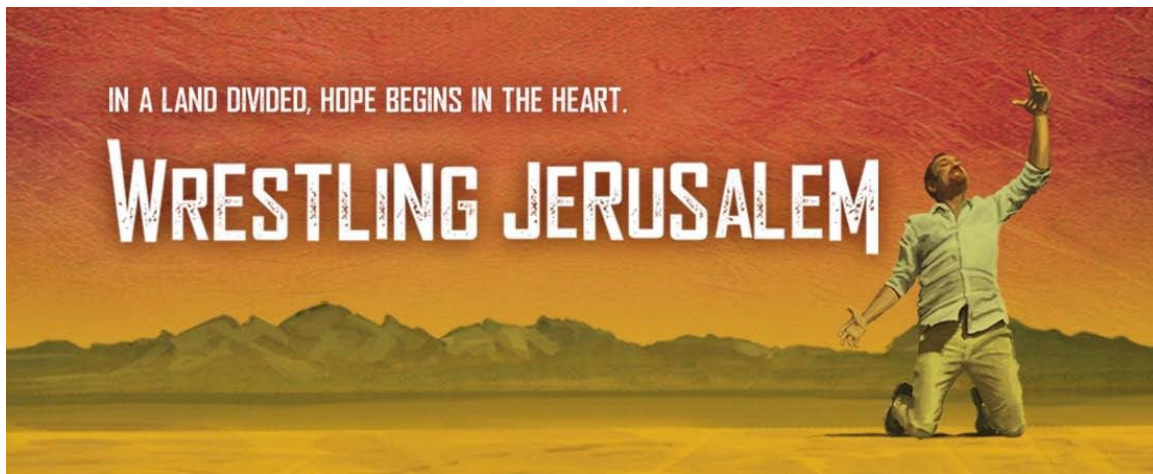


SROLIK PRODUCTIONS  
*presents*  
**WRESTLING JERUSALEM**

Directed by DYLAN KUSSMAN  
Written and Performed by AARON DAVIDMAN  
Produced by AARON DAVIDMAN DYLAN KUSSMAN  
Original Stage Production Directed by MICHAEL JOHN GARCÉS  
Co-Producer ERIK C. ANDERSEN Producer SARA SCHWARTZ GELLER  
Director of Photography NICOLE WHITAKER  
Editor ERIK C. ANDERSEN Music Composed by BRUNO LOUCHOUARN



*"I was captivated from the opening moment to the final credits."*

-Fanboy Nation

**Read the entire review here:** <http://fanboynation.com/wrestling-jerusalem/>

**Short Synopsis:**

A cinematic journey of one man into the heart of the Israeli - Palestinian story.

**Long Synopsis:**

Writer-Actor Aaron Davidman embodies seventeen different characters in and around the sacred city of Jerusalem as he takes us on an eye-opening journey into the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian story. Exploring universal questions of identity and human connection, this film dares the audience to leave the theater with their pre-existing ideas about its subject matter intact.

**Trailer:**<https://vimeo.com/174173720>

**More info:**

*Wrestling Jerusalem* is a film that models the value of holding multiple perspectives on a single divisive issue.

As our globalized world grows more and more complex, *Wrestling Jerusalem* acknowledges the depth of that complexity by using the art of film to move audiences to feel for human beings they might normally consider “other”. That is to say, the film cultivates *empathy*.

Through the embodiment of personal narrative, the central character in the film explores the nuances and layers of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Presenting seventeen different characters, the film represents voices from a wide range of perspectives, each voice deeply human and persuasive in their point of view. An Israeli commander; a Palestinian farmer; a British academic; a Palestinian UN worker; A Jewish psychologist. These are a few of the characters who tell their stories and add to a cumulative experience of multiple, often competing cultural, historical and religious narratives that shape this conflict. What is unique about this film is that all seventeen characters are portrayed by the same actor, Aaron Davidman, who wrote the film based on interviews throughout the region.

Aaron’s journey to Israel and Palestine to answer his own questions about the conflict makes the film particularly personal. And as he meets each character, he transforms into them, to see through their eyes, so to speak. There are no costume changes or film tricks. Aaron remains visibly himself, even as his vocal inflections change and his physicality morphs to denote change of character.

By holding these seventeen different perspectives in the span of 90 minutes, the film offers a model for the possibility of more nuanced, generous conversation concerning our world’s most divisive topics, beginning with the Israel/Palestine debate, but certainly not ending there.

## Statement of Purpose

### From Director, Dylan Kussman

Watching one man's unshakable hope for a better world collide with the tragic and intractable acrimony between Israel and Palestine makes me wonder whether I might not be witnessing an honest attempt to answer the ancient paradox, "What happens when the unstoppable force meets the immovable object?"

I envisioned the filmed adaptation of Aaron Davidman's critically-acclaimed stage play as an almost surgical exploration of our generation's Gordian Knot, with the sharpened scalpel of Aaron's prismatic soul as our only tool. We'll bear silent witness as he imaginatively travels the Holy Land, meets the people there, and with a breathtaking honesty and unsparing eye for detail, channels their passions, emotions, sorrows and joys into 17 vibrant and delineated characters, Arab and Jew, performed both in front of a live audience in a theater, and alone, under the harsh and unforgiving glare of a relentless desert sun.



I embraced both the communal theater stage and the isolated, blasted desert landscape as performance spaces capable of conveying the weight and epic nature of Aaron's quest for personal and political meaning; and as someone charged with bringing a true cinematic scope to the piece, I allowed the exteriors (shot in a landscape evocative of the Middle East) to function almost as a desert of the consciousness: a place where Aaron's ideas can ring out, collide with one another, elicit an emotional response, and ultimately foment change, both in him and in the hearts and minds of the audience.

My ambitions for this project are towering; my expectations for what it might be able to accomplish as a tool for change in moviegoers and in the world, some might say, are wholly unrealistic. But if this film is going to succeed, centered as it is around a solo performer brave enough to bare his heart and look all that despair, hopelessness, and cynicism dead in the eye without flinching and quietly insist, 'There is a solution,' my ambitions and expectations must be more than merely 'towering' or 'unrealistic' – they must, like his hope and faith, be completely boundless.

*Wrestling Jerusalem* premiered at the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival in July 2016.