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**Connecting Cottbus**  
3-6.11.2013  
East West Co-production Market  
at the Film Festival Cottbus
# SIERRA ZULU

*Golden Girls Filmproduktion & Filmservices, Austria*

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**producers:**
Arash T. Riahi, Michael Seeber, Sabine Gruber

**authors:**
Johannes Grenzfurthner, Roland Gratzer

**director:**
Johannes Grenzfurthner

**summary:**
A ragtag UN peacekeeping force operates a small camp guarding the no man’s land between Austria and the tiny agrarian microstate Soviet Unterzögersdorf, the last existing bastion of the defunct Soviet Union. When an explosion occurs deep inside the Soviet territory, the team is dragged into a bizarre conspiracy of industrial espionage, media madness and political intrigue. The knowledge economy? It’s about to get blown sky high.

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**project data:**
- **genre:** black comedy
- **length:** 90 mins.
- **shooting format:** HD

**budget:**
- estimated production costs: € 1,500,000
- financing already in place: € 56,534

**partners already attached:**
Vienna Film Fund development support, Austrian Film Institute development support

**looking for in particular:**
co-producers, financiers

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Near the self-sufficient mini-state Soviet Unterzögersdorf (the last remaining autonomous republic of the Soviet Union, established in 1945 in Lower Austria, near Vienna) the border to Austria is guarded by a United Nations military encampment. Five soldiers are permanently stationed there, partially as a punitive measure. Guarding the rural border is a boring and not very challenging routine. The UN troops have different social and cultural backgrounds, e.g. the war-torn southern Nigeria, Bangladesh, Scotland, Southern France, Alberta/Canada.

As a camera crew arrives in order to film for an international TV magazine, Soviet Unterzögersdorf is shaken by a severe explosion. The UN troops go on alert, and the military forces of Soviet Unterzögersdorf oppose any foreign intervention. Two mercenaries are taken prisoner but refuse to speak about their mission.

With the leverage of a hostage that they take by accident, the Soviets demand a quadrilateral summit conference with the UN, the EU and the USA in Soviet Unterzögersdorf to achieve the cessation of all hostilities against their state. Although the political world powers could not care less about the Soviets, the UN commander manages to organize a summit. International third-class diplomats, each blackmailed into participating with the help of equally embarrassing personal secrets, arrive at SUZ for the meeting.

Meanwhile, a third mercenary, still in Soviet Unterzögersdorf, frees the hostage. Their flight through SUZ, revealing unknown secrets about the mini-state and its history, is interrupted by a monstrous, out-of-control cyborg cow that randomly attacks humans.

At the summit, after a theoretical introduction to the importance of freedom of information and the destruction of Cognitive Capitalism, the Soviet attaché presents the barely believable truth: mercenaries had tried to destroy SUZ’s secret technology, a herd of genetically modified and technologically augmented cattle which, interconnected in a MESH network, would be the most effective illegal P2P download server in the whole world, thus guaranteeing the free flow of information - and the end of all copyright. Once again, international corporations have tried to steal and sabotage SUZ’s technologies to secure their control of the knowledge economy.

If the threat of publishing the blueprints of the cow network on the Internet does not yet quite convince the delegation, the malfunctioning cow does as it storms into the meeting, barely controlled by the neck-risking UN soldiers. It was damaged but not destroyed by the mercenaries, and now has become uncontrollable. Terrified, the assembly agrees to all terms of the Soviets.

A few months later: the UN camp still exists, the routine hasn’t changed.

Next door, however, a new fibre-optic cable is being installed by a local electric company. A much faster Internet connection is finally coming to Soviet Unterzögersdorf.

I was always interested in the political dimension of near-future sci-fi. It’s hard to imagine, but I became a punk and antifascist because I devoured cyberpunk novels and watched stuff like Max Headroom. It was great dreaming of a jack in the back of your head, but the corpocratic, doomed world was nothing that I wanted to really happen.
At monochrom, we have been occupied with the construction, analysis and reflexion of alternative worlds for quite a long time.

With SIERRA ZULU, we want to discuss topics such as the problems of historiography, the concept of „utopia“ and „socialist utopia“ and the political struggles of postwar Europe, information society, patent law, copyright and transnational capitalism in a playful, grotesque and entertaining way. We are postmodern leftists. A little bit melancholic - but you can count on us.

SIERRA ZULU aims to use stylistic elements of the dark comedy or the farce to deal with the fundamental questions of national supremacy, international conflict-solving strategies, national and international legislation, the power of the media and the diplomatic incapacity of international organizations.

The film wants to explore the perspectives of people who live more or less on the fringes of what we would call “history” or “the world”. This fringe area – surrounded by Austrian sovereign territory – is where we find the microstate Soviet Unterzögersdorf, the almost forgotten ‘last autonomous republic of the Soviet Union’ which has fallen victim to its geo-political, historical, cultural, and economical insignificance. This village is the last state to represent the ideas which have been eradicated from the face of the earth with Soviet Communism.

SIERRA ZULU is about implanting false memories into the political and cultural memory of Europe, and simulating the effects of this partial and local rewriting of history – namely, the initiation of an entire network of events, caused by this transposition. Or to put it differently: how would real life react to Soviet Unterzögersdorf?

**producer’s note**

One of our main interests lies in the non-dogmatic approach to film/TV/radio media, which links us closely to Johannes Grenzfurthner’s art group monochrom. SIERRA ZULU is unique in the Austrian and international film world and we are convinced that it is high time to produce a film that treats criticism of globalisation and capitalism in a humorous way. The story is intelligent, contemporary up-to-date, compelling and entertaining.

In recent years, monochrom has reached national and international cult status which is documented by the great number of international LoIs we already received from actors and artists for this project.

monochrom has been an active community for nearly two decades, and there are hundreds of “monochrom satellites” around the globe. These “satellites” are more than a regular fanbase. They are active supporters and collaborators. There have been collaborations with different artists, researchers and scientists in different fields of expertise, and that will be very helpful in the creating of SIERRA ZULU.

We officially launched the project at a public event during May 2011 and, with the help of the massive Internet connections of monochrom, word was spread throughout the media. By the time shooting commences, a gigantic buzz will already have been created, and we are working on a wide range of possible crowd-sourcing techniques in order to incorporate monochrom’s fan base.

During the development stage, we want to put together an experienced and professional team, perfect the script with
the help of international dramaturgical advisers, and look for the right co-production partners.

We are looking for international partners, particularly from Russia, South East Europe, Germany and/or France. We are open for cast and crew from abroad, and the sound post-production and final mix could be done in a partner’s country as well.

vita Johannes Grenzfurthner
Johannes Grenzfurthner (born 1975) is an artist, writer, curator and director. He is the founder of monochrom, an internationally acting art and theory group. He holds a professorship for art theory and art practice at the University of Applied Sciences in Graz, Austria.

His projects have received multiple international awards and have been featured in New York Times, Libération, Der Spiegel, San Francisco Chronicle, CNN, Reuters, Slashdot, Boing Boing, New Scientist, The Edge, LA Times, NPR, ZDF, Gizmodo, Wired, Süddeutsche Zeitung, CNet or the Toronto Star. Recurring topics in Johannes’ artistic and textual work are contemporary art, activism, performance, humour, philosophy, postmodernism, media theory, cultural studies, sex tech, popular culture studies, science fiction, and the debate about copyright. After numerous shorts and video projects, SIERRA ZULU will be Johannes’ first feature film.

vita Roland Gratzer
Roland Gratzer (born 1982) is a writer, artist, musician and self-defined “communication gland”. He joined the collective monochrom in 2005. Roland did academic research about blogs and blog culture for the University of Applied Sciences in Graz, Austria in 2006 and 2007. He works as a freelance radio journalist and radio host (ORF FM4 and OE1, both Austrian Broadcasting Corporations) and writes for a couple of online and print magazines. He is also co-curating the KOM.M.ST festival in Styria, Austria and is the co-creator of the CAMPAIGN series at the Volkstheater in Vienna, Austria. Recurring topics in his work are progressive theatre, media theory, popular culture studies and guerilla media tactics. After several video projects, SIERRA ZULU will be Roland’s first feature film.

company profile
Golden Girls Filmproduktion & Filmservices is a Vienna-based film production company working for 15 years in the areas of cinema and TV film production, commercials, music videos, industrial films as well as post-production. Our latest releases include Arash T. Riahi’s feature documentary EXILE FAMILY MOVIE, his short film MISSISSIPPI and Igor Hauzenberger’s feature documentary BEYOND THE FOREST. Between them, these films have won more than 15 international awards and were distributed in more than 10 countries worldwide. The first of our five feature documentaries (two of them international co-productions) to be finished in 2011, DARKHEAD, won the Audience Award at the Austrian Film Festival Diagonale and was the opening film of the Sarajevo Film Festival. Three seasons of our TV series MOMENTUM – WHAT DRIVES YOU, produced for Red Bull Media House, are currently aired on the Red Bull-owned Servus TV.
AN ORDINARY STORY
Filmzadeh Producer Center, Azerbaijan

producer: Olga Shelyubskaya
author: Chingiz Rasulzade
director: Chingiz Rasulzade

summary:
An ordinary story about a man who was born in the wrong place and at the wrong time. While history changed the world and the emotions around him, a boy, who had been born in the USSR, lived for fifty years without leaving his courtyard. At the end of his life, he dared to go outside of the courtyard...

project data:
genre: drama
length: 120 mins.
shooting format: 35mm

budget:
estimated production costs: € 1.180.000
financing already in place: € 15.000

looking for in particular:
co-producer

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Djanik was born in Baku in 1940. He was the long-awaited son of an oil industry worker. In 1941, his father Bakhtiyar left home to serve in the Second World War. A year later, he learned that his son will never be able to walk. The victorious soldiers carried different trophies home from the defeated and ruined Germany: watches, carpets, paintings, and even furniture. Bakhtiyar brought back a particular trophy he had found in a Berlin hospital—a brand new, oiled, hand-pushed wheelchair. Bakhtiyar brought the empty German wheelchair four thousand kilometers by freight train through the liberated Europe, Ukraine, Russia, fighting off embittered lame cripples and disfigured victims of the war. He wheeled the chair into his hometown, and into his own courtyard. He carried Djanik outside, put him in the wheelchair and strapped him in using his soldier’s belt.

Since then, the father would wheel his son out to the best place in the centre of the courtyard each morning before going to work. But Djanik, left to sit all day long in the centre of the courtyard, didn’t become an object of everybody’s love and attention. On the contrary—the children grew to dislike him, especially the boys. They often wheeled him to the side for their playtime. Once, the children forgot to wheel Djanik back into his usual place under a fig tree, and when Bakhtiyar came back, he found his beloved son sitting amongst the refuse bins. The following morning, the father put the wheelchair in its place and chained it to the ground. For the next 50 years, Djanik grew up and aged, sitting in the same wheelchair at the very same spot, in the centre of a small courtyard. All he knew about the world around him was limited to the neighbors’ conversations, to the books he read and the view through a small aperture of an archway which led out onto the street beyond. He saw the country’s history, the entire epoch of the state and the city through that arched passageway that led to the main street.

Djanik, limited in movement and enduring the sufferings of a motionless cripple, could only study himself and the inhabitants of the courtyard. After a while, he started to notice an unusual talent. At first, he was able to guess when his father would return from work. Then he could predict the events in neighbors’ lives. He learned about the events out on the street that happened without him knowing and outside of his view through the archway. The neighbors started to speak of him as being nothing more than a Saint. And then even a God. But, to be known as a God in the godless country bore great dangers not only for him, but also for his worshippers. So he was passing his life in that old rusty wheelchair like a hermit who no longer dreamt of the world beyond.

