

SYNOPSIS

Nero (Johnny Ortiz) claims he was mostly raised and educated in South Central Los Angeles before his family was deported to Mexico. Now 17, he manages to return illegally to the U.S. Nero decides to join the U.S army to get a Green card, a shortcut to citizenship, and is sent to an unspecified stretch of the Middle East.

to claim affirmer / **mostly** principalement / **to raise** élever / **to manage** parvenir à / **to return** revenir / **Green Card** permis de séjour et de travail / **shortcut** raccourci / **citizenship** citoyenneté; ici, nationalité américaine / **stretch** étendue; ici, région / **(the) Middle East** (le) Moyen-Orient.



THE DIRECTOR

Rafi Pitts was born in Mashad, Iran. He spent his childhood in Tehran, where he lived in a basement flat underneath a post-production studio. He came to England (his father is English) in 1981 during the Iran-Iraq war. He graduated in 1991 from the Polytechnic of Central London and moved to Paris where he worked on films by Leos Carax, Jacques Doillon and Jean-Luc Godard. In 1996, he was the first film director (in exile) to film in Iran since the Revolution in 1979. His first feature *Season Five* (1997) was the first Franco-Iranian coproduction since the Revolution. In 2006, he was nominated for Golden Bear award of Berlin Film Festival for his film, *It's Winter*. His 2010 film *The Hunter* was nominated for the Golden Bear at the 60th Berlin International Film Festival.

director réalisateur / **to spend, spent, spent** passer / **childhood** enfance / **basement** (en) sous-sol / **flat** appartement / **underneath** en dessous de, sous / **to graduate** obtenir son diplôme / **feature** film, long-métrage / *Season Five* La Cinquième saison / *It's Winter* C'est l'hiver.

THE FRONTIER

There are 1,954 miles (3144 km) of border separating the US and Mexico. Unlike famous barriers such as the Berlin Wall or the Great Wall of China, the US version is not much of a wall. It is a series of walls and fences, secured in between with a "virtual fence" which includes a network of electronic sensors, cameras, towers and high-flying drones that can see for more than 300 miles. It traverses a variety of terrains, ranging from major urban areas to uninhabitable deserts. It is the most frequently crossed controlled international boundary in the world, with approximately 350 million legal crossings being made annually.

border frontière / **unlike** contrairement à, à la différence de / **such as** tel(les) que / **(the) Great Wall of China** (la) Grande Muraille de Chine / **fence** clôture / **network** réseau, système / **sensor** capteur, détecteur / **to range from... to...** aller de... à... / **area** région, zone / **to cross** traverser / **boundary** frontière.

NUMBERS

The majority of Hispanics in the United States are native born. Of the **55 million** people in 2014 who identified themselves as of Hispanic or Latino origin, **35%** were immigrants.

There were **11.3 million** unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. that same year and Mexicans made up about **half** of them (**49%**).

In Fiscal Year 2014, more than **68 500** unaccompanied children were apprehended while attempting to enter the U.S. without authorization. In Fiscal Year 2015, UAC apprehensions declined **42%** to **39 970**.

In the first six months of Fiscal Year 2016 they stood at **27,754**, a figure almost comparable to the same period for Fiscal Year 2014.

The number of deaths reported in US Federal fiscal year 2015 (ending 30 Sept) was **240**, which was the lowest number in at least 18 years, and less than half the **492** deaths reported in 2005. Yet the statistics cited by scholars and the media are only the number of known deaths and do not include those who have never been found, underestimating the actual number of migrants that have died attempting unauthorized border crossings.

to make, made, made up représenter, constituer / **to report** faire état de / **at least** au moins, minimum / **yet** cependant / **scholar** spécialiste, expert; aussi, universitaire / **actual** réel / **to attempt** tenter, entreprendre.



THE DREAM ACT

The 2001 DREAM Act (**Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors**) was an American bipartisan legislative proposal for a multi-phase process for illegal immigrants in the United States that would first grant conditional residency and upon meeting further qualifications, permanent residency. It was reintroduced several times, including a big push in 2010 but failed to pass. Many states have since passed their own immigration legislation also named DREAM Acts, which have caused some people to incorrectly believe the federal version passed.

