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International
Film Festival Nyon

VISIONS du Réel

52nd Edition

VdR-Industry

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Editorial



Madeline Robert
Head of Industry

And here we are, one year later...

In April 2020, we thought the situation was exceptional. We then proudly accepted the challenge to adapt our activities online, thus redefining the Industry section of Visions du Réel. It was intended to address a unique and global crisis, one we believed to be temporary. That seems gently naive to us now, one year later, as we prepare to welcome the majority of you online, once again.

The consequences of the health crisis on the film industry's international landscape have not yet necessarily been felt by everyone. However, certain more radical changes are already affecting the branch, beginning with the closure of cinemas for months, which is disrupting the films' distribution and their economy, or the calendar of the festivals and their online organisation, making it even more complicated to launch films. Other professional categories seem to have been spared, less affected or have managed to pursue their activities in new forms. The effects of this paradigm shift over the long term thus remain inevitably uncertain... These transformations also have an impact on us at Visions du Réel, since we are part of this chain. Accustomed to the needs of those who make the films, produce them, sell them or show them, and to best address our role as a Festival that launches films, we must adapt our platform and activities. We have therefore developed our efforts to help the films in Visions du Réel official selection to access the market by completely revising our video library for professionals, renamed VdR-Film Market for the occasion. At the same time, we will highlight the films in our programme available for sales agents and for distributors with a new activity, the VdR-Showcase.

We invite you then to note, together, across the nine days of this rather unusual edition of VdR-Industry, all the changes that have taken place so far and those yet to come in the film industry. This year again, our professional platform will be a privileged vantage point over contemporary documentary production, a space for reflection in which the future of the industry will be sketched out. We will observe how the wealth of the genre has not weakened through the discovery of a selection of projects reflecting the diversity and vitality of contemporary creations, presented in the VdR-Pitching, the VdR-Work in Progress, the VdR-Rough Cut Lab, but also in In Between, the Prix RTS: Perspectives d'un Doc, the SWISS FILMS Previews or even in the projects emerging from the directors participating in Opening Scenes Lab. Filmmakers, far from being discouraged by this turbulent reality, seem to have strengthened their approach. We will also attempt to understand, and perhaps foresee the evolutions in the industry, through a series of discussions and round tables, with our now recurrent activities such as the VdR-Industry Talks, Switzerland Meets Italy and the Documentary & Audiovisual Forum.

Despite the challenge, we have always believed in the possibility of bringing you an on-site version of VdR-Industry. Now more than ever, after a year of lockdowns, it seems important to us to physically meet each other again. We are therefore offering an alternative to the fully online format by inviting those who can join us in Nyon to continue to exchange and work together. For all of those who cannot be present, we will welcome you in a newly created and tailored online space: an innovative, community-centred platform that will attempt to recreate the unique atmosphere of Visions du Réel as closely as possible.

Finally, I would particularly like to thank our financiers and partners for their unfaltering support. It is they who enable us to continue to propose a relevant offering. Thank you to our jurors who will have the difficult task of meeting all the project holders remotely and to the decision makers whose valuable commitment nourishes the projects. Thank you all for your involvement in creating the future of film together and welcome to the VdR-Industry 2021!

Jury and Awards

VdR–Industry is very pleased to welcome every year various juries, composed of eminent personalities of the documentary and filmmaking world. Together, they will award important prizes offered by our valued partners to the selection of presented projects. Moreover, this year we are enthusiastic to announce that three new cash awards will be added to our list.

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Jury: VdR–Industry
Jury: visions sud est
Awards

Jury: VdR-Industry



Roberto Minervini

Film Director
Italy, United States



Roberto Olla

Executive Director
Eurimages
France



Rasha Salti

Commissioning editor for La Lucarne
Arte France
Lebanon, Canada

Roberto Minervini is an Italian-born film director, who lives and works in the U.S. His latest film, the award-winning *What You Gonna Do When the World's on Fire?*, premiered in competition at the 2018 Venice Film Festival, and has garnered worldwide appreciation. After completing a Master's Degree in Media Studies at the New School in New York City in 2004, he moved to the Philippines to teach Documentary Filmmaking at the university level. In 2007, he moved to Texas, where he directed three feature films, *The Passage*, *Low Tide* and *Stop the Pounding Heart*, a Texas Trilogy that played at renowned film festivals including Cannes, Venice, Toronto and Rotterdam, among others. In 2014, *Stop the Pounding Heart* won the David di Donatello Award (Italian Academy Award) for Best Documentary. *The Other Side* (aka Louisiana), his fourth film, premiered at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival, competing in the Un Certain Regard Section.

Roberto Olla is the Executive Director of Eurimages, the Council of Europe's film fund. A lawyer by training, he holds a Ph.D. in entertainment law from the European University Institute of Florence. Roberto joined Eurimages in January 2002 as a project manager and in 2008 became its Executive Director. Before this, he was a researcher in media law, worked for the MEDIA Programme of the European Union and was a legal adviser on audio-visual matters to the European Commission in Brussels.

Rasha Salti was born in Canada, in 1969, to Lebanese and Palestinian parents. She was raised in Beirut, earned a B.A. in Fine Arts from Georgetown University (Washington D.C.) in 1992, and a Masters in the Arts from The Graduate Faculty and the New School University (New York) in 2002. She is a researcher, writer and curator of art and film, working and living between Beirut and Berlin. She co-curated several film programs including *The Road to Damascus*, with Richard Peña, a retrospective of Syrian cinema that toured worldwide (2006-2008); *Mapping Subjectivity: Experimentation in Arab Cinema from the 1960s until Now*, with Jytte Jensen (2010-2012) showcased at the MoMA in New York and *Saving Bruce Lee: African and Arab Cinema in the Era of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy* with Koyo Kouoh at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (2018). Rasha Salti has also collaborated with different festivals as a programmer, including the Toronto International Film Festival (2011-2015). At present she is the commissioning editor for La Lucarne, the experimental documentary program for Arte France.

Jury: visions sud est



Sebastiano Conforti

Distributor / Programmer
Outside the Box / FIFF, VIFF
Switzerland

After his university studies in Lausanne, in Cinema, History and Italian Literature, he worked for several Film Festivals, such as Locarno, NIFFF, FIFF and VIFFF as coordinator and programmer. Since 2017, he has been working for the independent distribution company Outside the Box (*Le Milieu de l'horizon, Ceux qui Travaillent*).



Daniela Persico

Programmer and Film Critic
Locarno Film Festival
Italy, Switzerland

Daniela Persico is film critic and programmer, based in Milan. She is the Head of special events and she is part of the selection committee at Locarno Film Festival. She's a founder and editor-in-chief for the online quarterly Filmidee (www.filmidee.it) and she manages the Filmidee Summer School. She's in the selection's committee of International Film Festival Mannheim Heidelberg (Germany), she is consultant for Nara Film Festival (Japan), Festival dei Popoli (Florence, Italy) and ISreal - Festival di cinema del reale (Nuoro, Italy). She wrote essays for various collective books and edited books on the work of Claire Simon (2008), Wang Bing (2010), Ross McElwee (2013) and Emmanuel Carrère (2014).



Meret Ruggle

Director and responsible for
the acquisitions
trigon-film
Switzerland

After completing her film and development studies in Zurich, Geneva and Paris, Meret has been working for several NGO's in the development sector before changing to the film industry, where she joined trigon-film as a public relations manager for several years. Since 2020, Meret Ruggle is the director of trigon-film and is responsible for the acquisition of new titles for distribution as well as the release strategies in the local market. trigon-film is a Swiss film distribution that has been releasing carefully selected films from Latin America, Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe since 1988. The film foundation also runs its own DVD edition and the video-on-demand platform filmingo.

Awards

visions sud est VdR–Pitching

visions sud est Award

10'000 CHF in cash for the best project from the South (Africa, Latin America and Asia) or from Eastern Europe (excluding EU members)

VdR-Pitching Award

5'000 CHF in cash for the most promising project

The Party Film Sales Award

Acquisition of international rights

RTS Award

Prebuy of one film

HEAD–Genève

Postproduction Award
Colour grading and creation of the files for diffusion

Cannes Docs Award

Two accreditations for the filmmaker and producer to attend the Marché du Film – Festival de Cannes and participate in Cannes Docs

DOK Leipzig / DOK Industry Networking Award

Accreditation and accommodation at DOK Leipzig & observer access to the DOK Co-Pro Market for the filmmaker and producer

Thessaloniki Documentary Festival Award

Accreditation and accommodation to TDF and access to AGORA for one person

VdR–Work in Progress

VdR-Work in Progress Award

3'000 CHF in cash for the most promising project

Lightdox Award

3'000 CHF in cash for the project with highest international potential

Raggioverde Subtitling Award

Subtitle creation incl. translation in one language

EFM Award

2 Market Badges for the EFM and a consultations session at the Docsalon

DAE Encouragement Award

2× memberships for the network plus 4 free consultations with network members, tailored to the needs of the project

Freestudios Award

Creation of a DCP package

Opening Scenes Awards

IDFA Spotlight Award

The winning director will be invited to IDFA's next edition to participate in a tailor-made programme within the IDFA Industry.

TËNK Award

Purchase of distribution rights for one film of the Opening Scenes section and an editing residency at the Documentary Village of Lussas (France) for the filmmaker of the awarded film.

META Cultural Foundation Award

The winner will be invited to a creative residency in Slon (Romania).

VdR–Pitching

VdR–Pitching is Visions du Réel’s international co-production and financing forum revealing a selection of 16 feature length projects. Ready to be launched in production, they combine artistic ambition and international potential. VdR–Pitching offers the participants the opportunity to present and to thoroughly discuss the form and content of their projects, and to find out which contexts and collaborations might be the most relevant for them. Through a live presentation and closed roundtables with decision makers as well as specific individual meetings, the Pitching encourages international co-productions and helps to finance outstanding film projects addressing an international audience. All the projects are presented for the first time at this stage of their development.

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About

After the challenge that Covid-19 and the outbreak of a global pandemic posed, the well established Pitching du Réel was forced to fully adapt to an online event for the 2020 edition for the first time. This year, in order to highlight the success of the past edition while trying to focus on a more positive and serene future, we are changing the look of our VdR-Industry by renaming our different activities. Formerly known as Pitching du Réel, VdR-Pitching's priority this year is to offer more support than ever in these uncertain times to a selection of 16 outstanding works and their project holders.

Nevertheless, we did not change the activity's format and we have decided to continue with our three steps structure: each project will have a presentation (in this case a pre-recorded pitch moderated in a live streaming), a number of digital roundtables with international professionals and pre-scheduled one-on-one meetings. This year's selection, which we are very happy with and proud of, presents adventurous works – from Africa, Asia, Europe, North and Latin America, as well as Australia – with strong and varied identities coming from established filmmakers and new voices, all of them sharing high cinematic ambitions, great potential and a profound connection with the world they relate to; a world that through these provocative pieces – and from our devices – we hope can be questioned and rethought.

We would like to highlight the presence of several projects which have been pitched across the past editions in the Official Selection of Visions du Réel 2021. Indeed, these are nothing less than three films which have been included in the International competition: *Les Enfants terribles* by Ahmet Necdet Cupur (Pitching du Réel 2019), *Ostrov – The Island* by Laurent Stoop and Svetlana Rodina (Pitching du Réel 2019) and *Little Palestine (Diary of a Siege)* by Abdallah Al-Khatib (Pitching du Réel 2020). At VdR-Industry we are glad and proud to witness how strong these projects have become.

We would like to warmly thank the moderator of the Pitching session, Paolo Bertolin, and the six moderators of the roundtables: Isabel Arrate, Pierre-Alexis Chevit, Francesco Giai Vai, Gitte Hansen, Jovan Marjanovic, and Ulla Simonen. We also want to express our deepest gratitude to all the decision makers that are joining us from all over the world, fighting timezones even when the time difference is not in their favour.

We are very glad to have renewed for this online edition of VdR-Industry our long lasting collaborations with our award partners, that continue to support the projects we trust with a number of very prestigious awards that are extremely valuable: The Party Film Sales Award, RTS Award, HEAD – Genève Postproduction Award, Cannes Docs Award, Thessaloniki Documentary Festival Award, DOK Leipzig / DOK Industry Networking Award and visions sud est Award (dedicated to the global South and East projects).

We are also very pleased to announce that Visions du Réel will grant a new cash award for the most promising project of VdR-Pitching 2021.

Welcome to our 2021 VdR-Pitching Online edition, we hope you have very productive meetings and discussions!

Pitching Moderator



Paolo Bertolin
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Selection Committee
Venice International Film Festival
Italy

Paolo Bertolin is a film programmer, critic and producer. He is a member of the selection committee of Venice Film Festival, which he joined in 2008. In 2019 and 2020, he was part of the selection committee of Cannes' Directors' Fortnight. Since 2016, he is the Artistic Consultant of Locarno Open Doors. He has worked for several international film festivals and institutions, including IFFRotterdam, the Doha Film Institute, Udine Far East FF, Torino FF, Mumbai IFF, Beijing IFF, IFFBratislava. As a film critic and journalist, he wrote articles for Italian and international publications, including *Il manifesto*, *Cineforum*, *Segnocinema*, *The Korea Times*, *Cahiers du cinéma*, *Positif* and *Senses of Cinema*. Furthermore, he has production credits on such films as Phan Dang Di's *Big Father*, *Small Father and Other Stories*, Lav Diaz's *A Lullaby to the Sorrowful Mystery* and Amit Dutta's *Chitrashala*, all entries in the Berlinale Competition. He is a member of the European Film Academy and of the Asia Pacific Screen Awards Academy.

Roundtable Moderators



Isabel Arrate Fernandez
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Deputy director IDFA/Director IDFA
Bertha Fund
The Netherlands
www.idfa.nl

Isabel Arrate Fernandez finished her MA in Film Studies from the University of Amsterdam in 1996, and worked in festival production, programming and film financing before joining IDFA to head the IDFA Bertha Fund. Since 2020, she is the deputy director of IDFA in charge of the Filmmakers support department. As such she is responsible for the IDFA Bertha Fund (IBF) and oversees the Talent Development programs. She is a member of the IBF selection committee, actively involved in the mentoring of documentary projects, and regularly participates as consultant in workshops and pitching forums. She is a member of Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS).



Pierre-Alexis Chevit
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Head of Cannes Docs
Marché du Film - Festival de Cannes
France
www.marchedufilm.com/cannes-docs

Pierre-Alexis Chevit runs Cannes Docs, the tailored industry program & networking platform for all feature creative documentary filmmakers and decision-makers, as part of the Marché du Film - Festival de Cannes. With a predominant focus on docs, he has also freelanced for, and still collaborates with, a variety of festivals, markets, and specialized organizations – both on the coordination and programming sides –, including Cinéma du Réel, Jihlava, Fipadoc, Cannes Court Métrage, the French Short Film Agency, Cinéma du Québec à Paris, Festival Silhouette, and more. He has also worked in the VOD/DVD field, dealing mainly with docs and short films. Pierre-Alexis regularly serves as jury, moderator, tutor, and consultant / expert on multiple international events.



Francesco Gai Via
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Programme, Advisor
Venice International Film Festival
Italy
www.labiennale.org

Francesco Gai Via is a festival director and film critic based in Turin, Italy. He is a member of the selection committee of the Venice Film Festival and scout of the Venice Production Bridge. He's head of Alps Film Lab, a french\italian training and development program funded by the EU and since 2015 he has been working with TorinoFilmLab, the renowned development and training institution, where he is a member of the pedagogical team and delegate on Italian projects. Since 2017, he is the artistic director of Annecy Cinéma Italien, the main international festival dedicated to Italian cinema. He is director of the Carbonia Film Festival in Sardinia. In the past, he was programmer of documentaries for the Torino Film Festival and responsible for the programming of the CinemAmbiente festival. He is co-founder of Crocevia di sguardi, a festival focusing on documentaries and migrant issues. He organizes seminars on film festival management and programming for various Italian universities and institutions. He is a member of the European Film Academy and the Italian Film Academy Premi David di Donatello.



Gitte Hansen
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Consultant, tutor & EP
Switzerland

Gitte is a free-lance consultant, tutor and EP in the international documentary industry with experience in developing, financing, production and distributing documentary projects with international potentials. Gitte has executive produced more than 20 international independent documentaries for First Hand Films where she was deputy director and headed sales and acquisitions for many years. Gitte is serving as a lecturer, mentor and tutor at national, regional and international workshops and film training schemes. Her experience includes work with filmmakers at project-driven programs such as IDFAcademy, DocCampus Master School, Baltic Sea Forum, Crossing Borders and Thessaloniki Doc. Gitte is appointed mentor for the training schemes Close-Up and CinéDoc-Tbilisi in 2021 and holds a Master of Film & Rhetoric from the University of Copenhagen.



Jovan Marjanovic
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Head of Industry
Sarajevo Film Festival
Bosnia and Herzegovina
www.sff.ba

Jovan Marjanović has been involved in the Sarajevo Film Festival since 1999, first as a technician and programme coordinator and later as the CineLink manager from its first edition. He is now on the festival's Board of Directors in charge of CineLink Industry Days. He was on the Board of Management of the Bosnian Federal Film Fund from 2011 and was its President it from 2014 to 2016. He has served as the National Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Eurimages since 2006. In his capacity as the Chairman of the Eurimages Cinema Support scheme, he initiated and overseen the implementation of Southeast Europe wide cinema digitization programme in 2009/10. Marjanović has produced a number of award-winning documentaries, shorts and feature films and consults for several international film institutions. He holds an MSc from the Cass Business School in London and teaches Film Business at the Academy of Performing Arts in Sarajevo.



Ulla Simonen
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Director
Promotion Centre for Audiovisual
Culture AVEK
Finland
www.kopioisto.fi/en

In the position of director of the Promotion Centre for Audiovisual Culture in Finland (AVEK) Simonen runs a fund supporting production, training and international promotion in the field of media art, documentary and short films. Simonen has worn different hats in the field of filmmaking since the mid-nineties, before joining AVEK, she was for 9 years producer and partner in the Helsinki based company MADE. Originally, she is educated as film editor, produced over 50 titles, shorts, features, both fiction and documentary, tutored for Berlinale talents since 2008 as well as many other talent development and training programs, such as DOK.Incubator, Generation Africa and IDFAcademy as the last ones. She has also worked as a commissioner for short films and documentaries and as the artistic director of DocPoint Festival in Helsinki. In her work, be it producing or tutoring she is dedicated to find the film-makers vision and to find ways how to enhance and support that vision.

#TimesUp Kyrgyzstan

Leigh Iacobucci
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: September 2022



Logline

A young pop star in Kyrgyzstan battles for women's rights through her music and activism, while turbulent political shifts make her fight even harder. Will the conservative government silence her right to protest (or sing) freely? With a mix of vérité scenes featuring Zere with her family and friends, recording in the music studio, and in the streets of Bishkek where she protests regularly, this film will reveal the difficulties in sparking a feminist movement in a society deeply rooted in conservative Muslim values.

Synopsis

#TimesUp Kyrgyzstan focuses on a 21-year old Kyrgyz pop star, Zere Asylbek, who is determined to spark a feminist movement in her country. Through her relentless activism and provocative music, she will not stop challenging conservative views and speaking out, despite growing government censorship.

After her first song went viral in 2018, Zere received death threats and made international headlines, but that did not dissuade her from speaking out on behalf of women's rights and gender equality. In the Summer of 2021, Zere plans to release her second album and step back into the spotlight. One of the songs, focusing on women's sexuality, is certain to provoke a backlash from a conservative muslim audience, but also from the new government, interested in controlling the media and ensuring that artist's messages are aligned with "Kyrgyz traditional values".

The film will also explore whether her parents will continue to support their outspoken daughter, and also be able to keep her safe in a country where even the police cannot be trusted. Will the country remain politically stable enough for her to release her music and spark the change she is seeking? Will her album and tireless activism succeed in galvanizing solidarity for the Kyrgyz women's movement?

Goals at VdR-Pitching

We are looking for international co-producers, financing, and world sales.

Filming Location

Kyrgyzstan

Shooting Language

Kirghiz, English

Shooting Date & Duration

2021, 3 months / 2022, 1 month

Shooting Format

HD

Expected Runtime

70' / 52'

Production Company

Framevox (Switzerland)

Producer(s)

Veronique Vergari, Agnès Boutruche

Total Budget

227,066 €

Financing in Place

8,836 € (4%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

Framevox, Switzerland

Looking for International Sales

Contact

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Director's Note

Since first meeting Zere in October 2019 at a UN Women conference, we quickly sparked a connection over our shared belief that all women should be able to reach their full potential. Together we agreed to make a documentary film, focusing on her fight for women's rights in Kyrgyzstan. Over the past year, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, our friendship has grown closer and we remain committed to telling this story in a country where women's voices are typically silenced. While the majority of the film will be vérité-style filming (at home with her family, protesting in the streets, singing in the studio, spending time with her friends), the audience will also listen to the voice messages that Zere has left for me throughout the film. These audio clips will give us insight to intimate thoughts and feelings about the various challenges she faces, and also hint at the close friendship between the subject and filmmaker.

With this film, one of my main objectives is to "humanize" Zere, as I know that many Kyrgyz people view her as a radical woman, without values or morals, who goes to extremes just to get attention. Making an audience see her as a daughter, as a caring sister, and as a vulnerable artist who dedicates so much time to helping others, I believe will make people more open to her message of equality and spark important conversations across the country. In parallel, I would like an international audience to be inspired by Zere's relentless efforts and for young women everywhere to know that their voice matters.

Producers' Note

In our documentary, it is these women who put their lives in danger for freedom, for equality, that we want to talk about. *#TimesUp Kyrgyzstan* is part of this desire to bring the courage of these women to the screen.

We are coming to VdR-Pitching with *#TimesUp Kyrgyzstan* at the development stage. We are looking for coproducers and a way to develop our financial plan. We will submit the project to OFC and Cineforum, RTS, the Federal Equality Office and count on contributions from Foundations (Swiss funds and potential financing partners). We are also confident that Andana Distribution will show enthusiasm in supporting the distribution of this project.

It is a documentary intended for a large audience, including young and middle-age people who are interested in pop music, geopolitics, social and societal issues. Additionally, this film will appeal to people who care about gender equality, who fight against violence against women, or who are involved in social movements.

Director's Profile

With over 17 years of production experience and a graduate of Stanford University's Documentary Film Production program, Leigh Iacobucci has honed her skills in many areas of production. She has worked as a cinematographer for several theatrical-release documentary films and as a field producer/camerawoman for multiple television networks in the USA, including MTV, The Learning Channel, The Travel Channel and PBS. She currently works as an independent producer, camera woman and editor for multiple UN agencies and is based in Geneva, Switzerland.

Take me Away fast, 45', 2009-2011
Premiered at Full Frame Documentary Film Festival 2011

Outlet, 19', 2006
KQED, San Francisco, distributed by Frameline, United States

Producer's Profile

Framevox

Since 2002, Framevox has produced established directors and as well as offering opportunities to lesser known directors to produce their first works. Framevox supports fiction or documentary projects with high human values.

Aana

Anna Eborn, Åsa Ekman, Oscar Hedin
Sweden
Expected Release Date: November 2023



Logline

Sharing childhood with a deadly disease and surviving – what happens after? This is Aana's intimate story about being young and trying to live a normal life in spite of the late effects of a harsh cancer treatment she had gone through as a child.

Synopsis

Aana is 20 years old and lives in the far north of Sweden. As a child, she was diagnosed with a rare type of kidney cancer and recovered a few years later. She is still doing regular check ups – magnetic scanning or ultrasound. Every three months a scary waiting for results starts all over again. In moments like this, when worries cloud her mind, she goes out camping in the wilderness.

The film follows her in midst of medical tests, fears and the thrills of her first years of adulthood. Her inner life also develops in relationship to her best friend Julia – a healthy “normal” northern girl who skis in the winter and skateboards in the summer. Julia is a great support person, but also reminds Aana of a carefree youth, different from hers.

It's Ci down in the south who makes Aana feel she is not alone on this road. The two young women befriended in the corridors of the hospital. They share a deep connection based on the fact that they both have seen their worst days at a fragile age, and are now living under the threat of a relapse. For Aana, the question about being able to have children has been growing since Ci shared that her mum took out 4 eggs before her treatment as a 14-year-old. Nothing was done about Aana; no one told her about infertility as a possible late effect.

When moved from the child department to the adult department in the hospital, the responsibility to initiate this medical investigation falls on Aana's shoulders and demands a new kind of strength.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

Anna Eborn's films have previously been very well received at Visions du Réel. We are looking for international distribution, funding for development, and possible co-producers in France.

Filming Location

Sweden, Umeå

Shooting Language

Swedish, Sami, Finnish

Shooting Date & Duration

Starting in 2021, 2 years

Shooting Format

2:1 / 4K

Expected Runtime

80' / 12' / 58'

Production Company

Film and Tell (Sweden)

Producer(s)

Oscar Hedin, Marina-Evelina Cracana

Total Budget

500,000 €

Financing in Place

85,000 € (17%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

The Swedish Film Institute, Sweden
The Swedish Arts Grants Committee, Sweden
Film and Tell, Sweden

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Director's Note

The mood and look of the film are conveyed through cinematic realism; bare, minimal, nuanced; a look into struggle and solitude, friendship, and being normal.

Nature is a mirror for emotions. We portray the force of nature in contrasts but also strengthen what might be going on inside the main characters, as they wait for medical results, worry or are feeling released from stress, etc. In the film, the images of the first snow, last ice breaking, thaw, animals in the summer, are all used to create sensations that help us understand their feelings. The method is to work over the course of the seasons, winter, spring, summer... and use longer takes, to let conversations between Aana, Julia and Ci go deep. A cinema vérité kind of approach is used around their daily routines like studying, skiing, rock-climbing, talking to their families, going to hospitals. We will work mainly with outdoor scenes, a trademark of Anna's artistic approach. The North of Sweden with its long summer days and dark winters, maybe with the magic of the Northern Lights, will contribute to creating cinematic scenes. We want to show the characters moving in a natural frame, in a real interaction with the environment and each other. We have weekly directors' meetings where we decide the scenes to be shot, the register/mood, the script. Most of the time Anna and Åsa are on the set, since Oscar is still under treatment.

DOP Pia Lehto and director Anna Eborn went to school together but this is their first feature length project together. Pia's work as a cinematographer can be found on her website www.pialehto.com.

Anna: "I have always been interested in the lives of young people facing all the uncertainties and insecurities about growing up. Children who defeat cancer become teenagers longing for normality, when normality at this critical age is already a tumultuous experience. Ci and Aana are true fighting spirits. And even if they are young, they know more about life and death than most of us. They have looked the end in the eyes, and came out alive. This film will be my first documentary shot in Sweden, so it's a road of discovery for me too, as a director."

Oscar: "I myself am currently recovering after a stem cells transplant, so I understand what these children have gone through. But I try to imagine – would I be the same adult I am today if this disease happened during my childhood? What does it mean to be under treatment when you grow up, your personality shapes up, your social needs and identity develop? Then how do you live the victory of having survived, grow independent and take matters into your own hands?"

Åsa: "Cancer leaves youth with invisible scars – infertility, a recurring need for treatment or a simple constant battle with yourself, internally, after having been deprived of a normal childhood. Still, the joy of having survived, prevails."

Producers' Note

The project is in the stage of idea development and research. We have secured access to the community of child cancer survivors in Sweden with the support of the Swedish Child Cancer Foundation, which endorses the project.

In autumn, we conducted casting interviews and talked with over 40 young participants who have survived different forms of cancer. We casted Ci and Aana for their complex personalities and their special connection. To capture the coming of age of these young people, the shooting period is set between 2021 and the spring of 2023. We have development support from The Swedish Film Institute, The Swedish Arts Grants Committee and a discussion with SVT for domestic distribution.

This film reflects the directors' strong interest in this story, and for Oscar, a special connection to the topic. Oscar and Åsa have worked together on *My Life My Lesson* and *Say Something*, two films about teenagers facing realities characterized by fear. Anna Eborn has a special sensibility to depict coming-of-age stories in an almost spiritual dimension.

Director's Profile

Anna Eborn's debut feature and self edited documentary, *Pine Ridge*, was selected in the Official Selection at the Venice International Film Festival 2013. Further films include *Epifania*, a hybrid/fiction which premiered at the Busan International Film Festival 2016 and the feature-length documentary *Lida*, which premiered in competition at CPH:DOX 2017. Her latest film *Transnistra* won the VPRO Award during the 2019 IFF Rotterdam and the Dragon Award for Best Nordic Documentary at Göteborg IFF 2019.

Transnistra, 93', 2019

Premiered at International Film Festival Rotterdam

Lida, 88', 2017

Premiered at CPH:DOX

Åsa Ekman and Oscar Hedin worked together on *Say Something* (2015) and *My life my lesson* (2014) which both premiered at IDFA, won the Swedish TV-prize Kristallen for Best Documentary two years in a row, and reached over ten million viewers. *My life my lesson* won the Nordic Docs award for Best Documentary and was nominated to The Swedish Film Award Guldbaggen for Best Editing.

Say Something, 75', 2015

Premiered at IDFA

My life my lesson, 75', 2014

Premiered at IDFA

Producer's Profile

Film and Tell

Film and Tell is a Stockholm-based film company founded by the award-winning director and producer Oscar Hedin. For over 10 years we've been producing high-end documentaries with a strong focus on social issues and character-driven storytelling. Our films have premiered in prestigious international film festivals like IDFA, have won important awards and been nominated to many among which The Best Documentary Feature (Göteborg Film Festival 2016) and TV Prize Kristallen for Best Documentary in 2016 and 2017. By pairing thoughtful, compelling documentaries with extensive outreach, we engage the audience to create positive social change. As an example, the documentary diptych on children exposed to domestic violence, *My Life My Lesson* (2015) and *Say Something* (2016), have led to changes in children's rights legislation, in Sweden.

But Dear Lord Why?

მაგრამ ღმერთო ჩემო რატო?

Rati Tsiteladze
Georgia
Expected Release Date: May 2022



Logline

For more than a decade, Dea has an unfulfilled dream of having a child. Grief and joy, fear and hope, seamlessly coexist in the symphony of her daily life, in a world where a woman is considered incomplete until she becomes a mother.

Synopsis

31-year-old Dea lives with her husband in the former Soviet republic of Georgia. She is a seemingly ordinary young woman with a strong desire of becoming a mother. For more than a decade, she battles with infertility, social pressure and unfulfilled dreams, in a world where traditional gender stereotypes are part of the national identity and where the position of women is paradoxical – a woman should serve her man and cannot be complete until she becomes a mother.

After various doctors, prayers and a failed in-vitro fertilization, when hope was almost lost, Dea miraculously becomes pregnant, and her sorrow turns into an unspeakable joy. But several months later, due to a doctor's negligence, her pregnancy starts to show complications. The baby girl is prematurely born. But the child dies and Dea's world turns upside-down.

As Dea tries to confront her inner turmoil, new tensions arise and she starts questioning herself, God and the relationship with her husband, who finds it hard to accept equality between men and women.

As Dea fights against hopelessness, she meets different people on her path. Among them is a young woman who had seven miscarriages, until she finally had a successful pregnancy. She visits a mysterious fortune-teller who gives her hope. She travels deep into the mountains to participate in ancient religious ritual "Lomisa", where an alleged "miraculous chain" is preserved and thousands of sheep are sacrificed. She walks several kilometers to attend the annual fertility pilgrimage "Tsachkh" with hundreds of childless couples, carrying toy cradles with a doll.

Eventually, throughout her internal and external journey, Dea examines her internalized myths of womanhood and realizes that she is already a complete woman.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

We are looking for experienced co-producers, presales and further financing. We are open to doing the full post-production in a co-production country.

Filming Location
Georgia, Tbilisi, Martvili Region, Dusheti, etc.

Shooting Language
Georgian

Shooting Date & Duration
Starting in June 2021, 70 days

Shooting Format
4K / 6K

Expected Runtime
90' / 52'

Production Company
ArtWay Film (Georgia)

Producer(s)
Nino Varsimashvili, Rati Tsiteladze,
Olga Slusareva

Total Budget
298,725 €

Financing in Place
36,725 € (12%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Sarke Studio, Georgia (co-producers' in-kind investment)
ArtWay Film, Georgia (own investment and deferrals)

Looking for International Sales

First Feature film

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Director's Note

But Dear Lord Why? is first and foremost a film about hope in the face of hopelessness, how hope can turn the grief into emotional power and shape a person's character and attitude towards the future. The film explores society's attitude towards gender roles and expectations, and towards religion, which forms a key component in how culture is defined and how culture defines our identity.

Dea is my sister. For a long time, I was unable to start a dialogue with her on this subject, as I knew it was painful for her. However, several months ago, when we met, I saw unspeakable emotions in the depths of her eyes, and we knew that it was time to break the silence. Through the study of characters and their relationship with each other, as their faith is tested to its limits, touching on issues that are both, personal and political, intimate and universal, I want to explore duality of human emotions of grief and joy, fear and hope, doubt and faith, through a lyrical visual narrative that conveys allegorical messages about the horrors and beauty of life.

I used to paint in my childhood and for me art has always been a special way of communicating. With this film, I aim to take an intimate journey inside the mind of the characters, allowing us to see the world through their eyes.

Framing, composition, lighting, and the natural elements will be given an aesthetic importance. I plan to work primarily with natural light and to observe the characters with still, single shots and long takes, which will allow the audience to connect with them emotionally. But from time to time, I plan to use a wide-angle handheld to capture the joy and beauty of life. The Georgian traditional folk music and the Orthodox Chant will be used as part of the character's emotional experience. There will be few dialogues, and voice-over of the past in some parts of the film will complete the images of the present day, but there will also be moments of silence, which will create harmony out of the chaos of real life.

