



دھتے بنڈھیر

edges
sharp





logline

[Sharp Edges](#) follows Shara Zaia, a writer and climber, as she navigates identity, belonging, and mental health within the Assyrian diaspora - one of the world's oldest, yet most endangered cultures.

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Estimated run time: 7-10 minutes

Filming locations: Wyoming & Colorado



synopsis

Raised in Ohio as a first-generation Assyrian-American, Shara grew up torn between preserving her cultural heritage and the pressure to abandon it. In an effort to fit in and feel safe, she underwent surgery that distanced her from her truest self. As she grew older, Shara began reclaiming her identity, becoming an outspoken advocate for representation and community. But deepening her roots came with a new challenge: proving and defending her Assyrian identity in a world that erases it.

Through abstract movement, light, and shadows, the audience delves into the internal landscape of her experiences. With a poetic voiceover, the film captures the emotional and physical benefits that climbing offers through its process, shifting away from an outcome-based or send-focused storyline.

Featuring Assyrian musicians and artists, Sharp Edges is not your average climbing film. It's an act of vulnerability, cultural resilience, and self-acceptance. Shara hopes sharing about her story through this film will inspire people of all cultures to embrace their sharp edges.



MEET

shara zaia

Shara Zaia is an athlete, storyteller, and community organizer whose work centers identity and belonging. Drawing from years of advocacy in the education sector and the outdoor industry, Shara is driven by a desire to uplift overlooked perspectives. As co-founder of Cruxing in Color, a Colorado-based 501(c)(3), she supports marginalized climbers with free gym memberships, gear, educational clinics, and community events. After building inclusive programming for the American Alpine Club, she now works full-time planning events for Protect Our Winters where she advocates for a healthy planet.

You can read Shara's latest pieces in [The Climbing Zine Issue 24](#) (Spring 2024) and [Alpinist Magazine Issue 88](#) (Winter 2024). Check out her recent podcast episodes on [Dirtbag State of Mind](#) and [Dirtbag Diaries](#).

Who are the Assyrians?

The Assyrians are an indigenous ethnic group descended from one of the earliest civilizations in Mesopotamia native to parts of modern-day Iran, Türkiye, Syria, and Iraq. During World War I, they endured ethnic cleansing and genocide, leading to significant persecution that has continued over the years. This has resulted in a widespread diaspora, displacement, and the endangerment of their language and cultural heritage.



“Ancient gods sculpted my body, but others taught me to hate it.
I couldn’t change the world, so I changed myself.
In a hospital bed, I traded my ancestor’s nose for safety.
I let surgery smooth my sharp edges.”



“Once the cradle of civilization, Assyria has faded from history books
but it’s stitched into my name and hidden in the curves of my body.

I climb with the strength of my ancestors, the love of my family, and the support of my community.
I climb for those facing discrimination, for those enduring persecution, and for those resisting erasure.

Because when the world tries to erase you, you must become unforgettable.”



visual style

The film explores an abstract and artful visual style to represent Shara's journey. By using movement, light, and shadows, we enter into the spaces between moments, emphasizing the internal landscape of her experiences. The film captures the tactile and emotional essence of climbing, moving away from traditional depictions to create an immersive experience that transports the viewer into Shara's mind.

Through unconventional angles, uniquely framed close-ups, and dynamic interplay of light and texture we ensure that the audience feels Shara's struggles, triumphs, and thoughts intimately, transcending the role of mere observers to become participants in her profound journey of self-discovery and empowerment. The film also features an original music score by Assyrian musicians as to tie together the visual and auditory experience.

the team

Our team is a diverse group of individuals from various walks of life, embodying the story's core values of celebrating differences and highlighting each person's unique traits, all while coming together as a unified community. *Sharp Edges* is directed and produced by a Middle Eastern woman and a Jewish man, showcasing a beautiful collaboration between two cultures with a historically complex relationship.