A Dreamers movement emerged from an underground subculture of students and young people who were born in the US to parents who came there without documents. Starting a decade ago, they began to find and help each other in coming out from the shadows, and began pushing for legal alternatives to miserable lifetimes in limbo.

act loi / **relief** aide, assistance / **alien** étranger / **proposal** proposition, projet / **to grant** accorder / **residency** permis de séjour / **upon** ici, dès l'instant où / **to meet, met, met** ici, répondre/satisfaire à / **further** ici, d'autres / **qualification** critère / **several** plusieurs / **big push** coup de collier / **to fail** échouer; ici, ne pas... / **to pass** ici, être adopté / **own** propre / **to cause** avoir pour conséquence / **underground** souterrain (aussi, clandestin) / **decade** décennie / **shadow** ombre / **to push for** faire pression en faveur de / **in limbo** dans l'incertitude.



UNDOCUMENTED YOUTH

Undocumented youth make up **16%** of the undocumented population as a whole. As children, youth are granted access to public K-12 education and benefits regardless of citizenship status. Without need to prove their legality within the country until they come of age, undocumented youth can live their childhood years without knowing that they do not have a legal status.

undocumented sans papiers / **youth** jeunes / **as a whole** dans sa globalité/ totalité / **K-12** primaire et secondaire / **benefit** aide; aussi, allocation / **regardless** peu importe, quel que soit, indépendamment de / **to come, came, come of age** atteindre la majorité, devenir majeur.

VOCABULARY

Use of the term **illegal immigrant** has been the source of some controversy in the United States. There are several other ways the media and public have described people living in a country illegally, and many of them are considered just as insensitive or unnecessarily vague. They include terms such as illegal alien, undocumented immigrant and migrant worker. In 2013 The Associated Press, the world's largest newsgathering operation, announced that it had banned the use of the term illegal immigrant, saying the word illegal should describe only an action. The AP said it would describe those people as living in the country illegally.

way façon / **insensitive** insensible / **unnecessarily** inutilement / **newsgathering** collecte d'informations / **to ban** bannir, interdire.

DACA

Are you wondering why Nero seems lost? Maybe it's because things are really complicated, even for those who haven't been deported. DACA (**Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals**) is a policy created in 2012 by President Obama. It grants deferred deportation to people under age 31 who came to the U.S. under age 16 and meet other criteria. If you apply and qualify for DACA, you're allowed to be in the U.S. legally, apply for employment authorization and receive a Social Security number. DACA provides legal presence, but not legal status. Once approved, DACA protection only lasts two years, but it can be renewed if you meet qualifications again.

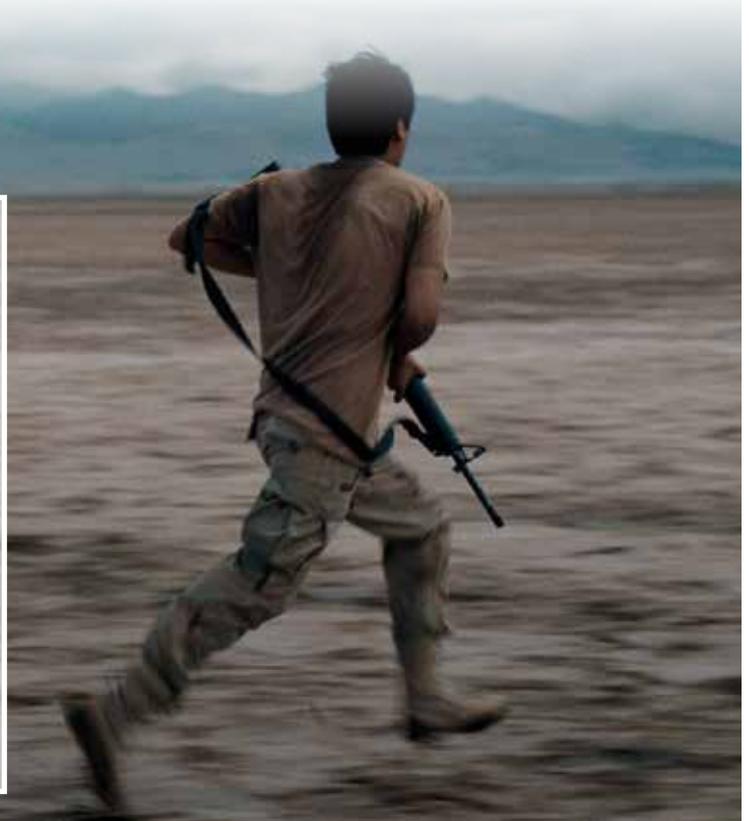
policy politique, mesure / **to defer** différer, reporter / **to apply** faire une demande / **to allow** autoriser / **to provide** fournir; ici, assurer / **to last** durer.

