

SF Film Production, Knut Ogris Films., Cinephil, Reveal Productions inc. present

Defamation

a Yoav Shamir Film

Director and Cinematographer: Yoav Shamir

Editor: Morten Højbjerg

Composer: Mischka Krausz Sound Design: Birgit Obkircher

Line Producers: Nylene Marie Selin, Ori Bader, Guy Sidis

Producers: Karoline Leth, Knut Ogris, Philippa Kowarsky, Sandra Ittelt

Produced by SF Film Production, Knut Ogris Films., Cinephil, Reveal Productions inc.

With Support from The Austrian Film Institute, ORF Film/TV Convention, DR, The Danish Film Institute

YLE, Nordic Film & TV Fund, Hartley Film Foundation

Zukunftsfonds Republic of Austria, Nationalfonds Republic of Austria, BM & UKK

The Rabinovich Foundation of the Arts, The Second Authority for TV & Radio, VPRO

World Sales: www.cinephil.co.il

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DEFAMATION

A film from Yoav Shamir

The screening dates for the film:

20.01.10 20:00 Künstlerhauskino Wien

EN: English subtitles

GER: German subtitles

OV: original version

DEFAMATION

Genre:	Documentary
Format:	35 mm / 93 min 1:1.85
Language:	english/german/polish/hebrew/russian
Script:	Yoav Shamir
Film Director:	Yoav Shamir
Editor:	Morten Hojbjerg
Camera:	Yoav Shamir
Music:	Mischa Krausz
Producers:	Karoline Leth - Copenhagen Sandra Itkoff - Los Angeles Philippa Kowarsky – Tel Aviv Knut Ogris - Vienna

SF – Film Production – Copenhagen, Reveal Productions Inc. – Los Angeles, Cinephil – Tel-Aviv, Knut.Ogris.Films – Wien

Founded by:

The Austrian Filminstitute, ORF FilmTV Convention, the Danish Filminstitute, Danish Radio TV, YLE-Finnish TV, Nordisk Film TV Fond, Ministry of Integration, Denmark, Hartley Film Foundation, Zukunftsfonds of the Austrian Republic, Nationalfonds of the Republic of Austria, the Federal Ministry for Education, Art and Culture, the Rabinovich Foundation for Arts, The Second Authority for TV & Radio

DEFAMATION

A film by Yoav Shamir

What is anti-Semitism today, two generations after the Holocaust? In his continuing exploration of modern Israeli life, director Yoav Shamir (*Checkpoint, 5 Days, Flipping Out*) travels the world in search of the most modern manifestations of the "oldest hatred", and comes up with some startling answers.

In this irreverent quest, he follows American Jewish leaders to the capitals of Europe, as they warn government officials of the growing threat of anti-Semitism, and he tacks on to a class of Israeli high school students on a pilgrimage to Auschwitz.

Opinions often differ and tempers sometimes flare, but in *Defamation* we find that one thing is certain - only by understanding their response to anti-Semitism can we really appreciate how Jews today, and especially modern Israelis, respond to the world around them, in New York and in Moscow, in Gaza and Tel Aviv.

Defamation- Synopsis

What is anti-Semitism today, two generations after the Holocaust? In his continuing exploration of modern Israeli life, director Yoav Shamir (*Checkpoint, 5 Days, Flipping Out*) travels the world in search of the most modern manifestations of the "oldest hatred", and comes up with some startling answers.

In this irreverent quest, he follows American Jewish leaders to the capitals of Europe, as they warn government officials of the growing threat of anti-Semitism, and he tacks on to a class of Israeli high school students on a pilgrimage to Auschwitz.

On his way, Shamir meets controversial historian, Norman Finkelstein, who offers his unpopular views on the manner that anti-Semitism is being used by the Jewish community and especially Israel for political gain. He also joins scholars, Stephen M. Walt and John J. Mearsheimer, while they give a lecture in Israel following the release of their book "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy", about the unproportional influence the Israel lobby in Washington enjoys. Yoav visits Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial museum in Jerusalem, the must stop for all world leaders on their visits to Israel. While in Jerusalem, he drops by the house of his grandmother that offers her insight on the issue and declares that she is the "real Jew".

