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Filmfestspiele
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Berlinale Shorts



LEFRESNOY
STUDIO DES ARTS TAOISSIP
NATIONAL CONTEMPORAINS

PYRAMIDE
INTERNATIONAL

les juifs riches by yolande zauberman





What is the film's origin?

One evening, my cousins and I got together (something we never do). We watched home movies, bar mitzvahs, weddings, circumcisions, etc. I saw the world of my childhood, that of our parents and their friends. The men's faces were hard, determined and proud. They sometimes wore sunglasses. No one knows how difficult it was to be their children.

I thought it would be quite moving to tell their stories. And immediately, the title, "Les Juifs Riches" came to my mind.

After the war, they arrived with nothing. They had lost everything, their families, their homes, their language.

They survived with such strength and without a word —most of them didn't tell their children anything. They gritted their teeth. They did what they could.

Between the stories, the memory lapses, and the jokes, you get a sense of what it's like to be Jewish. Or at least, to be me.

The moments I like best in the film...

The Jewish jokes. The moment when Helene Lapiower sings "Reyzele." The shot where my first husband's uncle, wearing a top hat, leans toward the Great Rabbi... I feel like I'm in a Scorsese film.

Why a short film?

In contemporary art, we give pieces of answers to big questions...

I liked that we made this film in my basement—where I set up an editing room.

We had a feeling of ease, of fluidity...

Sometimes you have to live a whole lifetime for a simple moment to occur.

What else can I say?

In Poland, in the cemetery in Lublin where my ancestors are buried, there was nothing left, just a few broken gravestones. I, who am neither religious nor attached to stones, stepped forward and introduced myself:

- My name is Yolande Zauberman, I am the daughter of Aaron Joseph Zauberman and Maria Granatstajn (I have never been able to spell that name correctly), I come from you... your graves will only exist in my memory.

Les Juifs Riches is something like this, stories without graves, turned towards life.

It moves me that the world premiere of the film is taking place in Berlin. We are all children of this story.

Biography

Yolande Zauberman is one of the most singular voices in French cinema. An unfiltered, uninhibited filmmaker, well-versed in the most sensitive subjects and the most challenging investigative fields. Born in Paris, with degrees in art history and economics, Yolande Zauberman began her filmmaking journey under the tutelage of director Amos Gitai. In 1987, she directed her first documentary, *Classified People*, about apartheid in South Africa, which won numerous awards, including the Grand Prix at the Paris Film Festival. Her second film, *Born Criminal* (1989), shot in India, was selected for the Cannes Film Festival. Three years later, she directed her first fiction film in Yiddish, *Moi Ivan, toi Abraham*, which garnered awards worldwide, including the Golden Fish at the Moscow International Film Festival and the Youth Prize at the Cannes Film Festival. A multidisciplinary artist, alternating between documentary and feature films, video art and narrative art, Yolande Zauberman has forged her own path of expression through films that have consistently sparked lively debates, sometimes even controversies. Her cinema investigates the shadows, breaks taboos, liberates speech, and compels us to listen. It portrays couples of “enemies,” and through love stories, it tackles the centers of power, whether religious or political; it confronts us with realities kept silent and renders the solitary, the marginalized, and the sacrificed desirable and even sexy.

In 2011, her film *Would You Have Sex with an Arab?*, presented at the Venice Film Festival, opened a broad debate on the living conditions of Israeli Arabs, addressing the highly sensitive issue of sexual relations in this fragile region of the world.

With her hidden camera, infiltrating secret areas of Tel Aviv, the filmmaker explored taboos, simply by gathering testimonies and capturing portraits.

In 2018, *M* extended this exploration through an even more sensitive subject: the rape of young boys. This film, shot in Yiddish within Orthodox Jewish communities, follows Menachem, a magnetic character and former victim of abuse, who revisits scenes from his childhood in search of his rapists. The film, praised by critics, won the César Award for Best Documentary in 2019 and numerous awards worldwide, including the Jury Prize at Locarno, the Bayard d'Or at Namur, the Critics' Prize at London, and the Grand Prize at the Mexico City International Film Festival, among others. *The Belle of Gaza* is the third installment of this trilogy. On the sidewalks of Hatnufa Street, Yolande Zauberman is looking for a trans woman who came on foot from Gaza, whom she met during the filming of *M*.

Her last movie, *les juifs riches* is built like a Russian doll, which first will appear as a short film at the Berlinale 2026 and will be transformed in a feature film in the close future.





Filmography

- 1988** *Classified People*
- 1990** *Born Criminal*
- 1993** *Ivan and Abraham*
- 1996** *Clubbed to death*
- 2002** *La guerre à Paris*
- 2004** *Paradise now*
- 2005** *A Jew at sea*
- 2012** *Would you have sex with an Arab*
- 2016** Publication of *Les Mots qui nous manquent*
- 2018** *M*
- 2021** *Douce France*
– Film des Révélation pour
les César et Chanel
- 2024** *La Belle de Gaza*
Restoration and re-release
of *Classified People*
- 2025** Restoration and re-release
of *Ivan and Abraham*
- 2026** *les juifs riches*

In preparation

La main bleue

L'Étrangère

