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Panorama

SPIRO FILMS AND UNITED KING FILMS PRESENT

THE DAY AFTER I'M GONE

A FILM BY
NIMROD ELДАР



THE DAY AFTER I'M GONE

A film by Nimrod Eldar
2019, 95 minutes, Colour, Israel

Synopsis

Yoram, a 50-year-old veterinarian living in Tel-Aviv is forced to re-examine his relationship with his adolescent daughter Roni, after she wishes to end her life.

He decides to take her on a journey to visit her mother's family, a process of self and mutual discovery in a primordial desert land enveloping the Dead Sea.

Casting

Menashe Noy, Zohar Meidan, Alon Neuman, Sarit Vino Elad, Claudia Dulitchi, Sharon Hacoen, Miri Aloni

Crew

Director: Nimrod Eldar

Screenplay: Nimrod Eldar

DOP: Itay Marom

Editor: Nimrod Eldar

Sound Design: Nimrod Eldar

Sound: Alfred Tesler

Production Design: John Yonatan Jacoby

Costumes: Hila Royzenman

Casting: Chamutal Zerem

Producers: Eitan Mansuri, Jonathan Doweck, Nimrod Eldar, Moshe Edery, Leon Edery

Production: Companies Spiro Films LTD, United King Films

World sales: Luxbox





Nimrod Eldar Interview

The desert environment alongside the Dead Sea plays a big part in the film. Why did you choose this particular land? What does it evoke to you?

Well, the desert has always been a major part of this exploration. Or rather, this film was born in the desert. The idea for «The Day After I'm Gone» was born while I was traveling through the remote desert landscape in the southern part of Israel, scouting for filming locations for another project I was endeavouring to produce.

I was driving in my car and listening to the radio when suddenly an interesting news item caught my attention. The item was about a new police task force that was responsible for identifying high risk suicide teenagers through internet forums. The item also mentioned that the task force had already proved to be very effective and had managed to get to teenagers at crucial moments and prevent their suicide, thereby saving their lives.

This idea of an official state functionary, a total stranger coming into your house, into your most intimate environment to inform you that something

terrible is happening under your nose left a strong impression on me.

I envisioned this father, awakened in the middle of the night by the violent knocking of police officers: they have come to inform him that he is asleep, deeply asleep. At the time, I didn't completely fathom the way these ideas connected with the images of the huge desert that surrounded me. However, the silence, the stillness, the sense of nothingness, and, on the other hand, the almost religious magnitude of the breathtaking desert landscape of hills and cliffs enveloping the Dead Sea, entranced me as a spectator. That is to say, I saw a great liveliness trapped within an invisible wall. The desert within the human soul. The desert between human beings. That's how this film was born.

Yoram and Roni are completely worlds apart from the conservative mother's family who live in the countryside. Why did you want to explore this gap between citizens of the same country?

For all the obvious reasons, there's usually a natural tension between "city people" and "country

people,» and Israel is no different in that respect. Residents of Tel Aviv are often caricatured as living in “the State of Tel Aviv”, denounced as “disconnected,» “living in a bubble,» “spoiled liberals” and so on.

On top of that, there's the inevitable family tensions that everybody knows about...

It's pretty clear, I think, that Yoram is not a big fan of his wife's family from the remote south, to say the least. However, he has no choice at this particular junction of his life— he needs them. I love the idea that in spite of what he might think of them, eventually, they will teach him a very fundamental lesson about interpersonal relationships; and despite their blunt attitude, his journey to and from them will transform something within him.

The film adopts a very intimate point of view on the so-called “age of ungratefulness”. Where does your will to focus on this very particular age come from? Has any of your personal experience driven you during the writing?

I wouldn't say the film is concerned with exploring adolescence, not at all. In fact, we know very little about what Roni, the teenager, is actually going through. Our focus is primarily on the father, and on his journey. The French expression “l'âge ingrat” (the age of ungratefulness), is an expression that Yoram is keen to adopt because of his current predicament in life, and not really because there is actually an essential truth to this rather adolescent phrase, in my humble opinion. Additionally, I don't think Roni is a typical teenager. I have always seen her as a more precocious, smart and levelheaded person, and I think that's how she comes through in the movie. Her problem isn't her adolescence, but it's her father, who perhaps hasn't concluded his own adolescent experience.