The film questions our perceptions and terminology when an event proclaimed by some as anti-Semitic is described by others as legitimate criticism of Israel's government policies. The film walks along the boundary between anti-Zionism, rejecting the notion of a Jewish State, and anti-Semitism, rejecting Jews. Is the former being used to excuse the latter? And is there a difference between today's anti-Semitism and plain old racism that is affecting all minorities?

Opinions often differ and tempers sometimes flare, but in *Defamation* we find that one thing is certain - only by understanding their response to anti-Semitism can we really appreciate how Jews today, and especially modern Israelis, respond to the world around them, in New York and in Moscow, in Gaza and Tel Aviv.

Director's Statement:

I first had the idea to make a film about anti-Semitism when my earlier work *Checkpoint* was released. In one of that film's many reviews, I was called "the Israeli Mel Gibson," not because of my good looks, but because the views I had expressed, critical of Israel's policies toward the Palestinians, indicated that I was anti-Semitic. The author of that review was Jewish himself.

At first I thought it was amusing. Being called an anti-Semite by an American Jewish reporter seemed completely farfetched. How could someone who chooses to live outside of Israel, who did not do military service like me, who did not lose a grandfather in the war like me, have the nerve to call me an anti-Semite?

Until then I had never considered the central role that anti-Semitism plays in our lives. Upon reflection I realized that it is a constant buzz, always in the background, always annoying. After a while, you simply get used to it. How often are we really disturbed by the hum of an electric fixture or the drone of passing cars? Anti-Semitism may follow us like a shadow, but then again, who really notices his shadow on a daily basis?

Once I did start noticing it, I realized that anti-Semitism is actually a very popular topic in the Israeli discourse. Not a day goes by without at least one article in the newspaper mentioning "Nazis," "the Holocaust," or "anti-Semitism." Having never experienced anti-Semitism myself—the closest I came was being compared to Mel Gibson—I decided to learn something about the subject.

This was the beginning of a long journey, culminating in this film. Anti-Semitism is an enormous word with many different connotations. Because of the events of the recent past, it also designates a very sensitive topic. Anti-Semitism is the ultimate "sacred cow" for Jews. While I did not set out to slaughter that cow, even the most sacred of cows needs to be shaken up every once in a while.

At times I found the subject daunting. No other phenomenon in Jewish history had so much written about it by academics that spent their whole lives studying it. Who the hell was I to think that I might have anything meaningful to add? I was walking on some very thin ice. Nevertheless, I decided to follow my instincts. Any question is relevant if I believe it is; I should never be afraid to ask or challenge even the most hallowed assumptions. The result is a personal journey that reflects things as I saw them. It, it is not intended as an academic essay.

I had embarked on a fascinating quest that meandered between the way young Israelis are raised in the cumbersome shadow of the Holocaust (making this film, in some ways, the last part of a trilogy made in the wrong order: *Checkpoint*, about Israeli soldiers; *Flipping Out*, about what happens to these soldiers after they leave the army; and *Defamation*, which examines Israeli youth before they begin their military service), the Anti-Defamation League, which is the largest organization in the world to combat anti-Semitism, and those who oppose the ADL, including Professor Norman Finkelstein, and John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, the authors of *The Israeli Lobby*.

My journey took me around the world: from Israel to the US; from Moscow to Rome to Poland. Mostly, however, it was a journey into the human soul, into the way that people think, and in my particular case, how my people, the Jewish people, choose to deal with the past.

I hope that everyone watching this film will find it as thought-provoking as I found my quest, and will honestly question their own assumptions about the issues it raises.

Yoav Shamir, January 2009

Yoav Shamir

Born in Tel-Aviv November 1970
High school –Vitzo France an art school – equivalent of A level. Specialized in photography.

