

# **KVIFF Eastern Promises Book of Projects 2022**

Works in Development – Feature Launch  
Works in Progress  
First Cut+  
OIFF Works in Progress Selection  
Czech Projects in Production



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# Discover New Talents at KVIFF Eastern Promises 2022

Dear Film Industry Professionals, thank you for picking up the Book of Projects – a compilation of various projects that are still in the making and that we at KVIFF believe have strong potential in the upcoming years. This catalogue presents a selection of 38 film projects which are now in development, production or post-production and are expected to be duly noted by the international film community. The projects will be introduced by filmmakers and producers at several events throughout our Industry Days. Under the flag of KVIFF Eastern Promises, we are introducing: Works in Progress, Works in Development – Feature Launch, First Cut+ and in cooperation with Odesa IFF we are hosting Odesa Works in Progress 2022. One-on-one meetings will be held live on Tuesday, July 5. Online meetings can be scheduled after Industry days. The FestiCiné online platform will make it easy for you to schedule mutually available time slots and enable you to meet right on the festival and also online.

## Works in Development – Feature Launch

### Monday, July 4, 11 am – 12:30 pm CET

Works in Development – Feature Launch is a presentation of nine selected projects that have been developed within the MIDPOINT Feature Launch program, a unique training and networking platform for emerging talents from Central and Eastern Europe that is aimed at scouting the most talented filmmakers and producers of the future. It focuses on creative teams who are developing their first or second feature film. The program has been conducted in partnership with the Karlovy Vary IFF, When East Meets West and the Trieste FF. The projects are in the development stage and are looking for further co-production partners as well as potential markets and sales opportunities. The best project of the program receives the KVIFF & MIDPOINT Development Award of 10,000 EUR.

## Works in Progress

### Monday, July 4, 2 pm – 5 pm CET

A presentation of ten selected films from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the former Soviet Union, the Middle East and North Africa that are currently in late stage of production or post-production. Following the last years' editions of Works in Progress, the presentation will merge fiction and documentary films. The most promising project will be awarded the post-production services package that will allow the producers to finish the film. There are two cash awards of 5,000 EUR each, one sponsored by TRT and the other by KVIFF. Both awards will be designated by the jury regardless of the project's post-production needs.

## First Cut+

### Tuesday, July 5, 2 pm – 4 pm CET

First Cut+ is a program created for boosting the competitiveness and marketability of feature films that previously participated in First Cut Lab. Eight feature films in post-production stage, predominantly from countries with a low production capacity and with a focus on Central & Eastern Europe. The range of films is large: from both debut & experienced directors, small and larger budgets. The project with the most unique artistic approach and international potential will receive the TRT prize of 5,000 EUR

## OIFF Works in Progress

### Tuesday, July 5, 11 am – 12:30 pm CET

This year, due to the full-scale war of Russia against Ukraine, the Works in Progress section of the Odesa International Film Festival section will take place at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. The Karlovy Vary festival expresses its full support for Ukrainian filmmakers and festival organizers, and will thus host the Works-in-Progress program of the 13th Odesa International Film Festival. The OIFF WIP Selection presentation will feature 8 film projects in the final stage of shooting or in post-production produced in Ukraine or in co-production with Ukraine. The main goal of the Works in Progress presentation is to promote Ukrainian films in the world and local markets and to attract the attention of international distributors and also to find the partners for future projects. The best Works in Progress project will receive a cash award of 10,000 EUR from Barrandov Studio.

## Czech Projects in Production

### Tuesday, July 5, 1 pm – 1:45 pm CET

Author's presentations of three remarkable Czech film projects in different stages of production that are looking for international co-producers, sales agents, and distributors: War with Salamanders (d. Aurel Klimt), Forest Killer (d. Radim Špaček) and Ice Down (d. Jan Hřebejk).



# **KVIFF Eastern Promises**

## **Works in Development – Feature Launch**

First and second feature film projects  
from Central and Eastern Europe  
developed within the MIDPOINT Feature  
Launch 2022 program



# KVIFF & MIDPOINT Development Award Jury



## Danijel Hočevar

Film producer and CEO of Vertigo, a Ljubljana (Slovenia) based production company with distinctive track record and extensive working experience on international co-productions and narrow budget films, incl. *Small Body* (2021, Cannes FF Critic's Week) by Laura Samani, *Reconciliation* (2021, CPH: DOX Next Wave Competition) by Marija Zidar, *Otac / Father* (2020, Berlinale Panorama Audience Award) by Srdan Golubovic, *God Exists, Her Name is Petrunya* (2019, Berlinale Competition: Ecumenical Award, and Lux Film Prize 2019) by Teona Mitevska, *Half-Sister* (2019, Karlovy Vary IFF Main Competition), *Nightlife* (2016, Karlovy Vary IFF's Best Director Award), *Slovenian Girl* (2009, Toronto IFF) and *Spare Parts* (2003, Berlinale Competition), all directed by Damjan Kozole, *An Episode in the Life of an Iron Picker* (2013, 2 Berlinale Silver

Bears) by Danis Tanovic, *Circles* (2013, Sundance FF World Cinema Competition's Jury Prize) by S. Golubovic, *Alexandrians* (2011, Trieste Film Festival Best Documentary) by Metod Pevec, and *Bread and Milk* (2001, Venice FF's Lion of the Future Award) by Jan Cvitkovic.

Danijel has been selected as one of Variety's Ten Producers to Watch, is a member of EFA, and the President of the Association of Slovenian Film Producers. Since 2005, he's actively been involved as a tutor with several European training initiatives, such as MID-POINT Institute, EAVE, Nipkow Programm, and Maia Workshops. He is also a member of the selection committee of the When East Meets West co-production market in Trieste.



## Julia Sinkevych

Julia Sinkevych is a film producer, programmer, consultant, co-founder and member of the Supervisory Board of the Ukrainian Film Academy, member of the Supervisory Board of the Ukrainian Institute, member of the European Film Academy and founder of JS Films LLC.

For the past 10 years, Julia worked as general producer of Odesa International Film Festival, which was one of the biggest-audience film festivals in Eastern Europe, a showcase of mainstream art as well as a film industry networking platform. Working previously for several years for the distribution and production company Arthouse Traffic, Julia was in charge of festival promotion of the selection of short films *Angry Ukrainians* and feature films produced by the company as well as the promotion of young Ukrainian filmmakers and international cooperation between film industry professionals from Ukraine and abroad. Over the years, she has established a network of professional contacts in cultural and audiovisual sectors in Ukraine and abroad. She often acts as an expert at the Ukrainian

State Film Agency and Ukrainian Cultural Foundation. As film producer, Julia has also co-produced the documentary film *Close Relations* by Vitaliy Mansky and *Heatsingers* by Nadia Parfan. Currently, Julia Sinkevych is finishing the feature film *Lucky Girl* by Marysia Nikitiuk and is developing the film *Lesya* by Nana Janelidze. Julia's career has included the management of cultural projects of different spheres of arts (e.g. music, theatre, films) as art manager and producer. The most prominent cultural events Julia Sinkevych has been involved in are the International The Koktebel Jazz Festival, International Festival of Contemporary Arts GOGOLFEST, and the Odesa International Film Festival. Julia Sinkevych graduated from the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Faculty of Law, and holds an MA in film production from the Kyiv University of Theatre, Film and Television. She also studied at the Kyiv Music Academy of P. Tchaikovsky, Voice Department. She was selected to take part in the SOFA program (School of Film Agents, Poland-Germany), and completed the Nipkow program.



## Paul Ridd

Paul joined Picturehouse in 2011, acting first as a programmer for cinemas and then moving full time to acquisitions for the company's distribution arm, Picturehouse Entertainment, at the beginning of 2017 in his role as Head of Acquisitions. He also acts as a programme advisor to the BFI London Film Festival and is an in-

ternational consultant for Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. He contributes articles to BFI online, Little White Lies, The ICA and various other publications and regularly hosts director and talent Q&As. Guests have included Andrey Zvyagintsev, Whit Stillman, Zhia Zhangke, Rachel Weisz and Ethan Hawke.

## MIDPOINT Feature Launch Script Consultant Trainees



### Sonja Tarokić

Sonja Tarokic (1988, Zagreb) has an MA degree in film directing at the Academy of Dramatic Arts and a BA degree in comparative literature at the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities in Zagreb. She is the writer and director of several short films, while her debut feature film *The Staffroom* premiered at Karlovy Vary International Film Festival in 2021, where it was awarded Special Mention. With this project she participated in Torino Film Lab Script&Pitch

and Framework development programmes. She has been running her own scriptwriting workshop for three years, aimed at developing short films by young local authors, and often works as a script consultant in Croatia, which continues to be her passion job. She also works as a director in advertising, and has recently started teaching at the Academy a class in film acting for directors and actors.



### András Soós

András Soós was born in 1996 in Budapest. He graduated as a screenwriter and script editor at the Hungarian University of Theatre and Film Arts in 2021. He started to work in television early during his studies: he wrote more than 50 episodes of critically and commercially successful sitcoms for RTL Hungary and other TV channels. He briefly worked as a film critic and tried his hand as a dramaturge in theatre. He frequently collaborates with vari-

ous Hungarian directors (such as Bálint Kenyeres and Ádám Freund) as a script editor and co-writer. In 2022, his project *The Cluster* (co-written by Bálint Kenyeres) was in the three finalists of HBO Europe's and the American Independent Film Festival's screenwriting contest, „*Write a Screenplay for Ioana Bugarin*”. The script is currently in development with the help of mentors such as Cristian Mungiu.



### Alizée Muson | Writer, Script Consultant

Alizee is a French writer and script consultant based in London. After studying film production at the Arts University Bournemouth in the UK and FAMU in Prague, she started working in script development by reading for international competitions. She went on to work as a freelance reader and script consultant for Entertainment One and Amazon Studios. As a writer, Alizee previously wrote web series for children with Wildbrain Spark and Entertain-

ment One and in 2019, she was a jury member at the BAFTA Children's Awards. Alongside writing and script development, she also works as a translator and previously worked with companies such as Ubisoft and Disney. While currently writing her first novel, Alizee continues to work as a script consultant with independent writers and organisations internationally.

# All My Friends Soon Will Be Dead / Visi mani draugi drīz būs miruši



Latvia

This film is director's feature debut.

## White Picture

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## Film synopsis

A group of millennials are in an orgiastic, psychedelic music festival that takes place between the two waves of pandemic. Meanwhile, their close friends Ieva and Alex have just stepped into parenthood. This moment redefines the entire group: Kitija is suffering from depression, and fails to find support, as her friends start to become more alienated from each other. Anna is trying to take care of her mental health by quitting weed, which turns out to be a challenge to her relationship with Kaspars, who grows it in their house. Unable to influence Martin's self-destructive lifestyle, Dainis starts to document it on video, becoming a participant and a creator of a reality show of his own. The friends start a wild journey into the new reality of becoming responsible for themselves and those around them.

## Company's profile

White Picture is a film production company based in Riga, Latvia, founded in 2020 by Alise Gelze. Alise has been active as a film producer since 2006, and has produced both features and shorts, which have been premiered at Cannes IFF, Berlinale, Rotterdam IFF, Karlovy Vary IFF, Pusan IFF, etc. Her most successful productions are – *Oleg* (2019) by Juris Kursietis, which had its world premiere at Quinzaine des Réalisateurs, *Mother I Love You* (2013), by Janis Nords, which received more than 15 national and international awards, including Berlinale Generation KPlus International Jury prize for the Best Film, and *Mellow Mud* (2016), directed by Renars Vimba, which received a Crystal Bear at Berlinale Generation 14Plus.

Alise Gelze is a graduate of EAVE and ACE Producers, and a member of EFA.

## Author's statement

When I started working on the film, I didn't yet know that a close friend - a prototype for one of the characters in the film, would commit suicide. He did this in a remote country house during the first wave of the pandemic. These tragic events have only strengthened my conviction that the themes of my upcoming film are now becoming more important than ever. Millennials seem to have a really difficult time becoming "grown-ups", being unable to deal with the reality of everyday life. This manifests in various mental disorders and self-destructive attitudes that seem to pop up out of nowhere. The film will explore my generation through a wild, often humorous, and drug-infused mosaic of extremely intimate character portrayals.

## Producer's statement

Even though this film is a debut feature for Armands Zacs, he is already known to the industry - as an editor. He has worked on over 12 short and feature films, and has directed several short films and documentaries. *All My Friends Soon Will Be Dead* has received development funding from Creative Europe MEDIA and the State Culture Capital Foundation of Latvia. The film has been selected under a special Covid-19 recovery programme, managed by the National Film Centre of Latvia, which requires that the film is finalized by the end of 2023. The project is in the late development phase, and going into production in summer 2023. *All My Friends Soon Will Be Dead*, with the parallel stories of its main characters, is designed for an audience of millennials, upon whom we want to focus the strategy for the distribution and promotion of the film.

director **Armands Zacs**  
 scriptwriter **Armands Zacs**  
 producer **Alise Gelze**  
 language **Latvian**  
 genre **drama**  
 estimated budget **704.640 EUR**  
 release date **2024**



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# Dolphin / Delfin



Poland

This film is director's feature debut.

## Before My Eyes

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## Film synopsis

Anna's plan to release her brilliant debut album is fully supported by her loving boyfriend Jan, and entirely killed by her fear of sharing her music with anyone. This deadlock is Anna's greatest drag – at least until the day Jan comes back from his holiday, pregnant, with a dolphin growing inside him. Anna can't go on drifting along in the shallow waters of her routine, and starts sinking. However, it isn't the little Dolphin who pulls Anna down – it's her carefully hidden self-doubts. The emergence of the Dolphin kicks up a storm, which will change the landscape of the couple's life. To save the relationship, and her own worth, Anna will have to unveil her most true self, so far closed in her music studio. *Dolphin* is a story about breaking free by achieving self-acceptance, maturing into a relationship, and learning to set free what one loves.

## Company's profile

Before My Eyes is a company producing both fiction and documentary films, and focuses on creating high-quality, author-driven films with international co-production potential. In 2014, the short film *Fragments* premiered at the Quinzaine des Réalisateurs section in Cannes. In 2020, the feature debut *Simple Things* was presented in the main competition of the New Horizons IFF. Their second feature *Everyone Has a Summer* premiered at the Gdynia FF in 2020, as well as celebrating its international premiere at the Giffoni IFF in the 16+ competition. This year, the company is completing a Polish-Romanian documentary co-production, *The End of the Valley of Tears*, and is in pre-production of another feature, *More*. Their latest project, *Dolphin*, is being developed at the MIDPOINT Feature Launch 2022.

## Author's statement

Despite the surreal element, I based the narration on subjective and naturalistic storytelling, looking into characters' intimacy, prioritizing the psychological drama, and sometimes reducing dramatic gravity with humour. I wish to focus on the relationship of Anna and Jan, but to stay within Anna's impulsive and exaggerated perception of reality, filled with sounds of the sea and her own music – an extension of her mind. The clue factor is the cast: Jaśmina Polak as Anna – intensely present, saturated with conflicted energies, and Bartosz Bielenia as Jan – intuitive and sensitive beyond classic masculinity.

I hope that with this story I can convince the audience that under the surface of the water we can see ourselves in entirely different light, arousing the potential for being free – which, after all, we always carry within ourselves.

## Producer's statement

*Dolphin* is a surreal dramedy with reversed gender roles. A human couple becoming parents to a symbolic baby-dolphin captures the viewer's imagination immediately. Sonja's imaginary concept is also deeply rooted in the intimate reality of a couple's everyday life. Focused on Anna's point of view, shot in a handful of locations, yet proposing a challenge in the creation of a realistic third character – the Dolphin – to be blended into the couple's reality, the film offers a balance of security and dare for a first-time director. As we would like to collaborate in fields like music, editing, sound design, and CGI, the project will be conceived as an international co-production. I believe that thanks to its light narrative, *Dolphin* has the potential to reach a wider audience that is looking for both emotional impact and entertainment.

director **Sonja Orlewicz-Zakrzewska**  
 scriptwriter **Sonja Orlewicz-Zakrzewska**  
 producer **Magdalena Sztorc**  
 language **Polish**  
 genre **surreal dramedy**  
 estimated budget **1.600.000 EUR**  
 release date **2025**



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# The First Week of August / Prvi tjedan u kolovozu



Croatia

This film is director's feature debut.

