



FEST 2021

New Directors
New Films Festival

04.10
— **11.10**

ESPINHO, PORTUGAL

www.fest.pt

BOOK OF PROJECTS
2021

Schedule

08 OCT — Friday

09:30- 18:10

Feature Gems Session

Check-In | 09:30 - 10:00 |

- + **Aiurê** | 10:00 – 10:10 |
Kurt Shaw, Rita de Cácia Oenning da Silva
- + **Augusta & Katia** | 10:10 – 10:20 |
Ludmila Mônaco Martinez, Luís Galvão Teles
- + **Flowers of Ukraine** | 10:20 – 10:30 |
Glib Lukianets, Adelina Borets
- + **For Buraz** | 10:30 – 10:40 |
Sabina Vajrača, Annika Dawson
- + **Losers and Princesses** | 10:40 – 10:50 |
Marta Nowakowska, Kordian Kadziela
- + **Milarepa** | 10:50 – 11:00 |
Louis Nero, Ludmila Gabusi
- + **No Border** | 11:00 – 11:10 |
Jovan Todorovic, Vladimir Simic

Coffee break | 11:10 – 11:30 |

- + **Son of the Streets** | 11:30 – 11:40 |
Mohammed Almughanni, Glib Lukianets
- + **The Messenger** | 11:40 – 11:50 |
Cláudio Marques, Marília Hughes Guerreiro
- + **The Portal** | 11:50 – 12:00 |
Chadi Abo
- + **Trip to Kiev** | 12:00 – 12:10 |
Ursula Romero Gerberding, Ione Hernandez

Jury Meeting | 12:30 – 13:00 |
Results Announcement | 13:00 |
Lunch Break | 13:00 – 14:00 |
Private Feedback + 1 on 1 Meetings with Panelists | 14:00 – 18:00 |

09 OCT — Saturday

09:30- 18:00

Work in Progress

Check-In | 10:00 – 10:10 |

- + **Bukra** | 10:00 – 10:10 |
Diana Antunes, Marina Reino
- + **Genghus Heroes** | 10:10 – 10:20 |
Nick Aquilino
- + **Happy Campers** | 10:20 – 10:30 |
Amy Nicholson
- + **I'm Not Lakit** | 10:50 – 11:00 |
Amy Nicholson
- + **Live Till I Die** | 11:00 – 11:10 |
Marina-Evelina Cracana
- + **Rocco - Boxing with my Father** | 11:10 – 11:20 |
Teresa Iaropoli, Elettra Fiumi
- + **Waste Island** | 11:20 – 11:30 |
Mitchell Stafiej

Coffee break | 11:30 - 11:50 |

Make It Short

- + **Applause** | 11:50 – 12:00 |
Guilherme Daniel
- + **At the Counter** | 12:00 – 12:10 |
Anna Huth, Daniel Stopa
- + **Not Today** | 12:10 – 12:20 |
Yağmur Misirlioğlu, Nefes Polat
- + **O Pomar** | 12:20 – 12:30 |
Ana Manana, Joana Lourenço
- + **The Best Model** | 12:30 – 12:40 |
Marina-Evelina Cracana
- + **The Story of Shoes** | 12:40 – 12:50 |
Anja Kofmel
- + **The World or Nothing** | 12:50 – 13:00 |
Virgílio Pinto

Jury Meeting | 13:00 – 13:30 |
Results Announcement | 13:30 |
Lunch Break | 13:30 - 14:30 |
Private Feedback + 1 on 1 Meetings with Panelists | 14:30 – 18:00 |

Editorial

We're very happy to welcome you to **FEST — Pitching Forum 2021**. Throughout its nine-year history, this event has proven to be an impressive and rewarding opportunity, creating bridges between the most creative filmmakers and top industry experts.

The 10th edition of **FEST — Pitching Forum** will be once again held online as a part of the industry program of **FEST — New Directors | New Films Festival 2021**.

In this odd year, we're proud to have created an online event in which our filmmakers feel safe and appreciated. We're very confident that this year's format will give our participants great development opportunities, by reaching a truly global audience.

About the event

FEST — Pitching Forum is an international film project competition, providing development support and co-production opportunities. Open to work-in-progress projects of different lengths, genres and stages of development (from idea to post-production), **FEST — Pitching Forum** is a great platform for all filmmakers, emerging and established alike, to present their work-in-progress to top industry producers, financiers, fund managers and investors from all over the world, all looking for new projects to support.

The Pitching Forum program is divided into dedicated online training sessions (September 27th – October 6th) and Final Pitching Sessions (October 8th – 9th), open to a professional audience.

Initially, the 25 selected finalists have partaken in a 4-day dedicated training program guided by pitching professionals, in preparation for their final video pitch. In these sessions they had a chance to deepen their knowledge and skills regarding script development and video pitching, and to improve their presentation technique and strategy.

In the Final Pitching Forum Sessions (one for each category: **Feature Gems**, **Work-In-Progress** and **Make It Short**), the finalists will have 5 minutes each to present their prerecorded video pitch to the panel of experts and industry observers. The presentation will be followed by the Q&A – collective feedback and discussion with the jury and experts' panel. At the end of each session, the jury will decide on the awards (prizes for each category).

Awards

The best projects in each category will be rewarded with:

+ **FEST Film Lab Awards**: a weekend training at a FEST Film Lab workshop of the winners' choosing;

+ **Script Consulting Award**: Script Consulting Prize promoted by Filmmarket Hub;

+ **Post Production Awards**: post-production services provided by one of FEST's partners: Halo Post Production, Zé Maria Colorist or Resonance Post Production.

+ **Distribution Award**: a distribution deal from Mailuki Films.

The awards will be announced immediately after the jury reaches a decision. After the announcement, each finalist will have the opportunity to partake in an exclusive individual meeting with all the experts, for private feedback and counselling about their project. This feedback is extremely valuable to participants, helping them understand the potential of their projects and the steps they need to take to bring it to completion.

Other opportunities

Apart from the awards, each project can grab the attention of international producers, distributors and investors present during the session (both panel members and industry observers), and receive an individual co-production proposal, advice or recommendation.

All the fiction feature film project finalists will also be awarded with a no-term subscription on Filmmarket Hub platform, allowing them to reach producers worldwide.

We truly hope that providing this diversified support will help all the finalists to develop their projects, collect valuable feedback, widen their professional network and reach the goals they are aiming for at this edition of **FEST**.

Almost 200 projects from all over the world have been pitched so far at FEST — Pitching Forum, including productions from Hong Kong, India, USA, Romania, Italy, Belgium, Germany, UK, and Portugal, some of them being later on successfully distributed at international festivals, in cinemas and on TV – in large part thanks to the collaborations initiated at **FEST**.

Projects —

Feature Gems



When two girls find an old steamer chest in the sacristy of the church of Aiurê, little do they imagine the secrets they will reveal about their idyllic village.

Production Details

Country: Brazil

Stage of production: Pre-Production

Expected runtime: 90'

Genre: Adventure, Catastrophe, Coming of Age

Language: German, Portugese

Estimated budget: 95,000 eur

Supporting Institutions: Flor do Vento Produções, Usina da Imaginação, Shine a Light, Templeton World Charity

Director | Writer: Rita de Cácia Oenning da Silva

Producers: Rita de Cácia Oenning da Silva, Kurt Shaw

Synopsis

Trying to entertain themselves during a funeral, Teresa e Kalu, two eleven year old girls, open an ancient steam chest in the sacristy of their village church. They find objects that incite their imagination: an Indian head-dress, a wedding veil, a book written in an incomprehensible language. The girls flee to Tereza's grandfather's house in the mountains; only the old man can read the gothic German in which the book is written. They find letters written by the grandfather's own grandmother — Therésia — to a cousin in Germany, relating the first years of colonization. The ancient Amélia — seen by the villagers as a witch —, Tereza's grandfather, and a frightening gravedigger all reveal pieces of the puzzle. These revelations inspire them to take on the powerful village priest and his allies, to reveal the dark mystery that lies beneath the tranquil surface of Aiurê. The priest's sister, Mariana, made her fortune selling illegal pesticides. Even worse, their family won their land when their grandfather called down a massacre on the indigenous people a hundred years ago.

Inspired by the girls, the village comes together to take back their river and their history.

About the Author

Rita de Cácia Oenning da Silva was born in a multi-ethnic peasant family that had lost its land in the south of Brazil, but she went to university on scholarship and then worked as a professional actress. After earning doctorate and post-doctorate in anthropology studying child performers in urban and indigenous communities, she developed methods to use theater and film as tools of social transformation. She produced a feature fictional film made by ex-child soldiers, a telenovela by indigenous children for Bolivian national TV, and an award winning hip-hop album against police violence. The Princess in the Alleyway (2017) was shown at festivals around the world and won best film of the year from the Subversive Cinema Society. Her documentary The Other Side of the Other (2019) is under consideration for franchising in Hollywood. She just completed Wuitina Numiá (Daughters of Courage) the first fictional Tukano- language film ever.

Da Silva has written two books and dozens of articles for both popular and academic media. With husband and co-director Kurt Shaw, da Silva has won the United Nations/BMW Intercultural Innovation Award (2016), the UN Online Volunteering award (4 times), a Wenner Gren Fellowship (2007), and The Freedom to Create Youth Prize (2008, finalist 2011). In 2019, she was honored as a World Leader for Early Childhood (2019).

Da Silva lives in Florianópolis, in the south of Brazil, with her husband and their eleven year old daughter, Helena.

Note of Intent

"What's a bugre, Dad?" I was eight years old as I walked through the jungle with my father, imagining the mysteries in the depths of the forest. I had heard that word from time to time: it brought to mind visions the fauns and centaurs of Greek myth. "Bugre?" my father responded. "They're people. Like us. They just live in the jungle. That conversation happened in the worst years of the Brazilian dictatorship, when my family had lost its land and had moved to the margins of a small city, what might today be called a favela. But we always went back to Aiurê.

As I grew up, I began to understand that the little German village where my grandparents still lived held a secret. Certain words and ideas made older people uncomfortable. Others stayed away from given places. When my brothers showed off an arrowhead they had found, adults didn't show the enthusiasm I might have expected. Even the name Aiurê was mysterious.

As an artists and as an anthropologist, I have come to see fiction as a way to reveal truth... not telling the "true" story, but opening a space in which the stories and fantasies of varied groups can come together to dialogue, debate, and interact. Aiurê incorporates this philosophy, moving between the point of view of different children with different ideas and experiences.

Aiurê is a children's adventure. It doesn't tell the story of the massacre, but of children who gradually discover the tragedy that founds their community, tracing my own discovery. Rita da Silva



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Augusta & Kátia

On a beautiful sunny morning Augusta and Kátia wake up and try to pay their rent, but instead end up accidentally murdering the landlord.

Production Details

Country: Portugal, Spain

Stage of Production: Pre-Production

Expected Runtime: 75'

Genre: Drama, Comedy, Road Movie

Language: Portuguese

Estimated Budget: 840,000 eur

Director / Writer: Lud Mônaco

Producer: Luís Galvão Teles

Synopsis

Portugal. Augusta, a Brazilian immigrant and unemployed painter, lives off gambling while fooling herself into thinking that she is job hunting. Kátia, another Brazilian immigrant and a receptionist at a funeral home, lives on praying and is obsessed with the idea that she has to be someone in life.

On a beautiful sunny morning, Augusta & Kátia get ready to see Mr. Jair, their landlord. Kátia opens a box but finds only half of the money rent and a gun. Augusta confesses that she bought the object on a promotion to study it for 'The Peace Mandalas' her new painting series. Augusta regrets that she couldn't afford any bullets.

