

Written Proposal

“IT IS WHAT IT IS”

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Logline

A few years before she passed away, I discovered my grandmother Kati’s secret: She was not always Jewish. My grandparents were one of 3,000 mixed couples who had immigrated to Israel from Communist Poland in the 1950s. This created great tension in Israeli society. Through my family’s own story, I examine the price people pay for crossing the love lines in the ‘Jewish state.’ A film about severed roots, perennial otherness, and unbounded love.

Treatment

An old house faces a wide valley in Galilee. Most of the belongings have already been packed. Even though Grandma Kati was 94, it's hard to believe she is not there anymore. The family members, the son **Haim** (62) and granddaughter **Gal** (30) can't bear to be inside the house during the move. They wait in Kati's magnificent garden, plucking her famous roses and promising to try to plant them at their own home. Everyone loved the funny and radiant woman; she was the glue of the family. Finally, the move is completed. And inside a drawer lies an envelope containing photos of unfamiliar people and telephone books with a Polish prefix. This is "IT IS WHAT IT IS" film's beginning—an intergenerational story about love, unsevered roots and shame.

The unraveling of the love story between Grandpa **Simon** and Grandma **Kati** unfolds through two timelines: the past and the present. The film portrays their story through secondary characters, my father, Haim, and myself.

First generation - The Loving Couples

In 1957, anti-Semitism reemerges in communist Poland. Prime Minister Gomułka allows Jews to leave the country if they renounce their Polish citizenship. Kati and Simon, a newlywed couple with a baby, decide to immigrate to Israel. Kati, a Polish Catholic, leaves everything behind. Simon, a Holocaust survivor, doesn't look back.

In this part of the film the story of the wave of immigration, known as "Gomułka's Aliyah," will be told. Archive footage and texts found in the archives reveal a complex situation in the new country where non-Jewish Polish women faced hostility. Polish-

speaking rabbis were assigned to convince women to convert, even going door to door, which prompted the Vatican to demand an end to the "Jewish missionary persecution."

In 1992, my father, Haim, learns about his father, Simon, during a trip to Poland with other Holocaust survivors from his father's town (Tarnow). Simon passed away a few years earlier, and my father knew nothing about him. Among the things he discovers is that his father had a first wife, Zosha. They managed to survive the concentration camp together, but she passed away a year after the war. My grandfather lost the love of his life. His family. Everything. Until my grandmother, a young doctor in the ward he worked in, cooked him chicken soup, and they fell in love.

My father doesn't believe his parents had love. It was compassion that brought them together. Many of these love stories have a common thread of compassion. My father says that she converted for my grandfather's sake. But I know that she converted for the sake of my father.

The Second Generation - The "Mixed" Children

My father never spoke about his conversion with anyone. Not even with my mother. Gradually, the layers of the story are discovered. He is surprised that there were 3,000 more families like his, and around 10,000 children like him.

One of these children who shook the young country was **Aaron Steinberg**, who passed away at the age of 12 from illness. He was a mixed child. The rabbi of his town refused to bury him in the cemetery because he wasn't considered Jewish. This incident sparked outrage, leading to protests where the cemetery fence was torn down. In parliament, a heated debate ensued between left-wing and right-wing representatives, one raising a flag promoting "racial purity" and another accusing him of promoting Nazi ideology. Prime Minister Ben-Gurion decided to register mixed children automatically as "Jews," which led to a governmental crisis.

When my father was supposed to celebrate his Bar Mitzvah, he couldn't because he wasn't considered Jewish. A relative describes the anger and frustration of my 13-year-old father that shouted at his parents, "Why is it my fault that you married a gentile?" This created immense pressure, secrecy, and shame within the family. My grandmother and father eventually converted. When I gently ask my father about it, he says he doesn't really remember when or why she converted.

Third Generation-

Through vibrant Amir-Kusturica-style family scenes in the Lublin region, reconnecting with relatives from Poland, I discover my grandmother's story: A young girl during the war who used to smuggle food under her skirt to partisans in the woods. I discover that eighty percent of the village were Jews, and one day all her friends disappeared. When she met my grandfather, she realized he wasn't insane, but rather heartbroken. Through conversations with my grandmother I recorded before she passed away, and encounters with my Polish relatives and my family in Israel, I will explore the tensions that arose due to Kati not being Jewish and converting. Why did she hide the connection she had with the family overseas? Why did they remain a secret?