GREEN CARD SOLDIERS

Special provisions of the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) authorize U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to expedite the application and naturalization process for current members of the U.S. armed forces and recently discharged service members. In addition, spouses of members of the U.S. armed forces who are or will be deployed may be eligible for expedited naturalization. Since Oct. 1, 2001, USCIS has naturalized 109,321 members of the military, with 11,069 of those service members becoming citizens during USCIS naturalization ceremonies in 34 foreign countries.

In September 2015, PBS, Public Broadcast Service, reported that there were over **65,000** green card holders that served in the military, and hundreds of them were being deported after their service because of petty crimes.

Green Card soldier immigrant qui s'engage dans l'armée pour obtenir un permis de séjour aux É.-U. / **current** actuel; ici, en activité / **to discharge** renvoyer à la vie civile / **spouse** époux/épouse / **foreign** étranger / **broadcast** diffusion / **holder** détenteur / **petty** mineur / **crime** délit.



VOCABLE RONAN LANCELOT

“I FIGURED THE US WOULD REPRESENT THE WORLD”

“J'ai pensé que les Etats-Unis représenteraient le monde”

Dans un contexte d'élection présidentielle américaine, l'immigration est un sujet d'actualité. *Soy Nero*, dans les salles le 21 septembre 2016, met en scène un jeune homme mexicain prêt à tout pour obtenir la nationalité américaine. Pour en savoir plus, nous sommes allés à la rencontre de Rafi Pitts, un réalisateur au regard perçant qui ne mâche pas ses mots.



RENCONTRE AVEC
RAFI PITTS
Réalisateur

1. VO: Where did you find the idea for *Soy Nero* ?

Rafi Pitts: I come from three backgrounds. My father is British, my mother Iranian and my stepfather is French. Today, I live between Paris and Los Angeles. I have always been obsessed with what borders, identity and immigration mean. I didn't want to make a film that concerned only one nationality, so I figured the US would represent the world because everyone is an immigrant there, yet they are so hard on immigrants. Then I looked into the matter and came across the green card soldiers. I found it hard to believe this actually existed. In fact they have since the Vietnam war, so it's not a new subject, but the only difference now would be that a lot of Latinos who would have been deported after 9/11 underneath the Patriot Act were finding themselves joining the army, fighting for the US and being deported anyway after that. It became an obsession. I went to Tijuana, in Mexico where I met some of them. If they have done anything illegal when they return after having served, they are not considered American citizens and can be deported.

1. background origines, milieu socio-culturel / **stepfather** beau-père (second mari de la mère) / **border** frontière / **to figure** penser, estimer / **matter** question, sujet / **green card (US)** permis de séjour et de travail (green card soldiers immigrants qui s'engagent dans l'armée pour obtenir leur permis de séjour aux É.-U.) / **actually** en réalité, effectivement / **to deport** expulser / **9/11** = attentats du 11 septembre 2001 / **underneath** ici, en vertu de / **Patriot Act** loi antiterroriste votée en oct. 2001 / **to serve** servir (dans l'armée).

2. VO: The movie doesn't go that far...

RP: I didn't set out to make a critical film about the U.S. My main ambition was to try to find out why a young man would want to take all these risks in order to gain an identity and belong. All I try to do is hold up a mirror and say there is something wrong. I hope that someday Hollywood will make a movie about the green card soldiers and they will change their laws.



Waiting in the middle of nowhere.

3. VO: When *Nero* enrolls, why is he sent to a desert with no name?

RP: I didn't want to specify the location because the absurdity of the whole situation is that there's no location. I even wrote on a signpost that says “Nowhere, 110 km” in

2. to set, set, set out partir / **to belong** appartenir, ici trouver sa place / **to hold, held, held up** ici, tendre / **law** loi.

3. to enrol s'engager (armée) / **location** lieu, endroit / **whole** dans son ensemble / **signpost** panneau /

VOCABLE Bureau de Paris : 56, rue Fondary 75015 PARIS.
Tél : 01 44 37 97 97 / sag@vocable.fr

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Farsi. It's a bit like *Waiting for Godot*. When we got to the second half of the film, the war section, I was concerned that this movie wasn't just about the immigrants but also about a group of young men all lost with their own identity and who all wanted to belong to something that doesn't really want them. If everybody turn their back on these young men, could it not be possible that they might become the enemy? ●

Waiting for Godot En attendant *Godot* (pièce de théâtre de Samuel Beckett, mettant en scène deux vagabonds dans un lieu sans nom) / **concerned** préoccupé, inquiet.

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Pour organiser une séance scolaire contactez
Arnaud Tignon - 01 44 43 46 04
atignon@sddistribution.fr