When Djanik was a greying 50-year-old man, the empire fell and he went out into the world. But the world frightened him, he felt lost. Suddenly, he was no longer an almighty God, but a helpless and sinful commoner, and, after a few more years full of suffering, a homeless fool who cannot find his way home…

**director’s note**

The film will be divided respectively into three parts—Prologue (26 mins.), The Birth of a God (64 mins.), The Birth of a Man (30 mins.). I am interested in the different rhythm and energy of the film’s three different parts, its visual depiction and the complex inner dramaturgy. I am captivated by the task of integrating the three aesthetically different resolutions into a single subject line.
The second part will be shot exclusively in an old courtyard which, in Baku, is usually located in the city centre and is colloquially called Italian yard. This is a round, almost enclosed space with only one entrance to the street. The houses surrounding the courtyard are adjacent to one another and are usually only one to four levels high. The courtyards are usually small so that the neighbors know each another very well and actively take part in each other’s lives.

**producer’s note**

The main purpose of participating in the pitching is to search for co-producers for shooting in Germany and for post production. We are also searching for co-producers in other European and former USSR countries – in particular, Georgia, Russia and Ukraine. At the moment, the only country participating in the project is Azerbaijan.

**vita Chingiz Rasulzade**

Chingiz F. Rasulzade was born in Baku (Azerbaijan) in 1972 to a family of engineers. He attended the Azerbaijan State College of Arts which he completed in 1992. In 1998, Rasulzade graduated from the Azerbaijan State Institute of Arts. His passion for filmmaking took him to Moscow where he was admitted to studies at the All-Russian State Institute of Cinematography (VGIK) and graduated in 2004. His debut feature THE DOLLS premiered with success at the 2010 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. He also works as a producer and screenwriter.

**company profile**

The Filmzadeh Producer Center is a newly established company which has two projects at the stage of development. It is the second year that one of its projects has been presented at Connecting Cottbus. The company brings together young and ambitious experts in the field of cinematography, who have participated in such training programmes as AVANTI and IFASC for countries of Southern Caucasus, with even more experienced experts who have made films for many years in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Russia. One of the founders is Chingiz Rasulzade.
THE NOTEBOOK
Front Film, Bulgaria

producer:
Nadejda Koseva

authors:
Ventsislav Vassilev, Svetla Tsotsorkova

director:
Svetla Tsotsorkova

summary:
One never knows when love will grab you by the throat. To some, it only happens once in a lifetime. To others – a few times. As for Lefty Junior, love grabbed him from the moment he was born.

project data:
genre: tragicomedy
length: 90 mins.
shooting format: 35 mm

budget:
estimated production costs: €600 000
financing already in place: €325.000

partners already attached:
MEDIA development support; Bulgarian National Film Center

looking for in particular:
co-producer, distributor, sales agent

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**synopsis**

In the beginning, there is a wedding. This particular wedding seems to be frozen in time. Of all the guests, it is only the bride who is awake. But this sleeping wedding is not where it all starts:

Eighteen-year old Lefty Junior disappears from the village of Lower Misery during a thunderstorm. This takes place a day before Damla, the Turkish girl he loves, is to marry somebody else. During the search for Lefty Jr. along the river, Damla finds a notebook written by the boy. Hiding from her father and her future husband, she begins to read it.

One never knows when love will grab you by the throat. Love catches up with Lefty Jr. as soon as he comes into this world. He and little Damla were born on the same day, in the same room. Lefty Jr. is a weak child. He pays more attention to his grandfather’s magical stories than to his father’s advice about running with a step counter in order to save himself from his “heart arrhythmia.” Damla, whose name means both “precious drop” and “heart attack”, is a beautiful and stubborn child for whom playing is everything and the will to win trumps over the actual game. The two children’s growing up is a comic dance in which “who’s leading” is a topic that is never discussed because there could never be a consensus about it.

The clashes occur when Lefty Jr. teaches her the alphabet in the barn, when they get into a fight because of their fathers’ bet, when they argue over the goat’s name, when they have to figure out who owns the dog ...

But one tragic day, he loses his father because of her. Then he loses her. After her departure, Lefty Jr. doesn’t stop running and counting his steps.

The new meeting of Damla and Lefty Jr. starts like a new game in which they dance – now as a young man and a young woman. This game turns out to be forbidden. The wrath of Damla’s father, the arrival of her fiancé Orhan and the announcement of the wedding turn everything on its head.

The storm breaks when these tales are completed. Damla has read through Lefty Jr.’s notes. This isn’t a notebook, but a love letter to her, ending with a code that indicates the number of steps to the place where he’ll be waiting for her. The counting down of the hours to the wedding turns out to be the counting down of the steps to love.

**director’s note**

One never knows when love will grab you by the throat. To some, it only happens once in a lifetime. To others – a few times. As for the main character Lefty Jr., love grabbed him from the moment he was born. It is no accident that the screenplay begins with a storm and ends with a chasm. The storm is like a force of nature, connected to momentariness, defeat and destruction, as well as – in an allegorical way – to the overpowering elements of temptation and passion. Something that one is unable to understand or control. Something like youth. The chasm, in contrast, is a place of the magic link between up and down, between life and death. A passage and a border. Questions and answers. Something like maturity.

In between the storm and the chasm there is a journey. A journey through “the map” of the lives of the boy and the girl. A journey through time as seen through the eyes of the main character – Lefty Jr.
A journey of the two characters towards one another. A journey through the magical world hidden in everyday life.

THE NOTEBOOK is essentially a story about love, but the setting in which it takes place should not be overlooked. As the two main characters belong to different groups – ethnic Turks and ethnic Bulgarians –, it is also a story about the coexistence between these two peoples. Seemingly separated by differences in religion, dress and language, which sometimes cause rifts between them, they are nevertheless united by their humanity, their moral understanding and everyday life’s triumphs and setbacks. It is this premise – of the co-existence of different ethnic and cultural groups – which provides the basis for a story with universal appeal.

producer’s note
THE NOTEBOOK tells a simple love story in a very poetic way. What made me believe in the project is the will to make a passionate film on the edge between the end of the world and the beginning of the fairytale. Nowadays, when new technology and virtual ways of communication overwhelm society, there is a need for tenderness and poetry. If we succeed in meeting this challenge, we will be able to reach the hearts of the audience.

THE NOTEBOOK already received financial support from the National Film Centre in Bulgaria and MEDIA Development in its first draft. We are now working on the second draft of the script and looking for co-producers to join the project.

vita Svetla Tsotsorkova
Svetla Tsotsorkova graduated from NATFA in Sofia as a film and TV director, and then studied Directing at the London Film School. After coming back to Bulgaria and working as a first assistant director for several years, she directed the 20-minute film LIFE WITH SOPHIA which won the Jameson Short Film Award at the Sofia IFF in 2004. The film had a very successful festival life: it participated in the Critics’ Week at Cannes’05, Sarajevo IFF ’04, Karlovy Vary’04, Munich Student IFF’04, Court Metrage de Bruxelles’05, Telluride IFF USA’05, Taipei IFF’07, Drama IFF’05, Cottbus IFF’05. It was shown on the Open Student Television Network USA and the Satellite Bulgarian channel. In addition, the film was released and screened on its own at an arthouse cinema in Sofia for two weeks. In subsequent years, Svetla worked as a producer and took part in a several short films as the main actress, some of them being awarded prizes at international festivals like Sundance, Clermont-Ferrand, etc.


vita Ventsislav Vassilev
Ventsislav Vassilev was born in 1973. After graduating from NATFA as a film director, he devoted himself to writing. His screenwriting efforts were rewarded when he wrote THE REVENGE PLAN. The project received financial support from the Bulgarian National Film Centre and the 30-minute film was made in 2009. Apart from the awards for best Bulgarian debut and best actor at the “Golden Rose” IFF’, in Varna (Bulgaria) in 2008, the film also received a prize for best screenplay at a festival in Haskovo (Bulgaria). In 2009, Ventsislav wrote a screenplay called MICE POISON which was also granted financial support from the Bulgarian National Film Centre and is now in production. In 2010, he wrote the full-length script MARTI, supported by Bulgarian National Television and currently in production.
Front Film Ltd. is a production company established in 2004 and run by Nadejda Koseva and Svetla Tsotsorkova. We work as producers on short, feature, fiction and documentary films by mainly young filmmakers who are at the beginning of their careers. And we executive or line produce films produced by other production companies. These projects are supported by government funds and/or by private individuals and companies.

Front Film’s first production was the short WALTZES AND TANGOS FROM THE VILLAGE OF WHITEWATER which premiered at Locarno and then travelled to many other festivals, winning a special mention at Montpellier Film Festival. As producers, Front Film also completed the fiction feature HUNTING PARK by director Lyubomir Mladenov (2009), and is currently in production with the 90-minute documentary BULGARIA IS ONE BIG MISTAKE TOO by director Stoyan Radev.

Front Film recently executive produced TAKE TWO (director: Nadejda Koseva; 26 mins; production companies: Art Fest and Coin Film) which premiered at Sarajevo Film Festival.
THE HIGH SUN
Kinorama, Croatia

producer:
Ivana Šimić

author:
Dalibor Matanić

director:
Dalibor Matanić

summary:
Two young people from two neighbouring villages of different religions and ethnicities fall in love. The people around them do not consider their love to be appropriate and are dead set against their reunion – it is difficult to overcome a deeply-rooted hatred.

project data:
genre: drama
length: 90 mins.
shooting format: 2K

budget:
estimated production costs: € 980,000
financing already in place: € 23,895

partners already attached:
Croatian Radio & Television, City of Zagreb

looking for in particular:
co-producer, dramaturgical advisor, international sales

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**Synopsis**

Dalmatia, 1990, 2000 and 2010. The story of THE HIGH SUN is an original take on a classic Romeo and Juliet story. As in every Romeo and Juliet story, the premise is the same – two young people from two neighbouring villages fall in love. The film is divided into three parts. It will tell the story of Jelena and Ivan, two young people from different ethnic groups, across three different decades. Thus, it will follow a total of six characters over three consecutive decades, each character in a separate decade played by the same actor. The lovers always meet in exactly the same location, at exactly the same age (she is always 24 and he is always 28).

But the stories themselves take place at ten-year intervals – each one begins a decade after the story that preceeded it. While the same stories repeat themselves from one decade to the other, it seems impossible to overcome a deeply-rooted hatred. However, the last story offers a ray of hope: altruism and some degree of civilized progress will allow our heroes’ neighbourhood to take a step forward and show that there is always hope that things may change for the better. The story about Jelena and Ivan is actually the story aiming to speak about hatred in general, which is the hatred and mistrust of the other.

**Director’s Note**

As an artist, I have been long intrigued by the ever-present inter-ethnic hatred in the Balkan region, and by conflicts rooted in war, religion or politics. With this film, I intend to explore these themes by contrasting the destructive emotion of hatred with its exact polar opposite: love, and the act of falling in love.

In the first story, a romantic attraction – the purest human urge – is forced underground when love becomes a forbidden luxury as a result of pre-war madness, confusion and fear. In the second story, the war is over, but a relationship between two lovers from different communities is still forbidden because the scars of war simply cannot heal that easily, and inter-ethnic hatred still has a powerful and malignant hold over people’s lives. The third story takes place in the present day, it offers a solution where love finally becomes possible when people manage to overcome the darkness in their souls and try to live once more according to basic human principles. Catharsis succeeds, but alarming side-effects appear.

I would like to combine the sun-scorched Dalmatian landscape, the fecund natural world and the carefree certainty of youth with human actions that are the fruit of long-standing hatred, history, tradition, confusion and fear. With such a contrast, I will follow our main characters with the camera.