## Castor Multimedia

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## Film synopsis

Ivana and Zoran Ler are a dysfunctional upper-middle class married couple, raising their ten-year-old son, David. On their way to summer vacation, David gets lost at a ferry port, prompting an exaggerated reaction from Ivana. She slaps him hard across the face, initiating a chain of events in which she and Zoran will have to cope with their son's growing defiance. Arriving on an island in the Adriatic, they meet their long-time friends, the Vučković family. Tension builds between the two families, due to David's increasing resistance, sabotage, and manipulation. The whole situation eventually gets out of hand, leading to a complete shift of power from parents to son, as David tests the limits of his new-found supremacy. A mirror image of the parents' mistakes is reflected through the son, highlighting their reckless use of authority.

## Company's profile

Castor Multimedia is a production company dedicated to creating and developing original audiovisual content. Founded in 2003, TV formats created by Castor have been recognized around the world, and in 2007, Castor's game talk show, *The Pyramid*, won The Best Show Award at *Rose d'Or*. Since 2018, Castor Multimedia has produced several documentary series for Croatian National Television, and has begun developing a slate of films and drama series. In 2021, a Croatian-French co-production, *I'm Not Telling You Anything, Just Sayin'*, by Sanja Milardović, was shown in competition at the Palm Springs IFF, and the Icelandic-Croatian co-production, *All Dogs Die*, by Ninna Palmadóttir, was shown at Karlovy Vary IFF. Castor Multimedia currently has several feature films and drama series in different stages of development.

## Author's statement

In my previous work, I almost exclusively dealt with the "pathology" of middle-class relationships, and in many ways, this film combines all of my previous preoccupations. In *The First Week of August*, I explore the fragility of the façade of family relations, and how easily it can break down, but this time the aim is also to explore how elements of genre film can be subtly implemented into a film that would usually be considered a conventional family drama. The entire plot is based on the idea of a child's rebellion against the value-system imposed by their parents. A single incident represents the total destruction of a *petit bourgeois* ritual, denouncing not only the parents, but at the same time the entire social class. Its consequences therefore become a metaphor for the power that ultimately destroys the ones who subscribe to it.

## Producer's statement

As a producer, I've always been eager to explore stories around us that are authentic, and artistic voices that need to be heard. Filip Mojzeš is one such voice; his previous works have proven that he has a unique talent and potential to be a future stronghold in Croatian cinema. Mojzeš's debut feature, *The First Week Of August*, a well written family drama, caught my attention as an interesting artistic take on the topics of family problems that are relatable to all audiences. The project's development has been funded by the *Croatian Audiovisual Centre*, and having in mind the success of Mojzeš's previous films, I'm confident that *The First Week Of August* has a strong potential to be recognized by critics, audiences, and festivals around the world.

director **Filip Mojzeš**  
 scriptwriter **Filip Mojzeš**  
 producer **Matej Merlić**  
 language **Croatian**  
 genre **drama**  
 estimated budget **820.000 EUR**  
 release date **2025**



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**Matěj Merlić** Producer  
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# A Flower Is Not a Flower / O floare nu e o floare



Romania

This film is director's feature debut.

## Point Film

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## Film synopsis

After being abandoned by her aunt in an inhumane communist orphanage, Ana, an 11-year-old girl, must learn to survive the bitter reality of Romania of the late 80s. Ana's sensibility helps her see the disturbing backdrop with a gentle, innocent twist, but at the same time, it leads her to seek shelter with the orphanage bully, Costea. When all hope is lost, and unable to endure the system's torture, Ana runs away with Costea. They end up living in the sewers, together with the self-proclaimed "Van Damme". For Ana, life underground is terrible, and things escalate when Van Damme attempts to sell her for money, without any resistance from Costea.

Her only chance is to run away from the sewers to the seaside. With her faith crushed, she's too afraid to accept help from a seemingly friendly family, and she ends up on the beach, running alone.

## Company's profile

Point Film's aim is to discover new directors and bring a fresh, new vibe and vision to the Romanian producing scene. Point Film is led by director/producer Tudor Giurgiu, founder and president of the Transilvania IFF, owner of the Transilvania Film distribution company, the Romanian streaming platform TIFF UNLIMITED, and the well-established production company, Libra Film (*The History of Love* by Radu Mihăileanu – FR, CA, RO; *Menocchio* by Alberto Fasulo – IT, RO; *Cannibal* by Manuel Cuenca - SP, RO), and producer Adriana Racasan, a film directing graduate, who has worked on more than 30 films as a production manager and executive producer since 2010. Point Film also co-produced the second feature by the Slovak director Ivan Ostrochovsky, *Servants*, which was presented in a world premiere at the Berlinale's Encounter section in 2020.

## Author's statement

After studying the brutal events in Romanian orphanages from the 80s, I decided to build Ana's story based on the heartbreaking recollections and interviews of that time.

Without downplaying the tragic events from these institutions, the innocent perspective of the main character, Ana, adds a layer of humanity to the film. A young child sees the world from a different point of view, and even in the most gruesome moments, she sees glimmers of hope. I intend to create a claustrophobic camera framing that is close to the main character, describing her perception of the institution.

Ana is a girl who evolves and overcomes great obstacles, and in the end, she succeeds in breaking free from all of the toxic people around her. It's a story about empowering oneself and never giving up the fight against appalling circumstances.

## Producer's statement

The film seriously and delicately deals with a hard to grasp subject for many people in the 90s. It's the first artistic project from Romania that has approached this issue.

The sensitive perspective of the main character, a young girl tackling an impossible system; it's an inspiring story told today to a troubled world, threatened with the loss of its most valuable right: freedom.

The border-crossing potential of this project relies mostly on the director's story telling ability which will resonate with audiences across the globe. We are thinking of structuring a three-country co-production, potentially between Romania, Germany, and Serbia. In Romania, after confirming production support from the Romanian Film Centre, we hope to get presale deals with either HBO Europe or Netflix, considering the international dimension of the project.

director **Cristian Pascariu**  
 scriptwriter **Cristian Pascariu**  
 producer **Adriana Răcășan**  
 language **Romanian**  
 genre **drama**  
 estimated budget **733.500 EUR**  
 release date **2025**



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**Adriana Răcășan** Producer  
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## My Best Friend's Baby / Min bästa vans bebis



Sweden

This film is director's feature debut.

### Grand Slam Film

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### Film synopsis

Damir (33) and Sara (37) have found a home in each other and in Stockholm's queer community. Damir floats among nightclubs, and still hasn't come out to his family in Croatia. Sara, single and self-reliant, wants to have a child on her own. The friends are convinced that they're so progressive that even a baby can't change their special bond. Damir offers to donate his sperm - but won't be involved as a dad. When Damir visits Croatia for his cousin's wedding, pregnant Sara comes along. As usual, if his family want to assume they are a couple, that's up to them. Once on the Adriatic island, their straight act begins to live a life of its own. Damir's boisterous and intrusive family soon figure out that Sara is pregnant. Now Damir and Sara must face the fact that the baby is real and on its way - and that *everything* is about to change.

### Company's profile

Grand Slam Film was founded in 2015 by Eliza Jones and Markus Waltå, as they graduated in film production from the Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts. Grand Slam has produced a number of short films, selected for some of the world's finest film festivals (Cannes, Sundance, Berlinale, Tribeca, Toronto). Their latest feature film is the much talked about and highly acclaimed *Pleasure*, which was selected for Cannes IFF 2020. It won the FIPRESCI Award at Gothenburg IFF 2021, succeeding its premiere in competition at Sundance the same year. It has sold worldwide, and is distributed by Neon in the US. Grand Slam Film is currently in post-production with the feature films *Locals* and *One Day All This Will Be Yours*, set to premiere in 2022 and 2023 respectively.

### Author's statement

As a filmmaker with one foot in Sweden and one in Croatia, I approach this story from a specific and personal perspective. I want to make a visceral family portrait where the tender and the cruel exist side by side. Where a blow can be made in the same gesture as a caress. I want to use comedy to ease the emotional punches to the audiences' stomachs, and with a playful tone, turn our accepted notions of gender and family roles upside down. The beating heart of the story is Damir and Sara's friendship in crisis. How do two best friends suddenly become parents? They will have to make it up as they go along. *My Best Friend's Baby* is about how impossible it is for us to live together, and how beautiful it is that we still try. An invitation to embrace the brutal and beautiful chaos of family - however you define it.

### Producer's statement

In 2018, we started collaborating with Sophie Vuković, producing her short film *Jamila*, which, after competing at Gothenburg IFF, had immense youth audience success. When Sophie shared her idea of a feature film called *My Best Friend's Baby*, we were hooked. *My Best Friend's Baby* is a contemporary film, in the concept's best notion. Sophie always manages to find something specific and personal, and dig until a rich, multifaceted story presents itself. Being "in between", regarding both a migratory background and the heterosexual couple norm, is the perfect soil for warmth, humour, strong emotions, and an affecting film for the audience. The film moves between Stockholm and the Adriatic coast, where most of the story takes place. This infers an organic co-production opportunity, and we really believe it can have an international impact.

director **Sophie Vuković**  
scriptwriter **Sophie Vuković**  
producer **Eliza Jones, Markus Waltå**  
language **Swedish, Croatian, English**  
genre **dramedy**  
estimated budget **1.650.000 EUR**  
release date **2025/2026**



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# My Name Is Lily



Cyprus

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## Film synopsis

Lily has everything she needs: a loving husband and an adopted child, Ori, who is intersex, like herself. Fed up with being bullied at school for looking non-binary, Ori asks for gender assignment surgery, so they fly from Cyprus to Lily's homeland. Watching history repeat itself, Lily's childhood traumas awaken as she relives the medical consultations – but still she stands by Ori's decision. When, right before the surgery, Ori has second thoughts, Lily's relationships with those she loves are put to the test, as they insist the child deserves 'a normal life'. Lily finds herself questioning her life choices and the understanding of those around her. Respecting her child's right to choose, Lily runs away with Ori. Along the journey, mother and child come closer and tap into their own truth. But their return won't be without consequences.

## Company's profile

Meraki Films is based in Cyprus and established by Stelana Kliris, aiming to create 'works of heart' that will travel beyond the shores of the island. Meraki Films collaborates with local production companies and filmmakers to promote Cyprus cinema, as well as providing services to international clients. The company focuses on supporting and developing films by local directors, mainly women. To date, Meraki Films has undertaken the short film *Watch Over Me* by Leah Kayaleh, a Public Service Announcement on human trafficking directed by Katiana Zachariou, and the short film *Betrayal*, also by Katiana. It is currently developing a series and three features, including *My Name is Lily* and is in production of Stelana's second feature *The Islander*, starring Harry Connick Jr, in collaboration with Uinta Productions (USA) and Das Films (USA).

## Author's statement

Our aim is an evocative, atmospheric film that feels up-close, personal, and raw in its testaments, capturing the emotional experience of intersex people, who make up 1.7% of the world's population, but still fight for basic human rights. We would like it to feel claustrophobic, hence the use of the academic ratio – as if to lock the characters into the frame, just as Lily feels trapped. The goal is to evoke a suffocating emotion that the anamorphic widescreen would scarcely be enough to contain. Lily constantly attempts to escape these tight frames as the story unfolds – she knows something we don't know from the start, having been in Ori's shoes some years back. There will be a tactile intimacy to Lily's depiction, focusing on her, while never neglecting the societal surroundings that have shaped her and oppress her true nature.

## Producer's statement

I wasn't familiar with the hardships that intersex people face. As society tries to embrace people from all backgrounds, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and gender identities, it is becoming increasingly essential to tell their stories. While we have seen films that deal with gender identity and documentaries on intersex people, there are no notable narrative films. We therefore feel that it crucial to fill this market gap, and cast intersex people for the corresponding parts. We want to cast a well-known Belgian intersex model for Lily's part. We will shoot in Cyprus and a second European country – ideally Belgium – where the characters fly to, due to lack of such surgical procedures in Cyprus. While English is the common language between Lily and the locals in Cyprus, her native French, is used upon returning to her homeland.

director **Yianna Americanou**  
scriptwriter **Yianna Americanou, Christina Georgiou**  
producer **Stelana Kliris**  
language **French, English, Greek**  
genre **drama**  
estimated budget **1.200.000 EUR**  
release date **2025**



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## Side By Side / Vedle sebe



Czech Republic

This film is director's feature debut.

### Unit and Sofa Praha

Salvátorská 10  
11000 Praha 1  
Czech Republic

### Film synopsis

Four young millennials, living their dynamic urban lives, find themselves in a strangely magical forest without any technologies. Unbalanced Sebastian, his success-driven girlfriend Andrea, Sebastian's sister, Johana, suffering from indecision, accompanied by a one-night stand, influencer Anna. They find themselves side by side, but not willing to be together in one car. The car breaks down in the woods and they try to find a way out of the forest, only to realize that Anna is missing. Also, a man from a local creepy gas station keeps mysteriously appearing. The forest seems to be playing a game with them, challenging their deepest, darkest fears, the magical power of nature, and forest creatures. They must play, or they'll never be able to leave. Eventually, the forest leads them on their path to adulthood, and they can leave the forest.

### Company's profile

Unit and Sofa Praha was established as a sister company of Unit and Sofa service production in 2015, with the aim of producing its own film and TV projects, specializing in debuting filmmakers and an original auteur approach to cinema. In 2021, it produced its first feature length film, *Occupation* (dir. Michal Nohejl), which competed at 2021 Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival, was nominated for 13 Czech national film awards (awarded Best Script, Best Music, and Best Supporting Actress) and 6 Czech film critic awards (awarded Best Film, Best Script, Best Director, Best New Talent). During the past 4 years, the company has also produced 4 TV series for Czech broadcasters. Unit and Sofa Praha is the desired production company for *Side by Side*. We are currently in negotiations, and our producer, Julie Zackova, is supervising the project.

### Author's statement

*Side by Side* is a coming-of-age film about the contemporary young generation discovering its journey to maturity, in this case through a forest game and its pitfalls. The story deals with societal pressure to succeed, anxieties from being lost in infinite possibilities, irresponsibility, and communication problems, all of which are topics our generation is constantly facing. However, the most important theme is about finding respect for one's self. The film will almost be like a form of self-therapy for our generation. The film plays with the poetics of magical realism, using elements of relationship drama, ambient horror, and situational comedy. It begins as a relationship comedy, and gradually turns into a mystery drama. We intend to create a story that would be referenced as "Euphoria meeting Stalker" in its tonality and style.

### Producer's statement

*Side by Side* is a unique film about pressing millennial generation issues, narrated through an original story, and playing with the theme of nature offering its tools to make the characters solve their own troublesome lives. The script is being written in collaboration between the director/scriptwriter and the actors. The method combines personal experiences with acting improvisation. This principle of collective writing is quite rare for the Czech film scene, and therefore relatable for young international audiences, which the film will mainly target. The film is currently in the script development stage, and production is planned for autumn 2023/spring 2024, with the film's release in 2024.

director **Kilián Vrátník**  
scriptwriter **Natalie Golovchenko, Kilián Vrátník**  
producer **Noemi Krausová**  
language **Czech**  
genre **drama**  
estimated budget **365.000 EUR**  
release date **2024**



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## Twentyseven / Dvadsaťsedem



Slovak Republic

This film is director's feature debut.

### MPhilms

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### Film synopsis

David and his three best friends from high school promised themselves that their friendship would last forever. After Hana gets married, Bažo moves abroad, Maja falls in love with an adventurous traveller, and David finds himself all alone. He is forced to embark on a new journey to find out that his adult life as a queer person might be inherently different than of those who grew up with him.

*Twentyseven* is a film about an early-life crisis and the finality of having to grow up. This happens in Central Europe, politically changing at a dizzying pace. Topics of becoming an adult as queer, catholic faith, and its forms, moving for a better job at the expense of family, or social media's unrealistic portrayals of identity, put the topic of friendship and growing-up into everyday situations, and turns it into a generational statement.

### Company's profile

MPhilms is a Bratislava-based production company, founded in 2005, with two producing partners - Mátyás Prikler and Zora Jaurová. The company is primarily focused on live-action and documentary production, but also produces audiovisual projects with a strong social dimension. As part of its non-profit activities, MPhilms organises creative workshops, training courses and educational programmes. Among its most successful productions are *Thanks, Fine* (2009, Cannes IFF), *Fine, Thanks* (2013, Rotterdam IFF), *Children* (2014, Beijing IFF 2015 – Best Script, Best Cinematography, Best Actress in Supporting Role), *Mirage* (2014, Toronto IFF), which starred Isaach de Bankolé, *Paradise on Earth* (2019, Best Documentary Film at the Slovak National Film Awards), and *Wild Roots* (2021, KV-IFF).

