

# *Meteor*

a film by

Atefeh Khademolreza

Produced by

Sholeh Alemi Fabbri

Samuel Kiehoon Lee

## **PRESS KIT**

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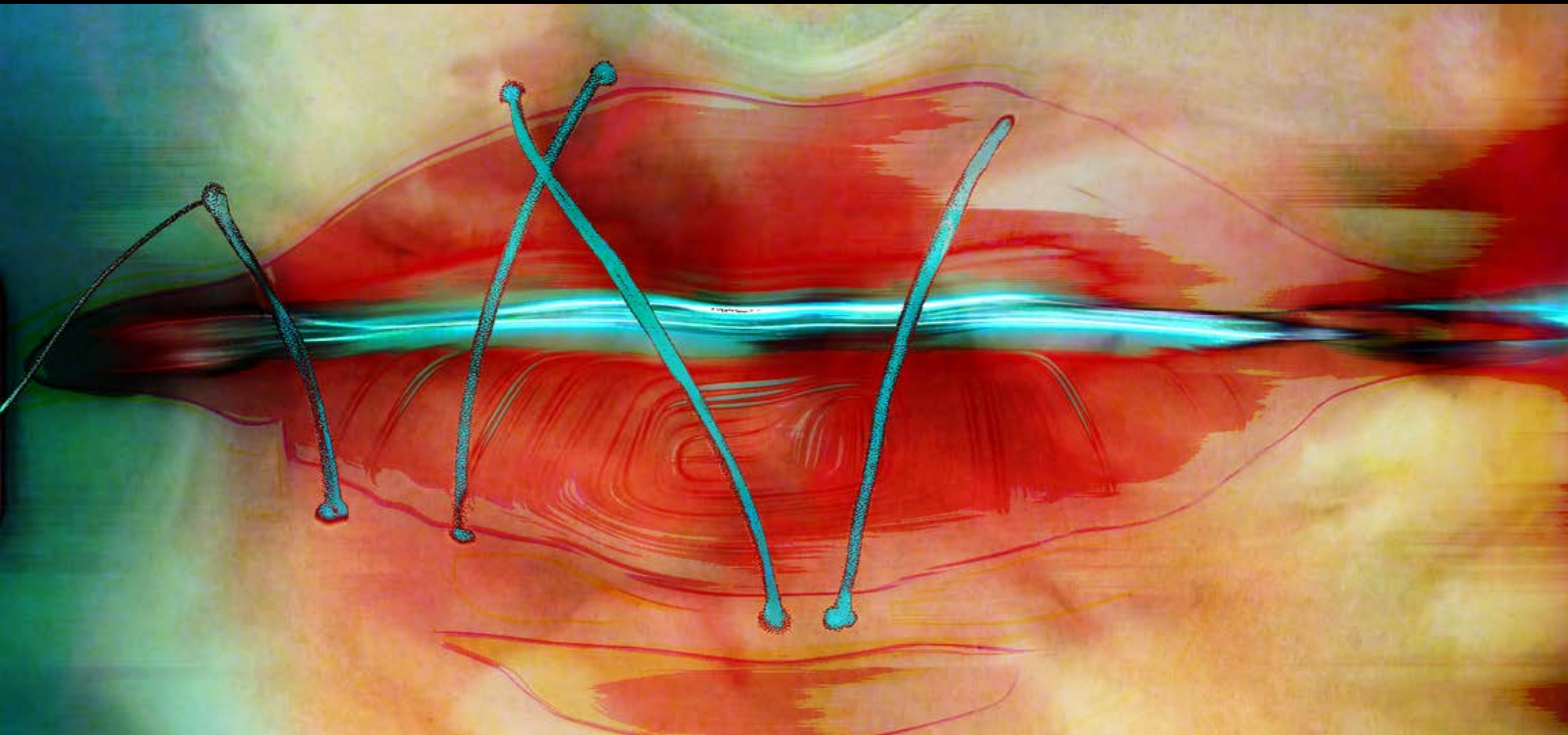
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## LOGLINE

*Meteor* explores the mysterious death of Amin, a gay man living in oppressive Iran. The animated doc highlights the deadly consequences faced by individuals living under severe societal constraints while echoing the recent 'Women, Life, Freedom' revolution.