In conversations with my father, I share my thoughts as someone who lives in Israel within a mixed relationship. As a father, who can relate to the future mixed child of his daughter, he speaks for the first time about his experience, struggles, and the anger that became part of his life because he was a mixed child. He asks me to leave the country. "Because when you are a child in Israel, you are always asked, 'Where are you from?' If your child chokes, they will suffer greatly."

As an epilogue, Kati and Simon's old house is being sold and demolished. Gal and her Palestinian partner, Nayef, are packing their apartment in Tel Aviv and moving to Haifa. They choose to stay and have their family here.

A	Above the Line	Quantity	Unity	Unit Price	TOTAL	
1	Director	1	fee	12,000.00	12,000	
2	Producers	1	fee	12,000.00	12,000	
	TOTAL					24,000 €
B	Production Crew	Quantity	Unity	Unit Price	TOTAL	
1	Production Assistant & Coordinator	30	days	200.00	6,000	
2	Director of Photography	20	days	500.00	10,000	
3	Camera Assistant	20	days	200.00	4,000	
4	Sound Recorder& Boom Operator	20	days	300.00	6,000	
	Gaffer	5	days	300.00	1,500	
	TOTAL					27,500 €
C	Office Expenses	Quantity	Unity	Unit Price	TOTAL	
1	Overhead & Contingency	1	allow	5,000.00	5,000	
2	Courier, Logistics Expenses	1	allow	2,000.00	2,000	
3	Accountant control & Auditing	1	allow	4,000.00	4,000	
	TOTAL					11,000 €
D	Project Development	Quantity	Unity	Unit Price	TOTAL	
3	Trailer Editing and Subtitling	1	allow	2,000.00	2,000	
7	Researchers & Fixers	1	fee	3,400.00	3,400	
8	Research Transportation Costs (Taxi, Public Transportation, Car Rental, Gas)	1	allow	1,500.00	1,500	
9	Research Accommodation Costs	1	allow	2,000.00	2,000	
	TOTAL					8,900 €
E	Production Costs	Quantity	Unity	Unit Price	TOTAL	
1	Transportation	15	days	500.00	7,500	
2	Per Diems for crew	15	days	500.00	7,500	
3	Equipment	15	days	1,000.00	15,000	
4	Expendables	15	days	300.00	4,500	
5	Transportation + stay Poland shoot	5	days	3,000.00	15,000	
6	Per Diems Poland shoot	5	days	300.00	1,500	
7	Equipment Poland shoot	5	days	1,000.00	5,000	
8	Archival rights & reproduction	1	allow	50,000.00	50,000	
9	BU & QC	1	allow	10,000.00	10,000	
10	Translations & transcript	1	allow	10,000.00	10,000	

11	Material Praperation for editing	1	allow	3,000.00	3,000	
12	Legal expenses	1	allow	20,000.00	20,000	
13	Insurance	1	allow	10,000.00	10,000	
	TOTAL					159,000 €
F	Post-Production	Quantity	Unity	Unit Price	TOTAL	
1	Post-Production Supervisor	1	fee	15,000.00	15,000	
2	Editing Suite (including preparation and screenings)	20	week	1,000.00	20,000	
3	Editor	80	shifts	500.00	40,000	
4	Video and Sound Synchronizat	5	day	400.00	2,000	
5	Picture Conform & Color Corre	2	day	500.00	1,000	
6	Color Correction & VFX	7	day	500.00	3,500	
7	Color Correction for TV & Mast	1	day	500.00	500	
9	DCP Mastering	1	allow	600.00	600	
10	Music & Rights Clearance	1	allow	5,000.00	5,000	
11	Transcription and Subtitle Translation (English)	1	allow	5,000.00	5,000	
13	Sound Edit / Final-Mix	10	shifts	800.00	8,000	
14	Post Production Per Diem and Other Misc. Costs	1	allow	1,000.00	1,000	
	TOTAL					101,600 €
G	PR& Marketing	Quantity	Unity	Unit Price	TOTAL	
1	Deliveries	1	allow	3,000.00	1,000	
2	Poster and Promotion Material	1	allow	2,000.00	2,000	
3	Trailer Editing and Subtitling	1	allow	2,000.00	2,000	
	TOTAL					5,000 €
TOTAL					337,000 €	337,000 €

Organisation	Amount in Euro	% of total	Status
The new fundation (ISAREL)- development grant	3,800	1%	Confirmed
Israeli broadcaster	100,000	30%	
European funds	95,000	28%	
Israeli fund	38,200	11%	
TV Presales	50,000	15%	
Investments and awards	50,000	15%	
Total:	€ 337,000	100%	
TOTAL CONFIRMED	€ 3,800	1%	