### Author's statement

In my work, I deal with personal topics and focus on turning points of people's lives. Most of us probably don't get to live through anything too dramatic or notable, worthy of what one could define as a "Hollywood film". However, those little details, everyday poetics, that's what we all share. My feature debut, *Twentyseven*, tells the story of four friends in their late 20's, whose ways are slowly but surely drifting apart. It's a natural process for all of them, but the gay main character, David, feels the necessity the most. This film explores the early-life crisis of those who face the finality of having to grow up, those who are yet to learn that happiness is not to be sought after, and home is just a state of mind. *Twentyseven* is a drama, where comedic elements caused by everyday absurdity prevail, just as they do in real life.

### Producer's statement

At MPhilms, we have long strived to work with debuting creators, and offer them the opportunity to establish themselves in a professional environment as soon as possible. Gregor Valentovic's debut feature offers a subtle drawing of small dramas; its atypical and seemingly inconspicuous dramatic arc is created by the contradictions and beauty of everyday situations, allowing the main protagonist to undergo a psychological transformation, and to gain knowledge. In combination with the presented theme, this film is a very promising project that has the potential to become a true European drama, relevant, and bringing a fresh voice to the audio-visual landscape.

The story is set in a Central European context, and the production strategy reflects this focus: we intend to cast our film and use crew from Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

director **Gregor Valentovič**  
 scriptwriter **Gregor Valentovič**  
 producer **Zora Jaurová**  
 language **Slovak**  
 genre **drama**  
 estimated budget **900.000 EUR**  
 release date **2024**



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# You Better Be



Bulgaria

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## Film synopsis

Boggie (28) and his mom, Tanya (55), live in distant towns and meet every few months. Their relationship seems great, but is built on many lies. Having grown up in a small Bulgarian conservative town, Boggie has hidden that he is gay, at all costs, all of his life. This evolved into him inventing and performing extreme personas of what people want and expect, and as a result, he achieves success. But when Tanya is diagnosed with cancer and comes to live with him, Boggie's polished facade begins to crack, and he suffers an emotional breakdown. No longer able to hide his life and take care of Tanya, as she is falling apart too, his most hidden persona is revealed – himself. This is when mother and child, with death at the door, have a strange emotional convergence, and relive everything they have suppressed for all these years.

## Company's profile

Little Wing Productions was founded in 2014 by Magdalena Ilieva, and its credits include the feature *The Lesson* (2014, Toronto, San Sebastian, Tokyo, Warsaw, LUX Prize finalist 2015, sold in over 30 territories), the shorts *Enemies* (2015, Sofia, Trieste), *The Son* (2016, Tampere, Sofia, Best Short at Cottbus), *Money for a Funeral*, aka *Hole* (2017, Edmonton, Nice, Clermont-Ferrand, Tirana), and others. Currently, LWP is co-producing the debut feature, *Enter-nity Package*, aka *Money For a Funeral* (in post), which was selected at Berlinale Coproduction Market 2016, where LWP premiered it. Among other projects, the company is in financing with the debut feature, *Paris 18*, financed for production by the Bulgarian National Film Centre in 2022, and in development with the genre feature, *Tsveti*, supported by MEDIA Creative Europe, also this year.

## Author's statement

*You Better Be* will explore the themes of shame, self-rejection, and the liberating power of being true to oneself. "Just be yourself" is a popular slogan, yet hard to live by. When we're children, it's the simple things that bring happiness: love, inspiration, life itself. But when you go against the inner child in order to fit in, you become something you're not. You lose your identity. And if you have to pretend in front of a loved one, it distances you from this person. They only see part of you, and the rest is hidden. Worse – if you pretend to be something you're not in front of yourself, you grow to resent yourself.

*You Better Be* tells the story of how being yourself is the only way to have a real connection and a complete relationship with others – a heavy issue that we tackle with lightness of touch and absurd humour.

## Producer's statement

The second Ilieva-Heidelberger authorial duo project, *You Better Be* will be structured as an international co-production, like their first joint feature, *Eternity Package*, which was a successful Bulgarian-Italian co-production, supported by Eurimages and MEDIA Creative Europe. The film tackles topics like shame, peer pressure, and staying true to oneself in a society that discourages authenticity – all issues that our target audience (urban and young 16+) is also dealing with. One of our characters is foreign, and comes from a more liberal society, serving as a contrast to the more rigid, conservative environment our story takes place in. This gives us a genuine opportunity to collaborate with partner(s) from abroad – currently, we are looking for a foreign partner to apply for co-development for the project from MEDIA Creative Europe.

director **Magdalena Ilieva, Jonathan Heidelberg**  
scriptwriter **Jonathan Heidelberg, Drago Bago, Magdalena Ilieva**  
producer **Magdalena Ilieva, Drago Bago**  
language **Bulgarian**  
genre **dramedy**  
estimated budget **600.000 EUR**  
release date **2025**



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## **KVIFF Eastern Promises Works in Progress**

Feature film projects in post-production from Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the former Soviet Union, the Middle East and North Africa will introduce new films that will premiere after the Karlovy Vary IFF



## Works in Progress Jury



### Ewa Puszczyńska

Ewa Puszczyńska is an experienced Polish film producer. Since 1996, she has been working exclusively for Opus Film, starting with producing TV commercials and later successfully leading international co-productions and executing projects for international companies, producing and co-producing films with international casts. She was the Polish line producer for David Lynch's *Inland Empire*. In 2016, she established her own company Extreme Emotions to develop and produce projects with Polish and international talents and crews.

She produced *Ida* by Pawel Pawlikowski, which received five EFA awards (Best Film, Best Director, Best Script, Best Cinematography, People's Choice Award), BAFTA and an Oscar for the best foreign language film. She also produced Pawlikowski's *Cold War*, which received Best Director award at Cannes 2018, five EFA awards, and was nominated for BAFTA and in three Oscar categories. Recently, she has produced Jonathan Glazer's *The Zone of Inter-*

ests. The film was financed by A24, Film4 and Access with the Polish cash rebate scheme.

Her other recent titles are:

- *Kill It and Leave This Town*, an art house animated project for adult audiences by Mariusz Wilk Wilczynski – premiere Berlinale 2020
  - *Fools*, a new film by Tomasz Wasilewski (Berlinale Silver Bear for *United States of Love*), planned to premiere in autumn 2022
  - Jasmila Zbanic's *Quo Vadi, Aida?* – Oscar nominated for Best Foreign Language Film – co-producer
  - *Silent Twins* by Agnieszka Smoczynska, an English language film produced together with Klaudia Smieja's Madants and UK 42 – the film premiered in UCR Cannes 2022.
- She is a member of the Polish Film Academy, European Film Academy and AMPAS and has been listed in Variety 500, an index of the 500 most influential business leaders.



### Óscar Alonso

Oscar Alonso earned a Degree in Business Administration at the Autonomous University of Madrid, a Master's degree in Cinema and Television Production at the Complutense University of Madrid and coursed the USC/Universal Studios Producing and Directing Programme at the University of Southern California. Starting in Film & TV Production, most of his career happened in Latido Films, an international sales agency that focuses mainly on Spanish language titles. Latido Films collaborate with both prestigious filmmakers (Oscar winning Juan Jose Campanella's *The Secret In Their Eyes* and legendary director Carlos Saura's *Fados*),

established directors (Mariano Cohn & Gastón Duprat's multi-awarded *The Distinguished Citizen* and Javier Fesser's box office hit *Champions*) and rising talents like Oscar nominated Rodrigo Sorogoyen (*The Realm*). He was appointed on 2019 as Head of Acquisitions, being his first pickup *The Platform* by Galder Gaztelu-Urrutia (Grolsch People's Choice Midnight Madness Award at Toronto International Film Festival and the most watched non-English language film ever on Netflix and 9th overall).



### Dennis Ruh

Dennis Ruh has been director of the European Film Market since 2020.

He studied cultural sciences, audiovisual communication, social science and history in Bremen, Germany and Valencia, Spain. During his studies, he began working for the Oldenburg International Film Festival in 2008 and became a co-director in 2011. Starting in 2010,

he also worked for Independent Partners Film. From 2012 to 2020, he was department head for International Festival Relations & Producers Liaison at German Films.

He regularly appears as a guest lecturer at film schools; he is a panellist at industry conferences and film festivals and has served on various juries.



### Esra Demirkiran

Esra Demirkiran is Festivals Co-ordinator at TRT Cinema (TRT is Turkey's public broadcaster). She is a co-ordinator of 12 Punto, Turkey's largest script development and co-production platform for Turkish and international feature films. For almost a decade, she worked as a news editor and executive-produced several flagship programmes and documentaries for Turkey's Haberturk news network. Prior to her journalism experience, Esra was the Board

President and Co-Director of NISI MASA, a Paris based European cinema network. In the past, besides working as a film critic and festival-distribution consultant for award winning Turkish feature films, she has contributed to the planning and organization of various Turkey-based film festivals. She studied Sociology at the Middle East Technical University, and holds an MA degree in Film & TV from Istanbul Bilgi University.



### Michaela Patriková

Michaela graduated from the Department of Sound at FAMU in Prague. She is a highly experienced Sound Editor and ADR Supervisor and has worked on a number of award-winning feature films, documentaries and prestigious TV projects. Michaela is one of the key members of the Soundsquare team. Some of the projects she has been involved in include: *The*

*Painted Bird* (V. Marhou), *Zátopek* (D. Ondříček), *The Bird Atlas* (O. Omerzu), *The Man with Hare Ears* (M. Šulík), *The Night-siren* (T. Nvotová), documentaries *Intensive Life Unit* (A. Komrzý), *Art Talent Show* (A. Komrzý, T. Bojar), TV series *Wasteland* (HBO), *Das Boot Seasons 2 and 3* (SKY) and *Munich Match* (SKY).

# Brutal Heat / Brutální vedro



75 min, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic

This is the film's final distribution title. This film is director's feature debut.

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## Film synopsis

Vincek (19) is paralysed by both his stagnant youth and a cosmic threat that leaves the whole world searching for answers. Persuaded by his friend, he decides to leave the smouldering-hot city and heads for a cottage where his friends are sheltered for the summer. What should have been an easy ride turns into a condensed initiation process. He encounters both violence and kindness and is subject to a variety of uncomfortable tests. Will he submit to the present moment and let his numbness crack under the pressure of uncontrolled existence?

## Director's biography

Albert Hospodářský was born in 1996 in Jihlava, student of FAMU in Prague, Department of Documentary Film. During his studies, he realized he was interested in both documentary and fiction filmmaking and that he would like to pursue both genres. Over the last three years, he has made several short films, both documentary and fiction. One of them, *Nekyia: An Inner Portrait of the Poet Hradecký* competed at Ji.hlava IDFF 2019. In addition to filming, he also writes short stories and film scripts. He is currently working on a script for a new feature film in addition to the feature length *Brutal Heat* project.

## Producer's biography

Ondřej Lukeš is finishing his bachelor studies at FAMU in Prague. He featured as a production manager on films such as *Anatomy of a Czech Afternoon* (Czech Lion award) or *Nekyia* (IDFF Ji.hlava competition). Apart from *Brutal Heat*, he is now working on two feature documentaries as a producer – *Such a Strange Winter* and *What Weighs You Down, Dear Boy?*

Lukáš Kokeš studied at Charles University's Faculty of Arts and graduated from the Department of Documentary Film at FAMU in Prague. With Klára Tasovská, he co-directed the feature debut *Fortress* (2012, Best Czech Documentary at IDFF Jihlava 2012, LUX Prize 2013 nominee) and *Nothing Like Before* (2017, world premiere at IDFA 2017 First Appearance).

## Author's statement

The main character of the film, Vincek, hasn't found the courage to start living yet. But thanks to technology, he can be anyone, anywhere in the world, and that's why he lacks the motivation to fight for his individuality. In the modern world, we no longer have to battle external problems. We fight what's inside - unsatisfied, untameable and unseen by everyone around us.

The film aims to reflect the weight and responsibility of a young person's life. Everything is in reach, close – and all the harder it is to decide who we are, where we're headed, and what makes sense. The world we live in belongs solely to us, and we must submit to the present moment if we wish to find happiness.

director **Albert Hospodářský**  
scriptwriter **Albert Hospodářský**  
producer **Ondřej Lukeš, Lukáš Kokeš, Katarína Tomková, Ivan Ostrochovský**  
camera **Tomáš Uhlík**  
music **Jan Tomáš**  
cast **Vincent Hospodářský, Milan Mikulčík, Zdeňka Petrová, Václav Kopelec**  
language **Czech**  
genre **road-movie**  
release date **15.02.2023**  
what's missing **final editing, sound post-production, color grading, additional financing for VFX and sound**



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# Elephant / Słoń



89 min, Poland

This is the film's final distribution title.  
This film is director's feature debut.

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## Film synopsis

Bartek (22) runs a small horse farm in the mountains in Southern Poland. He had to become head of the family when his father left, and his mother had a breakdown. One day their neighbour dies, and his son Dawid (32) comes to the village for the funeral. Bartek becomes fascinated by Dawid and his recklessness. First love will force him to decide if he's ready to choose his freedom over family obligations.

## Director's biography

Kamil Krawczycki was born in 1990 in Zakopane. He graduated from Warsaw Film School and Wajda School. He directed two short films - *The End of My World* (Best Short Film at AMOR Festival in Chile and Best Actor Award at Las Vegas Film Festival), *The Last One* (Presented at Barcelona Short Film Festival and Liverpool Film Festival) and several music videos. *Elephant* is his debut feature film. In his films, he wants to focus on characters who are often marginalized by society in Poland.

## Producer's biography

Co-founder and CEO of Tongariro Releasing, a distribution company in Poland focusing on LGBT+ films. *Elephant* is his first film as a producer and the first production for Tongariro.

## Author's statement

In my film, I come back to my hometown in Southern Poland, the region with the most breath-taking nature but a place that's pretty hard to live in when you're gay. This is the story of a young man who is forced to become head of the family when his father leaves and his mother has a breakdown. Family obligations affect his freedom, but he manages to hide his desires. I wanted to portray a character who is vulnerable and strong at the same time. I know that many queer people in Poland can relate to that. By telling this story, I wanted to pay tribute to them and give them a bit of hope, which is highly needed in Poland at the moment.

director **Kamil Krawczycki**  
producer **Jakub Mroz**  
camera **Jakub Sztuk**  
music **Jan Krolikowski**  
cast **Jan Hrynkiewicz, Ewa Skibinska, Pawel Tomaszewski**  
language **Polish**  
genre **romance, drama**  
release date **27.07.2022**  
what's missing **distributor, sales agent, festivals, international promotion**



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## Endless Summer Syndrome / Le syndrome de l'été infini



95min, Turkey, France

This film is director's feature debut.

### Film synopsis

Delphine and Antoine live an affluent life with their two adopted kids, Aslan and Adia. They are preparing for Aslan's departure to the US to study entomology, spending the last few days of his stay in the warm atmosphere of their summer villa. Delphine receives an anonymous phone call telling her that, at the peak of a drunken night with his colleagues, Antoine mumbled something about having a relationship with one of his children. Confused, Delphine tries to get a grip on herself and quietly investigate the claim. However, as she looks closer at her husband and his relationship with their teenage daughter and son, she begins to see traces of what she can only wish to be untrue.

### Director's biography

Kaveh Daneshmand is an Iranian filmmaker based in Prague. His first short film, *Occasional Showers*, has been selected as the best short film of the year by the Union of Iranian Writers and Critics. His second short film, *Alula*, premiered at Oberhausen International Film Festival. Kaveh teaches film directing and Iranian cinema at Prague Film School and Charles University respectively. He is also the artistic director of IRÁN:CI Film Festival, which is an annual showcase of Iranian cinema in the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

### Producer's biography

A self-made multi-media artist born in 1997 in Konak, Turkey, Gem Deger directed several short films and music videos in his homeland before moving to Prague, Czech Republic to develop a more subversive form of expression and work on his debut feature film *Playdurizm*, a provocative take on his generation's blurred lines between reality and art and the pursuit of self-acceptance in a censorious society. *Playdurizm* had a strong international reception and competed at reputable film festivals such as Fantaspoa International Film Festival and Molodist International Film Festival. It has also been released in North America under the Kino Lorber banner.