Producers' Note

When Rati shared with me the idea of *But Dear Lord Why?*, I was immediately interested and intrigued. The idea fascinated me not only as a woman, but also as a producer and artist, because I think that this is not just a film about infertility or a tireless thirst for motherhood, it is a film that explores human nature, delves into existential, philosophical issues and explores the duality of nature and human emotions.

Infertility affects millions of people around the world, but it is rarely discussed openly. Although male infertility contributes to more than half of all cases of global childlessness, infertility remains a woman's social burden. In many cultures, women who do not have children suffer from stigmatization, discrimination and ostracism.

Telling Dea's story, who suffered in silence for many years, is crucial for those women, because stories like these aren't told enough. Through her raw honesty, we want to break the culture of silence and raise concerns about the needs and experiences of women.

I've been working with Rati for several years and I strongly believe that he is a particularly passionate filmmaker who is not afraid to take creative risks. His international success underlines not only his unique but also universal appeal.

In April, we plan to apply for production funding at the Georgian National Film Center. From there we want to move on and apply for other international funds such as World Cinema Fund, IDFA Bertha Fund, Sundance, Hot Docs and visions sud est among others. In addition, we are negotiating with private investors and potential foreign co-production partners whose contribution can play an important role for achieving our fundraising strategy goal.

We plan to start filming by June and complete the production by the end of the year. After being part of the Cannes, Berlinale, TIFF and IDFA among other prestigious festivals and market platforms, we hope for a strong festival run that will create the foundation of a successful cinema release. Furthermore, we will target the festivals that focus on women's voices and experiences.

Director's Profile

Rati Tsiteladze was born in post-Soviet Georgia. He is a European Academy Award nominated filmmaker. He is an alumnus of TIFF Filmmaker Lab, Locarno Academy, HFFA Film Independent and Berlinale Talent Project Market. Rati directed and produced several short films that won over 50 awards worldwide and screened at more than 300 festivals, including Hong Kong, Melbourne and Locarno. His recent work *Prisoner of Society* (2018) won numerous Oscar® qualifying awards and was nominated for European Film Academy Award.

With his feature film project, *Blue Nights* he won the Eurimages Award at TIFF. He was selected among 6 directors at Cannes Cinéfondation Residence and won the first HFFA/Film Independent Award by Hollywood Foreign Press Association Golden Globes®.

Prisoner of Society, 16', 2018
Premiered at Tampere (Nominated for European Film Academy Award)

Producer's Profile

ArtWay Film

ArtWay Film was founded in 2014 by Rati Tsiteladze in Georgia. The company is focused on developing and producing art-house films and documentaries. The company's works have been screened at more than 300 film festivals including Hong Kong, Melbourne and Locarno and have won more than 50 awards worldwide, including European Film Academy award nomination.

The company's feature documentary film *Shadows in the Silence* was part of IDFA and has been selected among six projects at Doc Corner 70th Festival de Cannes, and the feature film *Blue Nights* has been selected for the Berlinale Co-Production Market, has won the Moulin d'Andé Prize at the Cannes Cinéfondation Residence and the Eurimages Award for Best Project at TIFF as well as the first HFFA/Film Independent Award by Hollywood Foreign Press Association Golden Globes

Egypt, a Love Song

Iris Zaki
Israel, United States
Expected Release Date: February 2022



Logline

Souad Zaki was a popular Jewish singer in 1940's Egypt, married to a Muslim musician who, after immigrating to Israel, lived a double life: in the mornings she was a cleaning lady and in the evenings a singer. Souad's granddaughter, Iris, brings her tempestuous story to life in a hybrid cinematic project that crosses nations, cultures, and religions, bringing together sweeping periodical plotlines with the intimate documentary journey of the director and her father, into their complex identities.

Synopsis

Director Iris Zaki and her father Moshe embark on a journey into the turbulent life of Souad Zaki, Iris's grandmother. A hybrid project integrating documentary scenes and archival elements with periodical scripted scenes from Egypt, US, and Israel. Souad was a Jewish singer in 1940's Cairo, who appeared in films alongside Umm Kulthum and was considered one of the Arab world's promising stars. She fell in love with Mohammad Al-Akkad, a renowned kanun player, and the two married – despite the objection of both families – and had a son, Moshe.

Mohammad, who traveled to the US to prepare for their emigration, abandoned Souad without explanation, married another woman and sued for custody of his only son. Realizing she could lose her son, Souad understood she could no longer remain in Cairo and that her only safe haven would be Israel.

In Israel, where Arab music was considered inferior, Souad lived in a poor immigrant neighborhood, and in order to put her son in a prestigious school, she did the only thing she could as a single mother in a new country: she became a cleaner. She realized she would never again rise to fame and fortune and considered her son's success her own. When Moshe was 17, his father contacted him and invited him to NY. Moshe began to visit him every year. After Mohammad's wife passed away, he invited Souad to come. A brief telephone conversation with him persuaded her and soon after she landed in NY, the couple married again. A few years later, they moved to Israel where they lived together till they died. Iris goes on an intimate father-daughter journey, visiting locations that were milestones in Souad's life. In each location, scenes from the story come through and juxtapose with Moshe's and Iris's response.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

We are mainly looking for co-producers, international financing, broadcasters and world sales.

Filming Location

Israel, Egypt, USA

Shooting Language

Arabic, Hebrew, English

Shooting Date & Duration

Starting in 2021, 12 months

Shooting Format

4K

Expected Runtime

80' / 52'

Production Company

Galay Productions (Israel)

Producer(s)

Asaf Galay

Total Budget

622,000 €

Financing in Place

150,000 € (24%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

Kan11 - Israeli Public Broadcasting Corporation, Israel

Makor Foundation for Israeli Films, Israel

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

The film will weave together three layers of cinematic language into a single entity. The documentary scenes in the film are continuing my signature documentary style. At the heart there are conversations filmed using my interviewing method of "The Abandoned Camera", with only me and my subject present without any crew in the space. This helps me create an intimacy and reduce theatrics; a small, intimate, aesthetic and delicate documentary, using subtle movements to paint a detailed picture.

The second layer will be scripted scenes of Souad's life from 1940s Cairo, Israel in the 1950s, the US in the 1980s, and contemporary Israel. These scenes will be cinematic and surprising. They will not be mere re-enactments or illustrations, but rounder scenes that stand out on their own, where I try to bring Souad's story to life through her own eyes and experience, with attention to detail in terms of costumes, art, dialogue, culture and politics of the time.

A third layer of the film will be rare archival material of my grandmother's music and films. It will include audio segments from radio interviews as she talks about her life and musical career in Egypt. In her own voice, in first person, Souad provides fascinating detail and nuance, including her first meeting with the legendary star Umm Khultum, and about how she escaped Egypt and made it to Israel in 1950.

The documentary scenes, the scripted scenes, and Souad's archival materials complement each other and create one powerful piece that touches delicately on the different layers of our family story.

Producers' Note

It's a great pleasure to work on this project with Iris, who brings so much passion and talent to filmmaking. One of the aspects of this film that excites me so much is the way that we are changing the historical record, in a way that impacts the cultural present. We are restoring and rescuing audio-visuals of Souad Zaki's music and movies that were censored in Egypt after she moved to Israel, and marginalized in Israeli archives. We are bringing to life a Jewish-Arab musical moment that's been repressed from Israeli memory for many years due to politics. With Iris's family connection to the narrative, that Jewish-Arab cultural story becomes personal and compelling.

We completed the development, with a precise cinematic concept/language and detailed treatment. We are now seeking international co-producer in order to secure the needed funds as well as open the doors to new markets. Ideally we would team up with European and North American co-producers and broadcasters that have an interest in Middle-East history and culture as well as subjects of identity, immigration and women's stories.

Director's Profile

Iris Zaki is a Grierson award-winning filmmaker who uses quirky first-person narratives to depict people. She did her PhD at Royal Holloway, University of London, where she explored her innovative interviewing technique. Her films were shown at numerous festivals and universities around the world (incl. IDFA, Visions du Réel, CPH:DOX, AFI Docs, Karlovy Vary, Palm Springs and Hamptons) winning many international prestigious awards, and also featured on TV and were commissioned by The New York Times' OpDocs. While working on her current project, Iris continues teaching Bachelor and Master students, while also giving masterclasses in Europe and the US.

Unsettling, 70', 2018
Premiered at CPH:DOX

Women in Sink, 35', 2015
Premiered at Visions du Réel

My Kosher Shifts, 20', 2011

Natural Born Settlers, 17', 2019
NY Times' OPDOCS

The Shampoo Summit, 8', 2016
NY Times' OPDOCS

Producer's Profile

Galay Productions

The award-winning films of Asaf Galay examine modern Jewish culture and creativity. He has explored the magical literature and complex life of Isaac Bashevis Singer, celebrated ultra-Orthodox and queer Swedish pop music, and traced the development of comics and cartoons in the US and Israel. His documentary *The Adventures of Saul Bellow* will be screened in the PBS American Masters series.

Facing Darkness

Jean-Gabriel Périot
France, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Expected Release Date: April 2022



Logline

Facing Darkness will offer a cinematographic journey through the Siege of Sarajevo. The first part of this feature documentary will be made up of excerpts from films shot during the Siege by young filmmakers who took their cameras with them even though they were fighting in the war. The second part of the film will consist of interviews with these filmmakers who testify today to this singular experience.

Synopsis

During the 1325 days of the Siege of Sarajevo, between April 1992 and the beginning of 1996, the inhabitants of the city were exposed to permanent daily violence. *Facing Darkness* will go through this historical moment by following young filmmakers who, in the heart of hell, took up their cameras while they had to concretely and militarily defend their city.

The first part of *Facing Darkness* will be a montage exclusively composed of preexisting films made during the war mainly by Sarajevan filmmakers. It will go chronologically through the almost four years of the Siege and some of its concrete repercussions on the inhabitants, whether men forced to go to the front line or others who also had to face daily violence and desolation. It will also point out the different ways the filmmakers translated their own experiences of this war into films and how they cinematographically expressed what they saw and felt.

The second part of the film will consist of interviews conducted today with the youngest of these filmmakers. Then aged between 18 and 25, some of them voluntarily joined the army, others were mobilised, and still others preferred to be integrated into civil defense. How and why did they start or continue making films? Did they take their camera as they could have taken guns? Twenty-five years later, they will recall for us the dark experiences they went through.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

We are looking for coproducers, sale agents, funders, distributors and broadcasters.

Filming Location
Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Shooting Language
Bosnian, English

Shooting Date & Duration
Autumn 2021, 2 weeks

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
90'

Production Company
Alter Ego Production (France),
Pravo Ludjski (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Producer(s)
Cécile Lestrade

Total Budget
371,000 €

Financing in Place
101,000 € (27%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
CNC, France
SCAM, France
Région Île-de-France
Région Sud, France
Procirep et Angoa, France
Ciclic - Région Centre, France

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

I was 18 years old in 1992 when the war in Bosnia broke out. Young men my age had to fight to protect themselves and I watched them on television. *Facing Darkness* will question the singular experience of being forced to take up arms to defend oneself... An experience those young men had to go through. I will focus more specifically on some filmmakers and artists who had to be soldiers during the war while starting or continuing to film. Why did they take up their camera? What did they want to say or achieve?

The first part of the film will consist of a montage of film and video excerpts with a special focus on those made by young filmmakers-soldiers. Their mostly unknown films question what it means to militarily defend a city and what the purpose of cinema could be in war times. Even if shot with poor technical means, they are nevertheless really impressive. Each of them presents a unique way of translating cinematographically how its filmmaker dealt with the disasters around him.

As the history of the Siege of Sarajevo is slowly but irrevocably fading away, this part will be edited chronologically through a precise choice of excerpts, which will give subtle keys to understanding the situation. This part will also introduce the filmmakers and artists who will appear in the second part of the film.

From the first to the second part of *Facing Darkness*, we will switch from 1995 to 2021, from a rather demanding archive montage, to a filmmaking based on interviews, with a more restrained rhythm. In a way, we will move from filmmaking focusing on "images" to one focusing on 'language'. The editing of the second part will mix the interviews by themes in order to draw a collective portrait of these young filmmakers who had to face the worst violence not only with weapons but also with cameras.

Around six men will be appearing. Each of them had a unique experience of the Siege regarding how he participated in the war: as a volunteer or as a mobilised soldier; on the front line, in the audiovisual section of the army or in the civil defense. And how he made films at this time: for the army, for a production company, independently; as a professional, as an artist or as an amateur. Today, each of them lives differently from the other. Some dropped their camera; others became renowned national or international filmmakers.

The interviews will be shot in Sarajevo in locations of their choice, always related to their experiences of war and cinema. The film crew will be kept to a minimum in order to allow them to move freely in these locations and to give them all the time they need to talk and share their reflections about the darkness they had to face.

Producers' Note

Alter ego has produced two short documentaries by Jean-Gabriel Périot, two films made with inmates of the Orléans' prison, testifying its desire to give voice to those who, in society, face exclusion, rejection, psychological and physical violence.

Working with Jean-Gabriel Périot on the development of a project such as *Facing Darkness* is to accompany the obstinate work of a committed and talented writer-filmmaker who here plunges us into the heart of the question of the act of filming to bear witness, to tell stories, in the most extreme conditions.

At the writing and development stages, we received significant support in France. Meanwhile, Jean-Gabriel carried out several sessions of location scouting and archive research in Sarajevo.

As co-producer of the film, Kumjana Novakova from Pravo Ljudski is dealing with the Bosnian archival institutions and production companies. She also organizes the research, the scouting location as well as the shooting in Sarajevo.

Other trips were planned for 2020 but unfortunately could not take place due to the health crisis. We are ready to organise this trip next spring and summer in order to prepare the shooting scheduled for next autumn.

We aim to finish the film in 2022 – the 30th anniversary of the beginning of the Siege of Sarajevo.

Director's Profile

Born in France in 1974, Jean-Gabriel has directed several short movies including *Even If She Had Been A Criminal...*, *Nijuman no Borei* and *The Devil* which were shown in numerous festivals and were honoured by many awards. *A German Youth*, his first feature, opened the Panorama section of the Berlinale 2015 and received many awards in festivals. It was released in France, Germany and Switzerland. His first fiction film *Natsu no hikari (Summer Lights)* premiered in the San Sebastian film festival 2016. It was selected in many festivals and released in French cinemas in 2017. *Our Defeats*, a documentary made with high school students, was premiered in the Forum of the Berlinale 2019. *Return to Reims (Fragment)*, his last documentary montage film based on the book by Didier Eribon, narrated by Adèle Haenel, will be released and broadcast in 2021.

Our Defeats, 93', 2019
Premiered at the Berlinale Forum

Summer Lights, 83', 2016
Premiered at San Sebastian

A German Youth, 93', 2015
Premiered at the Berlinale Panorama

Producer's Profile
Alter Ego Production

The producers Cécile Lestrade and Elise Hug welcome and defend author-driven documentaries which convey a singular and affirmative point of view. Recent films: *Samouni Road* by Stefano Savona (2018) *Young and Alive* by Matthieu Baryre (2019), *That Which Does not Kill* by Alexe Poukine (2019).

Pravo Ljudski

Kumjana Novakova is an active member and director of the Sarajevo Cultural Community that promotes the Balkan cinema and she is curator in film festivals.

King Coal

Elaine McMillion Sheldon
United States
Expected Release Date: January 2023



Logline

A rendering of a lost paradise and a series of surreal documentary vignettes explore how coal is imbued in the identity of Appalachians. *King Coal* documents the cultural expressions that reveal the complicated relationship with what was once the area's most dominant industry, while employing elements of magical realism to rediscover a lost dream for the region.

Synopsis

King Coal is a hybrid documentary that brings to life the lost dream of Vandalia, a mythical paradise that stands in contrast to the current reality of the Appalachian coalfields. Appalachia, a region in a tailspin to find its new purpose and identity in our post-coal world, is explored through Violet from Vandalia who sets off to help the dying region redefine itself and remember the riches that make it distinctive, beyond coal. We experience the psychological and mythical role coal has played as our main protagonist, Violet, transports to our current world – renamed Westylvania – through magical goggles found deep in the forest. Through her interactions and observations of real-life vérité scenes in our coal-dominated world, Violet sees that even though many see miners living in retrograde, for many in the region pride is anything but a relic. It's found on stage as a 17-year-old Pennsylvanian pageant contestant performs a dance routine honoring men killed in mine disasters. It's in the artistic process of a West Virginia artist who trudges through wintry creeks in search of coal, which he uses to make paint. It's in the stories of a retired miner who has taken his one-man show on the road for 15 years. It's the motivator behind a 50-mile march to the battleground of Blair Mountain, home to the largest labor uprising in United States history. It's shouted from the pulpit of a pastor at a dissident church service. And it's heard in the coal-themed poems written and read by a child at the Appalachian regional fair. These real-life vérité scenes show the complex relationship to coal in a region dominated by this mono-economy. They also demonstrate that the people of Westylvania are not bought and sold by coal, but instead share a universal desire: a sense of belonging to a community. As the world faces a post-coal reckoning, *King Coal* calls upon the next generation to imagine ways to live in harmony with what is above and below the Earth's surface.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

We are seeking co-producers, financiers and international sales. Additionally, we are looking to connect with a community of filmmakers and production companies.

Filming Location
United States: West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina

Shooting Language
English

Shooting Date & Duration
2021-2022, 18 months

Shooting Format
4K

Expected Runtime
88'

Production Company
Requisite Media, LLC (United States), Cottage M (United States)

Producer(s)
Shane Boris

Total Budget
985,000 €

Financing in Place
204,394 € (21%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
West Virginia Humanities Council, United States
Tribeca Film Institute Gucci Fund, United States
Sundance Institute Development Fund, United States
Catapult Film Fund, United States
Field of Vision Grant, United States
Creative Capital Fellowship, United States
University of Tennessee, United States
Guggenheim Fellowship, United States
Cottage M, United States

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

King Coal is a departure from the vérité films I have made since 2010. As my artistic practice as an "observer" has evolved, I desire to fill a gap in the post-coal conversation with my observations and lived experiences as someone who grew up in the coalfields of Appalachia. *King Coal* challenges me to take a lyrical and essayist approach to weave imaginative reflections of an alternate world with playful visuals. *King Coal* shuns the safety I seek through traditional character-driven film methods, and thrusts me into the wilderness to push the hybrid documentary form.

The documentary vignettes, filmed mostly in 2019, clearly represent the vision of Westylvania, as they draw from real-life events and people that exist in the contemporary world. The Westylvanian vignettes reveal a portrait of a culture in which coal is an inescapable presence. Juxtaposed with these coal-related scenes is Violet's journey that serves as the backbone for the film and allows the viewer to imagine an alternative past and future for the region, based on nonfiction theories of economics, history, geology and human geography.

I envision Vandalia, Violet's land, as home to true-life stewards of the land: farmers, seedsavers, quilters, musicians, environmental activists, educators, performers, and laborers. They uphold traits, including resourcefulness, loyalty, humility, and neighborliness and reveal the best of human nature as they defy Appalachian stereotypes. Through dreams, Violet shares these scenes with Westylvanians, to remind them of the deeply rooted traditions they can use to re-make their world. Through a mix of coal scenes, archival footage, and dreams sent from Violet to others, *King Coal* is a patchwork of moments that calls upon the next generation to become stewards of the environment.

Westylvania and Vandalia are both fictional lands, but the details inside them are based on nonfiction accounts. This distinction allows me as an artist to examine them and transcend the current politics around coal. Notably, both Westylvania and Vandalia represent the same place, seen through different perspectives, and both hold values for the future. This device serves as a commentary – as do the goggles, which allow a limited view into a world – about how society tends to take shortcuts without taking the time to see the complexity and understand each other.

Producers' Note

I met Elaine at a Sundance Institute grantee orientation. Elaine shared a brief synopsis of *King Coal* and I immediately knew she was creating something special. Beyond the ambition and originality of the story, it was her approach to storytelling – ted and created – that drew me in. I was also moved by Elaine's commitment to Appalachia and to her support of filmmakers and filmmaking in the American South, a region and people grossly underrepresented in our industry. Lastly, though Elaine has made extraordinary films in the past, *King Coal* felt like the film she has been preparing to make her whole career and it is very exciting for me to help her vision come to life in whatever small way I can.

We are currently in late development for the fictional elements of our story and in early production for the nonfiction elements. We plan to complete production in March 2022, picture lock and attach sales agents by October, and have a festival premiere in early 2023 followed by a broad worldwide theatrical and broadcast release. Our development funding has been grant-driven with partners such as Tribeca, Creative Capital, Sundance, Catapult and a WV Humanities Media Grant. We are continuing to apply for grants as well as speaking with financing partners to help close our budget and provide strategic and creative support. We will also look to raise funds through international co-productions and presales.

Director's Profile

Elaine McMillion Sheldon is an Academy Award-nominated and Emmy and Peabody-winning filmmaker. Sheldon is the director of *Heroin(e)* and *Recovery Boys*, two Netflix Original Documentaries that explore America's opioid crisis. *Heroin(e)* premiered at the 2017 Telluride Film Festival, and was nominated for a 2018 Academy Award. The LA Times called *Recovery Boys* "sensitive and life-affirming" the film premiered at the 2018 Hot Docs International Film Festival. Sheldon has received two Peabody nominations and one Peabody Award for her interactive documentary *Hollow* (2013), which was also selected for the IDFA Doc Lab. Elaine is a 2021 Creative Capital Fellow, 2020 Guggenheim Fellow, 2018 USA Fellow by United States Artists and was named one of the "25 New Faces of Independent Film" by Filmmaker Magazine in 2013, and one of DOC NYC's "40 Under 40" in 2020.

Tutwiler, 34', 2020
Premiered at Hot Springs Film Festival

Recovery Boys, 89', 2018
Premiered at Hot Docs

Heroin(e), 39', 2017
Premiered at Telluride Film Festival

Hollow, 2013
IDFA Doc Lab

Producer's Profile

Requisite Media, LLC is located in Knoxville, Tennessee. The company, directed by Elaine McMillion Sheldon, produces her own feature and short documentary films. Requisite Media's productions (*Hollow*, *Heroin(e)*, *Recovery Boys*, *Tutwiler*) have received an Academy Award nomination, a Peabody Award, a Daytime Emmy award, and a News & Documentary Emmy award.

Cottage M

King Coal is co-produced with Shane Boris from Cottage M. Cottage M's productions (*The Edge Of Democracy*, *Stray*, *The Seer And The Unseen*, *Walden: Life In The Woods*, *All These Sleepless Nights*, *Olmo And The Seagull*, *Fuck For Forest*, *You're Looking At Me Like I Live Here And I Don't*) have received an Academy Award Nomination, a Peabody Award, a Platino Award, and Jury Awards from Sundance, Hot Docs, Locarno, CPH:DOX, SFFILM, DOC NYC, Rio, Warsaw, Sheffield.

Life After Siham

La Vie après Siham

Namir Abdel Messeh
France
Expected Release Date: October 2022



Logline

Mourning for his mother, Namir has decided to revive her memory in a film. Completely lost and quite obsessed by his project, he goes back to Egypt to carry out a workshop for young writers. Unfamiliar with the issues the new generation is facing since the revolution, is he actually allowed to endorse this role? Instead of being a guide, what if they could help him end the story?

Synopsis

Life after Siham is a film about Namir, a French filmmaker from Egyptian origins, invited to Cairo to give a writing workshop for young filmmakers.

His real motivation is to complete his own film about his deceased mother, by using his mother's love letters to reenact her life with Waguih, (Namir's father) before their exile to France. But the workshop isn't as easy as it seemed: Namir is a foreigner in his own country, he doesn't know much about his student's problems and disillusion after the Egyptian revolution, and finding his place within the group becomes a challenge.

Stuck in his movie, that reveals a curious mix between not accepting that his mother left, and a childish belief that films can bring dead people back to life, Namir gets more and more lost in his creative process. Curiously, as he loses control, the relationship with him and the rest of the students starts to turn very positive. And what if, instead of being the one helping them, all these students become the ones helping him finish his film and connect to life again?

This film is a movie about the creative process, about how art and creation are ways to transform pains and suffering from the mourning into stories where people can relate to. Namir, the director, will play his own role in the movie. And most of the characters too. But yet, it is not their exact story. This is a fiction. A fiction that plays with documentary, and creates this pleasurable confusion between all the dimensions the main character is lost into: illusion and reality, past and present, life and death, comedy and drama.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

We are looking for co-producers and international broadcasters, distributors or sales agents. We would also be pleased to meet other partners (festivals, international funds).

Filming Location

Egypt, France

Shooting Language

Arabic, French, English

Shooting Date & Duration

Spring 2022, 6 weeks

Shooting Format

HD

Expected Runtime

90'

Production Company

Les Films d'Ici (France), Oweda Films (France)

Producer(s)

Camille Laemlé, Namir Abdel Messeh

Total Budget

800,000 €

Financing in Place

18,000 € (3%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

Oweda Films, France
Les Films d'Ici, France
AFAC Documentary program (Development), Lebanon
Ateliers de l'Atlas, Maroc

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

I lost my mother in 2015. I didn't realize what had happened at the time; so difficult it was for me to envision. When she died, I felt abandoned. I realized at that moment that I considered myself first and foremost a son, a son, who'd become an orphan. I had promised my mother that I would make another film with her, after she had played such an important role in my first one *The Virgin, The Copts and Me*. But now here I was, with her no longer with us.

The hazards of life sometimes compel you to action; like those in the military say: "Shoot first, think later." I shot her funeral, then my father's distress as well as my desire to transmit her memory to my children. It was as if this film which I hadn't yet written could resuscitate her, even if superficially. But this project began to spell out suffering for me. Time passed, and one day I happened to revisit the material I had shot. Had I changed? I began to perceive a potential film that could rise up from the ashes of my personal family drama to tell the story of how we transcend grief and mourning.

Meeting Sonia Moyersoan, my co-writer, was a decisive moment. She confirmed my feeling: something here could be turned into a film (the mock-up we used as inspiration basis: https://youtu.be/Z-Pg7_ffp9Q). It would be the third volume of a family saga: the first had been *You, Waguih*, dedicated to my father, the second *The Virgin, The Copts and Me* to my mother, and now this third would focus on me, the son. Today, I know that *Life After Siham* will widen the scope. It will show how grief first breaks before adding to the creative capacity of Namir, a character which seems to need a reminder of basic everyday life colors, of lightness' interest and of audacity's taste.

The film will take place in Cairo, during a writing workshop hosted by Namir itself. The young creators – various, complex, and endearing characters – and the relationship that they will build with Namir will be the spine of the film's narration.

This film we're writing is therefore of a particular genre. Here, fiction is permanently nourished by the documentary footprint while documentary instants are enforced by our imagination. Here and now, both registers are complementary. The film finds this fantasy by combining images from family archives, excerpts from the films of Youssef Chahine (whose ghost will make appearances throughout the story) and from dreams. The meeting of these elements will show the psychological progression of the film's main character: Namir.

One year ago, I brought my children a cat. My first thought was: one day, my kids will cry at its burial. I know that the experience of love they would go through would come out the stronger in the end, and that, in itself, made it all worth it. They would be sad. But afterwards there would be that recognition. This, in my opinion, is the last phase of mourning: the feeling of recognition which allows for rebirth. And this is the story that I wish to tell you.

Producers' Note

In 2012, *The Virgin, the Copts and Me* was released in cinema. With 112,000 french spectators, Namir's first movie had definitely found its audience. Then, Namir had a seven years "cinema truce", a silence due to the loss of his film's flamboyant heroine: his mother, Siham.

However, Namir documented this period, as if it was a prediction of a cinema desire. In 2019 he sent me a director's statement about his project *Life after Siham*. Namir's words revolved around grief: is loss a break or a driving force to creation?

I was immediately charmed and very enthusiastic about accompanying Namir during the creation of this complex, full of promise film. Namir's style allows spectators to share a particular intimacy with him. This is what Namir often repeats to his young attendees in *Life After Siham*: "In essence, since we aim to move spectators, writing means exposing yourself."

Namir and I decided very early to co-produce the film together. We hope this joyous co-production will soon forge links in the Middle East and in Europe, for we aim to build a true international project to which Egypt and France would be the principal anchors. In the last months, this harmonious duo's work has progressed well, offering us the opportunity to participate in the last edition of Marrakech Film Festival's Atlas Workshop. The project keeps on growing and we are now delighted to share the promising propositions of this sensitive film with you.

Director's Profile

Born in 1974, Namir Abdel Messeh lived his early childhood in Upper Egypt. He obtained a masters in cinema at the University of Paris VII and studied directing at La Femis (French national film school). He directed two short fiction films before exploring more personal questions through his short documentary *You, Waguih*. His latest work *The Virgin, the Copts and Me* is a feature documentary which deals, in an original way, with his relation to his motherland, Egypt, and to his Coptic family. The film was selected in a lot of festivals all around the world, like Cannes, Berlin or Visions du Réel. It won several awards such as Tanit d'argent at Carthage Film Festival or the Best Arab Documentary Film award at the Doha Tribeca Film Festival in 2011.

The Virgin, the Copts and Me, 87', 2011

Among many festivals: Acid Cannes selection 2012, Tribeca, Berlinale Panorama, Visions du Réel ...

You, Waguih, 29', 2005

Among many festivals: Rotterdam, Toronto international film festival...

Producer's Profile

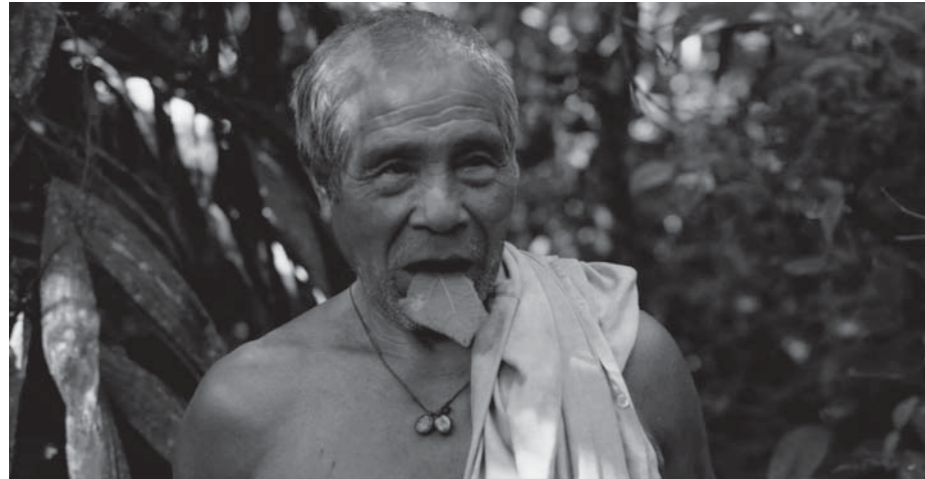
Les Films d'Ici

Camille Laemlé is an independent producer. After working as a production manager for more than ten years in several companies, she decided to joined Les Films d'Ici company in 2009, and since then, she produces documentaries with Serge Lalou, as *Fire at sea* by Gianfranco Rosi (Arte Cinema), Golden Bear Berlinale 2016, nominated for César and Oscar 2017, *Between Fences* by Avi Mograbi, Berlinale 2016, *A maid for each* by Maher Abi Samra, Berlinale 2016... Her latest films produced: *Notturmo* by Gianfranco Rosi, *Republic of Silence* by Diana el Jeiroudi, *History of the working class in Europe* by Stan Neumann (4X52mn), *The First 54 years* by Avi Mograbi, Berlinale 2021. In development today: *Athenian Material* by Laure Vermeersch, *Hyper lieux* by Michel Lussault and Stan Neuman (6X26 mn), *Call me May* (Fiction film), Darina El Joundi & Caroline Fourest, *Life after Siham*, Namir Abdel Messeh.

Looking for the Words

Buscando las palabras

Joel Stängle
Colombia
Expected Release Date: January 2023



Logline

As the outside world threatens their way of life, the last of the Nonuya people embark on a mythical journey deep into the Amazonian jungle to reconnect with their traditions in a struggle to see who will have the last word.

Synopsis

Grandfather Elias is one of the last of the Nonuya people living deep in the Colombian Amazon. Confronted with aging, he wants to honor his late father's last wish, "Take your children and introduce them to our ancestral land." But the Nonuya cannot enter that sacred land without the Nonuya language, a language that died years ago.

Each day Elias watches his grandchildren get pulled away from their roots by the outside world. At night, he tries to remember the few words of Nonuya that have survived and teaches their stories. When the creator gave them their land, he also gave them a language. But the Nonuya were taken from their land and shipped away as slaves to harvest rubber. The slave ships crashed. The few that survived found themselves living in foreign territory, regarded as orphans and their language cursed.

Just when it seems that everything is lost, a rumor spreads that far down the river there is a man who still speaks the Nonuya language. With the impending threat of losing connection to the land forever, grandfather Elias, his sons, and grandchildren embark on a mythical journey to find what has been lost. The search takes them through the jungles of other tribes where they confront their past and the curse. It leads them through cities and forces them to reimagine their traditions in a changing world. If they find the Nonuya speaker they can return home, but if not, they will have to find new ways to communicate with the land.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

At VdR-Industry we look forward to meeting experienced producers interested in becoming co-producers. We hope to learn more about partnerships with European TV broadcasters, and film funds.

Filming Location

Colombia, Amazonas

Shooting Language

Spanish, lenguas de gente de centro

Shooting Date & Duration

2021, 2 months

Shooting Format

HD

Expected Runtime

85' / 56'

Production Company

mnemo.cinema.lab (Colombia)

Producer(s)

Carolina Campos

Total Budget

200,000 €

Financing in Place

40,000 € (20%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

mnemo.cinema.lab, Colombia

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

When I met Elias, a Nonuya elder, he had just come back from hunting. He invited me inside his Maloca and we began to talk. The conversation lasted for 6 nights. He asked, "why are you here?" I fumbled for words, "I'm a filmmaker and believe art can preserve and promote culture." A blank stare. I told him that I had come across the subject of endangered languages continually in Colombia. Around the world in fact, languages and cultures were vanishing. He was interested. More concretely, I was there because I had met his son who had left the jungle for the city. The son told me the story about the Nonuya wanting to revive their lost language and sent me to his father. Reviving a language was more inspirational than filming one die.