From the initial story’s light-heartedness and lack of restraint, through the war-ravaged and traumatised couple in the second story, we will come to the present day and the need to raise ourselves above the horrors of the past and the need to revitalize the spirit of essential youthful innocence and mutual tolerance. I want an unquenchable vitality to break through the frames of this film.

**Producer’s Note**

We have been working with Dalibor Matanić since his feature film debut – this is now more than ten years of fruitful collaboration. We appreciate the artistic quality and sincerity of all of his scripts and films – he always chooses the topics that are important to him and in accordance with his sensibility.
If we were asked to name a common thread in all his previous films (for all of which he wrote or co-wrote the script), we would say that they all deal with individuals living in a society that deeply affects their inner worlds. As an author, Dalibor is very keen on highlighting social anomalies – discrimination, rampant consumerism, the influence of the Church, alienation – the host of problems associated with the societies in transition. His latest screenplay deals with a theme that has been occupying him for a while – the theme of inter-ethnic hatred. But by speaking about the inter-ethnic hatred so well known in our region, he aims to speak about hatred in general, the hatred and mistrust of the other. We consider this theme to be both important and very prevalent. We really cannot boast of tolerance – examples of hatred towards people who are different or ‘other’ can be found all over Europe. As producers, we would really like to make films that make a difference – this might be one of them and that’s where our strongest motivation lies. We believe in the director’s creative strength and the strength of this story, so we will do our best to film this story and present it to the audience.

**vita Dalibor Matanić**

Dalibor Matanić was born in Zagreb in 1975 and holds a degree in Film and Television Directing from the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb. After shooting several shorts, he made his award-winning feature debut THE CASHIER WANTS TO GO TO THE SEASIDE in 2000. His filmography includes seven feature films and several shorts screened at many international film festivals. His feature KINO LIKA and his short PARTY were shown at 80 international film festivals and received 27 awards. Currently, his MOTHER OF ASPHALT (2010) is on the international festival circuit, while this year’s Pula Film Festival showed the premiere of his latest feature DADDY. Matanić is a member of the European Film Academy.

**company profile**

Kinorama is a Zagreb-based production company specialising in film production, which was founded in 2003. Within the past two years, we produced four feature films and four shorts, winning more than 40 international film awards. At the moment, we are preparing two new features to be filmed soon and are developing four new projects. Some of the most promising young directors as well as already recognized and respected Croatian filmmakers are attached to our company. Since we are also eager to co-produce, we are always present at international co-production markets, both looking for partners for our projects and trying to find interesting other ones.
Connecting Cottbus
3-6.11.2021
East West Co-production Market at the FilmFestival Cottbus
THE PRIEST’S CHILDREN
Interfilm, Croatia

producer:
Ivan Maloca

author:
Mate Matisic

director:
Vinko Bresan

summary:
He decided to help God. GOD HELP US!!!

project data:
genre: comedy
length: approx. 100 mins.
shooting format: digital

budget:
estimated production costs: €1,640,100
financing already in place: €670,000

partners already attached:
Croatian Audiovisual Center (feauture film support)

looking for in particular:
co-producer

contact:
Maja Pavic, Maja Vukic
Interfilm
Nova Ves 45/2
HR – 10 000 Zagreb
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fax: +385 1 4667 022
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e-mail: interfilm@interfilm.hr
web: www.interfilm.hr
**Synopsis**

*A Mediterranean Comedy.* Don Fabijan, a young Catholic priest in a small town on a Dalmatian island, is frustrated by the popularity that the old priest has among the townspeople. After the Pope's new decree allows partial use of condoms, the new priest starts puncturing the condoms, which the god-fearing tobacconist Peter then sells on his kiosk. Don Fabijan and Peter are soon joined by Marin, the local pharmacist, a straight conservative, who starts secretly planting vitamin pills instead of contraceptives in his pharmacy. To keep the whole action under control, the three of them draft a kind of a *sexual graph* of the whole township. Thus, by controlling the sexual lives of men and women, they practically abolish contraception on the small Dalmatian island. As the unwanted pregnancies start occurring, Don Fabijan does all he can to marry such couples in a proper Christian way, even against their will. Slowly but steadily, Don Fabijan's importance as a priest on the island grows. The news of the growth in the birth-rate on that small Dalmatian island even spreads outside of the Croatian borders. Foreign TV crews and childless couples start visiting the island. When Peter's wife accidentally finds out about her husband's, Marin's and Don Fabijan's action, the three of them are forced to tell her what they have been up to. Local politicians, the police (investigating the disappearance of a pregnant girl) and others become involved in the matter as well, resulting in a comedy of errors in which each line of the narrative cumulatively creates comic situations.

**Director's Note**

A young and ambitious priest, motivated by the desire for demographic renewal and in collaboration with the local newsstand salesman, secretly punctures all the packaged condoms before they are sold. After the local pharmacist joins them too, they actually abolish contraception on the island. When the townspeople, bishops, political parties – social democratic as well as conservative –, media, police, tourist organizations etc. become involved in the matter as well, things get out of control, resulting in a comedy of errors in which each line of the narrative cumulatively creates comic situations.

A specific factor in this type of a film is precisely in the genre consistency and in the slow and inconspicuous addition of elements of seriousness. That is why the approach to every scene in the film will be a quest for the comic in the serious as well as the establishment of the film gag as a directors' principle. Of course, the humorous discourse of the story and film gags on the one side, need to have serious elements of the narrative on the other as a certain counterbalance because the very problem that *THE PRIEST'S CHILDREN* treats still affects human lives greatly today.

**Producer's Note**

*THE PRIEST'S CHILDREN* is a Mediterranean comedy which bases its attraction, on the one hand, on the undisturbed Dalmatian landscapes, picturesque island locations and specific Mediterranean mentality, and, on the other hand, on the universal film gag which provokes a positive reaction from worldwide audiences. Of course, the universality of this comedy also manifests itself in the fact that, through the humorous discourse, it poses serious questions such as the one about the relationship of the individual and
the Church dogmas or the manipulation of the society by the Church. With this film, the director Vinko Bresan returns to his home territory, offering insights into the social structure and mentality of the islanders with the same awareness as he already shown in his earlier films.

vita Vinko Bresan

Vinko Bresan was born in Zagreb in 1964. He studied Philosophy and Comparative Literature as well as Film and TV Directing. His debut, the low-budget feature film HOW THE WAR STARTED ON MY ISLAND, became - after TITANIC - the biggest box-office success in Croatian cinemas for the last twenty years. His films MARSHAL TITO’S SPIRIT and WITNESSES were awarded prizes at festivals in Karlovy Vary and Berlin. So far, he has directed four features as well as several shorts and TV series. He is also active as a theatre director.

vita Mate Matisic

Mate Matisic was born in Ricice near Imotski, Croatia, in 1965. He graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University of Zagreb. He is an award-winning playwright and scriptwriter, composer and musician. His plays were translated into over twenty languages and staged around the world. He is the scriptwriter and co-writer of ten feature films brought to the screen by various Croatian directors. As a composer, his opus includes over 50 theatre plays, 20 feature films and TV series. He currently teaches writing for the screen at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb. He is also a member of the gipsy jazz ensemble Hot Club.

company profile

Interfilm, established in the mid-nineties, first started with the production of commercials and video-clips and then moved on to documentaries (20 so far), TV dramas and series, including the first Croatian sitcom which became very popular and aired for five seasons. From 1996 to the present day, Interfilm produced over 20 feature films, including four European co-productions.
Connecting Cottbus
3–4.11.2021
East West Co-production Market
at the FilmFestival Cottbus
LOST IN MUNICH
Dog Day Productions, Czech Republic

producer:
Pavel Čechák, John Riley

author:
Petr Zelenka

director:
Petr Zelenka

summary:
Sir P, a 90-year-old gray parrot, formerly living with Edouard Daladier, the French prime minister responsible for signing the Munich Treaty, comes to Prague to give his "account" of the past events. But can he do it, being just a bird? At the end of the day, it is the French who decide to assassinate their own national hero - and that's only half the story …

project data:
genre: comedy, drama
length: 100 mins.
shooting format: 35mm, 16mm

budget:
estimated production costs: € 2.017.197
financing already in place: € 10.000

partners already attached:
Czech Television (letter of intent)

looking for in particular:
co-producer

contact:
Pavel Čechák
Dog Day Productions
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synopsis

Pavel, a tabloid journalist in a mid-life crisis, finds himself at a press conference for a 90-year old talking grey parrot, which belonged to Edouard Daladier, the Prime Minister of France from 1938-1939. Sir „P“, as he is known, is a living relic of history, specifically the Munich Agreement, which Daladier signed on behalf of France, and is able to repeat various important declarations of Daladier. Pavel senses a connection and consequently abducts the parrot, setting off an unwanted international scandal – although mainly because of the bird’s habit of making controversial “Daladier” quotes about the Czechs, the French, Hitler, even the Abwehr. Parallel to these events, Pavel is trying to straighten out his life. He’s losing his job and his wife while at the same time forming a bond with a feathered media star. Sir „P“, in fact, is the key to the missing meaning in Pavel’s life. The French authorities, however, decide upon a radical solution: assassinate the national treasure …

But this is only half the story. This film, less than an hour long, is but the torso of an unfinished feature. Structurally speaking, it is the first part of a commercial DVD. What follows is a 50-minute “Making Of” giving a behind-the-scenes look into an international co-production beset by problems: the French lead Leroy (barely seen in the feature) shows up late and it’s obvious the time he spent in rehab wasn’t a success; the director insists the parrot actually speak its lines; the producers can’t seem to communicate with one another; on the first day of shooting, the Czech lead Michal (Pavel in the feature) has an allergic reaction to parrot feathers. The difficulties pile up as the shooting schedule and budget completely collapse. At one point, through holotropic breathing séances, Michal briefly finds himself among the participants of the Munich Agreement meeting. He understands that the truth of these events is completely different from that offered in history books. He tries to apply this experience to keep the French producers from jumping ship. But it is Jean Dupont, a small-time pornographer with a love of Renoir and Tarkovsky, brought into the project by the French producers to be the parrot’s French tutor, who makes saving the film his great cause. But even Dupont’s passion isn’t enough when, before shooting a single major scene, Leroy dies. And so, there’s nothing left to do other than give the unfinished torso of a film some other meaning in editing …

director’s note

Munich 1938. After the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, it is the second most important event in Czech (Czechoslovak) history. The ghosts of Munich haunt us to this day. The feeling of isolation, being surrounded by hostile countries, victims of the decisions taken far beyond our reach … Was giving in to the Munich Pact an act of wisdom or an act of cowardice? Should we have stood up and fought the Nazis in September 1938? Did that decision cripple the Czech soul for the crucial historical moments to come in 1948 and 1968? Or did it help us save the best minds of the generation for the times to come? And if it were not for the Munich surrender, maybe there would have been no Second World War at all.

I am approaching the Munich Accord from three angles. In the opening documentary sequence, the “history book” depiction of events and some basic facts are presented. The truncated feature film that follows is a stylized and funny means of dealing with the “echo of history”. The historical issues of Munich are paralleled with the mid-life crisis of a mediocre journalist who has lost interest in truth and life
and people around him, and rediscovers it through his tangential brush with this history. In the third part, a group of filmmakers try to produce this film as an international co-production and, in this way, embark upon their own odyssey with the Munich myth and trauma. They fail. History repeats itself, film is war, your allies are your enemies, and your own generals are bluffing.

