



**Season 4 of AMERICA REFRAMED with Host Natasha Del Toro  
continues with the premiere of AMERICAN ARAB  
by Director Usama Alshaibi (*Nice Bombs*) and  
Executive Producers, Kartemquin Films**

**Tuesday, February 9, 2016, on WORLD at 8 p.m.**

[America ReFramed](#)

[www.facebook.com/AmericaReFramed](http://www.facebook.com/AmericaReFramed)

Twitter: @americareframed #americareframed

*"It's been more than a decade since the (9-11) attacks, but the fear and racism towards Arabs still exists....This excellent sociological study breaks down the barriers, providing a deeply personal and affecting look at life from the unique perspective of Arab Americans."* –  
Cleveland International Film Festival

January 6, 2016 -- (New York, NY) – Usama Alshaibi's documentary **AMERICAN ARAB** has its national television premiere on Tuesday, February 9, 2016, at 8 p.m. on WORLD Channel, as part of the fourth season of **AMERICA REFRAMED**, public media's newest documentary series. The film, made through Chicago production collective Kartemquin Films (makers of THE INTERRUPTERS), will be available for free streaming on [www.worldchannel.org](http://www.worldchannel.org) starting February 10, 2016.

MEDIA RELATIONS  
Neyda Martinez  
917 656 7846  
[neyda@amdac.org](mailto:neyda@amdac.org)

AMERICA  
REFRAMED  
20 Jay Street  
Suite 940  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

P: 212-989-8121  
F: 212-989-8230  
[americareframed.com](http://americareframed.com)

In AMERICAN ARAB, Iraqi-American Director Usama Alshaibi asks "Why is being an Arab suddenly the opposite of being a decent man?" Throughout the documentary, Alshaibi explores what it's like to occupy the 'space in between' as a hyphenated American, specifically of Arab origin, during the surge of anti-Muslim sentiment that arose in post 9-11 America.

"In this film, I wanted to show real people living their lives, and I also wanted it to be something that young people can watch and benefit from," said Alshaibi. "I think anyone that comes from the Middle East that comes from mixed ethnicity, that has a name that is Muslim or Arab, was affected after 9/11. I shared this story to make some sense of what we all went through."



Alshaibi offers a path for empathy while rendering a portrait familiar to those seeking and struggling to find their place in America. In a quest for the source of internalized pain in the face of discrimination, he digs and pokes to expose a long history of Hollywood images and media stereotypes of Arab men as sex craved buffoons, angry terrorists, “camel jockeys” and the butt of racist jokes.

The Alshaibi family came to America because Usama’s dad, a professor, refused to work for Saddam Hussein and was persecuted in Iraq. Their mother, Maha, reflects on the irony of having struggled for 10 years to become an American, to offer her children a new country with freedom, and a safe home, only to emerge as the “enemy” when her new country, America enters war with Iraq.

Alshaibi reflects on his childhood, a time when he never thought of himself as having any ethnicity at all. To reaffirm this notion of normalcy, he visits with college buddies in Iowa City who didn’t perceive him radically differently, but at the same time celebrated him for his “exotic otherness.” Later, Alshaibi shares how he became increasingly embarrassed by his Arab roots, and forged a new identity as an artsy teen interested in “hard-core punk, weird film and all things subculture.”

Alshaibi becomes a new father, coinciding with the end of Ramadan, when his daughter Muneera (Arabic for ‘brilliant’) Cinema Alshaibi is born. Maha, her grandmother, hopes the newest member of her family will enjoy a mix of “a new culture”: no hijab, no limits, free, proud of her varied heritage and, with the ability to make her own way.

"AmDoc is thrilled to collaborate with WORLD Channel and WGBH on the fourth season of AMERICA REFRAMED. As co-producers, we share a passion for storytellers committed to helping us gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding of America today," says Justine Nagan, Executive Director, American Documentary, Inc.

**Film Credits:**

<b>Director / Producer</b>	Usama Alshaibi
<b>Executive Producers</b>	Gordon Quinn, Justine Nagan
<b>Cinematography</b>	Christopher Rejano, Dinesh Sabu
<b>Editors</b>	Leslie Simmer, Matt Lauterbach, Usama Alshaibi

**About AMERICA REFRAMED**

**AMERICA REFRAMED** is a co-production of the WORLD Channel and American Documentary, Inc. and is hosted by journalist Natasha Del Toro.



Season four of AMERICA REFRAMED curates a diverse selection of films highlighting innovative and artistic approaches to storytelling from emerging to veteran filmmakers alike. Viewers will be immersed in personal stories from the streets of towns big and small to the exurbs and country roads that span the spectrum of American life. The documentaries invite audiences to reflect on topics as varied as culture, healthcare, politics, gun violence, religion and more. Several episodes feature a roundtable discussion moderated by host Natasha Del Toro with special guest commentators and filmmakers.

In 2015, AMERICA REFRAMED won a GRACIE Outstanding Series award, and was nominated for an EMMY award as well as an Independent Documentary Association award for best curated series. In its first season, AMERICA REFRAMED received five 2013 CINE Golden Eagle Awards, and one Imagen Awards nomination.

#### **AMERICA REFRAMED Series Credits**

Executive Producers: Justine Nagan, Chris Hastings, Chris White  
Series Producer: Carmen Vicencio  
Host: Natasha Del Toro

#### **Web and Social Media**

AMERICA REFRAMED can be accessed online via  
<http://worldchannel.org/programs/america-reframed/>  
and,  
<https://www.facebook.com/WorldChannel>  
<https://www.facebook.com/AmericaReFramed>

@worldchannelPTV  
@americareframed  
@ndeltoro

#### **AMERICA REFRAMED Co-Producers**

**American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc)** is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These



activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.

**The WORLD Channel** delivers the best of public television's nonfiction, news and documentary programming to US audiences through local public television stations and streaming online at [worldchannel.org](http://worldchannel.org). WORLD reached 35.8 million unique viewers 18+ last year (55% adults 18-49) and over-indexes in key diversity demographics.\* Online, the WORLD Channel expands on broadcast topics and fuels dialogue across social media, providing opportunities for broad and diverse audience interaction (\*Source: Nielsen Local Buyer Reach Scorecard 01/14-12/14).

WORLD is programmed by WGBH/Boston, in partnership with American Public Television and WNET/New York, and in association with the American Public Television and National Educational Telecommunications Association. Funding for the WORLD Channel is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the Ford Foundation. Additional funding for AMERICA REFRAMED is provided by the MacArthur Foundation

**Media Contact**

Journalists and reviewers may contact Neyda Martinez at **917 656 7846** or via email at [neyda@amdac.org](mailto:neyda@amdac.org) for interviews and special requests.

###