### Author's statement

*Endless Summer Syndrome* reflects on sensitive topics such as adoption, immigration, sexual identity and incest in the context of a modern and open-minded family whose integrity is threatened by an inconvenient phone call. A portrait of a seemingly ideal, loving and multicultural family and its collapse, the story questions family bonds from a much-avoided point of view and pushes its characters to an irreversible edge, where they're forced to question all the decisions they've made to be where they are today.

director **Kaveh Daneshmand**  
 scriptwriter **Laurine Bauby, Kaveh Daneshmand**  
 producer **Gem Deger, Eva Larvoire, Cédric Larvoire, Kaveh Daneshmand**  
 camera **Cédric Larvoire**  
 cast **Sophie Colon, Matheo Capelli, Gem Deger, Frédérique Milano**  
 language **French, Turkish**  
 genre **drama**  
 release date **25.01.2023**  
 what's missing **international sales, sound postproduction, additional financing, VFX, music licensing, color grading**



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**Gem Deger** Producer  
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 E gemdeger@gmail.com

# Machtat



80 min, Lebanon, Tunisia, France, Qatar

This is the film's final distribution title.

## Khamsin Films

Immeuble Victor El Khoury, rue Zouk Al Kharab, Dbayeh  
Beirut  
Lebanon  
E khamsinfilms@hotmail.com

## Film synopsis

Fatma and her two daughters, Najah and Waffa, are "machtat", wedding musicians in Mahdia, a small city in Tunisia. The sisters follow opposite paths: while Najah, divorced, tries to remarry to escape the authority of her brothers, Waffa wishes to divorce her violent husband. Fatma navigates between the two, praying that things will one day get better.

## Director's biography

Sonia Ben Slama is a Tunisian-French documentary filmmaker. She grew up in Paris, where she studied Art and Cinema at University Paris 3-Sorbonne-Nouvelle. In 2015, she directed her first feature documentary *Maktoub*, produced by Les films de la Caravane (Djerba Doc Days - Grand Jury Prize, Zagora Film Festival - Special distinction from jury, AFIDOK - Grand Jury Prize). She's currently working on two feature documentaries, *Machtat* (Chicken&Egg Pictures Lab 2020, MFI Script2Film Workshops Project Development Award from Visions du Re'el) and *316 North Main Street* (in development).

## Producer's biography

After her filmmaking and psychology studies in Beirut, Tania El Khoury moved to Paris and joined the Parisian independent production company Moby Dick Films, which she worked with as legal and financial manager until 2019. In 2017, she founded the production company Khamsin Films in Beirut, and in 2020 she founded the Paris-based production company Les Films de l'Altaï. She recently produced the latest feature fiction by acclaimed filmmaker Ghassan Salhab, *The River* (International Competition, Locarno 2021). Her current projects include Sonia Ben Slama's newest feature documentary *Machtat* and Anas Khalaf's new feature film *Love-45*. She is the recipient of the Netflix Fund for Creative Equity x AFAC in 2022 as a producer for the project *Manity* by Hussen Ibraheem.

## Author's statement

I grew up between France and Tunisia, and I often think that I probably would have had a similar life as the film's characters if my father did not choose to emigrate. I could have been one of the many women under the authority of an entire society. This is surely the reason why hidden women have always fascinated me, beginning with my grandmother, who got married very young. This story was the starting point of my previous film, *Maktoub*.

With *Machtat*, I keep digging: why are strong women caught between their will of empowerment and an overwhelming tradition? Why do they want to be free and at the same time expect their daughters to marry and live the same lives as them?

director **Sonia Ben Slama**  
scriptwriter **Sonia Ben Slama**  
producer **Tania El Khoury**  
camera **Evgenia Alexandrova**  
language **Arabic**  
genre **documentary**  
release date **02.01.2023**  
what's missing **partners, additional financing for the postproduction, colour correction, sound postproduction, sound mix**



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**Tania El Khoury** Producer  
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## Part of Society



90 min, Georgia

This is the film's final distribution title.  
This film is director's feature debut.

### ArtWay Film

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Georgia  
E [artwayfilm@gmail.com](mailto:artwayfilm@gmail.com)  
W [www.artwayfilm.com](http://www.artwayfilm.com)

### Film synopsis

What does it mean to be a stranger in your own home and country? *Part of Society* is an intimate journey into the world and mind of a transgender woman, Adelina, who has been locked away from the outside world for 11 years. Finally, her dream comes true, as Adelina flees Georgia and finds her freedom in Europe. Despite her inner fears, she finally finds a job, participates in the Miss Trans beauty contest and pursues her aspiration of becoming a dancer. However, the COVID-19 pandemic crushes all her dreams. Soon after, her life takes an unexpected turn. Events begin to spiral out of control and alter her life forever.

### Director's biography

Rati Tsiteladze is a European Film Academy Award nominated filmmaker. He is an alumnus of TIFF Film-maker Lab, Locarno Academy, ID-FAcademy, Berlinale Talent Project Market and Cannes Cinéfondation. Rati has directed and produced several short films that have won over 50 awards worldwide and screened at more than 300 festivals, including Hong Kong, Melbourne and Locarno. His recent work *Prisoner of Society* (2018) won numerous Oscar qualifying awards and was nominated for the European Film Academy. With his feature film project *Blue Nights*, he was selected at Cannes Cinéfondation Residence and won the Eurimages Award at TIFF and the first HFFA Film Independent Award by the Golden Globes.

### Producer's biography

Olga Slusareva is an award-winning producer from Georgia. Since 2014, she has been working with ArtWay Film production on documentaries and art-house film projects. She has produced several short films that have been screened at more than 100 film festivals and won over 20 awards internationally, including a European Film Academy nomination. The company's feature projects were selected at various prestigious festivals including the Cannes Cinéfondation Residence and Berlinale Co-Production Market and have won Eurimages Award at TIFF, Special Mention at Locarno and the HFFA Film Independent Award by the Golden Globes. With her recent project *White Nights*, she won the TDF Award at Visions du Réel.

### Author's statement

When Adelina shared her story with me, it touched me deeply and I knew we had to tell her story no matter the consequences. Her story is not only unique, but also reflects the state of the LGBTQ+ community. In 2018, we made the short film *Prisoner of Society*, which was nominated for the European Film Academy Award, and the film's success allowed us to help Adelina flee Georgia. However, over the past years, her story took an unforeseen turn and became even more complicated and complex. For me *Part of Society* is a film about being yourself. To be 'different' in a society means you are faced with the choice of becoming invisible for the sake of collective harmony or fighting for who you are, even if it costs you your own life.

director **Rati Tsiteladze**  
scriptwriter **Rati Tsiteladze, Olga Slusareva**  
producer **Olga Slusareva, Rati Tsiteladze**  
camera **Rati Tsiteladze**  
language **English, Georgian, German**  
genre **documentary**  
release date **01.09.2023**  
what's missing **additional financing, international sales, distributors**

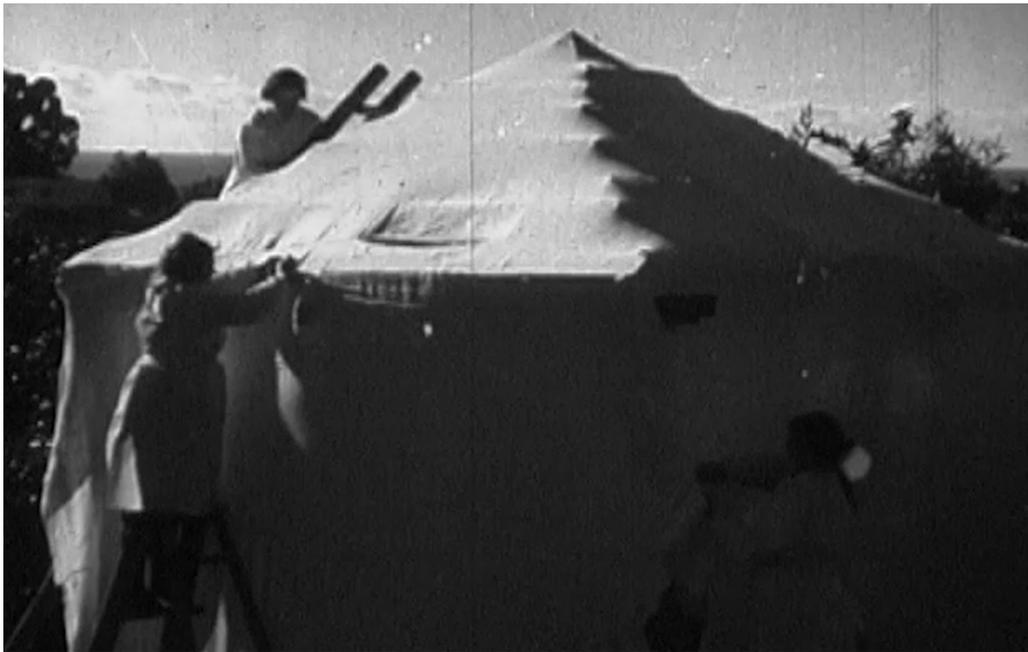


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## Self Portrait Along the Borderline / Avtoportreti Zghvarze



60 min, Georgia

This is the film's final distribution title.  
This film is director's feature debut.

### Sakdoc Film

24g Khazbegi Ave.  
0160 Tbilisi  
Georgia  
E salome@sakdoc.ge  
W www.sakdoc.ge

### Film synopsis

*Self-portrait along the Borderline* is a documentary about the obsession with identity and home. An abandoned house turns out to be a trap and a revelation; a "rite of passage" that opens the door to revisit the past. Fragments create a personal and political biography. The film searches for lost and split identity using both archive material and recent footage from the unrecognized territory on the border of the Black Sea - Abkhazia.

The film touches on the complexity of nationalism and identity in times of war and global displacement through a personal story of a divided family. It is a story that also reflects recent history and becomes a manual of what comes next once the wars are over.

### Director's biography

Anna Dziapshipa is a director and producer. She is a producer of Salome Jashi's first documentary *Bakhmaro* and, together with her, is a co-founder and director of the documentary film company Sakdoc Film. The last fiction film of Aleksandre Koberidze *What We See When We Look at the Sky* that she co-produced was part of the main competition of the Berlin International Film Festival (FIPRESCI award) and had its theatrical release in USA, Germany, France, etc. She is also the author of several short films such as *The Hunter Erects the City* (2018) 7', *Dear Dirty Tbilisi* (2016) 11' *On Being Dziapshipa* (2018) 8' *A House Left in a Dream* (2021) 8' etc. Her short films often explore the transformation of physical borders into memory and identity.

### Producer's biography

Sakdoc is a well-established documentary film production company and organization aiming to promote documentary film making in Georgia. Salomé Jashi and Anna Dziapshipa founded a documentary film production company in 2008. The company produces and co-produces documentaries and short and long fiction for local and international audiences. Its track record includes Alexandre Koberidze's *What Do We See When We Look at the Sky* (2021) Competition of 71st Berlin International Film Festival, Salomé Jashi's *Taming the Garden* (2021) premiered at Sundance Film Festival, *The Dazzling Light of Sunset* (2016) and *Bakhmaro* (2011) awarded at DOK Leipzig and Jihlava, both co-produced with MDR/Arte as well as Ugis Olte's *Double Aliens* (2015), which premiered at IDFA.

### Author's statement

Combining voice, archive and recent footage, the film searches for lost and split identity stuck between the border of Georgia and Abkhazia. Here the fragments are intricately woven together to create a personal and political biography, recalling the complicated and controversial historical past of the Georgian-Abkhaz relationship. Upon the finding of an abandoned summer house in Abkhazia, the space becomes a 'Pandora's box' 25 years later, making it possible to revisit violent yet pleasant memories.

director **Anna Dziapshipa**  
scriptwriter **Anna Dziapshipa**  
producer **Anna Dziapshipa, Sakdoc Film**  
camera **Anna Dziapshipa**  
music **Nikoloz Paniashvili**  
language **Georgian, Russian**  
genre **documentary**  
release date **30.09.2022**  
what's missing **additional financing for the postproduction, marketing, distributors, production financing gap**



**Anna Dziapshipa** Director  
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E anna@sakdoc.ge

## The Burdened / Al Murhaqoon



90 min, Yemen, Sudan

This is the film's final distribution title.

### Adenium Productions

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Aden  
Yemen  
E film@adeniumproduction.com  
W www.adeniumproduction.com

### Station Films

Khartoum  
Sudan  
E Amjad.film@gmail.com

### Film synopsis

The story of Ahmed, Isra'a and their three children in Aden, Yemen, 2019. Both parents lose their jobs and suffer from the economic crisis. The movie starts with Isra'a finding out about her pregnancy at a time when they cannot cover the expenses of a new child, leading them to make difficult decisions in order to survive.

### Director's biography

Amr Gamal (b.1983, Poland) is a Yemeni film and theatre director. In 2001, he received the President's Award in theatre-script writing, becoming the youngest Yemeni ever to win this award. In spring 2018, he wrote/directed/produced his first feature film *10 Days Before the Wedding*, which premiered in Aden during the summer, becoming the first film to open commercially in Yemen in the last three decades. The film continued to be screened for over eight months and became Yemen's official submission to the Oscars in 2018. The film won the Jury Prize at Aswan International Women's Film Festival, Best Makeup and Hairstyle, Best Costume Design at Jaipur International Film Festival, Audience Choice Award at San Diego Arab Film Festival, and Best Screenplay at Casablanca Arab Film Festival.

### Producer's biography

Mohsen Alkhalifi (b. 1993, Aden) is a Yemeni-American producer and TV presenter. After becoming one of the first Yemeni influencers on YouTube in 2012, he began his professional career as a TV presenter with a well-known Yemeni TV channel in 2016. Since then, he has presented and produced hundreds of episodes that have gained him recognition in the media scene. In 2018, he collaborated with his friend Amr Gamal to create the first Yemeni commercial movie to be shown in theatres, *10 Days Before the Wedding* (Yemen's official submission to the 91st Oscars 2018). The film was met with incredible public acclaim, consequently opening the door to the movie-making industry in Yemen.

### Author's statement

The idea of the movie *The Burdened* was sparked by a WhatsApp message. I was in Abu Dhabi airport on my way to New Orleans, Louisiana to attend a special screening of my first feature, *10 Days Before the Wedding*. Minutes before I boarded the plane, I received a message on WhatsApp from my close friend, Nasser, in which he apologized for not responding to my messages during the past weeks. He then sent me a voice message – with a heavy heart and broken voice, he told me that his wife was now pregnant with their fourth child. This news was devastating to them, as they could barely feed and raise their already existing three children, especially because their situation had gone downhill after being laid-off from their jobs at Aden Channel.

director **Amr Gamal**  
scriptwriter **Amr Gamal, Mazen Refaat**  
producer **Mohsen Alkhalifi, Amr Gamal, Amjad Abu Alala, Mohammed Alomda**  
camera **Mrinal Desai**  
cast **Khaled Hamdan, Abeer Mohammed**  
language **Arabic**  
genre **drama**  
release date **01.08.2022**  
what's missing **international sales, additional financing, color grading**



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**Amr Gamal** Director  
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# The Ice That Still Supports Us



63 min, Estonia, Lithuania

This is the film's final distribution title.

## ACUBA FILM

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## Ketvirta versija

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W <http://www.unnecessaryfilms.eu>

## Film synopsis

This film reflects people's desire to be happy in a rapidly changing world, even when that world is shattering like the spring ice. *The Ice That Still Supports Us* is about the ice road that erases borders between people. The ice road is a path between social reconciliation and intolerance. According to an old tradition, the ice road is built every year for cars and pedestrians. But the ice road is like a ghost road – no one knows when and where it will appear.

## Director's biography

Arko Okk is an Estonian filmmaker, born in 1967 in Tallinn, Estonia. He graduated from the VGIK, Moscow Film Institute, Department of Cinematography, master A. Knyazhinskiy (*Stalker*, 1979); *The Ice That Still Supports Us* (2022), 63 min, documentary, director and producer; *Allan, A Man at the Age of Christ* (2014), 52 min, documentary, director and producer; *Hope 3D* (2011), 19 min, 3D short feature debut, director and producer; Best Director at Bishkek Short Film Festival 2011; *Man Who Lived in Three-Dimensional Time* (2011), 65 min, 3D documentary, director and producer; *The End of Poetry* (2009) 114 min, documentary, director and producer; *The Highway Crossing* (1999), 68 min, feature debut as a director and producer; FIPRESCI prize at the 10th Stockholm IFF, Sweden; Best Opera Prima Prize at the 18th Uruguay IFF.

## Producer's biography

Arko Okk is an Estonian producer. Awarded films: *The Highway Crossing* (1999), 68 min, producer. FIPRESCI prize for the best film in the section "Northern Light" at the 10th Stockholm IFF, Sweden, 1999. Best Opera Prima prize at the 18th Uruguay IFF, 2000; *The Bus* (2004) by Laila Pakalniņa (Co-Production: Est-Lat-Lit-Fin), producer. Best Baltic Film & Best Baltic Documentary Award at Riga IFF, 2004.

