

**30 DAYS.  
1 WEDDING.  
NO GROOM.**

Norma Productions Presents

# Through the Wall

*"A classic  
romantic comedy"*  
The Times of Israel

Written en Directed by  
**Rama Burshtein**

Noa Koler Amos Tamam Oz Zehavi

Iris Sheleg Ronny Merhavi Dafy Alpern

Written and Directed by **Rama Burshtein** • Producer **Assaf Amir** • Cinematographer **Amit Yasour** • Editor **Yael Hersonski**  
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 **Eti Bennun** • Associate Producers **Tammy Cohen, Adar Shafran** • Poster design **Gerrit Blaauw**



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### Synopsis (NL)

Bekroonde Israëliische regisseur Rama Burshtein (Fill the Void) brengt een onconventionele en uiterst charmante romantische komedie over liefde en huwelijk in de chassidische gemeenschap.

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.



## BRIEF SYNOPSIS

Michal is 32 years old. She became religious 12 years ago, and only now she is getting married. A month before the wedding, while checking out the catering for the event, the groom has a change of heart and the wedding is called off. Michal feels she's unable to go back to her ordinary life, to the usual course of matchmaking. She feels this is the moment to do something completely out of character. With the force of her belief she goes on a month-long journey up to the planned wedding day: „I have the venue, the dress, the apartment; God can easily come up with my groom“.

A heartwarming journey from award winning director Rama Burshtein (FILL THE VOID).



## SYNOPSIS

Michal, a 32-year-old woman became religious 12 years ago and is yet unmarried.

She seeks out Hulda the Bukharan, hoping to remove the evil eye that is delaying her happiness. Hulda is so sure of herself that she sends Michal to Shimi, her son, who owns a wedding venue, promising that he'll cut a special deal for her.

Several months later, Michal is about to marry Gidi, a handsome man who became religious. A month before the wedding date, as the couple taste the catering, Gidi changes his mind and cancels the wedding. Michal can't see herself returning to a life of more dates and matchmaking and disappointments. She finds his move hard to swallow and takes a brave decision that sets her out on a journey to the unknown, with the clock ticking constantly.

"I have a wedding venue and a wedding dress, God shouldn't have too much trouble finding me a groom," she declares and continues her preparations for the original date of the wedding.

THROUGH THE WALL is Michal's journey from that day until the 8 candle of Hanuka, the date of the wedding. Her belief that her wedding will take place leads her to repeated collisions with the walls. To start with, there's the matter of 30.000 shekels, the cost of the venue. Her mother won't finance the wedding now, and Michal doesn't have that sort of money. Some people lose their belief at that point, but it does get worse: two weeks after Gidi cancelled the wedding it turns out that he found his true love.

A multitude of men play roles in the following month of Michal's life.

When she travels to seek comfort at the grave of Rabbi Nahman of Uman, she meets Yoss, a rock star and teen idol. Their meeting is both simple and hallucinatory, a fairy tale of extremes who share some powerful moments. Michal's heart is all there, but she wonders if the heavens did indeed intend her to share her life with a secular rock star that has no intention of observing the Sabbath.

When she meets Assaf, a 35-year-old religious academic, the wedding date is already drawing near, and despite the mutual attraction, she has no time to spare for the gradual ripening of the relationship. If he is the one, he will have to skip some of the stages.

Shimi, the owner of the wedding venue, a 35-year old religious married man. He follows Michal's hectic month without deciding whether she is raging mad, or on to a fantastic idea.

All the men Michal meets during this month could be the one, her match made in heaven. Each of them connects to Michal for a significant moment, but it is unclear who, if any, will take the quantum leap and marry Michal after such a short acquaintance.

On the day of the wedding, Michal is short of a groom. She is there, at the venue, in her wedding dress. The guests are quiet and embarrassed since there is no groom in sight.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

THROUGH THE WALL is director Rama Burshtein's second feature film.

When reading the script we were immediately aware it would be completely different than Rama's previous film, FILL THE VOID. While the first was a delicate family drama, dealing with the closed Haredi society and its clear borders, THROUGH THE WALL is basically modeled on themes of dramatic romantic comedies. The protagonist, Michal, who was raised in a secular family but then embraced Orthodox Judaism, finds herself in a deep crisis and decides to take a huge leap of faith.

### CASTING

Michal (Noa Koller), is in her thirties, beautiful, but in a simple, unglamorous way. She has a bright personality and the audience must fall in love with her and believe her – and for her – that anything is, indeed, possible. When approaching the casting stage we had a dilemma as to casting the men in the film. We wondered how credible it would appear that all these men could fall for the 'simple' girl. Eventually we decided to use the dilemma to challenge the creators, the cast and the audience, to believe that anything can happen, and that there is no wall that faith can't break through.

### AESTHETIC CONCEPT

During pre-production, Rama, the director, insisted that the portrayed world would be rich in color and texture, both in styling and set construction. The inspiration for

the aesthetic language was nudibranchs. Nudibranchs are creatures with extraordinary colors, living at the bottom of the sea. They are no larger than the length of a finger, and their powerful colors serve for either deterrence, camouflage or attracting mates. The combination of their colorful harmony, on the one hand, and their tiny size and place of habitat – hiding at the bottom of the sea – forms a blend of beauty and modesty. The nudibranchs only reveal themselves to those searching for them. And those who stumble upon them, can't stop gazing at their beauty.