Mr. Jair arrives, but gets enraged at his recurrent debtor tenants and yells at them to leave. Kátia tries to ease the situation with a €1 coin she finds on the floor. But neither that, nor the broken glass in the lobby, nor the weeks of cold water, make him overlook the delay. Kátia bets for the truth and shows the gun to the landlord explaining why Augusta bought it. It's the last straw!

Mr. Jair goes in search of the police. Augusta kidnaps the weapon from Kátia's hand, but Mr. Jair doesn't get intimidated. Augusta cocks the gun and doesn't really know what else to do, so quickly hands it to Kátia who ends up firing unintentionally. Tenants then discover the complimentary bullet that came with the promotion. Mr. Jair's body falls like a coconut falls from a tree.

About the Authors

Born in São Paulo in 1987, **Lud Mônaco** is a Brazilian screenwriter & director, whose work explores the female universe. She studied film at the Barcelona Film School (ECIB) and her graduation project 'Para, pero sigue' was awarded best short film at the Lisbon & Estoril Film Festival. Names such as Peter Handke were amongst the awarding panel.

Many of her short films have been featured in major festivals, such as the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Mix Brasil and Sitges Film Festival. Her work has also been showcased at the prestigious Museum of Image and Sound of São Paulo. 'Enjoy the Drama', one of her short films, has been released in a collection by the Peccadillo Pictures. Lud Mônaco has been selected for the Berlinale Talents 2017. She is currently developing her debut feature film, a tragicomic road-movie set in Portugal.

Based in both Barcelona and London, Lud has recently moved in to commercials, with her first project shooting for Uber. She is represented by Albiñana Films in Spain and Stable TV in the UK.

Note of Intent

I started developing this project when I returned from Lisbon in 2014, where I had gone to receive a prize at the festival of the legendary Portuguese producer Paulo Branco. At the time I was living in Barcelona and had no money to pay the rent. Awarded and unemployed, I decided to sit down and write about what I felt as a woman, an artist and an immigrant.

The happenings are connected by coincidences and some portray incoherent realities. The protagonists do not act within a recognisable psychology, they are deliberately incoherent and openly symbolic.

ment where a daughter of a wealthy celebrity could be rehearsing with the son of a criminal. In the hallway, there's a strange Englishman wandering the halls. "Who's he?" I asked my friend. "Alan Parker, a film director, he just made Midnight Express. They're making a movie about us" she said. In a class of only 140 students, we were, and still are a tight-knit group of talented artists. At our reunions I kept thinking, "someone should make a documentary about us, from the 'Fame' school. There are so many fascinating stories: a daughter of a famous Civil Rights activist, who continues with his legacy; a son of a "weatherman" who's writing a book about Attica; several successful actors; a restaurateur; successful professional dancers; an internationally renowned violinist and multi-millionaire fashion designer, who has a cabaret act, to name a few. We are working in nearly every aspect of life: health care; food; education; communication; law; entertainment. There are the lives that took a turn for the worse: several lost to AIDS; a beautiful dancer, murdered by her boyfriend; a gifted actor, who succumbed to drugs and prostitution. In the end, is Fame, everything it's cracked up to be? Is there a price? What is there to be learned from these stories? What can aspire performers take away from these life stories?



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Flowers of Ukraine

Квіти України

Three generation of Ukrainians (Xers, millennials and zoomers) faces its own problems on a way to better life.

Production Details

Country: Ukraine, Poland

Stage of production: Script Development

Expected runtime: 72'

Genre: Documentary

Language: Polish, Russian, Ukrainian

Estimated budget: 94,000 eur

Supporting Institutions: Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, Gogol Foundation

Director | Writer: Adelina Borets

Producer: Glib Lukianets

Synopsis

Nine short stories, which characters are divided according to Strauss–Howe generational theory. They are all ordinary people: pupil, graduate, student, designer, driver, smuggler, artist, civil servant and emigrant. Their problems are real and contrast with each other, but relate to one of the three prototypes of the generation. Everyone takes a decision. Some of them are more influenced by generation stereotypes, some of them less.

Need for peace, money and self-acceptance are common for all of the characters. But some habits and tastes are mutual only for Xers, millennials or zoomers. The story is not given in a classic sequential historical timing, but is composed like a patchwork quilt, intertwining one character with another. Starting the story in Kyiv, we move away from the capital and end up outside the country to show or disprove the global nature of the theory of generations.

About the Author

Adelina Borets, director and screenwriter, was born on January 1, 1998 in Mariupol. In 2020 graduated from the Warsaw Film School with a degree in film directing. In 2021 finished studio of Andrzej Wajda, where she was developing her screenplay for debut in feature film. Her first documentary short "The Wormwood Star" was nominated by 17 film festivals including Koszalin, Austin and New Orleans. Her short film "Eden House" is selected to 2021 edition of Gdynia Film Festival.

Glib Lukianets, the producer of the film, studied production in Łódź Film School, was a production manager of documentary "Quebonafide: Romantic Psycho Film" and more than 15 shorts awarded or nominated by Gdynia IFF, Camerimage, Warsaw IFF, New Horizons, Transatlantic, Koszalin IFF, Tofifest, Forum of European Cinema Cinergia, Molodist IFF.

Note of Intent

Each element of this generation triptych consists of three short stories, which are all intersect through locations, household items and situations that are observed in the genre of docufiction. Visually, the film is a reflection of the everyday culture of Ukrainians as a European nation, aims to fix it in the moment, for the possibility of acquaintance with it for future generations.

If the Strauss–Howe theory is actually reflected in the example of our characters, they are indeed a portrait of those who will make key decisions in world politics, business and culture in 5-10 years. Understanding their problems, ambitions and intentions is a reason for self-reflection: "who are we and where are we moving next".



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For Buraz

A successful Bosnian-American banker is forced into the dark underbelly of Florida's Bosnian Muslim immigrant community in order to solve his brother's untimely death.

Production Details

Country: United States
Stage of production: Script Development
Expected runtime: N/A
Genre: Neo-noir, Drama, Crime & Gangster
Language: English, Bosnian
Estimated budget: 1,700,000 eur
Supporting Institutions: Stowe Story Labs
Director | Writer: Sabina Vajraca
Producer: Annika Dawson

Synopsis

Living in a Tribeca loft, with a high-paid job on Wall Street, and a perfect American girlfriend by his side, Kenan's life couldn't be further from where he started – a bad part of a shitty town in Florida, where he and his family landed 22 years before, as Bosnian War refugees.

So, when he gets a call that his younger brother Armin died of an accidental drug overdose while visiting their mother in that same neighborhood, Kenan's plan is to go there, bury his brother, take care of his mother, and get back to NYC as quickly as possible.

That all changes at the funeral, when Mirso, Armin's childhood friend-turned drug dealer-turned reformed criminal tells Kenan it was no accident - Armin was killed, and he has witnesses to prove it.

The police refuse to investigate, so Kenan is left with no other option but to integrate himself into the dark underbelly of the Bosnian immigrant community in order to find out the truth, confronting many of its nefarious characters, including Bojan,

a way too trigger-happy gang leader, and Lea, the girl Armin was seeing at the time of his death, who may or may not have been responsible for what happened. A truth that proves to be very hard to accept when Kenan starts sleeping with her too.

About the Author

Born in Bosnia and Herzegovina, **Sabina Vajraca** immigrated to the U.S. as a war refugee, and started her directing career in NYC theatre.

Her critically-acclaimed feature documentary **BACK TO BOSNIA** (2005 AFI Fest / Director's Choice, 2006 Crossroads) is featured in the top 100 of the greatest films directed by women by BBC and available on Amazon.

Most recently she co-directed a USC/Warner Bros. feature drama **VOODOO MACBETH** (Best of Fest, 2021 Sedona / Best Director Award, 2021 Charlotte FF), and wrote/directed a short drama **VARIABLES**, which won numerous awards, including the DGA SFA Grand Prize, Alfred P. Sloan grant, and the Student Oscars, Student BAFTA and the HUMANTAS Prize nominations, and is currently streaming on IndieFlix and Film Shortage, where it was named Daily Pick. Sabina is a member of Film Fatales and the Alliance of Women Directors, an alumna of Ryan Murphy Half Directing Mentorship, the Nantucket Screenwriters Colony, and the Stowe Story Labs, and was in the top 25 selects for the 2020 HBO Directing Fellowship. She holds an M.F.A. from USC School of Cinematic Arts and is represented by Paradigm.

Note of Intent

Set in the same Bosnian community my family landed in as refugees in 1994, this is a story of identity, desire to belong, and the gray zone in which good&bad reside. It's also a story of guilt, in the sense of surviving something that your loved one didn't; as well as the huge pressure to repay the debt of being here in the first place.

Inspired by the events around my brother's death in 2010, this film is set to expose this unique experience of a child émigré, specific to Bosnians in this case, but easily applied to any immigrants, making this story both deeply personal, and universal. Given that we're living in an era of immense anti-immigrant sentiment worldwide, I'm eager to share this story now, to help debunk the myth of us being so different from anyone else, in hopes of making my audience more compassionate going forward.

Tonally, this film is akin to **MANCHESTER BY THE SEA** and **THE NIGHT OF**. Its themes will be reflected in production design, cinematography, and music, juxtaposing classical camerawork a la **CHINATOWN** and **THE GODFATHER** with the urban soundtrack of Bosnian Rap and Turbo-Folk.

Although set in the U.S., this is very much an international story. Bosnian communities are present around Europe, as are other immigrant groups. They are our target audience, as are adults who enjoy crime dramas, supporters of female filmmakers, and cinephiles interested in indie fare & thrillers.



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The Losers and Princesses

Jak przestałem się bac i zostałem elfem.

Coming of age story, about first love and ELVES. Funny and intelligent tale of adolescence, first love, becoming independent and LARP's hero.

Production Details

Country: Poland
Stage of production: Pre-Production
Expected runtime: 105'
Genre: Comedy, Coming of Age
Language: English, Polish
Estimated budget: 1,500,000 eur
Supporting Institutions: Polish Film Institute
Director: Kordian Kadziela, Michał Wawrzeczek
Producer: Maciej Sowinski, Marta Nowakowska

Synopsis

Sergius is 16 years old and is a loser at least his father and old brother, treats him like one. The thing he's good at is LARP (live action role-playing), which is an alternative to computer games and became popular among young people. Sergius and a group of like "losers" are often diving in the fantastic world of the princes, princesses, elves and imaginary battles to be a hero, a brave and awesome. But at school there are hiding their hobby. One day a new girl appears at his school Helena. Sergius falls in love with her immediately this happens quite often to teenagers, usually it is love from first sight. He is totally enchanted by her, but she joins the group the so-called popular who don't talk with such lames like him. Sergius decides to follow his heart and reach the queen of his dreams fighting for love in a real and fantastic world as well as recognition in the eyes of the father. He becomes brave, confident, and finally able to confront the strict father (a local policeman), a brother standing up to fathers standards and competitor from rich family with his supporters who constantly bullies him.

In the final of the movie the spectacular fantasy battle going on, parallel in a fairy tale (LARP) and in real world of the village, real clash happens with the participation of the local police, he saves beloved one and conquers her heart.

About the Author

KORDIAN KADZIELA - DIRECTOR AND CO-AUTHOR OF THE SCREENPLAY

A graduate of the production and direction organization of WSRiTV in Katowice. Member of the Polish Filmmakers Association.

Creator of short films: "Fusy" (including the Grand Prix Etiuda & Anima 2017) "Szczękościsk" (Main Award in the Competition Young Cinema at the Feature Film Festival in Gdynia 2016) "Larp" (awarded at festivals in Barcelona, St. Petersburg, among others Brno, Brest), "Muka!" (Including the "Debut Award" at the festival in Ann Arbor and Audience Award "Etiuda & Anima"). Director of advertising promos and music videos.

