a term used to refer to 8 cities with a large minority of Arab residents. About a quarter of Israel's Arab population lives in "mixed cities," a number that [is rising](#).
 - Laila, is a Christian from Nazareth, one of the two largest Arab cities in Israel. 7% of Arab citizens [are Christian](#), many of whom live in and around Nazareth.
 - Nour, an observant Muslim, is from Umm al-Fahm, a large Arab city in the more conservative triangle region.
 - The protagonists share an apartment in Tel Aviv, which is considered a liberal city with a thriving party scene.
- Language:
 - In the film, the characters switch between Arabic and Hebrew. Hebrew is Israel's official language. However, Arabic was an official language until the passage of Israel's 2018 "[Jewish Nation-State Law](#)", two years after the film was released.
 - Most Arab citizens learn Hebrew as a second language, and few Jews speak Arabic fluently. In a Hebrew-speaking economy, limited Hebrew abilities creates barriers to socioeconomic mobility [for many Arab citizens](#).
- In the [last decade](#), the number of Arab women completing higher education and entering the workforce has increased. Arab women are [more likely](#) to enter higher education than their male counterparts.

Further Resources:

- [Maysaloun Hamoud's In Between Is a Palestinian Feminist Revenge Fantasy - Vogue - Julia Felsenthal - 1.5.2018](#)
- [What It Really Means to Be Queer and Palestinian in Israel and the West Bank - Haaretz - Sheren Falah Saab - 6.9.2022](#)
- ['We're the New Arab Mainstream': This Is the Arab Alternative to Tel Aviv's Party Scene - Haaretz - Nadin Abou Laban - 2.10.2023](#)

Discussion Questions

The following questions are provided to spark inspiration. Feel free to adapt them.

1. What is one image, moment or quote that stuck out to you from the film. Why?
2. Did anything the characters experience feel familiar to you or people in your life? What felt different?



3. What languages were spoken in the film? When and why do characters switch languages?
4. What diversity within Arab society did you see in the film? What identities (gender, religion, sexual orientation, class, etc.) are explored in this film? Did this reflect your expectations or challenge them?
5. What role(s) do humor and satire play in “In Between?”
6. How do different forms of violence appear in the film? How is violence treated?
7. How did the film relate to other experiences you have had learning about Arab citizens of Israel? How did this compare?
8. Regarding her film, director Maysaloun Hamoud [said](#), “We will never be considered as equal, so we are in between, out of the society that we came from, and not really part of the Israeli society in equal ways in the places we live.” Do you agree? Why or why not?