

CineLink

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PROJECT BOOK 2017

SARAJEVO



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CineLink, Sarajevo Film Festival 2017

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Maya Vitkova

BG / RO

AFRIKA

A year in the life of one family in three stories of loss, intertwining in the name of love.

Director/Writer/Producer

Maya Vitkova

Co-producers attached

Anca Puiu, Mandragora (Romania)

Production company

Viktoria Films

Approx. budget of the project

1.600.000 €

Financing in place

16.000 €, own investment

Contact info

Viktoria Films

Tzat Ivan Asen II 2,

1124 Sofia, Bulgaria

Mobile: +359 884 905 220

Mobile: +34 679 274 685

Email: mayvitkovitz@yahoo.com

www.viktoriafilms.jimdo.com

Festival Scope

VIKTORIA

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/viktoria>

Attending the market

Maya Vitkova



DIRECTOR, PRODUCER'S BIOGRAPHY

Maya Vitkova graduated from the National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts in 2001. She worked as an assistant director, casting director and executive producer for over twenty national and international productions, such as the BBC's EASTERN DELIGHT by Michael Palin (member of the legendary Monty Python comedy group), before becoming an independent filmmaker.

In 2008 she executive produced Kamen Kalev's EASTERN PLAYS, which premiered at the Cannes Directors' Fortnight and was nominated for the Camera d'Or. EASTERN PLAYS was among the 3 finalists for the LUX Prize, in the official EFA selection, and Bulgaria's foreign film Oscar nomination.

In 2009 Maya founded Viktoria Films, directing and producing two short films – STANKA GOES HOME (2010), which premiered at the Cannes Critic's Week as an ESP special screening and MY TIRED FATHER (2011), which premiered in competition at the Oscar qualifying CFC Worldwide SFF, Toronto, both written by the 2015 Silver Bear winner Radu Jude. The two shorts were selected for more than 130 international film festivals, received number of international awards and were distributed by the KurzFilmAgentur Hamburg e.V., sold to the Eurochannel and the Turner Broadcast.

Maya Vitkova's debut feature film project VIKTORIA was selected for the Script&Pitch Workshops, Balkan Fund, Berlinale Talent Project Market, NIPKOW Programm, EKTRAN Programme of Andrzej Wajda's Master School of Film Directing, Phare Workshop and others.

VIKTORIA was financially supported by the MEDIA Programme, Vienna Film Fund and the Bulgarian National Film Center.

VIKTORIA was the first Bulgarian feature in competition at the Sundance Film Festival, IFF Rotterdam, AFI Fest and it was screened at Karlovy Vary, Busan, Göteborg, Munich, Chicago, Seattle, BFI London and others. The film had more than 70 international selections and 10 awards, and was greatly reviewed by the Hollywood Reporter, IndieWire, The New Yorker, Vogue Magazine, Screen International, Filmmaker Magazine, Twitch Magazine and more, making it to #4 of the best films of 2016 according to The New Yorker. VIKTORIA was sold to the USA, thus being the second Bulgarian feature theatrically distributed there. Maya Vitkova was selected as "Producer on the Move" in Cannes (2014). She is currently in preparation for her short film LYUBIMA (an international co-production) and in development of her second feature film AFRIKA. Maya Vitkova is an EAVE 2017 participant.

SYNOPSIS

In a world where the hidden is visible for the eye...

A successful career woman in her late 30s, who wants a child, is left by her partner. She needs to start anew, but the grief is there, right beside her, as an African elephant in her apartment. RAYA does not notice the ELEPHANT that takes her living room, when she is back from work... While the animal is eating from her plate over breakfast... While it baths with her, pouring hot water from its trunk in the bathroom... She does not understand, that the Elephant helps her gather the objects, clothes and photographs of her ex-partner, to pack them and send them via courier... Raya doesn't have a clue that the Elephant takes most of her bedroom, while she's asleep, but in her dream...

In her dream, Raya calls the Elephant... Her way to move on is by giving the love memories,

along with the grief, back to her ex.

Half a year earlier, Raya's father, a retired science professor, wants to finish the work of his life - discover the Garden of Eden. His wife ELYSA has just died...

He goes on a car trip, carrying the ash urn with her remains. While picking up hitchhikers on the road, it becomes clear that Prof. GALABOV has spent his life trying to prove that the Garden of Eden was at the Durankulak Lake on the Black Sea of Bulgaria. There were unseen creatures, unknown plants, exotic birds, even lions there... But his fellow travelers think he is crazy and make him question his own dream. He is weak without his wife, the one person who always supported him.

Raya's father gets to the lake by sunset and scatters the ashes of his wife. He has given up on his dream... Exhausted, he lays down in the grass and closes his eyes. Not so long after that, he hears steps... A lion passes. And his wife ELYSA, as a young, beautiful, naked woman, is walking towards an apple tree with a serpent wrapped around it...

Another half a year earlier, the New Year's resolution of Professor Galabov's grandson, an independent teenage boy, is to get rid of his little brother.

Raya's nephews, the teenager MICHAIL and his little brother BOZHIDAR, are locked home at New Year's Eve. For some reason, their parents would not let them play outside. They are only allowed to watch TV. Michail is angry that he is with Bozhidar again, that they are locked home, that there is no snow... But when a TV presenter announces that a great number of natural disasters will be happening in the New Year, Bozhidar starts crying. Michail calls him stupid and reminds him of how their family rescued them from a flood last summer...

Bozhidar calms down. But when the dinner guests - Raya and her partner, Prof. Galabov and ELYSA - arrive with a puppy as a present, the parents announce their divorce. Next year,

they will be separating the boys – Michail will live with his father, as he is all grown up now, while Bozhidar will stay with his mother. Michail unexpectedly breaks down, but his little brother is there to help...

A year in the life of one family passes in three stories of loss, where the day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

Close your eyes. Now try recalling the saddest moment of your life... I know it hurts. And the sweetest... It lifts you up, right? AFRIKA stands somewhere in between, in an emotional place where one remembers the pain, but can still rejoice and embrace life.

AFRIKA is a story of three moments of loss in the life of a family, the characters being different family members. They are caught by the end of their journey of processing loss, and each performs a subconscious ritual of saying goodbye to it. It is precisely these rituals that form the emotional finale of the film...

AFRIKA will be my second feature. Lighter than my previous work, but I hope as honest and moving as VIKTORIA. Although inspired by true events, the setting of AFRIKA, the context, could be seen as a fable. Along with the living African animals in the story, set in contemporary Bulgaria – an elephant (the grief), a lion (the courage), and a serpent (the fear) – a crucial scene of the film takes place in Africa... Africa is not only a geographical concept, but a place which marks the oldest inhabited territory on Earth, it is the “mother” to our world. Symbolically, the characters of AFRIKA are going back to basics in order to start anew and find greater love.

I will work with the D.o.P. Krum Rodriguez (VIKTORIA, SHELTER, THE LESSON, GODLESS, GLORY) on AFRIKA. He has number of qualities, one of the most important being that all of his films look different. The Hollywood Reporter quotes him on VIKTORIA: “Krum Rodriguez’s beautifully composed, diffusely lit cinematography and the crisp soundscapes are the other

below-the-line standouts”. Rodriguez and I are a team, working on creating a mutual specific and recognizable style.

With AFRIKA we will stay true to some of the technical and artistic assets developed while doing VIKTORIA – shooting with mainly natural light, not afraid of being on the edge of darkness, as this is where the real movie’s “black” is, simple or no camera movement, wide shots when possible, close-ups and details only when needed, in order to have the feeling of something happening right in front of our eyes. AFRIKA will be a drama in which realistic narrative and naturalistic technique are combined with surreal (magical) elements of dream and fantasy.

I would like AFRIKA to leave the viewer with the revelation that it is perfectly normal to be sad, experience loss, to grieve and deal with the tough moments in life... Isn’t loss that makes us realize what love is?

AFRIKA is a family story about processing loss and embracing love. It is personal, as I’ve recently lost my father... When I close my eyes, I see him... smile.

I believe AFRIKA will be beautiful inside and out.

PRODUCERS STATEMENT

There are only 10 feature films directed by women in Bulgaria since 2005. One of these is my debut feature, VIKTORIA.

“A strikingly assured and ambitious feature debut for writer-director Maya Vitkova, VIKTORIA has a touch of Garp and The Tin Drum.” (Dennis Harvey, Variety).

Since I have a very specific “handwriting” and a way of work, I need an equally specific producer to take care of my films. Hence, I started producing myself, especially after I’ve previously done that for other directors, and found both the process and the result inspiring.

As a producer, I do not differ much from Maya, the director – I’m curious about films that stand out from the realistic trend in the contemporary world cinema. I feel attracted to sto-

ries with a unique point of view that unfold and manifest a new way of thinking and engaging the audience, while still happening into a common reality. These projects often require more time and effort, occupying years of your life to happen, but the result is worth it. This is why I'm passionate about AFRIKA - it is a personal, complex, vital and exciting cinematic piece.

Currently the project AFRIKA has been selected for the Holland Film Meetings, the CineLink Co-production Market of the Sarajevo Film Festival and the Transilvania Pitch Stop at the Transilvania International Film Festival.

We're planning on starting development financing in September 2017, by filing an application in front of the Bulgarian National Film Center. The results are expected by the end of November. The next step will be the application to Creative Europe.

We expect to start production financing in Bulgaria in the first half of 2017. The estimated budget is 1.600.000 €.

We already have Mandragora (Romania) attached – Anca and Cristi Puiu – and we are looking for additional partners from France, potentially from Belgium and the Netherlands, but we are also open to other countries.

As a producer, I know that there is an audience for AFRIKA.

Grief is a feeling everyone has or will experience one day. And AFRIKA is about grief... But it is also about overcoming grief and finding life back again. It is a film about hope, about a way to overcome sadness and the loss of loved ones. And that's what I want – to show that there is light at the end of the tunnel – you only need to open your eyes... And see this beauty.

COMPANY PROFILE

Maya Vitkova completed the Olswang Business of Film Producer's Workshop, a cooperation between the Olswang Business Law Firm and the National Film and Television School, London, in 2009.

The same year she founded Viktoria Films, producing and directing two short films, writ-

ten by the award-winning Romanian director Radu Jude - STANKA GOES HOME (2010) and MY TIRED FATHER (2011). Both films had a long festival career and won awards at Sarajevo, Huesca and Athens, among others.

Viktoria Films acted as a production service company for projects such as the SKY One's ROSS KEMP ON GANGS and the National Geographic's THE ANCIENT X-FILES. The main occupation of the company however remained the development of Vitkova's semi-autobiographic debut feature VIKTORIA, which was presented at the markets in Berlin, Thessaloniki and Sarajevo.

The film project VIKTORIA was selected for numerous prestigious European workshops and financially backed up by the MEDIA Programme, Vienna Film Fund and the Bulgarian National Film Center. VIKTORIA was co-produced by the Romanian production company Mandragora of Anca and Cristi Puiu.

VIKTORIA was the first Bulgarian feature in competition at the legendary Sundance Film Festival (nominated for the Grand Jury Prize) and the International Film Festival Rotterdam (nominated for the Hivos Tiger Award), among others, opening door to Bulgarian films worldwide in 2014/2015.

VIKTORIA was sold for distribution in the US, thus being the second Bulgarian feature theatrically distributed there. VIKTORIA was listed number 4 of the best films of 2016, according to The New Yorker, whilst Vitkova was pointed one of the five best directors in the world by the magazine.

VIKTORIA Films is a boutique production company, currently in development of three sui generis features – AFRIKA (in co-production with Mandragora), MARGARITA and AIR (development support by the Bulgarian National Film Center), one feature-length creative documentary - SERAPHIM and in preparation for the short film LYUBIMA (production support by the Bulgarian National Film Center). All the films produced by the company have 35mm prints.



THE SMALL SCREEN THAT LOVES
THE BIG SCREEN.

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Mina Mileva, Vesela Kazakova

BG/UK

CAT IN THE WALL

A lost cat acts as prerequisite for unfolding social drama on a housing estate in London. A Bulgarian single mother becomes detached from this environment.

Director/Writers/Producers

Mina Mileva, Vesela Kazakova

Co-producers attached

Glasshead Limited – United Kingdom

Production company

Activist38 Ltd.

Approx. budget of the project

374.300 €

Financing in place

94.300 €

Contact info

149B Rakovski Street

1000 Sofia, Bulgaria

<http://www.activist38.com>

Festival Scope

THE BEAST IS STILL ALIVE

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/the-beast-is-still-alive>

DIRECTORS AND PRODUCERS' BIOGRAPHIES

Mina Mileva and Vesela Kazakova founded "Activist 38" in 2008.

Mina graduated animated film directing in "LA CAMBRE" Brussels and Sofia's Film Academy. She entered the British animation industry in 1996 working as animation director/ animator and line producer. Vesela graduated acting and economics in Bulgaria. She has achieved many prestigious awards as an actress including Best actress in Moscow festival 2005 and Berlinale shooting star in 2006.

She is EAVE 2013 graduate and also one of the Emerging Producers'13.

The two of them centre their activities around social and political causes, stirring up major controversy in Bulgaria with their documentaries. CAT IN THE WALL is their entrance to the fiction world.

Attending the market

Mina Mileva, Vesela Kazakova



SYNOPSIS

A lost cat, found on the staircase of a block of flats, causes a quarrel between otherwise friendly neighbours.

This council block of flats, reminiscent of the Titanic ship, where this unlikely comedy/drama takes place, is one of the last strongholds of the British social system. The inhabitants, including the central character – a Bulgarian single mother Alena, have enjoyed a decade of mutual support and strong community feel but now those values are starting to evaporate. Crushed between the political Brexit hysteria and fear from losing their homes local people are starting to blame the Europeans for everything. Particularly the shabby and dull East Europeans. Corporate giants move in to “gentrify” the area and the council has outlined expensive reconstruction plans.

