

= Berlin (NCIS) =

" Berlin " is the 21st episode of the tenth season of the American police procedural drama NCIS , and the 231st episode overall . It originally aired on CBS in the United States on April 23 , 2013 . The episode is written by Scott Williams and Gina Lucita Monreal and directed by Terrence O 'Hara , and was seen live by 17 @. @ 33 million viewers .

The episode advances a storyline focusing on the murder of significant secondary characters in the series and the romance between main characters Tony and Ziva . It carries the storyline surrounding the deaths of Ziva 's father , Mossad Director Eli David , and Vance 's wife , Jackie , who were both killed off in the January episode " Shabbat Shalom " . Ziva continues to pursue revenge against Eli 's killer , Ilan Bodnar , and Vance continues to endorse her actions despite orders from Homeland Security to rein them in .

" Berlin " introduced the new Mossad director , Orli Elbaz , portrayed by Marina Sirtis . Several actors reprised their roles from previous episodes , including Gabi Coccio as young Ziva , Ben Morrison as young Eli , and Oded Fehr as Ilan Bodnar .

The installment was generally well @-@ received , with the ratings being up from the previous week and critics giving it favorable reviews . The network and producers advertised the reported development of Ziva 's relationship with Tony within the episode . Particularly , a scene in which the characters dance together while in Berlin was heavily promoted and received favorable commentary from reviewers .

= = Background = =

NCIS follows a team of government agents who work for the Naval Criminal Investigative Service . The main cast includes Mark Harmon as team leader Leroy Jethro Gibbs , Michael Weatherly as Senior Agent Anthony " Tony " DiNozzo , Cote de Pablo as Mossad Liaison Officer turned NCIS Agent Ziva David , Pauley Perrette as Forensic Specialist Abby Sciuto , Sean Murray as Special Agent Timothy McGee , David McCallum as Autopsy Technician Donald " Ducky " Mallard , Rocky Carroll as NCIS Director Leon Vance , and Brian Dietzen as Medical Assistant Jimmy Palmer .

Executive producer Gary Glasberg began discussing the possibility of killing off Ziva 's father and Vance 's wife in the spring of 2012 . He approached Rocky Carroll and Cote de Pablo about the potential storyline , as well as Paula Newsome and Michael Nouri , who portray Jackie Vance and Eli David respectively . De Pablo was interested in the idea , seeing the ramifications of it as something that had not been explored with her character before , and Carroll agreed that the death of Vance 's wife would dynamically change his role in the series . Glasberg reported that Newsome and Nouri were understandably unhappy about their characters ' deaths , but agreed to " give it everything they could " . The plot twist , initially advertised as a " huge Ziva story " that would " rock Vance 's world " , culminated in Eli and Jackie being shot to death in a house attack in the 11th episode of the season , " Shabbat Shalom " .

The killings set the course for the rest of the season , and , in the following episode , " Shiva " , it is revealed that Eli 's protégé , Ilan Bodnar , had orchestrated the attack . Ziva begins to seek revenge with Vance 's support , covertly attempting to track Bodnar 's location after he escapes arrest and goes into hiding . In the episode directly prior to " Berlin " , Tony confronts her about her behavior , prompting her to approach Gibbs about going to Rome to apprehend Bodnar , where he is believed to be located . Gibbs agrees and instructs her to take Tony with her .

= = Plot = =

As the episode opens , Mossad Officer Amir Mantel (Dove Meir) is shot dead at point blank range in an American parking garage . At NCIS headquarters , Ziva cancels plans to pursue Eli David 's killer , Ilan Bodnar (Oded Fehr) , in Rome , having come to the conclusion that he will relocate to Berlin shortly . Before she and Tony depart , the new Mossad director , Orli Elbaz (Marina Sirtis) , arrives in hopes of collaborating with the agency in the search for Bodnar . Ziva frostily

congratulates her for her promotion and declines an offer to put her in contact with Mossad operatives in Rome .

Elbaz informs Gibbs and Director Vance that five Mossad officers went rogue following Eli 's assassination in support of Bodnar 's attempted coup d 'état . She explains that Mantel had been investigating the situation when he was killed , and Vance hesitantly grants her request for cooperation among the agencies .

Beginning on the airplane to Berlin , flashbacks are interlaced throughout the episode , illustrating the tensions caused by Eli 's frequent absence during Ziva 's adolescence and the disintegration of Rivka (Weronika Rosati) and Eli David 's marriage . Also while on the plane , Ziva explains her rationale for changing their destination : her father had told her to convert all funds to diamonds with a dealer in Berlin should she ever need to go into hiding . She assumes that he would have given Bodnar , who he viewed as a son , the same advice .