## Author's statement

I'm interested in people and atmosphere. I started this film from scratch, knowing as much about the ice road or the frozen ocean as did Pytheas, a Greek geographer 2300 years ago when he visited Ultima Thule. Therefore, this film is an observation through the eyes of Pytheas 2300 years later.

director **Arko Okk**  
scriptwriter **Arko Okk**  
producer **Arko Okk, Sandra Heidov, Teresa Rozanovska**  
camera **Arko Okk**  
music **Miina Härma (1864–1941)**  
cast **Jaanus Melb**  
language **Estonian**  
website **[www.facebook.com/iceroadfilm/](http://www.facebook.com/iceroadfilm/)**  
genre **documentary**  
release date **14.12.2022**  
what's missing **sound and color**  
**postproduction, marketing, distributors, additional financing (20,000 Euro budget gap)**



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**Sandra Heidov** Producer, Editor-in-chief  
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## The Visitors / Návštěvníci



83 min, Czech Republic, Norway, Slovak Republic

This is the film's final distribution title.

### Cinémotif Films

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### The Thousand Images

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### Peter Kerekes Film

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### Film synopsis

A young anthropologist, Zdenka, moves with her husband and three sons to Svalbard, Norway, to study how life is changing in polar regions. She has received a prestigious two-year grant to carry out extensive research on the impact of globalisation on the inhabitants of the world's northernmost town, Longyearbyen. After falling in love with her new home, Zdenka discovers that icebergs and permafrost aren't the only things vanishing in the Arctic. By conducting interviews with residents, she begins to perceive how heterogeneous the small local community actually is while revealing tensions that lie beneath the surface. Zdenka then has to weigh up her involvement in the local community, which she originally only intended to observe.

### Director's biography

Veronika earned her degree in cultural studies at Charles University and screenwriting and dramaturgy at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. She has been working as a film director, documentary script editor and curator. Her feature-length debut *Daniel's World* premiered at Berlinale in 2015. For several years, Veronika was the head of the Ex Oriente Film workshop at the Institute of Documentary Film and worked as a curator and acquisition manager at DAFilms. Currently, she is cooperating with various film training programs and markets as a consultant and selector; she is preparing her fiction debut and is about to complete her second feature documentary *The Visitors*.

### Producer's biography

Kristýna graduated from the department of production at FAMU. In 2015, she produced her graduate film *Road-Movie*, which had its world premiere at Black Nights Film Festival. In 2016, she founded her own production company Cinémotif Films, focusing on arthouse co-productions. She produced a documentary *The Sound is Innocent*, which premiered at Visions du Réel 2019. The feature fiction *Lost in Paradise* was the first ever co-production between the Czech Republic and Switzerland and premiered in 2021 at Solothurn FF. She is finishing a documentary from Svalbard *The Visitors* and a feature debut *Arved*, both of which are now in post-production. Among others, she is currently developing the feature debut *Year of the Widow*. She is a EURODOC 2017 graduate and has attended industry platforms such as Ex Oriente, East Doc Platform, MFI and others.

### Author's statement

When I decided to follow Zdenka during her fieldwork in Longyearbyen on Svalbard, I expected our main filming location to be of incredible beauty and fragility. However, I didn't anticipate that this place would also be a microcosm that is so intensely embracing some of the most universal issues and pursuits of today. My more than two-year-long documentary journey with Zdenka and her family then resulted in a very personal, cinematic diary covering the themes that emerge in this unique location, with a focus on issues relating to the social integrity and sustainability of the local community, the danger of exclusionary practices, and especially the universal need for a stable and predictable home.

director **Veronika Lišková**  
scriptwriter **Veronika Lišková**  
producer **Kristýna Michálek Květová**  
camera **Vojtěch Vančura**  
music **Jana Winderen, Jonatán Pastirčák**  
cast **Zdenka Sokoličková, Jakub Žárský, Josef Žárský, Vratislav Žárský, Adam Žárský**  
language **Czech, English, Norwegian**  
website **[www.facebook.com/thevisitorsfilm](https://www.facebook.com/thevisitorsfilm)**  
genre **documentary**  
release date **11.11. 2022**  
what's missing **distributor, sales agent, festival premiere, world premiere**



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**Kristýna Michálek Květová** Producer  
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# Windless / Bezvetrie



90 min, Bulgaria, Italy

## Red Carpet

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W <http://redcarfilms.com>

## Film synopsis

Kaloyan returns to Bulgaria for a few days to sell the empty family apartment after living in Spain with his mother for the last 10 years. There is a big investment project going on related to the construction of a casino, hotel and golf course in the desolated town of Kaloyan's childhood. Many of the old buildings must be demolished, while the cemetery gets moved to a different location to free up space for the golf course. Although Kaloyan and his deceased father never managed to get along and lost touch a long time ago, the young boy must arrange the transfer of his father's remains. The process starts as a mundane task, but soon transcends into a journey of self-discovery that tracks the connection between childhood trauma, memory and the passage of time.

## Director's biography

Pavel G. Vesnakov is a writer-director. His filmography includes the short movies *Trains* (2011), *The Paraffin Princess* (2012) and *Pride* (2013). They have been shown at a number of international film festivals such as Clermont Ferrand and Locarno. He has received many prestigious awards, including the Grand Prix for Best Film at the Clermont Ferrand Festival and Nomination for EFA. With his short film project *Zeus*, Pavel won the Robert Bosch Foundation's Grand Prize. Pavel has also participated in Berlinale Talents and Sarajevo Talents. Pavel's first feature film *German Lessons* premiered at the Cairo International Film Festival and won the award for Best Male Performance.

## Producer's biography

Veselka Kiryakova graduated from the National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts in Sofia, Bulgaria, where she studied Film Editing. She produced *Ága* (2018), the second movie by director Milko Lazarov, produced by Veselka Kiryakova, which premiered at the competition during Berlinale 2018 and won more than 40 awards around the world, such as the Grand Prix in Tehran, Cabourg, Chukotka, Heart of Sarajevo, etc. She is working with Greek directors Elina Psykou and Yorgos Zois as minority co-producer. Veselka was part of the Producers on the Move at Cannes in 2018. She participated in the EAVE workshop 2020. She is a member of EFA.

## Author's statement

As Louise Gluck writes: "We look at the world once, in childhood. The rest is memory."

This is exactly the situation my main character Kaloyan tries to come to terms with when he comes home to sell the apartment of his recently deceased father. The question of how time passes and what the word time means has bothered me since my childhood. How do we remember things? Do we remember the objects or the emotions? Do we remember the voices of our deceased relatives, or do we only recall their faces? These are all questions that I try to mediate on through the journey of my main character. With this movie, I am trying to explore the stillness of memory and the muteness of hidden childhood trauma.

director **Pavel G. Vesnakov**  
scriptwriter **Pavel G. Vesnakov, Simeon Ventsislavov, Teodora Markova, Georgi Ivanov, Nevena Kertova**  
producer **Veselka Kiryakova, Alessandro Amato, Luigi Chimienti**  
camera **Orlin Ruevski**  
cast **Ognyan Pavlov, Veselin Petrov, Mihail Mutafov**  
language **Bulgarian**  
genre **drama**  
release date **20.02.2024**  
what's missing **additional financing or partners for the post-production stage, sales agent, distribution**



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**Veselka Kiryakova** Producer  
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## **KVIFF Eastern Promises First Cut+**

Feature films in post-production stage,  
predominantly from countries with a low  
production capacity, which participated  
in the First Cut Lab program



## First Cut+ Jury



### Boris Pugnet

Boris Pugnet started to work as a movie-theatre manager, then as a booking manager for an independent company on the French market. After gaining rich experience as head of marketing for Le pacte releasing independent movies, he launched his company Tiramisu. He now works as an editor for trailers and as a marketing consul-

tant for producers and distributors, from development to release. He sometimes carries out long-term missions for distributors such as Fox, Pathé, Warner, etc. He also is a tutor for workshops such as Eave, First Cut+, Trieste and Karlovy Vary, Ceea animation, and in cinema schools such as Femis, INA, etc.

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### Ji Lacerna

Ji Lacerna is the Full Circle Lab Philippines' Lab Manager. Her passion for cinema led her to work for the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP), a national film agency responsible for film policies and programs to ensure the economic, cultural, and educational development of the Philippine film industry, where she has been serving for half a decade.

She is responsible for managing and overseeing the Project Development Unit, which is responsible for local and international film labs and partnership programs of the FDCP that support Filipino

filmmakers with film projects from ideas and concepts to developing and improving their scripts, treatment, and pitch with international and local industry players. These programs include film labs and other training programs, conferences, and market events, namely FDCP's International Film Industry Conference, Full Circle Lab Philippines, Sine Kabataan Short Film Lab and Festival, Southern Voices Film Lab, FDCP Spotlight Producers Program, and Animation Du Monde Manila to name a few.

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### Esra Demirkiran

Esra Demirkiran is Festivals Co-ordinator at TRT Cinema (TRT is Turkey's public broadcaster). She is a co-ordinator of 12 Punto, Turkey's largest script development and co-production platform for Turkish and international feature films. For almost a decade, she worked as a news editor and executive-produced several flagship programmes and documentaries for Turkey's Haberturk news network. Prior to her journalism experience, Esra was the Board

President and Co-Director of NISI MASA, a Paris based European cinema network. In the past, besides working as a film critic and festival-distribution consultant for award winning Turkish feature films, she has contributed to the planning and organization of various Turkey-based film festivals. She studied Sociology at the Middle East Technical University, and holds an MA degree in Film & TV from Istanbul Bilgi University.

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# Goldfish



145 min, United Kingdom, USA, India

This is the film's final distribution title.

## SPLENDID MOTION FILMS LIMITED

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## Film synopsis

Anamika Fields is the daughter of an Englishman and an Indian woman. Her mother, Sadhana Tripathi, left behind a promising career to marry Anamika's father and move to the UK. Her father died when she was ten. This left Sadhana, who never wanted to be a parent, and who never even wanted to live in the UK, to bring up their only daughter alone. Twenty-five years later, Sadhana is suffering from the onset of dementia. Ana thinks that she will be able to resolve the situation in a few short days. Mother and daughter, strangers for over a decade, find themselves thrown together once again, after all of this time. This has always been a difficult, damaging relationship for them. Some of this was a by-product of their circumstance, and some of it was deliberate. Anamika begins to discover a woman she had never known before.

## Director's biography

Pushan Kripalani is a cinematographer and director. His first film, *The Threshold* (2015), was highly acclaimed in its brief festival run, garnering praise at MAMI and the NFDC Film Bazaar, as well as winning Best Actor and Best Actress at the New York Indian Film Festival. It screened on Channel 4 in the UK, and is currently streaming on Disney+. As cinematographer, he has filmed several features, as well as ads, documentaries, and shorts, working with Shyam Benegal, Ram Madhvani, and Zafar Hai, amongst others, as well as for National Geographic, Discovery, and the BBC. He is a founder member of the industrial theatre company, and has worked on over thirty productions for the stage and for radio, in capacities ranging from director to actor, designer, musician, and producer. *Goldfish* is his second feature.

## Producer's biography

Amit Saxena is an Atlanta (Georgia), US-based technology entrepreneur who started Splendid Films in 2020. Films are his passion, and he has many interesting projects in the pipeline. His upcoming film, *Marichjhapi* (as a co-producer), was selected at L'ATELIER, at Cannes Film Festival 2020.

## Author's statement

*Goldfish* began as a film about dementia, identity, and the Diaspora. As the script began to evolve, it became about the collision of two unreliable memories, and then the cast got involved. After that, the film became about community and the definition of family. Then, to our delight, we were able to watch the whole, the sum of the parts, come together on the editing table. It moves from an obvious, pragmatic solution, to the need to take a difficult decision, drenched in uncertainty, but with love and duty at the core. When we are ephemeral, do we still exist in other people? Are we the sum of our memories alone? Are we alone? When we are from different places and times, can we truly matter to one another? Can we know ourselves if we do not know where we are from? Who are we?

director **Pushan Kripalani**  
 scriptwriter **Pushan Kripalani, Arhgya Lahiri**  
 producer **Amit Saxena**  
 camera **Pushan Kripalani**  
 music **Tapas Relia**  
 cast **Kalki Koechlin, Deepti Naval, Rajit Kapoor, Gordon Warnecke**  
 language **English**  
 website **[www.splendid-films.com/goldfish](http://www.splendid-films.com/goldfish)**  
 genre **drama**  
 release date **01.01.2023**



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**Pushan Kripalani** Director, Scriptwriter

## Charcoal (When My Life) / Carvão (Quando Minha Vida)



104 min, Brazil, Argentina

This is the film's final distribution title.  
This film is director's feature debut.

### **Biônica Filmes**

São Paulo

Brazil

E [karen@bionicafilmes.com.br](mailto:karen@bionicafilmes.com.br)

W <http://bionicafilmes.com.br>

### **Cinematográfica Superfilmes**

São Paulo

Brazil

W [www.superfilmes.com.br](http://www.superfilmes.com.br)

### **Film synopsis**

In Brazil, where violence and cruelty have free rein, a rural family accepts the proposal of an international organization led by an Argentine woman to "host" a foreign guest. However, none of the family members see their expectations fulfilled, and those of their guest's are even less. *When My Life* is a deadpan portrait of how the naturalization of the absurd is the new normal.

### **Director's biography**

Carolina Markowicz is a screenwriter and director based in São Paulo - Brazil. She has written and directed 6 short films selected for 400 festivals such as Cannes, Locarno, Toronto, SXSW, AFI and awarded more than 60 times. Carolina's short *The Orphan* premiered at the Directors' Fortnight and was the winner of the Queer Palm in Cannes, 2018. At Indiewire she was showcased among *Some of the World's Most Exciting New Filmmakers*. In 2021, Carolina was invited to be a member of the Academy.

### **Producer's biography**

Superfilmes is an independent production company from São Paulo, Brazil. Among the feature films produced (half of them Operas Primas), we highlight *La Casa de Alicia* by Chico Teixeira (Berlinale/Panorama). We have been working on *When My Life* since 2017, building valuable co-productions (Biônica Filmes and Ajimolido Films). Carolina is an original voice for all screens. The film's moral elasticity is a metaphorical extension of human relationships, a topic of great interest for us.

### **Author's statement**

Carolina Markowicz: "I feel we are becoming immune to violence and absurdity here in Brazil. I grew up in the countryside. There, I experienced everything a conservative city could offer. This bucolic, but at the same time, eventful environment made me an observer of human nature at its best and at its worst. As well as an admirer of an acid sense of humour, able to portray all the biggest human idiosyncrasies in a quite weird manner. *Charcoal* is my attempt to understand how violence and hypocrisy have taken over our lives in a way that we no longer even notice.."

director **Carolina Markowicz**  
scriptwriter **Carolina Markowicz**  
producer **Zita Carvalhosa**  
camera **Pepe Mendes**  
music **Alejandro Kauderer**  
cast **Maeve Jinkings, Cesar Bordón, Jean Costa, Camila Mardila, Romulo Braga, Pedro Wagner**  
language **Portuguese, Spanish**  
website **[www.superfilmes.com.br](http://www.superfilmes.com.br)**  
genre **drama, comedy**  
release date **01.06.2023**  
what's missing **sound and image**  
postproduction, sales agent



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**Carolina Markowicz** Director  
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# I Love You More



93min, Kosovo, Albania

This is the film's final distribution title.  
This film is director's feature debut.

## Tilia Entertainment

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Kosovo  
T +383 488 00 922  
E [tiliaentertainment@gmail.com](mailto:tiliaentertainment@gmail.com)  
W <https://www.tiliaentertainment.com>

## Action Production

Tirana  
Albania  
T +35 569 203 95 44  
E [gertaqurku@yahoo.com](mailto:gertaqurku@yahoo.com)

## Film synopsis

After a year of online pillow-talk, Ben, a shy Kosovar teen, is beyond-excited to finally meet his first (but secret) love, Leo. Consumed with passion, Ben carefully weaves the plans and cover-story for his romantic tryst with Leo who is arriving from Germany in just one month. Everything must be perfect. Great news, Ben's mother surprises the family with a life changing opportunity, but he just can't take it yet. He must meet Leo.

