

HOLYLAND PRODUCTIONS

presents:

أبطال الصحراء

مباراة
الكarate
بين
الجزيرة
والبحرين

CHAMPIONS of the DESERT

Directed and Produced by Oren Rosenfeld

Producer Michal Lee Sapir Editor/Co Writer Lee Bar Levav

Original Music Jonathan Bar Giora

Poster by Ellen Levy-Arie





ONE-SENTENCE DESCRIPTION

A feature-length documentary about Danny, a Jewish Australian, and Hazem, a Muslim Bedouin, who use karate to bring Jewish and Bedouin families together and represent Israel side by side in the world.

SYNOPSIS

Karate begins with an empty hand, unarmed, a symbol of an open mind. That principle draws Danny, a Jewish Australian, and Hazem, a Muslim Bedouin, into a friendship that lets their two communities, living only a few kilometers apart, meet for the first time. Together they build a dojo in Hazem's village, where Jewish and Bedouin children train side by side. Its success brings solar power to the village, a visit from the Japanese ambassador, and a camp for Jewish and Muslim girls, led by Hazem's wife Hanan, where her daughters and their new friends practice, eat, and laugh together. Danny and Hazem go on to represent Israel together at karate world championships. Hazem's family faces real hardship, and a younger generation is losing patience, yet he holds to his belief in a shared life. Karate becomes the way Jews and Bedouin keep choosing each other, despite everything.



Danny and Hazem



Hazem in the dojo

EXTENDED SYNOPSIS

“Karate opened my mind.” - Hazem

This is the modest yet seemingly impossible request at the heart of Hazem’s life in an unrecognized Bedouin village in Israel. Although his community lies only a few kilometers from neighboring Jewish towns, the distance between them is measured in more than geography.

Danny grew up Jewish in Australia. Hazem grew up Bedouin in Israel. Their lives are shaped by different countries and different conflicts, but they recognize something familiar in one another: the experience of belonging to a minority and a lifelong devotion to karate. From that recognition, an unlikely friendship begins.

Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker Oren Rosenfeld follows Danny and Hazem as they attempt to build a dojo in the village. It is a modest structure with an ambitious purpose: to give local children a place to train and to bring Jewish and Bedouin families, neighbors who have rarely met, onto the same mat.

The dojo’s success sets off an unexpected chain of events. Solar panels are installed, bringing electricity to the village. The Japanese ambassador comes to visit. An international karate champion trains with the young athletes. Hazem’s wife Hanan leads a camp where Jewish and Muslim girls, her own daughters among them, practice, eat, laugh, and spend time together. Ordinary encounters made extraordinary by the separation surrounding them. What begins as a bond between two men gradually expands into a network of relationships neither could have built alone, and Danny and Hazem go on to represent Israel together at karate world championships.

Inside the dojo, coexistence is not discussed as an ideal; it is practiced through repetition. The children bow to one another, follow the same rules, and learn to control the force of their own bodies. Hazem says karate gave him “self-confidence, self-control, values, and inner strength.”

Life outside the dojo is not always as simple. Hazem’s family has faced real hardship, and the village still waits for recognition. Through it all, Hazem holds on to the shared life he has built with his Jewish neighbors and friends, and he does not give up on it.

But he fears that the children watching him will not inherit the same patience. “The younger generation is angry,” he says. “They are not optimistic like us.”

The film asks what coexistence can mean when the ground is not equal. A dojo can introduce neighbors. Solar panels can bring light. A friendship can open doors. But can any of them keep another generation believing in a life together?



Karate in the desert



Camels on a desert road

FILM DETAILS

Title	Champions of the Desert
Genre	Documentary, feature-length
Director	Oren Rosenfeld
Production company	Holyland Productions
Year of production	2027
Country of production	Israel
Running time	65 minutes
Language(s)	English, Arabic, Hebrew
Subtitles	English and Hebrew available
Print source / screening file	Rough cut screener on request; final print to follow

FILM CREDITS

Director	Oren Rosenfeld
Producers	Oren Rosenfeld Michal Lee Sapir
Writer	Lee Bar Levav (Co-Writer)
Editor	Lee Bar Levav
Cinematographer	Jordan Polevoy (Director of Photography)
Additional filming	Boaz Oppenheim Ariel Tagar Oren Rosenfeld Darian Krost (Australia)
Sound recordist	Amit Ella
Original music	Jonathan Bar Giora
Executive producer	Holyland Productions
Original poster	Ellen Levy-Arie
Cast / subjects	Danny Hakim Hazem Abu Queidar Hanan Abu Queidar

ABOUT THE FILM

Champions of the Desert is a feature-length documentary chronicling the friendship between Danny, a Jewish Australian, and Hazem, a Muslim Bedouin. Through the shared discipline of karate, they bring Jewish and Bedouin families together and represent Israel side by side at karate world championships.
www.championsofthedesert.com

DIRECTOR

Oren Rosenfeld is an Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker and the head of Holyland Productions. He directed and produced Champions of the Desert and contributed additional filming.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Holyland Productions is an Israel-based production company led by Oren Rosenfeld.
www.holylandproductions.tv

PRESS AND DISTRIBUTION CONTACT

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STILLS



Danny and Hazem by the fire



On the cliffs



Karate tournament



Demolished house extension



Hanan Abu Queidar



Desert roadside