



THE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

A film by Eran Riklis

"[A] humane & observant drama... the film has wit and character!" – Ray Bennett, *The Hollywood Reporter*

"[A] lovely crowd-pleaser!" - Eithan Weitz, *IonCinema.com*



Israel, Germany, France, Romania / 2010 / Drama-Comedy / Hebrew, English & Romanian with Subtitles / 103 min. / 1:1.85 / Dolby Surround

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SYNOPSIS

The Human Resources Manager of Jerusalem's largest bakery is in trouble. He is separated from his wife, distanced from his daughter and stuck in a job he hates. When one of his employees, a foreign worker, is killed in a suicide bombing, the bakery is accused of indifference, and the HR Manager is sent to the victim's hometown in Romania to make amends. Far from home, on a mission to honor a woman he didn't even know but has somehow grown to admire, the HR Manager rediscovers his own humanity and his ability to truly care for human resources.

FESTIVALS AND AWARDS

WINNER Audience Award **Locarno Int'l Film Festival**

WINNER 5 Awards of the **Israeli Academy Awards®** including **Best Picture**

WINNER Best Actor **Haifa Film Festival**

OFFICIAL SELECTION

Toronto Int'l Film Festival

AFI Film Festival

Israel Film Festival (closing night film)

In conversation with *The Human Resources Manager* director Eran Riklis

Sarah Gopaul on September 19, 2010

The Human Resources Manager is essentially a road movie, but the characters are mismatched and very unconventional for the genre. Director Eran Riklis agreed, summing it up with, "It's an asymmetrical road movie." He notes that there must be two aspects to it: It must be a good physical trip, but an equally good emotional trip.

The Human Resources Manager of Jerusalem's largest bakery is in trouble. He's separated from his wife, distanced from his daughter and stuck in a job he hates. When one of his employees, a foreign worker, is killed in a suicide bombing and the bakery is accused of inhumanity and indifference, the HR Manager is sent on a mission to make things right. He embarks on a complex journey, beginning in Jerusalem and continuing to a frozen post-Soviet country. The Manager finds himself leading an awkward convoy to the dead woman's village including her rebellious son, a pesky journalist, a quirky consul, an old veteran driver and a coffin. Far from home, on a mission to honour a woman he didn't even know but has somehow grown to admire, the HR Manager rediscovers his own humanity and his ability to truly care for human resources.

The project was proposed to Riklis, so he read the book and agreed to direct. "There was something about the basic journey with death to discover life ... and on a more a personal level, the never-ending quest to find yourself," says Riklis. He was also attracted to the elements surrounding Jerusalem and displaced people. In addition, he felt he needed a break after his last film, *Lemon Tree*, which was very politically charged.

No one in the film has a name but the dead woman, Yulia; instead, they are identified by titles: the Human Resources Manager, the Weasel, the Boy, the Driver, etc. This idea came from the source book, but Riklis decided to keep the convention because he felt it made the story more relatable. Additionally, "everybody is alive here but maybe dead inside, and the only dead person is actually alive. It's out of respect in a way to her, both because she's dead and the catalyst of the whole thing," says Riklis. "The rest have to earn their names."

The film has three spoken languages: Hebrew, Romanian and English. However, Riklis is not at all intimidated by the challenge as several of his previous films have included several languages as well. "I've become somewhat of an expert on this," says Riklis. He continues that like music, when you become sensitive to a language, you can feel if it sounds right. Therefore, even though he had a translator on set to ensure the wording was correct, Riklis primarily judged performances by their impression.

Riklis sees the open ending of the film as part of the story's charm. The book is more conclusive, but Riklis decided to allow the audience to decide if the HR Manger's future is going to improve or not. "There is an ending, but it's open to new things," says Riklis. Nonetheless, should there be a desire to produce a sequel that picks up where this film left off, Riklis does not think he'd be involved. "Let someone else do it,"

Riklis manages to tell a story that is just quirky enough, while remaining relatable. "It's offbeat and kind of mainstream in a way," says Riklis. There are various moments of levity, but the seriousness of the ragtag group's task often breaks through the surface. Thus, *The Human Resources Manager* is an inherently conventional, but unusual road trip movie.

BIOGRAPHIES & FILMOGRAPHIES

ERAN RIKLIS

Director

Director Eran Riklis was born in Jerusalem in 1954 and grew up in Canada, the US, Brasil and Israel. He is a Graduate of The National Film School, Beaconsfield, England.