the team



SHARA ZAIA

she/her

Director/Producer/Writer
@sharazaia



MAX HAIMOWITZ

he/him

Director/Producer/Cinematographer
@max_haimowitz



BRIAN BOYD

he/him

Editor
@olympus.blue



ORION OWENS

he/him

Editor
@orionowens

Assyrian collaborators



TENISE MARIE

she/her

Composer
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SONIA ODISHO

she/her

Composer
@soniaodisho



ZAYA ODISHO

he/him

Cinematographer
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RABEL BETSHMUEL

he/him

Graphic Designer
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she/her

Translator
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RABI ANWAR ATTO

he/him

Language Advisor

talent



SHARA ZAIA

she/her

Talent

@sharazaia



NINA WILLIAMS

she/her

Talent

@sheneenigans



CHRISTY NGUYEN

she/her

Talent

@christyann_win



DARIOUS PHILLIPS

he/him

Talent

@whoopdarius

credits

Written by: Shara Zaia

Produced by: Shara Zaia & Max Haimowitz

Directed by: Max Haimowitz & Shara Zaia

Talent: Shara Zaia, Nina Williams, Darius Phillips, Christy Nguyen

Narration: Shara Zaia, Diana Atureta

Music by: Tenise Marie, Sonia Odisho

Edited by: Brian Boyd, Orion Owens

Assistant Editor: Haley Carchio, Jack Hessler, Max Haimowitz

Director of Photography: Max Haimowitz

Cinematography: Nate Dodge, Nate Stephens, Sean Farney

Additional Footage: Zaya Odisho, Shara Zaia

Photography: Mike Thurk, Max Haimowitz, Nate Stephens

Rigging: Luke Kantola

Color: Jonnie Sirotek

Sound Design: Sean Milburn

Graphic Design: Rabel Betshmuell

Motion Graphics: Luke Kantola

Translation Services: Diana Atureta, Rabi Anwar Atto

VO Engineer: Tom Pickren

Brand Sponsors: Osprey, SCARPA, Arc'teryx, Fat Tire

Supported by: Five Point Film Fest Wading for Change Grant





social media

Production:

@sharazaia
@max_haimowitz
@deserttripproductions
@olympus.blue
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Sponsors:

@scarpana
@ospreypacks
@arcteryx
@arcteryxcolorado
@fattire

Talent:

@sharazaia
@sheneenagins
@christyann_win
@whoopdarius

Creative:

@mthurk (photos)
@maxhaimowitz (photos)
@jonniesirotek (color)
@nate_dodge (cinematography)
@natestephens1 (cinematography)
@zaya.odisho (additional footage)
@seanfarney (cinematography)
@rabelbetshmuel (graphic design)
@tenisemariamusic (music)
@kaaantola (motion graphics)
@peaksoundsolutions (audio engineer)



screenings & awards

Selected for the 5Point Film Fest Wading For Change Grant

March 7: No Man's Land Film Festival (First Look)

April 23-26: 5Point Film Festival (World Premiere)

More to come! Follow along [here](#).



assets

Asset Folder

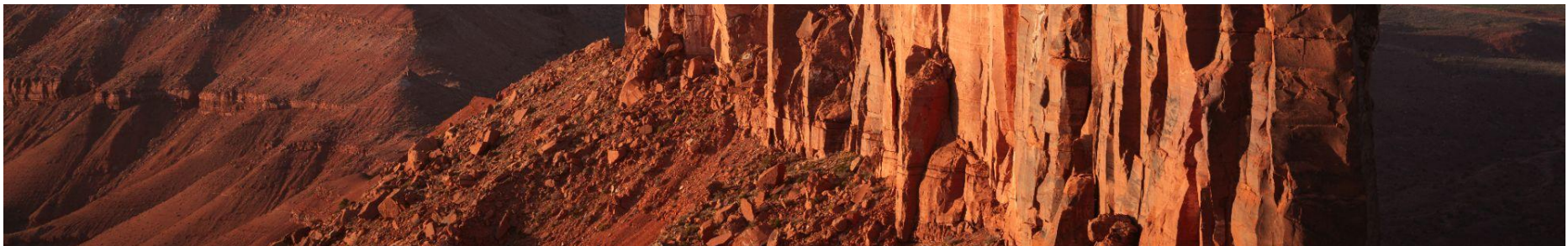
Website





For centuries, the desert has been a place of transformation—a space to find clarity, purpose, and truth. At Desert Trip Productions, we embrace that same spirit to craft bold, authentic stories that resonate and inspire. Whether it's a commercial, documentary, or narrative film, our work uncovers the raw, unfiltered core of every story we tell.

We believe storytelling is more than a craft—it's a journey. Like the Colorado River carving its legacy through stone, we work with brands, individuals, and creators to shape narratives that endure. From connecting audiences with the heart of a brand to showcasing human grit and exploration, we transform ideas into visuals that linger long after the screen fades to black.



contact



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*thank
you!*