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'Bau, Artist at War' to be screened at Movies of Delray on February 20

Staff Report

3–4 minutes

'Bau, Artist at War' is the inspiring true story of Joseph Bau, artist, forger, Holocaust survivor. Using his artistic skills in the camps, Joseph stays alive and helps hundreds to escape. Miraculously, he finds love in the midst of despair. A love that will last a lifetime. Years later, when called to be a key witness in the trial of the brutal Nazi officer Franz Gruen who tortured him and killed his father, he is thrust back into vivid memories of the Holocaust. Now, he calls upon this love and a resilience of spirit to face the ultimate demon of his past.



Courtesy of Paramount Global Content Distribution

Emile Hirsch and Inbar Lavi as Joseph and Rebecca Bau in the Wedding Scene from "Bau, Artist at War". Courtesy of Paramount Global Content Distribution

The film opens In 1971 in Tel Aviv in Joseph Bau,'s office. He is in his early 50's, considered to be the Walt Disney of Israel, a cartoonist, graphic artist, fine artist and forger. In a secret life, he is the top forger for the Mossad, the Israeli Intelligence agency. One day a mysterious man turns up at this studio. Joseph learns that Franz Gruen has been brought to trial for the third time for crimes against humanity in Vienna, Austria, where he was acquitted twice before. Joseph is needed as a witness to strengthen the conviction at the Vienna trial. However, Joseph, who savagery suffered at the hands of Gruen during his Plaszow internment, triggers post-traumatic stress and causes him to question his ability to testify.

Flashback to Plaszow, Poland, 1943, and the atrocities of the Camp. Unthinkable horrors define young Joseph's days, including his father's execution. Joseph is kept alive because he can draw maps, signs, and propaganda posters for the Camp Nazi Commander. Also secretly working with Oscar Schindler, the Krakow Resistance enlists Joseph's talents to forge passports under the Nazis' noses to help smuggle prisoners to freedom. This was his primary focus, until he met Rebecca. Their love affair grows and they marry in the women's barracks. Their world was shattered when the camp was liquidated and Rebecca was sent to Auschwitz.





Courtesy of Paramount Global Content Distribution

Joseph and Rebecca Bau in Israel. Courtesy of Paramount Global Content Distribution

Back to 1971 – Joseph meets with his Mossad handler, who encourages him to testify at Gruen's trial. The ramifications of Joseph's search for Rebecca after the war, and that of Joseph's testimony at the trial are interwoven to bring a thrilling finale to this extraordinary tale.

The film will be presented during the 8th Annual Judy Levis Krug Boca Raton Jewish Film Festival at Movies of Delray on Tuesday, February 20th at 2 p.m. Joseph Bau's daughters Clila and Hadasa Bau will be the guest speakers.

For more information, visit <https://levisjcc.org/filmfestival>