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TLV FORMATS 2017

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Georgi R. Chakarov
Editor-in-chief

Things Will Happen Here Before Anywhere Else

one can beat that.

That is what makes Israeli formats so easy to adapt in any part of the world – from a very religious and conservative Malaysia to colorful India, modern Europe and sleek USA. All of these and more than a hundred other countries now look to Israel when they search for quality content, less than ten years after *In Treatment* put the country on the world television map.

Nearly ten years after *In Treatment* (*BeTipul*) redefined HBO and started the Israeli conquest of the US television market, people in this industry are still trying to unravel “Israel’s secret recipe” to being one of the most dominant content creators on a global level. I believe the answer is somewhere in there, in the very essence of this show and all the other hit series and formats coming out of this country. In one word – daring.

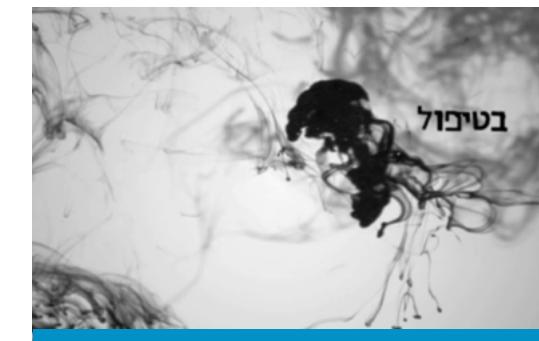
There is no other TV market in the world taking more risks with innovative, unforeseen, and in the case of drama - controversial shows challenging our understanding of the world and the human soul. Another thing that sticks out when I think Israeli content is its universal appeal. How do I define this? Let’s say you watch a bunch of shows from different countries – you would always be able to recognize which one came from the US, UK, Nordics, Turkey, but the appeal and production value of Israeli shows is so universal that it is very hard to pin them down to a certain country, unless it is mentioned in the credits. No

Having built an immaculate reputation (without major marketing campaigns and overblown investments), Israeli creators continue to define the global agenda of television content. More and more local companies are building their own creative teams, attracting young and driven people of various backgrounds with the goal to create shows that burst with a wow effect on the international TV scene.

At the same time, the domestic market remains equally important and challenging as it enters a new (revolutionary) phase as Keshet and Reshet become separate, full-blown channels this year; as new players enter the pay TV market and threaten the domination of HOT and Yes and open new opportunities for Israeli creators; as Netflix is already commissioning shows directly from local creators, and as changes in local legislation will guarantee greater IP revenues for the independent producers.

Small as it may be, Israel is certainly one of the most-vibrant, competitive and innovative markets in the television world right now. Things will happen here before anywhere else and we will hear about them first, here in Tel Aviv.

Welcome to TLV Formats Conference 2017!





Tanin partners with Global Agency and Italian producer

Global Agency is now selling the original Tanin Productions format *Thank You*. The factual entertainment format gives famous people a chance to have a glance back to their past to remember and express their gratitude to a person who helped them to be the great success they are today. Additionally, Tanin entered into an exclusive partnership with Triangle Production which now represents their content in Italy.



Macedonian *In Treatment* makes its debut

The Macedonian adaptation of *In Treatment* launches on leading commercial net Sitel next week. Season 1 counts 45 episodes.

Meanwhile, Israeli format *The Big Picture* made its debut on Fox in Turkey this summer and Keshet's *Sure and Insure* was just launched on TVP1 in Poland.



Armoza Formats opens LatAm office

Armoza Formats opened its first office for Latin America in May marking the a key expansion for the their business in the region. Karina Dolgiej is heading the office in Miami as Sales Director for LatAm. Dolgiej has over 20 years of experience, most recently working as International Sales Executive at Comarex.



TV anchor breaks into tears as Channel 1 closes

TV anchor Geula Even broke into tears while reporting that the Israel Broadcasting Authority was broadcasting its final news program on May 9. Channel 1 was then replaced by the new public net Kan which launched on May 15. So far, its ratings have been similar to those of Channel 1.



Yes names Gal-Raday VP of Content, launches Yes Studios

Yes has appointed Koby Gal-Raday as its Vice President of Content. He will be responsible for the company's original film, series and documentary productions. Gal-Raday was last active at ProSiebenSat.1 Media (2014-2016) as SVP International Co-Production & Documentaries. Before that he was EVP Drama, Comedy, Documentary and Cinema at Reshet for six years. He was also co-founder and co-MD of July August Productions. Yes also announced the founding of Yes Studios, which will be led by Danna Stern, VP Acquisitions, Channels and Programming.



Red Arrow and Studio Glam cooperate in the US

Red Arrow Entertainment Group announced a partnership with Studio Glam US, the US arm of the Israeli content and production company which was launched in September 2016 with a focus on developing content for the American market. Within this partnership, Red Arrow will create and launch international formats together with Studio Glam US. For these jointly developed formats, a co-production agreement for the US territory is also part of the deal. The new formats will be distributed worldwide by Red Arrow International.



HBO buys Euphoria, Netflix commissions show from *Fauda* creators

Israeli series *Euphoria*, which was broadcast on HOT about five years ago, is due to be adapted for HBO in the US. The series tells the story of high school students dealing with drugs, violence and sex.

Following the huge success of *Fauda*, Netflix announced in August that it has ordered straight to series an untitled project from *Fauda* creators Lior Raz and Avi Issacharoff, in which Raz will also star. A second series from the critically-acclaimed team, *Hit and Run*, is also in development.



Uri and Ella was the big winner at the Television Awards

Israel's Television Awards were handed out in March and drama series *Uri and Ella* was the biggest winner as it took the award for Best Drama and statuettes in 5 other categories. *Sisters* from Tedy Productions was named Best Comedy Series. Dori Media's *Dumb* took the award for Best Daily Series and two other awards. *The Voice 4* was named Best Reality and *Still Standing - Best Gameshow*.



Pregnant & Platonic travels around the world

Pregnant & Platonic has been making waves this year with deals in the UK, Australia, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Finland. My Entertainment has secured the rights for the US. The show created by Gil Formats matches singles both looking to co-parent without marriage or sex. Once (and if) they choose a platonic partner to have a child with, we follow each couple over a year as they attempt to become a family.



Russian adaptation for Israeli *Mermaids*

Russian prodco Sreda is currently shooting the adaptation of *Mermaids* (*Betoolot*) for Perviy (Channel One) after licensing the format from ADD Content Agency. The Israeli original is set to return for a third season on HOT.

Another Israeli format will hit the Russian TV screens this fall as family entertainment net CTC will launch the local version of Studio Glam's *The Extra Mile*.



Keshet wins the 12th button

Keshet and Reshet are preparing for the launch of their 24/7 broadcasts as they will leave Channel 2 in November. At the tender in April, Keshet won the most-coveted position at button 12 with an offer of 25 million shekels. Reshet will take the 13th position after offering 7.77 million and Channel 10 will be number 14 on the remote control after offering 1.54 million. However, in August it became clear that there is only one frequency for the former Channel 2 nets on the DVB-T multiplex - a solution is expected by November.

Pines joins Keshet; Channel 10 finds replacements

As Keshet prepares for its 24/7 launch in November, the channel landed a major deal with Channel 10 star Guy Pines. He is expected to move his popular late night show to his new home network. From Channel 10 recently confirmed that they will replace his format with a new project titled *Radar* which will be hosted by Sivan Klein and Ariel Margalit.