## SYNOPSIS

*Meteor* is a visually stunning piece that employs animated surrealist imagery to delve into the narrator's profound grief over losing her best friend within the repressive Islamic Republic of Iran. *Meteor* juxtaposes the international "women, life, freedom" protest movement with the challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community in Iran, making for a poignant and emotional ode to friendship and a tribute to those who continue to suffer in Iran.



**RUNTIME**

10 MINS

**COUNTRY**

CANADA

**LANGUAGE**

PERSIAN

**GENRE**

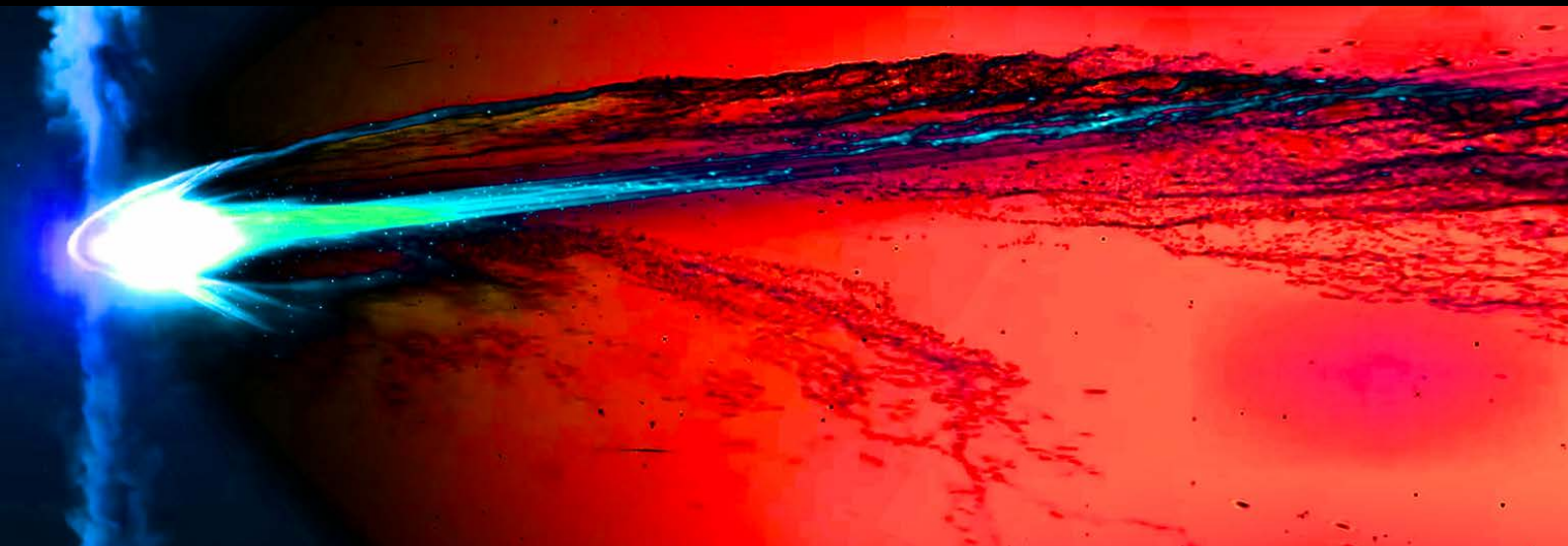
ANIMATED SURREALIST DOCUMENTARY

# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

My intention with *Meteor* was to shed light on the struggles faced by women and the queer community in Iran and their fight for freedom and equality. Inspired by the revolutionary "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement, the film explores the mysterious death of Amin, a dear friend who experienced the harsh realities of being queer in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Amin's journey reflects the experiences of countless individuals grappling with their identity in a society that suppresses their right to love and be true to themselves. Through this film, my aim is to bring attention to others who have been silenced or oppressed due to their sexual orientation.



~ *Atefeh Khademolreza, Director*



# REAL LIFE INSPIRATION

*Meteor* delves into the tragic circumstances surrounding the mysterious death of Amin, a 35-year-old Iranian man who was a close friend of the filmmaker. Amin's vibrant personality and unwavering support made him an invaluable presence in the filmmaker's life.

However, being a gay man in the Islamic Republic of Iran exposed Amin to discrimination, persecution and the constant fear of societal rejection. He kept his true sexual orientation a secret.