Tel-Aviv university:
BA in History and philosophy.
MFA in cinema, graduated with honors.

Films as Director & Cinematographer:

- 2001- "**Marta and Luis**" – 50 min documentary. – screened in Edinburgh film festival, IDFA,DOCAVIV and other international film festivals
- 2003- "**Checkpoint**" – 80 min. documentary – Won the first award in IDFA, Toronto, San Francisco, Munich, Madrid, Barcelona, Rome, Belgrade, Rio de Janeiro etc. received over 20 awards, and screened in over 120 int. film festivals.
- 2005- "**5 days**"- 94 min. documentary- participated in Sundance film festival, IDFA, Edinburgh, Melbourne, Gothenburg, Seoul and about 40 int. film festivals- in which won several awards.
- 2007- "**Flipping out**"- 83 min. documentary- Berlinale film festival 2008- Forum. Thessaloniki, Buenos Aires, Krakow, San Francisco, and about 40 more international

film festivals



KAROLINE LETH

In March 2006 Karoline Leth became producer at Tju-Bang Film. In March 2007 Leth became the Managing Director of the company. Tju-Bang Film produced among others THE MONESTARY directed by Pernille Rose Grønkjær, MECHANICAL LOVE directed by Phie Ambo and YOUNG MAN FALLING directed by Martin de Thurah.

In 2008 Tju-Bang Film changed name into SF FILM PRODUCTION given the fact that Swedish Film Industry (SF) bought Tju-Bang Film in 2005 and thereby is the financially strong partner in the company. SF FILM PRODUCTION is the Danish production unit of Swedish Film Industry. The goal of SF FILM PRODUCTION is to produce both feature and documentary with high artistic value. In 2008 Leth released DANISH DYNAMITE a documentary directed by Mads Kamp Thulstrup and Carsten Søbsted about the Danish National Football Team. At the same time Leth co-produced ARN I and ARN II – the feature films directed by Danish director Peter Flinth based on the novels by Jan Guillou. In 2007 Leth produced the documentaries CLARITY directed by Ole Bendtzen, THE FACE OF PASSION directed by Judith Lansade and THE CLASS directed by Ida Marie Darger.

From February 2004 until February 2006 Karoline Leth was CEO and producer at Zentropa Real - the documentary division of Zentropa. Leth produced 6 films under Lars von Trier's concept, DOGUMENTARY- among these RAW YOUTH directed by Margreth Olin and GET A LIFE by Michael Klint. Leth also produced THE WEEDS OF LUSAKA directed by Henrik Grunnet. Autumn 2005 Leth launched GUERRILLA GIRL directed by Frank Piasecki Poulsen at IDFA and the film has since that been traveling around the world on documentary festivals – latest at Silver Docs Festival in the US.

Since 2002 Leth has been distributor of director Jørgen Leth's foreign sales.

As for 1999 to 2004 Leth was a producer, teacher and a co-ordinator at The National Film School of Denmark, Documentary Department, where she among others financed and produced 25 documentaries from the 3rd world, in co-operation with the Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Danida. Among these GROWING UP IN A DAY directed by Phie Ambo which was premiered at IDFA 2003. In the same period Leth also produced 18 graduation documentary films at the film school.

Karoline Leth has been as well a performing jazz-singer and music instructor and is still working on developing concepts for theatre.

COMPANY PROFILE

SF FILM PRODUCTION is the Danish production unit of Svensk Filmindustri AB.

The goal of SF FILM PRODUCTION is to produce films with high artistic value that has potential on different platforms.

The ambition for SF FILM PRODUCTION is to produce 2-4 fiction features, 2-4 documentaries and short-films per year, plus being involved in international co-productions.

Fiction features are the main driver of the company, but documentaries, TV-series and the very short format for the Internet are also important. It is here that new talent can be spotted and more experienced people can try their hand. At the same time fiction and documentaries are interdependent in developing the creative environment that makes it all possible.