TV production platform eTribez raises \$3.5m

Startup eTribez has raised \$3.5 million, Globes reported in June. The Israeli company is developing systems for casting and managing production for the television and movie industry. The CE Ventures fund led the round, with participation from the Inimiti fund, a previous investor in eTribez. CE Ventures manages a total of \$80 million, and specializes in early-stage investments in media, communications, and Internet companies. Founded in 2012, eTribez has raised a total of \$5 million, including the current round.



Lower budgets in the pay TV sector

TheMarker reported in July that the increased competition on the pay TV market in Israel with the entrance of new players will lead to lower budgets for original Israeli productions. Currently, HOT and Yes are obliged to invest 8% of their revenues in local production which makes about 320 million shekels per year. However, the incoming OTT operators are excluded from this rule due to the fact that the legislation does not recognize them. As HOT and Yes continue to lose revenues to the competition, this would also mean less money for Israeli productions - calculations show about 20 million less in 2017.

TLV Formats Conference: Bigger and Better in 2017

The TLV Formats Conference is back for its second edition this year. The 2017 edition will welcome more attendees from all over the world and offer them a much richer program, as **Adam Berkowitz**, Chairman of the Conference, told Stanislav Kimchev over the phone from Los Angeles several days ahead of the event.

Mr. Berkowitz, International TV Formats Conference will be held for the second time this September in Tel Aviv.

How was the idea for this major event born?

Israel is a thriving market for television and we weren't sure that everyone internationally were aware of that, so the purpose of the conference is to promote the creators of Israel, Israeli television in general, the specific producers and the wonderful products that come out of Israel. We know that the United States is a thriving marketplace for this product, but we weren't sure the rest of the world knew. So that's the purpose of the conference.

The Conference was the government's idea and they asked me to lead the conference in terms of giving it prestige and in terms of my knowledge base of television. And I did it because I really believe in Israeli television market. Not only is it lucrative, but some great product comes out of it.

The main objective is to introduce the international community to the Israeli creators, writers, directors, production companies and their product. And it's a conference, where everyone can gather and have meetings and actually meet the different companies, as well as the guests.

What were the results of the first edition last year?

I believe that during the first edition last year many delegates became aware of the television business and they formed their own contacts with the Israeli producers and the production companies and the creators. I had no input in that follow-up, because my own relationship was only to American television.

What are your expectations for this year's event? How many delegates are expected to come to Tel Aviv?

Last year there were 80 delegates coming from around the world, and I believe this year there are over 100 delegates coming from over 20 different countries. The conference was successful and it's continuing to grow. The biggest numbers are from Germany, Hungary, China and the United States.

Also last year was just the first year and it might have been less structured, and this year it will be more structured. For instance, last year I was the only guest speaker, this year John Landgraf is coming, who is the chairman of FX Networks; Mike Lombardo is coming, he is the former president of HBO. Michael Rotenberg is coming, he is a very big comedy producer, and Doug Herzog is coming, who is former president of Via-

► ADAM BERKOWITZ is the Co-Head of the Television department at leading entertainment and sports agency Creative Artists Agency (CAA). Berkowitz has been instrumental in packaging and selling numerous television programs, including *Seinfeld*, *Everybody Loves Raymond*, *Arrested Development*, *Two and a Half Men*, *True Detective* and Netflix's *House of Cards*, among others. Additionally, he sold the first Israeli series to Netflix - *The Greenhouse*. Recently, he was responsible for packaging and selling the critically acclaimed Israeli series *Fauda* and *The Good Cop*, to Netflix.

Prior to joining CAA in 1997, Berkowitz was an Agent at the William Morris Agency. He passed the New York Bar in 1989. Berkowitz currently serves on the Board of the Hollywood Radio & Television Society as well as being on the board of the New York Television Festival. He is also very active in The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and is the Chairman of the Entertainment Division for the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles.





International TV Formats Conference 2016

com. So we have a lot of strong American presence with a different point of American view, which we can share with all the other countries. Also Ben Silverman is coming, who is a very important producer and formerly ran NBC. I think that the stature of the conference has increased greatly in just one year.

What are the highlights in this year's agenda? Will you bring back your format contest this year?

They will bring back the format contest, yes. I think that the highlight is to have more exposure for more and more delegates and countries to understand how the Israeli television market is thriving and can work in their country as well in terms of local production of these shows.

Israeli television formats have reached new heights in recent years, screened on TV networks worldwide. To what do you attribute the boom of Israeli content internationally?

I believe that the characters that are on Israeli television translate throughout

most of the world, or at least, the Western world. The shows are also done on a budget, because they don't have a lot of money to produce them, so they're very character based, as opposed to action-based. So they easily translate to many different societies that have a similar society structure. Because Israel is a very Westernized country, a lot of the issues that are dealt with in the shows appeal directly to the people in the United States and I believe they will also deal directly to people in other countries. Because television is successful because of the characters. Every week or every day you're going back and watching the same people and you have to have a relationship with them and feel that you can relate to them and the way the characters are portrayed in Israeli television translates internationally extremely well.

Can you draw some parallels between the Israeli and US TV market?

The only parallel that I can draw is that the creators in the Israeli market,

what they create seems to have a great reception in the United States, as I said because of the relatability of the characters and the situations and the story lines.

You are also the Co-Head of the television department at CAA. You've been working with many of the world's leading television producers, writers, and directors. How has the TV business changed in the past several years and what is the future of TV?

The business has changed rapidly and when I started a long time ago, there were only three television networks, and right now there are over 400 scripted shows. The outlets for television used to just be limited to broadcast, and now it's basic cable and it's premium cable, and it's streaming companies like Amazon and Netflix and Hulu, so there's a very very very great demand for content, and it's hard enough to keep up with the demand and find great content creators, so television is more in demand than ever before. ■



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The Final Four

The non-linear talent show

In the days when our beloved linear television seems to be slowly fading away, Armoza Formats have created *The Final Four* – a format which they define as “a non-linear talent show” that they hope will reignite the TV screens. This pitch has been quite successful so far as the show was recently sold to Fox in the US and five other major markets. Now we dig deeper and try to find out what makes this format stick out.

Yako Molhov focused on the international appeal of *The Final Four* in his conversation with CEO **Avi Armoza**, while Georgi R. Chakarov discussed the creative process and logic behind the concept of the show with Head of Development **Nehama Cohen**.



Avi Armoza,
CEO Armoza Formats

Avi, congratulations on your latest deal with US network Fox for *The Final Four*. Will this show turn into ‘the next American Idol’?

We are definitely in the main stage of TV content, and in the most crowded space as well. We are proud of the fact that Fox has taken a risk by picking *The Final Four* instead of focusing on something they have seen work time and time again. Nevertheless, we are in the business of not knowing, but we do know one thing for sure. In order to push the industry forward and create new ways of storytelling, you need to have the courage to take risks.

What are the main elements of *The Final Four* that you think will lead to its success on the international market? What are its advantages compared to other talent shows?

The Final Four takes the most loved elements of singing competitions and puts a unique twist on it. For example, looking around you can see that people love auditions. There are always new people with new emotional stories that viewers can relate to. For existing shows, this is a very small part of the format and it always happens in the beginning. We found a way to take the audition process and make it the whole show. In *The Final Four*, each episode will feature auditions.

Another element that will lead to the success of *The Final Four* is the non-linear structure of the format. The linear timeline has become

very predictable and shows are losing their viewers because of it. The structure of *The Final Four* allows for drama to happen every 15 minutes, keeping viewers on the edge of their seats throughout the whole episode.

The Final Four was launched at MIPTV 2017 and has already been sold to several countries so far - the United States, Russia, Italy, Spain, France and Norway. Which will be the first country to launch the show? What other territories are you negotiating with?

