

Long synopsis |

The life of Reuven Abergel tells the story of living in and out of revolutions, the inevitable connexion between the personal and the political and the poetry hiding between struggle and joy. Looking back on his family's history and his commitment to activism and equality for longer than 60 years, this cinematographic portrait enters Reuven's mind and explores the complexities of this iconic Mizrahi activist, historian and philosopher of revolution.

Reuven is one of the few people who refused and fought against the assumptions that were taught to the first generation of Jewish immigrants in Israel. Ruben's imagination and understanding of the political landscape lead him from a young age to engage with his family's history as Mizrahi Jews and the political reality in Israel-Palestine through a revolutionary and critical lens. He looks at his life and his surrounding with the sharpness of a researcher and the passion of a human rights activist. He is interested early on in critical theories on modern nationalism, power relations between the West and the East and institutionalized racism in Israeli society. Through his writings, activism and personal experiences, he is building a complex and uncompromising vision for Israel as a Middle Eastern country.

In the film, his political struggles are always intertwined with his personal life and his surrounding. The story of his upbringing and his sharp political understanding led him to grow as a charismatic social leader able to unite crowds and speak against oppression. His family's struggle as Mizrahi new immigrants in the neighbourhood of Musrara in Jerusalem pushes him to take part in the Black Panthers movement. The need for safe and affordable housing leads him to be part of the tent protests in the 70s. The feeling of being foreign in the land of Jews feeds his desire to fight for Israel to be an inclusive place for immigrants from Arab and African countries. His addiction to drugs and his experience with rehab and repentance motivates him to establish a rehab facility for drug addicts in Lifta. Reuven sees his problems as a direct reflection of the problems of his community and to this day you will find him shouting in a megaphone in protests or comforting the tenants of social housing apartments while he lives in a crumbling one-room

apartment.

The film presents Reuven Abergel as a story of a community, a story of Aliya, a story of the Jewish dream and its crash in Israeli reality, a story of a man's grip on his culture and his resilience in looking at the reality of oppression and acting on it. Despite his political and social struggles, Reuven does not give up on a meaningful and rich life. He cultivates joy through his intense love for Arabic music that first arose in his father's cafe and shares the wisdom and curiosity he inherited from his neighbourhood. His love for art and fashion and his constant rummaging through history books make him a true intellectual, one who lives and studies History and revolution.

Today, at the age of 80, in the last chapter of his life, Reuven is ready to remember and take an honest and vulnerable look at his life. The film seeks to capture his vision of our current societies and to accompany one of the most important voices in Israeli society as he shares his thoughts and aspirations, at the center of which a continuous struggle of a single man walking through the harsh and lonely reality of the diverse social struggles in Israel.