Trying to offer him an explanation of what a documentary is, my eyes were opened. What is certain is that this isn't ethnography. I will not approach them as the "other" but together we will tell their story. After the 6th night, Elias' oldest son said, "I couldn't sleep all night thinking about how WE will make this document." From that moment, I ensured this film is a genuine collaboration and not another Conquistadores approach to extracting stories while leaving nothing behind. I knew we reached true collaboration when they said they would sink me in the river if their story wasn't told. I am not sure if they were joking but I'm not planning to find out.

I have spent years truly trying to understand the Nonuya so that the cinematic translation of their world represents them as best as possible. In turn, they have let me peek into their lives, something they have rarely done with anyone else. We work in a simple way. When they tell me a story, past, personal, or mythological, if it fits our central narrative, I ask if it can be shared. Sometimes they say no but if they say yes that story becomes a type of metaphorical narration of the present through their own words. When they narrate a dream or introduce me to a new perspective, I ask them what they picture in their mind. If they see themselves underwater, I film them underwater. If they see a tiger footprint, I find a tiger footprint. This dynamic storytelling approach mixes diegetic narrations and images from the inner world of the characters. It allows the audience to immerse themselves in the story of this unique world and to take an emotional journey together with the Nonuya.

For the Nonuya, there is no difference between the myths of the past and the reality of today. The beauty of this film is that the literal search for a speaker of the Nonuya language presents a metaphorical search for what we have lost. It is through their physical return home to converse with their sacred land that we see a poetic vision of how we can all reconnect to our natural world. For the Nonuya, this is a final plea before their words vanish. I do not pretend to do anything other than bring their poetry to the screen through all the love and trickery of cinema. I have a firm belief that we can dream our cultures into existence. This story is that dream.

Producers' Note

I wanted to work on this film because it is a strong character-driven story with universal themes, namely: connection to the natural world, and identity/tradition in changing times. Seeing the way in which the Nonuya navigate these challenges brings us a new and vital perspective.

This is my third project with director Joel Stängle. I continue to work with him because of his dedication to documentary as Art, and the space these projects create for in-depth investigation and new insights.

The development of this project began in 2014 with story research and test footage. Through the years the story has matured. Now that we know the project is viable, we are planning two production trips each for one month. We want to build a small but dedicated creative team to achieve the film's full potential through production and especially post production. We have financed the development stages so far and are looking for a co-producer which will allow us access to special co-production funds in Colombia and we are seeking partners who have access to funding in the EU. We are confident that this film will have a cinema distribution in Colombia. Through an outreach strategy we will mobilize social and environmental organizations to generate a core audience, create visibility and ensure a strong VOD launch. We want to expand the distribution to Europe where besides universities and festivals, we want to reach television audiences.

Director's Profile

Living in Colombia, born in the United States to German parents, his life and films are marked by themes of culture, memory, and underrepresented narratives of our global age. He began working in fiction and in 2012 his feature *Acqua Fuori dal Ring* premiered at the "Festival Internazionale del Film di Roma", shortly after he moved into making non-fiction. In 2014, his film *Tranquilandia* was used as part of a land restitution trail for 66 families of displaced farmers and was broadcast internationally. His most recent film *La Niebla de la Paz* on the role of memory in war and peace in Colombia released in 2020 and is currently screening in festivals.

La Niebla de La Paz, 87', 2020
Best Documentary, at Rome independent Film Festival

Tranquilandia, 56', 2014
Broadcast Telesur, Amnesty int. Europe and Canada, FIFE France

Acqua Fuori dal Ring, 90', 2012
Rome FF, Taormina FF, Annecy FF

Producer's Profile

mnemo.cinema.lab

Carolina is a trained Sociologist with a masters Degree in Latin American Studies. She prides herself on producing films that stand up to the rigors of serious investigation. In 2014 she produced the film *Tranquilandia*, which was subsequently used in a land restitution case for over 1000 displaced farmers in Colombia. The film was broadcast by Telesur and screened throughout Europe and in Canada by Amnesty International, and screened for members of the EU parliament to inform policy decisions in Colombia. She went on to produce *La Niebla de La Paz*, a film that looks at the role memory plays in war and peace in Colombia. The film premiered at Ficci in 2020 is currently screening in festivals worldwide and has won various awards. mnemo.cinema.lab is a film company based in Colombia focusing on themes of memory and underrepresented voices.

Malqueridas

Tana Gilbert
Chile
Expected Release Date: November 2022



Logline

Women in prison reconstruct their experience of motherhood through videos and photographs captured with their forbidden cell phones while serving their sentences. *Malqueridas* offers a reflection on the severity of motherhood when faced with confinement and the loss of affections.

Synopsis

Malqueridas focuses on key moments of different characters that articulate a great story of motherhood in prison. It is a guide that projects the film's journey with a tentative order that begins with the birth of a child and ends with the death of another.

Victoria (28) tells her twins that she had to give birth to them, cuffed to the stretcher, and entered the prison for the first time with them; Romina (30) was able to raise her son in prison until he was two years old, she tells him how she had to prepare for their forced separation; Cristal (21) after the separation with her son, she tells him how she had to get used to a new cell, where she had greater access to cell phone trafficking, which led her in an isolation unit; Alejandra (30) tells her daughters the details of living in isolation and imagines the future reunion with them; Karina (33) tells her children how she found the love of a companion, while her family networks were being decreased; Susana (31) lost all contacts with her daughter years ago and reveals her that she is in fact her mother, and Ximena (40) remembers the day her son died while she was serving her sentence.

As we listen to the stories of the protagonists, we see the vast domestic footage produced by the women inside the prison with her mobiles. As the story progresses, the distance between motherhood and isolation grows, revealing that maintaining a relationship mediated by the prison is not possible.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

We are looking for international financing, coproduction, sales agents and alliances for distribution, in addition to creative feedback to enhance the realization of the documentary.

Filming Location
Chile, Metropolitan Region

Shooting Language
Spanish

Shooting Date & Duration
Archives

Shooting Format
Cell phones images / HD

Expected Runtime
75' / 52'

Production Company
Errante Producciones (Chile)

Producer(s)
Paola Castillo

Total Budget
186,030 €

Financing in Place
51,874 € (28%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Corfo Chilean Fund for Development, Chile
Errante Producciones, Chile
Patio de Luz, Chile

Looking for International Sales

First Feature film

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Director's Note

Growing up, the concept of prison was one that has always been really proximate to me. When I was little, my father was imprisoned in the United States and my mother traveled for a year to accompany him. Years later, when I was a teenager, the son of one of the women who raised me was imprisoned. The support that these men received was essential to cope with prison, so this led me to ask myself: what happens when a woman is imprisoned? This is how I got the idea for *Malqueridas*.

Maternity is a complex subject in itself; there is an implicit romanticization of being a mother that does not match reality at all. As mothers, we have had to fulfill a daily undervalued and historically diminished role. I have been a mother for two years now, so this social concept touches me closely. What is the limit between being a woman and being a mother? What options do we have to escape motherhood, even for a bit? In Chile 82% of women in prison are mothers. They are part of a system that forced them to abandon their parental responsibilities, making it impossible for them to escape the social expectations that come with it.

Our goal is to reflect on the triple sentences that the protagonists embody: the prison sentence lived in the harshness of the prison; social condemnation, since women must be exemplary mothers, which does not give room to commit crimes, and personal condemnation, for the immense suffering of being away from their children. The body is the main cinematic element of tension in *Malqueridas*. How do the bodies of these women that gave life to another human being now face imprisonment? What do these recordings reveal and hide at the same time? There are dimensions of the prison that will not be able to be represented, and that is precisely what becomes captivating in this project. Some women create small sets of photographs with a sheet in the background to hide the prison walls, while others reveal the presence of gray lockers, typical of Chilean prisons. The photographs and videos are traces of a traumatic past and are expressed through a great collective memory stored in the film. We want to boost the political power that self-registry holds.

The image is also confined by the frame's vertical lines, which represent the physical boundary within which the characters can circulate. It is a symbolic representation of the possibilities they have to look at the world: they have access to only a small portion of the outside images, which can be seen through the prison's vertical barred windows. The voices in the film have a performative quality and recount their experience in prison from an undefined space. Since we never see their faces in the present, their bodies remain in the past and their memories persist and resist.

The film also offers a small window or outlet for the issue of motherhood in prison, through the feelings they develop for each other. This world is forbidden, limited, and invisible, and support among women seems to be the only possibility to generate affection and closeness. The collective is how they cope with this sentence.

Producers' Note

I have known Tana since her time as a student, and I've had the privilege of observing how she has honed her documentary filmmaking vision. The energy, rigor, and search for a personal cinematic language in her work, only enhanced my desire to collaborate with her on her first work. This project offers the possibility of exploring the language of networks through unique material provided by the characters themselves. These recordings are a paradox because, on one hand, they represent being present and the possibility of being mothers, but, at the same time, they stand for the absence and inability to be with them. Also, we feel committed to the possibility of being able to reveal an issue that has not been addressed in our country and Latin America yet, through an impact campaign.

To date, the film has been selected in Chilean events such as, Conecta, Sanfic Lab, DocsValparaíso, and Chilean Future Cinema at FicValdivia, as well as, IDFA Academy. The project has been supported by Corfo and was awarded participation in the Cinematographic Creation Center's script workshop, bestowed at FicValdivia 2019. The project is in the final stage of development. Through more than three years of research, we now have unique access to the world of women in prison, and much of the video and file images required to make the film. We hope to start shooting the testimonies in mid-2021, while we finish gathering all the file material, and aim to complete the film by the first half of 2022. We are looking for creative and financial partners that are interested in participating further in the film.

Director's Profile

Filmmaker of the University of Chile with studies in Aesthetics. She is finishing a Master's Degree in Documentary Film at the University of Chile. Director of recognized documentary short films: *Descansa*, *Zulema (Rest, Zulema)*, made during her studies, was screened and awarded at various national and international festivals (Best Documentary Short Film Femcine 2013, Chile). Her latest short film *Sigo acá (I'm still here)* premiered at Hot Docs 2017 and has received several awards (Best Short Film Cine Las Américas, MiradasDoc Jury Award, etc). The short film was selected in more than 30 festivals around the world. She is developing a career as director of documentary films with an interest in social issues about the role of women in the Latin American family. In 2019 Tana was selected to be part of IDFAcademy with *Malqueridas*.

Sigo acá (I'm still here), 14', 2018
Premiered at Official Selection Hot Docs, Canada

Descansa, Zulema (Rest, Zulema), 9', 2013
Premiered at Femcine, Women International Film Festival of Santiago, Chile

Producer's Profile
Errante Producciones

Paola Castillo is a filmmaker who graduated from the School of Film and TV in San Antonio de los Baños, Cuba and the Executive Director of CCDOC, a non-profit organization that had an impact on the national and international visibility and distribution of Chilean documentaries. She is the founder of Errante, one of the most relevant production houses in Chile for the development of documentary films. Our works address social, indigenous, human rights, and art issues. In their filmography there are: *Beyond my grandfather Allende* directed by Marcia Tambutti, Best Documentary Award at the Cannes Film Festival 2015; Maite Alberdi's multi-award-winning opera prima, *The Lifeguard*, the renowned Canadian - Chilean co-production *Cielo* directed by Alison Mc-Alpine, and *Timoteo's Fabulous Ragged Circus* directed by Lorena Giachino, a multi-awarded film in national and international festivals, among others.

Our Money Unser Geld

Hercli Bundi
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: October 2022



Logline

What is money, and what effect does it have on us?

Synopsis

Surrounded by Swiss wealth but no stranger to financial hardship, director Hercli Bundi investigates the myth of money. Money allows us to do business with one another, creates obligations, promises autonomy and security – and produces dependence. Travelling through farmland, factories and shopping centers provides insight into the endless stream of value production. Things are being produced everywhere; market value is behind everything. We feed these value chains constantly. Revenue generation is omnipresent. Without it there would be no credit multipliers, no securitization of assets, no financial bubbles.

1,380 Swiss francs is what you get if you add up all the individual Swiss banknotes – 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 1,000. What would the protagonists do with this cash? For the bank robber, this sum would pay off a fraction of the interest he owes. For the manager of the mortgage bank it's the purchase price of her office chair. Between these two poles – one life nearly without money, the other in the service of money – the film explores how money works, what money is, and what effect it has on us.

Money rules the world as powerfully as a religion. It dictates what makes sense, what is appropriate, what is a taboo. We have become beholden to money – under the dogma that everything has a price and we must endlessly multiply it. *Our Money* invites us to rethink our relationship to money and pays tribute to those who question and rethink the universe of money.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

We are curious to get feedback, present the film to TV stations, producers, foundations and find international partners. We are also looking for distribution partners.

Filming Location
Zürich, Basel, Berlin, Leipzig

Shooting Language
German, English, French

Shooting Date & Duration
Summer - Fall 2021

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
90' / 52'

Production Company
Mira Film (Switzerland)

Producer(s)
Susanne Guggenberger

Total Budget
738,000 €

Financing in Place
282,638 € (39%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Zürcher Filmstiftung, Switzerland
BAK- Succes Cinema, Switzerland
Film Fund Basel, Switzerland
Mira Films (Producer's Investment), Switzerland
LOI from Outlook Filmsales, Austria
Zurich Film Foundation, Switzerland

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

As a 10-year-old I earned my first money. Every single day during my summer holiday, I harvested hay on someone else's farm. As a teenager, I knew that if my parents didn't buy me something, I could work for it and realized quickly where my limits were. I understood that I didn't want to do certain things, even if I was paid for it. Working in a bank would have been unthinkable for me.

When I was 20, my best childhood friends started studying economics or managing real estate. I wanted to understand why they were so interested in money. Some became fathers early. They had to match their dreams with the available opportunities – I got that. With others, I had the feeling that they imitated their parents' style and were enthusiastic about imposing cars or huge suites. I could understand that too. As a filmmaker, I lived below subsistence level for decades and encountered a lot of incomprehension because nothing I did was financially profitable. We can be passionate about the same art, the same sailboats, the same restaurants, without having the same understanding about money.

In the film, I want to explore money from opposing perspectives – how money is experienced and what possibilities it offers. Some of my protagonists are better able to explain technical facets of money, while others focus more on emotional or existential aspects. Each protagonist will get 1,380 Swiss francs in cash – a banknote of each value. These notes represent money par excellence, even if they are only the smallest part of the total money supply. By starting to talk about these banknotes, we move on to other, complex layers of money.

Currently we are in contact with about seven possible protagonists: a former bank robber, a bank manager, a publisher couple, a prostitute, a representative of Bank for International Settlements, the designer of Swiss banknotes and a philosopher. I will have an active part in the film too, as someone who tries to make money. My protagonists have just as much desire to debate money as I do. They will not fulfil preconceived expectations, but show their authentic and direct engagement.

Visually we want to create a movement that stands in for the infinite stream of production which is stimulated by money. Traveling shots will be one element as well as handheld camera in conversations. Where protagonists make a sketch in front of the camera to explain complicated financial constructions, they will draw it in our own sketchbook. If required, these sketches will form the basis of an animation to provide active in-depth information.

Money in all its technical and economic diversity is always also a cultural good, a measure of how we function as a community. In this sense, I don't want to make a "cold" financial film, but a lively exploration of how we deal with existential fears, responsibility and appreciation.

Producers' Note

The documentary film *Our Money* asks questions such as: *What actually is money?* How does it affect us? In our approach we are aiming to access the technical and emotional side of money simultaneously. The director – who is not a financial expert on money – will also be in the film. He explores the money universe with his protagonists, who will give us different perspectives on debts, obligations or money decisions.

Money is intimate and often a taboo to talk about. We want to make our audience curious to know and to learn more about it. We decided to keep our focus on Switzerland because money is an essential part of the Swiss self-image. Banking, the secure and secretive parking place for international money, is emblematic of Switzerland just as much as chocolate is. The director refers to his culture in the film and is thus able to maintain an emotionally authentic attitude. *Our Money* stands for the way we deal with money in the 21st century in Western societies, how we mistrust or distrust it, how much we depend on it or are free from it – and how we can find a more solid way of dealing with it. Our goal is to make it accessible also for people who are not familiar with financial terms. Currently we are at the stage of financing and pre-production. We took part in the Swiss training platform FOCAL marketing training and presented our ideas at the Zurich Film Festival in 2020.

Director's Profile

Hercli Bundi was born in 1964. He lives in Basel / Switzerland. From 1988 to 1992 he studied Film studies at the school of applied arts in Lausanne, DAVI/Ecal-Cinéma. In 2002, he co-founded Mira Film GmbH. From 2007 to 2010 he had a mandate as a producer at the Zurich School of Applied Arts, Master of Arts in Film. Hercli is a member of the Swiss Filmmakers Association ARF/FDS, the Swiss Film Producers Association SFP and the Swiss Film Academy.

Eisenberger, 93', 2018
Premiered at Dok Leipzig

House in the Park, 86', 2010
Premiered at Visions du Réel

Not Vital – Half Animal, Half Man, 55', 2000
Premiered at Solothurner Filmtage

Producer's Profile

Susanne has been producing with Mira Film since 2012. She studied communication science and history at the University of Salzburg. Since 1998, Susanne has been working with a focus on documentary film in various areas of production and distribution. Graduate of EAVE-European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs, member of the International Documentary Association and EWA. Mira Film GmbH is a Swiss production company, founded by the directors and producers Hercli Bundi and Vadim Jendreyko in 2002. Their focus is on documentary films for cinema and television on topics with social relevance and with a focus on individual values.

Science Fiction Ciencia Ficción

Ezequiel Yanco
Argentina
Expected Release Date: January 2022



Logline

During lockdown, the filmmaker moves to his childhood home with his family. Madly, he films his quarantined neighbours' routines and speculates about them. The girl on the 8th floor stands out. She dances, and wears costumes. Suddenly, she disappears. When she returns, the filmmaker believes that she is a different person. What happened? The film becomes science fiction, the girl is the star.

Synopsis

The film begins during quarantine, when the filmmaker moves to his childhood home with his family. Hidden behind a curtain of his department on the 7th floor, he maniacally films his new neighbours whose concerns and anxieties are evident. The filmmaker watches a selection of sci-fi movies which helps build up the dystopian atmosphere.

The filmmaker and his partner talk about what they see, imagining what goes on in the lives of their neighbours. One of them seems impervious to the collective feeling of anxiety: the Pop Girl on the 8th floor. She dances, sings and wears costumes. She glows. Suddenly, she disappears. Weeks later, she returns but she looks changed. The filmmaker believes she is not the same girl. She has stopped dancing. He thinks she's a different person. But how can we know? He decides that if he cannot know the truth he will create one.

The second part of the film is the fiction that answers what happened to the Pop Girl. It begins with a real casting call in search of an 11-12 year old actress to play her. One is chosen, she seems happy with the news. She goes home to tell her parents, we see them in a wide 8th floor apartment, the same one we have seen from the filmmaker's balcony. But her parents will not let her act, "too soon" they say. The Pop Girl escapes at dawn. She gets to the film set. She wanders off and sees extras dressed as astronauts in a sci-fi film set with a flying saucer in the background. Out on the street she sees aliens getting into a bus. She follows them and sits by the window. The crew speaks an unknown language. The bus leaves with everyone on board.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

Our financial strategy is based on getting international co-producers and the support of international grants. We hope VdR-Industry will be the framework where we can materialise co-production agreements that will allow us to cover shooting and post-production.

Filming Location
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Shooting Language
Spanish

Shooting Date & Duration
May 2021

Shooting Format
4K

Expected Runtime
90'

Production Company
Isoi Cine (Argentina)

Producer(s)
Ana Godoy, Ezequiel Yanco

Total Budget
232,210 €

Financing in Place
47,500 € (20%)

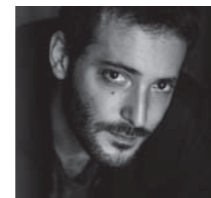
Confirmed Financial Sources
Isoi Cine, producers investment, Argentina
Mecenazgo, Buenos Aires City, Argentina

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

Science Fiction is divided in two parts with different aesthetic treatments. The first one is a documentary-style, the second one is fictional.

In the first part, voyeurism organizes the images. It's footage of my neighbors as seen from my balcony. I observe their routines. The images show them cleaning their homes, making their beds, having breakfast, watering the plants, exercising, watching TV, smoking a cigarette on the roof, and other frenetic activities prompted by the anxiety of being locked-down.

I use a fixed shot to register these activities. The fixed, static shots frame the ritual of routinary actions which are repeated. I use a single lens: 50 mm. The neighbours become characters, my partner and I give them names. Their size changes according to the distance from my balcony. The Pop Girl on the 8th floor of the front building looks smaller than the British on the left building, which is closer, but not as tiny as the Businessman in the building on the far right.

The narration is structured like a diary which sets a timeline, a calendar. The diary registers the quarantine in a sound journal. It is a collage of voices. It includes WhatsApp audios I get everyday: grandmothers asking about their grandson, the lullabies they sing to help him sleep; the greengrocer checking our order; the sleep coach sending instructions on how to get babies to sleep; the vet giving us options to deal with my cat's illness; my mom sending audios in which she struggles to remember my childhood in this place.

The sounds of our daily life inside our apartment add up to these sounds: the washing machine, the sounds made by our son and the whispered conversations I have with my partner about Pop Girl and the rest of our neighbours.

Visually, nocturnal images of the neighbors prevail. This favors the construction of an enigmatic atmosphere, a suspended time: the parenthesis on existence that was marked by the quarantine. The sounds and the background music from Sci-fi films we watch contribute to express the dystopian feel of the pandemic.

The second part of the film takes place after the restrictions are lifted. It is a fiction about the Pop Girl on the 8th floor, constructed from the observation of her routine during the first part. The aesthetic treatment changes its form. The casting call and their trip back home ends my direct presence in the film. And the autobiographical documentary turns into a fictional piece.

Science Fiction is the chronicle of everyday life when affected by the disruption of normality. Of a future that is present. And it materialises the feeling of living inside a film, with no borders between fiction and reality, between life and cinema.

Producers' Note

Ezequiel Yanco and I met while working together at the film *La vida en común*, which I edited and co-produced. It was a very good experience not only because of the final outcome, but also because our paths connected, we started living together, and now we have formed a family.

I witnessed the birth of *Science Fiction*, when Ezequiel started to film the neighbors of the apartment we had moved into. We found ourselves working together again and developing the script for the project. I admire Ezequiel's vital connection with projects which I now regard as very solid and original. *Science Fiction* mixes documentary with fiction, giving the project a very attractive production size. It's a small film that also expands into a fiction with famous actors, thus gaining a new dimension.

The main part of the first half of the film is already shot. Ezequiel and the editor are working on the first part of the editing. We are focused on completing the budget to start the pre-production of the 2nd part of the film, the fiction.

We have received our first local fund from Mecenazgo and have already applied to INCAA aiming to raise 35% of the budget. The goal is to complete the budget with international grants such as World Cinema Fund, Hubert Bals Fund, CNC, visions sud est. And also to find co-producers from Europe and North America. Our idea is to complete the film by the end of 2021 or beginning of 2022.

Director's Profile

Ezequiel Yanco is a historian and filmmaker based in Buenos Aires. He received a Bachelor's Degree with honors in History from the University of Buenos Aires, and an MFA in Creative Writing from NYC University. He taught at the Universidad del Cine. He co-edited *Desconfiar de las imágenes* (Caja Negra, 2013), a book that compiles a selection of Harun Farocki's articles. His filmography includes his feature film, *Los días* (2012) and his short *La piel* (2014). His second film, *La vida en común* had its co-world premiere at Visions du Réel and BAFICI. It has been programmed in Viennale, DocLisboa, Frames of Representation, and Art of the Real among others. Won Best Documentary at Biarritz among other awards

La vida en común, 70', 2019
Premiered at Visions du Réel & Bafici

La piel, 14', 2014

Los días, 75', 2012

Producer's Profile

Ana Godoy began producing, writing and editing after studying at the Universidad del Cine. Since then she produced and co-produced both Argentine and foreign films, focusing on auteur cinema.

Isoi Cine

Isoi Cine is a production company created in 2012 by Ezequiel Yanco to produce his films. It produced *Los días* (2012), *La vida en común* (2019) that had its co-world premiere at Visions du Réel and BAFICI. It is currently producing his two new films: *Science Fiction* and *Glory of the Hoods*.

The Last Year of Darkness

黎明之前

Ben Mullinkosson
China, United States
Expected Release Date: January 2022



Logline

Growing up, throwing up, love, loss and finding freedom in China. This documentary follows four of my friend's unique personal stories in Chengdu's underground party scene over the last year before the Chinese communist party shut down their secret "freedom" spaces forever.

Synopsis

A 90-minutes documentary following four 20-something and their coming of age in Chengdu's unique underground party scene. While watching these characters bloom, the film will simultaneously track the completion of the construction of subway line 8 which sits directly next to Funky Town, TAG and Taiga - this community's main three party spaces.

Hidden from the public by the construction site itself, our characters find a sense of personal freedom, creating their own strange world in the context of "communist China." They are free in the sense that every night, they embark on adventures with unpredictable consequences. They take chances, make mistakes, and sometimes learn from their experiences. Each character is searching for answers to life's questions, and the city's unique circumstances give our protagonists the emotional space to figure them out.

This film exemplifies the definitions and challenges of personal identity and cultural/political freedom through the fears and hopes of young people in contemporary China. Our characters deliver a firm "fuck you" to the Western view of what Chinese culture may or may not look like.

While the style and rhythm of this world is specific to Chengdu, our examination of the ephemerality of youth will make these coming of age stories universal.

Amongst partygoers, Chengdu is known as China's Amsterdam and is famous for its "Hell Tower" where old women make a living selling nitrous oxide balloons on the 21st floor and parties continue past sunrise.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

We are looking for international co-producers, potential Europe sales agents / world sales. We are also looking for international financing.

Filming Location

Chengdu, China

Shooting Language

Mandarin Chinese, English, Sichuanese

Shooting Date & Duration

2018-2021, 3 years

Shooting Format

4K

Expected Runtime

90'

Production Company

Florence (United States)

Producer(s)

Sol Ye

Total Budget

412,600 €

Financing in Place

120,310 € (29%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

Private Equity from Florence, United States
Rooftop Films Water Tower Fund, United States
Private Equity from Personal Investor, United States
NOWNESS, United Kingdom

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

When I first came to Chengdu in 2010, my vision of China was completely upended. Because of my role as a skateboarder and independent filmmaker, I quickly fell in love with the community and made a group of lifelong friends. Eleven years later, I speak fluent Chinese and fully intend to continue to make movies in China throughout my career.

There are plenty of films that turn a critical lens to China. This film isn't one. It's really important to me to show this to shock western audiences and disrupt their preconceived notions of eastern culture. China is consistently criticized because of decisions that are made by the government and not by its people. There is no voting in China, no protesting, and all recorded communication is tracked by the government. And yet despite living in such a seemingly restrictive place, I've developed a deep love for Chinese culture and for the people I've met here.

When we're not filming, Gena, Casey (local producer) and I are often skating with the characters or getting drunk with them afterwards. I'm very proud to say everyone in this film has been a friend of mine for at least three years and I think of each character as a collaborator in writing their narrative rather than a traditional documentary subject. It's a good reminder to me that the root of documentary filmmaking is patience, trust, listening and being emotionally available as a producer and cinematographer.

Before our premiere, I will show each character the film and have lengthy discussions about their role. If they are uncomfortable with certain material, we will take it out. Consent will be prioritized over everything.

From summer 2019 until summer 2021 we've been capturing the peculiarities of these young people's stories as they meander through these spaces. As observers and storytellers we document their highs, tears, madness, pain and confusion from dawn to dusk.

We're shooting with low light cameras and recording sound with lavalier mics that can pick up conversations under loud music. We won't turn off the background music and every conversation will sound as natural as possible.

As China gains evermore influence and power, more and more interest is being cast upon China's youth - the world is trying to understand who these people really are, and what we can expect from them. *The Last Year of Darkness* is a lyrical celebration of its hidden and burgeoning youth culture. It's a rare look at people struggling to define their city and define themselves in an ever-changing China. This is a film about self discovery and independence within a context that pushes oppressive uniformity. Not unlike the punk movement of the 70s, these rebellious twenty-somethings are the vanguard, treading a unique and liberated path for China.

Producers' Note

I and Ben have known each other since college. Throughout these years, I've seen how much effort he has put into the project he desires to make. Ben's passion and imagination are mesmerizing - there's no better person to make it. Being a Chinese millennial myself, I probably witnessed the fastest-growing era in History. Large numbers of people immigrated to the cities and formed different communities; new ideas and hypes from around the globe were steaming. There are many documentaries on China to showcase the poverty, pollution, and politics, which are absolutely necessary to be made. However, a contemporary one on the current youth culture is yet to be seen. This film is not an issue-based story, it's a story with social issues fundamentally framed in the background. Currently, we have finished more than 60% of the shooting, and we plan to deliver the film in summer, 2022.

COVID19 started in China but strangely after 3 months of intense lockdowns Chinese society was able to resume normalcy. We filmed before the outbreak, during the outbreak, and after the outbreak. *The Last Year of Darkness* is a coming of age film during the last year of freedom in China's only underground party scene. This last year of freedom is the same year that COVID19 ravished the world, and the Coronavirus is definitely a part of the backdrop of this film. Fortunately all of our subject's lives were not dramatically affected by the outbreak and despite the 3 month interruption everyone has been able to continue functioning in the same way as before.

Director's Profile

This is Ben's second feature length documentary and 11th year coming back to Chengdu. He speaks Chinese. His film *Don't Be a Dick About It* recently won the Audience Award at IDFA and is being distributed by Oscilloscope. He now works directing commercials and music videos. His works include Cannes Silver Lion Advertising award, Vimeo Staff Picks, NYT Op-Docs, and some of his films have millions of views.

Don't Be a Dick About It, 69', 2018
Premiered at IDFA Audience Award Winner

Osama and Ayman, 8', 2018
Premiered at DOC NYC

Gnarly in Pink, 8', 2014
Premiered at Tribeca Film Festival, NYTimes
OP-DOCS

Among Giants, 9', 2013
Premiered at AFI Fest

What I Hate About Myself, 27', 2013
Premiered at Slamdance Film Festival

Producer's Profile

Florence

Sol Ye is an independent bilingual producer based in Beijing, China. Her past works have won awards at Cannes Critics' Week (*She Runs*, 2019) and generated over 150 million views on the internet (Generational Gravity, VICE Media/Tencent Video, 2019). She produced the first China-Serbia production, and has worked on major Hollywood-China productions including Disney's *Mulan*, where she served as the China Assistant Production Manager. In 2018, Sol was selected as one of the five producers by the British Film Institute and worked at Studio Canal. Her most recent film *Having a Good Time* is officially selected at the 67th San Sebastian International Film Festival.

The Prince of Nanawa

El príncipe de Nanawa

Clarisa Navas
Argentina, Paraguay
Expected Release Date: February 2023



Logline

A footbridge divides Argentina from Paraguay. Guarani and Spanish float in the air while people run around trafficking all things imaginable. This is where I met Ángel (9). The first time I heard him talk, I was so moved that I promised to see him again. A year later I came back and the film was born. After four years, the passage from childhood to adolescence moves in these images between questions, absences and a unique strength to live and resist against all odds.

Synopsis

The Prince of Nanawa is a non-fiction film, built from the daily diaries that Ángel has been filming since he was 10 intertwined with the images I record each time we are together. At present, Ángel is 15 and we will continue filming throughout his adolescence. He speaks Spanish and Guarani and has been working since he was a child, like all the children in Nanawa. Surviving there is difficult, a liberated border where all kinds of things are trafficked. This is one of the hottest places in Latin America and yet there is no drinking water network. In some seasons the place becomes so flooded that all the houses are completely covered by the overflowing river.

When the night falls, the place becomes gloomy and bleak. Ángel, however, walks cheerfully through the closed market and its dark corridors. And the empty appliance boxes become treasure chests for the frogs that he hunts from the sidewalks.

The images delve into a unique intimacy built between the sensibility and empathy with animals, language tensions, the construction of sexual identity and the questioning of an educational system that accounts for the dreams and identifications of a childhood living far from any capital city. These images are an experience of resistance. Memories gathered in that passage from childhood to a new and unknown stage.

From the day we met, this film unfolded as "a promise" weaving the fabric of an intimate bond between Ángel and myself. Revealing that no one really knows what a child can do when he imagines other possible worlds.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

We are looking for international financing which can come along with potential co-producers who can access suitable funds for a project like ours. We are also looking for sales agents willing to start working with us at the stage of production.

Filming Location
Paraguay, Nanawa (Puerto Elsa) / Argentina, Clorinda (Formosa)

Shooting Language
Spanish, Guarani

Shooting Date & Duration
6 weeks in the first half of 2022

Shooting Format
HD / Sd / 2K

Expected Runtime
100'

Production Company
Gentil Cine (Argentina)

Producer(s)
Eugenia Campos Guevara

Total Budget
280,000 €

Financing in Place
50,500 € (18%)

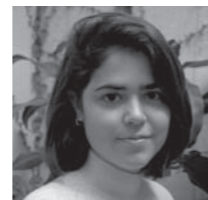
Confirmed Financial Sources
Gentil Cine, Argentina
Clarisa Navas, Argentina
Eugenia Campos Guevara, Argentina
Fondo Nacional de las artes, Argentina
Ibermedia development, Spain
Fondec, Paraguayan Film Institute, Paraguay
Sofia Paoli, Paraguay
Tekoha Audiovisual, Paraguay

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

When I saw Ángel for the first time playing alone in that market, and with a somewhat queer aura, it made me think about how difficult it must be to grow up in that context. Something very strong connected me to him. When he suddenly came to talk to me, his thoughts and sensitivity moved me.

