



# WE ARE MANY

The Untold Story of the Biggest Protest in Human History

**A film by Amir Amirani**

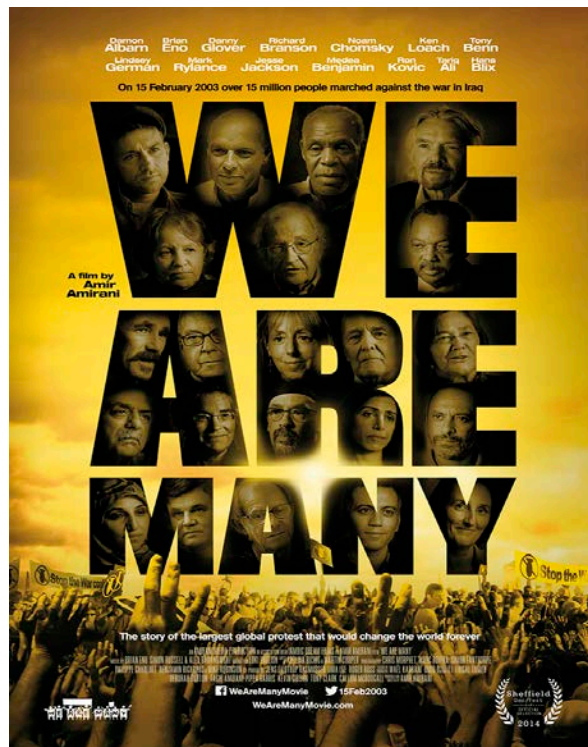
Executive Producers: Omid Djalili, Pippa Harris, Waël Kabbani,  
Callum McDougall, Signe Byrge Sørensen  
UK, 2014, 104', HD

[wearemanymovie.com](http://wearemanymovie.com), [View Trailer](#)

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**Featuring interviews with:**

Damon Albarn, Brian Eno, Danny Glover, Richard Branson, Noam Chomsky,  
Ken Loach, Tony Benn, Lindsey German, Mark Rylance, Jesse Jackson,  
Medea Benjamin, Ron Kovic, Tariq Ali, Clare Short, Hans Blix



**'Rise like Lions after slumber  
In unvanquishable number,  
Shake your chains to earth like dew  
Which in sleep had fallen on you –  
Ye are many — they are few'**

*Shelley, The Masque of Anarchy*



## **Brief Synopsis**

*We Are Many* is the story of the biggest protest in history, and how it changed the world. On February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2003, over 15 million people marched through the streets of 800 cities around the world to try to avert the war against Iraq. Some estimated the numbers were as high as 30 million people.

This is the inspiring story of how a handful of activists created a global movement on a completely unprecedented scale, and how that movement left an unexpected impact on the social and political landscape.

In a series of captivating interviews with prominent figures from both the political pro-war circles and the anti-war community, the road to war and the historic protest and the subsequent war is compellingly recounted.

Filmed in seven countries and featuring rare and previously unseen footage, this star-studded film charts the birth and rise of the people power movements sweeping the world, all through the prism of one extraordinary day.

## **Long Synopsis**

*We Are Many* is the never-before-told story of the largest demonstration in human history, and how the movement created by a small band of activists changed the world.

On February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2003, up to 30 million people, many of whom had never demonstrated before in their lives, came out in nearly 800 cities around the world to protest against the impending Iraq War. The *New York Times* called this movement the "Second Superpower".

How did this day come about? Who organized it? And was it, as many people claimed, a total failure?

This fearless, thought-provoking documentary is the remarkable inside story behind the first ever global demonstration, and its surprising and unreported legacy. The film features testimony from a unique cast of direct participants, including organizers, activists, high-profile figures, and of course the public, filmed in seven countries - Italy, Spain, Egypt, Sweden, Australia, UK, and USA.

Extraordinary testimony from activists in Egypt reveals how on the eve of the invasion of Iraq, the global anti-war protests inspired those in Tahrir Square to go on to engage in the massive democratic movement that ultimately led to the Arab Spring. In the UK, the government was defeated over the proposed invasion of Syria, a historic event that might not have transpired without the legacy of those demonstrations a decade ago.

The star-studded list of contributors includes Danny Glover in the US, actor



Mark Rylance in the UK, film director Ken Loach, Prof. Noam Chomsky, musicians Brian Eno and Damon Albarn, writer and Vietnam Vet Ron Kovic (author of *'Born on the 4th of July'*), Rev. Jesse Jackson, Richard Branson and Colin Powell's former Chief of Staff Col. Lawrence Wilkerson, amongst others.

