Berlinale 66 Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin
Forum

toz bezi

dust cloth

"TOZ BEZİ / DUST CLOTH"

NAZAN KESAL ASİYE DİNÇSOY

SERRA YILMAZ DİDEM İNSELEL MEHMET ÖZGÜR

ASEL YALIN YUSUF ANCU GÖKÇE YANARDAĞ

MAKE-UP ESMA KESKİN COSTUME DESIGN SEDA YILMAZ GAFFER CEYHUN PARLAK

SOUND DESIGN / MIX ARNE DAMMANN COLORIST CENK EROL SOUND MUSTAFA BÖLÜKBAŞI

EDITIN ALİ AGA EDITING SUPERVISOR AYHAN ERGÜRSEL CASTING DIRECTOR EZGİ BALTAŞ

LINE PRODUCER KAAN KURBANOĞLU 1ST A.D. ULAŞ PARLAKYILDIZ

ART DIRECTORS ASLI DADAK BARIŞ YIKILMAZ CINEMATOGRAPHER MERYEM YAVUZ

CO-PRODUCER STEFAN GIEREN PRODUCERS ÇİĞDEM MATER NESRA GÜRBÜZ

SCREENWRITER / DIRECTOR

AHU ÖZTÜRK



FILM DATASHEET

Title: TOZ BEZI (Dust Cloth)
Genre: Drama
Duration: 1:38:55
Language: Turkish / Kurdish (OV), English (ST),

LOGLINE:
Nesrin and Hatun are two Kurdish cleaning women living in Istanbul. While Nesrin tries to survive with her little daughter in the big city, trying to understand why her husband left her, Hatun dreams of buying a house in the districts where she goes to clean.

CAST & CREW

Writer & Director:	Ahu Öztürk
Cinematographer:	Meryem Yavuz
Art Director:	Asli Dadak
	Bariş Yıkılmaz
Costumes:	Seda Yilmaz
Editor:	Ali Aga
Sound:	Mustafa Bölükbaşi
Producers:	Ciğdem Mater (TR)
	Nesra Gürbüz (TR)
	Stefan Gieren (DE)

Nesrin	Asiye Dinçsoy
Hatun	Nazan Kesal
Ayten	Serra Yilmaz
Asli	Didem Inselel
Şero	Mehmet Özgür
Asmin	Asel Yalin
Oktay	Yusuf Ancu



SCREENING DATES

FRI, 12.02. - 15:30 - CinemaxX 6 (P&I)
SAT, 13.02. - 16:30 - CineStar 8
SUN, 14.02. - 12:30 - Arsenal 1
TUE, 16.02. - 17:30 - CinemaxX 10 (EFM)
THU, 18.02. - 21:30 - Delphi
SAT, 20.02. - 20:00 - Cubix 9

66 Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin Forum

SALES / PRODUCTION

Ciğdem Mater
Hamson Apt. 20/7
Asmalimescit / Beyoğlu / Istanbul
Turkey
ciğdemmater@gmail.com
+90 535 969 0319
+90 532 291 12 11

Stefan Gieren
Rappstr. 6
20146 Hamburg
Germany
stefan@storybay.tv
+49 40 66 8 4798
+49 176 325 385 26

EPK, trailer, screener & more Info - www.toz-bezi.com

'Dust Cloth' ('Toz Bezi'): Istanbul Review

10:22 AM PDT 4/20/2016 by Jonathan Holland



Courtesy of Ret Films

THE BOTTOM LINE

A tough but rewarding downhill journey.

Ahu Ozturk's grimly authentic drama about women's struggles won best local film, actress and screenplay honors at the recent Istanbul festival.

A slow-moving, emotionally wrenching and subtle indictment of life's trials as they are experienced — make that "suffered" — by two Kurdish cleaning women in Istanbul, *Dust Cloth* is well-observed, superbly played, unremittingly grim and emotionally very potent, indeed.

