

CINE  
MIEN  
PRESENTEERT / PRÉSENTE



73  
MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE  
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA  
di Venezia  
Orizzonti  
Competition

30 DAYS.  
1 WEDDING.  
NO GROOM.

Norma Productions Presents

# The Wedding Plan

"A classic  
romantic comedy"  
The Times of Israel

Written en Directed by  
Rama Burshtein

Noa Koler Amos Tamam Oz Zehavi  
Iris Sheleg Ronny Merhavi Dafi Alpern

Written and Directed by Rama Burshtein · Producer Assaf Amir · Cinematographer Amit Yasour · Editor Ya'el Hersonsidi  
Art Director Ori Aminov · Costume Designer Hava Levy Rozalski · Casting Director Michal Koren  
Music composed by Roy Edri · Sound Design Alex Claude & Daniel Meir · Sound Recordist Moti Hefetz  
Makeup Artist Eit Bennun · Associate Producers Tammy Cohen, Adar Shalrim · Poster design Gerrit Blauw

Logo:



## SYNOPSIS

NL

Dertiger Michal is van plan in het huwelijksbootje te stappen. Echter ziet haar verloofde in Michal niet de liefde van zijn leven en verbreekt de relatie. Michal besluit verder te gaan met de voorbereidingen voor de bruiloft. Ze legt de datum vast en stelt zichzelf een deadline. Ze heeft een maand de tijd om een geschikte huwelijkskandidaat te vinden. Ze heeft de locatie, de trouwjurk, het appartement; nu nog de bruidegom. Ze roept de hulp in van een huwelijksbemiddelaar en ontmoet in korte tijd heel veel potentiële partners. Zal zij haar Mister Right weten te vinden? Als ze kort voor de bruiloft nog steeds geen bruidegom heeft weten te strikken, besluit ze maar op de Goddelijke Voorzienigheid te vertrouwen.

FR

À 32 ans, Michal est enfin heureuse : tout est prêt pour qu'elle s'unisse à l'homme de sa vie. Un mois avant le jour J, quand il lui avoue qu'il ne l'aime pas, Michal est au bord de la crise de nerfs. Bien décidée à abandonner son statut de célibataire qui lui colle à la peau, Michal continue ses préparatifs comme si de rien n'était. Elle le sait, car Dieu l'a prévu : elle se mariera le huitième soir de Hanouka. Elle a la robe, le traiteur, le lieu de la fête... après tout, il lui reste 30 jours pour trouver un mari !

**duur / durée: 110 min. -**

**productie / production: Norma Productions**

**ondertiteling: Nederlands & Frans, dialogen in het Hebreeuws**

**sous-titrage: néerlandais & français, dialogues en Hébreu**

**formaat / format: 1: 1,85**

**geluid / son: 5.1**





## CREW

regie / réalisation

scenario / scénario

art direction / direction artistique

cinematografie / photographie

montage

productie / production

productiehuis / société de production

geluid / son

muziek / musique

casting

kostuums / costumes

## CAST

Michal

Noa Koler

Shimi

Amos Tamam

Yoss

Oz Zehavi

Michal's mother

Irit Sheleg

Feigi

Ronny Merhavi

Michal's sister

Dafi Alpern

Assaf

Oded Leopold

'Blind date'

Udi Pers

'Deaf date'

Jonathan Rozen

Rama Burshtein

Rama Burshtein

Ori Aminov

Amit Yasour

Yael Hersonski

Assaf Amir

Norma Productions

Alex Claude, Daniel Meir & Moti Hefetz

Roy Edri

Michal Koren

Hava Levy Rozalski

## RAMA BURSHTein

Rama Burshtein was born in New York, USA in 1967, and raised in Israel. She graduated from the Sam Spiegel Film and Television School, Jerusalem in 1994. During those years Rama became deeply religious and upon her graduation she dedicated herself to promoting film as a tool for self-expression in the orthodox community.



Rama wrote, directed and produces films for the orthodox community, some of them only for women. She is also teaching directing and scriptwriting in various film and television institutions within the orthodox community; those include Ma'ale Film School, Yad Benjamin Film School for Woman, Ulpna Arts School, Jerusalem.

Fill the void was her first feature film. The film received critical acclaim when presented at the official competition at the Venice Film Festival where Hadas Yaron won the Coppa Volpi for best actress. The film was shown at numerous other international film festivals including Sundance, New York and Toronto. The film won 7 Israeli Academy Awards including the award for Best Picture. Rama just finished her second feature film The Wedding Plan (Through The Wall).

## DIRECTOR'S COMMENT

To break through the wall, you must believe 100% that it's possible. With 99.9% you end up breaking your skull. Through the wall is a dramatic romantic comedy. It should lift up the spirit and give strength because Michal is not obsessed to get married rather she wants to beat the despair and let the good win. I feel that what I personally lack most is a belief in good and a defeat of desperation. To flex the faith muscle, one must sometimes devote one's soul. To stand on the highest springboard, hold my nose, and jump, even if I'm unsure the pool is filled with water.

## FILMOGRAPHY

2016 The Wedding Plan

(Through the Wall - Laavor et Hakir)

2012 Fill the Void

(Le Cœur a ses Raisons - Lemale et HaHalal)



## RECENSIE - CRITIQUE DU FILM

### She's Got 'The Wedding Plan,' With a Groom TBD - Ben Kenigsberg

The premise and the title of “The Wedding Plan” suggest a bubbly rom-com, but this prickly, delicately layered film from Rama Burshtein – an ultra-Orthodox director based in Israel – has the tangled ambiguity of a Talmudic lesson. Like Ms. Burshtein’s “Fill the Void” (2013), the story of a religious woman who must decide whether to marry her dead sister’s husband, “The Wedding Plan” manages to be respectful of traditions while at the same time feeling modern, even progressive.