Unlike her neighbours ALENA works and doesn't live on benefits. She owns her flat, which puts her in a privileged position but only until she receives a massive bill from the Council.

Turn between work pressures and raising her son alone, Alena is aware of her failings as a mother. Her brother VLAD, freshly arrived from Bulgaria, helps her.

Vlad hopes to find work in United Kingdom but has very impractical qualification.

Alena decides to pick up an abandoned ginger cat for her boy. As it turns out, the animal belongs to a dysfunctional family, living on benefits and drug addiction. Petty criminal JACK, his sister PHOEBE and girlfriend RHIANNA turn up, kicking up fuss and calling the police. The ensuing late-night feud scares the cat away. It hides in a hole left by the plumber in the outside wall of the flat. In the course of the following days the cat refuses to come out of its refuge and Alena forms a strong motherly bond with Jack's mother - SALLY, a woman living in a cloud of permanent depression. Sally confides in her a family secret.

Alena realizes that she no longer enjoys living in her multicultural London bubble.

Much like in the domino effect, the small problem the cat has unwillingly caused grows out of proportion.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

As director/producer team we, Vesela and Mina, are strongly attuned to topics with social and political engagement. Our latest doc THE BEAST, shot on pretty much everything under the sun, has sparked a political outcry in Bulgaria. We have learned that a film should provoke a reaction regardless of its form and would not fear using a creative combination of fiction, archival footage, documentary elements and reality snippets.

However, the authenticity of the filmed material is of utmost importance especially when dealing with fiction and we would work relentlessly to achieve it. We would take our time to find the right cast. Our work with actors is inspired by the Stanislavsky approach, quite popular during our post-Soviet style education. We would like to find the actor who falls into the shoes of our character, judging on a lot more than the narrow professional perspective. The psychological profile of their personality comes more into account than their CV and professional career up to that moment. Their motivational point of view is of paramount importance and the sense of empathy for the outlined character and actions. We are prepared to allow flexibility for the actor so they could even draw a different type of character than we had initially planned. We believe in the fluidity of the process and everyone's contribution towards it. Filmmaking relies fundamentally on a solid teamwork.

Work with children is layered with surprises. Filming happens in the least expected moment. This requires a flexible and agile DOP. We are used to having lengthy tests and rehearsal with the DOP without the presence of actors and

extras, in order to preserve the energy and spontaneity of the moment.

We have worked out a sound system that wires the room so the sound recordist can work at the shortest possible notice. Of course, such methods of work demand a tidy postproduction flow and an extremely experienced editor that we're lucky to have for this project.

Our preferred editing style is based on long shots that reveal as much psychological intensity as possible and the lack of cut on action that usually aims to cover up and disguise errors. The austere edit conveys more emotional and psychological intensity.

PRODUCERS STATEMENT

CAT IN THE WALL taps into the current issue of global movement and people's displacement but from an unexpected group – Eastern Europeans that are generally called economic migrants. The project has a definite TV appeal and we would like to exhaust the possibility of its TV implementation. There is also a possibility to edit TV Mini-series out of this material.

Having received the timely Creative Europe's MEDIA development support at this early stage has helped us outline a simple action and consult British dialogists and dialect consultants. The project is in coproduction with the Bulgarian National Television and ideally, we would like more TV partners attached.

Our British coproducing partner Glasshead Ltd is an independent British TV, film and video company formed in 1994 and has had lengthy exchange with the BBC and other broadcasters in the UK. It has a wide-ranging production output including documentaries and factual entertainment series, children's dramas, animations and innovative multi-platform projects. Already acknowledged with a raft of awards including two BAFTAs (The British Academy of Film and Television Arts), two BIMAs (Interactive Media Association) and RTS (Royal Television Society). For Glasshead CAT IN THE WALL aims to present the quirky and humorous side of East European migrants' lives, a group that has been

currently stereotyped as dull with the help of the media and nationalist political parties. The films will help to better understand this group and through them present an outsiders' point of view into British society, which is refreshing. The ostensibly open and tolerant British society has only very recently started to display intolerance and fear of losing the social care system and benefits due to the influx of "others". Brexit hysteria and other strong political and social manipulations would hopefully transpire behind the seemingly innocent premise of this film making it potentially appropriate for the festival circuit too.

COMPANY PROFILE

Strongly present internationally Activist38 is attracted to socially and politically charged projects. At home, it has gained notoriety with two docs: THE BEAST IS STILL ALIVE left the PR department of the Bulgarian Socialist Party (former communists) in tatters while UNCLE TONY, THREE FOOLS AND THE SECRET SERVICE provoked a scandal in the film industry and is still banned from screening in Bulgaria. Both films achieved good selections and awards and their animated BECAUSE OF MUM, directed by Antoaneta Chetrafilova is sold to ARTE by the producers directly.

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Dane Komljen

RS

DESIRE LINES

When Branko realizes he's a ghost, a yellow house appears, where others like him dwell, at the foot of a faraway mountain.

Director/Writer

Dane Komljen

Producer

Nataša Damnjanović

Production company

Dart Film

Approx. budget of the project

500.000 €

Financing in place

3.000 € - Film Center Serbia

(script development)

Contact info

Dart Film

Niska 6

10000 Belgrade, Serbia

Email: natasa@dartfilm.comwww.dartfilm.com

Festival Scope

ALL THE CITIES OF THE NORTH

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/all-the-cities-of-the-north>

Attending the market

Dane Komljen, Nataša Damnjanović



DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Dane Komljen, born in 1986 in SFR Yugoslavia, studied film directing at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Serbia and contemporary art at Le Fresnoy, France. His short films have been shown and awarded at the Festival de Cannes, Locarno Film Festival, IFF Rotterdam, FID Marseille, Sarajevo FF and the Lincoln Center in New York. ALL THE CITIES OF THE NORTH, his first feature, premiered last year at Locarno Film Festival.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Nataša Damnjanović was born in 1981 in Belgrade, Serbia, where she graduated film editing. She was part of Sarajevo and Berlinale Talents, Robert Bosch Stiftung Co-production Prize nominee, script editing trainee at Torino FilmLab and an EAVE graduate. Since 2006 co-runs DART film, a production company based in Belgrade. Produced and edited many short films and two features - HUMIDITY by Nikola Ljuca (Berlinale Forum 2016, FEST 2016 – Best Film, Best Director, Best Actor, “Nebojsa Djukelic” jury special mention, ACID Cannes 2017, Valencia IFF – Jury Special Mention, Five Lakes FF - Best Script, Vilnius, SFF, etc.) and ALL THE CITIES OF THE NORTH by Dane Komljen (Locarno 2016 - Signs of Life, SFF, New York FF, IFF Rotterdam, Valdivia IFF, Mar del Plata, FICUNAM, Jeonju etc.)

SYNOPSIS

If anything, BRANKO is a walker. He strolls the cities of Belgrade by day and by night. There's not much in his lonely life, apart from his brother with whom he shares a white room in their family's white apartment. Branko's brother starts behaving strangely, arriving home late, his shoes caked with mud, his bed sheets sprinkled with blood.

Branko wants to find out what's happening to his brother, so he starts following him obsessively, trailing his brother through parks and along riverbanks, through streets and myriad paths. The more he walks through the city, the more Branko begins to feel that he's the one who's a stranger. After receiving a mysterious phone call, Branko realizes he is a ghost. He realizes that he's never in contact with other human beings. Trying to accept such a fact does not come easy. Branko continues what he's been doing all the time. He walks. He walks further and further. Deep in the mountain forest, Branko collapses with exhaustion.

Two women and one man stroll through the forest and discover Branko on his knees, sleepless and drained. They carry him into a yellow house that they share with a few animals and plants. Branko recovers. Days and nights pass. Branko starts living with ADISA, DAVID and HANA who confess they are ghosts as well. Branko finds himself changed and the film changes together with him becoming an essay on coexistence of people, animals, plants and minerals, of dreams and memories, of love. The voices of people from the region telling the folk tales intertwine with the voices of the four people residing in the yellow house telling each other stories of tenderness.

The movement from solitude to multitude, from a fixed perspective to multiple shifting ones forces Branko to see how he is tirelessly moving and changing as well. He exits the yellow house wearing a dress. Adisa, Branko, David and Hana stroll through the mountain

forest. Branko climbs a tree. The dress falls to the ground.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

"We dream all night of those mountain-ridges in the horizon, though they may be of vapour only." Walking, Henry David Thoreau
 "I need tranquility if I am to love."
 Reveries of a Solitary Walker, Jean-Jacques Rousseau

DESIRE LINES will be a film about walking. With it I would like to convey an experience of movement, shape shifting and transformation.

From a film on obsessive stalking to a film of careless strolls.

From a play with the tropes of thriller and horror genres found in the works of John Carpenter and M. Night Shyamalan to a patchwork relentlessly moving between different practices - a landscape study, an essay on transience and fluidity, a utopian fiction.

From a portrait of monomania and loneliness to snapshots of a community formed of humans, animals, plants, minerals and phantasms.

From images of solitary figures, cold winds and concrete buildings to images of compassion and tenderness, bodies embraced and masked, wet from night swims in a lake.

Desire Lines will be a film decidedly placed in between, always on the run, a film of unending tension and suspension, quest and questioning, wandering and desire.

Desire Lines will talk of love. The one existing in spite of things falling apart. The one with no direction and no intention.

Desire Lines will be a film about walking and it will also be a film as a walk, starting at one place and ending somewhere else.

PRODUCERS STATEMENT

My relations to Dane Komljen go significantly back into the past. We studied together

in Belgrade, although we didn't actually collaborate until years after film school. What appealed to me in his student films at the time, was his exquisite ability to create very particular cinematic worlds, at once emotional and minimalistic, fictional and thick with reality. Something that continues to mesmerize me even today, after we have done a couple of shorts and a feature together.

Komljen's second film *DESIRE LINES* is currently in script development phase and, while it follows many notions present in his previous work, it stands very distinct. He continues to be fascinated with spaces and landscapes, haunted monuments of former Yugoslavia, motifs of brotherhood, possibility to embrace, accept and be accepted. On the other hand, with a more intricate narrative, playing with atmosphere and elements of genre - he takes a step into new territory. I find this most intriguing because, in a way, the film itself mimics the question embodied in its' main character - do we have the freedom to exhibit our true nature, despite how we may seem on the "outside", and what paths could lead us to it?

COMPANY PROFILE

Dart film was founded in 2006, initially as a company specialized in editing and post production co-ordination. Over the years, the company started producing shorts, features and documentaries, as well as collaborating on numerous high-end TV projects, including the *Got Talent* format and *X factor* Adria.

Currently, we are focused on working with emerging talented filmmakers of the younger generation and our productions have so far repeatedly screened at some of the most significant festivals, such as *Berlinale*, *Rotterdam*, *Locarno* etc, with one of the shorts lately being nominated for the *European Film Awards*.



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Damjan Kozole

SI

HALF-SISTER

Two estranged half-sisters, whose relationship is marked by their father's past, are forced to move in together. This is a film about feeling responsible for someone else's sins.

Director

Damjan Kozole

Writers

Damjan Kozole, Urša Menart

Producer

Danijel Hočevar

Production company

Vertigo

Approx. budget of the project

1.415.000 €

Financing in place

Vertigo (deferral and own financing): 40.000

€, Slovenian Film Centre: 450.000 €, FS Viba

Film: 210.000 €

Contact info

Vertigo, Metelkova 6

SI - 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Email: info@vertigo.si

Phone: +386 1 439 7080

www.vertigo.si

Festival Scope

NIGHTLIFE

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/night-life-1>

Attending the market

Damjan Kozole, Danijel Hočevar



DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Damjan Kozole (born 1964 in Brežice, Slovenia) is an award-winning Slovenian filmmaker whose directing credits include nine feature films and two feature documentaries, among them the critically acclaimed SPARE PARTS (2003), nominated for the Golden Bear at the 53th Berlin IFF and worldwide released SLOVENIAN GIRL (2009), premiered in 2009 at Toronto, Pusan and Sarajevo IFF.

In 2005, a Damjan Kozole film retrospective took place in the United States and Canada, hosted by the American Film Institute. In 2008 Sight & Sound ranked his SPARE PARTS among ten most important films of the New Europe.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Managing director and producer of Vertigo. Since 1987, when he started his professional career as producer, Danijel has produced or co-produced more than 40 feature films, as well as more than 15 documentaries, incl. the award-winning films such as WHEN THE DAY HAD NO NAME (2017) by Teona Mitevska, NIGHTLIFE (2016, Karlovy Vary IFF's Best Director Award), SLOVENIAN GIRL (2009, Toronto IFF) and SPARE PARTS (2003, Berlinale Competition) by Damjan Kozole, AN EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF AN IRON PICKER (2013, 2 Berlinale Silver Bears) by Danis Tanović, CIRCLES (2013, Sundance FF World Cinema Competitions's Jury Prize) by Srđan Golubović and BREAD AND MILK (2001, Venice FF Lion of the Future Award) by Jan Cvitković. Danijel has been selected among "Variety's Ten Producers To Watch" in 2001. He is a voting member of European Film Academy and since 2011 the president of the Association

of Slovenian Film Producers. Since 2005 he's actively involved as tutor or guest expert with several European training initiatives such as MIDPOINT (since 2013, Head of Studies since 2017), EAVE (Group Leader between 2009-13), Nipkow Program (jury member since 2005) and Maia Workshops (since 2015). He is also a member of the selection committee of When East Meets West project market since 2012.

SYNOPSIS

HALF-SISTER tells of the developing friendship between a pair of estranged half-sisters. Circumstances force IRENA and NEŽA, both from the seaside town of Izola, to share a small, sublet apartment in the city of Ljubljana.