I felt many similarities between Ángel's childhood and mine. We both grew up in a periphery, with dreams and ideas beyond the scope of what seemed possible in an oppressive environment where no political or economic measures are taken in order to protect its citizens. Border and peripheral cities are places where the big centers discard all they don't want to see and don't need to use. In Nanawa, children start working at a very early age in a town where different kinds of trafficking unleash violence from the security forces and gangs often. Added to that, the continuous floods and lack of public services jeopardize the lives and dreams of its inhabitants.

But "no one knows what a body is capable of", says the philosopher Spinoza, and that phrase becomes especially luminous when the system denies all sensible possibilities of existence. I like to think that no one knows what a child is capable of, it is pure mystery. Reducing a child to just his opinions is impossible; one must look for childhood in its gestures. So how can a child arise in terms of images and sounds?

The aesthetic of this film comes from an ethic as the possible approach to a child in his uniqueness. The image in this film is not thought of as what is said "about" things, but rather as the action of an encounter, of seeking a link with the world and accounting for this through a sensitive experience.

These are shots that try to dissolve the hierarchies that arise when someone films someone else. The image is established as a sort of passage where Ángel, disregarding the "rules" of framing, decides to follow the impulse of what makes his heart beat. When he grabs the camera, the shots take on the rhythm of running, jumping, pulsating with what's happening. In these shots, sometimes I appear when I am with him, and at other times Ángel films only to show me what happens, he records as if it were a diary that he will later share with me. His images become a witness of something ineffable.

Ángel uses this camera to keep a record of his days and also as a personal diary where, in selfie mode, he talks about different topics, generating very intimate scenes. The self becomes evident in its physical traits: the trembling, the breathing. There is someone who is enunciating and that someone is a child.

The film is thus a network of encounters and relationships. It is a gesture for tearing down the impossibility and claiming that cinema is also about generating encounters, through images that challenge what has been said, what has been shut down. It is a film that is open to the flow of time and capable of becoming a refuge for many.

Producers' Note

There is something that Clarisa and myself are sure of: in the development stage, the bases of the relationship that a film will establish with Cinema and with The World are drawn. We understand that in non fiction cinema and specifically in the case of *The Prince of Nanawa*, the tracing of those bases, of that map of distances, proximities, references and affections, require a lot of time, planning and dedication.

I believe Clarisa Navas is one of the most talented, sharp and ethical Latin America new directors. I trust her methods, I have worked closely with her for many years now and the first time she told me about Ángel and started showing me some of his videos, I knew I needed to be involved in this film.

We believe that this project is ambitious in many ways but not so much in the financing side of it. We feel confident that the budget of the film has a scale we can manage and all the people already on board are deeply committed to it. We need to have a few solid and vital supports and *The Prince of Nanawa* will be a reality. Our national funds (INCAA and FONDEC) represent 70% of our financial plan and we are confident that with Clarisa's antecedents and the political importance of this project, we are very likely to get their support. This co-production structure between Argentina and Paraguay is essential when thinking about the whole production of this film. We need to have International support for this project to complete our budget and we plan to create alliances with distributors and sales agents during the development and early production stage to jointly think about a design for the release of the film once it is finished.

Director's Profile

Born in 1989 in Corrientes, Clarisa has a degree in Audiovisual Arts from the Universidad Nacional de las Artes. *Hoy Partido a las 3*, her first feature as a Writer/Director, premiered at BAFICI's International Competition, and went on to win numerous awards and participated in over 60 film festivals around the world.

Las Mil y Una (One in a Thousand), her second feature, was the opening film of the 70th Berlinale Panorama, and was later awarded the Best Picture Award at the Jeonju IFF and a Special Jury Mention at the 2020 Toulouse Latin American Film Festival.

She is a professor at the National film School (ENERC), and has led workshops and coordinated screenwriting and directing labs in different locations around the world. She was a juror in several film festivals including BAFICI, SEMINCI, ANTOFACINE, FICER, OBERÁ, FNA, among others.

Las mil y una, 120', 2020
Premiered at Berlinale Panorama opening film

Hoy partido a las 3, 96', 2017
Premiered at Bafici International competition

Producer's Profile
Gentil Cine

Gentil is a production company settled in Buenos Aires. It was founded in 2016 by young film professionals Eugenia Campos Guevara, Agustín Gagliardi, Agustín Godoy and Felipe Solari Yrigoyen.

Gentil is specially devoted to the production of independent features and short films by innovative directors from Argentina and Latin America. Our aim is to produce high quality films that introduce new audiences to authorial cinema. We work with directors committed to taking formal risks and to question the current state of things. Some examples of Gentil's filmography are: *The Pretty Ones*, directed by Melisa Liebenthal, *A Province City*, directed by Rodrigo Moreno, *Flora's Life is no Picnic*, directed by Iair Said and *The Daughters of Fire*, directed by Albertina Carri. *All of them*, with extensive distribution opportunities in theatres in Latin America and Europe and TVOD platforms.

The Vanishing La Disparition

Rama Thiaw
Senegal, France
Expected Release Date: Late 2023



Logline

One evening in 2012, my mother vanished.

The Vanishing retraces the dazzle and distress of my mother, a black Senegalese woman, Mariama. For half a century, she lived a stormy life, politically embedded in colonialism, racism and misogyny in both Africa and Europe.

Against all odds, she always chose liberty over submission and followed her own rules. With my camera, I'm going to track prints and threads she left behind.

Synopsis

A woman has vanished.

Between August 10th and 15th, 2012, she flew from Paris to Dakar. From the airport there, she allegedly traveled to a farm she owned. On the eve of Ramadan, it is presumed that she traveled to Guinea by taxi. After that, Mariama literally disappeared.

Born in 1960, the year of our independence, this Senegalese woman is not another Jane Doe to me, she is my mother.

Raised by her grandmother, Crown Princess and Shaman, "Little" Mariama was destined to assume her role in escorting human souls from here to the beyond. She fell in love with a hustler-dandy, Elhadji, my father. Together, they ran away to conquer the world. They stopped in Mauritania, where they had two children, me and my brother.

She got married a second time, to a candid French engineer, Michel. During that time, she embraced the political struggle of her generation: getting rid of the colonial state's control done by the French government in Senegal. My mother was immediately jailed. After several months of bitter diplomatic negotiations, she was expelled from Senegal to France, with her two children. This was in October 1984: she had just turned 24 years old.

I was six; and I already wanted to become a poet. Since then, I have not stopped writing to you, Mariama.

This film is my last letter to you. Perhaps also to bear witness to your metamorphosis over the last 28 years until your disappearance. 28 dense years in which you went from the bright side of strength to its darkness, before disintegrating and vanishing...

Goals at VdR-Pitching

Meeting financing/ co-production partners. We are open to all countries, with a special interest in Denmark, Switzerland, and Canada. We also aim to get first feedback from festivals, international sales agents and broadcasters.

Filming Location

Senegal, Mauritania, France, Germany, Switzerland

Shooting Language

French, Wolof

Shooting Date & Duration

2022, 12 months

Shooting Format

2K / Archives / Animation

Expected Runtime

90'

Production Company

Boul Fallé Images (Senegal)

Producer(s)

Rama Thiaw & Hortense Maunoury (Boul Fallé Images), Jean-Laurent Csinidis (Films de Force Majeure)

Total Budget

700,231 €

Financing in Place

81,817 € (12%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

CNC (script writing grant), France
Hot Docs (development grant), Canada
CNC Images de la diversité (development grant), France
CICLIC (development grant), France
Scam (writing grant), France

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Profile

Born in 1978 in Nouakchott, Rama grew up between Mauritania, Senegal and France. She directed two feature documentaries: *Boul Fallé, la voie de la lutte* in 2009 and *The Revolution Won't Be Televised* in 2016. It was awarded the FIPRESCI prize at the Berlinale, the Jury Prize at the Carthage Film Festival and was broadcasted among several film festivals as Durban, IFF, Busan IFF and MoMa. Rama created her Senegalese film production Boul Fallé Images and has her heart set on teaching through different workshops. In 2019, she launched the first edition of Sabbar Artistiques de Dakar, a multidisciplinary event dedicated to African and Black women. She is currently working on *Zion Music*, she is writing her first fiction feature film *Life In Spiral*. In 2020, she has joined the selection committee of the Panorama section of The Berlinale.

The Revolution Won't Be Televised, 110', 2016
The FIPRESCI Critics Prize, FORUM Section, Berlinale 2016.

Boul Fallé, La voie de la lutte, 71', 2009

Producer's Profile

Boul Fallé Images

Boul Fallé Images was born from a passion for cinema, bodies in motion and musical commitment. In a world flooded with pictures, artistic creation on the African continent struggles to find its specificity while its audience continues to grow. In this context, we decided to support cinematic so as to give an inside outlook, different from the one of hegemonic media. The production was founded in 2010 by Rama Thiaw and Amath Niane, later joined by Yanis Gaye and Hortense Maunoury, as line producer. Boul Fallé Images wishes to accompany filmmakers sharing the same desire and to train skilled technicians; to develop a cultural and economic network on the African continent. Films de Force Majeure is a production company based in France. We focus on art-house films, with a special interest in international collaborations. We are keen on strong commitments and projects which transcend boundaries.

Director's Note

In the landscape of our collective memory, I shall follow my mother's tracks. I shall map the trail that led me to cinema through the portrait that emerges.

My film will display features akin to both the personal story and the documentary essay. This hybrid form reflects the lives of both my mother and myself; in other words, our cultural blending. The modern portrait of a Senegalese woman, five decades of an intimate story put in resonance with 5 decades of the History.

I have not decided yet how much I will be in this film, but I have a strong feeling that only my voice, and sometimes my shadow, will appear on screen.

My voice will be mainly expressed through the letter that I will address to my mother. This last letter in images and voice-over, structures the film like a backbone. It is the spine that will support the stories of the different "lives" my mother led.

I will articulate the transition from one phase of life to another through analogies, taking liberties from the actual chronology of events. Narration by analogy reflects my mother's improvisational approach to life, with sudden rises, breaks, descents, and even periods of plain calmness. The tone of this letter will reflect who Mariama was: complex, exuberant, lively, funny and sad.

I envision *The Vanishing* as a drawing, a sensorial object, a tactile epic tale on screen. So, my documentary's shape will be created from four materials:

1- Filmed in Cinema-Vérité style, the testimony of those who knew and were close to my mother. I'm seeking in their memories what she left them. And piece-by-piece I will draw her portrait. I plan to interview and film both of my grandmothers, my mother's three husbands and three other children, and her friends. There will also be archival footage that provides a counterpoint, giving us political or historical background.

2- To collect the testimonies of her relatives, I will rely on photos of themselves and my mother. The aesthetic I am seeking emphasizes the imprint we leave behind us, with the interplay with the filmic or photographic component when you're in the darkroom and the image on the film slowly appears. I will often use a photo as a device, either to evoke memory and speech, or as a medium that gives life to my mother's body over the course of time.

3- Drawing was an essential part of our life as a family. The drawings and paintings enable me to "materialize" all that is immaterial about my mother's life. I'm using animation in certain poetic moments which are either referring to dreams, mind mood and to the non-visible world that is part of my Senegalese culture. I'm using an old technique of animation, a rostrum camera. I chose this technique because it's a living material with all the imperfections that life can bring.

4- Music was the artistic cornerstone of my mother's various lives and a source of resilience. I will choose emblematic songs (or, to be more exact, parts of songs) to make the Original soundtrack of Mariama's life.

Producers' Note

The Vanishing highlights the life of an invisible great human being, invisible by her gender, skin color, social background and history. But not only this: her disappearance also made her physically invisible to us. She became a shadow, a ghost, which gives way to a beautiful cinematic and human challenge. This film deals with the traces that we all leave behind, and for that reason it is meant to move anybody.

More specifically, stories of black women are starting to reach a wider audience. Our wish is that they no longer dive back into invisibility. It is a generational story that will speak to anyone interested in African communities and their diasporas.

The director's approach is to tell us a historical resistance/fight through an intimate point of view combined with collective history, circumventing actual proliferation of set images and unfolding in several countries.

We are currently in late development, for which Boul Fallé Images gathered several financial supports (CNC, Hot Docs, Scam, Ciclic...). To meet the ambitions of the project, we need time. Time of several shootings in different countries. Months of animation with Marie Opron, months of editing with Niels Pagh Andersen. Hence we need to build a strong co production strategy in order to finance the film. We are aware that the estimated budget might seem quite high in comparison to the usual standard of documentary filmmaking. This is mostly due to the crucial importance of animation, archives and music in this multi-faceted and powerful film.

The Wolves Always Come at Night

Gabrielle Brady
Germany, Australia, Mongolia
Expected Release Date: February 2023



Logline

Devastated to discover their entire livestock suddenly killed overnight, Mongolian herders Anktuya and Dorji are forced to move to the city's polluted "ger districts". In an attempt to adjust to this new world cut off from nature, the ruptures within their relationship and themselves begin to grow..

Synopsis

The Wolves Always Come at Night (WT) blends documentary and magic realism to reconstruct the journey of a Mongolian nomadic family from their life as herders on the open steppe to migrating to the city's 'ger' districts. Anktuya and Dorji live symbiotically in the open steppe with their two young daughters. One morning Anktuya finds their herd completely frozen to death. The revelation that their animals have been taken by the sudden and chaotic cold sends their life into disarray. They are faced with little choice but to move to the city along with the many other nomadic families who have lost their animals in the increasing cold snap, a phenomenon increasing with the onset of climate change. Arriving in the chaotic ger districts, Anktuya and Dorji attempt to assimilate to a new reality; one where they are seen as unskilled and irrelevant. They are soon paid a visit from a local government representative. He explains that they have a deadline to find work and deliver the documents needed to apply for residency status within one month, or their ger will be dismantled and they will be forced to leave. With this news, Dorji is forced to find work as an illegal rogue miner. The tense situation, their loss and the fear and shame of Dorji's new work lead to a threatening and violent atmosphere within the family itself.

Goals at VdR-Pitching

At this stage we are looking for financing and distribution partners. We are also looking for feedback and advice in terms of the co-production structure and distribution, and impact strategies.

Filming Location

Mongolia

Shooting Language

Mongolian, English

Shooting Date & Duration

March - April 2022, 2 months

Shooting Format

HD / 2K

Expected Runtime

85' / 52'

Production Company

Chromosom Film (Germany)

Producer(s)

Julia Niethammer (Chromosom Film), Rita Walsh, Ariunaa Tserenpil

Total Budget

718,523 €

Financing in Place

54,500 € (8%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

Chromosom Film GmbH, Germany
FFA Germany (development fund), Germany
Screen Australia (development fund), Australia
BBC storyville (TV development), United Kingdom

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

In 2008 I lived in Mongolia for two years hosting and producing a TV show for children. This would mean traveling to the countryside for filming where I would live with nomadic families. During this time, I witnessed the way herders could predict the winds, the rains, how they could sense an animal had gone missing before they even did a count of their animals. I was taught how to relate to the natural world in a way I had never before. I carried these experiences over the years and it swelled within me; a sensation of how I grew up in a system that distances and distracts ourselves from nature. The more distance we have, the more disturbed our symbiotic relationship becomes.

I went back to visit Mongolia in 2016, when the country was considered one of the fastest changing countries on earth with one of the biggest growing economies. Yet in visiting friends' families, what was shared with me was the deep sense of pain within the herding communities whose very existence was disappearing. The "ger districts" around the city had mushroomed beyond the outlying mountains. Many of the nomadic families I had met and lived with years earlier were now in the cramped and polluted districts after having lost entire livestock to climate change weather phenomenon and were forced to migrate to the city to look for work opportunities.

In making my previous film *Island of the Hungry Ghosts*, I worked collaboratively with the film's protagonist Poh Lin Lee using performative and semi-scripted elements in a hybrid documentary form. I will be working in a similar way with this film, collaborating with non-professional actors to bring real lived experiences into a dramatic setting. I am incredibly passionate about this hybrid form that unites elements of the fiction and documentary worlds as a way to co-construct narratives with the film participants and work with the surrounding context.

For the visual aspect, I envision a creeping approach to the structure to invoke the feeling of terror as the incoming threats draw around the young couple. Observational scenes show life on the open steppes, filmed with a hand-held camera to capture the raw and nuanced daily routines of nomadic life. The beauty in nature will be captured as a kind of transcendental beauty, where natural occurrences play out as their own dramas (animals being born, sudden changes in nature, etc). I will collaborate with Cinematographer Michael Latham (who will be filming on an Arri Alexa mini). With the use of soft light and analogue lenses we will work to get as close to a 35mm feeling as possible, giving a timeless sensation to the film.

The crucial element in making this film is the genuine collaborations we have with our Mongolian crew members, producers and film protagonists.

Producers' Note

I worked with Gabrielle on her previous film already, which was a great experience. Gabrielle is an incredibly talented and inspiring filmmaker. Her film will be an elegantly conceived, cleverly woven and sensitive narrative that focuses on the inner self. A personal, intimate look at what happens in the lives of the film's protagonists, who are exposed to radical changes. She translates these inner processes into images and sounds, told through atmosphere and metaphor. A spectacle for the senses, that invites the spectator to deeply dive into and inspires compassion.

With this film we can build on our previously gained common experience and success. This time we are not starting from scratch. We already have an exceptionally talented team. We are familiar to each other and harmonize very well.

We have co-producers Rita Walsh (Australia) and Ariunaa Tserenpil (Mongolia) attached to the project. The development of the treatment was financed by FFA Germany, Screen Australia and BBC Storyville.

We are now starting to submit to production funds in Germany and then in Australia.

For this reason, we're mainly looking for commissioning editors, international funds, world sales and distributors, including contacts to the Asian market.

As soon as borders open, Gabrielle will travel to Mongolia to reconnect with protagonists after the pandemic. Filming is scheduled for early 2022.

The collaboration with our Mongolian partners is essential for us. Not only their experience and skills in filmmaking, but also the sensitivity with the topic and the protagonists together with their involvement in the development of the narrative are crucial to the project.

Director's Profile

Gabrielle Brady is a UK/Australian filmmaker based in Berlin. She makes cinematic hybrid documentary films. Gabrielle's award-winning debut feature film *Island of the Hungry Ghosts* (2018) has won over 30 international awards including Best Documentary at the Tribeca Film festival, the Buyens-Chagoll Award at Visions du Réel and the Human Rights award at IDFA. The film was nominated for the American Independent Spirit Award. Gabrielle's short film *River Undain* (2020) was recently exhibited by the Art Gallery of New South Wales and Australian Centre for Moving Image. She studied Documentary Direction, a 3-year course, at La Escuela Internacional de Cine in Cuba.

River Undain, 11', 2020

Premiered at Art Gallery of New South Wales

Island of the Hungry Ghosts, 98', 2018

Premiered at Visions Du Réel, Tribeca film festival

The Island, 20', 2017

Premiered at The Guardian documentary platform, Sheffield international doc festival

Milagro, 20', 2014

Premiered at Havana Film Festival

Producer's Profile

Chromosom Film

Chromosom Film was founded in 2006 by Alexander Wadouh and is based in Berlin. We focus on developing and producing national and international fiction and documentary films with a political attitude and zeitgeist. The great success of Jan-Ole Gerster's *Oh Boy* (6x German Film Award Winner) and the enormous international festival feedback for Noaz Deshe's *White Shadow* and Gabrielle Brady's *Island of the Hungry Ghosts* pave the way for courageous films with a strong own voice and attitude. Julia is a Chromosom Film's producer. She studied Media Science, Anthropology and Cultural Science at Marburg University. After that, she worked on several film projects as Production Assistant and 1st AD. Since 2012, Julia has been part of Chromosom Film.

Yoga Village

瑜伽村

Rongfei Guo
China
Expected Release Date: May 2022



Logline

A newly appointed Party secretary launched an ambitious campaign to eliminate poverty through yoga in a Chinese village four years ago, and this is how it unfolds.

Synopsis

Most young people have left Yugouliang Village. It is a remote village in the northwest of Hebei province in China, with an annual average income per person below 420 USD in 2015. Over 100 seniors, the average age of whom was 65, struggled to make a living from growing potatoes and other crops.

China announced in late 2015 that it would eliminate rural poverty by 2020, and included this goal in its 13th Five-year Plan in 2016. 50-year-old Lu Wenzhen was thus appointed top official of Yugouliang in early 2016 to lift Yugouliang out of poverty.

Not long after Lu came to the village, he introduced yoga to the residents. In a few months, the residents in their 70s and 80s were able to do headstands and acquired the habit of practicing yoga in the morning and evening. Regardless of the village receiving extensive media coverage, the superior government never approved the funding. And practicing yoga has yet to bring much economic benefit. As Lu's term of office expires soon, will he leave or will he stay?

Goals at VdR-Pitching

Find co-production partners and international financing partners including funds, broadcasters, and distributors.

Filming Location
China, Beijing, Hebei Province

Shooting Language
Chinese

Shooting Date & Duration
August 2018, 2 weeks / January, May, August 2019, 5 weeks / August 2020, 3 weeks / 2021, 6 weeks (to be done)

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
90'

Production Company
Shanghai Jiemian CLS Technologies Co. (China)

Producer(s)
Wenxin Zhong

Total Budget
252,971.06 €

Financing in Place
54,489.97 € (21.54%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Shanghai Jiemian CLS Technologies Co., China

Looking for International Sales

First Feature film

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Director's Note

China's central government claims that it will win the battle against poverty. In the so-called battle, government departments send "first secretaries" to most villages to help the locals fight poverty. Secretary Lu is among one of them. Lu is smart, innovative and romantic. After he was appointed Party chief of the village, he conceived measures to boost the local tourism industry and facilitate economic transformation by promoting yoga.

Yoga, a sport popular with the middle class, is used to fight poverty. Such dislocation is a good illustration of the hypocrisy of the nation-wide poverty alleviation campaign. Lu's idealistic vision seemed a distant dream. We have been a witness to the experience of the yoga village, including how it attracted media attention and then fell out of favor, and how it became the subject of a film celebrating China's achievements in poverty alleviation. This documentary about the yoga village is ostensibly a black comedy, but its essence is about the ridiculousness and hypocrisy of China's poverty alleviation policies and the collapsing dream of a cadre at the grass-roots level.

In this film, most of the footage is shot from a tripod in daily life tableau scenes with attention to the framing and composition. In the composition of the shots, we attach great importance to symmetry and formality to contrast the chaotic real life environment. Classical orchestral music and carefully arranged images are in sharp contrast to the scenery of the yoga village.

Producers' Note

In 2015, there were 10 million people who made less than 1.9 dollars a day in China. Five years later, China has declared success in eliminating poverty completely. Skeptical about this seemingly economic miracle, we zoomed onto one communist party leader and a village as a sample and found this story that is full of clashes between ideal and reality.

Award winning director Guo Rongfei is able to use her unique artistic style to compose another heart wrenching story under the cover of a black comedy after taking home the Student Oscar Award with *Fairy Tales* (2017). As her first feature documentary project, she adopted a creative approach that almost feels like she put a show on a real-life stage.

While surrounded with the propaganda hymn for alleviating poverty out of China, it is rare and crucial to have a truthful and vivid take beneath this grand image. This research for this project started in 2018, and since then, we have been closely following the village's evolution. With the support of Jiemian, we have finished roughly 3/4 of the shooting and require fundings to finish up the shooting and support for post production. We are reaching out to international broadcasters and distributors, not simply to receive funding, but to really impact the distribution of the content.

Director's Profile

Born in 1991, Rongfei Guo graduated from New York University majoring in Documentary. She was awarded the Student Academy Award in 2016. She recently completed her first musical short *Girl with a Thermal Gun* during Covid-19 and won the Special Jury Prize at FlickerFest. Her first short film, *Fairy Tales* won Best Student Film at DOC NYC and Best Short Documentary at Melbourne International Film Festival. She also participated in Hot Docs in the short film unit.

Girl With A Thermal Gun, 12', 2020
Premiered at FlickerFest, Special Jury Prize

Chinese Obama, 9', 2018
Premiered at Melbourne International Film Festival

Crossing the Loneliest Lake, 35', 2017
Premiered at Kendal Mountain Festival

Fairy Tales, 29', 2015
Premiered at Hot Docs

Producer's Profile
Shanghai Jiemian CLS Technologies Co.

Wenxin Zhong, an alumni from the University of Hong Kong and Peking University, is a documentary filmmaker. She has been creating documentaries since 2017 and her works have screened internationally including *Chai*. Chinesisches Filmfestival Leipzig 2020. Documentary *China to Siberia: Crossing the Loneliest Lake* was a finalist in Fédération Internationale Cinéma Télévision Sportifs 2019. *Sailing Family* and *Brothers of the National Skateboarding Team* were selected by Guangzhou International Documentary Film Festival 2019.

VdR–Work in Progress

VdR–Work in Progress is a showcase that puts the spotlight on 9 upcoming creative documentaries in their finishing stage. Excerpts are shown in order to seek for distribution opportunities, think about festival strategies and post-production funds. Through a live presentation and specific individual meetings, VdR–Work in Progress encourages distribution for these outstanding films addressing an international audience. All the projects are presented for the first time at this stage of their production.

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About

Formerly known as Docs in Progress, VdR-Work in Progress, one of our main VdR-Industry activities, presents nine feature films in their finishing stage. This year we will have a moderated live event with an introduction by the filmmakers followed by a trailer and/or excerpts of the film. As usual, our VdR-Work in Progress is accessible to film professionals exclusively (festival representatives, funds supporting post-production, post-production facilities, distributors, TV buyers, etc.) and we will organise individual meetings in a virtual space allowing the projects holders to find suitable partners to start or finalise their post-productions and to look for distribution, festivals and sales.

Several of our selected projects from previous editions have had impressive careers in various film festivals, world sales and elsewhere. This is the case for one of our 2019 Docs in Progress projects, *Acasă-My Home* by Radu Ciorniciuc, which was awarded the Special Jury Award for Cinematography at the Sundance Film Festival before having been selected by over 60 festivals worldwide, winning 10 awards and being nominated for The European Film Awards Documentary section.

Films presented in our 2020 selection are still to be finalised, having been slowed down by the pandemic. Nevertheless, various deals have been made, like the one of Outlook Filmsales and Cinetic Media with *Dark Red Forest* by Jin Huaqing, which will premiere very soon.

In 2021, we have selected unique and original projects that offer a wide range of practices and approaches and that combine artistic ambition with high visual quality. The presented projects are creative documentaries with a theatrical potential on international markets which address a worldwide audience. Among the projects' holders, we have selected experienced directors as well as emerging ones from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America.

We want to thank the generous partners giving awards and especially Lightdox which will offer, for the first time this year, a cash award of 3,000 CHF for the project with highest international potential. We would also like to thank Raggioverde, offering a translation in one language and subtitle creation; European Film Market, giving two Market Badges for the EFM/Berlinale and a consultations session at the Docsalon; DAE, offering two memberships and four consultations tailored according to the project's needs and Freestudios in Geneva that will provide a DCP Package Delivery.

The projects will also compete for the VdR-Work in Progress award and the project teams coming from the global South and East will be eligible for the visions sud est Award.

We wish you all exciting viewings and a great online experience!

Moderator



Jasmin Basic
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Industry Consultant, projects' selection
Visions du Réel
Switzerland

Film programmer and curator, Master of Arts in Cinema. She has been working with several festivals, in Switzerland and abroad. She has curated various retrospectives and has collaborated with the Cinemathèque of Tangier, the Centre for the Image La Virreina Barcelona, the Croatian Audiovisual Center, the French Cinémathèque, the Centre Pompidou, the Cahiers du Cinéma and the Forum des Images in Paris. She coordinates the Master in Cinema of ECAL/Ecole cantonale d'art de Lausanne and HEAD-Geneva University of Arts & Design and is President of Pro Short, the Swiss association for short films. She was an appointed expert for the Swiss Federal Office of Culture and the Geneva Film Commission. She is also an associate producer in Switzerland and in France. Since 2013, she has collaborated closely with Visions du Réel.

About Everything There is to Know

De todas las cosas y de algunas otras

Sofía Velázquez
Peru

Expected Release Date: August - September 2021



Logline

Under the invisible shadow of the poet César Vallejo, things happen in Santiago de Chuco, the town where he was born: the inhabitants follow in his footsteps, others hide them, others embody them. They all have stories to tell.

Synopsis

A group of filmmakers arrives in Santiago de Chuco, a town in the Peruvian highlands where the poet César Vallejo was born. With a casting as an excuse, the filmmakers take over the theater and the inhabitants of the place arrive, gradually unveiling lives embraced by the aura of the poet, who died in Paris more than eighty years ago. All of them, inhabitants and filmmakers, mix between verses, stories and poetry. Then, the fantasy arises: Blind Santiago is a character that appears in the poetry of César Vallejo, who apparently existed in that same place, many years before and now we are looking for someone from the town to interpret him. Elder is a young musician whose wishes emerge from a magical backpack like a cornucopia. The local children know the poems by heart and recite them in the most unusual places, the streets of the village are named after the published books of the poet and in the local cemetery there is a replica of his real tomb, actually located in Paris. But reality is also filtered: the search for opportunities to study, the need to build an identity, the wish to migrate, the certainty of inhabiting a place that is on the way to oblivion.

Goals at VdR-Work in Progress

We are looking for international sales, international distribution opportunities and for a Premiere at a Festival so that we can build an international festival circuit. We also need a last amount of financing to finish the film for final sound mixing. Of course, all kinds of feedback will be incredibly great and welcome.

Filming Location

Santiago de Chuco, North Andean region of Peru

Shooting Language

Spanish

Shooting Date & Duration

November - December 2018, 2 months

Shooting Format

4K / 3.2K

Expected Runtime

90'

Production Company

Mercado Central Asociación Cultural

Producer(s)

Carolina Denegri, Sofía Velázquez

Total Budget

87,000 €

Financing in Place

60,000 € (69%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

DAFO - Peruvian Ministry of Culture, Peru
Mercado Central Asociación Cultural, Peru

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

The visual proposal implies a game with the limit between reality and fiction. Both converse and belong to the same universe, but they must intersect, at times subtly, at times more blatantly. The camera is almost always fixed, with long shots that are sustained by the internal rhythm of what happens with the things and the people we look at, the rhythm of the times of speech, the rhythm of waiting, the rhythm of silences and also to the rhythm of the stories that the characters tell. The camera is not close to the faces because the distance allows me to suggest that in the "outside" of the shots there is so much more, there is a whole universe of metalanguage that I am interested in proposing a discussion about in the very ways of making films.

The process of getting closer to the town where we filmed and to the characters was very interesting. We first thought about calling a "real" casting, putting an advertisement on the walls and on the radio. But as soon as we arrived, people began to approach us and became involved. Some of the characters had already been imagined since the first scouting trip: I had identified certain key elements that would help me tell the story of the place and of Vallejo from their very own life experiences. I was also interested in the more formal characters, those who represent an integrity and formality that, being so stiff, can become poetic in itself. This is the case of the public servant who, standing in the middle of the theater, reads – as if he was reciting a poem – the new names of the streets.

Throughout this process, poetry was gradually getting everywhere. All the people who inhabit that place have some magic, they all know poetry, they all know at least some art, any art. So the decisions that I had to make was to figure out what would be left out and what would remain inside the movie. To measure in a precious way how many poems would be recited, how many not, what does really interest me about the moments in which the characters recite this poetry, what do I want to create there? I realized that in some cases, the poetic text itself was fundamental. In others, it was the performance that was relevant. But also, sometimes, what mattered was how this team of filmmakers – at times awkwardly, at times correctly – covered and embraced these moments. There it was then, again, the metalanguage where there was no difference between the film crew and the people of the place... we all seemed to be extracted from some poem, all trying, in some way, to connect with our own humanity and that of the other.

Assembling the material has been quite an adventure and it was a very long process. Although the filming was carried out from a guide that marked moments and continuities, in the editing I returned to rethink, from scratch, the approach to this place and to all the characters. The main job in the editing was to link the different narrative lines: all the little stories that happen inside the theater, the story of Elder, with which we left and entered the theater, as if his life were part of a performance. To organically mix all this, I decided to use a voice-over with my own voice and I think it was a good decision, since it allows me to spin and clarify some ideas that otherwise, perhaps, would remain untreated. At least that is the way I found to, through such a huge subject like Vallejo, enter the soul of the characters and in this way, build a portrait of Peru.

Producers' Note

We are very happy to produce this film, because we believe that it breaks with the common representation of what is Peruvian or even what is Latin American. Far from exoticizing the characters or exploiting a miserabilist image of the country, the director proposes a poetic gaze, capable of generating other possible worlds based on poetry, words, a gaze open to speculative possibilities, based on her own cinematic reflection.

The film is almost finished, we have made it entirely with funds granted by the Ministry of Culture of Peru through the Dirección del Audiovisual, la fonografía y los Nuevos Medios (DAFO) and with our own resources. Now, we need to complete the post-production and for this we are looking for an alliance for the final sound mix. We believe that this film should aim to seek an international premiere and thus build a tour of different countries before being released in Peru. As here in Perú, we don't have art cinema distributors, we need to create our own distribution circuit that combines exhibition in independent spaces, cultural circuit, streaming platforms and even self-managed screenings.

Director's Profile

Sofía Velázquez is Peruvian. She is a filmmaker, editor and a writer. With the project *About Everything There is to Know and Then Some* (working title), she participated in the II Andean Workshop on Ideas Development organized by Ibermedia in 2016. Between 2017 and 2018 she was part of the "Travesías" workshop, organized by the Peruvian-Belgian filmmaker Mary Jiménez. She is a member of the "Mercado Central" film and artistic group and, in parallel, she imparts creation workshops for women in seclusion spaces.