We believe that Russia and the US will be among the first to launch the show. We already have deals in 10 territories and following Fox’s announcement; we are negotiating a few more.

You have sold so many formats to so many countries around the world. Everyone in this business says that the US market is the one that really counts and drives sales worldwide. Do you share this opinion and what does your experience show? How hard is it to sell a show to a US network nowadays?

As a global company, we put an individual emphasis on working with each of our clients. Every territory has their own needs. Every territory has their own budget. So it is very important that you have a saleable show.

That being said, for sure the budgets in American productions are the biggest and therefore, bring the best production value.



Nehama Cohen
Head of Development
Armoza Formats

Nehama, you are among the creators of *The Final Four*. How was the idea for the show born?

After working and creating together for many years, the development team has this incredible dynamic. On one of our intense creative retreats, we threw around a lot of ideas as we focused on the needs of the market. We know that primetime shows are always in demand and that singing competitions are relatable for all viewers. It is a space we have wanted to explore and put our unique spin on for a while. We knew it was risky but at Armoza Formats we like a challenge. Once the idea sparked, it took off and grew into what is now *The Final Four*. We knew straight away that it was the one.

How long did it take you to develop the full concept and elements of the show?

One of the strengths of Armoza Formats is that we are a small and independent company with a quick turnaround. The original process took around two months. While we were fully developing the concept of the show, we worked on the creation of the pilot. After the pilot, we continued to finalize the details, taking all of our learnings and putting them into the bible and the concept of the show.

This show seems to go against the logic of 'traditional' talent shows. Why do you think this makes it interesting for the viewers?

Though the show seems to go "against the logic of traditional talent shows", it actually maintains all of the most loved aspects of singing competitions just with a unique twist. Not only as creators but also as viewers of these shows, we felt that the linear timeline has become very predictable and the big shows are losing their viewers because of this. For example, viewers expect that the elimination will only happen at the end of the episode. We don't believe in presenting more of the same and we believe that the audience will love this format as anything can happen at any time.

We see in the numbers how much audiences love auditions. Normally, this process is very small, yet very emotional and draws people deeper into the show. We found a way to make sure that the auditions last all season, and will let viewers follow the final four through the emotional highs and lows. The fact that this lasts means that you can always jump on board. If you are sitting at home watching from your couch and you feel like you deserve a chance to be part of *The Final Four*, you still can. When the auditions are all the start, you never get a chance to get involved after or know who your competition is.

Another thing fans will like about the show

is how direct it is. The fate of each person rests in their own hands as they must decide what to sing and who they would like to compete against. Normally, it is the judges who pick but this new take will place the power in the hands of the competitors, making it much more passionate.

Actually, does television still need big talent shows?

Definitely. At the end of the day, people like to sit with their family and friends and be entertained. People love the emotional connection that these talent shows provide- both with the contestants and each other. There is so much variety on TV today but at the end of the day, you continue to see these big talent shows. They have become a pillar of what TV stands for.

Armoza has built its reputation selling third-party formats but now it is selling more and more own concepts. How big is your team and how does the magic of creating a new show happen at Armoza?

Four years ago when I joined Armoza, Elwin Vizetelly de Groot, Senior Creative Director, had already been part of the team and luckily, we hit it off creatively. Moshiko Cohen, Senior Creative Director, joined a year later and now we work in this incredible team. Recently, Avital Epstein, Development Executive, has joined our team as well, providing insight on new creative spaces and fresh ideas about digital platforms.

The company as a whole is made up of very creative people. Avi, as a boss, helps to foster our creativity and always takes them to the next level- whether during our creative retreats or by making ideas even bigger.

What would you say are the most important elements of a format which could turn it into a huge hit?

There are three main elements I believe a show needs to have to turn into a huge hit. The first is that it must be based on truth. When developing a new show, we always think to ourselves, "What is the truth in this?" When you figure this out, you have also acknowledged what will make it relatable to viewers and how it will remind people of real life.

The second element a format must do is to bring a unique point of view. There are so many out there that many end up lost in a sea of other formats. To become a big hit, you must be distinctive and creative in a way that will set you apart. If you don't have something different to say, you probably won't be heard.

The third element is to keep it simple. If you can't explain the show in a sentence, then you have a problem. ■

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FAUDA

The hard road to international success

The world is talking about *Fauda* - the ultra-realistic series about the relations between Israel and Palestine, political affairs, personal relationships, war and terrorism. The controversial story won the approval of both Israelis and Arabs when it premiered on Yes in 2015. A year and half later, Netflix picked up the show and brought to the international scene, turning *Fauda* into one of the most-popular and critically acclaimed series of 2017.

Co-creator **Avi Issacharoff** tells Georgi R. Chakarov that the road to this huge global success was very long and hard as Israeli networks were unwilling to take a chance with such a controversial topic. But after more than four years of development and production, the show finally made it on air and has now turned into one of the biggest success stories of Israeli television, with a third season already confirmed for Netflix.

Avi, you are a popular journalist working for The Times of Israel, Walla and you also have a radio show. What prompted you to jump into the world of scripted TV with *Fauda*?

Seven years ago, Lior and I met not far from Ramallah by accident and we started to talk about the Israeli special forces and the Palestinian reality. He said that he wants to do a film about it and I told him that I had a dream about doing a TV show on that subject and this is how we started to work on *Fauda*.

My experience with television before that was very journalistic. The only experience that I had was doing documentaries for different TV networks. So, when we had the idea we went to a production company and they hooked us up with script writer Moshe Zonder and we started to work together, trying to understand what the story would be

and how it is going to look like and after that we started to pitch it to different networks but they said No one after the other.

After three negative answers that we got from Keshet, Reshet and Channel 10, we went to Yes and they gave us a positive answer.

According to reports, *Fauda* was developed by you and Lior Raz based on your experiences doing military service in the IDF's Duvdevan Unit. Is *Fauda* more based on real events or is it more fictional stories?

Actually, Lior was part of the Israeli special forces and my contribution was my journalistic background related to the West Bank and the Palestinian reality, having been to all those places and speaking with Palestinian officials, civilians and even terrorists. So, we tried to do it as realistic as possible.

How long did it take you to develop the idea and start the shooting process?

That was about three and a half years. It was really a very long process, then we started to shoot it and everything took us four and a half years. The reason it was so long was that we were very slow and even after Yes said "yes" we had nearly two years before they gave us the final green light after two years of development. Only after that we formed a writers' room which worked for about 18 months and after that we went into production.



▲ AVI ISSACHAROFF is co-creator of *Fauda* which Israeli critics describe as "the best action-thriller show that was ever made in Israel". It won the Israeli Academy Award for the Best TV Drama of 2015 and was sold to Netflix in late 2016 where it became a global phenomenon. Issacharoff and his partner Lior Raz are currently developing two other projects for Netflix, as well as season 3 of *Fauda*.

Issacharoff is an award-winning journalist and currently works as the Middle East analyst for Walla and The Times of Israel. He also has a radio show on IDF Radio. He has co-authored two award-winning books related to Middle East affairs.

After the series premiered what was the reaction in Israel?

The reaction was quite positive and that was a surprise. We thought there would be a very negative response due to the nature of the show but many of the people who saw it liked it. After the premiere I got many calls from people congratulating us on the good job. I was very, very happy with the results.

***Fauda* was picked up by Netflix last year and became an instant hit. At what point did they come into play? Did you pitch the show to them?**

Netflix got into the picture many months after the first season was aired in Israel. They did not contact us but picked the series from Yes. After it

launched on Netflix, we were again surprised at the positive reactions coming from all over the world.