The film’s chapters are presented in three styles of filmmaking: black-and-white documentary, standard 35mm feature framing and camera work, and fake documentary with its 16mm hand-held “being there” approach. With each new chapter, a new layer of the onion falls off and we come closer to understanding the motives of man and the history written by man.

producer’s note

What is remarkable about this project are the layers to the storytelling which simultaneously unpack and pick at an important European historical event while also fleshing out its themes through modern-day characters in universal circumstances. As always with writer/director Petr Zelenka, they are laced with satire and tinged with the absurd.

The film is not a historical drama or apology by any means. It embraces romantic and situational comedy, using exactly these elements to entice the audience to consider the deeper issues being raised, such as the sense of, even desire for, isolation, both personal and cultural, that so many feel today; the failure of people to communicate properly with one another; the role and power of media in shaping our thoughts and perceptions. These are themes that all exist on the macro-level in the historical event of the Munich Accord. They are also grist to the mill of events that make up the lives of ordinary people: a journalist, for instance; or an actor; or a translator; or a professor; any one of us. It is a story that, as it unfolds in its idiosyncratic way, offers the audience personal and emotional sustenance; and then, when it’s over, leaves that audience with food for thought for later.

vita Petr Zelenka

A graduate of the Czech film school FAMU, Petr Zelenka initially worked as a script editor at the Barrandov Film Studios. In the early 1990s, he wrote a number of teleplays for Czech TV. In 1998, his feature film BUTTONERS received a Tiger Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam and four Czech Lions (Czech Academy Awards). In 2000, he wrote the screenplay for LONERS, the top Czech box office hit of that year. His next feature, YEAR OF THE DEVIL, won the Crystal Globe at the 2002 edition of the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival and took home six Czech Lions. His last film KARAMAZOV, a Czech-Polish co-production supported by Eurimages, won the Czech Lions for Best Film and Best Director. He is also a successful playwright whose work is translated and produced throughout Europe.
company profile

Dog Day Productions is a newly established production company founded by Pavel Čechák in 2009. It produced the theatre performance "Posedlost", which had a successful run at the Divadlo v Čeletné theatre, a documentary film entitled O BYDLENÍ SENIORŮ, the TV short URAD, and co-produced the French feature documentary CASANOVA – THE STORY OF MY LIFE. Currently, it is preparing several film and television projects, including the TV series HOTEL VENUS, produced in cooperation with the Dejvicke theatre, exploring their rise ten years ago to the forefront of the Prague theatre scene, and the feature documentary THE LIFE OF MY FATHER, directed by Margareta Hruza.
TO THE SEA
Evolution Films, Czech Republic

producer:
Pavel Berčík

author:
Petra Soukupová

director:
Karin Babinská

summary:
Petr’s father dies and Petr puts a brake on his too fast, work-loaded life. He wants to be a good father and decides to go on holiday with his daughters to have a great time like he once did with his father. Apart from Adela and Johanka, he also invites Jitka, the daughter from his previous marriage. The four of them have never spent more than one day together, and Petr will have to deal with this difficult situation which he has put himself into.

project data:
genre: drama
length: 100 mins.
shooting format: 16mm

budget:
estimated production costs: € 1.000.000
financing already in place: € 500.000

partners already attached:
Czech Film Fund; Czech Television; Barrandov Studios

looking for in particular:
co-producer, sales agent

contact:
Pavel Berčík
Evolution Films, s.r.o.
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synopsis

Petr’s father has recently died. As he is sorting through his father’s belongings, he comes across some photographs from a vacation he took with his father when he was still a boy. Petr realises that his work as editor-in-chief of a magazine doesn’t leave him any time for his family. He decides to become a better father to his three daughters – Jitka from his first marriage, and Adéla and Johanka from his current one. He hits upon the idea of taking his daughters to the same place and to experience the same sense of idyll that he did as a child.

There’s only one week left in the summer holidays, so Petr quickly arranges a seafront house. Neither his former nor his current wife think that his plans are a good idea. But he has already made up his mind.

Jitka (16) is somewhat of a loner who doesn’t exactly have the best relationship with her father. Due to his work and his new family, he has little time for her. She hesitates; however, she decides to go, even though she cannot imagine what she might be doing there. Maybe she likes the idea of going to the seaside and she is pleased that her father has made the offer, but she has no intention of letting him fuss over her since they haven’t lived together for ten years.

Adéla (12) is a nice, well-behaved girl who likes to organise things. She loves to swim and is really looking forward to their seaside vacation. The only things she is not happy about are her few extra pounds and the fact that her mother won’t be coming. Johanka (6) is a golden-haired princess, smart and exceptionally intelligent for her age. But she is spoiled, knows exactly how to control her father and how to get what she wants – sometimes even by not playing fair.

She knows how to hurt people with her comments. Neither Adéla nor Johanka are happy to be going with their half-sister, but Petr doesn’t take their objections seriously.

Petr is not particularly worried, even though he is not exactly the family type and the complicated world of girls is incomprehensible to his rational nature. He is confident that he will manage, even though he has never been on holiday with his daughters alone. But as soon as all four are in the car together, it’s obvious that it probably won’t be a completely idyllic vacation.

Jitka stirs up trouble as she is clearly against Jitka travelling with them, while Jitka just wants to be left alone. The fact that Petr has a lot of work to do besides the holiday activities - and a smouldering conflict with his wife Klara – won’t help him deal with the situation. He tries to organise their everyday activities – swimming in the sea, a day trip, dinner – but cannot handle things when his daughters don’t agree to his suggestions. Moreover, his attempts to resolve the conflicts between his daughters in the quickest possible manner almost always fail. Usually, Johanka ends up at the centre of attention and Adéla feels ignored and shunted aside. Jitka feels like a stranger amongst the others, and tries to come up with her own programme. She never goes swimming with the rest and prefers to spend her evenings alone on walks along the beach with headphones on her ears.

Arguments between Petr and his daughters mount over an ice-cream stain on Johanka’s shirt – which means that she can’t wear the matching skirt, and, of course, over Jitka’s staying out late. Everything comes to a head when Adéla runs away. For Petr, the final day feels like going through
Eventually, of all of the family, it is Jitka who comforts Adéla and convinces her to return.

Just as their vacation is coming to an end, there is finally a fragile balance between all of them. They share one peaceful evening during which they all get along, but they are already on their way home. When they arrive back, the sisters head home to their respective mothers. There is a fleeting good-bye, and everybody returns to their lives. At the end, Petr remains alone, just as before.

**director’s note**

The script for TO THE SEA is an exceptionally sensitive story. For me, its main strength is in its detailed psychological exploration of all of its characters. We are introduced to the inner world of one family, and it is clear from the outset that things are not working out the way they should. The daughters are fighting for their position within the family and for their father’s attention. For his part, their father is incapable of understanding the world of girls, and he doesn’t even try very hard anyway – it is just too complicated and incomprehensible for someone of his rational nature. The youngest daughter, pretty little Johanka, uses her innocent looks and cuteness to manipulate those around her. She is smart for her age, but although this might appear to be an advantage, in the world of children it is more of a handicap. Chubby Adéla struggles with the feeling that nobody likes her, that she isn’t good enough. She feels pushed aside and mistreated. Jitka is an introvert who manages to hide her insecurity and vulnerability underneath a mask of aloofness and non-conformist clothing and behaviour.

In seemingly banal situations, the film reveals the conflicts, grievances, and misunderstandings resulting from the family’s inability to communicate. Although they spend a lot of time together, none of them is capable of speaking openly and expressing their true feelings. Nothing dramatic happens during their seaside vacation, and yet they all experience something that in one way or another transforms them and helps to reshape their relationships in a new way.

The story is based on emotions; the atmosphere is authentic and full of nostalgia. Our childhood experiences may seem unimportant, but they stay with us into adulthood.

For me, the script for TO THE SEA is a story of loneliness – the loneliness of four people who should be close to each other. But if we are unable to open up and share our true feelings, then we close ourselves off into our worlds of our own interpretations.

**producer’s note**

I picked this project because I like the psychological preciseness of the characters. For me, the message of this story is that we cannot leave our problems behind – because we never know when we will have to face them again, unprepared, in complicated situations. The main character Petr is in such a situation by his own fault, and he has to face it. His situation is especially difficult since he and his daughters are supposed to be the closest for each other, but, because of their inability to communicate, they are not.

I think this script, together with Karin Babinska’s directing talent, will be a strong piece of drama, but with some humour and hope in the end. Thus, I believe TO THE SEA
can be appreciated by festivals and cinema audiences alike. In the film, we would like to use the very melancholic, late summer atmosphere of the long sandy Baltic Sea beaches between Rügen and Gdansk. This means that I will be looking for suitable partners from these regions.

vita Karin Babinská
Karin Babinská studied film and television directing at the Film and TV Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (FAMU) from 1993 to 1999. During her studies, she made several short films, one of which, JAKUB AND VERONIKA, won numerous awards at international film festivals. She directed three short stories for the Czech Television series BACHELORS. She has also directed several TV films and commercials since 2000. In 2007, she directed her first feature film DOLLS.

vita Petra Soukupová
Petra Soukupová writes prose and scripts. She graduated from the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (2008) as a script writer. For her first novel “K moři / To the Seaside”, she was awarded the Jiří Orten Prize, a prestigious award for authors under 30 years of age. She was also shortlisted for the Magnesia Litera Prize for prose and the Josef Škvorecký Prize (all in 2008). In 2009, she was shortlisted for the Josef Škvorecký Prize again, this time for her second novel “Zmizet / To Disappear”. In 2010, Zmizet was awarded the main Magnesia Litera prize for The Book of the Year. She has also been awarded two important domestic prizes for her film scripts.

company profile
At Evolution Films, we develop and produce our own projects and feel comfortable in every field of audiovisual production. We produce feature films, documentaries, documentary series and animated works. We also cooperate on TV projects, and produce corporate documentaries, promotional films and music videos.
Our features include WOMANIZER by Jan Prušinovský (2008) which scored 150,000 admissions in Czech cinemas, and the international co-productions THE BALUTY GHETTO, a documentary by Pavel Štingl (2008), and A TEAR IS NEEDED, an animation project directed by Kristina Dušková (2009). We are currently finishing our minority co-productions YUMA by Piotr Mularuk (with Yeti Films, Poland) and LOVE by Jakub Kroner (with Inout Studio, Slovakia).
TOMORROW
Gogo Lab, Georgia

producer:
Sophia Bazgadze

author:
Ketevan Machavariani

director:
Ketevan Machavariani

summary:
Three old friends, refugees from Abkhazia, are on a trip to visit their old friend after a long separation. The road journey is leading them to refresh memories of their childhood in the hometown of Sokhumi, the place they were forced to leave. At the same time, this path leads them to change their lives.

project data:
genre: drama
length: 90 mins.
shooting format: 35mm

budget:
estimated production costs: €446,000
financing already in place: €50,000

partners already attached:
Jaga Grip (Georgia), Independent Film Service (Georgia)

looking for in particular:
co-producer

contact:
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Gogo Lab LLC
15 Shio Mgvimeli
Tbilisi
Georgia
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The four main characters of the film are refugees from Abkhazia. They were forced to leave their home town at the age of 13. As they were not allowed to return, they moved to Tbilisi and Moscow. Andro lives in Moscow. He is currently in Sokhumi with his girlfriend, the 19-year-old Abkhazian Amra. Amra is the daughter of refugees from Abkhazia. It is her first visit to Sokhumi. The Russian citizenship allows Andro to enter his lost homeland where he is looking for abandoned apartments. He buys one apartment and plans to involve his other Georgian refugee friends. He invites his friends living in Tbilisi to Anaklia, Abkhazia’s seaside resort. Gigi is considered a successful laser therapist in Tbilisi. Irakli produces popular TV shows. Gigi and Irakli manage to leave their routine and visit Andro. On the way, they meet their old friend, the former car-racing champion Dato, who became an alcoholic.