Tres tristes tigres, 5', 2019

Carta a un profesor en Delaware, 9', 2017
Premiered at KTLS18, Londres 2018 LASA
FILMFEST, Barcelona 2018

Soy eterno, 6', 2014

Producer's Profile

Mercado Central Asociación Cultural

Mercado Central is a collective of artists, communicators and researchers dedicated to the creation, development, production and dissemination of audiovisual and cinematographic content based in Lima, Peru. We produce shorts and feature documentary and hybrid films and we are about to venture into our first fiction production. In 2019 we won the Prince Claus Foundation: Next Generation's prize with the project *FROM INSIDE: audiovisual accounts of female subjectivities in seclusion spaces*.

Another Spring Još jedno proleće

Mladen Kovačević
Serbia

Expected Release Date: November 2021



Logline

In one of the biggest medical achievements of our civilization - the eradication of smallpox - the 1972 epidemic in Yugoslavia remains one of its most inspiring chapters.

Synopsis

When in 1969 Prof. Dr. Zoran Radovanovic, a young doctor fresh out of medical school, went to India to get first-hand experience with tropical disease, he received the obligatory smallpox vaccine. It was exactly 2 years and 8 months before the smallpox outbreak in Yugoslavia in the spring 1972, and with the vaccine keeping him protected for exactly 3 years, he was the only epidemiologist in Yugoslavia with immunity when the epidemic started. From the context of the Covid-19 pandemic where we observe fragments from his public and personal life, the old professor narrates the medical thriller from the beginning of his career – the narrative reconstructed from the 50 years old archive film footage. From the bazaar in Iraq, the deadly virus was brought by a Muslim hajji into Yugoslavia, unnoticed. Through a series of unfortunate events, the infection spread around the country for a whole month before it was discovered in Kosovo, while the number of infected people in Belgrade hospitals continued to increase undetected for weeks longer. The biggest post-war epidemic of the deadliest disease in human history hit Yugoslavia, threatening to spread around Europe. A disease that killed 500 million people in the 20th century alone. Until this day, smallpox is the only deadly virus that man has managed to eradicate, which is considered to be one of the greatest achievements of our civilization. The ten-year struggle with smallpox has united the whole world, while the Yugoslav epidemic, the last one in Europe, remains one of its most inspiring chapters.

Goals at VdR-Work in Progress

To find film curators and sales agents interested in cinematic documentaries. We are looking for post-production funds, broadcasters (with body of archive footage as an additional asset) and co-producers able to come on board rather swiftly.

Filming Location
Belgrade / Serbia

Shooting Language
Serbian

Shooting Date & Duration
2020, 10 days

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
90' / 53'

Production Company
Horopter Film Production (Serbia)

Producer(s)
Iva Plemić Divjak

Total Budget
320,000 €

Financing in Place
69,000 € (22%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Film Center Serbia, Serbia
Serbian Radio Television (archives), Serbia
Cinnamon Film (in kind shooting equipment), Serbia
Horopter Film Production (own investment), Serbia

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

When it was proposed at the World Health Organization summit that the WHO should commit to eradicate smallpox, there were 6800 hotspots in the world, and the number of deaths in the 20th century was approaching 500 million. The eradication program began in 1967 and was successfully completed in 1977. The only time in human history that a virus has been completely eliminated from nature, by humans. It seems a lot has remained unlearned from the ten-year struggle against the smallpox that united the world.

A minor narrative line with fragments of Radanovic's present clearly defines the perspective - we are telling the story of the 1972 epidemic, while we still gravely suffer in the present-day pandemic climate, and not just from the disease itself. While I write this and we witness the 3rd wave of the Covid-19 pandemic – perhaps the greatest catastrophe of our time – we are assembling the images scanned for the first time from 50-year-old film reels. Horrifying images from hospitals and quarantines; vaccination of 18 million people in only 2 weeks; epidemiologists, field doctors and volunteers in a restless struggle against a deadly virus from its detection, through efforts to control the epidemic, to elimination, while we also observe the everyday life in Yugoslavia during the spring of 1972. The Yugoslav smallpox epidemic reflects the fight against the smallpox anywhere in the world, and furthermore – any epidemic of any disease, demystifying the process from beginning to the end, through a thriller-like narrative about the human struggle on an individual and collective level. The remarkable story that takes place in a particular milieu of communist Yugoslavia, now becomes universally relevant. It is narrated as an intimate reminiscence through professor Radovanovic's voiceover, intertwined with the film archives that are slowed-down and perceived as memories, and archive interviews that reveal the synchronous perspective on the events, all unfolding in a precise, genre-like structure.

Producers' Note

Capturing an astonishing first-hand testimony of a rather unknown, yet potentially devastating historical event happening on the very verge of Europe of the 70s, long before all of worldwide misery was by default televised and fed online, sets the base for a documentary gem to be produced. Our initial idea was made possible when the Serbian national broadcaster let us dive into their smallpox-collection archives, hence we scanned them for the first time. A team made of the currently most remarkable Serbian film authors – Jelena Maksimović (editor) and Jakov Munižaba (sound designer), whose work is, as we speak, being praised after screenings in Rotterdam and Berlin, represent a perfect creative match to Mladen Kovačević, a director of an authentic, exuberant artistic language. While awaiting results of the Serbian Film Center production call, we are in parallel editing and further researching national and foreign archives.

Since the festival release is scheduled for the end of 2021, we plan to apply for post-production funding in the summer, while being open to suitable co-production partnerships. In Nyon, we intend to approach world sales and broadcasters who are looking for projects of a specific authorial approach and for subjects of universal pertinence such as ours, resonating with the world that is currently united by the common pandemic experience.

Director's Profile

After studies of film directing in London and Cape Town, Mladen Kovačević has wholeheartedly dedicated himself to documentaries. His poetic approach is rooted in simplicity of realism; his films explore various styles with idiosyncratic dramatic structures and the unconventional approach to naturalistic esthetics.

Premiering in Nyon and Rotterdam, his films traveled the festivals around the world, got broadcasted and awarded internationally. A three-times Grand Prix winner at Beldocs, his other awards include Spirit Award at Brooklyn FF and Best Doc Feature at AcampaDoc Panama (*Unplugged*, 2013), Special Mentions at Visions du Réel and ZagrebDox and Best Documentary Award at Ibiza Cine Fest (*4 Years in 10 Minutes*, 2018), Heart of Sarajevo for Best Documentary at Sarajevo FF and FIPRESCI Award at Flahertiana (*Merry Christmas, Yiwu*, 2020).

Merry Christmas, Yiwu, 94', 2020
Premiered at IFF Rotterdam

4 Years in 10 Minutes, 63', 2018
Premiered at Visions du Réel

Wall of Death, and All That, 62', 2016
Premiered at Visions du Réel

Unplugged, 51', 2013
Premiered at Visions du Réel

Producer's Profile

Bofa Productions

Since 2013, Horopter Film Production has produced four feature documentaries directed by its founder, Mladen Kovačević. The films were critically acclaimed and well traveled in the festival circuit (Visions du Réel, Hot Docs, IFFR, SFF, CPH:DOX, DokLeipzig, FIDMarseille, IDFA). Horopter's partnerships include broadcasting co-productions with ARTE/NDR and RTBF and sales representation by Taskovski Films, Kino Rebelde and Deckert Distribution. Iva Plemić Divjak joined Horopter in 2017, focusing on international financing and project development. Her previous experience includes award-winning documentaries by Mila Turajlić, *Cinema Komunisto* (Producer) and *The Other Side of Everything* (Executive Producer). With Horopter, Iva has produced *4 Years in 10 Minutes* and *Merry Christmas, Yiwu* (Heart of Sarajevo 2020 and FIPRESCI Award at Flahertiana 2021).

Blue Island

憂鬱之島

Chan Tze Woon
Hong Kong SAR China, Japan
Expected Release Date: July 2021



Logline

Set in a time when Hong Kong political activism is more uncertain than ever, *Blue Island* navigates an immersive and innovative cinematic journey that pieces together the memories of people who lived through tumultuous times and those who fight today for a better future.

Synopsis

Hong Kong has seen repeated en masse uprisings throughout its history, from the anti-British colonial protests in 1966-67 to the Anti-China Extradition Bill Movement that made international headlines in 2019. Sitting at the crossroads between East and West, the city has sought to leverage its economic synergies whilst not being able to reconcile conflicting political ideologies. Set in a time when Hong Kong political activism is more uncertain than ever, *Blue Island* looks to the past to seek answers for the current state of affairs.

A hybrid film consisting of real-life footage, historical archival footage, dramatic recreation, and experiences of actors behind the scenes, *Blue Island* navigates an immersive and innovative cinematic journey that pieces together the memories of people who lived through tumultuous times and those who fight today for a better future. The film spotlights three men – a Mainland China-born intellectual who took a harrowing journey to Hong Kong to escape the Cultural Revolution in the 1970s, a lawyer who witnessed the Tiananmen Square Massacre, and a patriotic businessman who was jailed during the 1967 leftist riots – along with youths who participated in the 2019 protests. Through vital and poignant inter-generational dialogue that blurs the boundaries of reality and fiction as well as past and present, the film aims to harvest understanding between those on opposing political standpoints, inspire reflections and explore the floating identities of people in a seemingly unwinnable battle against authoritarianism. *Blue Island* is a complex tapestry of contemporary Hong Kong.

Goals at VdR-Work in Progress

To seek finishing funds and to meet festival representatives, TV buyers, world sales, distributors to support international distribution and an innovative outreach of the film.

Filming Location

Hong Kong

Shooting Language

Cantonese

Shooting Date & Duration

2017 - 2020, 4 years

Shooting Format

4K

Expected Runtime

120' / 52'

Production Company

Blue Island Production Company (Hong Kong SAR China)

Producer(s)

Peter Yam, Catherine Chan

Total Budget

507,920 €

Financing in Place

382,653 € (75%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

Uzumasa, Inc., Japan
Hong Kong Art Development Council, Hong Kong
Docs Up Fund with Normandy for peace, France
AVEK, France
Hong Kong Documentary Initiative, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong
Academy of Film, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong
Pure Art Foundation, Hong Kong
Crowdfunding on Kickstarter

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

By filming the characters over a long period of time through an intimate lens, each of them has shared their memories again and again, each time with a little difference in details, but sharing the same level of emotions and pain in their scars from the big situations of Hong Kong. I decided to visualise their memories through vivid recreation. But I wanted to do something more than a reenactment. I have invited the young protesters of current-day movement to play in these characters' roles to reconstruct their real stories. I want to explore the boundary of non-fiction storytelling, using cinema language to explain concepts that travel through time and go beyond political reality.

Weaving with archival images of June 4th Movement and the lawyer Kenneth Lam's real image back in 1989 as a student leader in Tiananmen Square, his role in the reenactment is portrayed by a student leader of today's movement Keith Fong, who has been arrested multiple times. Today, Kenneth has provided pro-bono legal service to young people who were arrested in connection with the Movement.

In 1973, as a young, struggling intellectual during the time of the Cultural Revolution, Chen Hak-Chi fled from the Communist China to Hong Kong. His escape is portrayed by Anson Shum, a protester of today whose father was also one of the escapees during the Cultural Revolution. Chen and Anson will meet at the reenactment scene of the Cultural Revolution in the 70s and will speak about why Chen decided to escape from China.

In 1967, Raymond Yeung was 16 and charged with possession of seditious leaflets, in writing "Patriotism is not a crime. Violent resistance is justified", which was widely spread at the anti-colonial riots. He was sent to jail by the British colonial government. His role is portrayed by Tam Kwan-Long, a 22-year-old protester who is charged for rioting against extradition to China. Despite their contradicting political stances, the same consequence is at stake for them at a young age.

Their paths did not cross in reality yet we shrewd their stories in a cinematic fashion; their trauma, their dissent and their images will cross-reference and overlap. Weaving those life changing events and personal conflicts, historical photos and film archives echo the recent footages of the revolution of this generation youth. Hence, dialogues between generations will manifest. I attempt to make the sounds and high quality visual recreational scenes of memories of the protagonists reincarnate to the viewers. The film is shot cinematically with an aspect ratio of 2.35:1. Light is a metaphor in the film – the glimmer of neon light that Chen saw when he was reaching the safe haven of Hong Kong's shore; the annual candlelight vigil on June 4th memorial in Hong Kong Victoria Park; the light emitted through Yeung-produced television tubes emitting in every household of Hong Kong family in late 20th century. Soundtrack scores and sound design are vital to sew the montage pieces together.

Producers' Note

The film attempts to look for an answer of the never ending loop of protest cycles. In 2020, not only we see pandemic in everyday's newspapers, but also civil disobedience and anti-colonial protest are very much in the Zeitgeist.

Chan Tze Woon was born towards the end of Britain's colonial rule over Hong Kong, with an impending handover back to China. He grew up during times of political and social upheaval, which created a sense of confusion in his own self worth and identity. Therefore, Chan is eager to explore the complex relationship between Hong Kong and China.

Chan and I first collaborated on his first feature-length documentary *Yellowing*. Through his lens, Chan captured the nuance of a chaotic social movement, and allowed the audience to be intimately immersed in the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong. We decided, from then on, to continue our collaboration.

We hope to make the best film by reaching out to people who support freedom of speech and hope to reach as many audiences as possible.

Director's Profile

Chan Tze Woon is a Hong Kong filmmaker. He graduated from Academy of Film at Hong Kong Baptist University in 2013. A large-scale occupation in 2014 prompted his first feature-length documentary *Yellowing* (2016). The film won the Shinsuke Ogawa Award at Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, also nominated for Best Documentary at Taipei Golden Horse Film Awards, selected for International Film Festival Rotterdam and was a qualifier for Best Documentary Feature for Academy Awards. He is now working on his new project *Blue Island* exploring new possibilities in film financing, production format, cinema language and distribution.

Yellowing, 128', 2016
Awarded Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival 2017 Ogawa Shinsuke Prize, Qualified 91st Academy Awards Best Documentary nominations

Producer's Profile

Blue Island Production Company

Blue Island Production Company is a Hong Kong based documentary production company founded by Peter Yam and Chan Tze Woon. With several award-winning documentaries made, Blue Island Production Limited is striving for more high quality documentaries in the future. We are here to be the witness of time. Peter Yam produced *Yellowing* (2016), *Lost in the Fumes* (2017), and *The Cube Phantom* (2019). His latest film *Lost Course* (2019) was an official selection at IDFA 2020 and won Best Documentary at Taipei Golden Horse Film Awards.

Flickering Lights

Anupama Srinivasan, Anirban Dutta
India
Expected Release Date: October 2021



Logline

In a remote village on the Indo-Myanmar border, in the backdrop of a decades-long insurgency, news floats in that electricity might arrive. People are wary, they do not trust the State. A woman dreams of a better future for her children. An old man dreams of sovereignty for his people. Life flickers between hope and frustration.

Synopsis

In the hills of northeast India, far from the Indian mainland consciousness, there is a village of the Naga community called Tora. The region has a long and painful history of insurgency, and civic amenities are conspicuous by their absence. The film is an attempt to delve into a seemingly simple, idyllic life, inviting us to experience the warmth, textures, complexities and contradictions.

When there is an announcement that Tora will be electrified, people don't know what to make of it as the State has seldom delivered on its promises. 98-year old Khamrang, an ex-insurgent, has seen it all. He watches with skepticism as the linesmen pull cables, dig holes and erect poles.

An enterprising and optimistic woman, Jasmine sees an opportunity in the coming of electricity. Her husband, Ninghan and she are a hardworking farming couple, running a small shop. She makes a plan to buy a refrigerator and with that, give a good education to her children.

The film follows the story of how electricity arrives in Tora, through fits and starts, the process marred by inadequate labour and supplies. The absurdity of the electricity work creates situations, comic on one level, but perhaps revealing the desperation.

As Khamrang witnesses the goings on, he remains steadfast in his larger dream of a nation for Nagas, wondering if he will live to see the day when his people are free. Does electricity arrive in Tora? When it finally arrives, does it bring the promised joy? The film waits to witness it.

Goals at VdR-Work in Progress

We are looking for festivals, broadcasters and sales agents. We would like to have a sales agent on board to work out a detailed strategy for distribution, festivals and theatrical release. We are also interested in raising international finishing funds and in receiving feedback that will help us as we finalise the editing and complete the film.

Filming Location

Manipur, India

Shooting Language

Tangkhu

Shooting Date & Duration

2016 - 2018, 5 months

Shooting Format

4K

Expected Runtime

100' / 56'

Production Company

Metamorphosis Film Junction (India)

Producer(s)

Anirban Dutta

Total Budget

180,000 €

Financing in Place

91,500 € (51%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

Catapult Film Fund, United States
Bertha Foundation, United States
Docs Port Incheon (Best Asian Project Award), South Korea
Metamorphosis Film Junction Investment, India

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

We believe that our role as artists is to subvert conventions, and explore and interpret the world in our own way. For us, the choice of form is a political one. For us, the burning questions are: Can our film not be solely guided by the story? Can we move beyond a structure fuelled by cause and effect, conflict and resolution? Can we access deeper resonances that truly reflect our exploration and understanding of those we are representing?

Over the past fifteen years, we have worked in the Naga hills of Northeast India, making films and books, and training young people in filmmaking. We have been inspired and intrigued by life here, where people have so little but there is joy, there is humour, there is a spirit of togetherness. This is also a place where people's lives have been impacted by continued negligence from the Indian state, and a long militant movement.

We were embedded in the space and with the people, spending a long time in the location, not always filming, but internalizing the rhythm of life here and being alive to the details and the deeper layers behind social interactions, the expressions of piety, structures of power and decision-making, and the spirit of the collective.

We almost always filmed people along with their background, not isolating them from their context. This reflects our understanding of the community here that is not individualistic, where a person's identity is deeply linked to the larger group and the surroundings. There are main characters, like Jasmine, Ninghan and Khamrang, but they are not heroes or protagonists in the typical sense. We see them as a part of the whole, and not the whole through their eyes.

We often worked with long takes, to offer an immersive and lyrical experience of time, space and textures. In our way of looking and filming, we have tried not to 'exoticize' or manipulate, working with the belief and faith that in all its mundaneness, life throws up situations that reveal truths and insights, and that we need to be patient and observant to receive those moments.

In a world of increasing cacophony and polarization, we want to express ourselves with gentleness, allowing small gestures and everyday conversations to reveal the lived philosophy of a people, their dreams and anxieties.

Even as we seek to resist the homogenization of form dictated by consumerist impulses, we are trying to respond to the project of homogenization of language, religion, and cultural practices that is currently undergoing in our country. We cannot but be angered and bruised. It is crucial for us through our film to bring the so-called margin to the centre of attention; a small Christian Naga village situated at the edge of the Indian nation state. This is a way to reassert the diversity of our country and the plurality of what being Indian could mean.

Producers' Note

I have been engaged with the northeast of India since 2005, and have been working closely with communities here. Mostly ignored by mainstream media, the region finds occasional representation as a zone of conflict or as an exotic locale. We wanted to tell a story that reflects the intricate and complex reality of life here. Our intention was to reframe stories of marginalization of indigenous communities, and to present Tora as a living, thriving entity rather than essentializing the people here as victims of underdevelopment or violence. We are inspired by the cinema of Abbas Kiarostami in which the story seems simple and straightforward, but the way it is told is nuanced, rich with layers, and deep philosophical underpinnings.

We are at the rough cut stage. We are keen to work with a Consultant Editor to work on the edit further and finalise it. We hope to complete the film by September 2021.

We have secured about 50 percent of our budget. We have already applied to the Doha Film Institute (where the project has been shortlisted for the next stage), Sundance Institute and visions sud est for the remaining funding.

In earlier stages of the project, we have presented at Docedge Kolkata (Best Pitch Award), Docs Port Incheon (Best Asian Project Award), Sheffield Meetmarket and DMZ South Korea. We have interest from the following broadcasters: IKON Docs Netherlands, TG4 Ireland, POV USA, NHK Japan, YLE Finland.

Director's Profile

Anupama is a filmmaker based in Delhi, India. She did her BA in Applied Mathematics from Harvard University and studied filmmaking at FTII, Pune. She has been making documentaries for the past 18 years, often shooting and editing her own work. The documentary *Nirnay* that she co-directed and edited won the Most Innovative Film Award at the MIFF 2014. She was the Festival Director of the IAWRT Asian Women's Film Festival for three years (2013-15).

Are you going to school today? 59', 2019
Presented at Film South Asia Kathmandu

Nirnay, Co-Director & editor, 56', 2012
Presented at Mumbai International Film Festival

I Wonder..., 70', 2009
Presented at Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival

Anirban is a filmmaker, till photographer and a media educator based in Delhi, India. He set up the film company, Metamorphosis in 2003. His films have travelled to various film festivals in New York, San Sebastian, Mumbai, Qatar, Los Angeles and others. He has been a Visiting Artist at the University of Boise, Utah, USA (2009), Stanica Slovakia (2013) and exhibited in University of Lima, Peru (2007).

The Last Run, 37', 2019
Presented at Madurai International Film Festival

Beyond the Mountains, 17', 2010
Best Integral Realization award at the New York Short Film Festival

The Mud House, 16', 2010
Presented at Donostia - San Sebastian Human Rights Film Festival, Spain

Producer's Profile

Metamorphosis is a film company set up in 2003 and based in New Delhi, India. It specializes in non-fiction storytelling and produces projects from parts of South Asia that are underrepresented and media dark. Metamorphosis has trained young people from indigenous communities to make films and tell their own stories. In 2015, Metamorphosis started producing feature-length non-fiction films. It was done with a vision of telling stories that are universal and are told with strong voices from the community. We also push for interesting cinematic forms that expand the boundaries of narratives. Our films have been selected at Sheffield Meet Market (2017 and 2020), CPH:FORUM2021, DocsPort Incheon Asian pitching Forum: South Korea 2017, DMZ Forum: South Korea 2020. We have received support from Catapult Film Fund, Sundance Sandbox fund, IDFA Bertha fund and Bertha Foundation.

The Home

Jessie Zinn, Chase Musslewhite
 South Africa, United States
 Expected Release Date: January 2022



Logline

The residents of a Cape Town old age home struggle to elect a new Resident Committee amidst the heat of a drought-stricken summer. Through humorous observation, this quirky documentary takes a comedic look at themes surrounding death and a desire to find purpose at any age, while raising questions of who has the privilege to grow old in comfort in the new South Africa.

Synopsis

Residents of an old-age home in South Africa contemplate running for the facility's resident committee elections amongst an otherwise repetitive routine. Through humorous observation, this documentary takes a comedic look at themes surrounding death and a desire to find purpose at any age, while questioning who has the privilege to grow old in comfort.

Some of our main characters include Jos – the home's unofficial resident photographer; Monty – who holds the record for dating the most women in the home; Jeannette and Rona – best friends who spend their time knitting and gossiping; and Nobantu – the head carer of the third floor.

The home sheds light on an often disregarded stage of life, revealing a story of comedy and drama; one whose essence is defined by more than just a proximity to death. Many residents, with their previous lives left behind them, have been forced to start anew – find a new hobby, run for a committee or even get married again at 84. This new beginning also includes a new relationship – particularly with the women who take care of them day in and day out. The carers, middle-aged Xhosa women from South Africa's informal settlements, come from vastly different lives than the residents they care for. What results is a space composed of two starkly different groups who have a similar estrangement and affection for the space they call 'home'.

Goals at VdR–Work in Progress

We are looking for expert input on our rough cut to help us move forward in completion of the cut. Beyond this, our goal is to find completion funds to help us finish the film. We are looking for sales agents, broadcasters and co-producers.

Filming Location
 Cape Town, South Africa

Shooting Language
 English, Xhosa, Zulu

Shooting Date & Duration
 January 2018 - January 2019, 1 year

Shooting Format
 HD

Expected Runtime
 80' / 60'

Production Company
 Red Coat Films (South Africa), Picturescope (South Africa)

Producer(s)
 Jessie Zinn

Total Budget
 243,360 €

Financing in Place
 188,398 € (77%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
 National Film and Video Foundation, South Africa
 Justin Cohen, Picturescope Productions, South Africa
 Producer's Investment, South Africa/United States
 University of Cape Town, South Africa

Looking for International Sales

First Feature film

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Director's Profile

Jessie is a filmmaker from Cape Town, South Africa. Her work explores notions of space and identity through films that push the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction. Her short films have screened at international film festivals including MoMA Doc Fortnight, Visions du Réel and the Durban International Film Festival. She is an alumnus of Berlinale Talents (2018), as well as the Visions du Réel Focus (2017).

Wavelengths, 11', 2021
 Premiered at Visions du Réel (2021), San Francisco International Documentary Film Festival (2021)

The Gallery That Destroys All Shame, 10', 2021
 Like Water, 14', 2021

Can I Please Go to the Bathroom?, 3', 2018
 Premiered at Encounters Documentary Film Festival (2018), BFI Film Festival (2018)

Umva, 5', 2017
 Premiered at Visions du Réel (2017), MoMA Doc Fortnight (2018)

Chase is a creative filmmaker working in both the United States and in Cape Town, South Africa. Chase has always gravitated toward a balance between raw moments that reflect a character's natural emotion and more staged, designed images that provoke experimental thought beyond the confinements of reality.

Can I Please Go to the Bathroom?, 3', 2018
 Premiered at Encounters Documentary Film Festival (2018), BFI Film Festival (2018)

Umva, 5', 2017
 Premiered at Visions du Réel (2017), MoMA Doc Fortnight (2018)

Producer's Profile
 Red Coat Films

Red Coat Films is a female-owned, South African production company that was established in 2017 by filmmaker Jessie Zinn. Since its establishment, it has successfully developed and produced a number of non-fiction films that have been funded and supported by the National Film and Video Foundation. The company is currently producing the feature documentary *The Home* that has been selected to participate in IFFP Film Week (2018), Sheffield Meet Market (2019), Durban Film Mart (2019), IDFA Academy (2018)

Picturescope

Picturescope is a South African production company founded by Justin Cohen, as a platform for independent filmmakers. Under this banner he has produced numerous award winning short films, music videos and experimentals. With a focus now firmly set on feature film development, finance and production. Recent films: *The Queen of Azania*, *The Elephant Whisperer*, *Dark of Day*.

Director's Note

The Home takes a comedic look at a South African, Jewish nursing home that exists more as a luxury lifestyle resort than a morose holding cell. Originally built in 1916, Highlands House was founded as a safe-haven for elderly Jewish immigrants who fled the pogroms and later the Holocaust in Europe. Today, the home employs over 300 staff members and houses over 400 residents. Unlike what one may expect, the space is a vibrant world full of comedy and life. I have known about this world for many years. I went to a Jewish high school up the road from Highlands House where I engaged in frequent community service visits on weekends. When I decided to embark on this filmic journey, my connections and ties to the Home - as both a South African Jewish community member and a previous volunteer - allowed me exclusive access to the space. The film's narrative meets at the intersection of extreme comedy and tragedy. Forced to look out for themselves with the help of their carers, many residents take the opportunity to start anew - find a new hobby, a new friend group or even a new husband.

This new beginning also includes a new relationship - particularly with the women who take care of them day in and day out. Their carers (mostly Xhosa speaking black women), face many personal struggles, specifically around making ends meet and caring for their own families, while needing to travel long distances each day to care for other people. The relationship between the carers and residents reflects a socio-political inequality that still lingers throughout South Africa today.

Growing old is often represented in the mass media as depressing and an inevitable process that ends in death. In this film we are trying to undo this narrative to reflect a world that includes the serious undertones of aging while also bringing life and humor to this process.

The Home is not a tale of any one person on any specific journey. Rather, the film is a story of a space and its fleeting relationship with our characters. Constructed as a multi-character tableau, the six main characters contribute toward a narrative of the home as the central personality. During the film's development, we made the decision to shoot with a narrative style in mind. We often navigate our work in the space between genres, and this film will be no different.

Through observational vignettes and in-to-camera interviews, the film will weave different "chapters" together like a visual quilt embodying both the nuances of the space and the dynamics of its patrons.

Producers' Note

Both Jessie Zinn and Chase Musslewhite are directing and producing the film. The project is very personal for both Jessie and Chase, who fell in love with the idea of showcasing their religion and various aspects of South Africa through the world of one of the country's largest nursing homes. The project is currently in a rough cut stage. The goal is to edit throughout the start of 2021 until May where we will move into final post production (sound design and colour). The current edit still needs work and we have ample amounts of footage left to work with. We also have footage with the home's carers that still needs to be translated. A presentation at this stage of our project would be extremely advantageous to us completing the project on our projected timeline. We are also looking for finishing funds.

The Story of Looking

Mark Cousins
United Kingdom
Expected Release Date: June 2021



Logline

Faced with the threat of losing his sight, award-winning filmmaker Mark Cousins invites the audience on an intimate journey through his visual world, to explore the central role of looking in his life and art, and in the past, present and future of humanity.

Synopsis

Dawn. Mark looks out of his window, at a view he has seen for 20 years. Today he's afraid. Tomorrow he is due to have an operation to remove a cataract from his left eye. Recently he had a DNA test which revealed that he carries the gene for blindness. Mark is an intensely visual person. The act of looking, creatively and eagerly, is central to all of his films, and to his life. So the prospect of losing his sight is a hammer blow. On his phone, he watches a clip of Ray Charles talking about his blindness, and wonders how he could live without sight. He decides to spend the day in bed and imagine a walk around Edinburgh, where he lives, to find out if memory could substitute for vision, as it did for Ray Charles. His thoughts rove through the whole history of imagery and the visual world. He reaches out to other people via social media to ask what looking means for them, and the film becomes a polyphony. The next day, Mark heads for the eye clinic. We see him go under the knife, and see and hear the thoughts and visions that flash through his brain. He considers the deluge of images in the digital age. Are we being overwhelmed by the visual? Is there danger here, along with joy? We see astonishing images. Even in darkness, there are visions. After the operation, Mark lifts his eye-patch to see if it has worked, and bursts in tears. The future: Mark is 80 years old. As his looking life draws towards its end, it gets even more intense. As he gazes at a rockpool, lost in its currents, he concludes that Ray Charles was wrong to say that sighted people are burdened by looking. Looking has been Mark's greatest joy.

Goals at VdR-Work in Progress

Our goal at VdR is to introduce *The Story of Looking* to distributors, broadcasters and festival programmers, in order to start mapping our route to audiences. We are interested in feedback from marketing, sales and distribution.

Filming Location
United Kingdom

Shooting Language
English

Shooting Date & Duration
2018 - 2020, 3 years

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
87'

Production Company
Bofa Productions (United Kingdom)

Producer(s)
Adam Dawtrey, Mary Bell

Total Budget
200,000 €

Financing in Place
200,000 € (100%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Screen Scotland, United Kingdom
BFI Doc Society, United Kingdom
Private grant via the Film Collaborative, United States
Bofa, United Kingdom
Distributor TBC, United Kingdom

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

This is the story of something astonishing. It is everywhere, everyday, yet we don't think of it as having a story. It's epic and global. It's a story about our homes, relationships, adventures, creativity, art, science, sport, loves and deaths, but we take it for granted. This thing is almost invisible, and yet it's central to human experience. This is the story of looking. We talk about our family lives, our work lives and love lives, but more fundamental than these, for most of us, are our looking lives. It begins with what we saw when we were children, how we looked at our parents, and homes, and then our cities, and lovers. It then becomes the tale of how our nations looked. How discoverers and scientists saw the world. It ends with the overwhelming looking of the last 200 years, the age of photography, cinema, television, modern celebrity, and skype. Telling this story will feel like putting on a new set of glasses. It will see life in a new way. How did Homer look? Or Akenaten, Cezanne, Kahlo, Riefenstahl? What was looking like for our ancient ancestors, and how does that compare to looking in the urban jungle today? What was it like for Ray Charles to have sight taken away in childhood? What did telescopes, microscopes and cinema do to the act of looking? And how is the smartphone, the most powerful looking technology ever invented, transforming our visual consciousness? The story of looking is vast and compelling. In the age of the internet, of smartphone and drones, of Virtual Reality and augmented reality, it's time to tell, for the first time, the epic tale of the visual world.

Producers' Note

We are long-term collaborators with Mark Cousins, and it's our mission to support his extraordinary vision. Looking is at the very heart of his life and his artistic practice – his films are all about encouraging the audience to look better, to look more closely, to understand the power of their own eyes to reshape the world and themselves. *The Story of Looking* is by far his most personal project, almost a self-portrait, a selfie, an autobiography of his own eyes. We simply want to support this, and to get it out the global audience it deserves. The film is creatively complete, combining Mark's self-filming in his bed with own personal gallery of footage shot over his years of global travelling, intercut with movie clips, artworks and other stills, stock imagery and even "live" filming of Mark under the surgeon's knife. The film is picture-locked, the score by Donna McKeivitt is finished, we are currently working on sound design and grade. We are now fully financed, so we are seeking international sales and distribution, and festival invitations. We have a UK distributor in place, with theatrical release scheduled for September, and we are developing a distribution plan that crosses over from cinemas to art galleries, and into the online space. We are in talks with sales companies and festivals starting in the summer of 2021.

Director's Profile

Winner of the European Film Academy's inaugural Innovation Award in 2020 for his epic series *Women Make Film*, Mark is a prolific, globally renowned and multi-award-winning filmmaker, writer and curator. Born in Northern Ireland and based in Scotland, he has premiered his films at Cannes, Berlin, Sundance, Toronto and Venice. He won a Peabody Award for his 15-hour series *The Story of Film: An Odyssey*, a Prix Italia for his debut feature *The First Movie*, and a special commendation in the Camera d'Or at Cannes for *The Eyes of Orson Welles*.