She and Tony meet up with her Israeli friend , Adam Eshel (Damon Dayoub) , who gives them information on Bodnar 's whereabouts and intentions . Bodnar contacts Ziva on the computer , urging her to walk away . They are able to track his location but are unable to apprehend him as he disappears into a crowd . Later , they learn that he is planning to pick up the diamonds from an ally (Willem Van Der Vegt) at a night club . While waiting to intercept him , Tony dances with Ziva both to help her get a better view of the area and to calm her agitated state of mind . Bodnar seems to appear , but when Ziva approaches him , she is stunned to see that it is Ilan 's brother , Yaniv (Iddo Goldberg) .

Meanwhile , Gibbs and Vance order McGee to hack into the Mossad database , discovering that all five operatives Elbaz had claimed were rogue are still listed as active members and that Mantel was the only traitor . When confronted , Elbaz at first deflects , but when informed that " Bodnar " has been arrested in Berlin , admits that she had believed that he never left the United States . Realizing shortly after that it is Yaniv who is in custody , she explains that she had hoped that the other agencies ' search in Rome would cause Ilan to let his guard down . Vance and Homeland Senior Division Chief Tom Morrow (Alan Dale) , while angry about her deception , decide to look the other way .

As Ziva and Tony drive home from the airport , she divulges the reason for her resentment of the new director : Orli Elbaz was the reason for her parents ' divorce . She discloses that she had always believed that it was a political strategy on Elbaz 's part in attempt to advance her rank in Mossad , though she now thinks that it is possible that Elbaz had loved Eli . When she adds that she believes that she would be a different person were it not for Elbaz , Tony expresses thankfulness that things occurred the way they did .

The episode ends with a cliffhanger when an unknown vehicle crashes into their car , leaving their fates unclear .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

" Berlin " was written by Scott Williams and Gina Lucita Monreal . The episode marked the return of Ilan Bodnar , the " disgraced Mossad Deputy Director " last seen when he fled from both NCIS and Mossad after the deaths of Eli David and Jackie Vance . Following the two @-@ part episode arc in January surrounding the killings and the immediate aftermath , show runner Gary Glasberg decided to pull away from the storyline for a few months to focus on the typical police procedural work that the NCIS team is normally shown doing . The writers returned to the plot in " Chasing Ghosts " , the episode before " Berlin " by revealing that Ziva had been searching for Bodnar on her despite being told not to , intending to kill him as revenge .

Glasberg previewed Ziva 's state of mind and divulged , " People are going to see a Ziva David that they haven 't seen in a long time . There is a strength and a resolute determination . " A few days after the episode aired , Williams and Monreal stated :

Since we last saw Ilan Bodnar ... , we 've striven to whet your appetite with a few choice ingredients . 1 . Ziva 's determination for revenge . 2 . Tony 's watchful eye over his favorite Israeli , and ... 3 . The sparks that fly when 1 and 2 combine . Yep , the path of vengeance brings Tony and Ziva together in ways we can only hint at in other episodes . So when our fearless leader , Gary Glasberg , teamed us up with orders to add another chapter to this Tiva [Tony and Ziva] saga , we jumped at the challenge . And that was BEFORE we realized we 'd get to write flashbacks , and a dance , and a hotel room , and diamonds , and the new Mossad director , and Berlin , and a car crash . Truth is , start to finish , this episode was a blast . And it all started with Tiva ?

= = = Casting = = =

" Berlin " marked the first appearance of Eli David 's killer , Ilan Bodnar , played by Oded Fehr , since the January episode " Shiva " . Gabi Coccio reprised her role as young Ziva for flashbacks threaded throughout the episode , and Ben Morrison acted alongside her as young Eli .

On March 25 , 2013 , the casting of Marina Sirtis as Orli Elbaz , the new director of Mossad , was announced . Sirtis , who formerly portrayed the main character Deanna Troi in the Star Trek enterprise , indicated that she enjoyed working with Mark Harmon and said that he welcomed her to the set by bringing her breakfast on the first day of filming .

