



## **P.O.V.'s "9 STAR HOTEL"**

By Ido Haar

Tuesday, July 22, 2008 at 10 p.m. on PBS (Check local listings)

### **Filmmaker's Statement**

I grew up in a village on the edge of a pine forest, half way between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. On my way home, I often saw men running frantically across the highway. The fear in their eyes haunted me and I wanted to find out where they are running to, and whom they are running from.

I discovered that the forest — my own backyard — serves as a hideout for thousands of Palestinians looking for work in Israel. I found a secret camp on the other side of the forest, but didn't find any people. Whenever I came around, they would flee. My persistence made them curious, and eventually they stayed put. Since then, I have been documenting a vibrant community of young men and the impossibly hard and strangely wonderful lives they live.

My camera follows two best friends. Muhammad is the charismatic leader, the one who always has the answers. Ahmed is the childish one, the boy who wants someone to tell him what to do. I spend nights and days with them, experiencing, as much as an outsider can, a life of fear, uncertainty, madness, and grace; trying to understand how despite their circumstances, which to me seem unlivable — in the open, in the dark, away from home and family — they live and not only survive.

— Ido Haar, Director