You now have two new projects in development at Netflix - *Hit and Run* and a yet untitled project. How did you partner up with them?

Lior and I had two new ideas and we went to Los Angeles and we pitched them to different networks and that's how Netflix came into play and picked them both. And with *Fauda* 3 we will have three projects for Netflix. At this point, I cannot reveal any details about the third season but it has been confirmed.

About the other projects, I can only confirm what has been reported in the media already and cannot elaborate further on those projects. The first one is about a joint Israeli-American secret service operation: Mossad and CIA are trying to hunt down an international terrorist. The other one is a kind of a personal story that develops into an espionage story.

It seems politics and espionage will remain the focus of your upcoming projects. There have already been a number of series coming out of Israel in that genre that have been very successful internationally. How do you explain this?

I'm not really sure why but there are so many special stories to tell in Israel related to the security background. When you combine the creativity of the writers and the good stories that happen in Israel related to politics, espionage and security issues; all of this creates very good conditions to develop very good TV productions.

Television is a relatively new ground for you. Is this where you would like to develop in the future?

Yes, it is a new territory for me and for now I want to be here but I don't know about the future. I am simply enjoying the moment. I divide my time between being a journalist and a TV creator. Right now I'm busy with gathering a team of writers for the new shows. So far it is not certain if we will be working with an Israeli producer but we will be working with American producers for sure. ■



Alon Aranya:

Spotting the hits behind the stories

Alon Aranya is not just a successful producer and writer of American series. He is also the one who did what many thought impossible at the time – sell *Hostages* as a “paper format” and turning it into one of the most-acclaimed US television productions. Recently, he did it all over again by selling *Your Honor* well ahead of its premiere in Israel to CBS Television Studios. The US remake is now in production with Peter Moffat writing the script and Robert and Michelle King producing, while the Israeli original has already been renewed for a second season by Yes.

Alon and his company have also been responsible for importing and adapting a number of scripted formats into the US market. In this interview with Georgi R. Chakarov, he reveals some of the secrets behind his success.

Alon, Scripted World has been very successful in importing scripted formats into the US market. What makes foreign ideas interesting to the US networks?

Scripted World has been very successful with adapting scripted formats from around the world for the US market. This has to do with identifying shows and stories that we think resonate with American viewers. I have been doing this for 5-6 years now and I have set up close to 40 shows with networks and studios – most of them based on scripted formats or an original adaptation from overseas.

Every year, each of the Big 5 American networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, CW) are developing somewhere around a hundred pilots of comedy and drama combined. So, we are talking about 500 developments a year. That's a big pipeline to fill up and what we've seen happen in the last 10 years or more is that studios and networks have been a little more reluctant to take on original ideas because it's much more time consuming and generally harder to get them fully developed in a short period of time. In network television particularly there is a great need for source material because the development phase is very short – about three months to develop a pilot script and the world of the show – that's a hard task to pull off in such a short time. Source material such as formats helps everyone involved in the creative process, especially the writer start their work with some kind of a story blueprint as opposed to a blank page.

How do you identify the formats that could appeal to the networks? Do you look for certain criteria when selecting a format for potential development?

It definitely helps to have a strong background in writing and story development. Before I started writing and producing TV, I worked in the 90's in the film business as a development executive, and then started writing. In essence I've always worked around story. So, when I started looking at international scripted formats I was looking at stories and I was looking at what I could do with those plot lines in a US adaptation. That helped me look at shows not only for what they currently are, but also for what they could be in a US remake. I believe the reason I've set up so many shows is that unlike other players in this arena I offer our US buyers an actual pitch on a possible US adaptation and not just hope they will figure it out after watching a few episodes.

You are also one of the people behind the huge success of *Hostages*; just one of the several Israeli hit formats in the US. To what do you attribute the success of Israeli shows in particular in America?

Hostages is a perfect example of how my writing background helped bring this project to life. *Hostages* was sold based on my pilot spec script adapted from the original Israeli script before it was shot in Israel. There was no format to look at, but we had my script and my pitch and that's how *Hostages* started its journey



I look at shows not only for what they currently are, but also for what they could be in a US remake

to a series order at CBS. Without a strong story background this would've never happened.

I think there is great talent in Israel with lots of motivation to create shows that will go beyond its borders because Israel is a small market. Much like the thinking in the hi-tech world. Besides *Hostages*, Israel is the country that brought *Hatufim/Prisoners of War*, *In Treatment*, *Fauda* and now we have *Your Honor*. Those are all interesting, bold, fresh shows coming out of this small country. The other reason Israeli content enjoys strong exports is the amount of players that are working on exporting Israeli IP. The more people you have active in exporting content, the more transactions you will eventually record.

Indeed, the number of players coming from all over the world and trying to import content into the US is constantly growing. However, what else than a great idea is needed to get a commission?

I think all good shows have great ideas, but I think the shows I mentioned not only have a great idea; they have a great execution. TV is not about ideas, it's about execution. One of the oldest lines in Hollywood about ideas goes like this: "Ideas? Everybody has one." Ideas are generally not worth much since you can't protect the rights of any particular idea, you can only protect the execution of an idea. What made *Mad Men* an amazing show is not the idea but rather the brilliant execution.

Beyond a great execution, it seems most shows today need to attach more elements to actually get a series order. Those elements like in the film business can be a director or lead actor. Television traditionally was only about the writing. These days Television looks more and more like 6-10 hour movies and as such they require a bigger package.

I agree that the packaging is important, but at the same time you have also sold several "paper formats". Are they harder to pitch compared to the ones that have been already produced?

Yes, and I still do that. *Your Honor* was sold when it was on paper and *Hostages* was the first "paper format" sale in the US. Back then, people promised me that I would never be able to sell a show from Israel on paper. I sold it faster than I sold most of our produced formats. As a writer-producer, to me there is no difference if the show is on paper, or if it has already been produced. It doesn't matter because I'm pitching the same story. In the case of *Your Honor*, my pitch brought to the table Robert and Michelle King of Kingsize Productions and Peter Moffat. I didn't need a format for that. So, it's all about the strength of the story, the ability to identify it and put together a strong pitch for it.

Is it easier to make an original series or adapt a format then?

The challenge with writing an original is that you need to come up with everything from scratch. With a format you have some kind of blueprint, even if you only use the basic premise, it's still valuable. I'm currently developing my next show in Europe. I'm writing an original piece and it's definitely a longer process but clearly very gratifying. While it's faster to develop a series based on a format, it doesn't make that development more likely to get a series production.



Your Honor

What are some of the projects that you are currently working on?

Besides *Your Honor*, which I'm producing with Michelle and Robert King and Peter Moffat writing, I'm also working on an adaptation of a Dutch format entitled *Holland's Hope* that I sold when it was still in development in Holland. The adaptation is called *Kilroy County* and it will be produced by Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor (*Sideways*, *About Schmidt* and *The Descendants*), together with director Miguel Arteta and writer Roberto Benabib. We have several more adaptations of European formats in the works, both for network and cable.

What would you say are the current trends on the scripted market and how has the production boom changed the business?

The business has changed in the past two years in ways it has not changed in the decade before that. We have far more buyers now and there are between 450 and 500 scripted shows being made in the US every year so naturally people think of it as a boom. However, selling shows and getting them produced has never been more challenging due to the stiff competition among the buyers. It used to be much more segregated with premium and basic cable, and now it seems like everyone is looking for that unique, noisy show and everybody is trying to outdo each other. Said in other

words everyone wants to be HBO, or Netflix or a version of that. Also, with plenty of talent moving over from a challenging film industry to Television, we can see a cultural shift as far as how TV shows are being set up. Traditionally, shows were always set up with writers pitching the shows to the networks on their own or with a producer. I've sold plenty of shows as a producer without a writer attached. But in this competitive marketplace, it's harder to set up a show without attaching additional elements such as a director or actor. This has always been the common practice in the film business but a newer phenomenon in TV.

