



Wedding Night

Documentary | 90 Minutes | format: 4k

Director: Rachel Elitzur, Producer: Avigail Sperber, Editor: Noit Geva, Sales: Go2Films

An intimate journey into the events of a wedding night, when an ultra-Orthodox Jewish couple get to know each other, for the first time.



A wedding is a universal event that serves as a foundation to a 'declaration of love' between two people asking to tie their destiny to one another. That is not the case in the ultra-Orthodox Jewish community. In order to love and have sexual intercourse, one must get married first. The wedding is the happiest event, since society, home, cultural establishments, and culture, all design it to become one of the highlights in a person's life. Little girls get dressed up as brides on Purim holiday, young girls and boys dance at weddings out of pure joy, and they grow into this reality of excitement and expectation to become a bride or a groom.

While everyone is dancing, eating, and the band is playing in the background – in the hearts of the ultra-Orthodox bride and groom a great hue and cry is accruing. What will happen between them at the end of the night, when the guests leave, the band quiets down, and they go home together. Will it be good? Will they manage to survive this night? Will they manage to perform the 'Mitzva' (the commandment to perform sexual intercourse) to which they were prepared and guided, even without them knowing or understanding, since they were preschoolers?

Through the wedding prism, the film deep dives into the world of ultra-Orthodox Jewish men and women and creates a portrait of a society and place through sound and image, when the image is separated from the soundtrack. We will hear testimonies of women vs. men on different junctures in their lives talking about their intimate experiences on everything regarding their sexual and psychological world from childhood up to the climax – the union between a man and a woman on their wedding night.

The connection between the soundtrack and the image creates a gap, tension, a conflict, subtext, and contrast.

Wedding night is a portrait of a place – a wedding venue, with all its rituals, etiquettes, and joyful manners as well as a portrait of a society whose characters are men and women, teenagers and even children, who's experiences and recollections accumulate into a deep look on women's minds vs. men's, and the conflicting emotions arising on a wedding night.

The director's own personal experience is what gave birth to this film. In it, she chose to record interviews with ultra-Orthodox Jewish men and women who share their personal story with her and the similar or different experiences they had gone through. The difficulty in visual exposure creates a unique cinematic language, harmonious to this hidden and silenced issue in the ultra-Orthodox Jewish world. Holy of Holies.



The Director, together with the characters, give a full and complex picture of the life in the ultra-Orthodox Jewish society which creates the total of intimate experiences. We get to know the characters through their voices and visuals that portrays them. Three men, three women, and a couple, are telling the story, while the director's voice leads the narrative, the story.

Production Personnel

Pardes Productions, owned by Avigail Sperber, produces documentaries and network series, of social subjects. Pardes Productions films have been shown in festivals in Israel and around the world. Among the company's films: The Hangman, Family Matters, Covered Up, Absolute Happiness, and A Mirror of the Sun.

Rachel Elitzur -Director

Rachel Elitzur is an ultra-Orthodox Jewish director, graduated from a 'Bais Yaakov' school for girls.

A graduate of The Maaleh School of Film and Television in screenwriting track.

Her debut film, Covered Up, was screened on the 2018 Docaviv International Documentary Film Festival and on Festivals around the world, it was nominated for Best Debut Film and Best Cinematography on The Israeli Documentary Film Forum Awards. The films in screened on YesDocu TV channel. Her first short fiction film, The Youngest, participated in many festivals around the world and won various awards. Rachel was the head of the ultra-Orthodox branch at Maaleh Schools for Girls from 2014 until 2020, and today she is a member on Mifal HaPais Council for the Culture and Arts in the field of cinema.

In addition, she is a graduate of Greenhouse Development Projects of The New Fund for Cinema and TV for feature film development and documentary film development, פרי עץ, הדעת, and Wedding night (respectively). Wedding Night had also participated in The Intellectual Greenhouse for Filmmakers of the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute. Rachel also graduated The Mandel Foundation Program for Leadership in Jewish Culture, and currently studies at Alma, Home for Hebrew Culture.



Avigail Sperber – Producer & DP

Avigail Sperber is a Producer, Director, and a Cinematographer for Documentaries, TV Series and Dramas.

Furthermore, she is an artist, an Artistic Adviser for various foundations, an Academic Film Lecturer and Mentor.

for the past 25 years she has been involved in dozens of projects, for which she won multiple awards, in Israel and abroad.

Among those, her award-winning film, Probation Time, which won Best Israeli Film and Best Cinematography awards at the Docaviv Film Festival as well as Best Cinematography, Best Documentary, and Best Editing awards from The Israeli Documentary Film Forum.

Her film, The Hangman, got the Best Documentary award on Haifa International Film Festival, a Special Mention on IDFA, and was screened in dozens of festivals around the worlds. Further, Avigail won Best Cinematography award for this film from The Israeli Documentary Film Forum.

In recent years she was the Producer and Cinematographer in the following Documentaries:

The Hangman, Family Matters, Covered Up, Mirror for the Sun, Absolut Happiness.

She was also the Cinematographer of dozens of Documentaries Series and films.

Noit Geva - Editor

Noit Geva is a director, editor, teacher, artistic consultant and head of curriculum in the field of documentary filmmaking, and has co-directed with Dan Geva over 25 award winning documentaries Among them: "What I Saw in Hebron" "Description of a Memory", and "Noise".

Geva has a master's degree in Communication from the Hebrew University. For 5 years she has been the artistic consultant of the New Foundation for Cinema & Television and was the Head of Studies for Greenhouse script development program for the European Union.

Her Latest films as an editor: "The Perfect Housewife" by Jabe Bibi has won the Docaviv FF, She received the Editor's prize at Docaviv FF for "The Beach Boys" and in the 2020 Docaviv FF, she was the editor of the opening film "Rockfour - Time Machine" by Gadi Eisen, and the



editing supervisor of the first prize film, and Israeli Academy Award winning film “Rain in her eyes” by Ron Omer.

Wedding Night - Budget Situation

The film is produced for Yes Doku broadcaster and received a budget of 120,000 dollars.

We also received a grant of 70,000 \$ from the New Fund for Cinema and Television (NFCT) and the director has participated in the film development incubator.

The total budget we strive for to make the film is 310,000 dollars.

For this purpose, we would like to raise a co-production, pre-sales, and funds, which will invest about 115,000 dollars.

Financial Plan

Yes Docu - Broadcasting	120,000 \$
NFCT – New Foundation for Cinema and Television	70,000 \$
Private Investment	10,000 \$
Total raised	200,000 \$
Amount left to raise	115,000 \$
Total film budget	315,000 \$

Current Status

We currently have 30 edited minutes. We have finished the recording of the interviews and finished most of the shooting of the film's visual.

We aim to finish the film by May 2023.