Women Make Film: A New Road Movie Through Cinema, 840', 2020, Venice

The Eyes of Orson Welles, 115', 2018, Cannes

Stockholm My Love, 87', 2016, London/
Stockholm FF

A Story of Children and Film, 106', 2013, Cannes

The Story of Film: An Odyssey, 930', 2011

Producer's Profile

Bofa Productions

Adam Dawtrey and Mary Bell founded Bofa Productions in Bridge of Allan, Scotland, in 2013 to produce *A Story of Children and Film*, which premiered in official selection at Cannes. Adam was formerly European Editor of *Variety*; Mary was formerly deputy managing director of Hat Trick Productions, and an Oscar winner for the short film *Work Experience*. Bofa's films include *Iorram* (2021) by Alastair Cole; *The Eyes of Orson Welles* (2018) by Mark Cousins; *Stockholm My Love* (2016) by Mark Cousins; *Antonia Bird From EastEnders to Hollywood* (2016) by Susan Kemp; and *A Story of Children and Film* (2013) by Mark Cousins. Current films in production include *The Partition of Ritwik Ghatak* by Sanghita Sen, *Celluloid Underground* by Ehsan Khoshbakht, and *Like a Huge Scotland* by Mark Cousins.

Transfariana

Joris Lachaise
France, Colombia
Expected Release Date: December 2021



Logline

In a high security prison to the south of Bogotá, the marriage of a FARC leader to a transgender former sex worker sentenced to life imprisonment first caused a scandal and then led to a transformation of views at a national scale. Between prison life, Bogotá's urban network, and the Colombian countryside, the film looks for signs of the discrete movements governing the changes of a society.

Synopsis

Transfariana is embedded in a dream. The restless dream that Jaison, a FARC leader, made just before his liberation. After 14 years in prison, this commander and spokesman for the guerrillas is about to be freed while an amnesty between the State and the FARC was just signed. The warrior's unconscious assesses his past acts. He has this dream, in which he keeps waking up in the same place, next to the same ghost, without ever managing to get rid of his obsessions. And when the ghost finally vanishes, he notes: "I was left alone with the consequences of my actions."

Transfariana begins after a controversial episode in Jaison's life that will prove to be as decisive for him as for the peace accords to come. After outraging his fellow inmates for marrying a transgender woman, Jaison had to confront his own political family. A heretical marriage for a group of armed peasants who once condemned gay people to death, this union caused a scandal that disrupted the paradigm of thought for the revolutionaries. FARC leaders were urged to take a stand against the opinion of their base and the organization became the national standard bearer of the LGBTI cause in the negotiation of peace agreements.

The film breaks down various periods in Jaison's life, from prison to freedom, from armed struggle to legal struggle, while following 4 transgender people whose stories intertwine, branch out, and compose, in a context of significant social and political transition, a moving historical fresco.

Goals at VdR-Work in Progress

We are looking for co-producers to complete the financing, international documentary film funds, distributors, sales agents, TV networks, international broadcasters.

Filming Location
Colombia

Shooting Language
Spanish

Shooting Date & Duration
2016 - 2021, 5 months

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
180' / 2 x 90'

Production Company
Mujō (France), Romeo (Colombia)

Producer(s)
Line Peyron, Guillermo Quintero

Total Budget
225,420 €

Financing in Place
137,400 € (60 %)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Mujō (Producer's Investment, France)
CNC, France
Région SUD, France
Institut Français, France
CNAP, France
Tènk, France

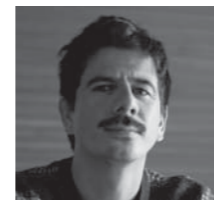
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Director's Note

Being in Colombia for a film festival where my previous film received an award, I was invited to La Picota, a high security prison to the south of Bogotá, by an association defending the rights of LGBTI people in prison. Films were shown and we discussed for several days, during long hours, about cinema, history, politics and philosophy. It was there that I met Jaison and Laura, who told me the story of their controversial wedding. We began to speculate on the consequences of this singular struggle which had, certainly, already provoked an internal conflict within the FARC but had not yet had the impact that we were expecting on the national political life. Seized by a common emulation, we decided together to make this film, not just to tell an unprecedented love story, nor to make an apology for the political transition of an armed revolutionary organization towards the legal path, but to tell how the convergence of certain struggles consists essentially, for the individuals who wage them, in acting in return on the movement of history that determines their actions.

Jaison carries out his internal, intimate, private fight at the same time as an external, political, public and collective one. This double dimension in the struggle gives him the characteristics of a tragic character torn apart by antagonistic forces of action. But while his two fights should logically conflict and annihilate each other, the film tells how he uses the strategies of his political struggle to achieve personal victories that he transforms into collective victories.

Conceived from an assemblage of heterogeneous material, historical archives, news, cell phone videos made by inmates, and film footage, *Transfariana* uses the dialectics of editing to connect disparate places, times, and social facts to propose another version of the historical narrative and make new fault lines visible.

Producers' Note

Transfariana is primarily the story of an incredible romance that the director has chosen to embrace in the great upheavals of Colombian history being written. In his will to tear himself away from the simple narrative of current events in order to seek the crystal of the total event in the singular one, this project, which immediately seemed original and ambitious to us, proved to be more and more convincing and necessary. Joris Lachaise, as close as possible to his characters, makes the bet to stop the flow of events, images, speeches, to derail them from their historical continuity. Through the play of editing, the film makes prodigious changes of scale that make the conflicting and contradictory temporality of the history of struggles sensitive in the cinematographic space.

Given the complexity of the sociopolitical context in which *Transfariana* takes place, we have embarked on a very stimulating production challenge to accompany, between 2017 and today, the director in his field investigations, the shooting, and up to a well-advanced version of the editing. The film has obtained financing in France from all the institutions that had already supported Joris Lachaise for his previous film. As we expect the film to be a fresco of about 180 minutes, we are going to Visions du Réel to meet international co-producers willing to commit to complete the financing of the project in its post-production phase.

Director's Profile

Joris Lachaise lives in Marseille (France). After a master's degree in philosophy, he undertakes a DEA which leads him to the field of documentary films. In parallel with his work related to an anthropology of death, and his political questioning on the status of the ethnography collections of the Musée de l'Homme (Paris), he became a cameraman and editor for the cinema. He was director of photography on Khady and Miriam Sylla's latest film, *Une simple parole*, in 2013. His films, *Convention : Mur noir / Trous blancs* (Mali, 2011) and *Ce qu'il reste de la folie* (Senegal, 2014, Grand Prix of the French Competition & Prix Renaud Victor at FIDMarseille among others), were shot in West Africa around gestures and words stemming from the awareness of a double form of alienation, mental and colonial.

Ce qu'il reste de la folie (What Remains of Madness), 100', 2014

Convention : Mur noir / Trous blancs (Convention: Black Wall / White Holes), 72', 2011

Producer's Profile

Mujō

Created in 2016 and based in Marseille, the production and post-production company Mujō brings together a team of producers, author-directors, composers and visual artists. It was born from the common desire to create a place for interdisciplinary exchange, a platform of research and development encouraging the emergence of new ways to compose with image and sound by accompanying filmmakers. Mujō wishes to constitute a varied and demanding catalogue made of works contributing to a complex vision of reality and questioning with happy concern what it means today to be and to inhabit the world.

Among the films we worked on at Mujō, we can quote (non-exhaustive list): *Artavazd Pelechian, le cinéaste est un cosmonaute* (2018), *Liberté* (2019), *Overseas* (2019), *Aswang* (2019), *Attack the Sun* (2019), *Le Soleil ni la mort* (2020), *PPMS* (2021).

Under Open Skies

À ciel ouvert

Charlie Petersmann
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: August 2021



Logline

A behind-the-scenes look on a major construction site and the lives of men who came from elsewhere to build the Switzerland of tomorrow.

Synopsis

Shot over three years, the film is an immersion into the world of construction, behind the scenes of a major building site, in French-speaking Switzerland. From the evolution of this pharaonic project, to the fragility of the lives of those who build it, *Under Open Skies* explores what it means to "be a man" in a working class environment in nowadays society. Following the rhythm of the seasons, in a back and forth between the construction site and intimate moments shared with the workers at their homes, the film questions how these men – bricklayers, electricians, scrap metal workers, laborers... who for the most part come from abroad, left their family and their people to build a country which isn't theirs. We meet Jorge, 60 years old, from Portugal, who lives in the remote countryside and overcomes his loneliness by planting flowers, Yarek, 52 years old, from Poland, who is going through a divorce after having spent too much time far away from his wife and daughter, Jacques, a Senegalese scrap metal worker whose son comes to visit, confronting him to the consequences of a long distance paternity... Through these portraits, the film depicts the reality of this labor force, as well as the sacrifices endured by these working migrants for the privilege of having a job in a northern country.

Goals at VdR-Work in Progress

With the support of Swiss cinema funds (OFC and Cineforum) and in co-production with the Swiss TV, the film recently reached a first cut. We are now mostly looking for partners to help us with the distribution, broadcasters and festival programmers, on an international level.

Filming Location

Switzerland

Shooting Language

French, Portuguese

Shooting Date & Duration

2018 - 2021

Shooting Format

HD

Expected Runtime

90'

Production Company

Mnemosyn films (Switzerland)

Producer(s)

Stephanie Argerich, Charlie Petersmann

Total Budget

300,000 €

Financing in Place

300,000 € (100%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

OFC, Switzerland
Cinéforum, Switzerland
RTS, Switzerland
SSA, Switzerland
Migros, Switzerland

Looking for International Sales

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Director's Note

A construction site is a cinematic place par excellence: a raw heap of forms, colors, materials that are intertwined on a daily basis and from which a new element of the landscape is born. It is the kingdom of contrasts, whether material or human. A space in constant mutation that fascinates me, because in this "no man's" land people from the most varied horizons cross paths, in a great open-air stage where the human condition is played out on a daily basis. A window on the cultural and social diversity of today's Swiss society, and in particular on those living on the edge. In Switzerland, as in most northern countries, the majority of construction workers have migration backgrounds. By showing the backstage of this environment and its functioning, I would like to share a closer immersion into these lives affected by physical work, which most Swiss citizens do not want to do.

I like the idea of Pessoa who says that "To see is to be distant. To see clearly is to stop. And to analyze is to be foreign". This distance from which these workers live and observe Switzerland interests me, having, for a time, been close to it. When I was a teenager, I chose to do an apprenticeship as a construction builder and I worked for a few years in this field before turning to film. This period was for me a kind of passage into adulthood. By making this film, I wanted to expose myself to another truth, to be among these men, in direct contact with broader realities than those I grew up with. My years as a construction worker brought me closer to the richness of that universe, often hidden. Here, one meets men who shine by their intelligence and their sensitivity, and also encounters the difficulties of what 'living together' really means, as most of these workers share the experience of trying to build a new life far away from home. It is also a microcosm that is defined by its almost total absence of women, although they are very present off-screen. At the site, virility and a sense of duty also rub shoulders with fragility and weariness, engendered by physical fatigue. This offers a privileged access to more complex facets of masculinity. To interweave these fragments of life is to pursue a path begun with my first films around migration, the relationship to the community, the questions of social and/or personal ruptures as well as the quest for belonging that accompany them. It is also to highlight the tension between what these men have come to do in Switzerland – build – and their own lives "in the making".

Producers' Note

Under Open Skies takes a plunge into an unusual side of Switzerland, and draws our attention to the shadowy workers who make up an important part of the Swiss population, as well as to human aspects that transcend borders.

The director studied at the film school in Berlin (dffb), grew up and worked in mixed sociocultural backgrounds, which is part of his access to the different worlds portrayed in the film. This third feature documentary by Charlie Petersmann is in the continuity of his work, characterized by an immersive approach and a fine observation of the challenges people face to find a place in the world, whether in a community, a country or a family. Through a cinema that aims to shed light on our times with an acute and sensitive eye, and through the fascinating societal themes that it addresses, we believe *Under Open Skies* is a film that approaches a universal reality. As the main issue of the film – south-north working migration, incarnates social issues shared by various countries within Europe, and beyond, we are looking for international collaborators who could help the film achieve its potential visibility and reach an international audience.

Director's Profile

Charlie Petersmann worked as a bricklayer in his teenage years, before entering for one year the Geneva art school - Head. He then studied film directing at the Deutsche Film und Fernsehakademie Berlin - dffb. *Under Open Skies* is his third feature documentary film. His last film - medium length *Miss Rain* - got a special mention by the jury in the international competition at Visions du Réel 2017. His first feature film - *Cantos* received a special mention by the jury at Visions du Réel in 2013 in the Regards Neufs competition. He also works as a producer (*The Lunar Course of My Life* by Valérie Bäuerlein selected at Visions du Réel 2021 / *Sarah joue un loup garou* by Katharina Wyss premiered at Venice's settimana della critica) and occasionally as a DOP (*Gangbé* by Arnaud Robert and films by Floriane Devigne).

Rois Mages, 22', 2021

Miss Rain, 41', 2017

Deltas - Back to the Shores, 76', 2016
Premiered at Visions du Réel

Cantos, 75', 2013
Premiered at Visions du Réel

Producer's Profile

Mnemosyn films

Mnemosyn films is a Geneva based production company founded in 2016 by Charlie Petersmann and Stéphanie Argerich which aims to produce independent and creative fiction and documentary films, both locally and internationally, and defends a "cinéma d'auteur". Our latest collaboration, *The Lunar Course of My Life*, a feature length documentary by german director Valérie Bäuerlein, has been selected at Visions du Réel 2021 and we are developing *Colostrum*, a first feature by swiss director Sayaka Mizuno. Mnemosyn has also co-produced the fiction feature *Sarah joue un loup garou* by swiss director Katharina Wyss, which premiered at the Venice film festival 2017 (Settimana della critica) and the last three films by Charlie Petersmann which were screened at Visions du Réel and among which *Cantos* and *Miss Rain* received special mentions by the jury.

We, students! Nous, Étudiants !

Rafiki Fariala

Central African Republic, France, Democratic Republic of Congo

Expected Release Date: August 2021



Logline

Nestor, Aaron and Benjamin are Economics students at the University of Bangui. So am I. We met in first year, studied together, strove together and together invented ways to survive every day. We dreamed about our futures, we assembled plans. Our exams are approaching. Here we are: at a crossroads.

Synopsis

Nestor, Aaron and Benjamin are Economics students at the University of Bangui.

And so am I. We met on the benches of the University, in the first year. We studied together, struggled together, invented solutions for our daily survival together. We dreamed of what our future could be, we made plans: we could go to Cameroon to continue our studies after the degree. The exams were approaching. We passed, but not Nestor. He, who seemed to be the brightest among us, failed and had to repeat his year. Nestor is punished for his friendship with a girl that a teacher was after. The girl had to leave the university to escape the harassment.

We continue our studies, but can we remain friends? Nestor blames me for only wanting to see him to film him. He is jealous of my success. Soon it is Aaron who leaves the university residence to live with his pregnant girlfriend. She gives birth to two twins. Life moves on. The dreams of our youth fly away.

Goals at VdR-Work in Progress

We are looking for international financing and world sales.

Filming Location
Bangui, Central African Republic

Shooting Language
French, Sango

Shooting Date & Duration
2020, 6 months

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
90'

Production Company
Makongo Films (Central African Republic)

Producer(s)
Daniele Incalcaterra

Total Budget
237,102 €

Financing in Place
152,102 € (64%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Makongo Films, Central African Republic
Unité Production, France
Kiripi Films, Democratic Republic of Congo
CNC, Aide aux cinémas du monde, France

Looking for International Sales

First Feature film

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Director's Note

We, Students! follows the small group of students around Nestor and Aaron. Through them, we discover student life at the University of Bangui. The question is: what is it like to be a student in a country like the Central African Republic?

I shot the film during the end of our second year of Economic Science and across our third year. I took the time to get real scenes, found cinematic moments where what I wanted to show shine out: scenes between students and professors, lecture scenes, selling scenes, partying scenes, everyday moments, frenzied discussions, emotional moments, silent moments.

There are also more contemplative moments: shots of our university, so beautiful and at the same time so dilapidated, its geometric buildings, its derelict rooms, the mildewed walls, the water leaking from ceilings.

The architecture here inspired me. It's like a film set. Students talk across buildings, they send each other jokes. They walk up the stairs with their buckets full of water. They talk between two mosquito-netted beds. The lively faces of the students are a response to the geometry of the buildings. Poverty is everywhere, but my outlook is not at all bleak. This is where we live and we can be happy here.

I describe the university situation in Bangui with my own style and through my own point of view. An important difference is that I am a student myself, that the characters are my friends. I am part of the group I am filming.

In my first film, *Mbi na mo*, I already filmed characters that were close to me, my friends. It allowed me to create the kind of intimate scenes that demand a private relationship with my characters. It is the case here too. I see my characters as allies, partners in the dramatization of real life. We make the film together, and we discuss scenes before shooting them, which makes it possible, even in a documentary, to produce real scenes that look like fiction scenes.

In this film, I go even further by explicitly acknowledging my presence. Even if most scenes are filled with the rules of direct cinema, characters might happen to address me, to include me in a discussion. It makes sense: they are my friends, and I am part of the group.

At certain points in the film, voice-over interludes provide an accompaniment to the frames. Not to give information or explanations. But to render my point of view, my emotions. I'd like to try something I don't think I've ever seen in a film: voice-over songs, hushed, as if I were singing to myself. This comes to me naturally: I'm a singer and singing is part of my identity. When I sing softly, it's easier to find the right tone. I'm more focused.

I imagine my whole film as tackling the issue of friendship. Rather than a sociological film about Bangui students' living conditions, it's a film about the strong emotions that young men go through: hope, dreams, wishes and disappointments, the story of a group of friends in the trash-can university of Bangui.

Producers' Note

The story of the University of Bangui is the story of the whole country. Crumbling buildings, negligent officials, absent professors, destitute students tell us about the Central African Republic after years of crisis and State collapse.

But this is also, and before all else, a film about youth, and that's why we want to produce it. Rafiki is young, like his characters, like his university friends. In the middle of penury and disintegration, young people live and build dreams in spite of all. There is beauty in this contrast.

We are happy to accompany Rafiki in this new adventure. We met Rafiki during a documentary filmmaking workshop we supervised in the Central African Republic in 2017. In a country with virtually no film tradition or industry, this workshop was an opportunity for young Central Africans to make their first films. Rafiki was one of them. Even more than the others, he was driven by an enormous desire to make films. He had always wanted to direct, he was full of ideas and desires. You could feel that nothing could stop him.

We want to support his boundless exploration of new forms, for we feel that this film will be like no other. His idea of voice-over singing is a brilliant and unique one. More than that: it's Rafiki, it represents him fully. It's his means of connecting music and cinema, his two passions, that in this film unite everything he is. At some points in the film, the voice-over will be sung. Not to give information or explanations. But to better convey Rafiki's point of view and emotions. Voice-over songs, subdued, as if he were singing to himself.

Director's Profile

Born in 1997 in Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rafiki Fariala is a slammer. Under his artist name Rafiki RH2O, he brings together many fans. During the fall of 2017, he was selected to participate in the Varan workshop in Bangui. In this context, he directed his very first film *Mbi na mo - Toi et Moi*, which was screened in numerous festivals, notably at the FIPADOC in Biarritz (France), Cinémas d'Afrique in Lausanne (Switzerland) and Vues d'Afrique (Montreal). *We, Students!* is his first feature-length documentary.

Mbi na mo - Toi et Moi, 28', 2017

Producer's Profile

Makongo Films was born when Elvis Sabin Ngaibino, Daniele Incalcaterra and Boris Lojkine met at a documentary film workshop in the Central African Republic. In a country where cinema barely exists, they decided to set up, together, a production company to support the emerging generation of young directors they started training from 2017, in partnership with Alliance Française de Bangui and Ateliers Varan in Paris.

Makongo, the first film produced by the company, directed by Elvis Sabin Ngaibino, received three awards at Final Cut (Venice International Film Festival, 2019), and was selected in the International Competition for Cinéma du Réel 2020 (Paris), where it received two more awards (SCAM International Award, Public Library Award).

VdR–Rough Cut Lab

VdR–Rough Cut Lab is a workshop that presents a selection of feature length projects at a finishing stage. It is a springboard for creative documentaries that are seeking specific feedback and advice on their most up-to-date rough cut. During four very efficient workshop sessions, four rough cuts will be screened and discussed with the film teams alongside tutors (experienced editors and industry professionals). In parallel, further individual meetings also allows the project teams to connect with potential financing and distribution partners.

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About

VdR-Rough Cut Lab is meant to offer a space for projects at the editing stage. In dedicated sessions, project teams will explore various aspects of their editing and receive constructive feedback on their rough cut, by experienced editors, tutors and consultants. The idea is to support filmmakers and producers who are working on projects in their editing process in finding the best way to finish their films. In non-public sessions, each rough cut will be discussed together with the film's team, the tutors and two editors/consultants. Due to this year's adapted online format, the films will be viewed by all the participants separately before the discussion. The project teams will also be guided by our team's matchmakers in order to have individual meetings according to the needs of each project.

We are pleased to say that last year's *Last Days at Sea* by Venice Atienza premiered at Berlinale 2021 and will be presented in Latitudes, the out of competition section of Visions du Réel 2021. This year we selected once again four ambitious very different and provocative projects directed by filmmakers from Brazil, Iran, Mali, and the United States.

We wish to warmly thank our tutors for their generous work, commitment and feedback.

Editing Tutors



Jordana Berg
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Film Editor
Brazil

Jordana has been working as a film editor for over 25 years, having edited more than 90 films. She worked for 20 years in collaboration with Eduardo Coutinho, considered the most important Brazilian filmmaker of the 20th century. She has taught masterclasses in Canada, France, the U.S., Argentina, Mexico, and Uruguay. She edited *Abigail*, which premiered at The Director's Fortnight, Cannes 2016. Today she works in Brasil, Uruguay, Argentina, Portugal and Mexico. She was one of the editors of the Oscar 2020 nominated documentary *The Edge of Democracy* by Petra Costa and on the same year *Cine Morocco* by Ricardo Calil. She has just finished the new hybrid film *Eami* by paraguayan director Paz Encina and worked as a chief editor for a Netflix series *John of God, Cure and Crime*. Now she is starting to edit the new feature doc by Petra Costa and also working at the Kenyan film *Testament* by Zippy Kimundu and Meena Nanji. She is a member of the Academy of Sciences and Arts and a member of Rough Cut Service as an editing consultant. Also as a consultant, she was the 2020 mentor for Hot Docs and Panelist for Sundance 2020.



Yaël Bitton
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Editor, writer, editing and story consultant
Rough Cut Service, HEAD
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Yaël Bitton is a documentary film editor, writer, story consultant, and director. She has been making films for over 25 years and pursues collaborations with filmmakers around the world. Additionally to her editor's endeavors, she works as mentor, editing and story consultant independently, as well as for Rough Cut Service, Doc Montevideo, Circle, Visions du Réel, Dok Incubator, Ex Oriente, Doc Aviv, and Doc Point. She has been working as an editing tutor at the HEAD/Cinéma du Réel in Geneva since 2008. Recently she was invited to be a member of The Oscars Academy in the documentary branch.

Tutors



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In 2017 she created WALDEN, a space for documentary creation. She has been a member of the World Cinema Fund (Berlinale) since 2011, and works as a tutor for Eurodoc, Torino Film Lab, Visions du Réel, DocMontevideo and DocSP. Since 2000, she teaches documentary seminars and workshops internationally: DocNomads, DocLisboa, Arché, Lisbondocs (Portugal); Proimágenes (Colombia); UNTREF, Di Tella University (Buenos Aires); EICTV (Cuba); DocsDF, CCC (México); EDOC, Flacso (Ecuador); Talentdoc (Bolivia); Chiledoc, AricaLab, Frontera Sur (Chile); DocsBarcelona, Pompeu Fabra University (Barcelona); Altos de Chavón (República Dominicana); Steps (Africa), DocumentaMadrid, DocTV, Ibermedia. She created the Filmic Portrait Lab (2009-2013) and "Docs in progress" (2011) produced by PlayDoc; "Landscape and Memory workshop" (2019), produced by AricaLab; "From the River" (2018) funded by Prince Claus Foundation and Goethe Institute. She produced films like *La Terra Habitada* (A. Sanmartí, Visions du Réel 2009), *Cuchillo de palo* (R. Costa, Berlinale 2010), *Salóme* (Y. Roca, Nordisk Panorama 2014, Best Film Award), *Oleg y las raras artes* (A. Duque, Rotterdam 2015); *Amanecer* (C. Torres, FICCI 2018, Best Film Award).



Paolo Benzi
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Film producer
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Paolo Benzi lives and works in Italy. He's the founder of the Italian independent film company Okta Film. Among the films produced: *L'estate di Giacomo* (*Summer of Giacomo*) by Alessandro Comodin (Italy/France/Belgium, 2011), *No Peace Without War* by Lorenzo Castore and Adam Cohen (Germany/Italy, 2012), *Redemption* by Miguel Gomes (Portugal/France/Germany/Italy, 2013), *La scuola d'estate* (*The Summer School*) by Jacopo Quadri (Italy, 2014), *The Other Side* by Roberto Minervini (France/Italy, 2015), *I tempi felici verranno presto* (*Happy Time Will Come Soon*) by Alessandro Comodin (Italy/France, 2016), *La consegna* (*The Delivery*) by Suranga D. Katugampala (Italy, 2017), *Così in Terra* (*As It Is On Earth*) by Paolo Santolini (Italy, 2018), *What you Gonna Do when The Worlds's on Fire?* by Roberto Minervini (Italy/US/France, 2018), *Semina il vento* (*Sow The Wind*) by Danilo Caputo (Italy/France/Greece, 2020) and *Il migliore* (*The Natural*) by Paolo Santolini (Italy, 2021) He's currently producing *Il giardino di Olga* (*Olga's Garden*) by Alessandro Comodin (Italy/France/Belgium), *This Earth* by Emmanuelle Démoris (Italy/France), *The Damned* by Roberto Minervini (Italy/US) and *Keys to Italy* by Andrew Fierberg (Italy/US).



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Film critic, artistic co-director
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Graduated from Moscow University, working as film critic for 35 years, writing in academic film art journals and newspapers. She is a film critic, film archive researcher, the author/director/producer of historical documentaries. FIPRESCI (International film press Organization) member. She works independently at the moment and in close collaboration with Flahertiana International Documentary Film Festival as artistic co-director and analyst. The artistic/research activity includes more than 50 documentaries about human events and cinema innovations of last century. The writer of the literature series "The venders of Ghosts" in five experimental novels, where the history of cinema art is a main plot.



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Festival programmer, film lecturer, critic and film director. Born in former Yugoslavia, she lives in Utrecht/The Netherlands. She is the Head of the Documentary Competition at the biggest South East European festival Sarajevo FF. 11 years ago she initiated in Sarajevo and coheads Docu Rough Cut Boutique and is in charge of Last Stop Trieste for 7 years. At the IDFA Amsterdam she takes part in the competition selection. She is also part of the selection of the Doha Film Fund. She is a mentor at The Master of Film at The Netherlands' Film and TV Academy Amsterdam. She is a film mentor and consultant at several international workshops/pitching sessions in Europe and Asia. Since 2009, she is the artistic director of a festival in The Hague Eastern Neighbours that focuses on Eastern European cinema. She served at more than 50 juries at film festivals around the world (a.o. Joris Ivens Jury at IDFA, Hot Docs Toronto, CPH Dox, Moscow IFF, Cracow, Nordic Panorama...etc)

I Will Be There Every Single Night

Toda Noite Estarei Lá

Tati Franklin, Suellen Vasconcelos
Brazil
Expected Release Date: November 2021



Logline

After suffering a transphobic physical assault in the church she used to attend, Mel Rosário, a 55-year-old evangelical trans woman bears the pain and costs of the lawsuits involving the case and claims her rights by making protests around the city. Watched by the cameras of business people and transphobic neighbors, threatened with death on the Internet, Mel insists on exposing herself, to be seen and, thus, staying alive.

Synopsis

Every day, Mel Rosário opens the doors of her modest beauty salon, located downtown, to work. After work it's time to go to the church to thank God. Mel defines herself as a "human rights activist."

After suffering a transphobic physical assault in the church she used to attend, she bears the pain and costs of the lawsuits involving the case and claims her rights by protesting in front of the church and writing her "message" on the walls around the city.

The beauty salon, which was once visited by many church members, no longer pays the bills with the few remaining customers. While fighting for her rights, in the hope of being able to improve her life, she dreams about getting a car so she can do some delivery services and earn extra money.

Based on a device that invests in the self-fictionalization of this dream, Mel builds new meanings of the present and appropriates the narrative she would like to live. She re-elaborates the possible dreams for a transsexual woman in the stigmatizing and unhealthy context of (de)constructing trans lives in Brazil.

Goals at VdR-Rough Cut Lab

We are really looking forward to feedback being able to help us find a fair balance between aesthetics and storytelling. At the same time, we are also looking for commercial partners for distribution and world sales.

Filming Location
Brazil (State of Espírito Santo)

Shooting Language
Portuguese

Shooting Date & Duration
2018 - 2021

Shooting Format
4K

Expected Runtime
75' / 52'

Production Company
Pai Grande Filmes (Brazil)

Producer(s)
Thiago Moulin

Total Budget
50.000 €

Financing in Place
50.000 € (100%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Secretaria de Cultura do Estado do Espírito Santo (Espírito Santo State Department of Culture), Brazil
Agência Nacional do Cinema - Ancine (National Cinema Agency), Brazil

Looking for International Sales

First Feature film

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Director's Note

We started filming with a big crew, tracking the development of the legal proceedings and the case with the church, but throughout the approach with the protagonist we identified the need to film with a smaller team, in a more intimate way, observing and recording the small movements of the survival, the dreams, the plans and the affections of Mel Rosário.

At the same time that we show a side of Mel as a victim and an example of that ultra-right reactionary wave that invests in a logic of violence against minorities, we also accompany the counterpoint in the possibility of Mel's existence.

The understanding of the ethical widening of the boundary between the real and the imaginary was crucial to understand which film to follow.

As filmmakers, it is important for us to tell stories that question the imposed reality - which does not always represent us - and (re)produce other forms of possible lives than those that enclose, kill and oppress some lives instead of privileged others. Based on a device that invests in self-fictionalization, the proposal for Mel to live in the film, a dream she can't materialise in real life, so she can tell the story she wants about herself, is a way of reframing her life-story and taking back territory for those who daily exchange dreams for surviving.

When we had already decided on the device, the strategy in the shoot was to be as natural as possible, blurring the boundaries between the recording of reality and the invention/intervention of the reality that we built with the protagonist.

In the montage, we propose that, as staging and spontaneity intersect, what is clear is the real drama outside the play of representations. In the end, the documentary is this staging of the real that becomes the real itself, the real of the filming. The outcome is the continuation of life.

Producers' Note

This film is not just a good story with a good character. It is, first of all, a necessary film. A portrait of 2020 Brazil, which goes through a historical period in which physical and verbal violence against minorities have found an echo in a dangerous global ultra-right reactionary wave. In this scenario, films with the approach proposed by Tati Franklin and Suellen Vasconcelos can be powerful alternatives to offer another space for reflection - dealing with religion and gender freedom with the respect that these issues deserve.

We participated in the Doc Brasil Meeting category of Brasil CineMundi in the pre-production phase in 2018, when we made important connections that took us, in the same year, to DocSP and, in 2019, to Walden Residences. These meetings raised the powers of the project and we have moved forward on fundamental issues to take us where we are with the film today.

As we have 100% of production's budget financed, we are at this point looking for partners for distribution and sales (both in the Brazilian and international markets) while we keep on the effort of making our film reach the screens of major world film festivals.

Director's Profile

Tati Franklin, 28, graduated in Cinema and Audiovisual from the Federal University of Espírito Santo. She works as a filmmaker on Filmes Fritos, an independent production company in Vitória-ES. In 2017, she directed and edited the short film *Transvivo*, which received a popular jury award for Best Film at the 24th Vitória Film Festival, was nominated for the Brazilian Film Grand Prix (2018) and licensed by Canal Brasil. *I Will Be There Every Single Night* is her first feature documentary as a director, financed by SECULT-ES and Ancine / FSA.

Faz Vinte Anos (It Has Been Twenty Years), 6', 2020
Best Edition Award at the 15 Independent Production Exhibition of ABD Capixaba

Transvivo (Transcend), 20', 2017
Premiered at (a selection) Brazilian Cinema Grand Prix in the category Documentary Short (2019), Best Film by the Popular Jury of the 3rd DIGO International Festival of Sexual Diversity, etc.

Insular, 15', 2015
Premiered at (a selection) Best Film Award in the Technical Jury category at the Cine Colorado Festival-Cariacica / ES, Best Film Award at Mostra Foco Capixaba by the critic workshop of the 22nd Festival de Vitória / ES Cinema, etc.

Casa Da Vovo Totonha (Gramma Totonha's House), 2', 2015
Premiered at 19th FCBU Brazilian Festival of University Cinema

Suellen Vasconcelos holds a master's degree in Education (UERJ) and a bachelor's degree in Radio and TV (Faesa). Curator of the Vitória Film Festival and Independent Production Exhibition promoted by ABD Capixaba. Filmmaker on Filmes Fritos, an independent producer in Vitória-ES, she is currently directing her first feature documentary.

Transvivo (Transcend), 20', 2017

Espelho (Mirror), 26', 2006

Estrangeiros (Foreigners), 15', 2004

Producer's Profile

Pai Grande Filmes

The company was born from a partnership started in Luanda (Angola) in 2012 and since then has maintained a constant production of socially relevant content. Our short films have already been screened at important world cinema places, such as the Habana Film Festival, the DocsMX and the Rio de Janeiro International Short Film Festival, one of them coming to appear as a finalist of the Brazilian Cinema Grand Prix in the short documentary category. We truly believe documentaries can change people, who in turn can change the world.