## Director's biography

Born in Peja Kosovo in 1992, Erblin started acting at ten years old. In 2010, their family won the Green Card Lottery to move to the United States. Erblin earned their B.A. from George Mason University where they studied film with a concentration in directing, and a minor in photography. Their thesis film, BINI, won multiple jury prize and audience awards, a Regional Student Emmy Award, and was nominated for a Student Academy Award. Erblin recently completed their debut feature film titled *I Love You More* which has been supported by the Kosovo Cinematography Center and Albanian National Cinematography Center. Now back in Kosovo, Erblin is producing feature and short films through their company Tilia Entertainment LLC.

## Producer's biography

Born in Peja, Kosovo in 1986, Fjolla has been acting since her freshman year of high school. She attended the only arts high school in Kosovo where she majored in acting. She continued to the nation's capital, Prishtina to earn her undergrad and master's degree in acting from the University of Prishtina. After moving to the United States, Fjolla starred in a few award-winning short films. In recent years, she has started writing and producing films through Tilia Entertainment LLC.

## Author's statement

Being a non-binary queer person from Kosovo, which is a very isolated and predominantly Islamic country, isn't easy. I saw my first queer film when I was in high school. For the first time I saw myself portrayed on screen and finally understood the way I was secretly feeling all those years. Films helped me escape and feel less lonely behind the closed doors of my room. With *I Love You More*, I want the Kosovar/Albanian youth, who have very limited national queer films, to see themselves portrayed on the screen by a community member that speaks their language. I'm telling this personal story for those who are still behind their closed doors and going through adolescence, hoping when they see this film they will feel less alone just like I did years ago.

director **Erblin Nushi**  
scriptwriter **Erblin Nushi**  
producer **Fjolla Nushi, Erblin Nushi**  
camera **Wenting Deng Fisher**  
music **Rona Castrioti**  
cast **Don Shala, Irena Aliu, Leonik Sahiti, Luan Jaha**  
language **Albanian, English**  
genre **drama**  
release date **10.10.2022**  
what's missing **world premiere, distributor, sales agent**



**Erblin Nushi** Producer, Director, Scriptwriter  
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# The Maiden



117 min, Canada, USA

This film has sales company attached.  
This film is director's feature debut.

## FF FILMS INC.

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M6K2J1 Toronto  
Canada  
T +1 647 884 4576  
E gfoy14@gmail.com

## MDFF

Toronto  
Canada  
E dan@mdff.ca  
W <https://mdff.ca/>

## Film synopsis

A perfect summer day ends in a tragic death. Colton, a suburban teenager, mourns the loss of his best friend Kyle. Grief awakens decay and darkness in a world that swirls amidst glimpses of natural wonder and beauty. The discovery of a missing girl's diary transports us to a mirror world. A magical ravine. A supernatural encounter. Is this Colton's psyche? A dream? The afterlife. Are we ever really alone...

## Director's biography

Graham Foy is a filmmaker based in Toronto, Canada. His short film, *August 22, This Year*, was presented at Cannes Semaine de la Critique and the New York Film Festival. *The Maiden* is Graham's debut feature film, it was developed at Cannes' Next Step where it was awarded the Moulin d'Andé Residency.

## Producer's biography

Daiva Zalnieriunas is a filmmaker based in Toronto, Canada. She produced the short film, *August 22, This Year*, which was presented at Cannes Semaine de la Critique and the New York Film Festival. *The Maiden* is Daiva's first feature film as a producer.

## Author's statement

I grew up in the community in Calgary where *The Maiden* was filmed and spent much of my teenage years hanging out in the ravine, the film's central location. *The Maiden* is not completely autobiographical, however, there are many personal connections to events, characters and places contained in the film. For me, *The Maiden* is a poetic vision of teenage friendship, loss and grief broken into two parts which share a cosmic connection, revealing layers of meaning and purpose even amidst moments of deep despair.

director **Graham Foy**  
scriptwriter **Graham Foy**  
producer **Daiva Zalnieriunas,**  
**Dan Montgomery**  
camera **Kelly Jeffrey**  
cast **Jackson Sluiter, Marcel T Jiménez,**  
**Hayley Ness**  
language **English**  
genre **drama**  
release date **08.09.2022**  
what's missing **world premiere, distributors**



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**Daiva Zalnieriunas** Producer  
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## Night Detour / Desvío de noche



93 min, Canada

This is the film's final distribution title.  
This film is director's feature debut.

### 9401-1863 Qc Inc.

6611 St-Denis  
H2S 2S1 Montreal  
Canada  
T 1-514-799-1281  
E jeannedupuis@gmail.com

### Film synopsis

In the midst of a snowstorm, a journalist dives back into the memories of her most recent investigation. Following the sudden departure of star figure skater Violeta Martinez, the journalist travels to Violeta's hometown, a tropical village on the West coast of Mexico. There, she encounters an intricate labyrinth of clues and wrong paths, surreal tales and enigmatic characters. Two in particular draw her attention. But even as the story deviates from her initial quest, she shall only glimpse this world from a distance.

### Director's biography

Ariane Falardeau St-Amour is a Montreal director, cinematographer, and producer. In 2018, she produced and shot her first feature film, *Mad Dog Labine*, winning the Focus prize at the Festival du Nouveau Cinéma, and the Gilles-Carle prize at the Rendez-vous du Cinéma Québécois. In 2020, she co-directed and shot her first feature film, *Desvío de noche*. Paul Chotel graduated from the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema in 2015, with the prestigious Susan Schouten Documentary Film Award. He recently co-wrote and co-produced *Foam* (2020), which premiered at the 70th Berlinale Shorts, and was named as one of Canada's top ten at TIFF. *Desvío de noche* is his first feature film as a writer-director.

### Producer's biography

Omar Elhamy, Simon Allard and Jeanne Dupuis met in Montreal through the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema. Omar Elhamy also works as a director and editor (*Foam*, 70th Berlinale shorts, Canada's Top Ten at TIFF, Grand Prix du Festival du Nouveau Cinéma, 2020). Simon Allard co-founded Outpost Mtl, a post-production company that has worked on Academy Awards nominated films (*Fauve*, 2019 and *Brotherhood*, 2020). Jeanne Dupuis, after working as a focus puller in Montreal for several years, is currently developing animation projects. *Desvío de noche* is their first feature film as producers.

### Author's statement

*Desvío de noche* is a sensory journey through a place one can never fully grasp. The film ponders the inaccessible through its characters, inspired by the stories of those met on the coast of Oaxaca, Mexico, while developing this fantastical drama. *Desvío de noche* reflects on memory and grief, muses about being lost and choosing to accept the beauty that comes from it.

director **Ariane Falardeau St-Amour, Paul Chotel**

scriptwriter **Ariane Falardeau St-Amour, Paul Chotel**

producer **Omar Elhamy, Simon Allard and Jeanne Dupuis**

camera **Ariane Falardeau St-Amour**

music **Gabriel Chwojnik**

cast **Abdallah Touaïmia, Ricardo Flores Aguirre, Martine Francke, Marie Brassard (voice)**

language **French, Spanish**

genre **Fantastic drama**

release date **10.06.2022**

what's missing **finalizing sound and color grading, visual effects**



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**Paul Chotel** Director  
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**Jeanne Dupuis** Producer  
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## Norwegian dream



85 min, Norway, Poland, Germany

This film is director's feature debut.

### Spaett film

Ferjemannsveien 4

7042 Trondheim

Norway

E igor@aurorafilm.no

W www.spaett.no

### Film synopsis

Robert (19), a Polish immigrant working at a fish factory in Norway, has come to earn money to pay off his mother's debts. Coming from an LGBTQI+ free zone in Poland, he struggles with his feelings for his Norwegian colleague Ivar (19), especially when it turns out Ivar is a drag queen. When a strike begins among the Polish workers at the factory, Robert is bribed into breaking it. Will he take the much-needed money, or stand up for love and his rights?

### Director's biography

Leiv Igor Devold (b. 1977) is a film-directing graduate of the Polish National Film School in Łódź. He has directed, written and produced over 12 documentaries and short films, which have been screened at festivals and on television internationally. Devold debuted in Norwegian cinemas in 2015 with the documentary *The Accidental Rock Star*. It won the Norwegian Amanda Award for best editing, and at Kosmorama filmfestival it also won an award for best Norwegian film 2015 and best sound. Devold has directed, produced and written films that have been screened at Annecy, Warsaw International Film Festival, BIFF, Dubai, Beirut, IDFA and more than 40 other festivals.

### Producer's biography

Håvard Wettland Gossé (b. 1986) is a Norwegian producer and a graduate of the University of Trondheim. Since 2010 he has produced several short and documentary films. He has been nominated for the Norwegian Amanda Award for best short film, and in 2016 he was selected for the talent program "New Roads" at the Norwegian Film Institute. His short film *Train Robbers* was screened at Clermont Ferrand Film Festival as one of 80 selected films from over 9,100 submissions.

### Author's statement

Poles are by far the largest minority in Norway. Many of the Polish immigrants are labour immigrants and come to Norway to create a new future for themselves. We find it important that Poles and Norwegians are treated as equals, and our aim is to create a greater awareness about labour rights. In 2019 approximately 1/3 of Poland's territory was declared "LGBTIQ-free". Poland was declared the most homo- and transphobic country in the EU in 2020, ranking 43rd from the 49 countries in Europe, just ahead of Russia. In 2021 many of the declared "LGBTIQ-free" zones have been canceled due to the threat of sanctions from the EU, but this doesn't mean that homophobia in those regions has disappeared. We want to put a focus on how different identity markers work together in a society that pressures individuals.

director **Leiv Igor Devold**  
 scriptwriter **Justyna Bilik**  
 producer **Håvard Wettland Gossé**  
 camera **Patryk Kin**  
 music **Florian Tessloff**  
 cast **Hubert Milkowski, Karl Bekele Steinland, Øyvind Brantzæg, Edyta Torhan, Jakub Sierenberg, Izabella Dudziak**  
 language **English, Polish, Norwegian**  
 genre **drama**  
 release date **15.01.2023**  
 what's missing **sales agent, distribution**



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**Lennart Lenzing** Producer  
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## The Territory / Bölge



75 min, Turkey

This is the film's final distribution title.  
This film is director's feature debut.

### Film synopsis

Through the character Ali, this movie depicts the life of a group of young people in a suburb of Istanbul who are stuck between drugs, gangs, religion and family while living in highly inadequate socio-economic conditions.

### Director's biography

I was born in Istanbul, Esenyurt. I completed my undergraduate education at Akdeniz University's Radio, TV and Cinema department. After university, I returned to Istanbul and took part in various cinema and advertising projects.

### Producer's biography

I was born in 1991 in Istanbul. I studied at the Department of Radio, Television and Cinema at Ege University. I work as a producer in the production of content such as commercials, documentaries in agencies and production companies.

### Author's statement

I wanted to tell the story of young people left alone in a degenerating society. I think these young people living in a local area of Istanbul have a story with a universal counterpart. We wondered what effect the atmosphere we wanted to create would have on the audience.

director **Mesut Keklik**  
scriptwriter **Mesut Keklik**  
producer **Burak Yavuz**  
camera **Mesut Keklik**  
music **Serhat Sarialioğlu**  
cast **Baran Yağmur, Ahmet Yağmur, Mustafa Çelik**  
language **Turkish**  
genre **drama, crime**  
release date **02.09.2022**  
what's missing **online editing, distributor, sales agent**



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# Under the Naked Sky / Onder de blote hemel



90 min, Netherlands, Belgium

This is the film's final distribution title.  
This film is director's feature debut.

## Revolver Amsterdam

Schollenbrugstraat 7H

1091 EX Amsterdam

Netherlands

E [welcome@revolver.amsterdam](mailto:welcome@revolver.amsterdam)

W <http://revolver.nl>

## Film synopsis

Elvie (10) grows up in a trailer home, where she lives with her intellectually disabled mother Emma (41) on a campsite that is owned by her grandfather Bucko (78) in the middle of a forest. When Elvie starts to mentally outgrow her mother as her grandpa simultaneously loses his grip on the situation, their isolated world in the forest slowly starts to fall apart.

## Director's biography

Lilian Sijbesma (1983) is an Amsterdam based filmmaker. She graduated in 2011 in directing and screenwriting from Utrecht School of the Arts. Her graduation film *Marijn* won various awards and was shown at film festivals in the Netherlands and internationally. Since then, she has written and directed several short films, children's series and music videos. *Under The Naked Sky* is her debut feature film. The script was unanimously chosen as a winner by the jury of the Visser-Neerlandia Award for best screenplay of the Netherlands and Flanders in 2018.

## Producer's biography

Germen Boelens is producer of *Brothers* (Gifoni Award Italy 2018) and *Fortune Seekers*, both by Golden Bear winner Hanro Smitsman, Emmy nominated *Dede: Mehmet with the Yellow Boots* by Tamara Miranda and *Vrije Vogel* (Free as a Bird) by Joyce van Diepen.

Kirsi Saivosalmi is a producer primarily focusing on creative project development and international co-productions.

Her first released co-production, *Eami* by Paz Encina, won the Tiger Award at the IFFR 2022. Current co-productions include *Utopia* by Juri Rechinsky and *Memory* by Vladlena Sandu. Kirsi is also the producer of three short films, the latest being *Five Tiger* by Nomawonga Khumalo (Competition for Best Short at Sundance FF 2021).

## Author's statement

What would it be like to grow up as a kid without someone explaining to you how the world works? Without a parent you know you can rely on to explain the rules of society? How would it shape you as a person? The influence of upbringing and circumstances in childhood is a theme that fascinates me enormously. Especially the subject of this film - children growing up with a parent with an intellectual disability.

Elvie has to grow up in a way I wouldn't wish on anyone. Tragically, there is no one to blame for her situation. Her mother does whatever she can; it's all she has to offer. I want to let people feel the love and affection between her and her mother as well as the inevitable neglect and pain. And to show what all of this does to Elvie and to her mother as well.

director **Lilian Sijbesma**  
scriptwriter **Lilian Sijbesma**  
producer **Germen Boelens, Kirsi Saivosalmi**  
camera **Christian Paulussen**  
music **Arjan de Wit**  
cast **Ylse Ringeling, Rifka Lodeizen, Johan Leysen**  
language **Dutch**  
website  
[revolver.nl/film-tv/2227/under-the-naked-sky](http://revolver.nl/film-tv/2227/under-the-naked-sky)  
genre **drama**  
release date **01.02.2023**  
what's missing **distributor, sales agent, additional financing**



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**Germen Boelens** Producer  
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# **KVIFF Eastern Promises Odesa International Film Festival Works in Progress Selection**

The OIFF WIP Selection presentation of feature films in the final stage of shooting or in post-production made in Ukraine or in co-production with Ukraine





## Company Of Steel / Zalizna Sotnya



110 min, Ukraine, Latvia

Film is in postproduction.

### #Babylon'13

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E Ukraine.babylon13@gmail.com

### VFS Films

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W vfs.lv

### Film synopsis

After enduring the horrors of the war in eastern Ukraine since 2014, three young veterans return home. As they struggle to find their place in daily life as civilians, the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 throws them right back into the trauma that they tried so hard to escape.

### Director's biography

Yuliia Hontaruk studied film directing at Kyiv National I. K. Karpenko-Kary Theatre, Cinema, and Television University. Since 2013, she has been a member of National Union of Cinematographers in Ukraine. Yuliia became one of the founders of the creative association #Babylon'13. She directed over 35 short documentaries and several full-length films for Babylon'13. Her latest short was *Fortress Mariupol. Last day at Azovstal* co-directed with a soldier, Orest from Azov. Yuliia's films have been presented at IDFA, Ji.hlava IDFF, and Trieste IDFF.

### Producer's biography

Ivanna Khitsinska is a Ukrainian producer and festival manager. She is a member of the Ukrainian Film Academy. Producer in #Babylon'13. Co-founder of Quatros Group. Alexandra Bratyshchenko is a Ukrainian producer. Since 2015, she has been a producer within #Babylon'13. In 2019, she took part in EAVE on Demand. In 2020, she founded the Eleron Pictures production company. Alexandra is a member of the Ukrainian Film Academy. Uldis Cekulis has worked on almost 50 creative documentaries as a producer, and sometimes as a cameraman. Most of his produced or co-produced films have received prestigious awards, such as the Shanghai IFF Golden Goblet and the Karlovy Vary IFF Crystal Globe.