As the weight of his hidden truth became increasingly unbearable, Amin eventually revealed his sexuality to the filmmaker and a small circle of trusted friends. He disclosed that he had engaged in risky unprotected sex but had been postponing getting tested for HIV due to the overwhelming fear of a positive result.

Several months before the filmmaker departed for Canada, Amin's health began deteriorating rapidly. Shortly after the filmmaker's departure, he fell ill with flu-like symptoms and tragically passed away in his sleep.

# FILMMAKERS



**DIRECTOR,  
WRITER,  
PRODUCER**

**Atefeh Khademolreza's** award-winning films focus on exploring themes of disorientation and reorientation. Mentored by the late Abbas Kiarostami in Iran, her films have been showcased at prestigious festivals including Berlin, Busan, and Vienna. After immigrating to Canada, Atefeh was selected for the Toronto International Film Festival's Micki Moore Writer's Residency (2021-2022) and the Netflix-BANFF Diversity of Voices (2023). An alumna of esteemed programs including Berlinale Talent Campus, Asian Film Academy, Serbia Interaction Film Camp, and Reelworld E20, Atefeh holds a Master of Fine Arts Degree from York University (2019) and is a member of the Writers Guild of Canada.

**Sholeh Alemi Fabbri** has been producing award-winning content for two decades and has received three Canadian Screen Award nominations. In 2021, Sholeh launched Good Measure Productions, focusing her talents at the intersection of film production and impact. She is currently developing several narrative projects including Eclipse with writer/director duo Atefeh Khademolreza and Samuel Kiehoon Lee and Producer/EP Heather Haldane (Maudie) as well as One Last Pheasant with director Yael Staav (Workin' Moms), writer Delphine Roussel and EPs Paul Barkin (Night Raiders) and Kyle Mann (North of Normal). She is a member of the CMPA, the DOC Institute and WIFT-T.

