

What will our experience be — returning for the first time? Will the Afghans still have the same beautiful spirit that we remember? Will they still be welcoming? Looking for our homes — carrying photographs of our homes from when we were little. Will we find our homes? Will they still be standing or will they be a pile of rubble?

**Anna Maripuu** tells of being the last person to walk the halls of AISK after the Soviet invasion in 1979, “Everyone had to leave suddenly, some families were told they weren’t allowed to return from vacationing in the States — their belongings packed up and shipped back to them.” Anna describes how she slowly touched each locker saying goodbye to the school for everyone who didn’t get the chance.



**Darulaman Avenue, the road to AISK 1965**

Searching for our schools and other favorite spots from childhood. If we find them — will it be exhilarating or heartbreaking?

The film will capture the experience of the Afghan Americans reuniting with the family members and old friends who stayed behind when they escaped. What stories will their relatives share about the life they have endured during the past 20 years of oppression? How will they relate to each other after so many years spent in a different culture?

Capitalizing on Wolfgang Helds’ talent for capturing unscripted and candid shots, Stacia Teele will direct to provide intimate and unguarded footage of the characters’ reactions.

We will speak to a diverse group of young Afghans including children who have not been able to attend school because they need to support the family — often by begging or polishing shoes at restaurants. What are their hopes and dreams for their country? The returning Afghan Americans will be involved in discussions with the young Afghans.

A series of photographs from the alumni of the beautiful trees in Kabul with a voice over from **Anna Maripuu**, “My father and I were taking a walk from the club house to the Chaikhana. On an impulse we decided to take a one Afghani coin and bury it under one of the many trees that lined the road. We made a little pact that we would come back to Afghanistan one day and find the coin together. It occurred to me afterwards that it would be hard to find the tree where we had buried



**Same perspective of Darulaman Avenue, in 2002**