SF FILM PRODUCTION Filmography:

DEFAMATION, documentary feature by Yoav Shamir (selected for Berlinale 2009)

A GRUESOMME GREETING, very short film by Tea Lindeburg

DANISH DYNAMITE, documentary feature by Mads Kamp Thulstrup & Carsten Søsted

ARN I and ARN II fiction features by Peter Flinth (Audience Award, Guldbagge 2009)

DEROUE, tv-series by Søren Fauli

EVERYTHING IS RELATIVE documentary feature by Mikala Krogh

THE GIFT fiction feature by Niels Gråbøl

MOVING UP fiction feature by Christian Dyekjær

MECHANICAL LOVE documentary feature af Phie Ambo

LAKSHMI AND ME documentary short by Nishtha Jain (Silver Wolf award, IDFA 2007)

YOUNG MAN FALLING short fiction by Martin De Thura,

THE MONASTERY documentary feature by Pernille Rose Grønkjær (Joris Ivens Award, IDFA 2006)

Knut.Ogris.Films

Knut Ogris, Producer (ÖSTERREICH)

Born in 1952 in Bad Aussee, Austria, Knut Ogris has worked in cinema since 1975 in a variety of roles, such as Location Manager, Unit Production Manager, Assistant Director, Producer, and Executive Producer. He has produced countless hours of both feature and documentary projects for Austrian and international television as well as domestic and international theatrical distribution.

Arion Film and its successor company Grey Panther Films specialized on TV productions, documentaries, commercials, and in corporate films. Since 2000, Knut Ogris has worked as Executive Producer with various national and international production companies, including Extrafilm, Vienna, Bonusfilm, Vienna, Pale Blue Productions, Mödling, AMF, Vienna and a1plus Film, Vienna, focusing mainly on European and international coproductions.

Following the successful completion of the French-Swiss-Austrian coproduction *Henry Dunant: Red on the Cross*, he founded [Knut.Ogris.Films](#) in 2006, a production company aimed at further extending and intensifying the close cooperation between scriptwriter, producer, and director on a European and international level.

www.knutogris.tv

knut.ogris.films@aon.at

Philippa Kowarsky - Managing Director Cinephil Distribution & Co Productions

Philippa Kowarsky graduated with an M.A. in Communication Policy Studies, at City University of London. From 1993 she has been working in the Film & TV industry in various fields such as production, development and sales.

In 1997 Philippa established Cinephil, a sales and co-productions company. Today, Cinephil is a home to independent Israeli, Palestinian and international productions, a contact for co-productions, introducing partners from all fields in the industry and following through projects to their completion.

Documentary films co-produced by Cinephil include:

Flipping Out by Yoav Shamir, ***Watermarks*** by Yaron Zilberman, ***Years of Blood*** by Dan Setton, ***Trembling Before G-d*** by Sandi Dubowski.

Films distributed by Cinephil: ***Unwanted Witness*** by Juan Jose Lozano, ***Ice People*** by Anne Aghion, ***Miss Gulag*** by Maria Yatzkova, ***Souvenirs*** by Shahar Cohen and Halil Efrat, ***9 Star Hotel*** by Ido Har, ***Cocalero*** by Alejandro Landes, ***No. 17*** by David Ofek, ***Ford Transit*** by Hany Abu-Assad and many more...

Cinephil exclusively represents documentaries by Amos Gitai

Cinephil also makes feature films – co-producing and distributing them. Films co-produced by Cinephil: ***Sweet Mud*** by Dror Shaul, ***Someone to Run With*** based on the novel by David Grossman, by Oded Davidoff.

More information: www.cinephil.co.il

The partners of Reveal Productions strongly believe in the power of media to create social change. Our goal is to tell compelling non-fiction stories that inspire viewers to think about the ways they perceive, act in and relate to the world. The filmmakers, who are committed to working as a cooperative unity to achieve this outcome are Macky Alston, Sandra Itkoff and Christopher White. Their latest film **The Killer Within**, screened worldwide and received great critical acclaim.