Zohar Meidan is heartbreaking in her role of an insecure teenager. What made you choose her to embody this flamboyant character?

Although this is her first time acting in a film, Zohar Meidan has been acting in the theatre for quite some time now, and is considered to be a prodigy in that field. I auditioned a staggering





number of actresses for the part. It really felt like an endless process of casting. And then one day she just showed up, handed me a piece of paper with a poem she wrote about the title of the film and asked to audition for the part, despite the fact that she was 10 years older than the character. Her performance didn't leave much room for indecision. The sincerity she expressed, the matureness, and the vulnerability just blew everyone away. She is a natural born actress, anyone could see that, and I feel very lucky to be the first to direct her in a feature film.

The actors who play Rachel's family really have a strong impact on the film with only limited screen time, could you tell us more about the process of casting?

Both Sarit Vino Elad playing Sivan, and Alon Neuman playing Arie are well established and very famous actors in Israel. Also, Miri Aloni, playing the grandmother, is a famous singer who has been around for a long time. In fact, she was singing on stage to prime-minister Rabin, just minutes before he was shot to death. So, you could say I was in

good hands. Surrounded by top professional actors who were willing to work hard and give their best under very difficult production conditions.

Yoram's character is passionate about his job as a zoo's veterinarian. How does this very particular profession, healing animals, affect his relationship to his relatives and especially his daughter?

I really don't know. I guess it's for the viewer to decide. There isn't anything symbolic in the film on my part. Back in 2009, I used to take my son to the city zoo to watch the poor animals. That's where I found Yoram's profession. It just felt true to the character. He's a good man after all, he is just suffering through a terrible period in his life.

Yoram seems to feel that both the police and the social services are no help for his situation. Is it just his feeling or do you think that public institutions are helpless to help to bring families back together?

I'm no expert, but I think they might be very helpful in certain situations. The thing is that Yoram

doesn't even think he has a problem. He doesn't want to acknowledge a problem because it will force him to act, and he would rather remain in his state of slumber.

If the internet is supposed to help people connect with each other, it rather prevents Yoram and Roni from communicating with each other. How do you think social media has altered the relationships within families?

Family is a burdensome issue with or without the Internet... social media didn't start the love-hate struggles of the modern family. The idea of people, who live under the same roof yet are completely detached and alienated from one another, fascinated me. Nowadays, there's the computer, the anonymous substitute, the distant faceless companion. It broadcasts to no one, or to the entire world, while face-to-face communication between human beings, the basis of all human relationships, is becoming a rare experience. Perhaps a sign of the auto-erotic compulsion dominating our times; of the ever-growing disassociation in our current form of existence. It's a big part of our lives today and therefore a part of any form— artistic or other— that tries to reflect our lives.





Nimrod Eldar's biography

Nimrod Eldar was born on January 28, 1977 in Jerusalem, Israel. After his graduation at the Sam Spiegel Film & Television School, he served the Israel's film industry for many years as a writer, editor, and sound designer. His debut feature film «The Day After I'm Gone» won the "Sam Spiegel Alumni Award" and the "Cinelink" award for Work in Progress at the Sarajevo Film Festival.

Filmography

2019, **The Day After I'm Gone**

2005, **My Masked Purim** (Short)

2002, **King's Road** (Short)

Spiro Films

Spiro Films is an Israeli-based production company dedicated to producing films and scripted TV of the highest artistic and commercial quality, targeted for the local and international markets, as well as endeavoring to promote original voices of a new emerging generation of Israeli writers and directors alongside already well-established and leading directors. Along the years Spiro produced numerous award-winning, critically acclaimed and commercially successful films. In 2017 Spiro produced "Foxtrot" a film by Samuel Maoz. The film won the Silver Lion at Venice International Film Festival, presented in Telluride, TIFF, Sundance and many more. It has won eight categories at the Israeli academy awards and was the Israeli entry for the Oscars.

2019, **The Day After I'm Gone** by Nimrod Eldar (Berlinale – Panorama)

2019, **The Operative** by Yuval Adler (Berlinale – Out of Competition)

2017, **Foxtrot** by Samuel Maoz (Silver Lion Award – Venice Film Festival)

2015, **Afterthought** by Elad Kidan (Cannes Film Festival – Out of Competition)

2015, **Abulele** by Yoni Geva





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