



THANKSGIVING

A film by David Lombroso



**A dysfunctional Jewish-American family
clashes on Thanksgiving**



**After a shocking
revelation shatters
the authenticity of
their traditions**

And the promise of
the American dream





**It's the morning
of Thanksgiving, and
the Abramson family
is falling apart.**



MOSHE (62) is left to juggle his religious practice with his familial obligations, after clumsily dropping the turkey on the floor. **FRAN (59)** is a one-time aspiring ballerina on the verge of a mid-life crisis. **MATT (29)** is a wannabe actor turned bartender, lost in life and looking for purpose. **BEX (26)** is an ambitious graduate student who's dreading what will be their first family gathering after coming out as non-binary.

Surrounded by a raucous ensemble of extended family, friends and lovers, our heroes navigate an increasingly complex web of personal desire and collective misadventure until the shocking revelation of their real ancestral origin throws into question everything they thought they knew about who they are.

Synopsis



Thanksgiving's supposed to be a quiet, wholehearted, family holiday. But with the Abramsons, things just don't ever seem to turn out that way. Just moments after HELEN, the elderly matriarch, warns FRAN, her middle aged daughter, how disappointed she'd be if her favorite holiday was ruined, MOSHE, Fran's (newly) religious husband, clumsily drops the turkey on the floor. Though Moshe resists, Fran insists he go out and get a new turkey before everyone arrives, a suburb-spanning quest he reluctantly accepts.

Meanwhile MATT--Fran and Moshe's son--is late for the train, causing his non-binary sibling BEX and their girlfriend IRIS to have to wait for him in Grand Central. While impatiently waiting for Matt, Bex frets to Iris about having to deal with their family's misgendering. Iris assures Bex that everything will be okay. But everything is not okay. Not only is Bex misgendered from the moment they arrive, but soon after, on a tour with Bex's grandma Helen, Iris discovers a distressing photo in Helen's old album: of Helen's father Wilhelm wearing the uniform of the Hitler Youth. Could it be? That Bex's Jewish Great Grandfather was actually a Nazi?

Though Helen tries her best to explain, there's no way around the truth: that they were never really Jews at all, having escaped the fall of Nazi Germany under assumed identities, posing as Jewish refugees. Thunder booms in the distance as Fran recoils in shock, as Moshe storms out in a fury.

In that moment of supreme uncertainty, the lights in the entire neighborhood suddenly go out, a blackout, induced by lightning from the storm. It just so happens that the night is also host to a recently discovered meteor shower which, once the power is out, comes into magnificent view for all to see. The Abramson's head outside and look up to the meteor shower, a moment of shock followed immediately thereafter by a moment of awe. Up there in the cosmos, as close to the divine as anything can ever be.

אברהם את יהודה בשמו

Characters



MOSHE

A reluctant patriarch, textbook schlemiel, started wearing a yarmulke after growing closer to God following his father's death.



FRAN

A tense yet sensitive, one time aspiring ballerina that's just about ready to let loose from the life to which she's long since resigned.

MATT

A wannabe actor turned bartender who's lost and looking for purpose as he nears his 30th birthday and the perceived onslaught of mature adulthood.



BEX

An anxious, non-binary graduate student who's just about had enough of everyone in the family misgendering them.

Supporting Characters



IRIS

Bex's girlfriend--kind, charming, supportive--an outsider who serves as our eyes and insight into the neuroses and idiosyncrasy of the Abramson clan.



DON

The hunky man next door, to whom Fran finds herself distressingly attracted after he makes a pass at her just days before moving away with his family.

HELEN

Fran's mother, a stern, tight-lipped holocaust survivor who's been hiding a deep family secret her entire life.



BARRY

Fran's brother, a pretentious Harvard professor, their mother's favorite child.



SHAKTI

Barry's partner, Scandinavian, like a new-age Stevie Nicks, cultural appropriation incarnate.



JANE

Fran's cousin, annoyingly perfect, unapologetic virtue signaler, married to a successful Israeli tech guy.



LILLY

Tal and Jane's daughter, an aspiring astrophysicist who possesses a wisdom far beyond her years.



JULIE

A childhood friend Matt runs into on the way home. There's instant chemistry, even though she's going through a rough patch of her own.



TAL

Jane's Husband, ex Israeli special forces, successful tech entrepreneur whose startup was acquired by Google.

Film Comps

THE FAREWELL



A SERIOUS MAN



Director's Statement

לברוך את יהוה בשם



Thanksgiving is an exploration of the contemporary Jewish experience, a community that has largely assimilated into American life yet still retains a unique practice, culture, and connection to their ancestry and traditions. As a secular American Jew, I've often considered my place in the continuum of Jewish experience, living in a place and period of religious and personal liberty, while also still painfully aware of the dark shadow that is the memory of the Holocaust, a horror survived by both my Grandmothers.

At its core, *Thanksgiving* is a film about intersectionality, about what really makes us who we are. From Moshe and his religious practice, to Bex and their gender nonconformity, the characters in the film are all trying to reconcile who others believe they are with who they know themselves to be. On an individual level, their identity is to each their own. But then, the aspects of their identity that they all share--their Jewishness, their Americanness--is what forms the crux of the film's conflict. When the family finds out that a supposedly Jewish ancestor was really a German Nazi, their origin story is thrown into question. If Grandpa was a Nazi, what does that make us?

In this historical moment of divisive, weaponized rhetoric and public policy, it's imperative that we investigate the components of what makes us who we are, as individuals, as a community, and as a society at large. But then, beyond identity, *Thanksgiving* is a story about faith, about desire, about love and compassion as the only thing that can ever really make us whole. Above all, that's what I hope the audience will take away from the film. That though we may all each have our own unique sense of self, in the end, no matter where our ancestors came from, what gender identity we express, what religion we practice, it's only love, compassion, and understanding that will allow us to heal, to grow, to see that we're all in it together.



Writer & Director

David Lombroso is an award winning filmmaker and a native New Yorker, the son of an Israeli father and an American Jewish mother, the two dominant perspectives of contemporary Jewish experience.

In addition to his work as a writer and director of short films, commercials and music videos, David produced the 2016 feature film *Like Lambs* and distributed the 2016 feature doc *Oriented* under his impact distribution label PICTURED, eventually [selling the film](#) to Netflix at the Toronto International Film Festival.

Thanksgiving is David's first feature as a writer and director.



THANK
YOU

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