Like “Fill the Void,” “The Wedding Plan” concerns marriage, something that the 32-year-old Michal (Noa Koler) desperately wants. On the verge of tying the knot, she asks her fiancé why he’s seemed distant. He admits that he doesn’t love her, a confession he had been avoiding.

Taking the engagement’s collapse in stride, Michal tallies the years she’s been dating. Impulsively following through on her original plans, she books a wedding hall for the last night of Hanukkah. That gives her three weeks to find a groom – possibly more of a miracle than the Hanukkah lights.

Like Ms. Burshtein, who also wrote the script, Michal doesn’t fit ultra-Orthodox stereotypes. (She runs a mobile petting zoo, which hardly seems like a typical profession.) In a complicated role, the excellent Ms. Koler exudes a kind of flighty confidence: For all her nuptial-related anxieties, Michal is completely comfortable with who she is.

Certainly, the matchmaking industry doesn’t know what to make of her. Michal is set up with a succession of men, including one who is deaf and another who refuses to look at her. (If he only looks at the woman he marries, he explains, she’ll be the most beautiful woman in the world to him.) For a stretch, Michal’s most likely candidate seems to be the nonreligious pop star (Oz Zehavi) she meets on a pilgrimage in Ukraine. Is he toying with her? Is she toying with him?

But “The Wedding Plan” doesn’t settle, as the Hollywood version of this story might have, for offering a cavalcade of comically wrong men. It holds out a few different prospects for Michal and keeps her (and us) guessing until the end. It’s a comedy in the Shakespearean sense – we know it will end with a wedding, groom or not – but Ms. Burshtein leaves open the possibility that it might be a broken one. The hoped-for marriage isn’t just a test of Michal’s happiness but also of her religiosity: A rabbi warns Michal against “counting on miracles,” and wonders what will happen to her faith if she doesn’t find a husband in time.

Ms. Burshtein asks viewers to take a leap of faith as well with a borderline surreal finale, which finds Michal, woozy in close-ups during a fast, trying to comprehend what’s happening around her. It’s a mystical touch – another tipoff that this ordinary-sounding movie is actually pretty special.

**Bron/Source: The New York Times, May 11, 2017.**

## RECENSIE - CRITIQUE DU FILM

**A spirited Orthodox woman takes marriage into her own hands in Rama Burshtein's humorous follow-up to 'Fill the Void.'** – Deborah Young

American-Israeli director Rama Burshtein, who opened up new vistas on the Hasidic community in Tel Aviv in her bright, dramatic first feature *Fill the Void*, offers a more independent view on marriage traditions in *Through the Wall*. Though still told from a woman's point of view, the story takes a comic look at the question of finding a groom for a desperate spinster of 32. But once again the underlying narrative force arises from its heroine's unshakable faith in God and the drama of how it is tested. This enjoyable Match Factory release should prove just as popular abroad as the director's debut film, which won protag Hadas Yaron the best actress award at Venice.

Far from the closed, stuffy rooms of *Fill the Void*, here the filming takes place in wide open spaces full of options and choices, and the focus is on an individual rather than a community. The story revolves around Michal, pretty not beautiful, but played with glowing warmth and bold non-conformity by Noa Koler. When her fiance, the sad-eyed Gidi, calls off their wedding a month before the event because he doesn't love her, she is devastated but not defeated. Astonishing her family, friends and the owner of the marriage hall Shimi (Amos Tamam), she decides to get married on schedule. After all, the wedding hall is booked for the 8th day of Hanukah and all the guests are invited – all that's missing is the groom, a detail she feels God can surely take care of, given a month's time.

The first part of the film will probably connect most easily with female viewers, who can identify with her concerns when she consults Hulda, an expert in removing the evil eye from the unfortunate. In a nervous, tightly edited scene, the disenchanted older woman forces Michal to admit the real reason she wants to get married so badly: to feel normal and respected, to have security, to be loved. Her sincerity is touching.

The following scenes humorously sketch her search for a groom on a series of blind dates arranged by a matchmaker: a man who refuses to look at her, a deaf man who communicates through an interpreter, a seemingly perfect mate who appears to enjoy her nutty energy. All are of religious persuasion, which is the only non-negotiable quality Michal seeks in a husband. But on each date, her honesty and unique personality burst forth, scaring off the prospective groom. For one thing, she earns her living running a "petting zoo" and it includes bunny rabbits and snakes, which she drives around in a truck to children's parties. Her non-religious mom (Irit Sheleg) and sister (Dafi Alpern) are highly skeptical that a miracle is going to happen. On the other hand, her sister is convinced against all odds that her estranged husband is going to come back to her, even though he calls the cops to keep her from screaming abuse under his window. Michal's best friends are also unexpected: a girl in a wheelchair with ALS and the loyal Feigi (Ronny Merhavi), who wears her long blonde hair in dreadlocks and is her own woman in the clothes department.

When all seems lost, Michal boards a Ukraine-bound bus on a pilgrimage to the tomb of Rebbe Nachman in Uman, where her anguished prayers seem to be answered in an encounter with a dazzling, super-cool rock star (Oz Zehavi of Yossi). But the stark fact is that Michal is her own worst enemy in courtship, simultaneously putting herself down, and beyond reach.

As the days pass the suspense grows; no groom is in sight, and Michal is visibly shaken. But she refuses to back down, despite her mother's entreaties, and faces her wedding with characteristic chutzpah and the conviction that her faith is being tested. The climactic final scene at the wedding hall begins as grotesque and humiliating, then slowly the threads come together, while Burshtein mischievously plays with perceptions about whether the unfolding miracle is a fantasy or not.

**Bron/Source: The Hollywood Reporter, May 6, 2016.**



# CINE MIEN

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