

## Film Review: ‘Where Do We Go Now?’ Advances a Path Toward Peace

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on May 19, 2012 - 7:52am

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CHICAGO – Society constantly needs a reminder about itself, especially in the arena of political and religious conflict. “Where Do We Go Now?,” written and directed with creative delicacy by Nadine Labaki, provides that reminder and fashions an adult fable of how women can do their part to stop war.



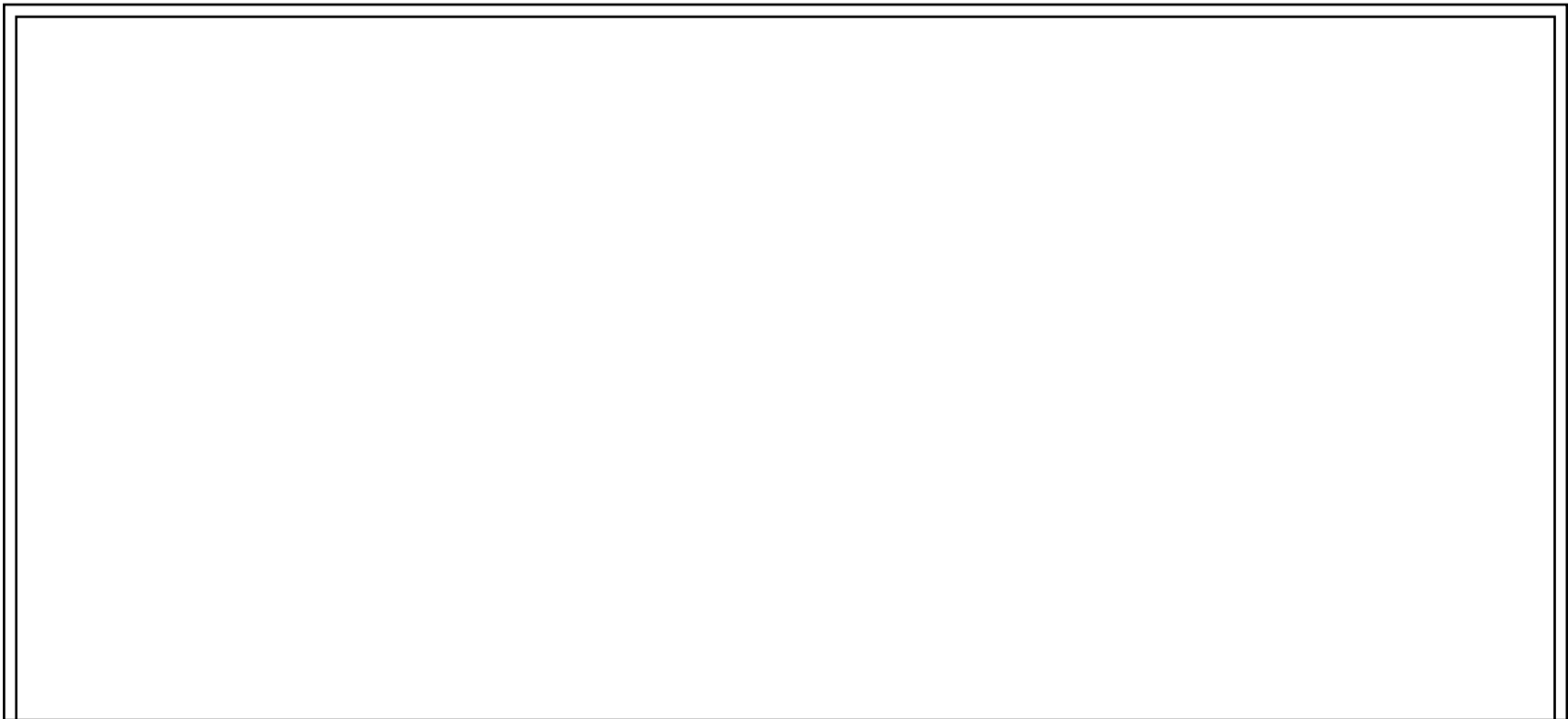
Labaki uses musical numbers, extreme portrayals of Lebanese townspeople and a troupe of Russian belly dancers to highlight the absurdity of the petty bickering that lead to larger wars, mixed with the ingenuity of the matriarchy to quiet the storm. The narrative is a fascinating glimpse into another culture, but also expresses how similar we all are in such situations. The story communicates that no matter where we’re from, we do have a responsibility in keeping the peace, simply by paying attention to our role in any conflict. Choosing peace over war, even tricking people into it, seems much less deadly than capitulating to the inevitable violence.

The story is set in an Lebanese village, populated by nice people, some of whom happen to be Christian and happen to be Muslim. An example of a big event in the village is that someone has figured out a way to rig up an ancient TV, and the town gathers to watch as if they were in an outdoor cinema. As some reports start to filter in from the outside that Christians and Muslims are clashing, the women of the village intervene and cut off the television.

But the genie is out of the bottle. Other incidences occur and it looks like tensions are mounting. Once the first fight breaks out, the women employ other means to distract the male testosterone overload, by recruiting a busload of Russian belly dancers. Ultimately, everything that is plotted and planned to keep the peace must come together, for the village to remain together. In the midst of it all, a couple of musical numbers break out, but that is to be expected in a peaceful village.

*“Where Do We Go Now?” continues its limited release in Chicago on May 18th. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Nadine Labaki, Claude Baz Moussawbaa, Julien Farhat, Yvonne Maalouf and Antoinette Noufally. Written and directed by Nadine Labaki. Rated “PG-13”*

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Director and Actor: Nadine Labaki (Amale) and Julien Farhat (Rabih) in ‘Where Do We Go Now?’

*Photo credit: Rudy Bou Chebel for Sony Pictures Classics*



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