

The Main Feature



Season 31 - Issue Number 4

Israel 90 minutes Cert PG

Language : Hebrew and Yiddish

UK release date : 17 March 2006

Director Giddi Dar
Screenwriter Shuli Rand
Music Nathaniel Mechaly

Cast

Shuli Rand	Moshe
Michal Bat-Sheva Rand	Malli Bellanga
Shaul Mizrahi	Eliyahu Scorpio
Ilan Ganani	Yossef
Avraham Abutboul	Ben Baruch
Yonathan Danino	Gabai
Daniel Dayan	Rabbi Daniel Dayan
Michael Vaigel	Ethrog Assessoria



Ushpizin is WNCC's annual film to mark the One World Week, when we traditionally screen a film showing a different world.

One family's ultimate test of faith is the backdrop for Ushpizin, a heartwarming and humorous "dramedy" set in the customarily private world of the Orthodox Jewish community. Ushpizin marks the first film made by members of the Israeli ultra-Orthodox community in collaboration with secular filmmakers and provides a touching and unique look at the daily lives of ultra-Orthodox Jews as they question and explore their faith.

Ushpizin an Aramaic word for 'guest' and the verb means 'to host'. The film is made and acted by two formerly secular actors, now married and converted to religion in a very serious way.

For halachic reasons, Shuli insisted that his real-life wife, Michal Bat-Sheva, who had never acted before, star opposite him as husband and wife whose love is tested and faith is challenged when a secret from the past reveals itself during the Jewish holiday of Succoth

Ushpizin lets rip with a style of gleeful Jewish comedy instantly recognisable even to people like me who know little about Jewish ritual. It is warm-hearted and confident, a parable which speaks as much to non-believers as to the faithful.

Indeed, it was aimed at a secular audience, according to its co-creator, Gidi Dar, who was delighted to re-partner with Shuli Rand after an eight year absence from the screen.

In an interview, the director described his experience on the film:

"I had made two films with Shuli in the past. He was the best actor I had ever worked with. Then he became ultra-Orthodox with the beard and the hat and the black-and-white clothes, and left the business. Eight years later I suggested to him that we should do another movie. As we developed the story together, it became clear to me that this film would be different. It would have to tell the story from two different perspectives at the same time: from the point of view of "the believer" and from a psychological perspective. The psychological approach is more hidden - it investigates the mind of the believer, his internal mathematics and the way he interpret his reality and God.

I had to dive deep into the ultra-Orthodox experience, even accepting its rules for a while (as they pertain to the film.) I agreed to these stipulations because I knew this was the only way I could have an honest look inside this world, which no camera had ever entered. It is an isolated world that lives by the rules of the Torah, revolving around the work of God. As director I did not want to criticize them, but to tell a story about a test of faith that will authentically show the unique way my heroes see their lives, the lives of the believers."



The photograph shows the director and star in discussion.

The star and his wife in an interview were asked "What has been the response of the *Chareidi* community to the movie?:"

Officially, the movie was shown only to non-*Chareidi* audiences, since that was the condition under which our rabbi permitted us to make this movie. Hence, we could hardly observe [*Chareidi*] reactions. However, many *Chareidim* watched the movie on DVD on their home computers. The responses were extremely favourable."

Ushpizin is a little film with a big heart. It's a small gem from Israel, where it's been something of a sensation because it was set in, and filmed in, a Hassidic community in Jerusalem whose members are ordinarily forbidden to watch films and television. Not only that, many members of this community actually took part in the film, with blessing from their rabbi.

Breaking the barriers between cultures, the film holds a universal and human appeal that transcends any religion or belief.

I hope tonight's presentation to mark "One World Week" results in our world view being expanded and brings us a wider understanding of another community.

Iain McGlashan



UNESCO defined eight action areas for the Decade, recognising that each would contribute to building a culture of peace for our children. **One World Week** is concentrating on the three areas most closely related to its vision and aims:

- ***Promoting sustainable economic and social development***
- ***Promoting respect for all human rights***
- ***Advancing understanding, tolerance and solidarity***

A culture of peace can be established at many levels:

- through personal inner peace;
- peace within the family;
- harmony within the community, between communities and across faiths;
- justice and non-violence on a global scale.

One World Week exists to provide the space for people from diverse backgrounds to come together to learn about global justice, to spread that learning and to use it to challenge inequality, discrimination and degradation, locally and globally.

What kind of world are we creating for our children – one filled with fear, conflict and injustice or one based on respect, caring and cooperation?

Let 2010 be when we begin to create a lasting culture of peace for future generations.

Reactions to

The Hurt Locker – 24th October 2010

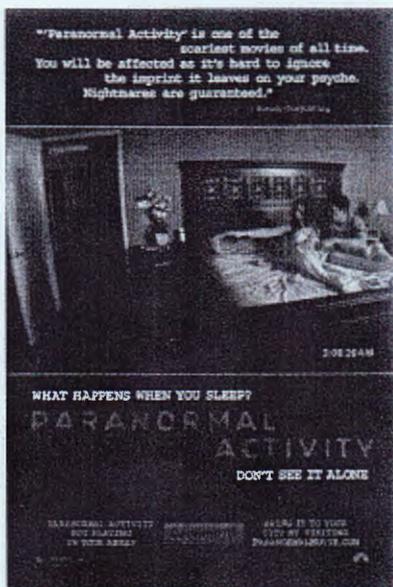
Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Votes	~	~	1	~	3	1	5	8	10	7	~

Total received - 35 Average Score – 7.09

Your Comments

Powerful, thought provoking. Had to close my eyes at times!
Excellent portrayed the confusion of modern war. Only spoilt by the unnecessary casting of Ralph Finnes as British Army officer in the desert scene.
I loved the sniper scene – very tense!
Such a powerful anti-war film. Could not watch it again but glad I did.
Gripping!
Highly realistic, well acted – you don't get any closer to the action.
Shows the humanity and futility of war.
One to put things in perspective.
A remarkable film.
Excellent film but extremely depressing.
On the edge of your seat stuff.
The score table suggestions are not relevant to this film – a very moving film, but I could not watch it again.
Enjoy is not the word!
Gripping film, amazingly shot (pardon the pun!) Couldn't hear a lot of the dialogue.
Scarifying.
Not my type of film, but I suppose a quite good of its kind.
Too long, too incoherent docudrama.
Not my sort of film – too noisy.

Position	Film	Average Score
1 st	An Education	7.83
2 nd	Le Premier Jour de reste de ta vie	7.54
3 rd	The Hurt Locker	7.07



Our next presentation on Thursday 28 October at 8pm:

Paranormal Activity

We have all heard a strange creaking noise in our house that made us wonder if someone was there. We've all had those moments where a slight chill crosses our neck and we shiver. "Paranormal Activity" plays on those little things that when packaged together, make for one scary film, albeit with a 15 Certificate.

Repropoint

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