Unlike them, Dato is not concerned with routine - he is in conflict with his family, with friends, with the whole world. Still, he is keeping a connection with their common childhood memories. When he is drunk, he is calling on the new dwellers of his Sukhumi house. Dato’s strange attempts to find some way back to their common past inspired Andro to come back to Sukhumi and try to purchase the houses where they had spent their childhood.

After a tiring journey lasting through the night, the friends reach Anaklia. They find out that Andro has drowned. The tide has apparently carried his body to the Abkhazian side where the rescue service could not continue its work. In Anaklia, the friends learn about about his affairs and meet Amra. Dato decides to continue Andro’s business, while Amra decides to return to Sokhumi and, as they can’t cross the border, provide Dato with the necessary information.

I am part of the so-called ‘lost generation’ – in the epoch of great changes and transition. At the same time, I am a witness to the wars of the last decades in my country. The material I accumulated on the basis of my own experiences serves as a source for the script of TOMORROW.

The main characters bear similarities with my friends of which some are refugees from Abkhazia or Ossetia. They grew up far from their homes. Some of them are very successful, some of them are floating on the surface of life like many others from our generation. I would like to reflect their needs, their dreams and their despair – sometimes, the routine eats their soul. I am trying to let my four characters find a way out of their own blind existences.

Dato, who seems to be a loser at the beginning, finally discovers his mission – although a high price has been paid for it. Andro’s desperate attempt to connect the past with the future is a catalyst for the turning point. The journey of Dato, Gigi and Irakli to West Georgia is a chance for each one of them to overcome their everyday routine. Will they use this chance?

The Black Sea region and its small, old seaside towns where we intend to shoot the film will give an authenticity to the story, while we will keep the contrast between the capital of Tbilisi and the rural areas. We plan to make mix professional with non-professional actors to obtain maximal realism on the screen. Local residents will be recruited as well. Our main task is to erase the line between staged scenes and documentary footage in the representation of our charac-
ters in the film. Preferably, sunless day and mostly rainy scenes will be chosen while the last scene will be shot in the intense sun to get totally white light. The journey of the characters should depict a way from reality and routine to the world of their still latent dreams.

producer’s note
The main message we want to deliver with our new project is to remind the audience that, despite the hostile relationships between the Georgians and Abkhazians, there is always a different and effective way of re-establishing connections. Thus, the mission of the four friends becomes a symbolic gesture both not to forget and to try to live together in peace. We think that the theme of the crises between the neighbouring countries and their relationship are of international importance. The Georgian-Abkhazian war and its consequences do not only effect us, as we can find many parallels with similar issues in other parts of the world.

The director and author Ketevan Machavariani is one of my closest friends whom I have known for several years. We have already worked on several projects and I believe we form a strong and imaginative team. This strong incentive was a reason why we became partners within our newly established production company.

Ketevan’s feature debut SALT WHITE, which premiered at this year’s Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, has already started its path through the international festival landscape. It will also be screened as a part of the main competition of FilmFestival Cottbus and thus be a good reference in order to have an idea of her creative vision. I admire the way she manages to combine the depiction of her aesthetic imagination with the harsh reality of the film’s subject. I truly believe in her talent and her own unique style.

\[ Vita Ketevan Machavariani \]

Ketevan Machavariani has directed several short films, worked as a director and producer of television programmes, and has also worked as an assistant director for several full-length feature films. From 2007 to 2009, she worked for the Independent Film Project Film Studio and has been a project manager for the Kartuli Pilmi (Georgian Film) Film Studio since 2009. She works as an executive producer, her last project STREET DAYS being selected by the Rotterdam International Film Festival for its Tiger Award competition. She also realised a couple of documentaries and image videos for NGO’s. Her feature debut SALT WHITE premiered in the East of the West section at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival 2011. It was also screened at the Montreal World Cinema Festival and the Cinemed-Mediterranean Film Festival Montpellier. It is also part of this year’s competition at FilmFestival Cottbus.

\[ Company profile \]

Gogo Lab LLC is a young and creative Tbilisi-based independent production company, established in 2011. It was set up by Ketevan Machavariani, the art director and producer Sophia Bazagadze, and the PR and event manager Nino Kirtsikalia, whose experience and co-operation in numerous projects was an incentive to start this collaboration. The mission of our company is to create quality products with an authentic identity. We aim to work with distinctive directors and to discover unique stories. We also aim to contribute to the development of Georgian cinematography and to take an active part in the international film market.

The main activities of Gogo Lab are:
• Production of full-length and short films
• Production of documentaries and animation
• Production of TV advertising
• Supporting young Georgian film directors and scriptwriters
NOW, LOVE
Grand Pictures, Ireland

producer:
Ailish McElmeel

author:
Virginia Gilbert

director:
Virginia Gilbert

summary:
All of us dream of the fairy tale … NOW, LOVE is a powerful and passionate contemporary drama that explores our universal yearning for love, and how such yearning forces us to confront the core of who we are.

project data:
genre: drama
length: 100 mins.
shooting format: digital – Alexia or RED

budget:
estimated production costs: €1,750,000
financing already in place: €477,000

partners already attached:
Grand Pictures (Section 481, Irish tax incentive); Irish Film Board development support; MEDIA development support; co-producer TR9 Films, Germany

looking for in particular:
co-producer, sales agent, distributors, financiers

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NOW, LOVE is a powerful and passionate contemporary drama that explores our universal yearning for love. When Denise, reeling from a painful, recent divorce, and on the cusp of lonely middle age, falls unexpectedly in love with Karol, a Polish émigré, she throws herself headlong into the relationship, desperate to get a second shot at happiness. But Karol, a man full of secrets, is in flight from the realities of his own life – a life that has been lived, for the most part, behind the Iron Curtain: a life of moral compromise and collusion and the slow erosion of his better self. As the truth about his background begins to surface – the truth about his job, about his marriage – Denise is forced to face up to the fact that her fairy tale can’t have a happy ending. And all those questions about her life and about herself that she had fled from, must be answered anew.

Complex, poignant and passionate, NOW, LOVE is a film about the fundamental messiness and unpredictability of life and the human heart; the choices that we make and our yearnings and hopes for happiness. An exploration of the complications of adult relationships and sexuality; the desires and needs that drive us, our inner vulnerabilities and our capacity for resilience in the face of loss and heartbreak.

**director’s note**

NOW, LOVE is a powerful, passionate drama that explores our yearnings and hopes for happiness, the complications of adult relationships and sexuality and our capacity for resilience in the face of loss and heartbreak.

When Denise falls in love with Karel in the wake of her painful and bitter divorce, the experience is transformative. That she should find the capacity to love in such a way again, and that she should have the opportunity to rediscover herself anew with him, is a revelation to her. Coming from a place where life seemed to be moving inexorably towards a settled old age, the possibility and promise of a new start is overwhelming. Age and experience have no bearing on emotion; Denise’s intellect is no defence against her neediness. Karel is clearly a man going through a deeply troubled period in his own life, but Denise, in falling for him, loses all sense of objectivity, and can’t be dispassionate. She falls for him like a teenager and even though this is pointed out to her, she cannot help herself, and therefore cannot help but be hurt. For, as the saying goes, the heart wants what the heart wants.

NOW, LOVE looks at complicated adults with complicated lives, as they attempt to navigate their conflicting needs and desires. Taking as its subject matter lives rather than events, the film roots the broader experiences of society in a powerful human drama. A man full of secrets, Karel is in flight from the realities of his life and background – a life that has been lived, for the most part, behind the Iron Curtain, shaped by Communism; a life of moral compromises and collusion and the slow but steady erosion of his better self. Change in Poland has brought, for Karel, chaos, humiliation and uncertainty. Denise, who’s had an apparently comfortable and successful life in Dublin, has had to face up to her recently failed marriage. The things which had once defined her – her marriage, her friends, her sense of herself – have been altered radically, and she is facing a stark reassessment of her life.

My unswerving love for and commitment to this film comes from a deep sense that it captures certain truths about human beings. At heart, the film’s concern is in exploring that vital question: what does it mean to try and live a good
life? The films I am drawn to and the cinematic traditions I see myself as part of, are those that seek to explore that most ambitious of questions and that seek to get under the skin of the way human beings operate. For me, Denise’s desire to love and be loved, is deeply moving, deeply messy and deeply human and, in spite of the suffering it brings, is somehow a profoundly inspiring affirmation of what it means to be truly alive.

**producer’s note**

NOW, LOVE is a poignant and powerful modern day love story. It doesn’t offer the happily ever after fairy tale love that is so often explored in the movies, instead, it offers a poetic realism of the bitter, messy moments in adult relationships. The harsh and difficult reality of returning to the dating game at an older age, with much of one’s confidence and beauty often eroded. NOW, LOVE while rooted in a harshly truthful honesty offers a resilient and optimistic hope for our heroine Denise.

NOW, LOVE is a powerful love story for an older audience. It is unashamedly arthouse and embraces European film making sensibilities at its core. Writer/director Virginia Gilbert is BAFTA-nominated and appeared in the 2008 Screen International Stars of Tomorrow. The script was placed on the prestigious Brit List as being one of the top 40 outstanding screenplays in the UK and Ireland, and internationally acclaimed actress Juliet Stevenson is attached in the leading role of Denise.

NOW, LOVE provides a wonderful vehicle for acclaimed actress Juliet Stevenson. Given Juliet’s attachment, the script listing on the prestigious UK’s Brit List and in the wonderful hands of BAFTA-nominated Virginia Gilbert, I believe NOW, LOVE will succeed in becoming a strong, moving, emotionally powerful arthouse movie with international appeal.

NOW, LOVE fits naturally into a creative Irish/Polish co-production model, however Grand Pictures’ previous experience with German co-productions has added an additional dimension – with TR9 Films, Leipzig attached to the project on the merit of the creative content.

NOW, LOVE is slated for production in summer 2012, and so it’s now an imperative to secure the right Polish co-producing partner, which we hope Connecting Cottbus will allow us to do.

**vita Virginia Gilbert**

Born in 1980, Virginia Gilbert is a BAFTA-nominated, award-winning writer and director. She writes and directs for film, radio and television. Her screenwriting work has been placed on the Brit List and she was named as a 'Star of Tomorrow' by Screen International in 2008.

Initially beginning in the industry as a producer, associate producing the feature THE HALO EFFECT and producing the RTE/IFB/UK History channel documentary LORD HAW-HAW: PORTRAIT OF A FANATIC, Virginia graduated from the EAVE programme in 2005 and went on to write and direct her first short, HESITATION. The film won numerous awards internationally, including the Gold Hugo for best short at the Chicago International Film Festival, and was nominated for a BAFTA and an IFTA. Virginia then wrote and directed her second short, MEA CULPA, funded by RTE, which will broadcast later this year. Subsequent work as a writer-director includes the critically acclaimed three-part documentary series STRIAPACHA (WHORES) for TG4 which
was later nominated for the prestigious Radharc award. She has recently completed work as a director on MONEY, MONEY, MONEY, a comedy-documentary for RTE.

Virginia is currently developing a number of feature projects, including A LONG WAY FROM HOME, starring Romola Garai ('Atonement', 'One Day') and Brenda Fricker ('My Left Foot', 'Veronica Guerin') and NOW, LOVE, a Brit-Listed screenplay starring Juliet Stevenson.