### Author's statement

It's about the experience that heroes gain in the war, about the initiation they go through, while accepting death. To survive the war and not be afraid to perform tasks, you need to accept the fact that you are already dead. There may be no tomorrow. The acceptance of death has a huge influence on a man. One of our heroes calls it roasting, after which you return to a peaceful life, and feel like a superhuman. It was the most important discovery for me in the 1.5 years that I was following the heroes in the war, and then another three years in their civil life. I also found a message for myself, that life is stronger than death.

director **Yuliia Hontaruk**  
 scriptwriter **Yuliia Hontaruk**  
 producer **Yuliia Hontaruk, Ivanna Khitsinska, Alexandra Bratyshchenko, Uldis Cekulis, Igor Savychenko**  
 camera **Yuriy Hruzinov, Denis Strashniy, Yuliia Hontaruk**  
 language **Ukrainian**  
 genre **documentary, drama**  
 release date **19.01.2023**  
 what's missing **gap production financing, world sales, world premiere, festivals**



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 Director  
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 Producer  
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**Uldis Cekulis** Producer  
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## Demons / Demony



105 min, Ukraine

### Kristi Films

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### Arthouse Traffic LLC.

Shchekavitskaya street, building  
30/39, office 282  
04071 Kiev  
Ukraine  
E producer@arthousetraffic.com  
W www.arthousetraffic.com

### Film synopsis

Slavik, a homeless man from Russia, finds himself in Gogol's places near Sorochyntsi. In order to survive the winter, he becomes friends with Ninka, an older woman. However, he underestimates the scale of her personality and the peculiarities of the region that overwhelm the uninvited guest.

### Director's biography

Natalka Vorozhbyt is a Ukrainian film director, playwright, and scriptwriter. Her debut movie *Bad Roads* (2020) won the Film Club Award at Film Critics Week of Venice IFF as the best innovative film, and was chosen as a Ukrainian candidate for the American Academy Awards 2022. She is the author of more than 15 plays that have been staged around the world, including the Royal Court Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in the United Kingdom.

### Producer's biography

Dmytro Minzianov is a co-founder of Kristi Films. A producer, with more than 15 years of experience in TV series, movies, and advertising. He is a member of the Ukrainian Film Academy. He produced *Bad Roads* by Natalka Vorozhbyt; *Graduation '97* by Pavlo Ostrikov (nominee as the best European short film, EFA Award, 2018); *Pryputni* by A. Nepytyaliuk (OIFF Award for the best Ukrainian film, 2017).

Denis Ivanov is a Ukrainian producer, film distributor, head of the Arthouse Traffic film company, and a member of the European Film Academy. Among others, he produced *Rhino* by Oleh Sentsov (2021), *The Tribe* by Myroslav Shlaboshpytskyi (2014), *Donbas* by Serhiy Loznytsia (2019), and *Black Level* by Valentyn Vasianovych (2018).

### Author's statement

This is a story about relations between a very different man and woman, about their unique cosmic system, about intimacy and chemistry, about the inability to come to an agreement, Russian and Ukrainian in one bottle, fuelled with moonshine, and carefully stirred. If an alien arrived in a Ukrainian village, he would see the local way of life as something fantastic and intangible. We want to make our story, our village, and our characters seen through an alien's eyes. It will be focused on everyday objects from an unusual angle. The artistic solution of the film is a detailed realistic approach, going beyond mere realism. Perhaps it could even be called magic realism.

director **Natalka Vorozhbyt**  
scriptwriter **Natalka Vorozhbyt**  
producer **Dmytro Minzianov, Denis Ivanov**  
camera **Volodymyr Ivanov**  
language **Ukrainian**  
genre **mystical drama**  
release date **01.05.2023**  
what's missing **additional financing to complete the shooting, additional financing or partners for the post-production stage, festival world premiere**



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**Denis Ivanov** Producer  
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## Diagnosis: Dissent / BožeViłni



115 min, Ukraine

This film is director's feature debut.

### Film synopsis

Soviet Ukraine, 1977. Andrii gets arrested for putting a forbidden rock band live on the air on a radio station. He is accused of anti-Soviet propaganda and sent to a special mental hospital, without trial. At the same time, KGB agents are developing a special operation to expose saboteurs inside the hospital. Some of the patients or staff have sent proof to the US that psychiatric treatment is administered to mentally healthy people on political grounds. The KGB agent puts pressure on Andrii's family. Andrii can protect his family by exposing the saboteurs. However, he understands that sending materials to the West is the only chance of stopping the torture inside this hospital.

### Director's biography

Denys Tarasov was born in 1984. In 2008, he graduated from Kyiv National I. K. Karpenko-Kary Theatre, Cinema and Television University. In 2005, he started working in television as a director and live broadcast director of entertainment shows aired on the Ukrainian TV channels: Inter, First National Channel, K1, 1+1, ICTV, Novy Channel, NLO TV, 2+2. In 2016, he co-produced and directed the TV series *Patsyky (Guys)* produced by Studio Kvartal 95 for TV channel ICTV. In 2017–2021 he directed TV series for the TV channels owned by Ukrainian media groups 1+1 Media, StarLight Media, and Media Group Ukraine.

### Producer's biography

Taras Bosak was born in 1981 in Kyiv, Ukraine. A graduate of the National Technical University of Ukraine, Kyiv Polytechnic Institute, Taras finished a training programme for producers by Inter Media Group. In 2015, after 10 years of experience in video production as co-founder and producer of the advertising agency, Liberty, Taras joined the film production company, Mainstream Pictures. From 2016 to 2020, Taras produced and executive produced four feature documentaries, three narrative features, and one TV movie. In 2020, he became the head of the state-owned film studio, National Cinematheque of Ukraine, and continues to work on film projects as co-producer and executive producer.

### Author's statement

This film tells the story about the historical fact when political dissidents in the Soviet Union were diagnosed with so-called "sluggish schizophrenia", in order to isolate and break individuals who refused to submit themselves to state authority. We will show how the Soviet Union tried to hide crimes of "punitive psychiatry", and the means it used. The psychiatric hospital is a reflection of the USSR, where propaganda was used, instead of psychotropic drugs. Our story is about freedom of thought, about those who were not afraid, about those who wanted to convey and tell the world what medical and political crimes were committed in the Soviet Union.

director **Denys Tarasov**  
 scriptwriter **Ksenia Zastavska, Symor Glasenko**  
 producer **Taras Bosak, Valeria Ivanenko**  
 camera **Eugene Kirey**  
 language **Ukrainian, Russian**  
 genre **drama**  
 release date **09.10.2022**  
 what's missing **post-production funding (64,000 Euro budget gap), additional financing for VFX and sound**



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## Do you love me? / Ty mene ľubyš?



90 min, Ukraine

### Family Production

Vozdvihzenska street 18  
04071 Kyiv  
Ukraine  
T +38 044 365 8085

### Film synopsis

One has to be brave enough to accept losing one's old self for the sake of growing up. Kira becomes an adult very quickly, watching her family and soviet childhood smashing into pieces. Just like Ukraine in the early 1990s, launching a painful process of transformation into an independent country.

### Director's biography

Tonia Noyabrova, Ukrainian director, born and raised in Kyiv, in a creative family. She studied directing at the University of Culture and Arts. Usually, Tonia prefers to work in the comedy genre, and is quite successful in it. *Do you love me?* was her first drama about saying goodbye to childhood, and the lost generation of the '90s.

### Producer's biography

Anastasiia Bukovska and Danylo Kaptyukh are co-founders of Family Production. Anastasiia is a director and producer. She's also a board member of the Ukrainian Film Academy. *Bullmastiff*, Anastasiia's film debut as a director, was released in 2020, and received numerous awards at international film festivals. *Deep Frozen Goods*, co-produced by Family, will be released by Warner Bros. in 2022. Danylo helped to create national stands of Ukraine on the biggest film forums in the world: Berlinale, Cannes IFF, and Toronto IFF. Along with Anastasiia, he also co-founded the Film Industry Association of Ukraine.

### Author's statement

This is a coming-of-age story of a 16 year-old girl named Kira. Her childhood seemed spotless and wonderful. However, the story plays out in history, in early 1990s Soviet Ukraine, in the era of a total disruption, and calamity. Her family falls apart, the country is crumbling, and everything she knew about life turns out to be an illusion. Looking back at the film from today's current situation, I see extremely relevant meanings in this story. Everything that galvanizes the air we breathe. Today, all of us Ukrainians are learning to live from the scratch, to start anew. This is a challenge and a test that the protagonist is facing, and it seems to me that we are all facing the same test.

director **Tonia Noyabrova**  
scriptwriter **Tonia Noyabrova**  
producer **Anastasiia Bukovska, Danylo Kaptyukh**  
camera **Vilius Mačiulskis**  
language **Ukrainian**  
genre **drama**  
release date **01.02.2023**  
what's missing **additional post-production funding, colour correction, sound postproduction, sound mix, distributor, sales agent, festivals, music rights**



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## The Glass House / Dim za sklom



110 min, Ukraine, Romania

### Directory Films

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Ukraine

E savychenko@directoryfilms.com

W directoryfilms.com

### Film synopsis

A young girl disappears with her older boyfriend. Victoria, the mother of the missing girl, has a seemingly perfect life. It is suspected that the daughter is involved in drug trafficking, but Victoria is less frightened by the dangerous world of drugs than she is of losing her picture-perfect reputation.

### Director's biography

Taras Dron is a film director and a member of EFA and Ukrainian Film Academy. He earned his university degree in Protection of Information, and worked as an Inspector of information security at Lviv State University of Internal Affairs. In 2010–2011 – founder and owner of a film and video production studio, and “Nord Production” rental equipment. In 2014–2016 – Taras studied in the Department of the Director at the Leon Schiller National Film, Television, and Theatre School (PWSFTv i T) in Poland. From 2012 to 2019 he worked as a music video and advertisement director for different projects in Ukraine, France, Poland. His film *Blindfold* won Competition 1–2 at Warsaw Film Festival 2020.

### Producer's biography

In 2015, director and producer Valeria Sochyvets founded the organization CUC (Contemporary Ukrainian Cinema), with the goal to promote Ukrainian cinema and produce films. Her films took part in many international film festivals, and won over 30 awards and nominations. She has also been a participant of numerous international pitches and co-production markets. In 2020, she was part of an expert board at a national competition for debut short films at Ukrainian State Film Agency. From 2018 to 2022, she was a Board Member of Ukrainian Film Academy. Her portfolio includes 13 short films, 2 feature documentaries, and 1 feature fiction. She holds a BA from Kyiv National I. K. Karpenko-Kary Theatre, Cinema, and TV University.

### Author's statement

The main subject that I want to approach is a shift of responsibility for yourself and your acts on to relatives, your environment. This film is not about drugs and the harm that they cause, though the environment of drug distribution is placed in the centre of the plot, and creates a metaphor for each character's detachment. The reason for everything that is happening is much deeper; it's on the level of sub-consciousness and deep fears that, after all, will come out or change in the situation. Structurally, the movie is written as a Greek tragedy, where the main character transforms, but does not change; the changes are happening around her. It gives a sense of a certain picture of society.

director **Taras Dron**  
 scriptwriter **Taras Dron, Jakub Prysak**  
 producer **Igor Savychenko, Valeria Sochyvets, Rodrigo Ruiz Tarazona, Taras Dron**  
 camera **Oleksandr Pozdniakov**  
 language **Ukrainian**  
 genre **detective, drama**  
 release date **14.01.2023**  
 what's missing **co-production, financing and distribution partners, pre-sales, sales agent**



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# Chrysanthemum Day / Svâto Xryzantem



90 min, Ukraine, North Macedonia

This film is director's feature debut.

## Mainstream Pictures LLC

Olesia Honchara St, 15/3

1025 Kyiv

Ukraine

T +380 444 032 860

E info@mnstrm.com

W www.mnstrm.com

## Film synopsis

A story of relations between a young medical doctor and her patient – an old “flower-woman”, known as a healer, who mysteriously survives a nuclear explosion, having completely lost her memory and identity. With clear orders to achieve results, the doctor manages to bring back some memory, little by little, but these memories become unbearable for the old healer. The doctor then realizes that if she dies, there might be no future for humanity...

## Director's biography

Simon Mozgovyi (1992) is a Ukrainian filmmaker, screenwriter, film editor, producer, and actor. He studied Cinema and Television Arts at the Kharkiv State Academy of Culture (B.A.). After graduating in 2013, he went on to study an advanced-level course in dramaturgy in Kyiv, where he began acting at the DAKH Theatre (2013–2018). Now, he works as a freelance filmmaker. Simon's documentary film *The Winter Garden's Tale* (2018) premiered at Ji.hlava IDFF, and then participated in DOK Leipzig, Full Frame, Docudays UA, and others. His filmography includes the documentaries *Salt from Bonneville* (2021), and *Orpheus Is Standing On the Bank of the Styx* (short, 2022).

## Producer's biography

Alex Chepiga is a Ukrainian producer. In 2003, he co-founded the cinema company, Arthouse Traffic, and in 2009 he worked as creative director of Odesa IFF. Since 2013 he has been working in filmmaking, and has participated in creating short films and music videos in positions ranging from crew administrator to executive producer. Among others, he produced *The Winter Garden's Tale* (2018).

Artem Koliubaiev is a creative producer who has launched more than 10 TV projects in different genres, and produced several feature and documentary films. Since 2013, he has been a co-owner of the Mainstream Pictures production company. His recent releases include *Carol of the Bells* (2022), *Salt from Bonneville* (2021), *Kruty 1918* (2019).

## Author's statement

We are living in dark times. The premonition of a Nuclear War is hanging in the air. The core idea of the film is to reproduce the feeling of devastation which will come to global society as a whole if this ever happens. The importance and uniqueness of a single human life in the face of the war machine inspired me when I wrote this script in 2014. I wanted to create a subtle, intimate world of the protagonists, and, in contrast to it, a fantastical, empty, and cold external world without love. On the one hand, we will see the consequences of the total destructive force of nuclear war, and on the other, the much smaller, but just as powerful force – the gift of healing.

director **Simon Mozgovyi**  
 scriptwriter **Simon Mozgovyi**  
 producer **Alex Chepiga, Artem Koliubaiev, Taras Bosak**  
 camera **Denis Melnyk**  
 language **Ukrainian**  
 genre **mystical drama, sci-fi**  
 release date **23.09.2023**  
 what's missing **production and postproduction funding, festival premiere, sales agent, financing for editing, sound mix, color grading, music and VFX**



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## U Are the Universe / Ty – Kosmos



90 min, Ukraine

This film is director's feature debut.

**ForeFilms**

Ukraine

T +380 673 837 508

### Film synopsis

The near future. Space trucker Andriy Melnyk transports radioactive waste on a cargo ship to an abandoned satellite of Jupiter. During another flight, the Earth explodes. Pieces of the planet are destroying everything in their path at breakneck speed, but Andriy manages to escape. Andriy becomes the last person in the universe, but after a while, Catherine, a Frenchwoman from a science station near Saturn, gets in contact. They are completely different people, and are far from each other, but every day Andriy and Catherine want more and more to meet. Even if it will be their last trip.

### Director's biography

Pavlo Ostrikov is a Ukrainian director and scriptwriter. In 2007, Pavlo joined the National Aviation University, from which he graduated in 2012 with a Master's Degree in jurisprudence. His five shorts participated and won awards in many international film festivals, such as Locarno, Tampere, Palm Springs, Black Nights, Brussels, EFA, and others. One of the shorts, *Graduation '97* was nominated for the European Film Award, and winner of the Ukrainian Film Academy. Pavlo is a member of the European Film Academy. Now Pavlo is working on his debut feature film, *U Are the Universe*.

### Producer's biography

Volodymyr Yatsenko is a Ukrainian producer. Before joining the film industry, he produced more than 600 commercials. He is the head of the Film Industry Association of Ukraine, and a member of the European Film Academy. From 2020 until 2022, Volodymyr was the first Representative of Ukraine in EURIMAGES. Anna Yatsenko is a producer, director, and screenwriter. She has made several shorts as a director, which participated in and won in POFF shots IFF, Palm Spring IFF, Odense IFF, etc. Together, Anna and Volodymyr produced *Homeward* (2018) – premiered in Un Certain Regard, with *Atlantis* (2019) – won the best award in Orizzonti in Venice IFF, for *Reflection* (2021) – in the main competition in Venice IFF, etc.