Note of Intent

The passion of our main hero sergius is terrain games in the imaginary, Fantasy world or LARP (live action role-playing), is an extremely spectacular strong branch of the entertainment industry together with cosplay.

Larp comes from role-playing games, in which the player creates its own character and decides about action from various types of fandoms and reconstruction groups and from the cosplay (costume play) movement, when ones are dressing up as anime characters, movies, comics.

We focus in our film on larp played in a forest based on a fantasy world, During which dozens of players trying achieve their goals in the scenery prepared by game organizers. We made a short film about larp in 2014. www.kordiankadziela.com/larp

We found out that our film found its never filmed before niche. Crowdfunding fundraiser collect the money enough to finish our short film just in a few days. The movie Was shown at dozens of festivals, won several prizes and was acquired by Canal+.

Producing full-length version of "larp" will bring commercial and artistic success. This is the story based in the real and imaginary environment of nerdes and geeks but also in school between „popular” kids. Shows problems of teenagers in small villages, second class cities as well as typical generation gap. Parents problems of acceptance teenagers rebellious phase and fighting own demons.

We will tell our film in unique visual style. We want our world to be in american films' aesthetics from the 80's a



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Milarepa

The fantastic journey of Mila, a young woman forced to disguise herself as a man in order to receive knowledge and move on from revenge to resurrection.

Production Details

Country: Italy
Stage of production: Pre-Production
Expected runtime: 100'
Genre: Drama, Women, Educational
Language: English, Italian
Estimated budget: 3,000,000 eur
Supporting Institutions: Fondazione Sardegna Film Commission, Apulia Film Commission, Film Commission Torino Piemonte
Director: Louis Nero
Producer: Louis Nero

Synopsis

A Mediterranean island, where modern decaying buildings co-exist with nuragic constructions. Here the young Mila lives a serene and rural existence in her family home. She lives with her parents and her little sister. Her father is very fond of his daughters, but the women's lives are radically disrupted. The head of the household suddenly dies and his cruel siblings rob the family of their rightful inheritance. Driven by desire for revenge, Mila's mother sends her to learn the Magical Arts. These can only be taught to men, so Daka cuts Mila's hair and dresses her up as a boy. Mila arrives in the presence of Lama Yunguntun where she learns all the secrets of True Science. Mila manages to get her revenge. Thanks to the use of magic, she collapses her uncle and aunt's house killing several people. After an ominous dream and the vision of pain and death she has inflicted upon her relatives, Mila decides to abandon black magic and seeks a new master to atone for her terrible deeds.

She goes to the famous guru Marpa, who initially does not seem willing to welcome her as his disciple. After many sacrifices, Mila, lost all hope and certain that Marpa will not teach her what she so desires, decides to end her life. But she is stopped just in time. Now, after having sacrificed everything and having purified her mind through effort and humility, Mila is ready to receive the guru's teachings.

About the Author

Louis Nero is an Italian screenwriter and director, known for his films and numerous collaborations with internationally famous actors. Among them: F. Murray Abraham, Faye Dunaway, Kevin Spacey, Michael Madsen, Corin Redgrave, Geraldine Chaplin, Franco Nero, Christopher Lambert, Giorgio Albertazzi. In his projects he has also collaborated with internationally famous Italian artists like Franco Zeffirelli and Tinto Brass.

His films have been distributed all over the world. He's a permanent member of the jury of the most important Italian film award: the David of Donatello. He's represented by the UTA (United Talent Agency), one of the most important agencies in the United States.

Louis Nero is also president and founder of the production company "L'Altrofilm" since 1998. In his project he always concentrates on the research and the study of the historical period the story is set in. Louis Nero graduated in DAMS at the university of Turin.

At the moment Louis Nero alongside Nick Vallelonga, Academy Award Winner 2018 for the acclaimed film "Green Book", is working on thriller procedural TV series, "The Puppet Master".

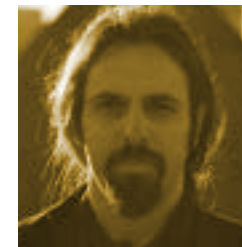
Note of Intent

We want to bring a great female protagonist to the big screen; within the world of Cinema we strongly desire to give voice to a story of female growth. In these particular historic times, our project Milarepa will help audiences, already sensitized, to embrace this theme with more empathy. We are talking about the freedom of choice, independence from family ties and the ambivalence of maternal love.

"Integration" is another key word of our project. The aim of this project is to make a film that visually combines Eastern and Western culture. Mirroring our current-day globalized world, in our project we wish to create a world rich in mixtures, with various ethnic and religious influences.

Films that in the last few years have won the most prestigious festivals ("Nomadland", "The Woman Who Left", "Shoplifters", "There is no evil") have a lot in common with Milarepa: female emancipation, the destruction of a family, social marginalization and the incessant desire for vengeance.

Our film can be distributed all over the world. The story is directed towards audiences who love to find a deeper meaning in their entertainment, whoever wants to experience a different kind of journey, and find themselves in a fantastical world that, however, is also contemporary, educational and inspirational. In addition to this, the involvement of an international cast, a high level crew and the discrete use of visual effects grant this project both artistic and spectacular relevance.



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No Border

On the border with Kosovo a young female Serbian special forces soldier investigates a murder she committed under orders of her superior. She uncovers a network of crime that changes her forever.

Production Details

Country: Serbia

Stage of production: Script Development

Script: No

Expected runtime: 100'

Genre: Drama, Coming of Age, Thriller

Language: English, Albanian, Serbian

Estimated budget: 1,500,000 eur

Director: Jovan Todorovic, Vladimir Simic

Producer: Bogdan Petkovic

Synopsis

Iva (25) is one of the only women soldiers on active duty in the Serbian Special Forces - enforcing the law among the civilian population of the ruthless and unruly border between Serbia and Kosovo. During an operation of capturing a prison escapee, Iva executes a shoot-to-kill order only to discover that the escapee was an unarmed 18- year-old kid. Her commander plants an unmarked pistol on the victim and the whole case is buried.

Riddled with guilt over killing an unarmed man, and troubled by the cover-up, Iva begins an investigation. She suspects that their fatal encounter was more than just coincidence. Iva uncovers a network of crime and financial interest that sees no border.

She is irrevocably changed by the investigation as her pursuit of justice turns her from a prodigious officer with a bright future in the Special Forces to an outcast. She cannot change the world but perhaps she can still change herself.

About the Author

Jovan is a Serbian American multi-disciplinary artist working in film, photography and music.

Drawn to storytelling as a means to use heightened visual, auditory and textural experiences, his work explores the human condition promoting connectivity through empathy, and broadening our ideas of beauty and what it means to be human.

Before finishing his MFA from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Serbia, he made his first feature "The Belgrade Phantom" which won best documentary at both FIPRESCI Festival in Serbia and Gotham Film Festival in New York, quickly launching his career. Since, he has traveled the world creating commercial, fashion and music video work for major global brands, agencies and artists such as Nike, Samsung, Diesel, Coty, W+K, H&M, Puma, Major Lazar, Nicki Minaj, Katy Perry, XL Records, Universal, Sony and others.

Often celebrated for its provocative nature and social impact, his work has garnered significant press and recognition across the world winning multiple Cannes Lions, Clio, Ciclope, Shots, Lux, and Golden Drum awards. His recent commercial for Nike Japan has created a political and social upstir that lead to some of the first serious discussions on race and prejudice in Japan's recent times.

He resides between Belgrade, Brooklyn & Tokyo and is currently finishing his band HEAT's debut album, as well as his second feature "Juvenile", a documentary exploring life in a Serbian juvenile prison.

Note of Intent

Despite growing up in the world in which this story is set, I've never truly felt like I was part of it. Whether it was the result of a brief spell in the West, my liberal upbringing, or an innate reaction against the corruption and moral hypocrisy which marks this part of the world, I always felt like an outsider in my own country.

At first, like Iva, I tried to find a place in this world. A sense of belonging. But as I grew up I found it increasingly difficult to compromise my instincts and began to pull away. This allowed me to see the bigger picture and place the problems of this region in the context of the wider world.

In this respect, Iva is both a representation of myself and a reaction against the established norms of a fledgling, corrupt capitalist system which serves underground forces and malign influences, while eroding trust within society.

Despite the politicized backdrop of this story, this is first, and foremost, a human story that is culturally specific but emotionally universal.



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Son of the Streets

The Palestinian boy grows up without ID in Shatila refugee camp in Beirut. In the struggle for citizenship, his right to education and health care, harrowing family secrets come to light.

Production Details

Country: Poland

Stage of production: Pre-Production

Script: No

Expected runtime: 80'

Genre: Human Rights, Coming of Age

Language: Arabic

Estimated budget: 135,000 eur

Supporting Institutions: Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Palestinian Cultural Fund

Director: Mohammed Almughanni

Producer: Glib Lukianets, Adrian Kujda

Synopsis

Khodor's parents have both died, so he grows up with his stepmother. The 13-year-old is cool and relaxed in front of his friends of the same age, but his new family often enough feels the pent-up aggression of the pubescent. His stepmother and half-sisters are desperately trying to get him a document that proves his existence and gives him the right to education, health care and freedom of movement outside the Palestinian refugee camp Shatila in Beirut.

Despite the fact that Khodor is a naughty and impolite child, especially to his stepmother, the one who tries to help him the most, the documentary film is narrated in an intimate way, trying to explain what Khodor wants. He wants to live a decent and uncomplicated life in a better-off home than the small apartment in the refugee camp, which has water and electricity cut-off several times on daily basis. The difficult circumstances he is going through and the frustration that befalls him whenever he builds hopes for obtaining the identification papers makes him angry with everyone around him, because he feels that they are all responsible for his present life and his future.

He escapes from this reality to meet his beloved 'DOMO' (14), who is at the same age as him, they play billiards together sometimes and when Domo is at work — she sells roses at crossroads — Khodor goes to practice one of his favourite hobbies which is collecting and taming the pigeons.

About the Author

Mohammed Almughanni- Director, screenwriter and cinematographer.

He was born in 1994 in Gaza, Palestine. He pursued his Bachelor and Masters degree in Film Directing at Łódź Film School in Poland. In the past few years he did film in different areas in the world such as Cuba, Palestine, Denmark, China, Jordan, Lebanon, Poland and Germany. He is an author of documentary and narrative films, including "Blacklisted" (2021), "Son Of The Streets" (2020) "Falafala" (2019), "Operation" (2018), "Where's the Donkey" (2018), "Shujayya" (2015) and "Halawan" (2012). His films were selected and awarded at numerous film festivals around the world.

"Being a Palestinian director, I've been always interested in telling the stories of the Palestinian people who are deprived from their basic rights, either they're living in Palestine or outside of Palestine. Life in Gaza has had a great impact on my life and on the stories that I want to tell, especially the stories of children who are born in areas of armed conflict and are trying to get what is happening around"

Note of Intent

The storyline is divided into three main narratives; one is when Khodor is at home and he's just an observer listening to conversations and arguments by adults around him talking about his case without him understanding a lot but feeling that there's a problem. The second one is when he's in the street playing with kids where he discharges all the negative energy he has regarding his ID issue, which makes him more violent toward others. The third one is his girlfriend and the birds where he's delicate and intimate. The birds are his meditation. The girlfriend is his future.

"During my studies at Lodz Film School in Poland, I made a short documentary about Khodor. Now, I'm developing it to make it into a feature documentary. I'd like to follow the life of Khodor and keep filming him as he grows up and he realises how important his ID issue is. This project is mainly to help Khodor getting his ID and raise awareness of people who are not registered as citizens/refugees/humans of any community" - Mohammed Almughanni



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The Messenger

A Mensageira

Iris is a bailiff and witness the social chaos. Sick by situations of the lack of justice, Iris will receive an ancestral call to investigate a major corruption scheme, that involves land grabbing.