A disrupted family life and longtime resentments kept them from having a sisterly relationship. In twenty-five years, they barely saw each other to speak. Yet, their personalities are more similar than they would dare to admit. Both are filled with paradoxes and frustrations. They can be abrupt and communicate in a like manner. At first, they persist in their dislike of each other and are resolutely unforgiving. Gradually, and with difficulty, they come to depend upon one another and pool their resources. They even pick up words and gestures from each other. The young women begin to create ties they never had as they piece together lost chapters of their family life. Each hides her longing for a different existence. At the same time, the threats, stalking and bullying by Irena's ex-husband become more dangerous for her. At a critical moment, Neža takes Irena's side to become the only true ally in her life.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

The characters in this story are held captive by failed or failing relationships from which they cannot free themselves or don't know how. These damaged, interpersonal connections are symptoms of a society where basic, healthy,

human relations are on the verge of collapse. We live in dangerous times. This will be a film about the fears we carry in ourselves. This will be a film about people who have become arrogant and abrupt just to hide their vulnerability. I see HALF-SISTER as a film contrasting the rough, unadorned reality of the old socialist-era suburbs of Ljubljana with the Adriatic seaside in the chill of winter. It is unflinching from an esthetic point of view, with characters that are clear-cut and fully-realized. It takes place in two Slovenian urban locations: the high-rise suburbs of Ljubljana, the capital, and the working-class fishing town of Izola on the coast. The main settings are wind-swept streets -- gray, cool and empty. The film will be directed from the subjective points-of-view of observers because the characters are constantly watching each other on the sly. Uroš watches (and stalks) Irena. Irena watches Neža and Neža watches Irena. Neža watches Marija, Sanela watches Irena and Irena watches her mother. The father watches both his daughters, and so on.

Two basic themes are interwoven into the linear structure of the film. The relationship between the two half-sisters is the lead theme. Neither had friendly contacts until a violent situation brought them together. The other theme is Irena's relationship with her (former) husband Uroš and the violence within their family and society at large. The first theme is intimate and personal; the other is broad and deals with society. As Fassbinder might say, within the intimate exchanges of classic drama might also lurk hidden, serious, political questions.

The story will be largely realized by the actors. I see "Half-sister" as a film of pent-up and complicated emotions, but with dramatic spontaneity in the many moments of youthful madness and even humor and joy. Both heroines must have real and multi-layered personalities, full of flaws, so that many of us can recognize ourselves in them. Both always confront their

situations in a human way, filled with fears and dilemmas. Together with the co-author of the screenplay, I want to reveal an understanding of the human condition through the fine points, expressions and gestures of the two women. The intimacy between them is challenged by aggression and violence which spur many questions about today's society. Empathy is the essence of all the characters in this film. The viewer becomes attached to them and responds to their good and bad sides, just as though each was a member of the family. In my opinion, the mission of European film is to tell the truth about people, that is, to reveal their weaknesses, contradictions and lies. The idea behind this film is simple and almost optimistic: that friendship and bonding among people today is still possible, that one needs to get over the hate. We live in dangerous times. Crazies and psychopaths thrive. All that's left for us is compassion. And humor.

COMPANY PROFILE

Vertigo, is a Ljubljana (Slovenia)-based production company with a distinctive track record and extensive working experience on international co-productions and narrow budget films. They (co)-produced more than 40 feature films and their latest titles include, among many others: *WHEN THE DAY HAD NO NAME* (2017) by Teona Mitevska / Berlinale 2017 Panorama Special; *NIGHTLIFE* (2016) by Damjan Kozole / KVIFF 2016 Competition: Best Director Award, *YOU CARRY ME* (2014) by Ivona Juka / KVIFF 2015: East of the West; *AN EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF AN IRON PICKER* (2013) by Danis Tanović / Berlinale Competition 2013: 2 Silver Bears, Shortlisted for Foreign Language Oscar); and *CIRCLES* (2013) by Srđan Golubović / Sundance FF 2013: Special Jury Award, Berlinale 2013: Ecumenical Prize.

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Araceli Lemos

GR

HOLY EMY

The supernatural coming of age story of a flawed holy being.

Director

Araceli Lemos

Writers

Araceli Lemos, Giulia Caruso

Producer

Konstantinos Vassilaros

Co-producers attached

Elina Psykou, Giulia Caruso

Production company

StudioBauhaus

Approx. budget of the project

650.000 €

Financing in place

3.500 € - Greek film centre (development funding support)

Contact info

StudioBauhaus

28 Zaimi street

Athens 10683, Greece

Phone: +30 6985997751

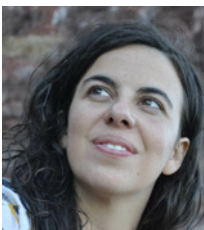
kvassilaros@studiobauhaus.gr

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Araceli Lemos is a Greek writer-director, and editor, living between Athens and LA. Araceli's debut feature in development, HOLY EMY, received development funding by the Greek Film Center and was selected for the 2016 MFI Script2Film Workshop. Her short film, MIGUEL ALVAREZ WEARS A WIG, screened at Tampere, Leeds and Outfest. Araceli's work as director spans from theatre (Shakespeare's Measure for Measure) to commissioned work for clients such as the HFPA, the U.S. Embassy in Greece and the French Institute in Athens. As an editor, Araceli's work includes the documentary THEY GLOW IN THE DARK (dir. Panayotis Evangelidis), winner of the Hellenic Film Academy's Award for Best Documentary and the FIPRESCI Award at the Thessaloniki Film Festival. In 2013, Araceli created the International Project Discovery Forum, a development and pitching program for Balkan features, as part of the LA Greek Film Festival. Araceli is a 2013 Berlinale Talent Campus alum and holds an MFA in Film Directing from CalArts, as a Fulbright and Onassis Foundation Scholar.

Attending the market

Araceli Lemos, Konstantinos Vassilaros, Elina Psykou



PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Konstantinos Vassilaros (b. 1985, Athens) studied Film Production at NYFA (US) and UCA (UK), and Creative & Cultural Entrepreneurship (Goldsmiths, UK).

He worked as at Slate Films (Last King of Scotland), Breakthru Films (Peter and the Wolf), and then moved on as News Video Producer for CNBC's "World Business" and for Agence France-Presse (AFP). As of January 2014 he returned to his home country Greece to set up StudioBauhaus. There he produced 5 short films, and is currently in post-production for Vardis Marinakis' (Black Field, 2009) 2nd feature ZIZOTEK. He was Greek animation team project manager for feature hand painted animation LOVING VINCENT (Poland, UK, USA, 2017). He is also is post-producer for documenta14's curated TV program KEIMENA for ERT2.

SYNOPSIS

HOLY EMY is the story of EMY (22) and TERESA (20), two-second generation Filipina sisters, set in the Catholic Filipino community of Piraeus, Greece. Emy has a strange supernatural condition; she cries blood. The two sisters hide this from the world. Teresa protects Emy, both from those who want to exploit her and from those who reject her powers, by keeping her tightly close and isolated. But when Teresa brings a man and a baby into their life - breaking an unspoken pact - Emy gets ready to leave the nest and embarks on her own journey to control her bloody tears and discover her real powers.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

HOLY EMY is an intimate character-driven drama with supernatural elements about a woman looking for her own place in worlds in which she doesn't fit. It is a story about sisterly love, a love that comes with the nurturing feeling of belonging and at the same time the numbing fear of abandonment. This tale of two

sisters takes place within an introverted, god-fearing immigrant community who needs to believe in something greater than itself in order to go on through adversity and displacement. At the same time, in order to keep its links to a world far away and long behind, it fails to adapt to the here and the now. Emy is a woman going through a journey of self-discovery and disillusionment, at the end of which she will have wants of her own, separate of her sister and her community. A key challenge of the film is the fine tonal balance between grotesque and realistic, subjective and objective, imaginary and grounded, and Emy's highly subjective perspective as the leading force throughout the movie. Some references that have inspired the film are Bruno Dumont's *L'Humanité* (1999), Jessica Hausner's *Lourdes* (2009), Carl Dreyer's *Ordet* (1955), Robert Bresson's *Au Hasard Balthazar* (1966) and Roman Polanski's *The Tenant* (1976).

PRODUCERS STATEMENT

I have known Araceli for many years here in Athens, and been following her work. I was immediately taken by her extrovert, and joyful character - and after watching her short films I could tell that there's something more to her. The first grab for the project was that we have never seen the Greek Filipino community portrayed in a feature film - a lively, but very introvert community. Emy and Teresa's world is a world that most know nothing about. It's an opportunity to show a unique mix of this Asian and Greek culture. The Filipino community is one of the biggest immigrant communities in Greece.

I'm excited about this collaboration as our producing team shares the same love for films. Films that are personal, almost confessional, and an adventurous, uncompromising spirit. Another component of the production that attracted me, are the potential co-productions that arise beyond the European Union. East

Asia, and the US, are territories which we are very interesting to look into. We believe that the huge in numbers Filipino communities throughout the world, will be very interested to watch Holy Emy, and big festivals throughout the world. A film that deals with their own traditions, fears, religion, families, and every day life.

When the script participated in the MFI screenwriting workshop, we received great feedback that pushed us to dig more into the structure of the story. There has been several drafts since, taking into account the feedback. Participating at the 2017 CineLink would be a major step towards the making of HOLY EMY. Due to the film's unique subject matter, and how challenging it is to make films in Greece right now, having the support of Cinelink would make a great difference in our efforts of bringing Emy and Teresa's story to life.

COMPANY PROFILE

STUDIOBAUHAUS produces and supports visual arts projects ranging from fiction filmmaking, documentaries, promos, installations, and animation. It offers full production and creative services, with a high range of creative and talented collaborators. StudioBauhaus completed in 2016 Orfeas Peretzis' first feature doc INTO THE CENTRE OF THE WHEEL, an existential adventure focused on the process of an amateur actor theatre group. Studiobauhaus is in post-production for Vardis Marinakis' (Black Field, 2009) 2nd feature ZIZOTEK, a drama-fantasy set in the forest, and in development for Orfeas Peretzis' first feature FESTIVE THOUGHTS, a semi-autobiographical comedy, and Araceli Lemos' HOLY EMY. StudioBauhaus collaborated with Oscar winning producer Hugh Welchman and Breakthru Films in running the Greek unit of trained painter-animators for the highly anticipated international production of LOVING VINCENT, the first feature hand painted animation film telling the story of Van Gogh by bringing his paintings

to life. StudioBauhaus has also produced 4 short films in less than 2 years, successfully funded by an online crowdfunding campaign, the Greek Film Centre, Athens Film Lab, and ERT respectively.

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Creative
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Balazs Simonyi

HU

LUPUS

The everyday life of a terminally ill 10-year-old girl is pure suffering. What is life like when one doesn't know if there's any point in continuing? Can infinite love ever justify killing?

Director/Writer

Balazs Simonyi

Producers

Monika Mecs, Balazs Simonyi

Production company

M&M Film

Approx. budget of the project

812.000 €

Financing in place

N/A (please mind the 25% tax rebate in Hungary after film spendings)

Contact info

M&M Film Kft

Károly Krt 10

Budapest 1052, Hungary

Phone: +36309524189

Email: mecsmonika@hotmail.com

Attending the market

Balazs Simonyi, Monika Mecs, Laszlo Jozsa



Festival Scope

ULTRA

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/ultra-1>

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Balazs Simonyi (1980, Budapest) majored in Literature & Film. He has been working as an independent director and producer since 2002. His short films have been screened at major festivals in competition or panorama sections, from Cannes to Vancouver, from Warsaw to Seoul. He participated at EDN Thessaloniki 2015 and 2017 LastStop Trieste WEMW 2017, DOK Incubator 2016, Rough Cut Boutique Sarajevo 2016, EuroConnection Clermont-Ferrand 2015, NIPKOW Programm Berlin 2014.

His feature-length documentary, ULTRA, coproduced with HBO Europe premiered at Visions du Réel, and was in competition at Krakow and Sarajevo IFF.

His next feature was developed at Sarajevo CineLink 2017.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Mónika Mécs after her graduation at the University of Theatre and Film Arts Budapest, started working as documentary film maker. In 2005 she founded M&M FILM – the production company of many successful Hungarian mainstream movie in the last 12 years. Meanwhile Mónika started working at INFORG STUDIO, where she co-produced both indie shortfilms and feature films. In 2010 InforG Studio became INFORG-M&M Film, the new company's first film was the Berlinale prized JUST THE WIND (2012). Since then INFORG-M&M Film has several productions in development. In 2017 Ildikó Enyedi's ON BODY AND SOUL won the Berlinale Golden Bear.

SYNOPSIS

ANNA (38) and ISTVÁN (39) are living an average, happy life with their daughter, GABI (10). After some strange symptoms, they learn that Gabi has a serious autoimmune disease. Its nickname is lupus. Like a wolf, it breaks in, attacks her organs and devours her step by step.

Gabi spends more and more time in the children's hospital amongst seriously ill kids. Anna quits her job as a stewardess to support Gabi and cope with their hardships. Istvan finds escape through his job as a high crane operator. A black dog guards the place. Istvan starts to believe that the weirdly behaved dog is the incarnation of the disease, the lupus itself.

Gabi suffers from the profound pain in her body and soul. She slowly finds out that she is terminally ill. As the lupus eats away at Gabi's body, the problems devour the spirit and intimate life of the parents. She constantly begs her parents to help her get rid of the pain.

Eventually the hopeless parents bring Gabi home. One day the dying Gabi sits in the bathtub and waits for her mother. She drops a hair-dryer in the water to sedate Gabi, and pushes her head underwater.

After the tragedy, Istvan must face the tragedy and cope with the aftermath. He has to witness as Anna re-enacts the fateful events during a demonstration for the police.

