



# I AM NASRINE

Autumn  
Season  
2013

**Release:** 2012  
**Cert (UK):** 15  
**Runtime:** 93 mins  
**Director:** Tina Gharavi  
**Screenwriter:** Abbas Kiarostami  
**Cast:** Micsha Sadeghi, Shiraz Haq

I Am Nasrine is a debut feature from Iranian born and UK based Tina Gharavi, a lecturer at Newcastle University who has been making documentaries for more than a decade that give voice to marginalized communities. The plot is close to Gharavi's own background: she left Tehran at the age of six to live with her father in the west, only returning 20 years later. *"I wanted to write a film about second-generation people like myself who are neither from the east or west, trapped between two identities,"* she says.



When you change where you are do you change who you are? *'I Am Nasrine'* is an intimate journey of self-discovery and ultimately reveals the unfolding of a soul. Set in modern day Tehran, and the UK, the film follows the paths of Nasrine and Ali, sister and brother in a comfortable, middle class Iranian home. When Nasrine has a run-in with the police, the punishment is more than she bargained for. At her father's bidding, Nasrine and Ali set out for the UK, torn about leaving behind their home and all that they know, embarking on a reluctant exile. Still, for Nasrine, there is undeniable excitement about the prospect of starting a new life in the West, and an eagerness for its promise of new freedoms. Arriving in Britain, their fate and their future are far from certain. Nasrine is quick to settle into her new life, while her brother Ali struggles with the realities of life in the UK. Then comes 9/11.



A 2013 Bafta nomination for outstanding debut got the film wider attention, and a well-deserved tour of UK cinemas. Reviews were mixed: Nigel Andrews, in the Financial Times, wrote: *"I Am Nasrine is the art house end of the silly season spectrum. Right-on in its messaging – the story of a police-harassed Iranian girl fleeing her country after unjust arrest and assault – it is as dull as slogan paint in execution. Nasrine (Micsha Sadeghi) reaches Newcastle, England, where misogyny, sexism and violence are once again rife and turned a blind eye to. The UK is little better than Ayatollah-land, socially and culturally, says director Tina Gharavi. Thanks for letting us know; I think I'll stay in the UK."*

Peter Bradshaw, in the Guardian, was more generous: *"The film is obviously an intensely personal film, flawed in some ways, with some plot issues, but acted with integrity and openness, and made with courage and a sense of melancholy in exile. Gharavi's crew for the Iranian scenes have not been named in the credits, evidently for their own safety. At any rate, Nasrine and Ali get a glimpse of a new but very painful kind of freedom. A valuable debut, shot with a fluent kind of poetry."*