Production Details

Country: Brazil
Stage of production: Script Development
Expected runtime: 70'
Genre: Drama, Social Issue, Surreal, Third World, Thriller, Women, Black
Language: Portuguese
Estimated budget: 406504,07 eur
Supporting Institutions: ANCINE (National Cinema Agency)
Director | Writer: Cláudio Marques,
Producer: Marília Hughes Guerreiro

Synopsis

Iris, the protagonist of "The Messenger", is a 34 year-old black woman who works as a bailiff, a profession that bears witness to social injustice. After taking part in a series of land evictions, Iris suffers from problems with her sight, is plagued by strange nightmares, and has difficulty sleeping. She seeks medical advice from a doctor but is frustrated by the responses and begins to increase her medication. Iris is in charge to carry out Anderson's arrest, an activist linked to the quilombola issue that has been denouncing the process of land grabbing. Psychologically shaken, Iris takes time off work and leaves Salvador to visit her father in Cachoeira, one of the most important cradles of the Candomblé religion in Brazil. Visits to Iris' hometown represent moments of softness and affection in the film. In Cachoeira, Iris decides to go to the place of worship (terreiro) of the spiritual leader (mãe de santo), Mãe Luzia. She discovers that Xangô, the deity responsible for justice, demands a response from Iris, who bears witness to so many problems in her daily work but fails to act.

On his return to the capital, Iris hears of the news that Anderson disappeared after his arrest. Iris breaks free of the inertia that has been holding her back. She faces up to the reality of the scheme involving the judiciary and the land grabber. Iris' friends, concerned for her safety, try to convince her not to pursue this cause. Some of the other bailiffs are already too deeply involved.

About the Author

Cláudio Marques worked exclusively in cinema for 25 years. He founded the Coisa de Cinema production company, where, he realized five short films with Marília Hughes. They have received acclaim for their five short and four feature films. With their short films, they have participated in approximately 250 festivals and special screenings and won 68 awards. The couple's first feature-length film, "Depois da Chuva" (2013), was the winner of the best script (Cláudio Marques) at the 46th Festival de Brasília do Cinema Brasileiro. Depois da Chuva received its international premiere at the 43rd Rotterdam International Film Festival in Holland. It was also selected for approximately 25 festivals in Brazil and abroad, like: BAFICI, Cinélatino and Chicago Film Festival. For the largest media outlet in Brazil, "Depois da Chuva" was the best Brazilian feature of the last ten years. "A Cidade do Futuro" (2016), also co-directed by the couple, was screened at 48 film festivals around the globe, for example, the Festival Cinematográfico Del Uruguay and Indielisboa, and won Best Feature at BAFICI (Argentina). The film's international premiere took place at the legendary Festival de la Habana (Cuba). The festival career of "Guerra de Algodão", included screenings at the 54th Montreal World Film Festival (Canada), the 42nd Montreal World Film Festival (Canada), the 42nd Atlanta Film Festival (USA) and 68th International Film Festival Mannheim Heidelberg.

Note of Intent

"A Mensageira" is a film with a classic narrative and distinct thematic and esthetic layers. The film addresses social inequality, issues of injustice and overt racism in the context of a social realist drama, with elements of suspense and moments of terror. The feature is based on Brazil's social structure, which combines the privilege of an insatiable elite with the hardships of the majority of the population who are relegated to second-class status.

In this film I am looking to merge auteur cinema with cinema that has the capacity to quickly capture the attention of a large audience. "A Mensageira" brings together linear narrative structure and elements of genre films, with an original screenplay and a bold visual concept.

The photography of "A Mensageira" will reflect the way its protagonist is trampled on by secular and oppressive institutions. Throughout her story, Iris experiences pressures that constantly displace and constrain her.

Ida (2013), from the Polish filmmaker Pawel Pawlikowski, is a brave and radical reference point for the way it places the character at the margins; a film in which the character is positioned away from the center, cropped and oppressed by the framing.



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The Portal

Rémi is a war journalist, is trying to enter a refugee camp. He heard about Sana, a miraculous girl that has unique abilities: she could communicate with the stars and bring back dead children to life

Production Details

Country: Syria, France, Egypt

Stage of production: Pre-Production

Expected runtime: 90'

Genre: Fantasy, Sci-Fi, War

Language: Arabic, English

Estimated budget: 1,280,000 eur

Supporting Institutions: CNC / Red Sea Film Festival / Doha Film Institut

Director | Writer: Chadi Abo

Synopsis

2016. A refugee camp in the Syrian desert. Remi is a French war journalist who earns his living taking photos of dead bodies, execution moments, and other horrid pictures of the everyday misery of war zone. His cynical attitude hides terrible grief: he lost his wife and daughter in a terrorist attack in Istanbul some years ago.

He and his Syrian interpreter, Zeid, are trying to enter a refugee camp hold by jihadists. They heard about Sana, a "miraculous girl". Rumors say that she has unique abilities: she could communicate with the stars and bring back dead children to life...

They are not the only ones looking for the little girl: the cruel Emir and his soldiers have just found her and keep her prisoner in a tent under close surveillance, the tension behind this capture is that the Emir already opened fire on the little girl days ago. They fear that the legends about Sana's supernatural powers could endanger their control of the area.

Remi and Zeid are at the camp gate, they want to release her, a chase begins in the desert with the terrorists. During the chaos, Sana disappears again. Remi will have to face different phenomena and encounters: a light beam that appears in the middle of the desert that links with Sana's story, a group of lost children with miraculous powers, an old Bedouin who knows about the strangers coming from outer space... The journey will bring Remy to the frontier of reality and profoundly disturb his convictions about life and death.

About the Author

Chadi Abo

Born in Damascus / Syria, studied architecture and graduated before he moves to France to start a new path in ENSAD Paris. In 2001 he finished his first short animation film Blinks Of Exile, featured in many festivals. In the same year, he started a long career in VFX in BUF, worked on many international productions from Matrix Reloaded, 300, Alexandre.

In 2012 he founded his image creation studio (HECAT Studio). He dedicated his ten years of experience to Arabic Cinema and TV, where he played many different roles from a VFX producer to director.

Chadi is a genre film supporter; he wrote many genre films and TV shows. The Portal, a Sci-Fi feature that speaks about the war in Syria from a different angle, won a Special Mention in the Sitges 2019 Pitchbox. The Portal was also selected to BIFAN 2021 and won an award.

The year 2019 was also his first year as a co-producer with National Geographic and The Danish Documentary on The Cave, directed by Feras Fayyad. The same project was nominated for 4 Emmy Awards and won two of them, one for Exceptional Merit in production.

Chadi, also an Executive Producer on the horror film The Unkind, and a co-producer on the French modern fantasy film "NEPAS". Defending and growing Arabic Genre productions is a personal and devoted mission for Chadi; he thinks that our culture is fertile soil for a different storytelling experience.

Note of Intent

My story will have a fantasy/sci-fi genre melange that speaks about Syria's horrific war without using direct visual tools, nor using any political agenda or a speech.

Also, as a Syrian, I feel intrigued about how to find my place as a filmmaker. The industry thrives for

Documentary films to understand what is happening over there. However, with The Portal, I can tell poetically and authentically a fable that speaks about children in wartime.

The Portal is at the cross between three genres: war film, drama, and fantasy.

The story begins with a complicated scene to reflect the confusing nature of that war. The stage involved Islamists inside a refugee camp, kidnapping children.

Like in a war film, all the different opponents inside this conflict – Islamists, Allies, journalists - converge to one point. Here, this point is embodied by a child; a ten-year-old girl everyone is chasing. The reason is her supernatural abilities.

As opposed to action war movies, I would like to have moments of poetry and fantasy that will resist the war's terrible details.

I've chosen a significantly tightened time-lapse to tell my story to develop long extended scenes. That impression of real-time tends to give a melancholic and poetic tone to the film.

There are three distinctive parts in The Portal. The first one is a long real-time scene that adopts Sana's point of view, the chased little girl. A group of religious fanatics is after her.



Chadi Abo

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Trip to Kiev

Viaje a Kiev

Marcos and Lucía decide to travel by car from Spain to Kiev to go pick up the child they have agreed to have through a surrogate Ukrainian mother. Hoping to also reignite their marriage.

Production Details

Country: Spain, Ukraine
Stage of production: Script Development
Expected runtime: 90'
Genre: Drama
Language: Miscellaneous
Estimated budget: 1,400,000 eur
Director | Writer: Ione Hernandez
Producer: Ursula Romero Gerberding

Synopsis

Marcos and Lucía, in their 40 s, travel by car from Spain to Kiev to pick up the child they have agreed to have through surrogacy. There is one month left for the child to be born. The two have decided to make this trip so that the transition to their new phase in life is not sudden. The trip uncovers a relationship crisis that has been dragging on for a long time and will make Lucía question the decision made.

Alina, 28, travels from her hometown to Kiev. She has signed a contract with a Surrogacy Agency to carry Marcos and Lucía's son. She stays in a shared flat that the Agency has arranged for her. It is mandatory to spend the last month of the pregnancy in an apartment under supervision with eight other women. These days that they all spend together, allows them to get to know each other. Suddenly Alina is unwell and is admitted to hospital. The birth comes early. The baby is given to a nurse to prevent bonding with the child. Meanwhile, a few km from Kiev, Marcos and Lucia see the delivery on a tablet screen.

They arrive at the Hospital. The excitement of having their child in their arms makes them forget their misunderstandings.

Alina is discharged from the hospital as Marcos and Lucía leave the hospital with their son. Alina walks behind them, unaware of the couple and the child and returns home.

The journey that began a week ago is now done in reverse, leaving behind the billboards of agencies that invite young Ukrainian women to be surrogates to have a better future.

About the Author

Ursula Romero Gerberding

Until recently I was unaware of surrogacy; it did not exist as a reality in my life. Now it generates debates and, in the country, where I live, it is prohibited. Every year, hundreds of women travel to Ukraine in search of their babies conceived in the womb of another woman. However, in Ukraine surrogacy is legal; young women in this country resort to this activity to get out of poverty. These two realities catch my attention and I wonder if the desire to be a mother is above all else.

The film proposes to explore the theme of surrogacy from the two realities involved: that of the parents who travel to look for the child and that of the pregnant mother who travels to Kiev to spend her last weeks of pregnancy in a shared apartment provided by the agency. In this tour I propose a structure in which the first act focuses on the couple's trip to Kiev and the second act focuses on the pregnant mother. The third act unites the couple and the pregnant mother.

As a woman I speak out against surrogacy, as a creator and filmmaker I just want to put the camera on the realities that come to this agreement without judging or creating a moralistic story.

My journey is the journey of the film, the same one that my 3 protagonists make and it is a journey that is addressed to all audiences because it is a current issue and it is also a journey that crosses different realities and countries, with which the nature of this story is already international in nature.

Note of Intent

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Projects —

Make it Short



Aplause

Aplauso

An apotheotic applause to an absent President doesn't seem to end, as anyone who quits seals his fate.

Production Details

Country: Portugal
Stage of production: Pre-Production
Expected runtime: 12'
Genre: Alternative, Drama
Language: Portuguese
Estimated budget: 22,000 eur
Director | Writer: Guilherme Daniel
Producers: Guilherme Daniel
Supporting Institutions: GDA Foundation

Synopsis

A Party meeting ends with a message of praise to the President that sparks apotheotic applause. In the middle of the crowd there are also members of the State Police, and the applause does not cease. The minutes pass and the arms get tired, the sweat runs down his heaving cheeks. On the dais, a man becomes aware of the ridicule and concludes the ovation, and with him the dozens of people in the audience.