Istvan has to find answers for questions about his responsibility. Anna doesn't want to process the tragedy: their communication is cut, they are losing touch. Istvan confesses in the church, and the priest urges him to silence his demons, and try to forgive.

Anna is sentenced to 2 years of imprisonment – suspended. The judge justifies her crime as an act of love. István's remorse is growing.

One day Anna asks for a towel from the bathroom. Istvan steps inside hesitantly with the towel in his hand...

Istvan goes back to his workplace with a mis-

sion. He picks up a big container with the crane and directs it over the black dog. He crushes the dog – the scapegoat is dead.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

LUPUS is about the bravery of a child, a drastic dilemma of a mother, and the eternal remorse of a father. LUPUS is a family drama, hospital drama and an inner journey to the soul. The story takes place in the present. I believe that this story is universal and timeless.

In 1993, everyone in Hungary knew about this staggering incident. This story was and still is unprecedented not only in Hungary, but also internationally.

At the time, I was the same age as Gabi, the terminally ill girl. This case became stuck in my mind and has haunted me since my teenage years. The painful and cathartic story stayed with me. This act of murderous love, a supernatural yet very real love was absurd and made me feel helpless.

Sometimes the story came back as a nightmare or in the form of questions. Where is the limit to love? Is there a limit at all? What can we do for dignity? Do we have the right to kill driven by love? Is there a good choice? What is the relevance of the case nowadays?

In LUPUS I search for answers to these questions to know more about the danse macabre of this family.

The 1st half of the structure shows the last year of Gabi, the struggle of the incurable girl, the coping mechanism of the mother. This part is an escape / release story in both a figurative and a literal sense. For Gabi: an escape from a world of pain. For Anna: an escape from the painful burden of a dying child. In spite of it all, the mother wears the stigma of a child murderer for the rest of her life.

The 2nd half shows the aftermath of the events. The focus shifts to the father, Istvan. Anna behaves passively, while Istvan becomes active. He wants to process the tragedy and

find absolution. He tries to face himself and the events, the tormenting questions of „what would I have done?“ and the possibility of forgiveness.

The mother, father and daughter form a fragile human triangle. The inner conflicts and dynamics of this triangle are important. The chronologically told events serve the purpose of telling a genuine story, to show how an ultimate decision is made.

PRODUCERS STATEMENT

The film could serve as apropos to talk about euthanasia, the indirect topic of the film. This is a very current, relevant, yet unchallenged taboo in many countries. Euthanasia is still a “no go” in many places and an acute social issue at the same time. This stands even stronger for child euthanasia in a country like Hungary, where adult euthanasia is also illegal. The film could indirectly put the subject into spotlight (mostly because it is told through a child’s experience), and could lead to more dialogue about merciful killing.

In Central Eastern-Europe the contemporary society never was mature enough to restart a debate on such a serious and disputable topic. You can find similar cases in your own country as well. Many families are affected, or struggling right now with the same problem.

We want to shed light on the process of the tragedy, the driving forces and the aftermath: what happened to the parents, how and why they became estranged, and could they now be able to reunite or talk openly about the past?

We think that this film is designed for a multi-lateral coproduction. We truly believe that this film could serve as a precedent, and help the viewers understand tough decisions and also attract public attention.

We’re looking to find investors and co-production partners who like to work with an experienced and Berlinale-winner production company and with a new talent director.

COMPANY PROFILE

M&M Film is a Budapest-based production company, its aim is to provide space for commercial feature films, indie-movies, documentaries, short films and any kind of extreme genres. The company’s first hit was KONYEC, in 2007 (Gábor Rohonyi). Since then the M&M Film made many succesfull Hungarian genre movies such as PANIC (Attila Till) and CHAMELEON (Krisztina Goda), also produced art-house movies like the internationally acclaimed short-film, BEAST (Attila Till). In 2017 Áron Szentpéteri’s shortfilm INVISIBLY was in competition at the Cannes Cinéfondation, parallel with this BRASILS (Csaba M. Kiss, Gábor Rohonyi) became a box-office hit in the Hungarian cinemas.

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Gabriel Achim

RO

NIGHT

A husband is left by his wife without telling him why. Not even a simple warning. He loves her so much that he cannot live without her. Thus, he decides to commit suicide. Only that in real life it is much harder to kill yourself than it is in the movies.

Director/Writer

Gabriel Achim

Producer

Anca Puiu

Production company

Mandragora

Approx. budget of the project

530.000 €

Financing in place

270.000 €

Contact info

Mandragora SRL

Str. Gh. Bratianu, nr. 4, ap 2

Bucharest 011413, Romania

Phone: +40212220558

Festival Scope

THE LAST DAY

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/the-last-day-1>

Attending the market

Gabriel Achim, Anca Puiu



DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Gabriel Achim graduated Film Faculty in Bucharest in 2008. As a child he suffered from an illness called humility. Poor thing! Now, as a result of that wretched illness, he tyrannises bunglers and dreamers, giving the youngest of them long speeches about life's hidden dangers.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Anca Puiu was born in 1971 in Bucharest, Romania. After graduating "Gh. Asachi" University in Iasi, she worked as country manager for a company manufacturing sportswear for the Premier League in Britain. In 2004, together with her husband, director Cristi Puiu, they founded the Mandragora film production company. Their first project, THE DEATH OF MR. LAZARESCU was internationally widely acclaimed and is considered the film that started the "Romanian New Wave" in cinema. They continued with short and feature films such as: MEGATRON (Marian Crişan, "Palme d'Or" Festival de Cannes 2008), AURORA (Cristi Puiu, Festival de Cannes 2010), MORGEN (Marian Crişan, Locarno 2010), VIKTORIA (Maya Vitkova, Sundance 2014), SELF-PORTRAIT OF A DUTIFUL DAUGHTER (Ana Lungu, IFF Rotterdam 2015). Among their documentary titles are: METROBRANDING by Ana Vlad and Adi Voicu, selected in 2010 within several DocAlliance film festivals, "Romanians in Ukraine" and "Romanians in Serbia" by the same team of directors and SONGS FOR A MUSEUM, a documentary by Eliza Zdru. The latest film, SIERANEVADA by Cristi Puiu, an international coproduction, was selected in the 2016 Festival de Cannes - Official Competition.

SYNOPSIS

A husband is left by his wife without telling him why. Not even a simple warning. He loves her so much that he cannot live without her. Thus, he decides to commit suicide. The way he saw it in the movies: with a razor blade, sitting on the edge of the bathtub filled with hot water. But before doing so, he needs to call her, so she will understand the reason behind his gesture. To his surprise, she answers the phone. He freezes, babbles a few words and drops the phone in the water. However, he needs to let her know the reason why he wants to die. A good-bye note seems to be the most convenient option. He starts writing while drinking vodka, to pucker up the courage. He writes something, crosses out, rewrites it and drinks again. In the morning, he wakes up with a hangover, but he cannot send her the confusedly written note. He starts writing it again. One day, two days, three months – day after day, dozens of pages. When finished, he starts to read again all those pages. Suddenly, he becomes aware of two things: that he has written one of the most beautiful love essays and that he has found a new life purpose: to write!

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

Generally, the films about writers, even more so those about literature, are quite complicated to embody in cinema. Of course, I'm leaving out the easy approaches, that use overlapping frames with paragraphs, words, letters newly written by the writer's quill pen. That is, a graphic cinema, obsolete if not ridiculous. In this manner, one of the important stakes of the film is the choice you make when you translate the text cinematographically - the suicide note, a real love novel-poem. I opted for an ambitious and complex narrative structure, seemingly confusing, elliptical, non-linear and multi-plan, but fair in relation to the script. The ubiquitous voice-over, I am going to use extensively, even for the dubbing of the

dialogues, is the equivalent for the author's voice, characteristic for intimist literature. At the same time it creates the atmosphere of the film. Thus, we use, one way or another, many means of expression that the realist cinema rejects. But, paradoxically, we use them to re-create the dense realism of the tension, turmoils, depression that a suicidal person goes through. In short, a depressive-realism.

The tone of the film is definitely of a noir film. The main character, a male anti-hero, disillusioned because his wife left him, cannot find a purpose in living his life. Not only the tone, but also the atmosphere, the style, the point of view, the tension, the pessimism and perspective, they all give the impression of a noir film. The dialogues are reflective and intimistic, sometimes a bit theatrical, sometimes surreal, according to the stream of consciousness of the anti-hero.

NIGHT will be visually distinctive, through the use of expressionist lightning, in low light (sometimes using only one source of light), the use of shadows that creates tension, the depth of field, of frames and compositions that subtly induce anxiety, through the choice using of claustrophobic and dark urban locations (the entire film action takes place during night time) and the juxtaposition of visual elements and the abrupt montage.

Last but not least, the approach with regards to the sound is very complex. Besides the use of voice-over and dubbing of the dialogues, I intend to use as little direct sound as possible. All the sounds will be re-created in the studio, to be in accordance with the visual choices of this film in a depressive-realist key.

PRODUCERS STATEMENT

NIGHT triggered my attention and gained my interest through the subject it depicts, how actual it all is and the themes it touches upon. With the new script Gabriel is going farther in his artistic endeavors and intentions. The pro-

duction has a totally different stake, both when it comes to production and as a stake in itself. The project is already supported by National Film Center Romania and by some of our previous partners: PMB Bridge Int. & Consulting and DC Communications.

COMPANY PROFILE

Mandragora is one of the most important production companies in Romania. Their first production, THE DEATH OF MR. LAZARESCU was internationally widely acclaimed and is considered the film that started the “Romanian New Wave” in cinema. They continued with short and feature films such as: MEGATRON (Marian Crişan, “Palme d’Or” Festival de Cannes 2008), AURORA (Cristi Puiu, Festival de Cannes 2010), MORGEN (Marian Crişan, Locarno 2010), VIKTORIA (Maya Vitkova, Sundance 2014), SELF-PORTRAIT OF A DUTIFUL DAUGHTER (Ana Lungu, IFF Rotterdam 2015). Among their documentary titles are: METROBRANDING by Ana Vlad and Adi Voicu, selected in 2010 within several DocAlliance film festivals, “Romanians in Ukraine” and “Romanians in Serbia” by the same team of directors and SONGS FOR A MUSEUM, a documentary by Eliza Zdru. The latest film, SIERANEVADA by Cristi Puiu, an international coproduction, was selected in the 2016 Festival de Cannes - Official Competition.

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Kristijan Risteski

MK/HR/SI

SNOW WHITE DIES AT THE END

Although people in the Balkans generally fart backwards, some of them still fall in love, treasure their friendships, keep their word, and pursue happiness.

Director

Kristijan Risteski

Writer

Kristijan Risteski

Producer

Kristijan Risteski, Jovica Panovski

Co-producers attached

Švenk (Croatia), Gustav Film (Slovenia)

Production company

Vertigo Visual

Approx. budget of the project

400.000 €

Financing in place

260.000 € (Macedonian Film Agency -
200.000 €, Deferrals – 38.000 €, In-kind –
22.000 €)

Contact info

Vertigo Visual

Pariska 10B

1000 Skopje, Macedonia

Phone: +389 2 3220 450

Email: contact@vertigo.com.mkvertigo.com.mk

Festival Scope

CUT HERE

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/cut-here>

Attending the market

Kristijan Risteski, Sasho Blazhevski



DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Kristijan Risteski holds a BFA in film directing from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, at the St. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Macedonia. He is film director, scriptwriter and film producer. He is partner in Vertigo Visual production and post-production company.

His directing and producing credits include five features, six shorts, two medium-length films, two TV series, as well as more than two hundred fifty TV commercials.

SNOW WHITE DIES AT THE END is his first feature film as a director. It has gained partial financing from the Macedonian Film Agency. So far, it is part of the Midpoint International Script Development Program.

His short REMAIN UPRIGHT!! has been shown at more than 20 film festivals, including Palm Springs International ShortFest, Sarajevo Film Festival, San Francisco International Film Festival, Melbourne International Film Festival and Molodist Kyiv International Film Festival.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Kristijan Risteski holds a BFA in film directing from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, at The Cyril & Methodius State University in Skopje. He is film director, screenwriter and film producer.

He is partner in Vertigo Visual production company. His directing and producing credits include five features, six shorts, two medium-length films, two TV series, as well as more than two hundred fifty TV commercials.

SYNOPSIS

SNOW WHITE DIES AT THE END is an ensemble drama consisting of three stories about three different groups of people whose lives interweave.

Love story: MAYA (25) does not communicate with people. She almost never leaves her house, except for on rare occasions, late at night, when she performs her yarn bombing guerrilla art actions. IGOR's (25) greatest naïve hope that drives his life is that things will eventually fall in their right place at some point – not necessarily globally, but in his own personal world. They are not supposed to meet, but they do and they fall in love.

Friendship story: NIKOLA, GORAZD and DEYAN (all in their mid-30s) have been friends since childhood. Nikola is in a constant maniacal search for a new business venture, having failed all his previous attempts. Deyan undermines all of Nikola's ideas and undertakings because he is about to move to the West – when he gets himself a passport. Gorazd is a creative director with an advertising agency, unhappy in the world of lies, consumerism and mediocrity. Behind the everyday life façade, they struggle to preserve their old school, pre-social-media values of spontaneity and immediate human interactions.

Commitment story: BOBBY (20) is a drug addict and dealer. SNEZHANA (50) is a reputable gynaecologist, Bobby's godmother and Bobby's dead mother's best friend. She promised her friend on her deathbed that she would look after her son. Despite all her efforts and sacrifices, that might as well be seen as utterly inappropriate, Bobby overdoses and dies.

DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

SNOW WHITE DIES AT THE END consists of three stories which interweave. Each story will be treated differently, by using different means of film language.