But in terms of the money that is being spent on scripted content, do you think that this is a sustainable business model in the long term?

For example, when we look at the multi-billion loans Netflix is taking just to make series one wonders will they ever be able to pay that money back.

Generally it will be hard to sustain this level of output and have enough eyeballs to justify it. We are already seeing some players exiting the scripted arena, players like A+E, Pivot and Seeso in the US as well as other digital platforms in other countries that couldn't sustain a scripted business. So on the one hand, I would expect additional outlets to merge or

TV is not about ideas, it's about execution.

shut down in the next 2-3 years, and on the other hand have players like Netflix who are doubling down on content and talent as a means to disrupting the traditional TV business model and emerging as an indispensable content player around the world. Only recently they lured Shonda Rhimes away from ABC and they are expected to continue their aggressive creative expansion. Netflix wants to be everything content, a one-stop shop if you may. Their ability to sustain this business model also depends on how many players will be forced to exit the scripted business.

Actually Netflix themselves despite their constant need for fresh titles are staying away from the format business. How do you explain this?

Netflix is currently in production on adaptations of a Russian format as well as an Israeli format, so they are not 100% out of the format business. Ultimately, they are trying to create a unique IP library and not worry about other versions of the same show on the other platforms. The more exclusive, unique and original the IP is, the more subscriptions they will enjoy around the world. ■

Israel's Best Sellers

TVBIZZ Magazine takes a look at some of the formats that have earned Israel the reputation of a leading market for innovative ideas and exporter of international hit formats and series.



Prisoners of War

Prisoners of War was aired in Israel between 2010 and 2012 but only a few years later it became known to the whole world thanks to its US adaptation titled *Homeland*. The original drama and format have received numerous awards as *Hatufim* is now celebrated as probably the best series to come out of Israel. It has been adapted in five countries.



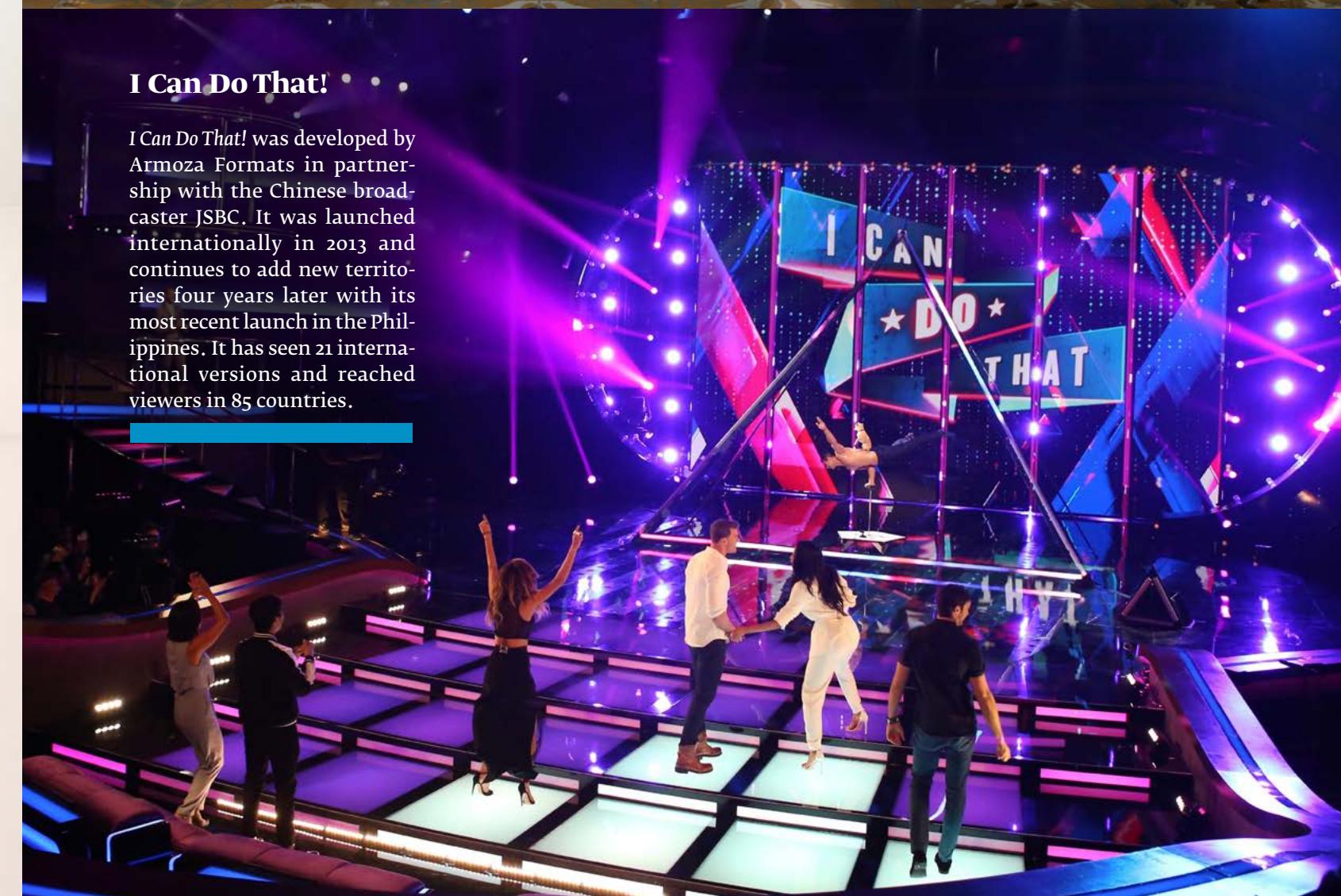
Connected

At launch, *Connected* became the highest-rated show on Israeli cable TV ever. The success has been repeated internationally as the show has now traveled to 14 countries. A fresh season is coming up in Finland.



In Treatment

In Treatment holds the crown of the most-adapted Israeli scripted format of all times. HBO's remake became the pioneer which opened up the US market to formats coming from Israel. Its 19th adaptation launches in Macedonia next week.



I Can Do That! • • •

I Can Do That! was developed by Armoza Formats in partnership with the Chinese broadcaster JSBC. It was launched internationally in 2013 and continues to add new territories four years later with its most recent launch in the Philippines. It has seen 21 international versions and reached viewers in 85 countries.



Raid the Cage

Raid the Cage debuted in Israel four years ago but still remains among the hottest gameshow properties on the international market. Its recent launch in Portugal proves just that as it toppled *The Price is Right* from its 13-year long access slot throne. The format was developed by Shy Brameli, Tal Berman and United Studios of Israel.



The Vault

The Vault was the first major international hit in Keshet International's catalog. The classic interactive reality/gameshow has been adapted in 21 countries around the world.



Upgrade

The family gameshow has been a huge international hit for Armoza Formats and is among the Top 3 formats of the distributor. It has been successful both in Eastern Europe and Scandinavia but also in India, China and Uruguay.



Power Couple

Power Couple is the most-successful classic reality format to come out of Israel. It has been sold to more than 10 countries and enjoyed a strong second season on RTL in Germany.



Rising Star

Rising Star is the proud holder of two prestigious titles – Israel's best-selling talent show ever and the world's fastest selling format ever – a year after its launch on Keshet it clocked up more than 25 territories around the world.