The man is arrested.

About the Author

Guilherme Daniel graduates in Applied Mathematics before joining Film School in 2009. There he directs two short-films, "Ponto de Fuga" (2011) e "O Silêncio das Sereias" (2012), before graduating in Cinematography with a minor in Directing. Since 2012 he works in Film and Advertisement. As a DoP he shoots 16 short films, four documentaries and two feature films. From 2013 on he writes and produces short-films, such as "Maria" (Joana Viegas, 2014) and "Ermida" (Vasco Esteves, 2015). In 2017 he directs "Depois do Silêncio", work to be followed in 2018 with "A Estranha Casa na Bruma" and in 2019 with "Erva Daninha". These short films won awards in national and international film festivals, having the last two won the National Competition at MOTELx - Lisbon International Horror Film Festival, and the later the National Grand Prix at FEST 2020.

His new short-film "Os Abismos da Alma" is now in post-production.

Note of Intent

Recently, an image that stayed with me emerged from reading an account of an event that took place in Russia in the 1930s, one of the many testimonies collected by Alexander Solzhenitsyn concerning life and death in Stalin's Russia. There are many testimonies of cruelty among men when there is a person or a class that imposes itself as superior. And the great motivation to make this film, in addition to the enormous cinematographic potential is this: men are born equal, and must have themselves as such; when a man holds the fate of others in his hands and applies that power with tyranny and violence, it is an insult to Life. Against the background of a pandemic, we live a moment of crisis comparable to those that gave rise to dictatorships in the past. In these times it is imperative that people connected to the arts keep memory present, as we already know that humanity tends to make the same mistakes in a cyclical way. On the other hand, the cult of personality, so linked to the birth of fascist thought, is a very present component in society today, in the way people deal with social networks and the small celebrities and niches that arise there. This film, in its abstraction and symbolic treatment, thus gains a dimension that largely hinders political criticism.

The spectator will himself be in the midst of the applause, examining the faces and poses that dissolve around him around him during the time of the film. This will be an unusual, unsettling film experience.



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At the counter

Przez okienko

Through the tiny window of a small-town kiosk, we observe the warm-hearted, humorous interactions between the newsagent and her customers.

Production Details

Country: Poland
Stage of production: Ready for Shooting
Expected runtime: 15'
Genre: Comedy, Women, Satire
Language: Polish
Estimated budget: 20,000 eur
Director | Writer: Daniel Stopa
Producers: Jerzey Kapuscinski

Synopsis

In a particular Polish town, there is a special type of convenience store which the townspeople visit each day: their local newsagent. What are they doing there? They shop, discuss the weather and make small talk about other. Sometimes they are looking for advice, sometimes they stop only to say “Good morning” to the woman who works there. We watch their encounters with the newsagent through the shop window, a series of unique mini-dialogues that sometimes make us laugh, and sometimes make us cry. We find out what amuses, fascinates and upsets the townspeople. Some of the customers are regulars who treat their visits to the counter as their daily chore. Some are admirers who visit their newsagents with a kind word, or even a gift. There are some who seem to happen upon the newsagent by chance, but still become a part of this unconventional collective portrait. As the seasons pass, and the end of winter nears, more and more customers form a unique bond with their newsagent.

“At the Counter” is a document – minimalist in approach, but with maximal results – focusing on everyday observations of human faces.

About the Author

Daniel Stopa was born August 11, 1988 in Olkusz. He is a graduate of the Kieslowski Film School in Katowice and film studies at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. As an assistant director and editing assistant he collaborated on such feature documentary films: Brothers (dir. Wojciech Staroń), Opera about Poland (dir. Piotr Stasik), Andrew Warhol. My Factory (dir. Bogdan Dziworski) or Sonny (dir. Paweł Chorzępa).

In 2018 he made his first fiction short “Skinny”, which was presented at many international festivals, incl. Camerimage International Film Festival, Bogotá Short Film Festival or DokuFest - International Documentary and Short Film Festival. In addition to the short film “At the Counter” (production: Munk Studio), he is currently working on two feature-length documentaries: “Kiosk” and “Until Wedding” (both produced by Kiosk Films). The project “Until Wedding” was awarded at the 60th Krakow Film Festival as the best project within the Doc Lab Poland - Docs to Go program.

Note of Intent

I live in a small town with a newsagent’s whose counter is mentioned in the films title. I really like to listen to the random conversations that take place between residents while they wait in line at the cash register, on the bus or out on the street. I’ve always wanted to find a way to record these anonymous conversations on camera and share them with the world. This is how I got to the newsagent’s, which a counter that turned out to be a mirror through which I can finally show what fascinated me so much.

The way we shoot may appear very straightforward: simply set the camera and reality will come to you. As it turns out, this is not the case at all. The project “At the Counter” taught me that you must not make friends with reality, that in order to get intimate stories from people, you must first give them something from yourself – time, patience, empathy. I understood this sitting behind the back of a newsagent who, like an excellent documentary filmmaker, conducts a dialogue with her customers. As the seasons passed, I became a part of this place, and the community that revolves around it.

As a reward I got humour, emotions and a unique relationship that connects this woman with the residents who visit her store. In this mini- documentary I would like to talk about this encounter.



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Not Today

BUGÜN DEĞİL

Responsible of caring for two homes, three kids and her mother with Alzheimer's; Meryem, a single mother nanny, gets hooked on middle class' discourse of self-help.

Production Details

Country: Turkey
Stage of Production: Pre-Production
Expected Runtime: 15'
Genre: Drama, Women
Language: Turkish
Estimated Budget: 10,618 eur
Director / Writer: Yağmur Mısırlıoğlu, Can Pekdemir
Producer: Nefes Polat
Supporting Institutions: Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism

Synopsis

Only at the beginning of her thirties, Meryem makes a living by nannying for a middle-class family, while also taking care of her own children and her mother with Alzheimer's. Getting treated like a member of the family by the household she works for leads Meryem to an illusion of belonging which is further supported by the self-help books she discovered through them. Following those new teachings that influences her and the lifestyle she partakes in, Meryem decides to reset her priorities in life, but chooses the worst day possible to take action. On the day that Not Today takes place, Meryem wakes up right before sunrise, covered in her six-years old son Cemal's urine to find out that her elder son, Yusuf (11) has just arrived and clearly got beaten up. Since wetting the bed is an almost every-night event for Cemal and Yusuf has a habit of getting involved with people that he most certainly shouldn't; from where Meryem stands only exceptional thing about the start of her day seems to be the off the charts heat.

That being the case, as she does every day, Meryem leaves for work, eager to leave behind all the mess she unwillingly calls home, counting on her mother with Alzheimer's to take care of the kids. While she enjoys her day with her book and Arya, six years old girl she nannies for, the slow death of Yusuf and the journey Cemal is having with neighborhood's drug dealers remains unbeknownst to her.

About the Authors

Yağmur Mısırlıoğlu - Director / Co-screenwriter
 She was born in 1991 in Istanbul. Has majored in philosophy, she graduated from Galatasaray Üniversitesi in 2015 followed by her graduation from Prague Film School in 2017 specialized in directing and screenwriting. During her high school years, she has worked as an assistant director for established theater companies. After her shift towards filmmaking in 2013, she has taken part in various feature, short and commercial films both national and international. Currently she is working on her directorial debut.

Nefes Polat - Producer

Concentrating on co-productions since 2015, Nefes has been producing films which have been pre-sold in Europe and won success in film festivals. She was the associate producer of SOMETHING USEFUL directed by Pelin Esmer (2017 / Turkey, France, Germany, Netherlands co-production). Recently, she co-produced SIBEL directed by Çağla Zencirci & Guillaume Giovannetti (2018, Turkey, France, Luxemburg, Germany co-production), which made its world premiere at Locarno International Film Festival, receiving FIPRESCI Prize, ECUMENICAL Prize, Second Prize of the JUNIOR JURY AWARDS - Concorso Internazionale. Nefes Polat is a Berlinale Talents and Talents Sarajevo alumna, received VFF Berlinale Talent Highlight Award in 2017 with the project THE BUS TO AMERIKA by Derya Durmaz. She is the founder of Nefes' Films which focuses on independent film production.

Note of Intent

Not Today is a fictional drama that emphasises the undeniable role of socio-economic class in the society we've built, regardless how eagerly we try to ignore it under the roof of political correctness.

Born into a relatively wealthy family yet raised by a working-class nanny, I experienced the principle of equal opportunity crumbling in my head pretty young, pretty quick. In the telltale environment of neoliberalism where individual comes first, where every dream is achievable, we tend to forget that there are more solid obstacles in life than our own minds. Through Meryem's eyes, a single mother nanny who is getting drawn into the reality of the family she works for rather than her own, Not Today will display a distorted perception of polarity not only by its story but also by its own hybrid language which is an on purpose clash between a rough, chaotic shoulder mounted camera and a smooth, so to say Hollywood glamour touched Steadicam. As a philosophy major, I aim to raise a question of a misplaced conflict that we all are tricked into by what we're being exposed to every day: an endless possibility of a better self. I'd like to reach everyone that feels there's something off with the reality offered by mainstream and that in search of a new discourse, in other words, audience of independent films around the world. That's why I strongly believe that an international input would be a milestone for this film in its journey of meeting its true potential and target audience.



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O Pomar

Laura works at the pear harvesting when her friend, Carol, arrives at the village and confronts about her true intent.

Production Details

Country: Portugal

Stage of production: Script Development

Expected runtime: 20'

Genre: Coming of Age, LGBTQ+, Women

Language: Portugese

Estimated budget: 22,900 eur

Supporting Institutions: Optec Filmes; Câmara Municipal do Bombarral; Associação Nacional de Produtores de Pêra Rocha.

Director | Writer: Ana Manana, Joana Lourenço

Producer: Abel Ribeiro Chaves

Synopsis

West, end of the summer.

Laura works at the pear harvesting, a family business. During the afternoon, Carol arrives at the village to spend a few of her vacation days with her friends. That night, when Laura catches them stealing pears from one of her father's orchards, she is confronted by her friend regarding her true intent.

About the Author

After attending to Fine Arts University of Lisbon, **Ana** and **Joana** decided to base cinematographic criteria and references, and joined Kino-Doc, where we made the documentary "Caravagyo", a portrait of a pair of Portuguese-Brazilian DJs who introduced Brazilian funk music into Lisbon's nightlife, creating an alternative and queerfriendly space that supported and promoted new projects from a young and politically active community. The documentary was filmed in spaces and contexts that may no longer exist in the city, which is currently going through a period of gentrification and a pandemic crisis.

We immerse ourselves in more creative and DIY thinking. A punk attitude, in a somewhat political way, when facing the world in a detached way and without fear of the future. It also gave us the willingness to work with an intimate and diverse team, to reflect on (not exclusively) female voices, and above all young people, cultural agents who inspire us as role models to create and act politically.

Today, we further our path in cinema and in Visual Anthropology, a field of studies that has asserted us as attentive filmmakers with an in-depth look at the reality surrounding us, on contemporary discourses and the way they have been reflected in cinematographic and documentary production. We have been working on the "city" theme, more specifically on Lisbon, but also on who its agents are and where they come from.

