



Brooklyn Daily Eagle



How to convince your brain to stop over-eating

howlifeworks.com/health



How to regain your mental sharpness after age 40

howlifeworks.com/learn



Going... Going... Gone! New iPads for under \$40

howlifeworks.com/shop

Facebook Friday



Like us on Facebook



Exp. Nov 2011

Brooklyn's Plumber
718 - 748 - 1254
facebook.com/petriplumbing

Charitable Discount

Make a donation to a 501(c)3 in honor or Petri Plumbing

Save 10% or more.

DONATE & SAVE



Exp. NEVER



Enter a keyword

Search

September 23, 2011



Archives
Brooklyn Public Library's
Brooklyn Daily Eagle Online
(1841-1902)

Archives
Brooklyn Eagle
(2003-present)

Read about
Brooklyn Eagle and Contact Us

Categories

- ▶ Main page
- ▶ RSS Channels
- ▶ Bay Ridge
- ▶ Atlantic Yards
- ▶ Photo Galleries
- ▶ Brooklyn Today
- ▶ Brooklyn People
- ▶ Brooklyn Cyclones
- ▶ Courthouse News & Cases
- ▶ Brooklyn SPACE
- ▶ Features
- ▶ Crime
- ▶ Sports
- ▶ Street Beat
- ▶ Brooklyn Inc

Art



Film Examines Arab-Jewish Relations, Brooklyn Style

by Raanan Geberer (edit@brooklyneagle.net), published online 06-08-2011

Friendship Between Two Children Is the Focus of Fendelman's David

By Raanan Geberer
Brooklyn Daily Eagle

BROOKLYN — Much has been made of Arab-Jewish relations, but a new film by Brooklyn-based filmmaker Joel Fendelman, David, examines the subject from the unusual vantage point of the relationships between children.

Moreover, the locales are not the Gaza Strip or Jerusalem, but Borough Park and Bay Ridge.

David stars Muatasem Mishal as David (or Daud, to use the Arabic form of the name), Binjyomin Shtaynberger as the Jewish child Yoav, and Maz Jobrani as Ahmed, Daud's authoritarian father. The film is sort of a comedy of errors, although not a comedy because it's embarrassing for everyone involved. Some Orthodox Jewish children from a summer program at a nearby yeshiva drop a Hebrew book, and Daud picks it up.



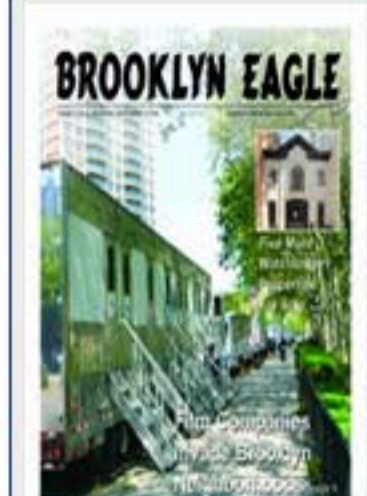
Yoav (left) and David (or Daud) in Chinatown, in a scene from David.



Daily Cover



Weekly Cover



- ▶ Brooklyn KIDS
- ▶ Editorial viewpoint
- ▶ OUTBrooklyn
- ▶ Brooklyn Woman
- ▶ Art
- ▶ Up & Coming
- ▶ Hills & Gardens
- ▶ Auction Advertiser
- ▶ On Food
- ▶ Historically Speaking
- ▶ Health Care
- ▶ Get A LifeStyle
- ▶ On This Day in History
- ▶ Obituaries
- ▶ Community Boards
- ▶ Stars and stripes
- ▶ Community News
- ▶ Brooklyn Yellow Pages

☰ **Contact Us**

If you'd like to contact us [click here](#)

Read about Us [HERE](#)

Business:

salon

Location:

brooklyn,ny

Search

- ▶ Blinds
- ▶ Buffet
- ▶ Cabinets
- ▶ Clothing
- ▶ Condos
- ▶ Curtains
- ▶ Deli
- ▶ Frozen Yogurt
- ▶ Gift Baskets
- ▶ Gift Shops

The same day, his uncle has given him a valuable, beautifully illustrated copy of the Koran that belonged to his grandfather. Daud puts what he thinks is the Hebrew book into the book drop, only to discover later on that it was the Koran.

<<first < previous next >> last>>

Daud tries to sneak into the school to retrieve the Koran, but before he can do so, he's mistaken for one of the yeshiva students and sent upstairs. Soon, he's seated with the Jewish students, learning about why Jewish identity is important from a very powerful, charismatic male teacher (Noam Weinberg).

When asked his name, he has the presence of mind to say "David." The teacher asks him where his family is from, and he says, "Jerusalem and Istanbul," but the teacher merely assumes that "David" is a Sephardic Jew.

Within a day or so, he's able to sneak into the principal's office and retrieve the Koran. But by this point he finds himself unable to leave the Jewish school, perhaps out of fear, perhaps because he's already become friendly with some of the Orthodox Jewish boys. Their religions may be different, but when it comes to baseball and basketball, their culture is the same. David forms a special friendship with Yoav.

Without giving away the ending, there's also a secondary plot involving Daud's older sister, Aishah (Dina Shihabi), who wants to go to Stanford to become a computer engineer but whose parents want her to go to school closer to home, and to marry her off as well.

The actors are all local Brooklyn residents, both Arabs and Jews, and by and large are not professional actors. Even though some touchy international incidents like the Gaza flotilla happened while the movie was in production, it didn't affect the way the Jewish and Muslim cast members worked together.

"Many times," says Fendelman, "I heard Arabs say, 'We have no problem with Jews. Our problem is Israel.' Obviously, people hold a grudge, but it's not necessarily a religious thing."

To prepare for the film, Fendelman spent about a year in both Borough Park and the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem, then spent about a year doing volunteer work within the Arab community of Bay Ridge. In both situations, he says, the people he encountered were very friendly. By and large, he says, they share the same values — a focus on community, on holding onto traditional values, on the importance of family. Although he's Jewish, Fendelman rarely encountered Orthodox Jews during his childhood and adolescence in Miami, which is predominately Hispanic (although if he had grown up in Miami during the 1930s, as this writer's father did, he might have found things otherwise). He sees making David as part of his search for identity.

Previously, he made several short films, including one about the March for Women's Lives in 2007, one about a girl undergoing an abortion and one about a poet, as well as a documentary about kung fu masters. He lives in Prospect Heights.

The film is showing tomorrow at the Brooklyn Film Festival, then will run for a week at the Quad in Greenwich Village starting on Sept. 9. Because of its theme of tolerance, he feels it's important that its run coincides with 9/11.

☰ **Real Estate Brooklyn**



☰ **Bay Ridge Eagle**



ARAlifestyle.com



Shocking discovery for joint relief