**company profile**
Grand Pictures, formed in 2000 by Michael Garland and Paul Donovan, is one of the top film and television production companies in Ireland, with Ailish McElmeel joining the team in 2003. The company produces comedy and drama and works with a mix of new and experienced talent. Our feature film credits range from the low-budget domestic hit SPIN THE BOTTLE to Nicholas Roeg's international co-production PUFFBALL. Grand Pictures are recipients of both MEDIA and IFB slate funding and our current slate includes work from Pat McCabe, Arthur Mathews and Flann O'Brien.

Grand Pictures' current production DEATH OF A SUPERHERO recently premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival to rave reviews. DEATH OF A SUPERHERO is directed by Ian FitzGibbon and a co-production with Bavaria Film, Germany. Grand Pictures is also a multi-award-winning producer of comedy and drama for domestic television. Hits include mock documentary PATHS TO FREEDOM and, most recently, the Monte Carlo Best International Comedy Award-nominated six-part TV comedy series TRIVIA.
MODRIS
Red Dot Media, Latvia & Boo Productions, Greece

producer: Vicky Miha
author: Juris Kursietis
director: Juris Kursietis
summary: Unable to deal with her teenage son, a mother turns Modris in for a small crime. But a teenager’s everyday life can’t heed the restrictions of the police probation.

project data:
genre: drama
length: 90 mins.
shooting format: HD

budget:
estimated production costs: €620,000
financing already in place: €20,000

partners already attached:
MEDIA development support; 2|35 Post-Production (Greece)

looking for in particular:
co-producer, dramaturgical advisor

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Modris (16) is no better and no worse than any of his peers. He draws graffiti and listens to rap. He goes to school and has a girlfriend, Linda. He lives with and is raised by his mother, but their relationship is poor. Maybe this is due to his obsession with slot machines, but in his mind that’s nothing bad, every single one of his friends seems to do the same.

The downhill movement begins like a snowball when he pawns his mother’s electric heater in order to squeeze out a win on the slot machines. The simmering conflict with his mother boils over and she betrays him to the police. His attempt to live in his friend’s allotment hut doesn’t work out and his girlfriend doesn’t want to see him anymore. The court sentences him to a two year suspended sentence, plus he has to attend a correctional facility at Salaspils. The correctional facility is not so bad; for instance, a girl he meets there is really quite nice. Unlike school, nobody moralises or looks over your shoulder. The coming and going to the facility, however, is expensive. On one occasion, he has to get to Salaspils, but doesn’t have the money. Thus, he earns his first administrative offense, of which there can be no more than three during the suspended sentence.

However, not all is dire; with time, he seems to think less about Linda, and, unexpectedly, his lawyer discovers information about his long lost father, who, as it turns out, has long since been released from jail, contrary to what his mother claims. Modris’ coming of age birthday party at a nightclub begins well. He manages to win Linda over, dances, and has the odd drink or two. After phoning his father to inform him about his birthday, Modris ends up at the slot machines again and an annoyed Linda tells him that it’s all over.

Even the girl from the correctional facility has taken a dislike to Modris and she’s arranged for some friends of hers to rough him up. If that wasn’t enough, during the fight he loses his passport, which as it turns out, is an administrative offense. Overwhelmed by all his problems, which seem like a vicious circle, Modris buys a beer so that he can switch off and sit in peace in the park under the warm spring sun. The police arrive unnoticed and book Modris; public drinking is also an administrative offense. The court revises the suspended sentence for a real one and Modris ends up in Riga Central Prison. It is there, that in a twist of fate, Modris’ father comes to visit him for the first time in his life.

director’s note
When I first heard the story of Modris and was told that it actually happened in real life, I was struck by how cold and cruel the justice system works in Latvia. An individual was lost in the bureaucratic system because people didn’t see the bigger picture. In a logical sense what happened is simple: a mother wanted to teach her son a lesson and went a little too far. However, the most absurd thing about this is that the justice system saw this case as being the equivalent of that for a drug dealer or a rapist (looking into cases of drug dealing and rape, the offender very often receives 2-3 years). This young boy was no different than most teenagers these days and one has to ask: does a lifestyle of a new generation clash so much with the older one that the only way of dealing with it is to put the younger one in jail?
Latvia is always mentioned as this great example of communism transferring into capitalism and democracy. It seems, though, that, at this stage, this country has taken a rather different turn to the commonly agreed terms of democracy and is turning it into a custom-made political system which ignores the obvious when dealing with its citizens. Taking into account that this story very accurately shows what the current dangers are in a country like Latvia, the story has to be told as true as possible. It has to feel real.

As a director, from an early age, I have been particularly interested in the subject matter of an individual’s struggles against a larger force (be it a community or a political system) and its perceptions of how things should actually happen in everyone’s lives. I believed and still do that each one of us is differently weird and that is how it should be. The problems start when one has to follow the regulations or perceptions of a “decent” living. I am not talking here about serious criminal activity, but about one’s struggle to follow stereotypes.

Every person has at least one story worth telling - Modris’ one is shocking and I hope that the cinematic experience after watching the film will be as powerful as the realization of the social problems around us.

I have confidence that MODRIS will be developed into a strong project with international potential, touching on the subjects of justice and adolescence by telling a story worth travelling beyond the borders of Latvia.

As we are still shaping the strategy of the project, we are very open to discussing the involvement of a third co-producer with regards to creative contributors, the shooting of interiors, facilities and equipment.

 Vita Juris Kursietis

Juris Kursietis (screenwriter/director) graduated with distinction from the Northern Media School in the UK, where he obtained his MA, specializing in Film Directing, with a minor in Screenwriting. His graduation film WILL HAVE IT TOMORROW received public notice in the UK and Latvia. Since then, he has actively participated in the growing Latvian film industry. In 2007, Juris was 1st AD on the feature film AMATIERIS, while, in 2008, he worked again as 1st AD on the feature film DEATH TO YOU. He has directed a feature-length documentary THE ESCAPE FROM CUBA, and two medium-length documentaries – JANUARY 13TH and HACKERS. With the support of the Latvian Film Council, he completed a feature film script STEAL IN 30 SECONDS. Apart from this, he has worked extensively in directing commercials for such brands as Martini Asti, Swedbank, TV3, Viasat, StarFM, Merrill, and many more.

producer’s note

Having worked on Juris’ previous films, I have always thought that as an author/director he can create a fatalistic world where the heroes surrender to their weaknesses and addictions. The camera acts as an impartial witness to the events without judgment, the cinematic universe acquires a real-life texture.
company profile Red Dot Media
Since its foundation, Red Dot Media (RDM) has emerged as one of the strongest broadcast production companies in Latvia. RDM has produced numerous TV commercials and worked with the top advertising agencies and broadcasters and a large pool of creative talent. In the field of film production, RDM has been a strong documentary producer, with titles like THE ESCAPE FROM CUBE, HACKERS, 13TH OF JANUARY. MODRIS is the first fiction feature film to be produced by RDM.

company profile Boo Productions
Boo Productions has been producing feature films and TV commercials since 2007. Film credits include DOGTOOTH by Yorgos Lanthimos (Oscar nominee for Best Foreign Language Film in 2011/ Prix Un Certain Regard Cannes 2009) and 4 BLACK SUITS by Renos Haralambidis (Pre-selection for the European Film Awards). Boo Productions is also the co-producer of ATTENBERG by Athina Rachel Tsangari (Coppa di Volpi for Best Actress Venice 2010/ Sundance 2011).
producers:
Milena Garfield, Uliks Fehmiu

author:
Milena Markovic

director:
Oleg Novkovic

summary:
A movie about sinners and their quest for salvation. But God is hard to find.

project data:
genre: drama
length: 110 mins.
shooting format: RED, Cinemascope, 35mm

budget:
estimated production costs: €1,300,000
financing already in place: €300,000

looking for in particular:
TV, co-producer, sales agent, distributor

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After having lost her parents in the war in Kosovo and her child due to tragic accident, Maca (40), lives alone as a refugee in the suburbs of Kraljevo. She is barely surviving by singing in the local bar where she meets all kinds of men. She can see that the world around her is changing and she is afraid that the end is approaching and the punishment is coming. She is trying to redeem herself by praying and visiting the monasteries. On Christmas Day, she decides to adopt a child, a Gypsy boy. But she does not love him at all. And she knows that God can see it.

Jovan (47), Maca’s former husband, fought in the war in Kosovo and became a monk. He believes that he has found his peace. But there is no longer any peace for him. At Christmas, Jovan suddenly sees the living God in the retarded girl Milica. He starts to change. He understands that the end of the world is coming and that he can only be saved by innocence itself. He goes away with Milica to start a new life and rebuild the place from which they came. At Easter, Maca finds God in her adopted son. It is not clear whether the end is near or whether there is still hope to come.

director’s note

Logline: This is a film about sinners and their quest for salvation. But God is hard to find.

Simplicity: The events are following one another without any special anticipation. They just flow like a river does. We are watching them from the distance, without commentary or judgment.

Who: We are dealing with refugees, the people who are expelled from their homes. They are forced to live in new, unfamiliar surroundings. They are forgotten, invisible, foreign, damned. They are the Others.

Characters: The characters in the movie are people with many flaws. With indecent desires. And yet we identify with them and love them.

Acting: The acting without „acting“. Everything is very restrained, hidden; everything is a gesture or a glance.

Place: The greater part of the film takes place in Kraljevo, a little town in southwest Serbia. Restaurant, refugee centre, streets, apartments, grocery shops... The smaller part takes place in Kosovo, in the medieval Orthodox monastery of Gracanica during the Christmas and Easter liturgies.

Set design: The story is happening in a completely realistic setting without any interventions in style. It is a documentary-style approach.

Structure: The story arc of the film is somewhat unusual. The prologue consists of three extreme and shocking scenes which take place during the war in Kosovo. This is where we meet the protagonists, Maca and Jovan. Ellipsis, eleven years later. The first part takes place during Christmas. Maca is at the centre of the story. Maca is a singer in the local restaurant. She is looking for God and seeking redemption and salvation. Ellipsis. The second part of the story takes place during Easter. The central character is Jovan, a former civil war fighter and now a monk. He is leaving a monastery in order to fulfill his mission. At the end, the stories converge into an unexpected conclusion.

Time: The prologue takes place during the war in Kosovo in 1999. The rest of the film is set in the present.

Framing and timing: The camera is static; the frames are stable. One lens, normal. Wide frames, Cinemascope. Ellipses and discontinuity.

Music: Music is in the restaurant where Maca is singing in order to earn a living. She sings old Kosovo songs and new country/folk songs. There is Orthodox liturgy music in the
church. The rest are original sounds. 


Universal and local: The film takes place in the Serbia of today, in very specific historical and social circumstances. But feelings, relationships, desires and the quest for meaning are universal to all human beings. Anywhere, anytime. Realism or ... The style is realistic. Till the very end. And then, maybe we will step out of it, further from it. Nevertheless, the approach is realistic and the spectator will decide what the outcome is.

Why do I want to make this film? This film is a great challenge for me. It is unusual in its form and it contains many questions and multiple meanings in itself. It gives me a chance to continue to develop my own directorial style and worldview. And I love the script.

producer’s note

One night while we were shooting WHITE WHITE WORLD, we were doing a scene in a shuttered former hotel in Bor, the most destitute place you could imagine. Only, it was not deserted. It was crowded with squatters, ten to each crumbling room. Compared to this scary picture, our desperate characters from WHITE WHITE WORLD looked almost like the middle class. Our characters were trapped and poor, but still in possession of their place, their identity, their sense of belonging.