Note of Intent

Summer of 2011, in the West. The heat and the warm colors of the West Mediterranean (Portugal) surround us while working at the Rocha pear harvesting. The work is quite demanding and it still reflects a gender-based wage inequality. "O Pomar" portrays a "pre-online" era where smartphones, mobile data or instastories did not yet exist. A time when love letters were limited SMS's, when sexuality is strongly normative, male brothers are still more protected, the male figure remains in a place of power, and the family gradually ceases to be an unbreakable social construct. It's also a defining moment by a deep financial (and political) crisis that destabilizes many Portuguese families. We dare, ironically, to highlight these ideas to destroy them at the end of the film, to the rhythm of "Tenho Fome", a music rescued from the punk scene of the 80's, today, updated, we use it through a completely "digitized" and admittedly feminist, raw, open and politicized language. This key signature, present in the film's tone and linked to a more disruptive theme, even closer to the DIY characteristic, is relevant to state our artistic expression as directors. By adding footage from a Nokia express music mobile phone screen, we use a common image in everyday life, as if it were a familiar super 8 footage, and convert it to a present-day digital platform. If in 10 years, certain speeches were taken to the streets, in "O Pomar", would remain still indoors, at the dinner table waiting.



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The Best Model

Violetta is an ambitious toxicology student convinced that animal testing is inevitable for reliable data in medical research. While handling mice and rats in the lab, her own beliefs are put to test.

Production Details

Country: Sweden

Stage of production: In Editing/ Post-Production

Expected runtime: 15'

Genre: Youth/Teen, Science, Independent

Language: English, Swedish

Estimated budget: 197,500 eur

Supporting Institutions: The Swedish Film Institute, Formas & Torvald and Britta Gahlins foundation

Synopsis

Violetta is originally from Siberia and has moved to Stockholm to study toxicology at the Karolinska Institute. The Institute is among the world's leading medical universities with a focus on the 3Rs – an abbreviation for three sustainable principles in animal research: "Reduce, Refine and Replace". Violetta loves animals and grew up surrounded by them in her home. She argues that those who love animals conduct better research on them, because they handle them better, with care. Violetta will work with animal methods and cell methods for one year, a journey at the end of which she hopes to better understand herself and her choices. Her story opens up a heated and tabu topic regarding the use of animals in medical research and brings into focus a conflicted young generation of researchers caught in between the past and the future, looking for "the best model". We will follow Violetta in the lab, talking with her tutors, classmates, animal activists, friends and family and spending time with animals.

The camera will also go close to the little lab mouse or rat and their curious eyes, we will hear their sniffing and get a sense of their personality. While filming the process of handling and studying the animals, the focus is on Violetta's inner conflicts. Though professionally conducted, the empirical experience of working with animals in the lab seems to bring Violetta into a gray zone, where doubts infiltrate.

About the Author

Åsa Ekman's diptych on children exposed to domestic violence *Say Something* (2015) and *My life my lesson* (2014) premiered at IDFA, won the Swedish TV-prize Kristallen for Best Documentary two years in a row, and reached over ten million viewers. *My life my lesson* was nominated for the Guldbaggen and won the Nordic Docs award for Best Documentary.

Oscar Hedin founded Film and Tell in 2010 and prior to that he made films that reached large audiences, formed opinions and changed laws. His film about the soccer team Assyriska, A National Team Without a Nation (2005), won the Golden Palm at the Beverly Hills Films Festival. *Aching Heart* (2007), focusing on the Jihadist movement in Sweden was nominated for a Guldbagge, Prix Europa and Ikaros, and won the Amulet.

Note of Intent

The Covid-19 pandemic made us realize how fragile we are and how much we depend on new medicines, such as vaccines. But often times the road there is not easy and we echo the question that will remain relevant after this virus "Is human life worth more than the lives of thousands of mice and rats? Can we get our vaccines without this sacrifice?" These questions about the use of animals in research reflect a recent movement of expanding human rights to animal rights. A ban of animal testing in the cosmetic industry, for example, is already a step forward. But some researchers still need to carry out animal testing for life threatening diseases. The discussion on the topic is rather heated and divided in the public space, and their work is often stigmatized.

Yet another question led us to this film: How does a young person who enters this arena, handle this delicate issue? When we started filming *Violetta*, she supported the approach of researching on animals and we wanted to understand how she justified it in a non-judgmental way. The arguments she used were not far from what we had read: the accuracy of data or the fact that we don't yet have a model that perfectly replicates a living organism. But how and when will we get there, and what does the young generation think about it? All the pros and cons of this debate on animal research come alive through *Violetta*, on camera. There are no easy answers on this matter. We just want people to start thinking and talk about it.



Marina-Evelina Cracana

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The Story of Shoes

Die Geschichte von den Schuhen

A single pair of shoes becomes a symbol of an unknown and dark chapter in the history of rural Switzerland.

Production Details

Country: Switzerland
Stage of production: Concept
Expected runtime: 20'
Genre: Docu-Drama, History, Education
Language: No Dialogue
Estimated budget: 450,000 eur
Supporting Institutions: Zürcher Filmstiftung, Berner Filmförderung (both regional Swiss funds)
Director: Rahel Landolt
Producer: Anja Kofmel

Synopsis

Little Peter grows up in poverty on a farm in the Swiss village of Walkringen. When his alcoholic father is killed in an accident, the village authorities auction off the family farm and sell the children to foster families as labourers.

Peter, the youngest, is assigned to a miserly farmer in the neighbouring village. He is forced to work hard every day as an errand boy, carrying the milk to the village. He initially resists and tries to escape, but he doesn't stand a chance.

When the weather grows cold, Peter receives a pair of worn-out shoes from the farmer, which he can hardly walk in as they are much too big for him. Peter stuffs the shoes with straw to keep his feet warm in winter. Over the years, Peter's feet grow, but despite repeated requests, he is not given a larger pair of shoes. He keeps his shoes on at night, fearing that one morning, he will no longer be able to put them on. His feet become severely inflamed and begin to grow into the hard leather shoes.

In his feverish dreams, he runs like a light-footed hare through the soft meadows, far away from the farm.

In his distress, Peter cuts open the toes of his shoes. The village cobbler takes pity on him and helps him obtain a new pair of shoes, which become the catalyst for him to find an unexpected and painful solution to his situation.

About the Author

Rahel Landolt is the author and director of «The Story of the Shoes». She will also be responsible for a part of the animation. She was born in 1977 in Berne, Switzerland. She completed her initial training as a primary school teacher, and still teaches in a part-time capacity. She then went on to study arts and design at the Berne University of the Arts, graduating with a Bachelor's degree. She continued her studies at the renowned Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, focussing on illustration and animation and earning her Masters in 2013.

During her studies, she was involved in several film projects. Her first project, «Botanische Rundschau», was an artistic staging of flowers, while the multimedia installation «Panopticon» combined animation and live film.

Her first short film, «Flirt» (2015), was screened in Annecy (2015), at the Brooklyn IFF (2016), Yerevan ReAnimania (2015), Monstra Lisboa Animated FF (2016), among many others. In 2015, it was awarded "Best animated film" by the Berner Filmförderung as well as winning the Music Award at the 11th Animfest Athens International Film Festival.

«The Story of the Shoes» is a project very dear to her heart.

Note of Intent

This project is based on the true story of a child who was fostered as a farmhand and went to school with the director's grandfather in the 1930s. This form of fostering, tantamount to slavery, was commonplace in rural Switzerland for decades and represents a dark chapter in central European history that has recently been brought to light again.

The film will be told with a combination of traditional 2D animation set against documentary archive photos from the original settings. The look will be in tone with the optics of faded archive photos from the 1930s and be sepia-colored to visualise the harsh reality of Peter's life.

The poetic, hopeful narrative thread of Peter's escape into his fantasy world will in comparison be realized in color, thus providing a visual counterpoint to his cruel everyday life.

With this story, we want to tell the story of the fate of fostered children in Switzerland and of the trauma suffered in silence by entire generations. In the tradition of «Waltz with Bashir» in terms of genre, we will use animation to express inner trauma and emotions with a subjectivity and completeness that live-action cannot match, blurring the lines of the real and the feverishly dreamt as perceived by the protagonist.

With Switzerland, like many Western countries, currently in the process of bringing past atrocities to light and making reparations, this is a little-known European story that needs to be told now.



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The World or Nothing

O Mundo Ou Nada

The beginning of Summer, during an intense heatwave inseparable childhood friends choose different paths for their lives, tensions grow when and old crush comes into the picture.

Production Details

Country: Portugal
Stage of production: Script Development
Expected runtime: 18'
Genre: Drama, Coming of Age
Language: Portuguese
Estimated budget: 18,000 eur

Synopsis

In the outskirts of Lisbon, during the biggest heatwave of the Summer, Mauro, 19 years old but mature for his age, gets his first job as a shelf stacker in a big supermarket chain, at the same time his childhood friend and roommate, Bebuxo an enthusiastic dreamer that gets by by doing odd jobs, gets invited to DJ at their city's most important Summer party, a dream come true for him.

For the first time since they were kids they decide to follow different paths, this creates a tension that escalates even further when they start to develop a romantic interest for their former school friend Diana. As Mauro deals with the disillusionment that comes with the daily grind of his dead end job, the frustrating interaction with his superiors, the empty promises and cliched corporate expressions he is confronted with his best friend's unwavering belief in achieving his dreams.

As each day that passes leading do the party excited and focused Bebuxo between practicing his set, day dreams of a career full of fame and success this ambition makes him grow closer to Diana an equally ambitious and adventurous person, as Mauro deals with feelings of resentment at work, when he sees coworkers getting fired and at home where he might lose a romantic partner and a best friend in the process he feels he must take a stand.

About the Author

Virgílio Pinto was born in 1993 in Luanda, Angola and in 1999 emigrates to Portugal, his passion for filmmaking begins when a high school teacher gives an assignment to film an adaption to contemporary times the play "Frei Luís de Sousa" by Almeida Garret. In 2017 he receives his bachelors in "Cinema, Video and Multimedia Communications" by Universidade Lusófona and directs and produces his first short film "The Third Half/A Terceira Metade" that is screened at festivals like Lisbon & Estoril Film Festival, FEST, Fantasporto, CórteX, Caminhos and has been developing work as a videographer and assistant director in film and advertising.

Note of Intent

"The World or Nothing" was born from my necessity to explore the world of labour, its power dynamics and its role in the construction of an identity. Exploring the idea of labour as a pivotal element in creating dignity and a narrative for your life, in a world where occupations are more unpredictable and transient and unskilled and precarious work is the norm. The disillusionment of a non-existent upwards mobility and of a system that cynically sells false dreams. A contemporary story about ambition and alienation.

The film will analyse the relationship between a whole generation and world of labour, a generation of young people that enters adult life, in a fast changing world where the educational system nor the working world seem to adapt or guaranty the realisation of their dreams and aspiration. Feelings of disappointment and frustration grow with the inability to imagine a better future. How to you thrive in this situation? Do you enlist in the "army" ready to be called up to a dead end job? Do you look for an individual approach and follow your dream as improbable as it may seem?

The main characters of this film are second and third generation immigrants that grew up in a country in a constant state economic crisis where the opportunities that motivated their parents and grandparents to immigrate don't seem to exist. This film will tackle a global issue that seem to affect a generation but from the perspective of group of young people in the outskirts of Lisbon.



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Projects —

Work in Progress



Bukra

Bukra

Focused in the encouraging and contagious work done in the Jenin Refugee Camp, in Palestine, six different life stories reveal the strength to overcome their silenced voices for more than 70 years.

Production Details

Country: Portugal
Stage of production: In Editing/ Post-Production
Expected runtime: 90'
Genre: Documentary, Human Rights
Language: Arabic
Estimated budget: 90,000 eur
Director | Writer: Diana Antunes
Producers: Maria João Mayer

Synopsis

Known as the Capital of Martyrs, Jenin witnessed a massacre in 2002, during the Second Attack (Infitada). The highest impact was felt in the Jenin Refugee Camp, housing 17,000 people in just 1 square km. International media coverage left a mark in people's perception of Palestine, as a place of uncountable incidents of armed violence, undermining the remaining sources of resistance. The grief and permanent oppression caused by the massacre, gave birth to some inspiring projects, revealing different forms of resistance. Six real life stories, reveal the daily lives of people who believe they can peacefully make a difference, whether through art, speech, or other actions to empower women. Bukra intends to create global awareness of what is happening in Palestine, from the seed of inspiration and peaceful emancipation, without nurturing speeches of separation from people that granted us enormous teachings about generosity, strength, and the will to live.