Boom!

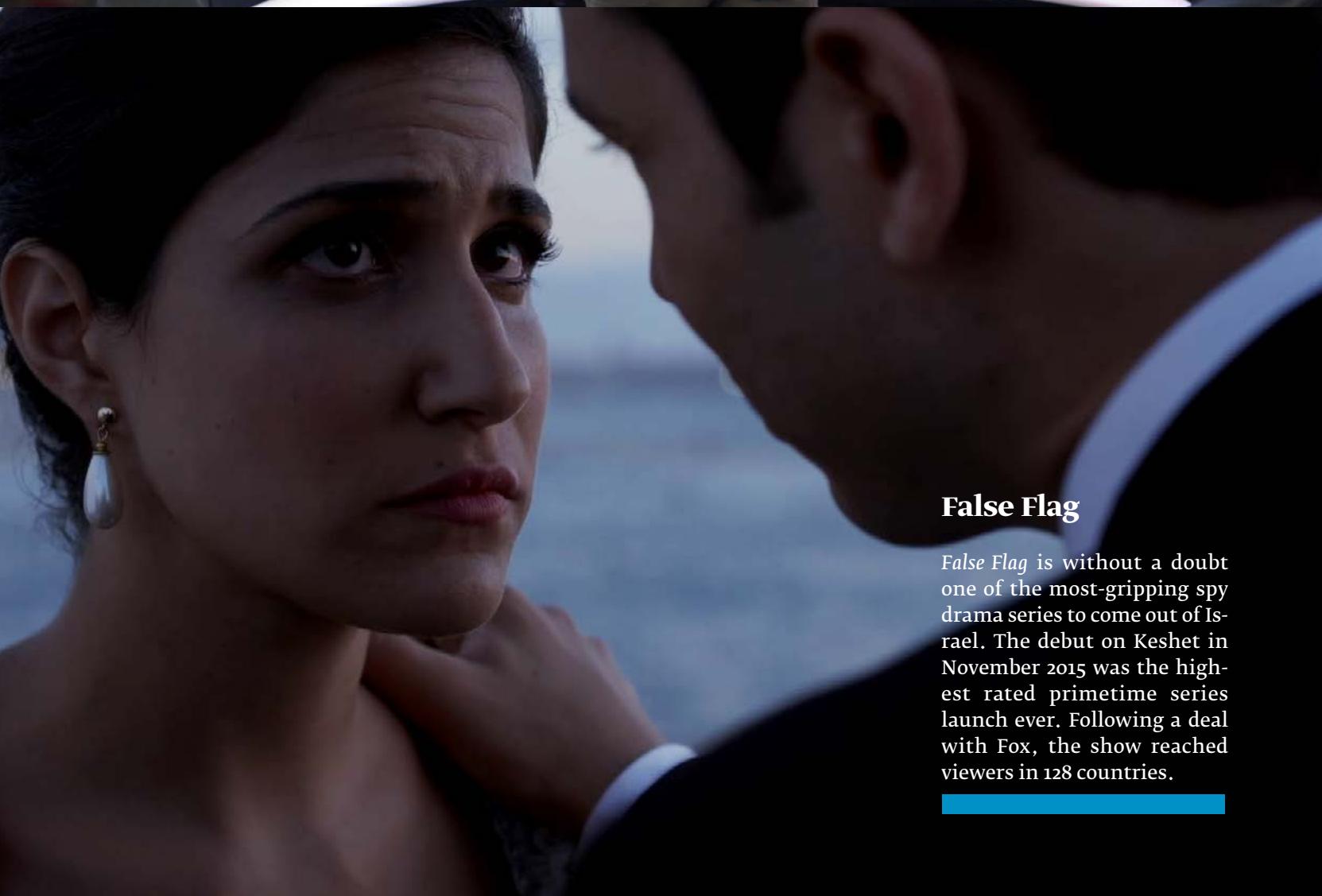
Suspense is the main spice in Boom! The show exploded on Israeli TV screens in spring 2014 with up 27% rating and since then the format has been sold to 17 territories. The show is one of the mainstays in Antena 3's access and broke a number of records for Italy's Nove this spring.





Still Standing

Seven years after its premiere *Still Standing* remains the most popular gameshow on Channel 10. Thanks to the efforts of the sales teams of Armoza Formats and NBCUniversal, the format has been adapted in 20 countries worldwide.



False Flag

False Flag is without a doubt one of the most-gripping spy drama series to come out of Israel. The debut on Keshet in November 2015 was the highest rated primetime series launch ever. Following a deal with Fox, the show reached viewers in 128 countries.



Deal with It

The hidden camera gameshow, produced by United Studios of Israel for Keshet, quickly turned into an international hit and gained worldwide popularity with its US remake, hosted by Howie Mandel. It ranks among the best selling formats made in Israel with over 20 adaptations around the world.



Hostages

Hostages made history as the first Israeli scripted show to be sold in the US as “paper format”. The Israeli original premiered on Channel 10 in 2013 and won the Award for Best International Drama Series at the Monte-Carlo Television Festival. It has aired in 180 countries.



Israel's Young Creators

Israeli series and formats have conquered the small screens in the past few years turning the small Near East country into one of the biggest exporters of TV content on a global level. Anyone who has ever worked with people from Israel would know of their great professionalism and motivation to be the best at what they do but all of this would be nothing without the great creative talent born in the country. We meet two of the young creators who will be defining the future of Israeli formats in the coming years.



LITAL SHEMESH is one of the popular TV presenters of Channel 20 in Israel. She created her first format last year. *Come to Bed* won the pitching contest at Kiev Media Week which gave her first major distribution deal with Small World IFT. Later, she sold her format *Cook for the Chefs* to Global Agency and her third original idea won the Red Arrow's Elevator Pitch at MIPCOM last year.

▲ SHY BARMELI is the Founder and CEO of CreateIt Studio. He founded the company in 2014 after creating his first format *Raid the Cage* which has now traveled to more than 20 countries worldwide. Shy is also the creator of formats like *Drop Your Family*, *Pull Over* and *Shoot Me If You Can*. CreateIt's new title *Cash Crush* was picked up by Endemol Shine and will soon debut on Channel 5 in Singapore.



Shy Barmeli is the creator of the famous gameshow format *Raid the Cage*. He is now running his own company and in less than two years has created a dozen of new formats which will soon conquer TV screens around the world. In this interview he tells Georgi R. Chakarov how he dropped the lucrative diamond industry to start working in TV and also why Israelis know what could turn into a great TV show.



Shoot Me if I'm Wrong

picture, Reshet was in the picture and a year later we started broadcasting in primetime on Channel 2.

How were you involved in the whole development process?

I was in Vancouver, in Canada, where I worked in the diamonds industry, I was doing sales of diamonds and after 4 years in rainy Vancouver I said "no more", I have to go back home. So it was then that I decided I'm only going to do things I enjoy, because selling diamonds is a lot of money but there is not a lot of fun in it, and you look at your life and say "Why did I waste my time for the last 4 years?" And then my friend offered me a job: "Listen, there is this job for an assistant in production" and I said "You know what, I would take anything, I just want to be in the business of television - what I studied". So I started as a production assistant, running after celebrities, giving them water or making sure they are not hot or that they're satisfied and that was in United Studios of Israel.

And one day you came up with a great idea for a TV show. How was it born?