This bold documentary by Amir Amirani charts the birth and growth of the new people power movement, now sweeping the world, taking us up to the Arab Spring and Syria, a little over 10 years after that historic day.

## **CAST & CREW**

### **PRODUCTION TEAM:**

Executive Producers include:

#### **Signe Byrge Sørensen**

Oscar-nominated Producer of *The Act of Killing*.

#### **Pippa Harris**

Co-founder, with Oscar-winning director Sam Mendes, of Neal Street Productions, Executive Producer of *Jarhead*, *Revolutionary Road*, *Things We Lost In The Fire*.

#### **Waël Kabbani**

Creative Director of Iambic Dream Films.

#### **Taghi Amirani**

Senior TED Fellow, Producer of *Red Lines And Deadlines*.

#### **Callum McDougall**

*In addition to several Bond movies, Callum's credits include The Beach (Co-Producer), Skyfall (Executive Producer), Into The Woods (Executive Producer).*

#### **Omid Djalili**

*The Infidel, Gladiator, The Mummy.*

#### **Laura Hastings-Smith**

Consulting Producer. Laura produced *Hunger*, which won the Camera D'Or at Cannes and was directed by Oscar and Turner Prize-winning artist Steve McQueen.

#### **Deborah Burton**

Deborah is a former governor of the London Film School, and co-founder of the Tipping Point Film Fund.

#### **Immy Humes**

Consulting Producer, USA. Academy Award-nominated Brooklyn-based documentary director and producer.

### **CREW:**

#### **Camera:**

Chris Morphet & Mike Robinson



### **Music:**

Brian Eno, Barry Adamson (*Dreams of a Life*), Simon Russell (*Pussy Riot, Afghan Star*)

### **Editors:**

Adelina Bichis, Martin Cooper, Allen Charlton (*Imagine: Vivian Maier – Who Took Nanny's Pictures?*)

### **INTERVIEWEES:**

Sir Richard Branson	Businessman
Danny Glove	Actor
Mark Rylance	Actor
David Babbs	Founder, 38 Degrees (1 million UK members)
Colleen Kelly	9/11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows
Esther Vivas	Leader of Spanish anti-war movement
Rafaella Bollini	Leader of Italian anti-war movement
Tariq Ali	Writer
Noam Chomsky	Academic, MIT
Ron Kovic	Author, ' <i>Born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July</i> '
Ken Loach	Film Director
Brian Eno	Musician
Damon Albarn	Musician
Lord Falconer	Labour Cabinet, 2003-2007
David Blunkett	Former Labour Home Secretary
Clare Short	Former Labour Cabinet Minister
Col. Lawrence Wilkerson	Former Chief of Staff to Sec. of State Colin Powell

## **Biographies**

### **Director - Amir Amirani**

Over the past 15 years, Amir Amirani has made films for some of British television's most prestigious series, including *Arena (And The Winner is)*, *Timewatch (Concorde – A Love Story)*, *Picture This (Hallelujah Hendrix)*, *Correspondent (Letter to America and Addicted to Arms)* and *Newsnight*. In films that have received critical acclaim, Amirani has covered the life and death of Concorde, the strange world of awards and awards ceremonies, Jimi Hendrix's house in London, music under Apartheid, the arms trade with Will Self, sex change in Iran, and the horrors of chemical warfare in the Iran-Iraq war. Two of his documentaries have been nominated for an *Amnesty International Award* and *One World Broadcasting Trust Award* respectively.

He went to the BBC in 1992 as a Graduate Production Trainee and two years later joined his brother Taghi in setting up Amirani Media. Amir has produced and presented programmes for BBC Radio 4. They include *In Business*, *From Our Own Correspondent*, *The Today Programme*, and documentaries on Iranian comedy and poetry. His journalism includes writing for *The Guardian*, *New Statesman*, *New Scientist*, *Business Traveller Asia*, and the *Economist Intelligence Unit*. *We Are Many* is his first feature film.



### **Executive Producer - Waël Kabbani**

Waël is the Executive Creative Director of Iambic Dream Inc., where he writes and produces award-winning music. He is the creator of a 3D superhero brand called *The Utopians' Alliance*. In addition to *We Are Many*, Waël is the executive producer of *Democracy*, a documentary about the incredible transformation of Colombia, directed by Andreas Dalsgaard and currently in post-production. Waël is also the executive producer of *Medicine Man: The Stan Brock Story*, which is scheduled for a 2015 release.