The film is far from perfect; its pacing is slow but not always steady, while the ellipses in the storytelling sometimes look like scripting errors. But there's an intensity and earnestness of purpose about it — call it the desire to truthfully record how things are — which lends Ahu Ozturk's feature debut a depth and complexity which makes up for its more superficial flaws. Easy viewing it isn't, but this is one case in which adjustment to the film's slow rhythms brings due rewards, which is presumably what the Istanbul jury felt when it was handing out its prizes.

Having been left by her husband Cefo (Ozgur Dogan) after suggesting that he find a job, Nesrin (Asiye Dincsoy), now raising her infant daughter Asli (Didem Inselel) alone, is regretting her decision and wants him back — except that he seems to have disappeared. She spends most of her time hanging out with the slightly older, tougher and wiser Hatun (Nazan Kesal), married to ne'er-do-well Sero (Mehmet Ozgur) and with a ne'er-do-well son Oktay (Yusuf Anktu).

Nesrin and Hatun clean the houses of insufferable middle-class women such as Ayten (Serra Yilmaz) before whom they inexplìcably assume the pose of submissiveness and who inexplicably treat them with superiority: One of them complains about losing a piece of a jigsaw puzzle whilst remaining blissfully unaware of the borderline poverty in which Nesrin and Hatun live. They promise to do things for the women, and then don't deliver.

search of a job with insurance, Hatun can at least dream of one day owning a house in one of Istanbul's better districts. But for Nesrin, losing her husband sets in motion a process which will lead to her losing everything else. Her journey through the film ends in an exquisite, haunting street scene which achieves its full power only in retrospect.

"Some people are lucky, unlike us," reflects Nesrin: *Dust Cloth* is a film about how badly we treat people who haven't been as lucky as we have. Both Nesrin and Hatun are marginalized figures, first

because they're women, second because they're Kurds (effectively shorthand for 'second-class' across swathes of Turkish society) and third because they're cleaners. But by letting Cefo go in the sexist and racist culture which Ozturk is portraying so brutally, Nesrin has left herself completely exposed to attacks from all sides and must begin the slow slide down the social scale. Expect no tidy, stage-managed redemptions here.

Dincsoy, who deservedly took best actress honors at Istanbul, is superb in a role, so painful it is best observed through crossed fingers, which portrays a woman traveling the short but crucial distance from anxiety to desperation to finally utter hopelessness. The disturbing thing for viewers is that it's happening right before their eyes — ever more pathetic and browbeaten, Nesrin by the end is a shadow of a shadow, one guaranteed to inspire pity in even the most cynical. If Kesal's performance plays second fiddle, it's not down to the quality of the performance, but the quality of the role.

Several shots drag on seconds too long in the name of faithful naturalism — one taxi-catching scene is an example, where the length of the shot cannot justify what the viewer is able to take away from it. Visually, it is mostly the drab browns and greys of single-sofa settings with nothing on the walls, in contrast with the houses the women clean, where the sunlight comes streaming in — either that, or it's overcast skies and rain, shot in what looks like natural light.

At times the symbolism of *Dust Cloth* (chosen as the title presumably for its disposability) is unnecessarily obvious, as when the characters are shot in front of glamorous ads for fashion and perfume — or when, playing a game with her mother, the child Asli repeatedly cries out, "We're lost, we're lost!" It's powerful stuff, but too explicit, and it is testament to the film's power that the viewer hardly needs reminding that yes, her mother is indeed lost.

Production companies: Ret Film, Fiction 2.0
Cast: Asiye Dincsoy, Nazan Kesal, Serra Yilmaz, Didem Inselel, Mehmet Ozgur
Director-screenwriter: Ahu Ozturk
Producers: Cigdem Mater, Nesra Gurbuz, Stefan Gieren
Director of photography: Meryem Yavuz
Production designers: Asli Dadak, Baris Yıkılmaz
Costume designer: Seda Yilmaz
Editor: Ali Aga

Sales: Ret Film

Not rated, 99 minutes

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