Silent Beauty

Jasmin López
United States, Mexico
Expected Release Date: January 2022



Logline

Silent Beauty is an autobiographical exploration of my family's history with child sexual abuse and a culture of silence.

Synopsis

Silent Beauty is a personal documentary that follows me, Jasmin López, as I work to heal from child sexual abuse I endured at the hands of my grandfather, Gilberto, almost thirty years ago. In the process of sharing my own trauma with my large family, I learn that generations of children in my family were victims of the same abuse. Told from my own perspective, *Silent Beauty* is a film about confronting and accepting difficult truths while finding beauty in the process.

Goals at VdR-Rough Cut Lab

I am looking for rough cut feedback, international financing, and world sales.

Filming Location
United States, Mexico, Malta

Shooting Language
English, Spanish

Shooting Date & Duration
2018 - 2021, 8 months

Shooting Format
4K / super 8 / mini dv / mobile phone / photographs

Expected Runtime
90'

Production Company
Corazon Oscuro Productions, United States

Producer(s)
Jasmin López

Total Budget
666,240 €

Financing in Place
474,854 € (71%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Southern Documentary Fund, United States
Tribeca Film Institute, United States
Chicken & Egg Pictures, United States
Sundance Institute, United States
Creative Capital, United States
Black Public Media, United States
Firelight Media, United States
Latino Public Broadcasting, United States
ITVS, United States

Looking for International Sales

First Feature film

Contact

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Director's Note

My grandmother was fascinated with sound. She consistently recorded the soundscape of our home on an old cassette tape recorder, unaware of her influence on my young mind. This is how I learned to appreciate sound and our story in an organic yet experimental manner.

After discovering and managing a photo and radio journalism training program for youth in Mexico, I was inspired to become a radio journalist myself – documenting the lives of others through sound. Since losing some of my hearing four years ago, I began to consider the visual as a way to tell stories. I decided to begin with my own.

I tell my story in a non-linear fashion to reflect the journey of healing from trauma, where I am constantly suspended between old memories and the desire to move on. The visual materials include archival family photos, super 8 family footage, vérité, and dream-like reconstructed sequences. The film's experimental sound design incorporates my grandmother's old cassette recordings, my narration, audio interviews, recorded conversations, and vintage recordings of Latin American boleros. The texture and rhythmic editing of the sound mirrors the visual world of the film and mimics the quality of traumatic memories and my own hearing loss. The layering of sound enhances the visuals creating a multi-textured conversation between the past and the present.

As a woman of color and a survivor, I draw inspiration from techniques like Cecilia Aldarondo's use of texture and process in *Memories of a Penitent Heart*; Rita Piffer's poetic approach in *Ghost Syndrome*; Azadeh Navai's use of light and simple potent imagery in *Remembering the Pentagons*; and Tatiana Huevo's ability to find and create beauty out of so much pain in *The Tiniest Place*.

My film is rooted in memory and interspersed with dreamlike reconstructions from Gilberto's childhood, as well as my own. They tell the story of darkness and beauty in a way that reflects my own interpretation of the darkness and light in my childhood home.

My grandfather filmed the majority of the archival footage, depicting the perfect, happy family life. To contrast this, I reconfigure the film archive to tell my truth. Combined with the present day footage and the disembodied sounds of my grandmother's cassette tape recordings, *Silent Beauty* is representative of a survivor's experience: the reclaiming of a story.

Producers' Note

I am the director, producer, and protagonist of this film. I am motivated to tell this story for my own personal healing but also to reach those with similar experiences, and those not familiar with this topic. We are applying for grant funds in the US to help us complete production this year. We have secured a TV broadcaster in the US but are looking for a premiere outside of the US in early 2022.

Director's Profile

Jasmin Mara López is a journalist, audio producer, and filmmaker. Born in the United States, with familial roots in México, her childhood was affected by issues experienced on both sides of the United States - México border. This instilled in her a strong passion for immigrant rights, youth empowerment, and social change. Jasmin founded Project Luz, which taught Mexican youth to document stories from their communities. She received the Society of Professional Journalists' Excellence in Journalism Award in the US for her audio documentary *Deadly Divide: Migrant Death on the Border*, and has garnered support for *Silent Beauty* from organizations like The Southern Documentary Fund, Tribeca Film Institute, Chicken & Egg Pictures, Sundance Institute, Creative Capital, Black Public Media, Firelight Media, Latino Public Broadcasting, and ITVS.

Producer's Profile
Corazon Oscuro Productions

Corazon Oscuro Productions is based in New Orleans, Louisiana and is currently only working on *Silent Beauty*.

Silent House

Khaaneh Khamoush

Farnaz Jurabchian, Mohammadreza Jurabchian
Iran, Philippines
Expected Release Date: October 2021



Logline

Silent House explores pre and post-revolutionary Iran through a traditional upper middle class family living in an ancestral house in Tehran. Through the decades, the family's struggles and dreams have intersected with the country's social and political upheavals. Time is charted from the 1979 revolution to the present through a rich collection of analogue and digital home videos dug from the vault of the family's archives, and obsessively continued by its youngest living members – sibling filmmakers Farnaz and Mohammadreza.

Synopsis

Silent House is the story of three generations of an Iranian family living in a hundred-year-old house that once belonged to the fourth wife of Reza Shah (the Shah of Iran 1925-1941). Through archival family footage narrativized with contemporary images, the two filmmakers, my brother and I, portray the family's evolution for over 40 years, from the 1979 Islamic Revolution until the present time. We follow each member deep into the center of their joys and sorrows, revealing a family that is as complicated and volatile as our country, Iran. With the house itself as an anchor, our family's story becomes a mirror for society and our house a metaphor for Iran.

As the third generation, we have witnessed how gradually our mother lost her hope, hindered in her achievements by patriarchal customs and expectations. We have witnessed how our grandmother was forced into a life of oppression, against her own will, which was common for women of her time. We bear testimony to our uncle who was traumatized by his experience of going into self-exile. Another uncle was sent to the Iran-Iraq war due to forced military service in Iran. Through photographs, Super 8 footage, and analogue home movies, the film flashbacks to the joyful and most striking moments of our family's lives, going back in history and evoking memories of the past to bring back the spirit of the house. Through the images we take today, we trace this past left and interrogate its imprints in what remains – in the house and in our lives.

Goals at VdR-Rough Cut Lab

After years of working creatively on our own, we feel ready to share parts of the film which is currently in early post-production. We will be glad to get feedback and advice on how to shape the film's narrative, as well as production advice to advance the current stage toward completion. We hope to find opportunities and partners to secure funds and support for post-production and international sales.

Filming Location

Iran

Shooting Language

Persian

Shooting Date & Duration

2016 - 2020

Shooting Format

HD

Expected Runtime

85'

Production Company

Eli Image (Iran), Cinema in Incomplete (Philippines)

Producer(s)

Elaheh Nobakht, Jewel Maranan

Total Budget

163,165 €

Financing in Place

65,266 € (40%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

Al Jazeera Media Network, Qatar
Eli Image, Iran
NFB assistant fund for emerging filmmakers, Canada
Fundraising from Iranian New Media platform (non-governmental organization), Iran
We are working with an international sales agent, Taskovski Films, United Kingdom

Looking for International Sales

First Feature film

Contact

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Director's Note

I emigrated to Canada in 2004 to study cinema there. When I was in Canada, I realized how little people know about Iran. I realized most people only know about my country through the news. However, the reality of what is seen in the news is very different from what we live in Iran. For instance, the Islamic revolution, war, sanctions and strikes are just the headlines that everybody gets through the news but we live with them. They are a part of our lives. Sometimes our everyday lives. In 2011, I decided to go back to Iran to make my thesis film about my childhood house. Since then my brother and I have been filming our family.

Our mother and father had a very happy marriage. However our mother was a revolutionary and our father was against any revolution. I was 9 years old and my brother was 4 when our father drowned in the sea. Our mother, as a single woman who lost her husband young, suffered considerable hardship. Due to the economic situation of the family our mother decided to sell everything and move to her father's house.

Our lives changed when my brother and I, with our mother, moved into this one-hundred-year-old mansion after our grandfather's death in 1995, where our grandmother lived with her son. We settled on the second floor. Very soon, the house and its events began to affect our life. We bore the mark of the great political and economic tension after the 1979 Islamic revolution and the traumatized people living in the house who lost their hopes.

Lost hope, dramatic fate, suffering and violated rights of oppressed people are what we, my brother and I have witnessed for many years. But will this silent house keep us silent too? By telling our family's story, we try to break this silence and to give voice.

We juxtapose the daily life of these characters that live in the house with the political backdrop of the Islamic Revolution. In contrast to the everyday life of the characters, the mundane moments in the house evoke memories of past and present. Archival and personal footage will transport us in a different place in time covering major historical events, while personal home movie footage will offer a personal glimpse into how the revolution affected a family.

The film's nonlinear narrative unfolds through three different time spans. One is the time that has been captured and frozen in the historical archives, Mini DVs, and 8mm footage. The other one is the real and everyday life of the characters. And the present time which is revealed through my voice-over narration uncover our motivation to film.

Producers' Note

Elaheh Nobakht

As the producer of my film company Eli Image in Tehran, and the producer and investor of the film *Silent House*, I have made the commitment to the sibling filmmakers Farnaz and Mohammadreza Jurabchian.

This decision was influenced by their talent and commitment to their project, but also after reviewing the international success of their previous films on various platforms like Hot Docs premiere.

I strongly feel this film has great international potential. We are connecting with Canadian funders such as NFB, National Film Board of Canada and Canadian television networks who have already expressed their interest in the project. We are in the early stage of editing our rough cut and we do hope that with the help of international funds we will be able to finish this film.

Jewel Maranan

It is a challenge and a delight to board the *Silent House* team and collaborate with the filmmakers not only to secure its completion but to reach the film's best form. *Silent House* will be the second film I'm working on as an Iran-Philippine collaboration – the first one being the documentary *The Silhouettes* which premiered and won a Special Mention in the International Competition of Visions du Réel 2020. *Silent House* is a very personal film that provides us with a looking glass into Iranian history, the cycle and decay of family, youth, ageing and impermanence. At the same time, this film is a testament to the dimensions of the moving and still image that swells in the passing of time, waiting to be owned by every new generation that seeks meaning in it.

Director's Profile

Born in Tehran, Iran, Farnaz Jurabchian is an independent filmmaker & writer currently based in Tehran. She received her BFA in Cinema from the Melhoppenheim School of Cinema, Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, and her BA in French Literature from Tehran University.

Born in Tehran, Iran, Mohammadreza Jurabchian is an independent filmmaker & photographer currently based in Tehran. He received his BFA in photography from the Faculty of Art and Architecture of Azad University. Together, these sibling filmmakers made several "Award-winning" short films and documentaries that have been presented in a number of international festivals worldwide.

Overruled, 53', 2016

Premiered at 2016 Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival

Final Encore, 18', 2013

Premiered at Aviff Cannes Art Film Festival, Cannes, France

The Last Image of a Memory, 18', 2012

Premiered at Tehran Short Film Festival, Tehran, 2012

Producer's Profile

Eli Image

Elaheh Nobakht is one of the most active women in the Iranian Cinema industry. Producer of *Beloved*, selected at IDFA, Berlinale and awarded best film by the audience in HotDocs 2019. Co-producer of *Holy Bread* selected in IDFA mid-length competition 2020. She is an active member of the Iranian Producers Association (IPA) and a member of the Iranian documentary producer Association.

Cinema in Incomplete

Jewel Maranan is a documentary filmmaker and producer whose creative documentaries explore how history inches through ordinary life. She is the founder of Cinema Incomplete, a film production and distribution outfit with productions in the Asian region, and co-founder of the newly established Filipino Documentary Society. Her films and initiatives have received support from Sundance, visions sud est, Asian Network of Documentary, Ford Foundation, Doha Film Institute, IDFA Bertha Fund, Purin Foundation and Movies That Matter among others.

Taamaden

Seydou Cissé

France, Cameroon, Belgium, South Africa
Expected Release Date: September 2021



Logline

Ouloulou, Baldé and Doucouré, young migrants from West Africa lead us through the realm of African spirituality in a world of modern technology where the cell phone has become a genuine mobile talisman.

Synopsis

Ouloulou, Baldé and Doucouré are three young migrants from West Africa who have recently arrived in Valencia, Spain. They tell how they crossed the Mediterranean Sea assisted by their marabout-shamans who recommended prayers, rituals and offerings.

Having set up in Valencia, they stay in contact with their marabouts via smartphone which has become essential for spiritual connection, in the hopes that their spiritual guide will continue to improve their living conditions.

In Mali, Bakary who has already made an unsuccessful attempt to cross, prepares for a new trip under his marabout's watchful eye as well.

These young men lead us through the realm of African spirituality in a world of modern technology where the cell phone has become a genuine mobile talisman.

Goals at VdR-Rough Cut Lab

We are stepping into an important phase in the editing : that of sharing. Our participation at VdR-Industry is primarily motivated by our need for feedback (we have to edit a 90' and 52'). We are keen to find world sales, distributors, Festival programmers, etc.

Filming Location

Mali, Espagne

Shooting Language

English, Spanish, French, Wolof, Bambara

Shooting Date & Duration

February 2020, 10 days, June 2020, 20 days

Shooting Format

HD

Expected Runtime

90' / 52'

Production Company

Les Films du Bilboquet (France), Tara Group Cinema (Cameroon), STEP (South Africa), Neon Rouge (Belgique)

Producer(s)

Eugénie Michel Villette, Dieudonné Alaka, Don Hedkins, Aurélien Bodinaux

Total Budget

253,911 €

Financing in Place

222,582 € (88%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

CNC, France
Pictanovo, France
Fresnoy, France
Procirep/Angoa, France
France 3 Hauts-de-France
STEP, South Africa
OIF with ACP bonus, Cameroun

Looking for International Sales

First Feature film

Contact

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Eugénie Michel Villette
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Dieudonné Alaka
Producer
Tara Group
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directiontaragroup@gmail.com



Director's Note

The origin of this film can be found in a subject that has been dear to me for a long time, namely belief, but above all in a place which has become a meeting place, the Plaza del Tossal, in Valencia. I went there for the first time in 2010. It is the starting point of my film, the privileged place of its shooting. It's a place of transition for these men I met there: it's basically an open space, receptive, welcoming as I want my film to be. These migrants, these refugees, these asylum seekers, pass there, wait there, but they are unlikely to stay there. This film will be devoted to their journey, to the inner strength that drives them to travel, because I prefer to say that they are Travelers, in Bambara's language "Taamaden".

Besides their origins or their sometimes compatible aspirations, two similarities caught my attention and constituted the narrative framework of my film project. Those I know in Valencia all use a smartphone. The smartphone is for the power of the image it captures and saves, and for the link it allows with beliefs from another continent, a major object. For my part, I consider it to have become a gri-gri. Its very existence, its durability, make visible the hardships it has gone through. In this, it is almost an object of transfer, an extension of those migrants who have become my friends: it is one of them. And the word it peddles from West Africa, that of the marabouts, makes it a magical object, capable of transmitting through the rituals claimed all the strength of belief, or faith. In my opinion, it is in this belief, in the magical powers of the marabouts, that their incredible strength lies in the face of the uncertainties of the journey, of their future, of their entire lives. They have all experienced a traumatic Mediterranean crossing. The sea appears as an even more uncrossable border than the others. Frightening, it becomes hallucinogenic due to hunger and thirst: some have told me about animals, cars, roads that they had imagined or observed on the surface of the water. The Mediterranean calls for a different regime of images, which will tip the film into migrants' nightmares, between hallucinations and real images. The vastness of blue, gray, sometimes choppy, in shots starting from a beach on the European side to switch, thanks to the addition of 3D effects, or datamoshing.

I want my approach to the migration issue, which is so broad, so sensitive, so publicized, to be personal because it resonates with my own history, to be individual because the difference must be reduced by the encounter. I would also like it to reflect, thanks to the tools I know and use in my creations over the past ten years, on the complexity of these painful tales with unexplained shadowy sides, where only magic can help accept reality.

Producers' Note

Taamaden was launched via Generation Africa: a collection of 30 films by African directors about migration. This collection is supported by Steps program. *Taamaden* achieves an international dimension via our partner Steps which plans to support the distribution of the collection with a campaign to generate impact. The goal is to assist distribution through the active engagement of partners that support the causes and issues in the films. As a result, all 30 films in the collection will benefit from distribution agreements under negotiation on a dedicated platform hosted by European broadcasters. Discussion is also underway with international festivals. France 3 Hauts-de-France signed a broadcast agreement. In France, we also have received support from the Centre National du Cinéma, Procirep Angoa fund, and Pictanovo. Negotiation of a broadcasting agreement with TV5 Monde is underway. On the international scene, production support is provided by OIF and Steps. Initial shooting plans were cancelled due to the global pandemic. We have absorbed the financial loss and postponed shooting until after lockdown. The material we are working with is dense and eclectic. We hope to have sufficient editing time to make the choices required. To establish the pace of the film will also be a challenge because we have more images to edit than the scenario suggested, which was not included in the initial budget.

Our ambition for the film has grown. We aim to be selected in leading European and African festivals. We are now requesting funding from the Doha Film Institute Fund and Bertha Fund to finalize editing, to support post-production. We hope to be able to continue post-production under optimal conditions and to give the film the care and promotion it deserves.

Director's Profile

Seydou Cissé is a graduate of the Fresnoy-Studio National Contemporary Art (France) and the Conservatory of Arts and Metiers in Bamako. Originally from Mali, his work is largely influenced by the country's ancestral culture, its traditions, its superstitions, but also the various changes that animism has undergone in contact with other cultures. In his productions, he mixes temporalities and invites a journey into the universe of textures and colors, understood as elements to be tamed. For this, he uses different techniques and supports, by making the material the structuring element of many of his works. Listening to the questions posed by traditional African society and the mysteries linked to the occult sciences, his works give a central place to nature and to the practices employed by man to connect with the mystical world. Seydou is a painter, video artist and a filmmaker.

Producer's Profile Les Films du Bilboquet

Les Films du Bilboquet, based in Roubaix, France, produces films believing that, whatever the subject matter, whatever the genre required, the most important thing is the purpose for which the film is made, with cinematographic creativity serving as a means by which certain films lead to an evolution in cinema.

Tara Group Cinema

Tara Group Cinema is a production company, based in Cameroon, which produces African films and leads the workshop Yaounde Film Lab and a Master of cinema in Yaounde University.

VdR–Film Market

The VdR–Film Market, formerly known as the Media Library, is an online platform that offers key industry professionals the opportunity to view a selection of +500 new creative documentaries with international potential.

About



14 April - 25 July 2021

The VdR-Film Market, formerly known as the Media Library, is an online platform that includes a selection of +500 new creative documentaries with international potential. It groups Visions du Réel 2021's Official selection, as well as almost 400 new films from 2020 and 2021, proposed by our own selection committee, partner institutions, sales agents and producers. The purpose of the Film Market is to facilitate exchanges, purchases and potential sales of new films. It provides an opportunity for the selected films to be promoted and sold by getting the attention of key accredited professionals (festival programmers, buyers, etc).

VdR-Film Market changes its format this year in order to welcome you online, in a clear and user-friendly section of our brand new website. This new format allows us to provide extra visibility for the films by giving each one its own web page on Visions du Réel's website.

This year we are also glad to welcome some new partners in the VdR-Film Market and to offer them a personal space in order to present their actual line-up.

The Film Market is open to accredited professionals only (Please note that, as a result of this, the premiere status of the Film Market films does not change). It will be made available online throughout the entire duration of the festival as well as for the three following months.

www.visionsdureel.ch/en/film-market-catalogue/2021

Partners

Academy of Media Arts Cologne
 Andana Films
 C&Co
 Chiledoc
 DOK Leipzig
 East Silver
 German Films
 National Film Centre of Latvia
 Sixpack Film
 Taiwan Docs
 Taskovski Films
 The Party Film Sales
 Wallonie-Bruxelles Images

Opening Scenes Lab

Opening Scenes Lab is a tailor-made programme for the 16 filmmakers who have their first short film or student film presented as world or international premieres in the Official Selection of Visions du Réel 2021. It offers the filmmakers the opportunity to get better acquainted with the international market and its decision makers.

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About Opening Scenes Lab

Tutors

7000tours/min

Contraindre

Don't Hesitate to Come for a Visit, Mom

Drafted

Galb'Echaouf

How to Order Online

Kalsubai

Kind Regards From the Anthropocene

Lillian Finds the Zombies

Not Over Yet

Scylos

Seeking Aline

Soraya Luna

The Disappearance of Tom R.

The Hut Made of Stone

About

Opening Scenes Lab is a special programme for the 16 filmmakers invited to the Opening Scenes section of the festival, dedicated to first short films or student films, presented as world or international premieres.

This tailor made programme offers the filmmakers the opportunity to get better acquainted with the international market for documentaries and its decision makers, to look for distribution for their short film as well as to meet potential partners for their next projects. The group of filmmakers is invited to participate both online and on-site (if they can join us) to a specific program of activities including talks and meetings with their tutors and a speed-dating with invited producers who are interested in meeting new talents.

The 16 directors will participate at VdR-Industry 2021 and it is possible to meet all these new talents on our online platform.

Tutors



Wouter Jansen
info@squareeyesfilm.com

CEO
Square Eyes
Austria
www.squareeyesfilm.com

Wouter Jansen is the owner of the sales and festival distribution company Square Eyes. He worked as the head of programming at the Go Short - International Film Festival during the first 10 editions. In 2013 he started Some Shorts, which changed to Square Eyes in 2019, which specializes in having outstanding non-mainstream films find the audience and recognition they deserve. With Square Eyes, Wouter represents bold, author-driven features and shorts, and collaborates closely with the filmmakers to devise bespoke festival distribution and sales strategies. This has resulted in a small catalogue of films premiering at prestigious festivals and winning multiple awards over the last few years like main prizes at Cannes, TIFF, Berlin, Locarno and Clermont-Ferrand.

Wouter has been giving lectures at schools like Le Fresnoy, HEAD Geneva and Netherlands Film Academy as well as moderating and leading workshops at festivals like IDFA, Locarno, True/False, Winterthur, VIS Vienna Shorts and others. He is a Berlinale Talents alumni.



Luciano Barisone
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Documentary Consultant
Italy

Cinéclub organiser, journalist and film critic (Filmcritica, Cineforum, Duellanti, La Stampa, Il Manifesto), in 1990 Luciano Barisone founded the magazine Panoramiques, and stayed in charge until 2010. He is the author of monographs on Catherine Breillat, Robert Guédiguian, Clint Eastwood, Naomi Kawase, Nicolas Philibert, Les Films d'Ici and Sydney Pollack. Between 1997 and 2010, he collaborated with several international film festivals, including Locarno and Venice. In 2002, he created the Infinity Festival in Alba and was the director of the festival up until 2007. He joined the Festival dei Popoli in Florence as artistic director between 2008 and 2010. In 2011 he went on to become the Artistic Director of Visions du Réel, up until 2017. He currently works as an artistic producer and consultant for various markets and international film festivals.



Teboho Edkins
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Filmmaker
South Africa, Germany

Born in Tennessee, USA in 1980, Teboho Edkins grew up in Lesotho and South Africa and now lives in Cape Town and Berlin. He studied photography and fine art at the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town and film at Le Fresnoy in Tourcoing, France. He then took a directing degree at the German Film and Television Academy in Berlin. His films have screened at over 400 festivals and have also been presented in group and solo exhibitions, including at the Centre Pompidou, the Tate Modern and the Haus der Kulturen der Welt. His last film *Days of Cannibalism* premiered in Berlinale Panorama 2020. His filmography includes: *Ask Me I'm Positive* (2004), *Looking Good · True Love* (2005), *Gangster Project 1* (2007), *Kinshasa 2.0* (2008), *Thato · Gangster Project* (2011), *Gangster Backstage* (2013), *Coming of Age, Generation* (2015), *Initiation* (2016), *I am Sheriff* (2017).

Participants



Daouya Ferial Achir
feriel.achir@gmail.com

7000tours/min, 13'
France, Algeria, 2020
World Premiere

Daouya Ferial Achir is native of Algiers and she spent her childhood playing with a VHS camera with the help of her bigger brother. After attending sociology courses in 2013, she also started taking courses in photography and different workshops such as photojournalism, history of art and through that she rediscovered her love for visual arts. She started experimenting in photography and videography and her work is mainly based on individual portraits and storytelling.

Currently Working On...

I am currently working on a docufiction, the story is mainly based on a boat and his owner.

Upcoming Project

I am currently working on a new project, a docufiction because I feel the need to make it this way, in other words there are some parts of the story that for me can't only be based on what happens in the reality. I am also looking for good locations in order to tell the story with an interesting frame, visually speaking, but also to connect the facts of the story in a real place where my protagonists had their own experiences. I don't feel the urge to start working on the screenwriting, I think it would be best for me to create a deep connection with every single detail first and work on my project note to have a better understanding of the story and how it should be told.



Lucas Ackermann
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Kind Regards From the Anthropocene, 14'
Switzerland, 2021
World Premiere

Lucas Ackermann was born in 1997. After attending the Propädeutikum at Zurich University of the Arts, he graduated from Lucerne University of Applied Sciences in 2020 with a BA in Directing. His films range from documentaries to experimental and often incorporate grotesque imagery and existential topics.

Currently Working On...

After writing several scripts for short films, I am currently working on my first feature length script. A chamber dramedy. The overarching topic of this project is: "borders of human existence".

Upcoming Project

Echokammer (WT), approx. 30 min, an experimental documentary. The project is co-written by Manuel Troxler. This film aims to depict an individual's dissociation on right wing image boards. Our motivation comes from the sense of losing a good amount of dear people to weird and anti democratic beliefs.



Anna Artemyeva
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Don't Hesitate to Come for a Visit, Mom, 12'
Belgium, Hungary, Portugal, Russia, 2020
International Premiere

She was born in Moscow. She graduated as a cinematographer and as director of the animation at VGIK (Russia). Anna starts doing her masters at DocNomads documentary directing program 2019. Her diploma film *Once upon a time there lived a mother* was selected at more than 50 festivals around the world and was awarded more than 25 times. In collaboration with the famous Russian director Elena Laskaki as a cinematographer and an animator, Anna made 15 documentary films.

Currently Working On...

Now I'm working on my diploma film *Nobody Knows, Where Valerik Lives* based on found footage. In the summer of 2021 I am going to complete the Docnomads master's degree in doc filmmaking.

Upcoming Project

Director/Editor for *Nobody Knows, Where Valerik Lives*, 22 min
This is a story about a hunter Valerik, who lives in a small Siberian village 300 km from the nearest town. He spends the whole winter in the forest with his dog Skif in search of fur to feed his family. He feels himself the master of nature, but the forest in the form of a bear, following in Valerik's footsteps, takes his close friend, faithful dog.



Rokhaya Marieme Balde
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Seeking Aline, 27'
Switzerland, Senegal, 2021
World Premiere

Born in 1995 in Dakar (Senegal). She began her studies at Sup Imax Dakar (Higher Institute of Digital Arts and Crafts) in 2017. After a year of studying starting in China and studying political science at the University of Montreal, she finished her training Bachelor in directing at the HEAD of Geneva (Haute école d'art et de design) in 2020. She is now starting the ECAL / HEAD Master in screenplay.

Currently Working On...

I'm currently working on the fiction feature on Aline Siteo Diatta, a senegalese anti-colonial heroine that my short film *Seeking Aline/ à la recherche d'Aline* is about. I'm also working on a short doc-fiction musical: where I propose to 4 recent graduates of "La Manufacture" to write a police thriller musical with me.

Upcoming Project

Lausanne, written & directed by Rokhaya Marieme Balde
Rokhaya, a film school student, invites four young dance graduates from La Manufacture - Haute École des Arts de la Scène in Lausanne to write and direct a musical with her on young police officers investigating the murder of two young lovers murdered the day before their wedding.

Participants



Yudhajit Basu
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Kalsubai, 20'
India, 2021
World Premiere

Yudhajit Basu is a graduate from FTII Pune in Film Direction and has made several short films and short documentaries which have travelled to many national and international film festivals namely Ismailia International Film Festival, Egypt; Toronto South Asian Film Festival, Canada; IDSFFK, Kerala, India; ISFF. His latest Documentary short is doing its world premiere at Visions Du Réel and its German Premiere at Oberhausen International Short Film Festival.

Currently Working On...

I am researching for a nonfiction film on the lost language of the earliest inhabitants of the North Eastern Himalayan Belts of India and writing the script for my first feature to be shot in 2022.

Upcoming Project

The Missing Link (working title), length approx. 90 min

It is a nonfiction about the lost language of one of the earliest inhabitants of the north eastern Himalayan belts of India. Lepchas, as they were called by the British, meaning "untouchable" in their language, is a tribe that has faced a systematic colonial eradication of their culture and language since the colonial times, still forms the rudiment of the essence of the land in these belts. Their script, invented in the 17th century by the Lepcha scholar Thikung Men Salong, is getting slowly obliterated. 'Rongring' as the lepchas call their script today is spoken by many but the language in its written form has sunk into the depths of oblivion. My film aims to unearth the roots of this lost language and in turn shed light on the brutal colonial past of the Himalayan India. With a blend of fiction and nonfiction, the film will unfold in small vignettes of anecdotes, photographs, letters, old documents, texts and local folklore.



Abdessamad El Montassir
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Galb'Echaouf, 19'
Western Sahara, Morocco, 2021
World Premiere

Abdessamad El Montassir's research is focused on a trilogy: the right to forget, visceral narratives, and the trauma of anticipation.

In his body of work, he sets reflexive processes that invite us to rethink history through collective or fictional narratives and immaterial archives.

Abdessamad El Montassir tackles these problems while taking into consideration the knowledge on non-human identities in order to ignite the emerging of renewed manners to think about our environments.

Currently Working On...

I am currently working on my next documentary film: *Adouaba*. I am currently engaged in researching at the Ethnographic Museum of Neuchâtel, and am applying for additional funding for the film.

Upcoming Project

Adouaba aims to highlight transformation forces that operate in complex and invisibilized social situations.

In this dynamic, the project focuses on two specific contexts driven by Harratines in Mauritania: the Adebayes mobile villages made up of a civilization of Maroons, and the Maddaha, unofficial groups of Harratines who create emancipation stories through song.

The project intends to reflect on situations of domination, where new models of society are constituted as spaces of transformation and emancipation in constant reinvention. In this dimension, the walking and the songs become acts of struggle and resistance, which subvert the imposed order and create intervals for the recovery of one's rights, one's identities, and one's confiscated histories.

Adouaba's narrative will be drawn from several spaces and temporalities connected here: testimonies in Mauritania, and research in the archives of the Ethnographic Museum of Neuchâtel.



Elisa Gómez Alvarez
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Soraya Luna, 24'
Switzerland, 2021
World Premiere

Born in 1989 in Berlin (Germany). 2017 graduated from the University of the Arts in Berlin in the class of prof. Ai Weiwei. Video artist and cinematographer, she has been involved in various German theaters and operas: 2015 Ballhaus Naunynstraße Berlin, 2016 Staatstheater Stuttgart, 2017-18 Theater Bremen, Schauspiel Frankfurt. In 2020, she obtained her Masters in cinema (directing) at ECAL / HEAD (École Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne). Since 2018 she lives and works in Lausanne (Switzerland).

Currently Working On...

I am working on the following: Documentary short film *L'oiselier*; feature film (fiction) *D'ailleurs*; assistant director Elena Avdija *Jouer le Mal* (documentary feature film, Bande à Parts Films).

Upcoming Project

L'oiselier, length 30 minutes is poetic documentary portrait of the birdcatcher Jean Koelle (75 years old). The dramaturgy is inspired by the musical form of a balade, mixing found footage from the RTS Archives, footage shot in 2019, 2020 and 2021 in order to immerse into the dilemma of a man who sees himself as a savior but who is accused to not take care of his 200 birds. Jean Koelle reminds me of my mother, who is schizophrenic, and the way she took care for me and my siblings. I am fascinated by characters outside the box and I want to tell their stories in order to unfold consciousness and transgress patterns of traditionally established society and antiquated value judgments.



fleuryfontaine is an artistic duo exploring the place each of us occupies in the neo-liberal, artificial and secure environments that condition our behaviors, our bodies, our relationship to the world and to others. They work with films, installations, sculptures, performances, as well as video games.

Currently Working On...

We've done artwork on police violence, and we are part of Index, a NGO specialized in digital forensic and looking at state violence in France. We did expertise for the media and for the court.

Upcoming Project

Theatre of the mind, 25 min

Prisoners are playing Dungeons&Dragons in jail. How does the pursuit of this famous role playing game affect them? What narratives does it create? How do two very antagonistic spaces (the penitentiary and the fictional) co-exist in their minds?

In the flesh, 20 min

Slaughterhouses are kept away from our gazes and minds, not only because of the inherent secrecy of it, but also because the violence of the footage regularly disclosed is so hard to watch that we've all built an instinctive process of denial. This digital forensic will reenact the process of a slaughterhouse, using CGI as a tool to reflect on the politics of the visible.

Oddly satisfying, 10 min

In some corners of the internet, people are trading videos. Not any kind, those are tailor-made: A client asks for something very specific but strangely casual and someone will provide. This short will explore the secret world of soft fetishism and pastel colors and what's beyond, to uncover darker shadows.

fleuryfontaine
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Contraindre, 11'
France, 2021
World Premiere



Participants



Paul Sirague
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The Disappearance of Tom R., 19'
Belgium, 2020
International Premiere

Born in the parisian suburbs, Paul Sirague fled to Brussels where he now lives, works, uses several pseudonyms, tells lies in order to get to the truth. He directed two short-length documentary films: *A Room in Poland*, shot in partnership with Lodz cinema school, and *The Disappearance of Tom R.*, his graduation film for INSAS. He also works as screenwriter and script doctor for long-features, series and short-films.