About the Author

Diana Antunes graduated in Cinema, Video and Multimedia Communication from Lusófona University of Humanities and Technologies, in Lisbon.

In 2011 she directed her first short-film "How late it is?". She moved to London in 2012, where she directed some projects which were later exhibited at the Somerset House and the V&A Museum.

In 2015, Antunes went to Los Angeles to take part in a film residency at the CalArts. She returned to Lisbon, and has been working as a director for commercials and music videos since then.

In 2020 she produced a short film, and is currently finishing her first documentary feature and her first TV fiction feature.

Note of Intent

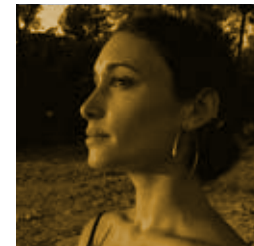
Bukra is a documentary about the peaceful resistance inside a Palestinian Refugee Camp. Jenin witnessed a massacre in 2002. The highest impact was felt inside the refugee Camp, housing at the time 17,000 people. Despite what one could expect, this bloody landmark did not tear all their people down. It became a genuine cause and developed different forms of peaceful resistance.

I've decided to follow the lives of 6 different people who believe they can peacefully make a difference, whether through art, speech, or empowering women through actions.

I've been in Palestine 4 times already and I created a bond with some of its people. I felt integrated inside the community and built trust so they could open up to me. I met 6 great human beings, 6 great characters, and decided to follow their work inside the camp to understand how these projects have been so important to create different ways of resistance to so many different people.

For far too long Palestinians have been trying to find ways to resist the occupation and colonising process. Bukra emerges to create global awareness for what is happening in Palestine, through the lens of inspiring people and peaceful emancipation.

I decided to grant myself the task to make the world see what I've experienced with my eyes: how these people fight everyday, not through armed resistance, but with strong actions and speaking out. Even though they know it won't be enough to end the injustice they've been living for more than 70 years.



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Genghis Heroes

Genghis Boys

The story of two boys in Mongolia, one 9 and one 14, who are child jockeys in one of the most grueling competitions in the world: The Nadaam. And during the race, one of them watches his horse die.

Production Details

Country: Mongolia
Stage of production: In Editing/ Post-Production
Expected runtime: 54'
Genre: Documentary, Children, Family, Nature
Language: English, Mongolian
Estimated budget: 87,000 eur
Director | Writer: Bia Chuluun
Producers: Nick Aquilino

Synopsis

The idea of the film is to instill in the viewer the feeling of awe and wonder that there are children who are somehow so young and so new to the world, yet who can be such old souls and embody such a great deal of potential, leaves most of the rest of the Western world speechless, images that can only be shown in the form of a film.

In order to make the theme personal, the Director chose to focus on two of the riders, and follow them during their training and competitions. Vangur and Aaghi are both accomplished riders, even though they have only been riding a few years.

But they are determined to win the competition known as the Naadam, a part of the cultural history of Mongolia, and they race in the most difficult conditions possible, for long distances across dozens of miles for hours and hours. The horses are so exhausted at the end of the race that some of them collapse, and the child jockeys are also in mortal danger of getting thrown from the horse, as they ride bareback.

About the Author

Bia Chuluun, Director

After working on social development issues for 10 years at international organizations such as UN, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Bia started her filmmaking career 12 years ago. This one is her first project after her graduation from the International Academy of Film and television. As a screenwriter she wrote two short original screenplays, and the feature-length historical film script, Khubilai Khan, based on the novel written by well-known Mongolian historian Morris Rossabi, a professor at Columbia University. She also wrote a story entitled "New Immigrants" about her own experiences in a foreign country.

Nick Aquilino, Producer

Nick produced an independent feature made for a shoestring budget and sold worldwide, and produced and directed two documentaries independently, "Takashi's Dream," and "The Brokaw Hoax." He followed this with two years as an Assistant to the Oscar-nominated Producer of "Norma Rae." He attended the American Film Institute in the Graduate Producing Program. He became a Certified Avid Editor and was Editorial Assistant on the PBS series "Have You Heard From Johannesburg?" He taught Editing, Film History, Documentary and Guerrilla Filmmaking to students at the International Academy of Film and Television, and later at the San Francisco Academy of Art. He was co-Producer and Editor of the documentary "Steel Drums, Not Guns," and the documentary "On Borrowed Time," and has edited more, including 1 for Amazon Prime.

Note of Intent

Note from Director Bia Chuluun:

I am a Mongolian filmmaker. For the following reasons, I'm the best person to tell this story. Firstly, I love horses and children and am a loyal fan of Mongolian horse racing. There is something about it that instantly touches my heart, even before I think of it consciously. It is just indescribable in words. This hidden love or feeling led me to choose this topic as my first documentary project, without a doubt.

When you think about Mongolia, the horse is definitely an inseparable part of our culture. As good filmmakers say: if you know your subject well, you will be able to find the best way to show it.

I spent one year doing research about horse racing and met about 50 child-jockeys, 30 horse trainers attending more than 15 horse-training camps, and filmed about 10 girls and boys until I found the ones I had selected. I have done 30 hours filming in different regions and provinces of Mongolia looking for characters and story.

Secondly, there have been documentaries about Mongolia, or shot in Mongolia, in the last decade, such as Tracking Reindeers (France), The Horse Boy (USA), Palawan (France), and many more (not mentioning several others by Japanese and Korean filmmakers). All of them were made by foreigners except The Weeping Camel. It is shame for me, that we are native to the land and are a "piece" of those stories, but are not making any good movies. Genghis Heroes is in the rare tradition of documentaries by native people.



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Happy Campers

The working-class residents of a scrappy seasonal trailer park reveal the secrets to a rich life as market forces threaten their shabby Shangri-La.

Production Details

Country: United States

Stage of Production: In Editing/ Post-Production

Expected Runtime: 75'

Genre: Documentary, Culture, Social Issues, Dramedy, Comedy

Language: English

Estimated Budget: 480,000 eur

Director / Writer: Amy Nicholson

Producer: Amy Nicholson

Synopsis

In a waterfront campground off the coast of Virginia, tenants live spitting distance apart in rows of ramshackle RVs. Inlet View has horrific roads, questionable septic and feral cats roaming everywhere, but beneath a few white trash stereotypes lies an improbable utopia where loneliness and isolation are inconceivable.

The location is spectacular. Dolphins swim just offshore, and pelicans glide past the prettiest sunsets anywhere. Its assets read like an overwritten real estate brochure. And yet, the real magic of Inlet View is the people – kindred spirits who look past the obvious flaws to be part of something bigger than themselves.

About the Authors

Amy Nicholson is a commercial director and documentary filmmaker based in New York City. In a previous life as an advertising executive, she created campaigns for clients like Snapple, Got Milk? and Nike. Nicholson's most recent documentary is a short titled Pickle. Pickle garnered audience awards at

multiple international festivals including Full Frame, Traverse City, and Aspen. Pickle was nominated for an IDA Award and Cinema Eye Honors, selected for New York Times' Op Docs, and featured on the Criterion Channel with Errol Morris' Gates of Heaven. Nicholson has produced and directed two feature projects. Zipper: Coney Island's Last Wild Ride won a special jury prize at its sold out DOCNYC premiere, and was held over twice at the IFC Center, qualifying it for Oscar consideration. Muskrat Lovely premiered at The Hamptons International Film Festival and was broadcast nationally on the Emmy Award-winning Independent Lens. Nicholson recently wrote and directed Irony, a narrative short comedy that was chosen to be a Vimeo Staff Pick Premiere. Both of Nicholson's features have aired on PBS. Her films have screened at Hot Docs, Sheffield, Full Frame, DOK Leipzig, BFI London, Florida, Hot Springs, Camden, Montclair, Traverse City, Rooftop Films, and the MOMA. They have been reviewed by Variety, Indiewire, The Hollywood Reporter, The Wall Street Journal, and The New York Times.

Note of Intent

A few years ago, I was in Chincoteague, Virginia taking photos when I wandered into a run-down RV Park. I just had to know the people whose names were carved into the wooden lobsters and turtles mounted to the sides of the trailers. So I moved in.

The eclectic collection of characters I would never have met in the "outside world" demonstrated perfectly how you can live in a rusty, old travel trailer, with few creature comforts, ten feet from the next family, and be truly happy. They taught me how not to judge, how to give what you have, and how to make time for others. Under that place's crusty surface was pure magic.

When the property went into contract it hit everyone really hard. The climax of my footage reveals the painful heartbreak - mine included - of the humiliating displacement that paves the way for "better people" to move in.

Places like Inlet View get wiped off the map all the time without anyone knowing, and a piece of America's collective soul gets lost in the process. Living there was life-changing for me. Happy Campers is my way to give voice to a community full of beauty and charm that doesn't immediately seem like it would offer much of either.



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I'm not Lakit

Punished for being born.

Production Details

Country: Lebanon, Romania

Stage of production: In Editing/ Post-Production

Expected runtime: 90'

Genre: Documentary, Drama

Language: Arabic

Estimated budget: 590,000 eur

Director | Writer: Marie Surae

Producers: Marie Surae, Pierre Sarraf, Carmen Rizac

Synopsis

Saleh lives in the house for the homeless in the mountains, not far away from the historic Lebanese city of Byblos. He has no family name, no nationality, no passport, no religious belonging. Saleh is a lakit. According to the Islamic dictionary, lakit is an illegitimate, abandoned child. In some Middle Eastern countries children born out of wedlock by law have no right to live a full life, they might as well not exist. In a country where the most important things are your family name, ancestry, religion and nationality, these people are deprived of it all through no fault of their own. They do not have a right to go to school or college, to travel, they won't be hired for a job. Though Saleh is not a child anymore, he is 23, but he looks like he is 16. He can't read or write and has difficulty speaking. Most of his life Saleh spent in the Home of Hope. This place looks and functions more like a prison. Saleh wasn't enrolled in school because lakits are not allowed to study.

The orphanage punished children by locking them in the bathroom for five days. During those five days they ate in the bathroom too. Saleh tried to run away several times, but he was caught.

About the Author

Marie Surae is a director, screenwriter and producer with over 16 years of experience in the film industry, including years of commitment to the Lebanese cultural scene. She was born in Moscow in 1983. She graduated from the Faculty of Journalism of Moscow State University. She started as a documentary filmmaker and switched to feature films. As a producer she filmed more than 100 documentaries for TV channels. In 2014 the short fiction film "The Last One" or "Sonuncu" (a co-production between Russia and Azerbaijan) produced by Marie was selected for the Official Competition of Short Films at the 67th Cannes Film Festival, it later participated in 87 film festivals and received 9 awards. In 2017 Marie directed a documentary short "Muhamad" and a documentary mid-length film about Syrian refugees "Fleeing the War". The film received a special award from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Russia and the main Critics' Choice Award at the Stalker International Film Festival. In 2021 Marie finished her debut feature "The Anger" (a co-production between Lebanon and Germany). The star of French cinema, actress Manal Issa plays the lead role. The cinematographer is Tommaso Fiorilli. In 2021 Marie is working on two documentaries: "I'm not Lakit" (Lebanon, Romania) and "10 and Virginia". The cinematographer of both projects is Marius Panduru. In 2022 she will work on a new Lebanese-Romanian feature film with Marius Panduru as cinematographer.

