

# MENDING A CRACK IN THE SKY



**Directors:** Roble Issa & Zach Jama | **Cinematographers:** Alex Tse | **Editor:** Lawrence Jackman | **Sound Recordist:** Jason Milligan | 8 min | Canada

**Synopsis:** Shamso Mohamoud and Shamso Elmi both lost their sons to violence and watched their alleged killers walk free without so much as a legal prosecution. Now, the two Somali-Canadian mothers have organized a group “Mending a Crack in the Sky” to collectively combat gun violence and hardship while facing cultural and racial barriers.



**Roble Issa bio:** Roble Issa is a Somali-Canadian filmmaker based in Toronto. After graduating with a degree in Psychology from York University, he pursued a career in film, starting as a screenwriter before making the transition to directing. His work explores themes such as identity, coming of age, and mental health.



**Zach Jama bio:** Zach Jama is a documentary filmmaker and engineer. He studied his BAsC in Systems Design Engineering from the University of Waterloo in Canada and his MFA in Cinematic Arts in Jordan. In 2019, Zach graduated with a Master of Science (MSc) in Art, Culture and Technology from MIT.

**Directors’ statement:** What happened to Shamso Elmi and Shamso Mohamoud, unfortunately, is not uncommon. Somali mothers in Toronto have been losing their sons to gun violence for a long time now; similarly, in Canada, other black, brown, and indigenous communities face statistically disproportionate murder rates. What is unique about this particular story is that they’ve managed to channel their grief and use it to empower other mothers to deal with similar tragedies.

If there’s one thing we hope people take away from this film, it’s the resilience of the Shamsos and the over one hundred other mothers in *Mending a Crack in the Sky*. It is important to remember that before the mothers in this film lost their children to acts of violence, they had escaped a war in Somalia and sought refuge in Canada because of the promise of a safe and prosperous life for their children. To then have that dream ripped away from them in such a tragic fashion, we imagine, would be enough for most people to give up. Yet, they continue to fight for the future of Somali youth despite the overwhelming evidence that the Canadian government does not value their children’s lives.

Oftentimes, it’s difficult for us to listen to them describe what happened to their sons without envisioning our own mothers and how they would handle a similar situation. This film is a testament to the courage of Shamso Mohamoud and Shamso Elmi, not only because of the important work it documents but also because of the courage they’ve shown in retelling their story. These powerful mothers were willing to re-open their past wounds for this film, and that is something that we, the filmmakers, do not take lightly; in return, we hope we did their story justice and helped spread their message to a broader audience.

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