Concerning the squatters, I asked “Who are they?” They were refugees, or – as classified by the UN High Commissioner – DP or Displaced persons. People with no home, no identity cards, no destination. They roam the world despised by those who expelled them and detested by those who accepted them. They are the non-belonging. They are the Others. Who are these people? Are they victims of tragedy? Are they accomplices?

In 1991/1992, political upheavals in the Balkans after the break-up of Yugoslavia displaced about 2,700,000 people, of which more than 700,000 sought asylum in Europe. In 1999, about one million Albanians escaped from Serbian persecution. Today, there are still thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons in the Balkan region, who cannot return to their homes. Most of them are Serbs who cannot return to Kosovo and still live in refugee camps in Serbia today. With half a million refugees from Croatia and 200,000 from Kosovo, or more than 7% of its population, Serbia has the largest refugee population in Europe.

As social commentary, Oleg Novkovic’s depictions of life in Balkan are meticulously precise. As always, he concentrates on hyper-realistic details and everyday faces who together form a flesh-and-blood “Road to Calvary,” the Breugel fresco-like painting of victims and sinners searching for salvation and a God, who may be walking among them, unrecognized. But, by concentrating on each of his characters and the realistic detail of life, Oleg is at the same time telling a much larger story to those who know how to look for it: the story of the Others.

vita Milena Markovic

Milena Markovic is one of the most acclaimed playwrights and poets in Serbia. A 1998 graduate of the Academy for Drama in Belgrade, her theatre plays are performed all over Europe, including “Paviljoni (“Pavilions”) and “Sine” (“Tracks”) in Austria, Macedonia, Poland, Germany, Slove-
nia and Serbia. “Sine” was published by Theater Heute, the most prestigious European theatre magazine. “Suma Bli-
sta” (“The Forest is Glowing”) was produced by Schauspielhaus in Zürich in February 2005. In the same year, Marko-
vic wrote the documentary THE MINER’S OPERA. In 2006, she authored the screenplay for Oleg Novkovic’s TOMORROW MORNING. She also wrote the script for WHITE WHITE WORLD. She has also published two collections of poems.

vita Oleg Novkovic
Oleg Novkovic is one of the most important Serbian filmma-
kers. His sensitive portrayals of ex-Yugoslavia’s lost genera-
tion brought him the attention of international film festi-
vals and audiences. According to Variety, “his movies have the delicate balance of well-measured emotional tensions and hyper-realistic expression.” His most recent film WHITE WHITE WORLD, which premiered at the Locarno Film Festival in 2010, won numerous awards at interna-
tional film festivals: Locarno Film Festival: Golden Leopard for the Best Actress, FilmFestival Cottbus: Best Film, Cross-
ing Europe Filmfestival Linz: New Vision Award, Festroia Setúbal: Best Director, Festival de Cinéma Européen des Arcs: Best Actress, Mar del Plata Film Festival: Special Jury Award, Sopot Film Festival (Serbia): Best Director, Best Lead Actor, Best Actress, Best Costume Design, Cinema City International Film Festival Novi Sad: Best Director, Best Actress, Best Music. WHITE WHITE WORLD has been selected by the European Film Academy (EFA) as one of the 45 best European movies of 2011.

company profile West End production
West End Production, which produces in Eastern Europe mainly from offices in the West, was founded in 2003 by Milena Garfield and Uliks Fehmiu. Garfield is a pioneer of (private) theatre production in Eastern Europe. She lives in Washington, D.C.. Fehmiu, a film and theatre star in Yugoslav-
ia, left for America in the 1990s to continue his profes-
sional career in theatre, film and TV, including the lead in the highly acclaimed Peter Sellars’ play CHILDREN OF HERACLES. In 2006, he returned to the region with several leads in films from Slovenia, Serbia and Bosnia, including the lead roles in Oleg Novkovic’s TOMORROW MORNING and WHITE WHITE WORLD. He lives in New York City. West End Productions was the main producer of WHITE WHITE WORLD, in cooperation with the co-production partners Ost-
llicht Filmproduktion, Germany, and Hepp Film, Sweden.

company profile ostlicht filmproduktion
Ostlicht filmproduktion GmbH is developing and producing feature films for national as well as for international mar-
kets. The company is managed and owned by Marcel Lenz and Guido Schwab. The principal office is located in Wei-
mar, Thuringia. Our emphasis is on the cooperation with renowned filmmakers as well as young talents, on expert handwork, detailed planning and endurance. The filmogra-
phy includes: THE WOMAN WHO BRUSHED OFF HER TEARS (WT; Macedonia, Germany, Slovenia, Sweden) by Teona Strugar Mitevska, FÜR ELISE (Germany) by Wolfgang Dins-
lage, WHITE WHITE WORLD (Serbia, Germany, Sweden) by Oleg Novkovic, TILT (Bulgaria, Germany) by Viktor Chouch-
kov and MEER IS NICH (Germany) by Hagen Keller.
PIARGY: ANTICHRIST REBORN
Arina, Slovakia

producer:
Silvia Panakova

authors:
Lukas Hanulak, Hana Cielova

director:
Lukas Hanulak

summary:
PIARGY: ANTICHRIST REBORN is a poetic story considered as a metaphoric image of the biblical Sodom and Gomorrah, about the destruction of the sinners by a natural disaster. The film is a reflection of human suffering and its presence in the world.

project data:
genre: spiritual drama
length: 110 mins.
shooting format: digital

budget:
estimated production costs: €1.400.000
financing already in place: none

partners already attached:
Big Bang Creative Ltd., Slovakia; Luxor, Czech Republic

looking for in particular:
co-producers, distributors, dramaturgical advisor

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synopsis
PIARGY: ANTICHRIST REBORN is a spiritual drama set in the early 20th century in a small high mountain village in the Polish-Slovak border region of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This village of Piargy is located in a narrow valley, completely surrounded by ancient hills. The rocks hanging over the houses create a gateway – a gateway to another world. In this world, we meet Johanka, a beautiful shy human being, who is being brought up by the old herbalist after her parents’ death.

The village is holding a major event again after a gap of many years – a wedding. Juliška, Johanka’s step-sister, is marrying Jan, a young man who works in the forest. And then there is the shy and taciturn Klement, who is secretly in love with Johanka, but his courage doesn’t allow him to take the first step. The lively wedding celebrations provide the backdrop for us to meet the other inhabitants of the village which is dominated by the spontaneous and calculating Magduša, the richest housekeeper in Piargy, who lives with her handicapped siblings.

The joy and celebration is suddenly broken up by crying and misery. A tragedy occurs in the mountains shortly after the wedding. Jan is dead! While trying to help Klement, he is killed by a falling tree. Juliška loses her sense of reality and her zest for life. Johanka tries to be supportive not only to her, but also to the seriously injured Klement, who is unable to stop blaming himself for the death of his friend. An investigation in the village has started, led by the corrupt Hungarian clerk officer Bárkóczy. His interest is not in the investigation itself or in seeing justice done. Instead, he wants to seize valuable wood from the sacred oak grove that is protected by the old herbalist.

Unbelievable things start happening in the village. Magduša, a woman of few manners, begins to dominate the majority of the citizens in Piargy through her connection with Bárkóczy. Her deaf sister Léna becomes pregnant under mysterious circumstances. Wolves begin to rage in the surrounding forests. Moreover, there are rumours about a major war impending.

Johanka, supported by Klement, with whom she slowly gets closer and falls in love, tries to reason with the villagers, but the people, possessed by fear and misbelief, decide to trust the greedy Magduša instead of Johanka and the old herbalist who has always protected them. The final decision is made! On the night of the woodcutting when the men fell the sacred oak grove, the old herbalist dies after predicting the destruction of the village. She utters the prophecy of the birth of Antichrist to “an unworthy woman”.

After a harsh winter, Magduša returns to the starved village with a wagon full of food and alcohol. The people thank her and pray for her. The final carnival party at Magduša’s house is the beginning of the end for all of Piargy’s citizens. One room sees the culmination of an orgy, while, at the same time in another room, a simple girl gives birth to a stillborn child. At that moment, the punishment is delivered. That night, the village of Piargy disappears off the face of the earth.

director’s note
PIARGY: ANTICHRIST REBORN is a poetic story with a mystic atmosphere moving on a very thin line of spiritual drama and romance. Due to its outer plot line it resembles a metaphoric picture of the biblical Sodom and Gomorrah about the destruction of sinners by a natural catastrophe.
Instead of sulphur and fire, a destructive avalanche comes. Collective guilt and the following punishment express the idea of total disruption of a society.

Based on this idea, the story becomes a philosophical reflection on a spiritual world of nature as opposed to the dark side of human existence which is possessed by greed and selfishness. Humanity has lost its ability to listen and understand the voice of Nature – we have lost contact with ourselves. We are wasting the world around us without any mercy or fear ... just for the illusion of a richer life! There is only one way out of the cataclysm – to understand the law of the Universe.

The film’s most important mission is to emphasize the fact that the meaning of human life is not material happiness and welfare, but the growth of the soul and unselfish love, as shown in Johanka’s and Klement’s relationship.

We know that there is an urgent need to change our attitude towards the environment, and that humans cannot continue the unconstrained exploitation of the biosphere. We have to stop and start to listen to the silent voice of Nature. It is our only chance – to find the miracle of life again – and that’s what this story is about.

**producer’s note**

The project PIARGY is now at the stage of script development and looking for co-production partners for further development and production. Our goal is to reach partners from Poland, Germany, Austria and Hungary. We are aiming to attract international partners in order to be able to access national and European funds (MEDIA, EURIMAGES).

The main production objective is the development of a film on a European scale, which is based on effective collaboration and strong story-telling through the images. With its subject matter and visual approach, the film could attract all generations of viewers. The attractiveness of the film is further compounded by the settings for the story’s action: the natural world of mountains and a sinful village immersed in the conflict between human greed and spiritual values. The story takes place on the Polish-Slovak border during the Austro-Hungarian Empire and focuses on the representation of the original Goral culture from the early 20th century. This not only allows the use of traditional Goral dialect together with other languages, but also directly promotes the international cooperation of actors and creative collaborators, which we see as a prerequisite for a successful co-production between several countries.

**vita Lukas Hanulak**

Lukas Hanulak was born in Čadca, Czechoslovakia (now Slovakia) in 1983. In 2009, he graduated from the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava – Department of Film Directing. In 2004-2007, he had studied Documentary Film at Academy of Arts in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia. He made several shorts before directing and producing his medium-length film OTEC (The Father) in 2009. OTEC won the Award for Best Fiction at the 39th Sehsüchte Film Festival in Potsdam, Germany, followed by numerous other festivals and awards. In 2011, Lukas Hanulak founded the independent production company Big Bang Creative Ltd. to work on his first feature film PIARGY.

In the meantime, he has also directed several TV series, such as AFÉRY (Affairs) and AFÉRY 2, DRUHÝ DYCH (Second Breath), ODSÚDENÉ (Condemned) and V MENE ZÁKONA (In the Name of The Law).
vita Hana Cielova

Hana Cielova was born in Bratislava in 1958. From 1977-1982, she studied scriptwriting and dramaturgy at the Film Academy (FAMU) in Prague. Her feature film THE SIXTH SENTENCE (1986), directed by renowned Slovak film director Stefan Uher, won the prize for the best script of the year at the Czechoslovak National Film Festival. Hana Cielova worked as script editor on various feature films, e.g. AMERIKA, the debut of the Czech director Vladimir Michalek, or WHO’S AFRAID OF WOLF, directed by Maria Prochazkova and screened at the Berlin International Film Festival. Another internationally highly acclaimed film was THE RETURN OF IDIOT by Czech director Sasa Gedeon, which had its international premiere at the Venice Film Festival. In 2004, she received a Nipkow Programm scholarship. She has also been working since 2005 as a tutor for the international script developing workshop Moonstone Screenwriters Lab. She lives in Prague.

company profile

Arina Ltd. is a production company which was founded on the basis of more than ten years' working experience by its founders in the fields of film, commercials, television and organising social events. Arina Ltd. is represented by the producer Silvia Panakova who is a member of ACE – Atelier du Cinéma Européen and was named Producer on the Move in 2010 by European Film Promotion. Arina Ltd. is a member of the Slovak Film and Television Academy and the Slovak Association of Independent Producers.