Note of Intent

I found out about the fact that such a phenomenon as 'lakit' exists in modern society by chance. According to the Islamic dictionary, lakit is an illegitimate, abandoned child. Arab countries have a law according to which children born out of wedlock, i.e. born by an unmarried woman, don't have a right to live a full life, they might as well not exist. They have no family name, no passport, no religious belonging, no nationality. They do not have a right to go to school or college, to travel, they won't be hired for a job. In a country where the most important things are your family name, ancestry, religion and nationality, these people are deprived of it all through no fault of their own.

I was so shocked by the fact that it happens in today's world that I immediately decided to research this subject and make a film.

How people who don't really exist live, who helps them survive and what is going on with the law on lakits, will it be revised or abolished – these are the questions that I will raise in my film, and I hope I will answer them.



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Live Till I Die

Leva tills jag dör

In an elderly home on the outskirts of Stockholm, a deep relationship unfolds between an activity coach who still grieves for her grandmother and a 99-year-old resident who doesn't have any children.

Production Details

Country: Sweden
Stage of production: In Editing/ Post-Production
Expected runtime: 75'
Genre: Social Issue, Senior/Aging, Documentary, Human Rights, Health/Medical, Independent
Language: Swedish
Estimated budget: 343,000 eur
Supporting Institutions: UR, Filmbasen
Director | Writer: Oscar Hedin, Åsa Ekman, Gustav Ågerstrand, Anders Teigen
Producer: Oscar Hedin, Marina-Evelina Cracana

Synopsis

At Kyrkbyn, an elderly home on the outskirts of Stockholm, many of the residents will soon turn 100 years old. Wheel-chaired or with very low mobility, some of them didn't even know each other's names until an activity coach was hired to break this solitude. With no nursing education but a warm, extroverted personality and bunch of daring ideas, Monica Lyander caught their attention. The film begins when Monica has reawakened their youthful spirits, turning them into a playful gang who are always ready to crack an unexpected joke or participate in spa sessions, boxing lessons and themed dinners. The backbone of the story is given by Ella's development, a 99-year-old gracious and cheerful lady. She has built a very strong connection to Monica, who now calls her 'grandmother'. When Ella must have her leg amputated and her health worsens, Monica rushes to make the most out of Ella's last days, organizing a big celebration for her 100th birthday and taking her back to the village where she grew up.

Though rewarding, this journey becomes an emotional marathon and when Ella dies, Monica feels broken and realizes this is a cycle that will never end; she will give her energy and affection to people she will soon lose. Does she have to detach, or can she continue? "Live Till I Die" breaks taboos surrounding an increasingly long life expectancy and explores what it means to live life fully on the last hundred meters, while embracing with humor and candor the ups and downs of old age.

About the Author

Åsa Ekman's diptych on children exposed to domestic violence *Say Something* (2015) and *My life my lesson* (2014) premiered at IDFA, won the Swedish TV-prize Kristallen for Best Documentary two years in a row, and reached over ten million viewers. *My life my lesson* was nominated for the Guldbaggen and won the Nordic Docs award for Best Documentary.

Oscar Hedin founded Film and Tell in 2010 and prior to that he made films that reached large audiences, formed opinions and changed laws. His film about the soccer team *Assyriska, A National Team Without a Nation* (2005), won the Golden Palm at the Beverly Hills Films Festival. *Aching Heart* (2007), focusing on the Jihadist movement in Sweden was nominated for a Guldbagge, Prix Europa and Ikaros, and won the Amulet.

Note of Intent

Humanity is undergoing a major demographic change. Today, the world's average life expectancy has increased to 72 years. In the industrialized world – such as the Scandinavian countries - studies show an even higher average of 81 years. We live longer. But how will old age feel and look like in this new context? In the next ten years there will be a severe shortage of caregivers in Sweden, with a deficit of up to 200 000 qualified personnel. Europe and the western world are in the same situation and many people will be asking the same question we do: who will take care of our parents, and ourselves, when we grow old? We have had parents and grandparents in retirement homes.

The lack of happiness amongst the elderly and the personnel has been frightening. With this film, we want to explore this reality with a focus on empathy, so we looked for a place where the elderly live a modern, vibrant and fun life despite the pain, anxiety, and the daunting perspective of leaving this world. The key to that is elderly workers who have a human approach to their job. Monica and her oldies are the perfect characters to lead us through this journey. Dealing with the hardships of ageing, they celebrate life. We wanted to make a visually strong, deep and emotional film that speaks to an international audience. With humor and strong characters, we cross the borders of the Swedish language and culture and reach far down into the universal human need to live a meaningful life for our whole lives



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Rocco - Boxing With My Father

A coming of age of a champion: from the ring to the stage, a heart divided between two countries and an idol to overcome.

Production Details

Country: United Kingdom, Switzerland
Stage of production: In Editing/ Post-Production
Expected runtime: 80'
Genre: Youth/Teen, Coming of Age, Documentary
Language: English, Italian
Estimated budget: 252,000 eur
Director: Lara Fremder
Producer: Elettra Fiumi, Giada Mazzoleni

Synopsis

The film documents the adolescence of 12-year old Rocco who moves to London with his parents from a small Italian countryside town. In this new context, he feels alienated and is bullied by his classmates. Rocco is so angry with his father that he "could punch the entire city." It is his father, a former vice world kickboxing champion, who encourages 13-year old Rocco to train until he wins the junior world title representing England, the country from which he initially felt rejected and in which he is now forced to live. Although after the victory he manages to make new friends in London, Rocco feels the strong need to reconnect with his roots and aspires to be world champion, under the Italian flag, his lifelong dream. Like his father nine years earlier, Rocco comes in second. This loss makes him aware of his own motivations: he actually lost purposefully because he didn't want to beat his idol, his father.

The defeat and the imminent choice of college instill in him, now in full adolescence at sixteen years old, new questions. He needs to rebel against his father and find his own way. He discovers the theatre where, from the ring to the stage, he finally finds a sense of belonging and independence from his father.

About the Author

Teresa is the co-director of the documentary *Passo a Due*. The film won the Alida Valli Award at the International Women's Festival in Florence, was awarded Best Italian Documentary at Molise Cinema and selected for the International Women's Festival in Rio de Janeiro and the Films Femmes Méditerranée in Marseille.

Her most recent short documentary - *Solo da tre giorni* - was awarded as best short film at Molise Cinema and preselected for Nastri d'Argento. Teresa also collaborated on the film *Oggi insieme domani anche*, selected for Nastri d'Argento and premiered at Torino Film Festival, Italia in Doc Bruxelles and São Paulo International Film Festival. After graduating in directing from the National School of Cinema, TV and New Media in Milan in 2011, Teresa began her career working as director and producer on the collective film *Il Pranzo di Natale* (Rome and Giffoni Film Festival) and *Milano 55.1 - Cronaca di una settimana di passioni*, selected for the Locarno Film Festival. Teresa was nominated as the best "next to be" female director for the Ideazioni workshop, sponsored by Marie Claire, OffiCine and Vitasnella in 2011. Her most recent documentary in development called "Rocco" has been selected at Archidoc program 2015 which is supported by MEDIA EU funds in collaboration with La Fèmis - Paris, IDFA Amsterdam and Vision Du Réel - Nyon.

Note of Intent

When I was 8 years old, like Rocco, I left a small town to move to a big city with my family. At school I experienced much of my loneliness; with no friendly presence, I was bullied by my classmates. When I met Rocco, that crack in my soul reopened and I wondered what traces remain inside of us, when we feel thrown elsewhere as children, entrusting our freedom in the hands of an adult. That feeling led me to observe Rocco for five years, filming the passage from childhood to adolescence; his initial uprooting and his progressive integration into the new English context; his relationship with his idolized father-coach and his inner conflict in considering him insurmountable; his abandonment of the ring to tread the theatrical stage where he comes to discover a sense of belonging.

A large part of the scenes, shot with natural light, are set in a lush London, far from the noise of the city, and in Cangelasio, a small, silent town in the Parma countryside, as if to reconcile the two worlds between which Rocco is divided. Stylistically, the film weaves together a direct observational style with the family archives that represent his memory. The variety of sounds is dictated by Rocco's linguistic duality: initially at home and with loved ones Rocco expresses himself in Italian, while outside with the world he communicates in English. His voice, recorded during a series of informal chats between Rocco and I as he grows up, provides access to an even more intimate dimension of adolescence.



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Waste Island

In an identity crisis, a lonely Type 1 Diabetic named Alek attempts to recapture his glory days in a hometown that embodies what he now dislikes about adult life — responsibility and complacency.

Production Details

Country: Canada

Stage of production: In Editing/ Post-Production

Expected runtime: 80'

Genre: Drama, Avant-garde, Alternative, Drame, Independent, Microcinema, Disability, Culture, Post Modern, Underground

Language: English

Estimated budget: 35,000 eur

Director: Mitchell Stafiej

Producer: Mitchell Stafiej, Beatrice Scharf-Pierzchala

Synopsis

In an identity crisis, a lonely Type 1 Diabetic named Alek attempts to recapture his glory days in a hometown that embodies what he now dislikes about adult life — complacency. Upon arrival in suburbia he finds that most of his old friends have moved away, started a family, or simply grown up. Only one person responds to his invitation: Matt, an old acquaintance who has never moved away from the suburbs. Matt represents everything that Alek despises about suburban life; the banal, boring, and uncultured. Unwilling to give up on his nostalgic dreams, Alek parties with Matt, launching them into a hallucinatory and directionless fugue through the dark streets of suburbia. Throughout the seemingly never-ending night and as Alek's blood sugars become more erratic, he pushes Matt and their adventure to darker and darker places with complete disregard for their well-being.

About the Author

Mitchell Stafiej is a disabled filmmaker and sound designer who lives and works in Montreal, Quebec. He has lived with Type 1 Diabetes since he was 16 years old. His films explore the potential and the political power of juxtaposition and the cut; language-less demonstrations of social change. He embraces textural images and harsh sound and often shoots films on 16mm and lo-fi technology like HI-8 and cell phones. He is constantly on the search for the 'anti-image' and tries to expand the notion of what can be considered cinematic.

His past documentary work explored the politics of racism, hate, and religion. His first documentary *The Devil's Trap* was a deeply personal and harrowing exploration of a highly secretive and religious cult. It used analog media to represent the degrading state of mind of the main character. The film premiered at CPH:DOX, where it competed for the F:ACT Award. In fiction, Mitchell destabilizes traditional narratives to create portraits of distinct moments in time. His first film *Found*, used cell phone images and characters filming themselves to present a family struggling with grief. His next film, the 16mm fever dream *A*, funded by Telefilm Canada, followed an alcoholic ambient musician who locked himself in his apartment on a dangerous seven-day bender.

Note of Intent

I am disabled and have been living with Type 1 Diabetes since I was 16 years old. I've always wanted to make a film with a character who is diabetic. It is incredibly rare to see films about, with, and made by people living with a disability and whose disability is not just treated as a narrative device. Disabled stories and artists are routinely left out of the narrative of representation in the arts and cinema. We continuously feel like we are invisible; not fully human. I hope to change that with this film. In the film, Alek is Type 1 Diabetic, and his illness is one of the many responsibilities that he neglects. It's imperative that we hear these stories. It's imperative that we are given space and opportunities to create.

I wanted production to feel as much like a documentary as possible. During COVID, the crew quarantined together for the 11 production days. I'm proud of our ability to adapt and still remain safe during a pandemic. This attitude shows the resiliency and ingenuity of artists even under the face of global pressure.

Creation was still necessary. Through production, it had to feel like we were all running around through suburbia with the characters. I come from a background in documentary and am interested in this blending of fiction and non-fiction elements, even though there is a script, albeit loose. The result is a raw experience of cinema, something abstract and expressionist, where mistakes are embraced and encouraged.



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