Maya and Igor are arguably the most interesting individuals in the city. They are on the edge of society, but larger than life. Their love story is the earnest/sensual part of the film and it will be stripped of all pretentiousness, ornateness, attraction or spectacle. This story will be told with the simplest means of the film language. Everything will be shown directly, in a reduced manner. The camera will be intimate, close to the faces of the actors, most of the time in clean single shots, handheld, free and with shallow depth of field. The main focus will be on the interaction of the two characters.

Nikola, Gorazd and Deyan are a typical neighbourhood crew of the last generation that is not dehumanized by the virtual communication and by the aggressive encroachment of politics upon our lives. Their friendship story is the heroic/comical part of the film. The characters are alive in a world of zombified people and desperately try to achieve something in this new world, but are at the same time beware not to leak all life out of themselves or lose their integrity. The directorial approach aims to allow the juices, the textures and the spirit of the characters' lives overwhelm the screen. Their scenes will be filled with sun, colours, sounds, rhythm, sweat, smells and symbols. You'll be able to almost breathe the heavy summer air of Skopje. Wider shots will dominate. We'll never have only one of them in a frame. It'll always be two-shots or three-shots with deep focus.

Bobby is the loser child of the new times. He is guided by a single instinct – how to find drugs. Snezana is a unique remnant from before the ice age. She risks everything for a pledge she has made to look after her best friend's son after her death. At the moment of his death Bobby manages to communicate with the void inside himself through a hallucination which is equally kitsch, as the world Bobby inhabits.

This commitment story will balance between two complementary styles: the strict genre

framework of the police/gangster films (the realistic part), and the genre framework of 70's soap operas that bring melodrama to the verge of mockery (the trash hallucination).

COMPANY PROFILE

Vertigo Visual is film production and post-production company.

The production division is engaged in production of TV ads, short and feature length films and service production for foreign feature films. The post-production division is engaged in visual effects for A-list Hollywood films, and big budget foreign TV ads and music videos. Its highlight is participating in the VFX team of the Oscar winning 'Argo'.



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Christos Passalis

GR

THE DRAGON HAS COME

After a terrible accident, two lovers enter a dream world between the real one and the Underworld, trying to meet for the last time.

Director

Christos Passalis

Writers

Eleni Vergeti, Christos Passalis

Producer

Maria Drandaki

Co-producers attached

Mani Mortazavi, David Mathieu-Mahias
(4 A 4 Productions)

Production company

Homemade Films

Approx. budget of the project

730.000 €

Financing in place

15.000 € - Own investment

Contact info

Homemade Films

Fratti 14, 11742 Athens, Greece

Phone: +30 2130415200

Email: info@homemadefilms.gr

www.homemadefilms.gr

Attending the market

Christos Passalis, Maria Drandaki



DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Christos Passalis is a stage director and actor. In cinema, he participated in Yorgos Lanthimos's DOGTOOTH, (Prix Un Certain Regard - Cannes IFF 2009 / Oscar Nomination 2011) and was awarded with the Best Supporting Actor (Hellenic Film Academy Awards, 2010). He participated in Syllas Tzoumerkas' HOMELAND (Venice IFF 2010), Vardis Marinakis' BLACK FIELD and Fiona Tan's HISTORY'S FUTURE.

In theatre, he works with "blitz" theatre group since 2004. To date, he has written, directed and acted in all the group's performances. The group has created 15 performances and has presented its work in various major theaters and festivals around the world.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

After working for several years as a producer and a communication and development manager in film and television, Maria Drandaki founded her own production label Homemade Films in 2009.

With a taste for sharp, cutting edge, innovative cinema, Maria has produced and co-produced several successful short and feature films, which participated and won awards in many international film festivals and got distributed in movie theaters, tv-channels and platforms around the world.

SYNOPSIS

ANNA and ARIS are traveling by car. They are in love. They listen to their favorite song again and again, they talk, they are carefree. It's a cloudy winter day and the countryside around them is banal and decadent, yet somehow charming.

They have a car crash. They are transferred to the hospital, both in a coma state.

Their mutual desire to find one another leads them into a dream reality: They find themselves in a provincial town where they meet again without recognizing each other. The town is strange and mysterious, full of tributes and aeries which fill the night with bizarre sounds, melodies and human voices.

In this town, some of the inhabitants disappear inexplicably. There is the belief that the vanished people remain trapped in the same houses and streets where they used to live but they are invisible, like ghosts. They try to send messages to the ones left behind. Thus, the town's authorities have installed aeries everywhere, which record the voices of the people that have disappeared.

As we watch the daily life and the odd rituals of the inhabitants, rituals dedicated to the lost ones, Anna and Aris fall in love again. They decide to leave the town.

Shortly after, Anna suddenly disappears.

She is trapped in a hotel. She realizes that her disappearance from the town and her entrapment actually mean that, in the real world, she is dying. She is sending messages to her lover, desperately trying to escape and to meet him.

At the same time, Aris is left behind, listening to Anna's messages from the aeries and trying to cope with her loss. In the parallel, real world, his condition is getting better and he is ready to get out of the coma.

Before he wakes up, he is confronted with an unbearable dilemma: either he stays with his lover and dies or he lives and leaves this dream world.

Back to the hotel, Anna enters a dark corridor and suddenly finds herself in the hospital where Aris is hospitalized. They meet for the last time.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

Rather than depicting or reproducing it, cinema has to interrupt reality. And by interrupting reality I mean proposing a new system of perception that is closer to poetry and a new quality of time, closer to our inner sentimental life. Cinema can deny the causality that is supposed to lead our everyday lives and re-enchant the world and the stories we narrate or watch.

THE DRAGON HAS COME is influenced by one of the strongest and most influential myths of ancient Greece and the European culture: the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, an archetypical myth about love and death, where the omnipotence of Death is being challenged. The roles here are reversed, though. It's the female protagonist that mainly brings the story forward: unable as she is to accept the loss of her lover and her own death, she makes a desperate effort to return from the Underworld in order to meet him for the last time.

The film proposes a journey into the secret corridors of love, of loss and sexual desire, where the spectators identify with the struggle of the two lovers to find each other, to remember one another and to finally revolt against the unbearable loss in a world that is hostile and obscure.

With this film, we want to create a reality that only exists in our dreams, where it becomes difficult to differentiate between imaginative seeing and seeing from the outside and where time and space are dangerously out of control. A cinematographic world that's atmospheric, enigmatic and emotional, where the two protagonists as well as the spectators are lost and then find themselves in the streets of a mysterious and decadent provincial town, in the hallways of abandoned hotels and in a forest

full of mystical objects and strange rituals.

The film is inspired by Apichatpong Weerasethakul's films and video installations, by the musicality and the subtlety of Wong Kar Wai's cinema, by the peculiar, 'marginal' realism of Harmony Korine and Ulrich Seidl, the photographs of Francesca Woodman, the paintings of David Lynch and Marcel Djama and the light artworks of James Turrell.

Last but not least, Jean Luc Godard in 'Masculine Feminine' wrote: 'That film we would have liked to make or, more secretly, no doubt, the film we wanted to live.'

THE DRAGON HAS COME shares this intention.

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

THE DRAGON HAS COME is the first film of the actor and theatre director Christos Passalis, famous for his participation in Dogtooth by Yorgos Lanthimos and other Greek films as well as his work with the "blitz" theatre group (www.theblitz.gr) cofounded with Angeliki Papoulia and known for its innovative, "devised" approach to theatre performances. Having followed and appreciated greatly his work as an actor in films but also as a director through all the performances of blitz since their foundation in 2004, I was excited when Christos approached me to read his script. I was immediately hooked by the strong love story and the unique atmosphere of the film. Although this will be his first film as a film director, I already feel confident that he can create a totally magic film, rich in beautiful images, interesting characters and absolutely touching moments. His work in the theatre with blitz makes me comfortable to say that he has the tools to capture strong performances from the 2 main and all the supporting roles. At the same time, the cinematic atmosphere of their performances is so strong that it can be convincing regarding his ability to tell a story through moving images. In order to support him in this venture we have already approached one of the more experienced Greek cinematographers,

currently working mostly in the USA, Christos Voudouris, who's expressed his strong interest in the film.

The team will be completed by foreign collaborators who will bring their experience in the production of the film. The french production company 4a4 is already on board and we are looking for a 3rd country to complete the structure. Christos is already familiar with working with collaborators from different countries, since their team has been regularly invited to present its work in various theatres across Europe collaborating with foreign actors, technicians etc.

As far as the subject of the film is concerned, it falls into the discussion about expanded experiences, parallel lives and dimensions, which is a way to speak about our own existence and experience in the crucial times we're currently living. But most of all it is a film about love and loss, the deepest and at the same time most popular theme in all forms of arts. The combination of a love story with a rich in imagination world is a combination that can travel the world.

COMPANY PROFILE

Homemade Films is an Athens-based production and distribution company, founded in 2009 as a production label for Maria Drandaki. Since then, it has produced and co-produced several successful shorts and features, most notably Syllas Tzoumerkas' feature films HOMELAND (Critics' Week, Venice IFF 2010) and A BLAST (International Competition, Locarno IFF 2014), Yorgos Zois' shorts CASUS BELLI (Venice IFF 2010) and OUT OF FRAME (Venice IFF 2012, Best European Short Film Award) as well as his debut feature INTERRUPTION (Orizzonti Competition, Venice IFF 2015) and Konstantina Kotzamani's short LIMBO (Critics' Week – Cannes IFF 2016).



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Slobodan Šijan

RS

THE GREAT TRAM ROBBERY

The Great Tram Robbery is a story about Boško Tokin, the first film auteur in the Balkans and the first one in the world to be jailed for it.

Director/Writer

Slobodan Šijan

Producer

Marko Paljić

Co-producers attached

Maxima Film (Croatia), Studio Virc (Slovenia),

Novi Film (Bosnia and Herzegovina),

Chouckov Brothers (Bulgaria)

Production company

Gargantua Films

Approx. budget of the project

1.270.000 €

Financing in place

200.000 € - Gargantua Film, Film Center Serbia

70.000 € - Maxima Film, Croatian Audiovisual Centre

10.000 € - own investment, Studio Virc

70.000 € - own investment, Chouckov Brothers

100.000 € - Cineplexx

Contact info

Gargantua Films

Gospodar Jovanova 49, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia

Phone: +381 2753 586

Email: office@gargantuafilms.com

Attending the market

Slobodan Šijan, Marko Paljić



Festival Scope

WHO IS SINGING OVER THERE

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/who-is-singing-over-there>

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Slobodan Šijan is a film director, visual artist and writer. Ever from his debut with the black comedy masterpiece WHO'S SINGIN' OVER THERE? (Cannes Film Festival) Slobodan Šijan is widely regarded as one of the greatest Serbian and Yugoslavian film auteurs of all times.

Over the next decades he crafted a string of outstanding films (including which all enjoy cult following and undying popularity across all the countries of ex-Yugoslavia).

In 1996, Yugoslav Academy of Film Art and Science pronounced WHO'S SINGIN' OVER THERE as the best Yugoslav film made in the last 50 years.

In 2016, film WHO'S SINGIN' OVER THERE was declared the best Serbian film of 20th century by Yugoslav Cinematheque. He was professor at Faculty of Dramatic Arts, University of Arts in Belgrade.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Marko Paljić was born 1973 in Belgrade, Serbia. He studied history and philosophy at Faculty of Philosophy – University of Belgrade. After working for several years as a head of production and distribution for major Serbian film houses such as Cobra Film (PRETTY VILLAGE PRETTY FLAME, WOUNDS, WAR LIVE, SMALL WORLD) and Blue Pen Production (CHARLESTON AND VENDETTA, one of the most expensive Serbian films ever which was coproduced and got

picked up for worldwide distribution by Luc Besson's EuropaCorp, premiered at Toronto Film Festival), Marko Paljic founded Gargantua Films in 2007.

Among other things, through his company he produced three feature films all of them being blockbusters but highly critically acclaimed too.

SYNOPSIS

THE GREAT TRAM ROBBERY is a story about the golden age of the roaring 1920s, the age of Dadaism, Futurism and Zenitism; the age of ragtime, jazz and Charleston; the age of automobiles, aeroplanes and sexual revolution. A story about generation that has survived the horrors of the First World War, but also generation of French-educated free-minded intellectuals who tried to bring the spirit of the avant-garde to their homeland. The story is set against the flamboyant settings of 1920's Pride Parade, Court intrigues and miscellaneous political plottings which will decisively change the whole country.

Director BOŠKO TOKIN, a historical figure, was an avant-garde poet, visual artist and the first cinephile in Yugoslavia and Balkans. In 1923 he gathers a group of idealistic young artists in an attempt to make the first avant-garde film in the Balkans. It was a project of such importance and artistic value that it required the combined efforts of the entire cultural elite of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to be put together – Nobel Prize Winner Ivo Andrić, Ita Rina (leading role "Erotikon"), famous poet Tin Ujević, communist leader Josip Broz Tito and even Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, amongst many. However, at the end of the shooting, the film mysteriously disappears.

Twenty-five years later, Boško Tokin is imprisoned by the new communist authorities. During a very strange interrogation, he discovers why the film was deliberately lost, how it was saved, and how it covertly inspired and propelled the world film avant-garde.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Boško Tokin was an avant-garde poet, a visual artist and the pioneer of writing about film in Balkans. He directed the first avant-garde film in this region, the unfinished and mysteriously lost THE GREAT TRAM ROBBERY.

The destiny of this eternal optimist, a charmer and a film enthusiast, and the discrepancy between his upbeat character and his life path, as well as his decisiveness not to accept the reality, opens up an opportunity for an intriguing comedy.

We are making a film about optimism and fancy as the only resources one could rely on in order to successfully defy the Balkan darkness. A cheerful, lascivious and avant-garde Belgrade of the twenties of the 20th century is a setting for a story about the generation which, amidst the first mass destruction of the European people in the Great War, found its solace in fun, film and sex.