Arina produced, among others, the international co-productions T.M.A., directed by Juraj Herz, and MY HUSBAND’S WOMEN, directed by Ivan Vojnar, and the docudrama TIME OF GRIMACES by Peter Dimitrov. The company is currently producing the co-productions BLUE TIGER by director Petr Oukrupec, and WOLF, directed by Janek Ružička. FAIR PLAY, to be directed by Andrea Sedláčková, is now in pre-production as a Slovak-Czech-Polish-German co-production.
PITCH BLACK
Film Idman Yurdu, Turkey

producer:
Olena Yershova

author:
Emre Özdür

director:
Emre Özdür

Summary:
This is the story of three men, Umut, Fırat and Ali: three soldiers fighting in the never-ending war that has caused the loss of many lives in the East of Turkey.

project data:
genre: drama
length: 90 mins.
shooting format: digital

budget:
estimated production costs: €652,500
financing already in place: €307,000

partners already attached:
Ministry of Culture of Turkey (development support, production support), M3 Film, Turkey (distributor)

looking for in particular:
co-producer, dramaturgical advisor, distributor in Germany

contact:
Olena Yershova
Film Idman Yurdu
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**synopsis:**
Umut died during a battle on the border of Northern Iraq. His commanding officer, Lieutenant Ali, has to carry his remains back to his family in Istanbul. Fırat, another drafted soldier, working as a photographer documenting dead soldiers, is assigned to go with him given an urgent leave without knowing why. The two men already feel that they are on the hardest mission of their lives.

Lieutenant Ali knows the reason why Fırat is being sent to his hometown so urgently: Fırat’s parents have been murdered by a burglar who broke into the home. According to the army law, it is imperative that Fırat should not find out the reason before they arrive in the city. Lieutenant Ali also has to carry this burden for Fırat, and prevent him from discovering the devastating truth before he meets his relatives.

The only good thing about this journey is that Ali’s wife will be having their first baby in a couple of days. Once the mission is accomplished, he will be on paternity leave. But will he really have the peace of mind? Both men, haunted by the gravity of the events, will eventually be absorbed into the dark depths of depression and come to the verge of losing reason. Fırat will have to deal with the flashing ghosts of all the corpses he has been taking pictures of. Eventually, he finds solace in acting against his civic obligations by deserting the army. But this will not be easy - the military police will be more determined than he expects them to be. Ali, after almost harming his wife and his baby daughter by accident due to the excessive stress he is under, will have to come to final terms with the only thing he knows how to do: being a soldier.

**director's note**
The clashes that have been going on for years in the East and Southeast of Turkey have affected the people of this country to a significant degree, and nearly always occupied the headlines of the contemporary agenda of the country. I want to make a film about the soldiers. Invaded by the psychology of war, they have to go on a compulsory journey. Soldiers, who, as they return to normal life, start to question the state of war and the psychology they are in.

The film’s atmosphere will be dark and bleak. When the script is translated into film, the director’s greatest success will lie in conveying the dire situation the characters find themselves in to the audience. The most important factor for the main actors will be the facial expressions and naturalism, rather than their power of acting. The film grammar to be adopted in the film will be planned in such a way that, throughout the film, the audience will be reminded that their eyes are the ones looking in from outside.

The cinematography and lighting of the film will utilize reverse lights, light-shadow opposition and high contrast. During the scene changes, I will strive for the same effect to be created for the audience as when the eye leaves a dark interior location to enter an illuminated exterior location and experiences a process of adaptation to the lighting and colour of the new location.

The film will be shot in various cities and regions of Turkey which differ greatly from one another in the visual sense. The first part takes place on the Southeast border of Turkey, the second part in Istanbul.
producer’s note

For centuries, the nature of war and the psychology of man at war is a subject that works of art have frequently used. Although armies are managed with a mentality allowing them to move as a community, completely devoted to the hierarchic order, and strictly disciplined with personal emotions suppressed, the ones who put their lives at stake are single individuals. The individuals at war have emotions, thoughts, dreams, hopes, and people they left behind and loved. Therefore, if something is going to be told about “war,” first and foremost, it has to concern itself with the understanding and expression of the individual.

The army is compulsory in Turkey: every man is obliged to fulfill his duty. But these boys are not professional, most of them very far from real war, but the war continues in Southeast Turkey. Almost every day, information about dead soldiers is in the news. It can touch every family.

In the script of PITCH BLACK, we have different points of view: Ali is a professional soldier who comes to the point that he cannot continue to be part of this system, Firat is a conscript soldier who faces the loss of his parents and feels guilty that he was absent from home. Their points of view are contrasted with the one of the parents of Umut who was killed at the battle and brought back to his family in a coffin.

I personally come from the generation of Soviet people whose classmates had to go to the war in Afghanistan — so, I think this topic it really universal and, especially, the psychological approach we have in the script.

vita Emre Öz dür

Emre Öz dür was born in Bursa in 1981. He graduated from Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Department of Film and Television. Emre Öz dür has worked on various feature films and TV series as a scriptwriter, assistant director and executive producer. He wrote, directed and produced two shorts. PITCH BLACK will be his feature film directorial debut.

company profile

Film İdman Yurdu was founded by Emre Özgür and Serdar Temizkan, who have worked on various feature films, documentaries and TV series as a scriptwriter, assistant director and producer. In 2004, Serdar Temizkan founded the production company Ada Film which produced TV series and feature films with Emre Öz dür. After working on the feature films FIRST LOVE and IN BAR together, they wanted to take a break from TV series and founded Film İdman Yurdu to produce only feature films. The aim of Film İdman Yurdu is to establish a platform for young filmmakers where they can fulfill their potential and bring their preferably subversive works to life.
Connecting Cottbus
3-6.11.2022
East-West Co-production Market at the FilmFestival Cottbus
MEDIA Programme

MEDIA 2007 is a programme of the European Union for the advancement of audio-visual industry in the 32 member states. Support is channelled through it for the areas of development, distribution, sales, promotion, festivals and training. The programme MEDIA Mundus, which has been recently launched, is co-financing activities with countries outside the EU – in the field of promotion, training and distribution.

Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg

The Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg is the first stop for film and media professionals in Germany’s capital region. Under one roof, it unites film funding and the development of the media industry in the states of Berlin and Brandenburg.

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MDM – Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung
As the Central German regional film funding body the Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung supports economically interesting media productions from preparation through production to distribution and presentation of all film, television and other audio-visual media productions. The funding aims at the strengthening of the audio-visual culture and industry in Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia and thus contributes to the strengthening of the film- and media sector in Germany and Europe.

Robert Bosch Stiftung
The Co-Production Prize of the Robert Bosch Stiftung
The Robert Bosch Stiftung issues three Co-Production Prizes for young German and Eastern European filmmakers. The prize, worth up to 70,000 euros for each selected project, is awarded in the categories animated film, documentary, and short film. Young filmmakers in the fields of production, directing, camera, and screenwriting are given an opportunity to explore the methods and creative styles of their partner country. Please find further information on the prize and the application procedure at www.coproductionprize.com.

Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH
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The Post Republic
The Post Republic is a full service postproduction facility offering the full range of 2D and 3D post-production processes. Located in Berlin and Halle, we combine highly skilled professionals with the very best quality equipment.

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The Post Pitch Award is donated by The Post Republic.

MEDIA Antenna Berlin-Brandenburg
The MEDIA Antenna Berlin-Brandenburg is one of the four German information offices of the European MEDIA Programme. As a contact point for media professionals mainly based in Berlin-Brandenburg and Central Germany, we advise on funding possibilities as well as assistance with funding applications. In collaboration with international partners our office also offers networking events to support international cooperation amongst media professionals.

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CineLink project is the backbone of the Sarajevo Film Festival’s Industry Section. It is a development and financing platform for carefully selected regional features destined for European co-production. Around 15 most promising projects from Southeast Europe are selected each year for a series of tailor-made development workshops that take place throughout the year and culminate in a financing event – the CineLink Co-Production Market, which takes place during the last three days of the Sarajevo Film Festival.

The Co-Production Market gathers more than 400 participants from all spheres of the film business ready to network, discover talent, co-produce or commission new projects, while creating an annual hub for local professionals and adding international industry relevance to the festival. With the average conversion rate of its selected projects from development to production at over 60% in the past 5 years, CineLink has grown into one of the most successful development and financing platforms in Europe. Selection and diversification in development are central to this success, while the focus on local product with international potential, discovery of emerging talent and the promotion of modern cinematic language proved essential to the initiative’s rising profile in the film industry.

Sarajevo Film Festival: 6-14 July 2012
CineLink - Project Development Workshops: TBD (June 2012)
CineLink Co-Production Market: 11-14 July 2012

CineLink - Sarajevo Film Festival
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**EAVE**

EAVE is a leading training, development and networking organization for producers primarily funded by MEDIA, MEDIA Mundus and the Luxembourg Film Fund. In addition to the well-known European Producers Workshop, which has been running since 1988, EAVE is involved in a variety of programmes for audiovisual producers in Europe, Russia, Latin America, the Arab world, Asia and Africa.

**EAVE**
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**4th Moscow Business Square June 2012**

«Moscow Business Square» is a business platform of the Moscow International Film Festival, which increases the access of foreign companies to Russian Film and TV market. In 2012 more than 400 film industry professionals will be invited to join «Moscow Business Square». «2012 Moscow Business Square edition» offers its participants an intensive program including:

• 4th Moscow Co-Production Forum
• Moscow Business Square Screenings
• Mini EAVE
• Moscow Industry Showcase
• Round tables and Presentations

Application Deadline: January 1 – April 1, 2012

**Moscow Business Square**

Olga Kolegova – Head of Moscow Co-production Forum
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ACE
Created in 1993, ACE is an organisation dedicated to helping European producers to co-produce with other countries. Every year the organisation selects 16 professionals, who have proved themselves in their respective countries, to participate in its annual programme. ACE offers unique expertise in the fields of script development, project financing and film marketing. Our consultants include leading international sales agents, managers of European funds, and the most experienced members of ACE’s own network of producers. Participants thus have the opportunity to join a prestigious club that meets at all the major festivals and markets. Already well established in Europe, ACE recently began to welcome non-EU producers and has designed a special programme for them. The association now also organises workshops outside Europe, looking for new talents and new markets in Asia and Latin America. Reflecting their creativity and dynamism, ACE producers are frequently featured among the award winners in Cannes, Berlin and Venice, at the Oscars, Césars, European Film Awards, and so on.

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Nipkow Programm
The Nipkow Programm, launched in Berlin in 1992, is a fellowship programme, designed to assist film and television professionals from all over Europe to expand their contacts and working experience. By supporting a new up-and-coming generation of film and media talents, Nipkow aims at strengthening future European collaborations in the media and film sector.

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pool production gmbh

pool production, an agency organising events, is organizer of the FilmFestival Cottbus and the East West Co-production Market Connecting Cottbus. pool production provides classic advertising, as well as publicity and marketing for all kinds of commercial and cultural events. pool production fuses its internal capabilities with external project-related know-how and offers a broad spectrum of services.

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