One day I was sent to the supermarket, and it was funny because in Canada you buy one tomato, one cucumber, two oranges - you don't buy in kilos, because it doesn't exist, people don't buy in kilos. So I come to the supermarket here in Israel and there is a special promotion - buy one plastic bag for 75 shekels and you can fill it with as many tomatoes as you want. And I see people putting tomatoes and squeezing them into this bag, and I said "Wow, that's ridiculous! Why would they do that? You can't even use half of the tomatoes you squeeze into that bag" and on the way back to the studios I had this idea where the one-liner was "Let's see what happens when greed meets its biggest enemy - time". And then I started thinking how I want to create a television game out of it. And then I came up with the game, I met Taliah Shahar from United Studios and I said "I have an idea for a game, what should I do with it" and that's how I got in! They really liked the idea, Sony was in the

After that I was in contact with Sony and I had a first deal agreement with them for two years, but as soon as I started with *Raid the Cage*, the only thing I cared about was how am I going to come up with my next show. And this is why I established CreateIt, because I'm always thinking about how I'm gonna create another new thing, how I'm gonna move forward, because this is my company's biggest motivation - to come up with the next thing. It doesn't matter what you've done, the only thing that matters is what we are going to do.

So how did you start your company?

I was with Sony for two years and I met Ori Dror, who is my partner today and he's Head of Development in the company. When I met him he was the chief editor and the showrunner for *Raid the Cage* and *Still Standing*, *Baboochka*, *The Big Picture*, etc. and we had a great connection. The two of us started to develop together ideas and at the end of it I thought - "Listen, we are really good at



Cash Crush

what we are doing. Let's do something for ourselves" and the first thing we did was *Pull Over* which was really a guerilla production - my mom made the sandwiches, my friend operated the camera, we asked one of the hosts who we knew in Israel to come and be the host and the whole thing was really a guerilla production, and it went to Armoza and Armoza said "great idea" and sold a few options and also put it on air in Spain. So I told him - "See if we are doing and we are creating, things will happen", so we called the company CreateIt and we have 11 titles in the past 2 years. All the titles, everything's created by us.

You also recently sold a show to Endemol Shine. Can you tell us more about that?

With them it was a very interesting process. We really liked an idea that we called *Cash Crush*. So we went to Endemol Shine. They really liked the idea and they invested in the pilot, we did the pilot and from the moment they gave us the "Go ahead", from the meeting until we had the take, it was 4 days. We recruited everybody, we had the studio ready, everything in 4 days and we delivered the pilot, because they had a big meeting where they wanted to present it. So we sold them the game and they invested also in the pilot, took the IP and now there are few countries already interested, there is one country that is already producing and they are going to air it in January.

Can you mention some other shows that you are working on right now?

We are currently working on *Play Date*, that we won the Israeli Conference pitch competition with. It's a daily strip where families are meeting every day in someone else's house for a *Play Date*. The kids are playing, while the parents are watching the hosting family, and the kids at the end are giving the house a grade. So the play date, the food, etc. We shot a test that was very successful and now we are going to shoot a pilot. We are going to launch it at MIP.

Also we are working on a show that is *Road Trip*. It's a show where the mentors are driving to the homes of the potential stars, pick them up and do the auditions

in the car. We did it with Media Pro. Another show that we launched at MIPCOM was *Shoot Me If I'm Wrong*, a show where if you don't know you get shot by a paintball and it's a very high-tension show that got a lot of interest. In general, as you can see we are always dealing with the extreme, as we want to bring our audience to an interesting situation in an extreme condition.

Why do you think Israeli shows are so popular around the world? What's the secret for this success?

I think that what's happening in Israel is like in a startup, Israel is trying to take simple ideas and simple visions and stop and look at them. While other countries are, there is a whole book *Startup Nation* where they talk about the innovation in Israel. So, it started with the startups and now it's coming into television, that Israeli people are innovating and trying to create out of really simple ideas that make sense, but nobody thought about them before. Of course there is a lot of creation around the world that is huge but Israel is a country with 8 million people and maybe 50,000 opinions. So also in creative, there are a lot of creative people that want to show their opinion about how game-shows should look like, how reality shows should look like, and they do it by creating formats that are really interesting, because if you look at it, if you are coming out of Israel, it is always on the spot with what is hot, and always with ideas that are a little bit not ahead, but exactly in the trend. I think that Israelis know how to recognize the trend and how to work by it.

Do you think that age is also a factor? It seems like there is a lot of young people involved in this whole process, especially in Israel.

I totally agree that age is a factor. In the company we are running for almost a year and a half now, we have a group of young people - it's like a workshop - they don't pay for the workshop, we teach them how to create formats and they come up with their ideas. Those people, by definition, are not coming from the business of television - we have doctors, we have lawyers, we have one girl who works in a coffee place. They're bringing cool

ideas, all of them are young, and what we decided to do is to give them a place where they can bring us, the television people, things that we are not aware of. We even have a 17-year old guy who gave us a few good ideas that we are working on and developing, that we are not aware of, things that are trends in the youngest world. You know I'm 37, I don't think I'm that old, but obviously when you look at a 17-year old, they tell you "Listen, the hottest thing now is to watch people play FIFA" and I will ask "What's fun about this?",

because I prefer to play on PlayStation, not to watch, and he says "This is the biggest trend", and now we are opening a YouTube channel in Israel with people commenting the games - it's a trend that has already been in the world for many years, but we have a twist on it that we will do in our show. So we can take that idea, we can take the trend that he brings and he shows us, and put a twist on it. And I think, with my experience, and their creative minds, the result is amazing.



Lital Shemesh is a young Israeli journalist and media personality. In 2016 she made the headlines of the format business world by winning several pitching contests with fresh ideas which have been picked up by some of the world's leading distributors. Lital has set the goal to have her first format on air in 2017 and continue creating new exciting formats which have the potential to travel internationally.

Lital, what attracted your interest to television and how did you start creating formats?

I've been working as a journalist and news anchor for a few years. I'm working for different channels and media outlets and most of the time I'm in front of the screen. Seeing the industry from the inside and given the fact that I'm a former freelance copywriter doing mostly digital stuff, I see myself as an entrepreneur and a person who comes from the world of ideas. I'm always having ideas on various things: initiatives, TV ideas, apps. I'm always creating and I think the whole format industry is very popular and it gained more and more strength in the past few years with a lot of Israeli formats and TV series that have traveled all over the world; and this is how I got drawn to this whole world. Also, seeing my partner Elwin (Senior Creative Director at Armoza Formats) creating stuff all the time and asking about ideas also drew me to the format world.

When did you come up with your first idea?

My first idea was *Come to Bed* - it is a docu reality showing people in their most intimate time before they go to bed. I understood that there is a huge insight there,



with people peeling their layers and creating their most intimate shrine - the bedroom. From my personal experiences in this situation of talking about your day, things bothering you and also the experience of having other couples who are facing different life situations - couples expecting kids or people rediscovering their relationship after their kids have left home, or a single guy who every night has a different girl in his bedroom. All these different states in life and experiences I think they need to be shown.

I applied with this idea at the pitching contest organized by Small World IFT and Reed MIDEM at Kiev Media Week. I was among the top five finalists and I flew there and pitched my idea and I won. Small World took the rights and we developed it a bit together and they launched it at MIPTV. I was also sitting with them in a few meetings with clients and I saw how people are really enthusiastic about it and now the hard part starts - to close the deals in all those territories. I'm very excited to work with Small World, and really excited with this format.

After that you sold a show to Global Agency. Can you tell more about it?



It's a cooking show that has both elements from game-shows and cooking shows in which you have two families from the same street competing against each other by cooking a meal for two celebrity chefs who are surprise guests in their homes. The chefs are carrying a suitcase full of a lot of money with them which the families can win. It is called *Cook for the Chefs* and Global Agency is distributing it.

