

THE CAKEMAKER

Israel (2017) 113 minutes

Director: Ofir Raul Graizer

Cast: Tim Kalkhof (Thomas), Sarah Adler (Anat), Roy Miller (Oren), Zohar Strauss (Moti)

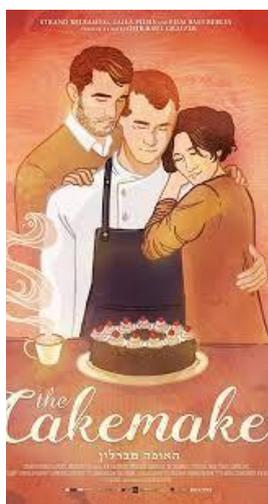


Screening 08 September 2021 at Swindon Arts Centre

Synopsis

Thomas, a young German baker, is having an affair with Oren, an Israeli married man who has frequent business visits in Berlin. When Oren dies in a car crash in Israel, Thomas travels to Jerusalem seeking answers regarding his death. Under a fabricated identity, Thomas infiltrates into the life of Anat, his lover's newly widowed wife, who owns a small café in downtown Jerusalem. Thomas starts to work for her and create German cakes and cookies that bring life into her café.

Reviews



The Cakemaker is Ofir Raul Graizer's debut feature, and the film must somehow reflect the parabola of the Israeli-born director's life. It's set between Berlin and Jerusalem, the two cities apparently closest to him, and one of its main subjects – alongside weightier themes such as grief and loss – is food, especially the rich experience of cooking. (Graizer's biography records how he studied film, as well as – a phrase you don't expect to find in such contexts – "trained in kitchens as a cook and will soon publish his own Middle Eastern cookbook".)

The result is independent cinema at its economical best, something that brings together, just as a recipe does, simple ingredients into a piece of lasting – and commendably understated – emotional power.

The Arts Desk

Drool-worthy confectionery expresses unspoken emotions in *The Cakemaker*, the first feature from the writer and director Ofir Raul Graizer and a master class in exquisite restraint.

Beginning as one thing and ending as quite another, this softly lighted melodrama follows Thomas, a reserved German pastry chef with a cozy cafe in Berlin and a handsome Israeli lover, Oren. Once a month or so, Oren arrives in Berlin for business — and a generous slice of Black Forest gâteau — leaving a wife, Anat, and young son back in Jerusalem.

When Oren dies suddenly between visits, Thomas, obeying some primal instinct and with no clear purpose, immediately travels to Jerusalem. Concealing his identity, he takes a part-time job in the small cafe run by Oren's weary young widow, so impressing her and her customers with his piping skills that he soon becomes a fixture.

Sad and sweet, and with a rare lyricism, at heart it's just a tender love triangle with a ghost in the middle. And a mouthwatering abundance of crème fraîche.

The New York Times

Film Facts

- The film received the 2018 Ophir Award for best picture, and was selected as the Israeli entry for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 91st Academy Awards.
- The film has been noted for its exploration of the topic of sexual fluidity.
- Financing of *The Cakemaker* took 6 years.