Eran Riklis directed over 300 commercials, promos and corporate videos, many TV dramas and TV series, and directed and produced 9 feature films, including *Lemon Tree* (2008 Berlin International Film Festival Audience Award), *The Syrian Bride* (Montreal Grand Prix, Public, Fipresci & Ecumenical Awards, Locarno Public Award, Ghent Public and Script Awards, Bastia Best Actor, Script and Jury Awards, Auxerre Grand Prix), *Vulcan Junction* (1999 Haifa Best Film Award) and *Cup Final* (Official Selection, Berlin and Venice Film Festivals, won prizes in Salerno, Valencia, Montpellier). Riklis's next feature film, *Playoff*, is due to come out in 2011.

Filmography

2008 **Lemon Tree**

2004 **The Syrian Bride**

2002 **Pituy**

2002 **Ha-Masa'it** (TV series)

1999 **Volcano Junction**

1999 **Vegvul Natan** (documentary)

1995 **Sipurey Efraim** (TV series)

1993 **Straight Ve-La'inyan** (TV series)

1993 **Zohar**

1992 **Gmar Gavi'a**

1984 **B'Yom Bahir Ro'im et Dameshek**

MARK IVANIR
HR Manager

Born in Ukraine, Mark Ivanir immigrated to Israel with his family in 1972. After serving in the Israeli Army, Ivanir studied in a Circus school and ended up working in a Parisian Circus - Cirque Pawelles. Leaving the circus, Mark entered into formal theatrical training, studying at Israel's top acting school Nissan Nativ, later co-founding a theatre company Gesher Theatre. Tapping his command of Russian, English and Hebrew, Mark performed many different roles, translated and adapted eight plays for the company and performed everywhere from Lincoln Center to the National Theatre in London as well as major stages in Paris, Rome, and Berlin.

After being cast by Spielberg in Schindler's List, Ivanir moved to London to study with Philippe Gaulier and the actors of the Theater De Complicite. During that time, he landed roles in The Man Who Cried (with Johnny Depp) and Secret Affair, which encouraged him to relocate to Hollywood.

Mark Ivanir has been working as a professional film and television actor in Los Angeles since 2001. His first major film role was in Steven Spielberg's 1993 Oscar winning epic Schindler's List. He then played a pivotal role in The Good Shepherd, directed by Robert De Niro. He has booked over 25 guest star and guest lead roles on television shows such as 24, NYPD Blue, Law and Order, CSI, Monk, The Unit, Boomtown, CSI: NY and many others.

Selected Filmography

2010 **Bunraku** by Guy Moshe

2010 **Holy Rollers** by Kevin Asch

2008 **What Just Happened** by Barry Levinson

2007 **The Hunting Party** by Richard Shepard

2006 **The Good Shepherd** by Robert De Niro

2006 **When Do We Eat?** by Salvador Litvak

2005 **Mr. & Mrs. Smith** by Doug Liman

2004 **The Terminal** by Steven Spielberg

1993 **Schindler's List** by Steven Spielberg

CREDITS

CREW

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Director | ERAN RIKLIS |
| Screenplay | NOAH STOLLMAN |
| Director of photography | RAINER KLAUSMANN |
| Sound | ASHI MILO, GIL TOREN, HOLGER LEHMANN |
| Music | CYRIL MORIN |
| Editing | TOVA ASCHER |
| Costumes | LI ALEMBIK, ADINA BUCUR |
| Set | DAN TOADER, YOEL HERZBERG |
| Production company | 2 TEAM PRODUCTIONS |
| Co-producer | HAIM MECKLBERG, ESTEE YACOV-MECKLBERG, ELIE MEIROVITZ, THANASSIS KARATHANOS, KARL BAUMGARTNER, TUDOR GIURGIU, TALIA KLEINHENDLER |
| Co-production company | PALLAS FILM, EZ FILMS, HAI HUI ENTERTAINMENT, PIE FILMS |

CAST

Acting Role

Name

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| HR Manager | MARK IVANIR |
| Widow | GILA ALMAGOR |
| Weasel | GURI ALFI |
| Boy | NOAH SILVER |
| Consul | ROZINA CAMBOS |
| Vice Consul | JULIAN NEGULESCO |
| Ex-Husband | BOGDAN STANOEVITCH |
| Divorcee | REYMOND AMSALEM |
| The Grandmother | IRINA PETRESCU |
| Daughter | RONI KOREN |
| Driver | PAPIL PANDURU |
| Secretary | DANNA SEMO |
| Nun | SYLWIA DRORI |
| Morgue Worker | OFIR WEIL |