### Author's statement

*U Are the Universe* – the story of the last love of the entire human race, that needs to be recreated for its own sake. This is an attempt to tell the story of the most excellent feeling in the world, one that knows no boundaries. It is important for me to tell this story, because I see myself as the main character. I fear that I can give up on my dream, and stay alone with my problems. This movie reminds me of how important it is to find someone who understands you, even if you need to fly across the whole galaxy! Space has its place in culture, and it is a topic that many artists have made use of. One of the tasks I have set for myself is to create my own unique space, with a Ukrainian hero at its core.

director **Pavlo Ostrikov**  
 scriptwriter **Pavlo Ostrikov**  
 producer **Volodymyr Yatsenko, Anna Yatsenko**  
 camera **Mykyta Kuzmenko**  
 language **Ukrainian, French**  
 genre **dramedy, sci-fi**  
 release date **20.12.2023**  
 what's missing **co-production, financing and distribution partners, finalizing sound and color grading**



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 Producer  
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# When We Were 15 / Koly nam bulo 15



90 min, Ukraine

This film is director's feature debut.

**Digital Religion (DGTL RLG) LLC**  
Ukraine

E [n.libet@dgtrlgn.com](mailto:n.libet@dgtrlgn.com)

W <https://www.dgtrlgn.com/about>

## Film synopsis

Tonya is the new girl at school. Dealing with her sexuality, as well as past abuse, she is learning to accept loneliness while trying to find her place in the adult world.

## Director's biography

Anna Buryachkova's experience combines more than fifteen years of work with international and Ukrainian audiovisual production studios. Her artwork has been recognized at numerous festivals, including Berlin Fashion Films, Berlin Music Video Awards, Cannes Lions' Social Campaign Programme. She graduated from Kyiv National University of Theatre, Cinema and TV with honours. *When We Were 15* is Anna's feature debut.

## Producer's biography

Natalia Libet gained experience in co-production, investment, and finance while working for international companies. Now, she works as a film producer. In 2019–2021, she brought First Cut Lab to Ukraine; her first local initiative was with EAVE in Demand in 2017. She has had annual audits with Big 4, and obtained an MBA in the U.S. Natalia is responsible for the educational programmes at the Film Industry Association of Ukraine. She is a winner of 2000 Edmund Muskie/Freedom Support Act Graduate Fellowship Award, a member of Ukrainian Film Academy, and an alumna of EURODOC. In 2022, Natalia is an Emerging Producer with Ji.hlava IDFF, and a Producer Under the Spotlight at Marche du Film.

## Author's statement

I am an adult who grew up from a broken teenager of the late '90s, one who was not taught how to protect themselves from abusers, those who bully you, or those who rape you. You couldn't ask for adult help: it was incredibly shameful to be abused. The level of shame has not really reduced since then; and therefore, the most crucial question is still on the table – both for teenagers and adults – while trying to find love and appreciation, aren't we losing who we truly are? It's our generation's drama, set in a rough, edgy, yet romantic tone, with emotional visual storytelling. Powerful and compressed, with psychological close-ups, dedicated to tensions and feelings.

director **Anna Buryachkova**  
scriptwriter **Marina Stepanska, Anna Buryachkova**  
producer **Natalia Libet, Vitalii Sheremetiev**  
camera **Olena Chekhovska**  
language **Ukrainian**  
genre **drama, romance, action**  
release date **31.01.2023**  
what's missing **additional post-production funding, festivals, international sales agent**



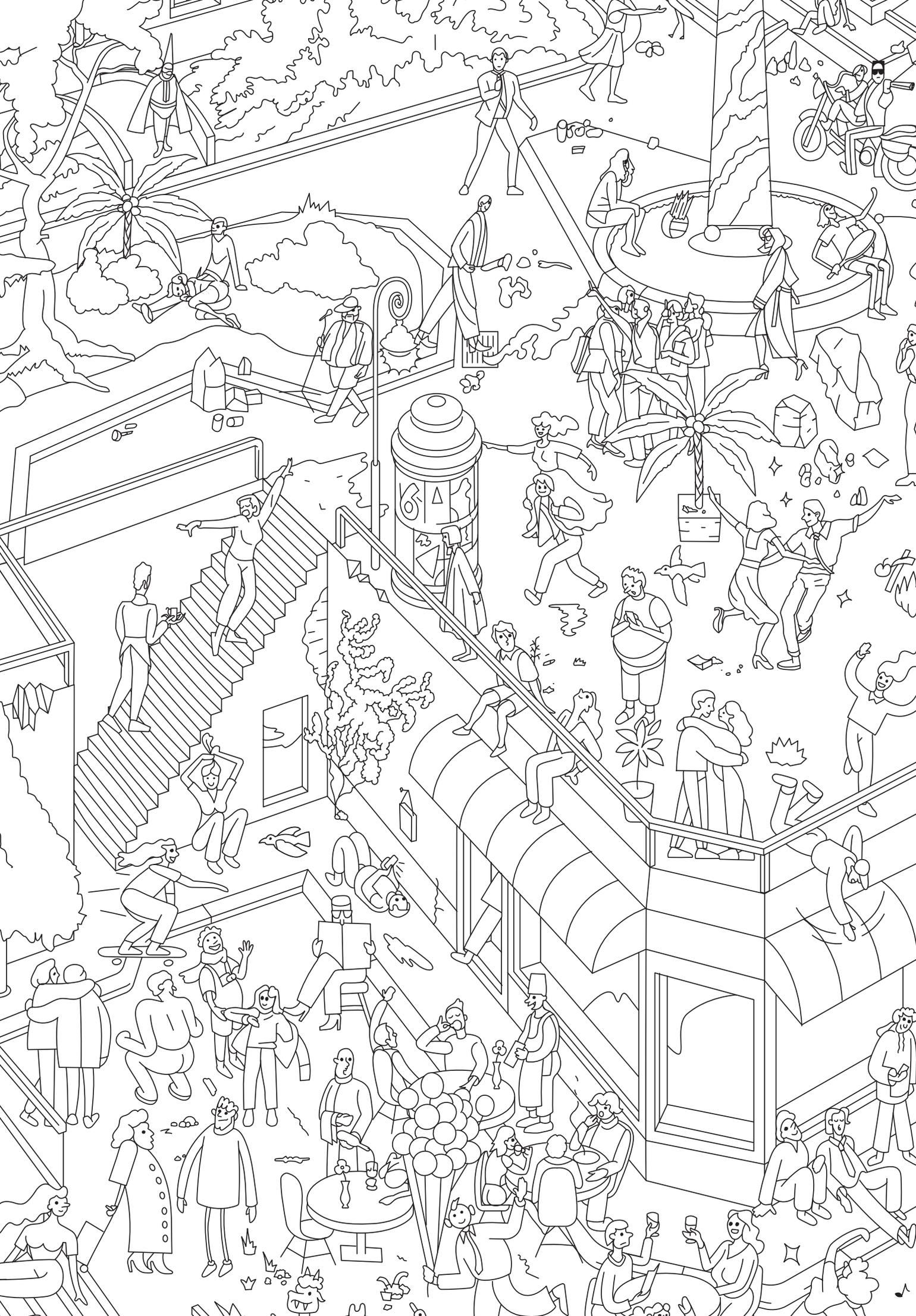
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## **KVIFF Eastern Promises Czech Projects in Production**

Author's presentations of three favoured Czech film projects in different stages of production that are looking for international co-producers, sales agents, and distributors



## Forest Killer / Lesní vrah



85 min, Czech Republic, Romania, Slovak Republic, Poland

### Vernes s.r.o.

Karla Buriána 721/4  
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Czech Republic  
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### BFILM

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### Film synopsis

The film is based on true events – in 2005, Viktor Kalivoda murdered 3 random hikers that he met by chance in the forests of Czechia. The case received a great deal of attention for its lack of motive. After his arrest, Kalivoda confessed, but did not reveal his motive. The film will closely observe one year in his life leading up to the murders and his arrest, leaving his motive unclear. The character will thereby become a screen for the audience to project their own fears, anxieties, and evil motivations. We strongly believe that, without making an effort to achieve some degree of understanding, the phenomenon of lone shooters that has plagued the West in the past decades will not go away.

### Director's biography

From an early age, he played various roles in a host of radio and TV shows. After his graduation from the conservatory, he was admitted to study directing at Prague's FAMU. After the first year of his studies, he left for Sarajevo, to end up filming his directorial debut, *Young Men Explores the World* (1995). He graduated from FAMU with his second film, *Rapid Eyes Movements* (1998). His feature film, *The Chains* (2010), earned him 5 Awards from Czech Film Critics, and the same number of Czech Lions. He is the co-founder and creative director of the Festival of Bollywood Film. In October 2014, his next feature film, *Places*, was released. He co-directed the TV series *The World Under a Head*, the licensed BBC format of *Life on Mars* for the Czech territory in 2017. His latest film, *The Golden Betrayal* was released in 2018.

### Producer's biography

Zdeněk Holý worked as an editor for Cinepur film magazine, serving as editor-in-chief in 2007–2010. He authored the story for *Daniel's World* (Panorama section at Berlin 2015), which he also produced. In 2017, he was the producer and script editor for a cycle of popular educational documentaries entitled *Man, That's Science*. In 2016, he was selected to become the Dean of Prague's Film Academy (FAMU) for a four-year term. At the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, he came up with the idea of a docusoap made at covid departments, so *Hospital on the Frontline* was produced and aired every week in the spring of 2019. Two time-lapse documentaries that he produced, *Out in Force* and *Leaving Beginnings Behind*, were released in 2021.

### Author's statement

When I first became acquainted with the case of the so-called *Forest Killer* some years ago, I immediately started to think of it in terms of the film. Firstly, because the story of someone deliberately dehumanizing themselves is deeply unsettling, and secondly, because it offered a unique film form. The Czech murderer, Viktor Kalivoda, shot three randomly chosen people after he intentionally got rid of his inhibition by first killing animals. After being apprehended, Kalivoda confessed, but he never revealed his motivation. We are making an observational film that does not explain the main character's motivation. Although we never know exactly what makes the character act in a particular way, we become strongly emotionally connected to him.

director **Radim Špaček**  
producer **Zdeněk Holý, Jana Brožková, Peter Badač, Vlad-Andrei Rad Ulescu**  
camera **Oleg Mutu**  
cast **Michal Balcar**  
language **Czech**  
website **www.vernes.cz**  
genre **slow burn thriller**  
release date **31.12.2023**  
what's missing **financing (150.000 EUR), additional shooting**



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**Peter Badač** Producer  
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## Ice Down / S ledem v srdci



100 min, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic

### Alluvium Production, s.r.o.

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Czech Republic

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### Wandal Production

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W [www.wandal.sk](http://www.wandal.sk)

### Film synopsis

It's the beginning of the 1960s. Two ice hockey legends, Bohumil Modrý and Augustin Bubník, live a life scarred by a communist mock trial that took place in 1950. Former national heroes and world champions, who spent the best years of their lives in a prison, mining uranium, along with their teammates. As an aftermath, Modrý struggles with a serious illness caused by uranium exposure, Bubník suffers from severe back pain, but above the mere physical pain, the souls of both men are tormented by their past, as they try to answer the question: Who has betrayed them? Can a reunion hockey match, organized by their third friend, ex-team captain, Vladimír Zábrodský, who, unlike the, never ended up in prison, bring a light to this eternal question?

### Director's biography

Jan Hřebejk (1967, Prague, Czech Republic) is one of the most successful Czech film directors of the last two decades, who also occasionally works as a theatre director. He is also one of the few Czech or Slovak directors who consistently and programmatically maps the modern history of Czechoslovakia in his films; in the name of this goal, he has helped to revive the now very popular genre of the retro-comedy. His most successful films include *Cosy Dens*, *Divided We Fall* (6 Czech Lions and an Oscar nomination), *Pupendo*, *Up and Down*, *Beauty in Trouble*, *Teddy Bear*, *I'm All Good*, *Shameless*, *Kawasaki's Rose*, *Innocence*, *Honeymoon* and most recently, *The Teacher*.

### Producer's biography

Wanda Adamík Hrycová is a producer, and under her label, Wandal Production, she produces films, TV series, and theatre, including the musical *The Producers* (A. Hryc, 2008), films *Collere* (M. Cieslar, 2013), *The Line* (P. Bebjak, 2017), *Perfect Strangers* (Z. Mariankova, 2021), and the tv series *The Slavs* (P. Bebjak, 2021). She is currently developing a historical feature film drama, *Ice Down* (J. Hřebejk), and a TV mini series, *Three Branks of the Danube* (P. Bebjak). Wanda is an EAVE graduate, is the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Seychelles in Slovakia, and the President of the Slovak Film and Television Academy. Wanda is a mother of three sons.

### Author's statement

In my concept of the story of this well-known case of the 1950s fabricated trial, I chose to go for a longer timeline, and go back to 1963, a total of eight years after the release of the former world champions. I did so because I had no interest in examining the anatomy of the monstrosity of a system that, for the purposes of its ideological propaganda, exemplarily condemned national heroes. Rather than that, I wonder if strong-willed people can, even after such a punishment and ordeal, find faith in life again. Can they forgive envious people, or more importantly, can they forgive each other? To put it bluntly, can a true hero be broken by the system at all? We want to introduce three heroes in our film: Modrý, Zábrodský, and Bubník. Their heroism is different, with each of them fighting fate in his own way, and all the while, they are all trying to save their friendship, consciously, or even a little against their own will.

director **Jan Hřebejk**  
 scriptwriter **Petr Kolečko**  
 producer **Wanda Adamík Hrycová**  
 camera **Martin Žiaran**  
 music **Michal Novinski**  
 language **Czech**  
 genre **historical drama**  
 release date **30.07.2026**  
 what's missing **co-production, financing, sales, sales agent**



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# War with Salamanders / Válka s mloky



90 min, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Croatia, Serbia

**In Film Praha s.r.o.**

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## Film synopsis

The captain of a Dutch merchant ship, Vantoch, discovers an unknown species of salamanders in a remote bay of a small, obscure island off the coast of Java, Indonesia. Anyone who thought that this new species could cause the destruction of humankind would have been called a fool. But that's exactly what happened.

Mankind brings destruction upon itself by selfishly exploiting the rapidly growing population of salamanders, with the sole purpose of achieving unlimited economic growth.

Our blind quest for abundance and wealth leads humankind down the path to tragedy, allowing planet Earth to return to its ancient state of shallow seas and oceans, dominated by a new civilization of salamanders.

## Director's biography

Aurel Klimt, born in Žilina, Slovakia, graduated from the Faculty of Film and TV, Animation Department (FAMU), in Prague in 1999, where he is currently teaching.

Aurel has also produced number of TV commercials and short animated films, including *An Eastern - Bloody Hugo* (finalist for Student Oscar prize 1998) and *The Magic Bell* (Nickledeon Award – New York 2000, Bronze Lion – Taipei 2000).

He has produced and directed full-length films, including *Fimfarum* (best full-length film – Golden Fish Film Festival 2003 Moscow, Czech Lion Award for best artistic design) and *Laika* (Best Animated Feature Film – Jelly Film Festival 2019 Hollywood, Best International Animation – LUSCA Fantastic Film Fest 2018 Puerto Rico, Czech Lion Award for best artistic design).

## Producer's biography

Rudolf Biermann was born in Trenčín, Slovakia. Following his graduation with a PhD from the Comenius University Law Faculty in Bratislava, he decided to fulfil his creative dreams, and joined the largest film studios in Bratislava as a production assistant. Thanks to his foreign language skills, he was able to become involved with a number of international film productions, as well as domestic ones.

Working as an independent film producer since 1990, he set up his own film production company, In Film Praha s.r.o., in 1993. Since then, his company has produced over 40 feature films, many of them receiving praise from the critics, and highly honoured at festivals, making Rudolf one of the most successful film producers in both Slovakia and the Czech Republic alike.

## Author's statement

The central theme of the novel mirrors the profound and life-threatening circumstances that humanity finds itself in today, and that is why this novel is of great relevance again, both in form and content. In reality, this is an unavoidable clash of civilisations, and this suicidal trend is driven by humanity's race to sacrifice everything in order to gain economic well-being, including sacrificing our own habitat. We don't plan to reference any specific present day socio-political issues, because ruthless economics and the yearning for greater wealth and control have been behind every contemporary and past conflict, to the detriment of other people, animals, and the planet as a whole. We are convinced that this is how it was viewed by Karel Čapek.

director **Aurel Klimt**  
scriptwriter **Aurel Klimt**  
producer **Rudolf Biermann, Aurel Klimt**  
camera **Martin Šec**  
music **Vladimír Martinka**  
cast **Jaroslav Dušek, Robert Nebřenský, Csongor Kassai, Lazar Ristovski**  
language **Czech, English**  
genre **adventure, sci-fi**  
release date **17.11.2024**  
what's missing **co-production, financing, partners**



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## **Book of Projects**

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