Sandra Itkoff, Producer

Email: sitkoff@earthlink.net

Sandra Itkoff has been an award-winning filmmaker for over sixteen years, creating and producing documentary film and children's television. She is the recipient of many international awards for her films, including the DuPont Journalism Award.

Ms. Itkoff is currently in production in *The Truth Will Set Your Free* about the Rt. Rev. Gene Robinson, the only openly gay bishop ever to be consecrated since the time of Christ. She is also presently producing the animated children's series *Grossology: The Science of Really Gross Things* for Nelvana and Discovery Kids.

Ms. Itkoff's last film *The Killer Within*, Macky Alston directing, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival.

She consulted on *Prisoner of Paradise* for Alliance Atlantis and PBS, which was nominated for a *2003 Academy Award*. Ms. Itkoff's film *Drag Kings on Tour*, a road-documentary, premiered on the Discovery Channel and won Best Documentary/Audience Awards at Outfest Los Angeles, San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film Festival and Toronto Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. Ms. Itkoff is also currently in production on *The Ten Commandments*, a ten-film series that uses the Ten Commandments as a framework for a provocative look at contemporary society.

Ms. Itkoff and director Judith Helfand have been collaborating on *Cooked*, a film in preproduction on the politics of poverty and climate change.

Ms. Itkoff executive produced the highly acclaimed four-film PBS series *Cadillac Desert* that focused on the epic political and environmental struggle for water in the modern American West. *Cadillac Desert* garnered record ratings for PBS when it aired. She also executive produced *The Twentieth Century Project*, a six-film series financed by The Walt Disney Company in which directors explored personally compelling topics that spanned the Twentieth Century. Directors who participated in the project include Norman Jewison (*Moonstruck*, *In the Heat of the Night*), Barry Levinson (*Diner*, *Rain Man*), Garry Marshall (*Pretty Woman*), Gregory Nava (*El Norte*), Robert Townsend (*Hollywood Shuffle*), and Robert Zemeckis (*Forrest Gump*).

Mischa Krausz

was born in afritz, a small village in carynthia /austria, october 2nd 1954

- raised in vienna
- has two daughters, esther and ela
- ela has a daughter of her own, leonie, turning him into a grandfather
- married to claudia since 2003.
- studies of the violoncello at the age of ten
- studies of electric bass at the vienna conservatory of music
- completion of the vienna conservatory of music with a degree
- studies of orchestration at the berklee college of music
- working as a bass player
- writing arrangements and producing music for jazz and pop projects for his own label
m.krausz records
- recording/mixing/mastering is completed with priority at his own Studio Bartberg

More information: **www.mischakrausz.at**

DEFAMATION

Crew list

KAROLINE LETH (LEAD)	PRODUCER, SF - FILMPRODUCTIONS	DENMARK
NYNNE MARIE SELIN	LINE PRODUCER, SF - FILMPRODUCTIONS	DENMARK
SANDRA ITKOFF	PRODUCER, REVEAL PRODUCTIONS INC. LA	USA
PHILIPPA KOWARSKY	PRODUCER, CINEPHIL, TEL AVIV	ISRAEL
ORI BADER	LINE PRODUCER; CINEPHIL, TEL AVIV	ISRAEL
KNUT OGRIS	PRODUCER, KNUT.OGRIS.FILMS	AUSTRIA
YOAV SHAMIR	WRITER/DIRECTOR/D.O.P.	ISRAEL
MORTEN HOJBJERG	EDITOR	DENMARK
BIRGIT OBKIRCHER	SOUND DESIGNER	AUSTRIA
PETER HÖHSL	ANIMATION, GRAPHICS	AUSTRIA
TINA SCHEMBECKER	GRAPHIC DESIGN	DENMARK
SYNCHRO FILM VIDEO & AUDIO	POSTPRODUCTION FACILITY	AUSTRIA
MILLI SEGAL	PRESS AGENT	AUSTRIA

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