The narrative structure, which constantly confronts fantasy and the harsh reality, would be a fast-paced bitter sweet comedy about art in the Balkans, created by the means of witty dialogues and gripping characters who present the era in a way which diverges from all the established clichés of dealing with our patriarchal past. It shows a devel-oping, dynamic city, open to modern trends coming from the wide world.

In terms of visual concept of roaring twenties, THE GREAT TRAM ROBBERY" is inspired by "The Grand Budapest Hotel" and "Midnight at Paris".

To have Miloš Biković (Hollywood Reporter named him as "World Raising Star") in the leading role of both younger and older Boško Tokin is a wonderful thing. The rest of the cast will be made in accordance to him but since the characters are from the ex-Yugoslav region, a great number of actors would come from various countries.

My desire to make this film is very strong, since I believe that the script offers enough material to make an excellent film for art-house cinemas and attract audiences to reflect on

a period when our culture was yearning to integrate into newly emerging Europe. Europe of strong youthful enthusiasm to change the world which had just shown its ugliest face in the recently ended World War I. All of these, fills me with hope that I can actually manage to pay him back with this film, for everything that he did as a promoter of cinema as art in The Kingdom of Yugoslavia and Balkans.

PRODUCERS STATEMENT

When I was a little kid, my older sister took me to see what she called the best film of all times. After it premiered in Cannes that year, it started regular distribution in Yugoslavia and everyone was eager to see it. Yugoslavian cinemas were packed and people queued in front of theatres to see it all across the country, many of them, like my sister and me, multiple times. Over the next 37 years I had a chance to see it over and over again as it became a cult classic and was on TV almost constantly. If there is anyone in former Yugoslavia who hasn't seen it, he would still be able to cite a few lines from the film as many sentences from it became proverbs and an integral part of our language. Finally, last year, it turned out that my sister was literary right as her prophecy was fulfilled when Yugoslav Cinematheque declared Slobodan Šijan's WHO'S THAT SINGING OVER THERE the best domestic film of the 20th century.

It is a great privilege and honor for me to have a chance to work with such a master of cinema and the idol of my childhood and help him create yet another masterpiece. However, I'm even more proud that I will produce a film based on one of the best screenplays I've read since I entered film business.

Much like his hero, Boško Tokin, Šijan is a visual artist, a cinefile and an avant-garde figure of Serbian cinema. His artistic vision is so strong that he created a genre for himself, "a Šijan film", much like Woody Allen or Wes Anderson have created universes for themselves. In this

sense, THE GREAT TRAM ROBBERY is as good "Šijan film" as they get: provocative, intelligent, funny and deeply insightful on human nature and artistic soul.

THE GREAT TRAM ROBBERY is a tale from common history of all ex-Yugoslavia nations, but even more it is a universal story about art, artists and one's irresistible urge to create. Šijan's quirky, dry humor has always been extremely popular with the Yugoslavian audience, but his films reveal themselves fully only to more attentive viewer.

The screenplay we have is a brilliant take on the history of the Balkans but also on history of World cinema and European avant-garde. Our task is to help the maestro turn it into a brilliant film.

COMPANY PROFILE

After working for several years as a head of production and distribution for major Serbian film houses such as Cobra Film (PRETTY VILLAGE PRETTY FLAME, WOUNDS) and Blue Pen Production (CHARLESTON AND VENDETTA, coproduced by Luc Besson's Europacorp), Marko Paljić founded Gargantua Films in 2007. Gargantua Films quickly established itself as a regional powerhouse. Among other films, the company produced regional super hits, darkly humorous LITTLE BUDDHO and the first Serbian martial-art film in history THE SAMURAI IN AUTUMN, as well as an award-winning sports docu-drama GINGER: MORE THAN A GAME. Gargantua Films is based in Belgrade, Serbia.

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Eylem Kaftan

TR

THE HIVE

A city woman moves to Turkish countryside, starts producing honey but when a bear interferes, she kills it and faces with feelings of guilt.

Director

Eylem Kaftan

Writer

Eylem Kaftan

Producer

Canol Balkaya

Co-producers attached

Mitos film (Germany)

Production company

Caba productions

Approx. budget of the project

533.000 €

Financing in place

117.000 € - Ministry of culture of Turkey

23.000 € - Digiflame post production award

17.000 € - Medienboard German-Turkish co-production fund

Contact info

Caba productions

Üsküp caddesi 34/13 06690

Çankaya Ankara, Turkey

Canol Balkaya 05552171536

Festival Scope

SARAJEVO MY LOVE

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/sarajevo-my-love>

Attending the market

Eylem Kaftan, Canol Balkaya



DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Born in Turkey, Eylem Kaftan completed a B.A. in Philosophy at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul. She then completed Masters programme in Film and video at York University. Her first documentary, FAULTLINES won Best Short Film and the Jury Prize at the Planet Indie Film Festival in Toronto in 2002. Kaftan then wrote and directed VENDETTA SONG (2005) produced in co-production with the National Film Board of Canada. This documentary about her personal journey into the honour-killing of her aunt in a small village in Turkey has received several awards including the Quebec Film Critics Association Award for Best Documentary. Her third documentary BLEDI, THIS IS OUR HOME tells the story of the non-status Algerians and their struggle to remain in Canada. The film is made for the Quebec broadcaster Télé-Québec. Between 2011 - 2013 she worked for Al Jazeera Network and produced several documentaries which were shown at Al Jazeera English channel. In The Passion and Penalty, Kaftan searches for the soul in Turkish football. In SARAJEVO, MY LOVE, Kaftan paints an intimate portrait of a Serbian general who defended Sarajevo during the siege of the city. In SEEING ISN'T EVERYTHING she entered the world of four blind people living in İstanbul. IN THE EMPTINESS IN ME Kaftan followed three sufis in different countries. Kaftan also worked as a presenter for a TV series for TRT on 'urban farmers'. Her latest film is about the massacre in Rabia hospital in Egypt called Massacre in Rabia made for Al Jazeera World.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Canol Balkaya

After graduating from Marmara University fine art sculptor department, Canol Balkaya continued his education at The Royal Academy of Dutch, and completed Masters in Communication art, Cinema Department NYIT (New York Institute of Technology). He has been invited as a guest artist to various international festivals for his unique work in contemporary art. He opened total of 5 solo exhibitions, two in Ankara, one in Istanbul, Den-Haag and New York. He curated several exhibitions such as 'Contemporary Solutions Den Haag' in Holland, 'Legal Lynch' in Istanbul, Missing Code in Communications, Istanbul and 'Vitrin', International Ankara film festival.

He received development support for his feature film 'Bearing' from Turkish Minister of Culture. He published his first book in 2013 title 'Bazen/Sometimes'.

Balkaya also worked as director, producer and coordinator for various international films.

As director: MOTIONLESS IN THE SPEED (Video Art 1999), TO BUY THE WORLD (Video Art 2000), EVERY IDENTITY CAN CHANGE (Video art 2002), TRANSVESTITE CROWD (Documentary 2003), 1000&1 NIGHTS STORIES (Documenta-Drama 2005), ALIYA (Documentary 2010), FORBIDDEN LETTERS (Short 2007), PASSENGER (Short 2015), BEARING (Script 2014).

As producer and coordinator: ARGO 2012, directed by Ben Affleck (Turkey Crew Coordinator, uncredits), CROSSROADS 2013, directed by Faysal Soysal (Producer), THE HIVE, 2017 writer and director Eylem Kaftan (pre-production).

He is still working on his last book which will be published in October 2017, titled 'Compartment'.

SYNOPSIS

A forgotten border town at the peak point of Northeastern Turkey... An urban woman,

AYŞE, in her late 30s drives to her hometown as she learns that her mother is gravely ill. In her hometown, she is confronted with what will radically change her life, the apiary that has been left to her by her mother. Ayşe isn't enthusiastic about the apiary but she can't say no to her mother's final wish. Ayşe dedicates herself to produce honey from the hives which long lost its fertility. But an unexpected visitor destroys her plans: a Caucasian bear.

Ayşe is determined not to leave the hives to the bear especially after putting so much hard work into it. She is convinced she has one last choice: trapping the bear and killing her. The result will be beyond expectation.

What's more, a strange twist of fate introduces Ayşe to a nature conservationist, Ilker, who is looking for a critter cam he placed on a special bear named 'Chestnut'. Ayşe finds the critter cam near the apiary and her feelings of guilt deepens as she starts to empathize with the animal. Facing herself seen from the point of view of the bear, seeing herself as a human turned killer becomes overwhelming. Her self-image is deeply shaken as she sees herself, the 'other', as a wild creature. Ayşe ultimately faces the truth; she has been the victim of her own intelligence and ambitions which have been trying to dominate and redesign the nature.

THE HIVE is the story of the attempt of an urban woman to learn the mysterious language of the nature. It explores the idea of the survival of the urban woman in nature as she is torn by her moral principles. A conflict in her principles becomes inevitable as she tries to protect her honey harvest. She realizes that regardless of how nature loving she thought she was, she moved into the animal settlements and their natural habitats. 'The Hive' isn't an attempt to reveal the essence of the bear and the bee who behave according to their nature. It is an introspective look into the chaotic and contradictory nature of urban woman.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

THE HIVE is inspired by a character I met, while shooting a documentary series I was directing about 'urban farmers'. The beekeeper I met in Northeastern Turkey was an impressive woman who lived in the West for several years and then returned to her hometown to take charge of the bee hive of her family. The stories she told me about her struggle with bears pulled me into her world like a powerful magnet. I felt an urge to make this film.

Increasing numbers of people are leaving the cities to live in farms but we can't imagine how difficult this journey would turn out for them. Urban farmers believe they can somehow find peace in nature despite all difficulties. However these people who have maybe looked down on the people in the countryside are the new object of mockery for the local people who know that the 'city individual' in nature will face the harsh reality sooner or later. In fact, this new form of individual often becomes an outcast in the countryside. The story of our character, Ayşe is the story of a woman who makes huge mistakes, takes lessons out of them and eventually learns to grow up.

The strange status of untouchability of the Caucasian bear struck me. With increasing urbanization, as the bears started to lose their natural food resources, they often approach human settlements more than ever. This confrontation between the bear and the beekeeper and its cinematic opportunities excited me. The critter cam technology, on the other hand, enabled me to explore the point of view of the 'ultimate other', that of the seemingly wild creature, the bear. Through critter cam we have the opportunity to look at our main character in the role of a modern killer, and explore our own nature through the eyes of the 'Other'. THE HIVE will be looking at nature from an angle we rarely look in cinema, which is the perspective of the bear. We will be peeping into the nature and most importantly our own nature, through the eyes of these unique and highly intelligent animals.

PRODUCERS STATEMENT

It took a short round of chatting to convince me of Eylem Kaftan's idea of making a film about an urban woman's struggle against a bear. I was quickly convinced that The Hive is one of the most unique stories I heard in a while, told in a very unique way. As I began reading the script of THE HIVE it was clear that the theme was more than 'human versus nature', the story carried depths which would be controversial for an international audience and spark a lively discussion among critics. I also loved the universal appeal of the story as many city people have a dream of going back to nature for many different reasons. Kaftan's subtle sense of humour in portraying amusing dilemmas of urban farmers was also a powerful appeal for me. I loved how Kaftan didn't have mercy in her characters as she put them in tough situations, forced them to make mistakes and watch how they learn in the hard way.

I always admired Eylem Kaftan's passion to understand her characters and delve into their worlds. She is a very experienced filmmaker who made many documentaries and I believe her experience in documentary filmmaking will be a great advantage for THE HIVE. The unique atmosphere of eastern black sea region will allow her to capture the metaphysics of nature and pose existential questions which, I believe, will engage audience globally.

THE HIVE has already secured around 40 percent of its budget. Already in the development phase, the project received recognition by Turkish ministry of culture as well as Medienboard, German-Turkish co-production development fund. It also received a post production award from Boğaziçi film festival in Istanbul.

I am confident that The Hive will have a powerful impact on the global audience and will be a good contribution to the genre of films which deal with human and nature. It will grab senses by genuinely engaging the audience into the wilderness of black sea region. Eylem's cinema-

tography will capture the audience by exposing the intense cruelty and richness of nature. Kaftan's subtle style of spiritual realism will allow the audience to step into a mesmerizing world of wilderness and the mystical landscape of the Caucasian bee and bear.

I believe Kaftan's work will be not only one of the most original Turkish films of recent years but also a top quality contribution to world cinema. With its exceptional atmosphere and unconventional story, The Hive will be an unforgettable film for years to come.

COMPANY PROFILE

Canol Balkaya, internationally acclaimed visual artist and producer, established Caba Productions in 2015, in Ankara, Turkey. Caba productions is committed to international art-house cinema and puts special emphasis on emerging, auteur filmmakers. It strives for a strong collaboration between contemporary art and cinema without borders.

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Siddiq Barmak, George Ovashvili

GE

THE PASS

Two soldiers fighting on the opposing sides must cross together one of the most dangerous passes in the Caucasus mountains amidst a chaotic flood of war refugees.