" There is a lot of history between Ziva and Orli , " Glasberg hinted before the episode aired . He added that the characters ' relationship would be tense and complex ; their background and the reasoning behind Ziva 's animosity towards the new Mossad director would be explained in the final scenes . Sirtis described her character 's relationship with Ziva as electric , explaining that she saw Orli as a counterfoil to Ziva 's intensity and drive for vengeance . Their history , she believed , is " kind of mind @-@ blowing " ; it provides an explanation for subplots introduced earlier in the episode . She clarified that Director Elbaz would not be a " shrinking flower " : " She 's kickass . She 's strong . She 's manipulative . She uses every weapon in her female arsenal . These parts for middle @-@ aged women in Hollywood do not come along very often . I 'm thrilled that the producers of the show were brave enough to cast a woman in this role . They 're prepared to take risks . It 's a big gamble . "

= = = Filming = = =

Before the episode aired , a photograph depicting Tony and Ziva dancing while in Germany was released and promoted , and Glasberg commented , " This is a very personal moment of vulnerability where her guard goes down and she lets herself melt into his arms . I think it 's a moment that our Tiva fans will truly enjoy . "

Cote de Pablo relayed that there had been a dispute between the director , Terrence O 'Hara , and the actors during filming about how the scene should be choreographed . Both sides thought that it needed to be very intimate , but the director thought that the moment should be drawn out more while de Pablo and Michael Weatherly wanted to keep it brief . Furthermore , the latter two believed that simply looking at each other would be sufficient to convey the message to the audience . Eventually , de Pablo approached O 'Hara and said , " Listen , if there was any more time of staring into each other 's eyes , it would be like , cut to a hotel room . " In an interview , she explained that she and Weatherly played the characters as being at a more vulnerable level than is typical for the show . She likened Tony to a " man Teddy Bear " in the episode ; in the Tony @-@ Ziva dynamic , he is normally portrayed as being the more juvenile of the two while Ziva is more mature and worldly . In " Berlin " , their roles are largely reversed as more of " the little girl in Ziva " is shown and as Tony takes charge of the situation while they are dancing . De Pablo said that she found this reversal in their interactions to be an interesting change .

Producers Avery Drewe and Richie Owens coordinated the visual effects during the final scene of the episode and were only able to do one take during filming . Stunt driver Steve Kelso drove the SUV when it crashed into Tony 's car , reportedly driving at 50 miles per hour , though bloggers indicated that they thought that the car looked more like it was going 80 miles per hour .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Berlin " was seen by 17 @. @ 33 million live viewers at its April 23 , 2013 broadcast , with a 2 @. @ 8 / 8 share among adults aged 18 to 49 . A rating point represents one percent of the total number of television sets in American households , and a share means the percentage of television sets in use tuned to the program . In total viewers , " Berlin " was the highest rated show on the night it aired . The spin @- @ off NCIS : Los Angeles drew second and was seen by 14 @. @ 22 million viewers . Berlin had higher ratings and attracted more adults aged 18 ? 49 than the previous episode , " Chasing Ghosts " .

= = = Critical reviews = = =

BuddyTV marked " Berlin " as number 9 on its list of " The 10 Best ' Tiva ' Episodes " , and Entertainment Weekly contributor Sandra Gonzalez remarked that the episode had " some of the best ' Tiva ' moments of all time " . TVline reviewers Matt Webb Mitovich and Michael Ausiello commented that the episode gave Tiva fans " the best of times ... [and] the worst of times " , and that there were both light and dark moments for the couple , " including ' diamond shopping , ' dancing (punctuated by a meaningful Eli flashback) and , yes , hand @- @ holding . "

Douglas Wolfe from TV Fanatic gave the episode 4 @. @ 8 / 5 and said that he did not think the episode could have been executed better . Wolfe emphasized Ziva 's back story with her father and speculated that many of her choices were based upon events that her family experienced , including her father 's repeated absences and the breakup of her parents ' marriage due to Eli 's indiscretions with a young Orli Elbaz , which also explained Ziva 's resentment of Elbaz . Wolfe was touched by Ziva 's dance with Tony , and her flashback to dancing with her father as a child while he tells her , " My Ziva . One day you will dance with a man who deserves your love " . In a TV Fanatic round table , Steve Marsi added , " What an emotionally loaded quote from the Eli flashback , followed by the much @- @ anticipated present @- @ day dance . " He went on to say that Sirtis did well as the new Mossad director and that " Counselor Deanna Troi was nothing but a faint memory " . Michelle Calbert from TV Equals praised the storyline and agreed that Marina Sirtis performed well in the role , saying that she found Orli to be a more likeable character than Eli David .

" Berlin " ended with Tony and Ziva being in what appeared to be a severe car crash , so viewers speculated about the extent of the damage done and focused on the fact that Ziva 's portrayer had not yet renewed her contract for the show at the time . TV Guide called the car crash in the closing moments of the episode as its " best cliffhanger " of the week .