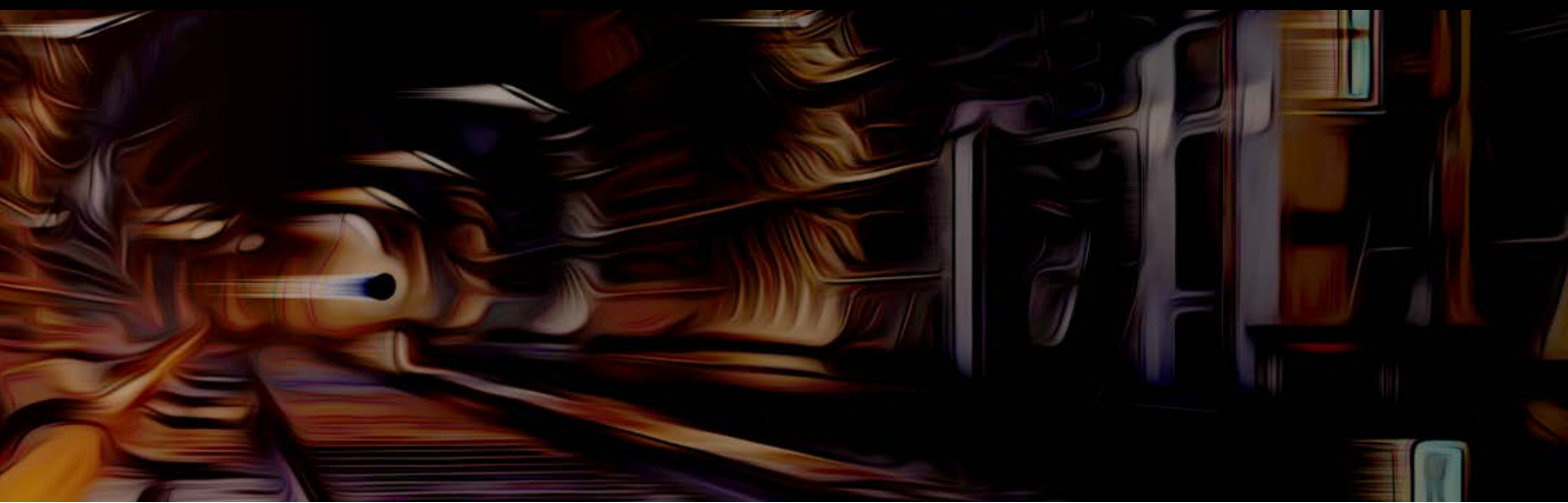


**PRODUCER**



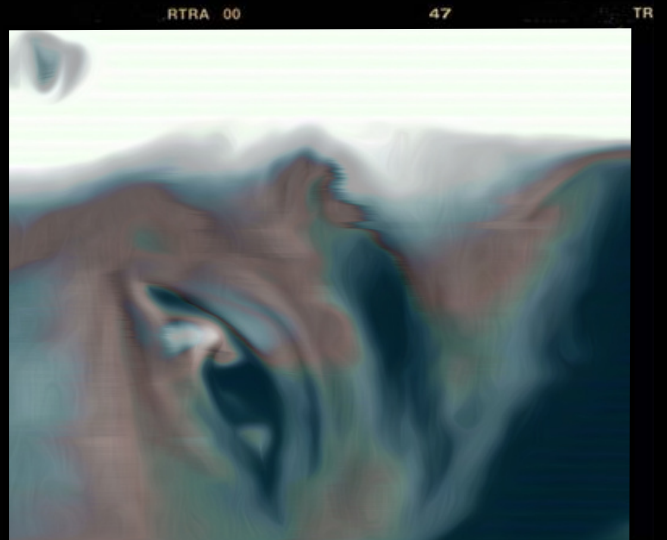
**PRODUCER**

**Samuel Kiehoon Lee** is a Toronto-based writer/director whose diverse body of work explores trauma, language, culture, and identity. Born to parents who fled North Korea during the Korean Conflict, Samuel's films reflect his deep understanding of fractured histories and personal struggles. His acclaimed works include the feature film "GYOPO" and impactful shorts like "And the Sun" and "How to Make Kimchi." His current projects include the fantasy drama "Eclipse" and the psychological thriller "Buzzer". Alongside his enduring love for storytelling, Lee enjoys exploring his passion for stand-up comedy and maintains a commitment to the ketogenic diet.



## STYLE

*Meteor* embraces a mesmerizing surrealistic form, seamlessly blending reality and imagination through its visually striking approach. The film's unique artistic style is enriched by the incorporation of archival photos and videos, which not only provide historical context but also deepen the narrative's poetic and evocative essence. Furthermore, the use of rotoscoping, a technique that involves tracing over live-action footage frame by frame, adds another layer of visual enchantment and stylistic innovation to the film. Through this captivating blend of elements, "Meteor" crafts a rich tapestry of emotions and meaning, immersing the audience in a truly extraordinary cinematic experience that transcends traditional storytelling boundaries.





## VIRAL INTERVENTIONS PROGRAM

*Meteor* is a project that emerged from the Viral Interventions program, a three-year initiative. Talented artists and teams collaborated in this program to create impactful short videos about HIV/AIDS within the current context of COVID. Their creative processes and community engagement efforts were also documented on the VI Documentation Site, a research-creation platform dedicated to exploring diverse methods and models for artists engaging with communities affected by HIV.

The program received invaluable guidance and mentorship from esteemed individuals in the field. The VI Mentors & Workshops for 2023 featured Alison Duke, Sarah Flicker, Richard Fung, John Greyson, Mike Hoolboom, Milada Kovacova, Bh Yael Roslyn Kalloo, Ariel Smith, Darien Taylor, and Wayne Wapeemukwa. Their expertise and support significantly enhanced the project.

Additionally, the VI Residency Artists for 2023 included Atefeh Khademolreza, Darien Taylor, Jamie Whitecrow, Ken Morrison, Amil Shivji, Dakota Marks, and Alexandra Gelis. Each of these artists contributed their unique perspectives and talents to the endeavour.

The diversity among the artists-residents involved in the program is truly remarkable. Out of the artists-residents, 11 identify as queer or transgender, 8 are living with HIV, and 16 are racialized. Furthermore, 8 artists proposed projects with global locations, including 2 in the Middle East, 2 in Africa, and 1 in the Caribbean. It is worth noting that approximately 10 artists have previous experience creating art or videos focused on HIV-related themes.

Viral Interventions received funding, in part, from a SSHRC Insight Grant (Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council) and is co-produced with Trinity Square Video. The program also extends gratitude to York University's CMA and the Toronto Queer Film Festival for their support.