Directors/Writers

Siddiq Barmak, George Ovashvili

Producer

George Ovashvili

Co-producers attached

Arizona Films (France)

Production company

Wagonnet

Approx. budget of the project

1.400.000 €

Financing in place

7.170 € - Georgian National Film Center
(development grant)

Contact info

Wagonnet

23/25 Aslanidi Street

Tbilisi, Georgia

Phone: +995599442211

Email: nin.chichua@gmail.com

Festival Scope

CORN ISLAND

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/corn-island-1>

Attending the market

George Ovashvili



DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Siddiq Barmak is an acclaimed Afghan filmmaker. His debut feature film OSAMA won the Golden Globe award for Best Foreign Film in 2004 after premiering at Cannes Film Festival's Director's Fortnight. Siddiq made his second feature film OPIUM WAR in 2008. It won the Critic's Award at 2008 Rome International Film Festival among others, and was Afghanistan's official selection to 2008 Academy Awards. From 2009 to 2012 Siddiq produced features in Afghanistan and taught for several years at the university in Kabul. He moved to France in 2014 with a political refugee status and currently resides in Angers.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

George Ovashvili is a Georgian director, writer and producer. His first feature film THE OTHER BANK premiered at the Berlin Film Festival's Generation section in 2009 and won over 50 international prizes. His second feature CORN ISLAND won the Crystal Globe at Karlovy Vary International Film Festival in 2014 and was shortlisted for the Academy's best foreign language film in 2015. George's most recent feature Khibula, which has been his passion project, premiered at Karlovy-Vary in July of 2017. George recently founded a film production company Wagonnet.

SYNOPSIS

Two soldiers fighting on the opposing sides must cross together one of the most dangerous passes in the Caucasus mountains amidst a chaotic flood of war refugees. 16-year-old Georgian ZAZA is determined to lead his 45-year-old war prisoner ADGUR to a safe place, to request an exchange for his captive father. Abkhazian Adgur tries to escape at all costs.

During the journey, the two meet refugees, young and old, rich and poor, walking and driving, all of them carrying their most precious belongings. They had been denied access to the main highway along the Black Sea coast because of the civil war, and have to cross the pass in freezing cold, 3000 meters above the sea level.

As Zaza and Adgur ascend the 60km road, they have to briefly unite their forces to help save people they meet on the way. The higher they go, the less people can continue the journey and nobody cares about their belongings any more. Soon Zaza and Adgur develop a peculiar relationship which makes them realize what they are really fighting for. Meanwhile, it turns out that the only enemy is not the one they left behind, but also the local people living in the mountains, who raid and assault the refugees. The story is based on the tragic events taking place briefly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when a violent conflict erupted around historical claims by Georgian and Abkhaz ethnic groups on the territory in the north-west of Georgia called Abkhazia.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

It seems that there is no end to the tragedy of mankind from the day of the fight between Cain and Abel. And this trend continues today. THE PASS follows war refugees as they start a hard road through the mountain range. Actions take place in the snowy mountains, against the backdrop of the gravest period of the Abkhaz-

Georgian war.

Camera will follow the footsteps of human tragedy - death, hunger, and mental disorder, as well as depict the small joys of life that these people still manage to feel. Ultimately, THE PASS is a very humane and hopeful story that speaks about brotherly love and compassion between humans.

Against the background of the general struggle, audience observes the main story: a conflict between a 16-year-old Georgian soldier Zaza and a 45-year-old war prisoner Adgur; they both have to cross the pass together, however their goals differ. The two become witnesses of chaotic stories, human hostility and victims of the pass. They confront each other but at the same time, try to help other people. When the tension between the two soldiers fighting on the opposite sides reaches its peak, they find themselves in each other's personalities.

Similar to the people who are always walking, the camera will constantly be on the move, gliding between the characters like a witness. It will disclose mysterious feelings and emotions of the people and their relationship to things that happen around them.

We will be using elements from Georgia's rich culture such as myths and music in order to set the tone and mood and immerse the viewer fully in the atmosphere. We will use real locations where the story happened in 1992; the cast will consist of professional as well as non-professional actors to underline the genuineness of the tragedy.

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

THE PASS is based on a very specific and local series of events that took place in Georgia briefly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, the story has the potential to touch souls of people today. Two enemies, a young boy and a middle aged man, have to cross an alpine pass to escape the war; during the course of the story they take an audience on

a journey through pain, love, despair, humor and hope.

The screenplay is based on the story of a person who walked on foot through the Caucasus mountains in freezing cold, without any provision or preparation, in order to escape the war. However, he was hopeful and he survived. In this brutally honest screenplay characters display genuine emotion towards each other, their situations, and their surroundings; it is filled with beautiful, quiet, observing moments. The audience is exposed to such universal themes as question of morality in a morally confusing world and the human notion of hope; the characters go through difficulties that are very similar to ones that people around the world face nowadays, when conflicts between governments are turning innocent people into refugees.

We believe that THE PASS will be a wonderful cinematic experience for the audiences and it needs to be shared now. Dramatic storytelling skill of director Siddiq Barmak, which we have seen in his Golden Globe winning film Osama, will translate this uplifting and tragic story to the big screen in a masterful way. THE PASS has all of the right elements to make an effective drama – one of the reasons it has a loyal creative team behind it. We are looking forward to once again pulling together wonderful local and international talent, which has enabled us to produce powerful films in the past.

COMPANY PROFILE

Wagonnet is a Tbilisi-based film production company founded by Georgian director, writer and producer George Ovashvili. After producing his own features for years, George started Wagonnet in 2016, which aims to produce various talented directors' works, mainly through international co-production. THE PASS is Wagonnet's debut project.

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Ivan Ikić

RS

THE USERS

A melodrama about a love triangle between users of a Home for youth with special needs, their mutual attraction and combined plans for suicide.

Director/Writer

Ivan Ikić

Producer

Milan Stojanović

Production company

SENSE Production

Approx. budget of the project

800.000 €

Financing in place

31.500 €

Contact info

Phone: +381669399869

Email: milan@senseproduction.rs

www.senseproduction.rs

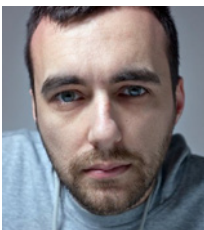
Festival Scope

BARBARIANS

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/barbarians-1>

Attending the market

Ivan Ikić, Milan Stojanović



DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Ivan Ikić's debut BARBARIANS (2014), a touching drama about troubled youth premiered at Karlovy Vary IFF, winning Special Jury Mention in the East of the West Competition. The film was later awarded at Crossing Europe Linz, EFF Palic, St. Petersburg, FMF Brussels and FEST Belgrade and was screened at more than 40 international festivals.

Ivan graduated Film and TV Directing at the Faculty of Drama Arts in Belgrade as the Best Student of the generation in 2006. In 2016, he was one of the six selected directors to attend Cinefondation Residence of the Cannes Film Festival.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Milan Stojanović produced the award-winning debut film by Ivan Ikić BARBARIANS (2014) and THE WAY OF THE EAST (2017), a documentary by Katarina Mutić.

He also worked as production manager and line producer in domestic and international productions, including CIRCLES (2012) by Srdan Golubovic, MOTHERS (2010) by Milcho Manchevski, THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A PORNO GANG (2010) by Mladen Đorđević and DESTRICED (2006) by Marina Abramović.

Milan is an EAVE graduate, Producers on the Move and Berlinale Talents alumni and a member of the European Film Academy.

SYNOPSIS

ROBERT is a melancholic teenager, a user of the Home for children and youth with special needs, whose tendency to “lock in” more than once resulted in cut wrists. These infertile attempts for suicide were often accompanied by DRAGANA, his faithful friend and accomplice, very much in love with Robert. Their relationship is interrupted when MARIJA, a new user with aggressive behavior, comes to the Home. She also falls in love with Robert, hiding this from Dragana, her instant-new-best-friend. Abandoned by everyone, with no life perspective and condemned to a life time of hiding from society because of their defects, in surroundings with strict rules of conduct and survival, their emotions explode and linger on a thin line between eros and thanatos, threatening to, at any moment, end in tragedy. The triangle is broken when Dragana, feeling hurt and betrayed, ends communication with both Robert and Marija. Robert’s councilor separates Robert from Marija because of the bad influence she has on him and, after Marija tries to stab him, the councilor transfers her to another home. After months of separation and psychological pressure he’s been under by his councilor, Robert meets Marija again, determined to complete their plan of cutting their wrists together.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

The users are children who were born with mental handicaps, abandoned by their families and placed in specialised institutions where most of them live their whole lives. The users rarely come in contact with the outer world, they almost never have visitors, and they have nowhere to go.

As a film student, I had the opportunity to visit one of these institutions and do some documentary work there. There, I met Robert, an introvert boy who could break dance fascinatingly well. He saw these choreographies

only on TV and managed to replicate them with great detail. Robert had stopped talking and his only means of communication with the other users was through his break dance choreographies which he performed in the public rooms of the institution. There was one more detail about Robert that spoke more about him, and that was the vast amount of scars on his hands from many unsuccessful attempts to slit his wrists. The mystery about this boy was that which left a strong impression on me and became the core inspiration for this film.

The film will be shot in real locations at an existing institution and the actual users will play the main characters. The “actors” will then go through a workshop where they will be slowly introduced to the characters they are to play, while the script will be adapted to the real characters of the participants. In this way the film will have more authenticity and the participants will not be forced into a situation which is not close to their characteristics in real life. I used this same method of forming the script according to real characters, in which documentary film influences fiction and vice versa, in my former film BARBARIANS - the main characters were real juvenile delinquents from a small town in Serbia to which the script was adapted and finally completely restructured. That proved to be both great experience for the actors and myself, as well as the only right solution for the film and I am looking forward to going through the similar process with THE USERS.

PRODUCERS STATEMENT

With his debut film BARBARIANS (2014), Ivan Ikić showcased his specific style of storytelling and his method of working with non-professional actors, which was welcomed with awards in Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, European Film Festival Palic and Crossing Europe Filmfest Linz, among others. The Hollywood Reporter pointed out the

“impressively realistic look”, while Cineuropa praised the film’s “convincing non-traditional cinematic means”.

With *The Users*, we will continue using the same, proven method, exploring end bending its boundaries.

I’ve known Ivan from the first day of the film studies and we have done most of the student films together. Our co-operation later continued with *BARBARIANS*, which became the debut film for both of us – to him as a director and for me as a producer. We went through some very difficult moments with *BARBARIANS* and were heavily tested, but I believe that made our professional relationship even stronger and we are now ready for a new joint adventure.

In 2016, Ivan Ikić was selected as one of the six directors to be part of Cinefondation Residence of the Cannes Film Festival, which, aside from the mentorship that Ivan received during his five-months stay in Paris, gave *THE USERS* significant exposure. In October 2016, the project’s development was supported by Creative Europe MEDIA, while its script development was previously also supported by Film Center Serbia. The project will be applied for production funding with Film Center Serbia in Sep 2017.

After a year-long battle with bureaucracy, in May this year the project was approved by the Ministry for Social Care, which supervises the Homes we wish to do casting and shoot in. Thanks to this, the casting and, consequently, the further work on the script will start in August this year.

COMPANY PROFILE

SENSE Production is a Belgrade-based company gathering auteurs with an exciting approach to drama and visual. The company produced *BARBARIANS* by Ivan Ikić (2014 / Special Mention, Karlovy Vary IFF / Best Film, Crossing Europe Linz / Seyfi Teoman Award, EFF Palic), *THE WAY OF THE EAST* (2017), a

debut documentary film by Katarina Mutić and *ONLY GIRLS CRY* (2017), a short by Vladimir Milovanović.

Current slate of projects in development includes *THE RETURN OF ELIJAH* by Mladen Đorđević, *THE FORBIDDEN AUNT*, a documentary family story by Bojana Novaković and *CLASSROOM RASCALS*, a musical comedy by Slobodan Skerlić.



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Konstantin Bojanov

BG / IN / FR

YOUR EYES

The love story of two teenage girls driven apart by the institutions of religion and prostitution in Southern India.

Director

Konstantin Bojanov

Writer

Konstantin Bojanov, Buku Sarkar

Producer

Palmyre Badinier, Frederic Corvez

Co-producers attached

Argentum Lux (Bulgaria),

Travelling Light (India)

Production company

Urban Factory

Approx. budget of the project

900.000 €

Financing in place

190.000 € - Producer's investment and equity

(Argentum Lux Films and Dreams Industry

Ood - Bulgaria, Oddjoint and Travelling light -

India, Urban Factory - France)

80.000 € - MG Sales (UDI)

20.000 € - MG French Distribution (Urban

Distribution)

Contact info

Urban Factory

14 rue du 18 aout

93100 Montreuil, France

Phone: +33 1 84 21 48 37

Email: p.badinier@urbangroup.biz

Attending the market

Konstantin Bojanov, Palmyre Badinier,

Frederic Corvez

Festival Scope

LIGHT THEREAFTER

<https://pro.festivalscope.com/film/light-thereafter>

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Konstantin Bojanov, born in Bulgaria in 1968, is a filmmaker and a visual artist. After graduating from the National School of Fine Arts in Sofia in 1987, he received an M.A. from the Royal College of Art, London, and later studied documentary filmmaking at NYU. His career as an artist began in London in the early 90s, and his work has been exhibited internationally in private galleries and museums. His directorial debut was the short film LEMON IS LEMON (2001), followed by the award-winning documentary INVISIBLE (2005). Bojanov's first feature film AVE premiered in 2011 at Semaine de la Critique, Cannes, and went on to win numerous international awards. His second feature film LIGHT THEREAFTER (2017) premiered at the International Film Festival Rotterdam and was nominated for the Huvos Tiger Award. Konstantin Bojanov lives and works between Berlin and Sofia, Bulgaria.



PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Palmyre studied Arabic Literature and International Relations at Sorbonne University and has worked in the fields of journalism, diplomacy and international artistic exchanges. Her career in the film industry began in 2006, while working on the development of films from the Middle East.

In 2008 she co-founded in Paris LES FILMS DE ZAYNA, a production company dedicated to Arab independent cinema. Recent titles includes GHOST HUNTING (2017) winner of Best documentary award at the last Berlinale. Since May 2017, Palmyre works as associate producer for URBAN FACTORY. Palmyre is a member of European Network EAVE.