### **Executive Producer - Omid Djalili**

Omid Djalili is an internationally renowned stand-up comedian, and winner of the 2001 Time Out Comedy Award. He has appeared on numerous television shows in the UK and the US. He has also acted in films such as *Mr. Nice*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Gladiator*, *Notting Hill* and *The Infidel*, which he also Executive Produced.

### **Executive Producer - Signe Byrge Sørensen**

Signe produced the BAFTA winning and Oscar-nominated *The Act of Killing*. She has been a producer for 16 years. She began in SPOR Media in 1998, moved to Final Cut Productions ApS in 2004 and founded Final Cut for Real ApS in 2009. Her focus is on documentaries, and she has, besides several productions in Denmark and Sweden, produced documentaries in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Senegal, Thailand, and Argentina. Signe holds an MA degree in International Development Studies and Communication Studies from Roskilde University, Denmark.

### **Executive Producer - Pippa Harris**

Pippa Harris started working in television in development at Carlton and Channel 4 before moving to the BBC in 1997 as Head of Drama Commissioning. Her commissions included *State of Play*, *The Lost Prince*, *Cutting It*, *Daniel Deronda*, and *Out of Control*. Since starting Neal Street Productions in 2003 with partners Sam Mendes and Caro Newling, she has produced *Starter for Ten*, *Stuart: A Life Backwards*, *Jarhead*, *Things We Lost in the Fire*, and *Revolutionary Road*.

### **Executive Producer - Callum McDougall**

Callum McDougall is a veteran of many James Bond movies and Executive Producer on both *Quantum of Solace* and *Casino Royale*. His other credits include *Skyfall* (Executive Producer), *Wrath of the Titans* (Executive Producer), *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (Co-Producer), *Die Another Day* (Co-Producer), and *The Beach* (Co-Producer).



## Director's Statement

In 2003, on a cold February day, right after attending the Berlin Film Festival, I did something that would change my life, though I didn't know it at the time. I found myself on the streets of Berlin along with about 500,000 other people.

What happened on that day, involving millions of people around the world, would also end up making history. It was the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, 2003.

I was on my first ever protest, and it was against the Iraq War. I'd never been among that many people. For many of them, it was also their first protest. When I returned to London, friends told me of the amazing day in London that I'd missed. Reports ranged from 1.5 to 2 million. I was upset that I had missed the biggest day in the history of the city I'd grown up in.

A month later, the Iraq War was launched, and we all know the tragedy that followed. Over the next year or so, I kept thinking back to that day, and what that feeling was telling me. As I began research, I realized that the protest had happened all over the world. *The Guardian* later said that up to 30 million people might have marched in nearly 800 cities around the world.

It seemed the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, 2003, was the biggest demonstration in history, the first to be co-ordinated globally, and to be on such a scale *before* a war had started.

This was my light-bulb moment. I realized that it didn't matter where anyone was on that day, but that they took part somewhere, such as the 70 people who demonstrated in Antarctica! And I also realized that something like that does not just happen out of the blue. I knew there was a story there to be told, and that in some way it heralded something, a new phenomenon that went to the heart of the public's relationship to politics, to each other and to great political events shaping our lives. I didn't know what that was, or how the day came about, but I was determined to find out.

That day, which inspired the film and forms its central narrative, was a day on which many ordinary citizens, who were not political or activists, came out for the first time to protest against a war, effectively becoming politicized by the experience.

Stories of mass action by citizens are rarely if ever told, and much less seen on our TV screens, compared with the testimony of politicians. From the start, I was intent on telling this story predominantly from the point of view of the activists and the public. For many young people, it was their first taste of politics, and it marked the politicization of their generation.

More and more, social movements and activists around the world are becoming connected. The uprisings that have marked the past few years, dating back to the famous Seattle protests, are not isolated events, but rather mark a new chapter in political organization, in which citizens are increasingly fighting to be heard.

I could not have imagined the journey I would go on, or where the story would take me. Now, 11 years after the event, the film is finished. I carried out my first interview in London in April 2006, just over 8 years ago, and eventually filmed in seven countries – UK, USA, Egypt, Australia, Italy, Spain and Sweden. Telling an aspect of one of the most important social and political stories of our generation has been the most exciting, rewarding, and challenging 8 years of my life.