### SHOOTING

Many rehearsals were held before shooting, forming and strengthening the connection between the actors and their understanding of their characters. Since the scenes were long, it was important to arrive on the set without having to find the basis of the scene, but rather the right moments, based on the work already done.

The first scenes were planned for Uman, Ukraine, where we arrived to shoot next to Reb Nachman of Breslov's grave. We flew over for three days, planning one day of shooting. Upon arrival, the weather turned nasty, putting all our shooting plans on hold. We stopped and waited. Fortunately, things cleared up by noon. When we finished all the preparations, makeup and styling, our cinematographer, Amit Yasur, turned on the camera – and it went dead instantly. The shooting was cancelled, and we returned with many experiences, but no material.

As opposed to the series of events in Uman, the shooting in Israel progressed as planned. The film takes place in Jerusalem, and was shot in both Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

When we began editing the materials, we also planned the shooting in Uman. We were well aware that the scene in Uman is an important emotional point in the film and the meeting between Michal and Yoss (Oz Zehavi), was crucial to the plot line. Before the second trip to Uman, and after spending time editing the materials we had already shot, we took advantage of the fact that the scene had to be reshot, and changed it drastically – in a manner that simplified the editing process.

### MUSIC

Similar to all other elements in the film, the music's role in the film is to help the viewer on his complex journey with Michal. Most of the soundtrack is comprised of original songs, combining soft rock, Reggae and soul music.



## LIST OF THE CHARACTERS

MICHAL – The main character. She is a 32-year-old beautiful woman in a simple way; not too glamorous. She became religious 12 years ago and has been dating for the past 11 years, but is still not married. She speaks her mind and seeks the truth. She has decided to go ahead with her scheduled wedding even though her groom backed out. This decision is very out of character for her. Naturally, she is more scared than brave.

NOAM – Michal's 30-year-old non-religious sister. She is currently separated from her husband and lives with Michal. She is considered the "crazy" one in the family. She is convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that her husband will come back to her even though he has already called the cops to keep her away from him.

FAIGIE – One of Michal's roommates and close friend. She is 30-years-old, chubby, a bit tomboy, and has long Dreadlocks. She has a very cool personality. She became religious three years ago and is still single.

ZIV – One of Michal's roommates. She is a 30-year-old surgeon. She is a rich beautiful woman who looks like a gym instructor. The three roommates are living in Ziv's parents' apartment.

GIDI – A 36-year-old religious "Breslev" Chasid. He is very good looking man with sad eyes. He is Michal's groom who backs out of their wedding engagement and leaves her a month before their wedding.

SHIMI – The owner of the wedding venue. He is a 35-year-old handsome married religious man.

YOS – A 33-year-old non-religious man. He is a very famous rock star and teen idol.

SOSH – Michal and Noam's 60-year-old non-religious mother.

PERLE – A 30-year-old religious woman who is diagnosed with ALS and is currently immobile. She is a good friend of Michal and acts as the "wise man" of THROUGH THE WALL.

HULDA – Shimi's 60-year-old mother. She is religious and specializes in removing the "evil eye" from people.

RONEN "BLIND DATE" – A 33-year-old handsome "Breslev" Chasid. He is Michal's first arranged date but doesn't look at her throughout the entire date.

ALON "DEAF DATE" – A 35-year-old religious handsome deaf man. He is Michal's second date and brings along an interpreter with him to the date.

ASAF – Michal's 3rd date. He is a 35-year-old religious, handsome and perfect on paper man.

MICHAEL – Alon's interpreter. He is a handsome 26-year-old man.

MARTA – A 45-year-old woman. She is the owner of the bridal salon.

RABBIE FRANKEL – The family Rabbi. He is a wise 50-year-old pleasant man who has a long beard.





## DIRECTOR STATEMENT

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.



## 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 produced films for the orthodox community, some of them only for women. She was 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, Ulpena 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 THROUGH THE WALL.

2016 THROUGH THE WALL  
2012 FILL THE VOID



Norma productions is an independent Productions Company.  
 The company was established by producer Assaf Amir in 1995 Norma's debut production, CHRONICLE OF A DISAPPERANCE by director Elia Suleiman, won the Luigi De Laurentiis Award at Venice Film Festival 1996. Since then, the company's productions won six Isreli Academy awards four Best Film and four best film awards at Jerusalem Film Festival, and an array of awards in international festivals.

In 2012 Norma's first collaboration with Rama Burshtein FILL THE VOID won the Coppa Volpi for Best Actress at Venice Film Festival.



CAST & CREW

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*

CREW

Written and Directed by – *Rama Burshtein*  
 Producer – *Assaf Amir*  
 Associate Producers – *Tammy Cohen & Adar Shafran*  
 Cinematographer – *Amit Yasour*  
 Editor – *Yael Hersonski*  
 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 – *Eti Bennun*  
 Gaffer – *Lior Prei*

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Country of origin – *Israel 2016*  
 Duration – *110 minutes*  
 Sound format – *5.1*  
 Format – *1:1,85*  
 Original language – *Hebrew*



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