SYNOPSIS

RANI, 33, a sex worker, belonging to the cult of the Goddess Yellamma, announces to her family that the Goddess had appeared in her dream and had commanded her to go on a pilgrimage. The following day she sets off in the direction of the Temple at Saundatti.

While on the road, she recollects her early life and the near deadly incident that had led to her dedication to the Goddess at the age of six. At fifteen, Rani's sister KAVERI is sent off to work in a brothel in Mumbai. The same day Rani meets RENUKA, a 17-year-old rebellious prostitute, who has just started working out of the neighbor's house. Rani is immediately smitten by her. They begin a relationship, which Rani's family strongly opposes and tries to break off.

In time, Renuka becomes pregnant and has to leave town to get an illegal abortion. Rani awaits her return despondently, fearing that she might never come back. Eventually, Renuka returns. Penniless and with a bad infection she is forced to look for a new accommodation. Rani follows her in her quest and steals some jewelry from her own family to help her out. She spends the night nursing Renuka and learns from her that she is on the run after stabbing

an abusive cop at a brothel back home. Rani's overnight absence brings her mother's wrath on her again. In an act of defiance, Rani cuts all her hair off and goes back to Renuka.

Two years later, Kaveri returns from Mumbai heavily pregnant and it is now Rani's turn to begin sex work and to support the family. After an unsuccessful attempt to run away, Rani is brought back home and forced to undergo her "first night" with a local farmer. He rapes her brutally within an earshot of her family. The only person who comes to her rescue is Renuka, and this is the last time Rani will see her.

Now, 18 years later, Rani is secretly on her way to Bangalore, where Renuka is serving a life sentence for murder.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

As a director, for me it is no longer sufficient to simply tell a story if it doesn't touch upon the philosophical questions of our times and tear into the fabric of society, so as to shed light upon the moral dilemmas we all face. YOUR EYES is precisely this kind of story.

My personal connection to India began over fifteen years ago, when, lured by its vastly seductive culture, I began exploring the Subcontinent. Gradually, over the years, India became one of my idiosyncratic fascinations. And the closer I got to it, the more clearly I began to understand that under the veil of perceived exoticism lies an extremely complex and volatile society, often precariously held together by tradition, religious dogmas and an oppressive cast system.

YOUR EYES began as a documentary, constructed of four cross-pollinating stories. In 2014 I started filming the first of these stories. The center character was Reshma, a 32-year-old devadasi sex worker, belonging to the cult of the Goddess Yellamma. As the filming progressed, I became more and more convinced that I needed to focus on this one single story, set against the background of a centuries old tradition of sexual exploitation under the ban-

ner of religion. At that point I also decided to transition the film from nonfiction into fiction. The cast of YOUR EYES will be a mixture of professional and nonprofessional actors, which I believe will provide me with the type of unadulterated performances I strive for. The production will take place on real-life locations and the camera will take a strictly subjective approach, staying close to the characters and studying in great detail their emotional connection to one another. It will be filmed exclusively using available light, in long takes, focusing on the inner frame dynamics, and therefore minimizing the frequency of editorial cuts. The story editing will be associative, nonlinear, mimicking memory patterns and stream of consciousness. First-person voice-over will be used sparingly, only as a way of narrative connection and to provide a further glimpse into the protagonist's mind. High emphasis will be placed on the sound, treating it not as a naturalistic soundscape, but more as a sound map of the characters' emotions.

YOUR EYES will be a film stripped of exoticism - raw and uncompromising. It will pull no punches.

PRODUCERS STATEMENT

My partner Frederic Corvez met Konstantin for the first time while his first feature, AVE, was already in production. Few years later, when Konstantin told him about his new project, Frederic decided he would not let pass this opportunity. A non-typical and talented filmmaker, Konstantin Bojanov's sensibility allows him also to portray the world with a particular openness to other cultures and people. By then, Frederic jumped as a French producer in this strange journey of Bulgarian filmmaker and producer willing to shoot an Indian story ... I learned about YOUR EYES when Frederic offered me to join Urban Factory, few months ago. As a producer, my aim has always been to produce films that contribute to a better understanding of the human being, by telling intimate stories, rooted in specific realities,

with a fine and consistent cinematic treatment. No matter how challenging could be their production! I could still remember Ave, the subtlety and the strength of Konstantin's creative approach to adolescence. Having spent part my life between traditionalist societies and occidental cultures, I also witnessed that everywhere women are not only the first victims of patriarchal systems, but also the main gatekeepers of this oppression. Through its particular insight of a complex reality, YOUR EYES succeed to address this archaic and paradoxical behavior we are all holding.

In India, the project has been supported since an early stage by Celine Loop, a Belgium citizen based in Calcutta, first through Oddjoint, and now through her new company Travelling Light. Celine will also be in charge of the line production. Being too controversial, the film won't benefit of any subsidy from the current Indian government. However, it makes it attractive for equity investment from some patron of the arts from the Indian diaspora.

Our strategy is to build up a strong European coproduction and this is one of our main goal at CineLink. The production structure, with a budget of less than 900k€ seems both realistic and reasonable. Through the co-producers investments and MGs for the sales, quarter of the budget is secured. In France, the answer from CNC will come end of September. We aim to submit the project to the Bulgarian Film Center in November this year. We are also in touch with Alexandra Hoesdorff (DEAL Productions) who will apply to the Luxembourgish funds in December.

COMPANY PROFILE

Founded in 2011 by Frédéric Corvez, recently joined by Palmyre Badinier, French production house URBAN FACTORY is UDI (Urban Distribution International) sister company. UF is dedicated to produce and coproduce international art-house films by promising young filmmakers and renowned directors, distinguished by their innovation and originality. and to bring

this quality cinema to the largest audience possible on each continent.

Recent titles includes GOOD MANNERS / AS BOAS MANEIRAS (Locarno international competition 2017), LA LUZ INCIDENTE (2015), EL MUDO (2013), VIRAMUNDO, a musical journey with Gilberto Gil (2013)

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Doha Film Institute congratulates its grant recipients and Qumra participants who have been selected to participate in the CineLink Industry Days at the 2017 Sarajevo Film Festival.

'iPhone Memory'

by Mahdi Ali Ali
Feature Narrative / Qatar /
Fall Grants 2016

'The Maiden's Pond'

by Bassem Breche
Feature Narrative / Lebanon,
Germany, France, Qatar /
Fall Grants 2016

'What Comes Around'

by Reem Saleh
Feature Documentary / Egypt,
Lebanon, Qatar / Fall Grants 2012

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مؤسسة الدوحة للأفلام

DOHA FILM INSTITUTE

Mahdi Ali Ali

QA

IPHONE MEMORY

Intersection of three miserable stories in Paris: a Frenchman battles cancer while his wife wants an abortion; a Romani girl looks for someone to adapt her sister; a Syrian immigrant boy tries to survive by acting in the cinema.

Director/Writer

Mahdi Ali Ali

Production company

TBD

Approx. budget of the project

510.000 €

Financing in place

Doha Film Institute - Development Grant

Contact info

mahdialsharshani@gmail.com -

0097455536063

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Mahid Al-Sharshani is a Qatari filmmaker, and is taking charge of the training and education. Since joining Doha Film Institute, he's worked to provide Qatar filmmakers with comprehensive learning initiatives, led by the industry's major players. He is executive producer and supervisor for more than 30 short films have been produced by Doha Film Institute.

Mahdi Ali Ali has a master of fine arts degree from EICAR, the International Film School of Paris. He has made short films including "Champs Elysees, I love you" (2009) and "The Gulf Habibi" (2011) and worked on others for Al Jazeera's Documentary Channel and Al Jazeera Children.

He acted in some plays for the theater and he started this hobby when he was eleven years old. He spends most of his time in reading books of philosophy and physics. He has a big passion for cinema and arts.

Attending the market

Mahdi Ali Ali



SYNOPSIS

This docu-fiction feature film concerns the struggles of a Syrian refugee boy in Paris. Via the iPhone he has stolen, we will discover his life as he travels around the arrondissements taking spontaneous images of himself and of Parisians. These short videos and photos divulge the mysterious life there. The mobile belongs to a Frenchman, who appears in photos with his pregnant wife. We see them prepare for the coming baby as a new visitor comes into their world. The iPhone is stolen by a girl who gives it to his little girl to play with; now the images display the life the lifestyle of a Bohemian Romani family in Paris. Then the phone is stolen again, and we are taken into the universe of the young Syrian refugee.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

By examining events through the eyes of a juvenile, and from ground zero of today's Syrian tragedy, I hope to approach this emotional issue from a fresh perspective. The simplicity of the narrative structure is designed to allow the audience to grasp the parallels between the experience of the characters in Champs Elysees. My vision for the aesthetic is inspired by the French New Wave, in particular the work of Jen-Luc Godard. The cinematography will be influenced and interpretative throughout, and include fights of surrealism to signal that this is a symbolic exploration of the tragedy rather than a factual representation.

Bassem Breche

LB / FR

THE MAIDEN'S POND

The story of two women trying to maintain and negotiate their lives – with and against each other.

Director

Bassem Breche

Writers

Bassem Breche, Ghassan Salhab

Producer

Jana Wehbe

Production company

The Attic

Co-producers attached

Meroe Films (France)

Approx. budget of the project

543.660 €

Financing in place

8.460 € - AFAC grant development

8.460 € - Dubai Film Connection prize by ART

42.300€ - DFI production grant

Contact info

The Attic

Email: jana@theatticproductions.com

Phone: +961 70 963 855

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Bassem Breche is an Emmy Award winning scriptwriter and director, born in Lebanon in 1978; he started his career as an actor in Lebanon and the UK: (BLIND FLIGHT, 2003) and (HAMBURG CELL, 2004), before altering into writing and directing. Since 2007, Breche has directed three short films: BOTH (2007), ZIU (2013) and FREE RANGE (2014) premiering at Cannes' Critics week, touring and collecting different awards in film festivals.

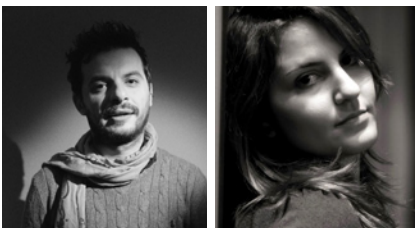
As a scriptwriter, Breche has written a various amount of web series and films: (SHANKABOOT, 2009-2011, International Digital Emmy Award, 2011), (FASATEEN 2012), (THE LITTLE DROP, 2015), (ENSLAVED, 2016) and (ALEPH, 2017). Breche is the founder/director of Scenario Beirut a collective of screenwriters based in Beirut.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHY

Jana Wehbe studied Filmmaking at IESAV in Beirut, and Modern Oriental Singing at the Lebanese National High Music Conservatory. She became known to renowned directors and production companies in Lebanon and the region for her work in the production of narrative and documentary films, television commercials and music videos. Her filmography as a producer includes 2 1/2, THIS LITTLE FATHER OBSESSION, REVOLTANGO and TALEJ. In 2011, she joined the team at the Doha Film Institute to work on their annual film events. Wehbe is currently producing several film projects.

Attending the market

Bassem Breche, Jana Wehbe



SYNOPSIS

The Maiden's Pond tells the story of two women trying to maintain and negotiate their lives with and against each other. Salma survived the difficulties of her past by letting go of any attachments, including those to her daughter. But the past did not let go of Salma, and has returned her daughter to her – defeated, divorced and pregnant.

PRODUCERS STATEMENT

When 1st the director approached me and shared with me the script of The Maiden's Pond, I was directly captivated by it.

Along with the enjoyment of reading, I questioned myself: how could a man enter so deep in the skin of a woman and write about 2 women in such a delicate way!?

Further in our discussion I discovered that the director was influenced by 2 different stories coming from the 2 sides of his parents. And as a storyteller he decided to tell a unique new story, his new story, from a different point of view; the point of view of "Salma".

I treasured the storytelling and the choices that Bassem, the scriptwriter/director made. With very few dialogue, he presented strong characters displaying genuine emotions towards each other, along with their situations and their surroundings, which never came across as anything but natural and sincere.

The quiet observing moments in some unhurried scenes communicated a sharp, yet lyric feeling.

For "The Maiden's Pond", we will collaborate with the finest creative team for the result to combine the director's signature in visuals and storytelling with powerful dramatic performances.

When discovering a screenplay with such intensity, the urge of ensuring it finds its way the screen is immense.

A unique picture in the making, ... I believe this film will reach the audience in a delicate, yet, authentic way.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT

'The Maiden's Pond' follows the relationship between Salma and Thuraya as it unfolds without culminating in a resolution or confrontation. What connects these two women is the inheritance of loss and pain, handed down through the generations despite action or rebellion. In such a context, verbal communication is impossible, apologies are not available, and forgiveness is not an option. Forgetting, ignoring and surviving might be all that is left.

A lesson that goes against the grain in a present that is all too keen on resolutions, endings and moral lessons. Salma reluctantly returns to her state of motherhood, only to discover that option is not available any more. Thuraya returns to her past in search of a trauma that might be resolved, only to discover there is nothing there. Uttering the words "mum" and "daughter" does not end the conflict; it merely exacerbates it. Moving forward often requires letting go of the past, aborting it, and discovering a different self – one that can provide some comfort for the time that remains.

COMPANY PROFILE

The Attic is a growing boutique film production house with an innovatory sparkle that intends to bring to light films by emerging talented directors. Based in Beirut, The Attic was founded in 2009. It aims to participate vigorously in the present and future of cinema in the Middle East by focusing on fine and exceptional content without compromise. The Attic produced Elie Kamal's short films 21/2 (2010), which was screened at numerous film festivals and received a FIPRESCI Prize at the Dubai International Film Festival in 2010, TALEJ (2012) AND REVOLTANGO (2014), along with a series of corporate projects. Currently, The Attic is producing several other promising projects.

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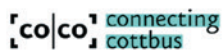
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