You had another interesting experience this year by winning the Elevator Pitch at MIPCOM. How did you win it?

They just invited people to come and pitch their ideas inside an elevator in Cannes. So people pitch their ideas and the videos went to the judges from Red Arrow who picked my idea. After that I had a meeting with Mike Timmerman and I pitched him my idea and we are still in contact and now I started sending him a few other ideas. So that was a nice way to get in touch with people when you are a newbie at MIP.

Do you have any new projects that you are working on at the moment?

Yes, I got back from MIPCOM and I was overwhelmed and so inspired by everything going on there and I'm now working on a few new ideas - some are entertainment, talent shows, some are cooking shows and reality shows.

Does this come easy to you? Or do you spend a lot of time thinking about new ideas?

Yes, the ideas are coming very easily. The hard part is to develop the show and to check that there is nothing similar out there and to find a unique element to it to make it special - something that people haven't seen before. So that takes some effort.

Also, there are not so many young people and women creating new formats in this industry so what was the attitude of the TV pros towards you during MIPCOM?

I can't say that I felt different in any way. But I do feel that you do need to be more prepared and really schedule all your meetings in advance to make the most of

it. I do think that the majority of the format creators are men and I would want to see more women in that field in the future.

What is the situation in Israel? Are there more women engaged in the process of creating formats?

When you look at the creative directors out there - the head of creative at Armoza is a woman and the head of creative at Reshet is also a woman and that's just a few examples. So, yes, there are a lot of women creating formats in Israel.

Can we also say that this one of the key ingredients that makes Israeli shows so successful?

Yes, I think Israel is a very innovative country and you can see it in so many different fields like the high-tech industry and the startup industry where we are Number 2 after the US per capita and I think we are Number 4 in exporting formats. I think some of the reasons are that we are a young country and we needed to grow rapidly - we don't have many natural resources here so our biggest resource is our brains, so we are constantly inventing new stuff.

You were also in the 40under40 ranking of one of the leading websites covering the media world in Israel. Do you know most of the people in that ranking and what are the criteria to get in there?

I think they picked the rising stars of the industry - television, advertising, media. People who achieved a lot this year and made the headlines and I actually know most of the people on the list and it's a great honor.

Are you planning to build your own company or are you going to work closer with a particular company?

At the moment I'm not thinking about creating my own company. Maybe that will happen in the future when I have enough formats. Now, my main job is being a news anchor. I just recently got to be the new host of *News Evening* - one of the first news shows in Israel on Channel 1, and I'm hoping to grow and create more new exciting shows. ■

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Pitch & Play LIVE 2.0



CEETV and NATPE partnered up for a second time to find out the Best New Format created in the CEE region during the past year. A total of 11 formats from 7 countries took part in the competition and their qualities were evaluated by a professional selection committee which rated them from 1 to 5 in three categories: originality, universality and internationality. As a result the three finalists for this year's edition of **Pitch & Play LIVE** were selected. Here they are:



Start Up Slovenia

The show looks for the country's best new product developed by local entrepreneurs. It was created by POP TV in cooperation with a big supermarket chain which realized the sales of products in order to determine their competitiveness on the market. The show was a big hit for the channel and has already won several awards, including the WARC Innovation Award. It collected a total of 57 points out of 75 possible after the vote of the selection committee. The format will be back with a new season this fall.



SuperYou!

This is a talent show with an emotional twist as it gives a chance to kids without parents to showcase their talent to the Russian audience. The format was created by NTV's General Producer Timur Weinstein and was an instant hit for the channel helping it become the most-watched network in Saturday primetime. The show is now getting a dance spin-off. Our 5-member committee awarded it with a total of 53 points.



The Land is Singing

This is a folklore show presenting the diversity of Slovakia's musical traditions. The format was created by Nunez NFE for public broadcaster STV1 and it ruled the Saturday night ratings in the country. The great production quality and innovative format were well liked by the selection committee which gave the show a total of 52 points to make it the third finalist of this year's Pitch & Play LIVE.

PITCH>PLAYLIVE NATPE

The creators of these three original formats presented their shows live in front of the NATPE Budapest attendees. The presentations were followed by a Q&A session after which the respected jury decided which show to name *Best New CEE Format*.

The jury, consisting of Levina Negi, VP, Global Acquisitions & Development, FremantleMedia; Gergely Ökrös, Program and Creative Director, TV2 Hungary and Bence Trunko, Chief Creative Officer, Paprika Latino Studios, had a tough choice to make and choose between three very strong formats with great potential for international roll-out. But there could be only one winner and that was *The Land is Singing* – a Saturday night folklore entertainment show, produced for Slovakia's public broadcaster STV1.

NATPE President & CEO JP Bommel congratulated producer Peter Nunez for his win and announced that the format will be presented during the upcoming market in Miami where the official award ceremony with the Pitch & Play trophy will be held.

Also, during the event the organizers held an audience vote which was won by POP TV's *Start Up Slovenia*. Both formats will be honored and receive their respective awards at a special event during NATPE Miami.

CEETV and NATPE can confirm that all three finalists have attracted international interest and negotiations are ongoing for potential license deals once again proving the high quality of the formats.

The shows can now be screened at www.pitchplay.tv with the option to contact the format owners directly.

CEE Breakout Hits

TVBIZZ Magazine presents some of the biggest new success stories in the CEE region this TV season



Survivor Greece

We all thought the days when a single show could change a market completely but *Survivor Greece* proved us wrong. The Acun Medya production reached up to 70% share in primetime, turning Skai into the most-watched channel in Greece with a huge advantage over its competitors.



Our Little Village

RTL Klub's decision to adapt Slovak hit *Upper Lower* resulted in their most successful project of the spring season. The comedy series *Our Little Village* (A mi kis falunk) easily ruled its Thursday night slot in Hungary, achieving over 30% share in the target demo and adding around 50,000 time-shift viewers per episode. Season 2 is in the works.



Nice Guy

The adaptation of Korean drama *Nice Guy* was the most-watched premiering series on Ukrainian TV this spring. It led its primetime slot on 1+1 with a season average of 14.4% share in the 18-54 demo.



Olga

The debut of *Olga* marked the return of TNT to its "classic sitcom" style. The story of the woman who is bringing up two kids from different marriages and also takes care of her alcoholic father and tries to fix her personal life at the same time captivated the Russian viewers. It became the most-watched series on TNT last fall with 23.9% share in the 14-44 demo.



The Land is Singing

Slovakia's public broadcaster scored one of its highest results this spring thanks to the original folklore talent show *The Land is Singing*. STV1 led its Saturday night slot with the show, posting solid results in the commercial demo as well.



Belle Epoque

Belle Epoque was the most-watched premiering series on TVN this spring. The show also topped the scripted charts in Poland in the commercial demo 16-49. The period crime drama set in Krakow has been awarded at the World Media Festival with the Silver Globe Award. Writing of the episodes for the second season has started.



SuperYou!

SuperYou! (Ty super!) is NTV's most successful project in years, engaging audiences and Russian society on and off the screen. The talent show for kids for children aged from 7 to 18 who come from orphanages and boarding schools ranked first in Saturday prime-time this spring. The number of online views exceeded 50 million.

Dark Country

Dark Country (Temný kraj) was the absolute breakout hit in the Czech Republic this season. The crime series gave Prima the leadership in its Sunday night slot with over 30% share. The story focuses on a lone-wolf detective who goes on a vacation in a remote area but finds connection between his Prague cases and the serial killings of women in the region.



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