Currently Working On...

I am currently working with Guillaume Maupin on a short fiction project about jazzman Sun Ra and his live concert on Saturday Night Live, as well as writing a long-feature film (a picaresque documentary novel set in France under Emmanuel Macron's rule). I just finished a musical video for Tartine de Clous called *Brave Marin (Brave Sailor)*. Finally, I am working on organizing an outdoor movie tour for the summer 2021.

Upcoming Project

Rengaines (Jingle), 30 min

My next project is a musical docu-fiction of about 30 minutes called *Rengaines (Jingles)*. The film takes place in a popular bar in the north of Brussels. During a karaoke night, a series of characters will talk about their stories through the songs they sing. As the evening progresses, the ambiance gets more and more strange, even magical... This film is a social and documentary tale in the tradition of Vittorio de Sica, Aki Kaurismaki or Miguel Gomes. We have already met with the production company Derives in Brussels, who has agreed to follow the project. We are now looking for co-producers.



Myriam Guyénard
myriam.guyenard@hotmail.fr

The Hut Made of Stone (La Cabane en pierre), 13'
Switzerland, 2021
World Premiere

Myriam Guyénard was born in 1997 in Annecy (France). She has Finnish and French origins. She studies film at ECAL (Ecole Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne) as a director of photography (2019-2021).

Currently Working On...

I am currently working on my bachelor degree (a thriller-horror movie) as a director of photography. In parallel, I am writing a short movie about death and offering tribute instead of mourning.

Upcoming Project

I am currently looking for work as a director of photography with documentary directors. I discovered shooting documentaries with my personal short movie *The Hut Made of Stone* and I would be really interested to accompany another director in his/her creative process. I would love to direct another documentary myself but for the moment my focus is more on a fictional project.



Louise Martin Papsian
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Drafted, 11'
France, Armenia, 2021
World Premiere

Louise Martin Papsian grew up in Paris, where she studied law and philosophy. During a university exchange in Buenos Aires, she was introduced to documentary practice in a filmmaking workshop. Back in France, she joined the Master Pro Concepteur Audiovisuel at the INA. After having worked on film development at Eaux Vives Productions, she joined the programming team of FIDMarseille. In 2017, she began in parallel a documentary work in Armenia, where she directed her first film, *Drafted*.

Currently Working On...

I am currently working as a programmer for FIDMarseille for the first year. In parallel, I am working on the development and editing of a documentary essay between Armenia and Colombia.

Upcoming Project

Armenia (working title), medium length, is a documentary essay based on two frescoes painted on the walls of the city of Armenia in Colombia, one created by an independent artist representing the Armenian genocide, the other commissioned by the Turkish state as part of a diplomatic exchange, representing a sultan. This false mise en abyme between Armenia and Colombia is intertwined with my intimate experience of these two countries, both crossed by the recent war, creating bridges in a game of correspondence.

Voskepar and *Naftalan* are two short documentary film projects on which I am writing as part of my candidacy in Le Fresnoy. The first deals with the question of the border in the native village of the character in my film *Drafted*. The other, *Naftalan*, the name of an Azerbaijani town located a few kilometers from the border with Nagorno-Karabakh, known for its oil cures, is a film in computer-generated images that links two apparently opposite uses of oil: curative and industrial.



Monise Nicodemos
monisenicodemos@gmail.com

Not over yet (Ainda não acabou), 22'
Brazil, 2021
World Premiere

She is a researcher. Following a PhD in cinema and audiovisual on obsolescence and reinvention of analog cinema in the digital age (2019) at Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3, she is specializing in oral and audiovisual archives at CNAM (Conservatoire National des arts et métiers). She also has experience with analog cinema and photography.

Currently Working On...

I'm working on two photography projects. One project is about film archives in Europe, while the other is about seed banks. I also collect oral archives about professionals working on analog cinema.

Upcoming Project

I'm just starting a new project. I want to do a short documentary about women working in art ateliers and scientific labs. The project tries to interrogate these two spaces (these huis-clos) after a Bruno Latour theory that explores the similarities between these two places. Through the connection between these two microcosmos, we will propose to analyze the place of woman in these fields (Art & Science). How do contemporary women work in their labs and ateliers? Where is art and science in there? What do science and art have in common?

The film will be filmed in super 8 and the sound will be recorded in digital.

Participants



Julie Ramage
contact@julieramage.com

How to Order Online, 9'
France, 2021
World Premiere

Julie Ramage (1987, France) is a visual artist and holds a PhD degree in humanities and arts. She investigates the complex relationships between people and the spaces they occupy.

Her work was exhibited in France as well as the United States, Argentina and Spain. With the help of visual artist Marina Ledrein, she created BLACKCUT, a collaborative art production and distribution platform she codirects. *How to order online* is her first film.

Currently Working On...

I am working on formal and informal economic systems in French prisons, through various formats: podcasts, performances, installations.

Upcoming Project

Ghostmarkets was born out of a research-creation project that began in prison in September 2019. Taking as a starting point the ban on currency in the prison space, economists, anthropologists, archaeologists and choreographers were then invited to collaborate with a working group set up inside the prison walls. The participants propose the creation of a "currency of esteem" guaranteeing, when entrusted to a peer, loyalty and assistance in all situations. This work is initially intended to be film-documented.

Following the interruption of the project in March 2020, the idea was born to create a "ghost film" from the preparatory documents of the aborted shooting, through different formats: installations, podcasts, performances. A film documenting those various attempts is now in preparation.



Maaïke Anne Stevens
maaikestevens@gmail.com

Scylos, 22'
Netherlands, United Kingdom, 2021
World Premiere

Maaïke Anne Stevens is a visual artist based in Amsterdam and London. *Scylos* is her first film, for which she received a development budget from the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts (AFK). She is a graduate of Goldsmiths College, London (MFA 2012). Her work has been shown in exhibitions worldwide, including the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (Santiago, CL), the Art Gallery of Alberta (Edmonton, CA), and the Jerwood Space (London, UK). Her work is part of the Victoria & Albert Museum permanent collection.

Currently Working On...

What You Don't See Doesn't Exist - Short film, colour, sound (appr. 15 min)
This short film is based on a popular Dutch children's song from the 1980s. It portrays an 8-year old's appeal to the adult world to meet her in her intangible reality, defined by fears and fantasies. Shots of a virtual organic shape and a mushroom factory are combined with a sound design based on the original children's song.

Upcoming Project

Analemma (The thing with letters) - Short film, colour, sound (appr. 30 min)
Starting point for this film is the changing form of communication between me and my father due to his dementia. As words increasingly escape him, I discover the connection that has always existed between us outside of language. I wonder whether the same verbal silence lies at the heart of his lifelong urge to create things: houses, boats, airplanes. My father surrendered to the material world on his hands and knees, yet at the same time he studied the clouds and the celestial movements, and he had an untenable wish to fly away from the world at his footsteps. In this film I want to capture this oscillation within him between the near and the distant. It will take the form of a pendulum swinging between two geographical locations with extreme opposites: the Western Scheldt Estuary in the southwestern part of the Netherlands, and Punta Arenas on the Strait of Magellan in the southernmost region of Chile. In the middle stands a sundial, which my father constructed in the back garden of his house.



Stephen Wardell
stephenwardell@gmail.com

Lillian Finds the Zombies, 15'
United States, 2021
World Premiere

Stephen Wardell is an artist and filmmaker from the Midwestern United States. His documentaries seek to interrogate ethnography, anthropology, and observational filmmaking traditions from a queer perspective. He often makes work with his nontraditional family. He is also interested in handmade filmmaking, tactile cinema, and unconventional approaches to fiction filmmaking. Right now he lives in Iowa City, IA, and is finishing his graduate degree at the University of Iowa.

Currently Working On...

I'm making a 16mm documentary about space colonization and sci-fi kitsch. Using camp, the film explores how privatized, corporate space colonization is part of a larger pattern of capitalism.

Upcoming Project

My film *Lillian Finds the Zombies* is part of a larger series of short documentary portraits where I use collaborative reenactment to bring my adopted siblings' fantasies to life as a way to tell my family's history. Currently I'm planning another film in this series, to be shot once it is safe for me to see my family in-person.

I'm also in the early stages of planning a feature film about developmentally disabled adults in group homes. I want to use the collaborative reenactment model of filmmaking I've been developing through my shorter portraits to explore in a long-form way how disabled people have been institutionalized in care facilities across the USA. I have personal connections to these types of group homes: I used to work in one, and my younger brother is about to permanently join one of these homes. Working title: Group Home.

VdR–Industry Talks

VdR–Industry Talks is a panel of discussions inviting various protagonists of the film industry to get together and exchange ideas and opinions around current issues. Always revolving around the latest questions in the field, the talks represent a crucial moment of confrontation and interaction, an opportunity to unfold the most urgent topics step by step.

VdR–Industry Talks is a privileged vantage point over contemporary documentary production, a space for reflection in which the future of the industry is sketched out. The Talks will be online public debates about these topics and there will also be an open Q&A with the remote audience.

Since Visions du Réel took place at the very beginning of the lockdown last year, we organised these discussions online, in order to investigate how different profiles of the industry were dealing with the situation. For this edition, one year later, we invite you through two Talks to discuss the changes that have taken place so far within the industry, and those yet to come. The third one will gather directors whose films are included in the 2021 line-up, around the question of producing films that dare to question the very state the directors are living – or, indeed, had to flee.

VdR–Industry Talks

1. Filmmaking and Resistance

Two masters of non-fiction filmmaking will meet and discuss in this panel session. One of them is working and living in the very country he questions, the other one is forced to live in exile because of his positions and films. A conversation with two filmmakers in resistance.

Speakers

Vitaly Mansky Film Director	Avi Mograbi Film Director
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Moderator

Orwa Nyrabia, Artistic Director, IDFA (The Netherlands) and Producer

Date and Time

Sunday, 18th April at 7pm (Swiss time)
online and on-site

2. Film Festivals, Distribution and Strategy – One Year Later

In light of the reflections we initiated last year on the different alternatives that festivals have chosen to undertake under corona-times (namely festivals going online, cancellations, and postponements), we aim this year to gather some prestigious festival representatives alongside further market players to consider what happened in the past 12 months, what kind of decisions were made, and which effects they had. The Festival Directors of major festivals of the beginning of 2021 – i.e. Sundance Film Festival and the Berlinale – will meet with important sales and distribution representatives in order to understand the role of festivals in today's market strategies.

Speakers

Carlo Chatrian Artistic Director, Berlinale, Germany	Jason Ishikawa Senior Executive, Cinetic Media, USA
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Tabitha Jackson Artistic Director, Sundance Film Festival, USA	Hédi Zardi CEO, Luxbox, France
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Moderator

Finn Halligan, Screendaily

Date and Time

Monday 19th April at 5.30pm (Swiss time)
online

3. Filmmakers and Producers at Work

A panel focused on the situation that filmmakers are facing now and might have to deal with in the near future. The discussion will be specifically focused on the work, the shooting conditions, the changes and adjustments needed. How can filmmakers adapt (or not) to new realities? Filmmakers, directors and producers are exchanging on these topics.

Speakers

Sébastien Lifshitz Film Director, France	David Epiney & Eugenia Mumenthaler Producers, Alina Films, Switzerland
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Gaston Solnicki Film Director, Argentina	Myriam Sassine Producer, About Productions, Lebanon
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Moderator

Francesco Giaï Via, Venice International Film Festival, Italy

Date and Time

Wednesday 21st April at 6pm (Swiss time)
online

Documentary & Audiovisual Forum

VdR–Industry is offering an opportunity to the Swiss Industry representatives to gather and exchange around important topics. The Documentary & Audiovisual Forum is an annual event that allows the Swiss film industry to get together and exchange opinions on important and pressing issues, within the international context offered by VdR–Industry. This year the focus will be on the distribution of documentary cinema.

Documentary and Audiovisual Forum

The Documentary & Audiovisual Forum is an annual event that allows the Swiss film industry to get together and exchange opinions on important and pressing issues, within the international context offered by VdR-Industry.

What audience for tomorrow?

The Distribution of Documentary Cinema – one year later

In light of the reflections on our Documentary and Audiovisual Forum “The future of Creative Documentaries” discussed in 2019 at Visions du Réel, we imagined to explore further the subject in 2020 by addressing the issue of distribution. However, the Covid-19 sanitary crisis was a turning point, forcing us to cancel the session and disrupting our habits, in particular those related to our role as spectators. Therefore, today the question is misplaced but, at the same time, more urgent and relevant than ever.

The distribution of documentary films has always been a challenge, often requiring the development of extraordinary and bold strategies. In a time where cinemas are put under strain, theatrical releases, just like festival presentations, do not constitute the point of departure for the distribution strategy anymore. On the other hand, online viewing platforms are growing incredibly popular, both in terms of audience and in terms of their financial and political weight in society. The matter of institutions’ roles and of public proposals to support the distribution and the broadcasting of independent films becomes equally political (especially given the right holders’ remuneration is also jeopardised). As a result, how to widen the public for documentary cinema becomes one of the most important aspects to touch during the discussion.

This is why, one year after the start of the sanitary crisis that disrupted the economy of cinemas, during Visions du Réel 2021 edition in Nyon, we will dedicate our Documentary and Audiovisual Forum to distribution. This way, our goal is to stimulate the proliferation and exchange of ideas and examples of both Swiss and international practices in the field.

In collaboration with FOCAL, Foundation for professional training in cinema and audiovisual media

Speakers

Christoph Assezat
Head of the fiction/documentary
division, TV5 Monde, FR

Eve Gabereau
Founder and Managing Director,
Modern Films, UK

David Bernet
Film Director, Co-president AG DOK, DE

Pierre-Adrian Irlé
Project Leader – Play Suisse, CH

Matthias Bürcher
Head of Distribution and Diversity,
Federal Office of Culture, CH

Susa Katz
Deputy managing director, responsible
for the nonfiction department and for
distribution, Zürcher Filmstiftung, CH

Tobias Faust
Co-director, Kult.kino, my film.ch, CH

Mischa Schiwow
Distributor, Frenetic Films,
Co-president Agency for Filmpromotion
“Prochaine”, CH

Barbara Fränzen
Director of Film Department
Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport
Federal Ministry Republic of Austria, AT

Elena Tatti
Producer, Box Productions,
Co-president AROPA, Romande Association
of the Audiovisual Production, CH

Moderator

Barbara Miller
Director, president ARF/FDS

Date and Time

18 April 2021

10:30–13:30

on-site and online

Followed by a lunch offered by ARF / FDS.

In Between

In Between is a programme that explores the blooming territory of artists’ moving image with two Artists’ Work Sessions that aim to shed light on the challenges and opportunities to bridge the gap between the art world and the cinema industry.

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About In Between

Moderator

Psychic Island

The Signal Line

About

Moving images are by now the dominant form of cultural narration and communication in our world, both in people's everyday lives and in the artistic field. Artists' moving image has become a blooming territory in which new narratives and critical positions towards mainstream audiovisual culture are generated. However, those practices often use economies and evolve in contexts that are different – and too separated – from the ones found in the film industry or in the art market.

The artists' work session offered by VdR-Industry is an event meant for artists, producers and other professionals from both the visual arts and film contexts to meet and work around the development of two artists' moving image projects. Two artists' duos will have 1h1/2 to convene with a table of 5-6 industry professionals, which may include producers, curators, film funds or foundations' representatives and so on.

In Between is a collaboration with On and For Production and Distribution.

Moderator



Anna Manubens
anna.manubens@gmail.com

Curator, writer and producer
Spain

Anna Manubens is an independent curator, writer and producer with a preference for hybrid roles at the intersection between exhibition-making, research, public programmes, project development and institutional analysis. She was Head of Public Programmes at the CAPC Musée d'art contemporain in Bordeaux until 2017. She previously combined her activity as curator and programmer with teaching at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona) and a part-time curator position at the Belgian artist-run organisation, Auguste Orts, dedicated to the production of, and thinking around, artists' films. With Auguste Orts she was founding project manager of On & For Production and Distribution, a European collaboration project aimed at facilitating the production of artists' moving image through the conception of new working frameworks and peer-to-peer exchange formats. She was artistic director of LOOP for the editions of 2011 and 2012, and is currently a professor at the Elías Querejeta Zine Eskola, a new international centre for the research and practice of cinema in San Sebastián.

Psychic Island

Babak Afrassiabi, Nasrin Tabatabai
Netherlands, Belgium
Expected Release Date: 2022



Logline

Psychic Island is a film centering Telegraph Island as its main location and character. Situated deep in a mountainous narrow inlet in the Persian Gulf, the island was made into a repeater station by the British from 1865 to 1868. The film depicts the Telegraph Island as an 'unanchored' transmission node, a technological organ signalling from near and far-removed locations, with intertwined narratives, voices and sounds from what and whoever had once or will cross it.

Synopsis

The film takes place on the small rocky island known as the Telegraph Island. Hidden away deep inside a narrow mountainous inlet on the south of the Persian Gulf, the island had been made into a telegraph outpost by the British government in the 1860s to ease communication between London and the India Office. With 1500 miles of submarine cables connecting it to inland telegraphy lines, the island was operating as a repeater station for no more than three years before being left uninhabited for a decade and a half. Now the new inhabitants, who arrived on the island only in the last ten years, have started to experience strange phenomena. They believe that the island is transmitting certain unidentifiable signals and that whatever words or sounds they communicate between themselves or pass through their minds are channelled to them by the island. This has distressed and divided the community in their responses to this situation. Some believe that what is transmitted to them comes from the waters and others are convinced that it comes from the air. The first group finds their rescue in elevating the island in the air and stopping the transmission from the sea, the second group sees the solution in immersing the island in the water and away from the air. A parley is organized between the two groups involving lobbying and politicking and deceit. Meanwhile the transmission of the signals continues, increasingly orchestrating what takes place on the island.

Goals at VdR-Industry

Co-producers, international financing, feedback, world sales.

Filming Location
Telegraph Island

Shooting Language
Arabic, Farsi, English, Pashto, Afghan Persian

Shooting Date & Duration
2022

Shooting Format
4K / Archive

Expected Runtime
45'

Producer(s)
Babak Afrassiabi, Nasrin Tabatabai

Total Budget
145,000 €

Financing in Place
30,000 € (21%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Directors' own investment
Mondriaan Fund, Netherlands

Looking for International Sales

Contact

Babak Afrassiabi
Director / Producer
info@pagesmagazine.net

Nasrin Tabatabai
Director / Producer
info@pagesmagazine.net

Director's Note

Psychic Island (working title) is a film in development, with Telegraph Island as its core location and main character. This incredibly small and uninhabited island, located in the strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, gets its name from 1865, when the British turned it into a repeater station to secure and speed up the communications flow across territories linked to the British Empire. Submarine cables were laid across the Gulf, bending through the narrow deep inlets of the Musandam peninsula, and there behind high cliffs, the island would accommodate the telegraph post. From here the cables would loop out of the fjords to finally reach the Indian shore via the Gulf of Oman. Telegraphy was one of the earliest modern technologies to integrate the Persian Gulf into the territorial network of the colonial Empire and the Telegraph Island as a new Residency Post was to become one of its key nodes. However, the station and the complex cable network was operational for only two years. The island's desolation and its confined dry condition had a depressing effect upon the signallers and recurring conflicts with local communities finally forced the British to evacuate the station in 1868. What is now left are architectural ruins of the repeater station slowly crumbling into the water. With its suspension as a repeater station, the Island became an abandoned and obsolete technological remainder.

Psychic Island situates itself at the limits of this technological suspension. The film is based on the hypothetical idea that islands have the capacity to transmit information much more fluidly than mainland. They exude as smoothly as they can soak up whatever passes through them by water and air: the island as an unanchored transmission node, a technological organ signalling from near and far-removed locations, passing on intertwined narratives, voices and sounds from what and whoever had once or will traverse it.

The film builds on the island's actual historical past to fictionalise its future: for 150 years after it stopped operating as a repeater station, the island has remained uninhabited and forgotten. Meanwhile the island never stopped transmitting. The interaction between the new inhabitants and the island will be defined by this technological past. Throughout the film, the inhabitants appear to be subsumed and assimilated into the island's technological landscape.

Director's Profile

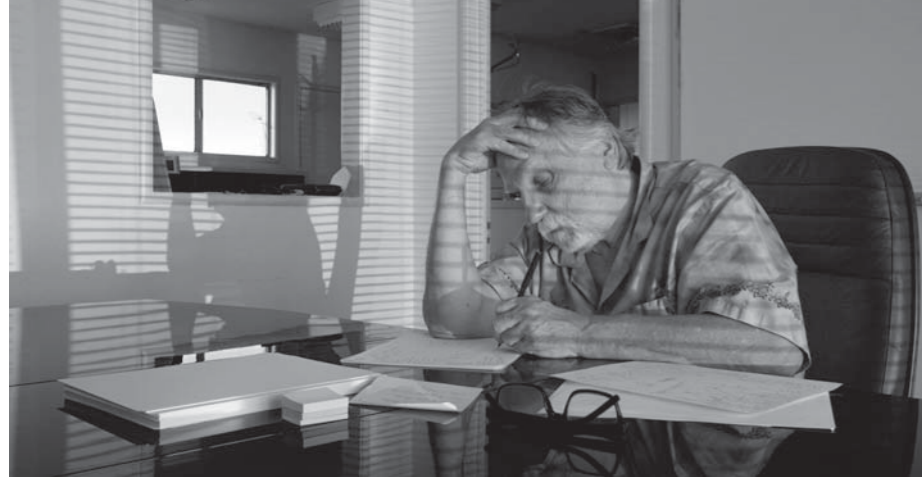
The artists Nasrin Tabatabai and Babak Afrassiabi have collaborated since 2004 on various joint projects, developed through such mediums as video, audio, sculptural objects and printed matter. They often extend their work from unresolved historical narratives. Their recent projects are concerned with making speculative junctures between history, archive, technology and the practice of art. Their works have been exhibited regularly in solo and group exhibitions internationally. Their single channel videos were presented in Festivals such as IFFR, FidMarseilles, Doclisboa, Transmediale, etc.

Thicker Than Paint Thinner, 28', 2011

Satellite, As Long As It Is Aiming At The Sky, 29', 2010

The Signal Line

Simon Ripoll-Hurier, Myriam Lefkowitz
France
Expected Release Date: Spring 2022



Logline

What if we hired psychic spies to look through Silicon Valley's iron curtain? *The Signal Line* will be a sci-fi documentary on the edge between divination and espionage, New Age and new tech, a film about the possibility of perceiving the invisible, of seeing through walls, bodies, time and space, and a film about the possibility of sharing these visions.

Synopsis

"Somewhere, perhaps in the unconscious mind, there exists what we will label "the Matrix". The Matrix knows no boundaries and has no limitations – it contains all information about all things." (declassified CIA archive, 1988)

Imagine that some people can perceive things without using their known senses.

They can reproduce a drawing sealed in an envelope, describe and draw a remote location, report a past or future event. Consider this extrasensory perception not as the privilege of a few, but as a latent yet trainable ability. Anyone can learn to connect to "the Matrix", and there is a training method called "remote viewing". It was designed by a Silicon Valley high tech research institute under CIA funding during the 1970s: SRI International, otherwise famous for creating Arpanet, the computer mouse, Siri...

Are "the Cloud" and "the Matrix" ethereal siblings?

What if we asked experienced remote viewers – an amateur club created in the San Francisco Bay Area 20 years ago – to probe the future and describe a major yet hypothetical event to come: the first time they'll connect a human brain to "the cloud", as predicted by all famous futurologists. Who's gonna be the first one? What's going to happen then?

The remote viewers gave us a script. It is elusive, sometimes contradictory, but it is the core of *The Signal Line*. The film, as an esoteric wandering through the Bay Area, is a quest for this person, as much as a quest for an alternate narrative on the future.

Goals at VdR-Industry

Feedbacks, co-producers, international financing, distribution, etc.

Filming Location
San Francisco Bay Area, CA, United States

Shooting Language
English

Shooting Date & Duration
2019, 1 month / 2021, 1 month

Shooting Format
4K

Expected Runtime
45'

Producer(s)
Simon Ripoll-Hurier

Total Budget
65,000 €

Financing in Place
35,000 € (54%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Fondation des artistes, France
Image Mouvement, Cnap, France
Etant donnés, FACE Foundation (Institut Français), United States / France

Looking for International Sales

Contact

Simon Ripoll-Hurier
Director / Producer
simonripollhurier@gmail.com

Myriam Lefkowitz
Director
myriamlefkowitz2@gmail.com



Director's Note

This film project is part of a wider research that explores other formats: texts, videos, performances, radio pieces (ex: Gessnerallee, Feb. 21)... It all started with a first simple idea: what if we used a tool once designed for "psychic espionage" to spy on its birthplace, Silicon Valley? To do so, we explored the CIA declassified archive, we met different communities of "remote viewers", we trained ourselves and shared the practice around us... Slowly a plot emerged, and it became clear that the film had to probe a future and almost mythological event: the connection of our brains to the "cloud". Therefore *The Signal Line* is not a film about remote viewing, but a film with it: a film constructed by and around this practice, exploring its aesthetic potential, and "using" it to draw lines between people, places and events. Remote viewing shapes a way of channelling extrasensory perceptions based on the organization on paper of what can be called a "stream of consciousness". This idea has a long history first in literature and then in cinema, and will serve as a guide to make the film, which will be based on the intertwining of many voices. The film's soundtrack will be a key element to its construction, from the weaving of ambiances to the spatialization and treatment of the different voices. In the remote viewing protocol, the viewer must say aloud everything they write, producing a kind of descriptive mumbling. Assuming that an observer always transforms what they're looking at, these fragile and hesitant voices will have effects on what they describe: Silicon Valley will be caught in choral delirium, shaped as an anxious dreamlike speculation on the future of humankind. All taking place in the San Francisco Bay Area, *The Signal Line* will be a film on the edge between divination and espionage, reading and spying, esotericism and new technologies, somewhere between a new-age film and a spy movie. It will be a film about the possibility of perceiving the invisible, of seeing through walls, bodies, time and space, and a film about the possibility of sharing these visions.

Director's Profile

Coming from visual arts and developing a practice on the edge of music, radio and cinema, Simon Ripoll-Hurier (born 1985) tracks down situations of listening. Between 2014 and 2017, he developed *Diana*, a research project that includes film, video, performance and radio. His work has been presented in festivals, biennials, museums, galleries, and broadcasted on the radio. He also plays with Les Agamemnonz, an instrumental surf band, and co-founded *DUUU, an artist-run webradio.

Coming from dance, Myriam Lefkowitz designs various immersive devices that engage direct relationships between spectators and artists, and explore modified forms of attention and perception. Her practice, on the edge of care, esotericism and somatic experimentation, deploys and shares the resources contained in the liminal states between sleep and wakefulness.

Dreamland, 28', 2014
Premiered at Alchemy Film & Arts

Diana, 47', 2017
Premiered at Visions du Réel

Station, 15', 2018

Age of Heroes, 18', 2020
Premiered at Cinéma du Réel

Observer's Projects

With this new opportunity, VdR-Industry wants to give access to two projects to witness the dynamic offer of our platform. They will have the possibility to participate in the different activities in order to meet with relevant professionals for the development of their projects.

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A Love Story
Chronicles of Pandemic

A Love Story

Une histoire d'amour

Mathieu Volpe
Belgium, France
Expected Release Date: August 2021



Logline

At the dawn of his 25th birthday, Sokuro, the son of Burkinabe immigrants living in Italy, perpetuates family traditions by marrying Nassira, a young girl that lives in his native village, not far from Ouagadougou. For him, this marriage is the first step into a future and definitive return to Burkina Faso, but for his new wife, the wedding is a gateway to the European El Dorado...

Synopsis

Ouagadougou, August 2018. Sokuro, a young Burkinabe, drives his motorcycle at full speed in the middle of the night. He is getting married the following day and needs to pay the dowry to his in-laws. His wedding is arranged by his mother, with whom he counts the money in the pale neon light of her house. 24 hours later, according to a typical Burkinabe tradition, Nassira, the young bride, is taken by the groom on a motorbike. After the marriage, Sokuro and Nassira don't know each other, but over time, a relationship is forged. At the end of the summer, Sokuro has a project: to build a house for his wife in Ouagadougou. He lives in the North of Italy, where he is forced to return because he needs to go back to work.

Back in Italy, Sokuro lives his daily life, punctuated by the exhausting work in the factory, the shouting sessions with his little brother Nassir, the daily phone calls to his wife and the absence of his father, constantly at work... until his mother returns from Africa: now, she wants Sokuro to bring Nassira back to Italy as quickly as possible.

A few months later in Ouagadougou, Nassira prepares herself for Sokuro's arrival. Once reunited, Sokuro tells her that he would like to marry her at the City Hall, in order to make their marriage official for the Italian law. Unfortunately, he does not have enough money because he lost his job just before leaving Italy. Eventually Sokuro and Nassira get married at the City Hall with the financial help of his mother. Sokuro has now the official marriage paper, but must now find a stable job to be able to bring Nassira to Italy...

Directors' Biography

Mathieu Volpe lived in Bari (Italy) until he was 19. In 2009, he moved to Belgium to study film directing. His graduation film, *Il segreto del serpente* (2014), has been selected by several international festivals. His documentary short, *Our Territory*, about immigrants' lives in southern Italy, had its International premiere at Locarno film festival in 2019. He is now completing his first long documentary, *A Love Story*, and preparing the shooting of his first fiction short, *Eldorado*.

Filming Location
Italy, Burkina Faso

Shooting Language
French, Italian, Miscellaneous

Shooting Date & Duration
From August 2018 to March 2021

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
90' / 52'

Production Company
Replica Films (Belgique)

Producer(s)
Arnaud Dufeys, Robin Andelfinger

Total Budget
231,536 €

Financing in Place
187,236 € (81%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Centre du Cinéma de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Belgium
Wallonie Image Productions, Belgium
Direction générale Coopération au développement et Aide humanitaire, Belgium
Région Grand-Est, France
Procirep, France

Looking for International Sales

First Feature film

Contact

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Arnaud Dufeys
Producer
Replica Films
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+32472 73 66 78
www.replica-films.com



Chronicles of Pandemic

Rawyan Shayema
Bangladesh
Expected Release Date: March 2022



Logline

The film consists of several short character-driven isolated stories exploring space, time, marriage, relation, discrimination & rural life along with the adaptation of new circumstances and reality during the pandemic in a small town of Bangladesh. Each story represents a single individual of the Director's family and relatives including herself, focusing on their own individual crisis & expectation under the global crisis for COVID.

Synopsis

One town, one main story but it consists of several short character-driven isolated stories during the locked-down situation of a pandemic for COVID-19. The stories are: a 72 years old father's hyper activeness for concealing solitude, the marriage of a 17-year-old girl for escaping from domestic violence, a 16 years old boy's adolescent crisis, a 7-year-old lonely boy who wants to be famous on YouTube, new entertainment for a 40 years old mother & her 16 years old son, a 20-year-old girl's new realization about her skin's tone, a 28 years old female filmmaker gets back to her hometown for searching the comfortability of home.

Each short story represents several individuals of the Director's family and relatives who are sharing the same time and space but with our own individual crisis & expectation under the global crisis for COVID. This film shows the life of some simple people during the pandemic who are living life invisibly surrounding us and dying without being noticed, but these stories belong to every mile of Bangladesh which are untold, mundane and unnoticed in the representation of general conventional audiovisual in Bangladesh.

Director's Biography

Rawyan Shayema is a Bangladesh based self-sufficient BIPOC filmmaker, studied Film And Media at Stamford University Bangladesh. Since then, she has been engaged in 3 feature fiction films and worked as a cinematographer and editor in several documentaries and short films. The one-man-army approach to film-making, experimenting with forms & thoughts, simplicity & minimalistic presentation are her notable features. Her documentary *Self-Fantasy* got a post-production award in Docedge Kolkata, Asian forum for documentary filmmakers and attended docschool-nepal where got awarded the Nomination for Rotterdam Lab in IFFR.

Filming Location
Rajshahi, Bangladesh

Shooting Language
Bengali

Shooting Date & Duration
2020 - ongoing

Shooting Format
HD / 2K

Expected Runtime
60'

Production Company
Art Haaat (Bangladesh)

Producer(s)
Faizul Haque

Total Budget
174,500 €

Financing in Place
55,840 € (32%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Rahi Hasan, MMJ Documentaries, USA
Faizul Haque, Art Haaat, Bangladesh
Reaj Uddin Ahmed, CEO of Bandhu Distribution Committee, Bangladesh

Looking for International Sales

First Feature film

Contact

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Faizul Haque
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Art Haaat
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Switzerland meets... Italy

Switzerland Meets... is an opportunity for Swiss producers and representatives of public financing and television to meet a delegation from a country having a co-production treaty with Switzerland, to encourage co-production, networking and collaborations. This year... Switzerland Meets Italy!

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About

Swiss producers and representatives of public financing and television meet a delegation from a country offering official co-production opportunities with Switzerland to encourage networking and co-production.

Following the success of the bilateral meetings we put in place during the previous editions with the Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles, Québec and the United Kingdom, resulting in several concrete co-productions, this year we are organising a bilateral co-production meeting between Switzerland and Italy.

The idea behind these meetings is to facilitate contacts between experienced producers who are looking for co-production opportunities in the context of an immediate co-production agreement with Switzerland. It aims not only to offer support to producers and to their long-term activities, but also to encourage them to defend their editorial line of documentary cinema. It is in the context of these meetings and within an intimate atmosphere, relaxed and effective, that the producers have the opportunity to create long-lasting professional relationships.

The invited participants will first take part in a roundtable about the challenges and opportunities of co-production between Switzerland and Italy with representatives from institutions and televisions from both countries as speakers and institutional guests.

A production case study talk will be given by Swiss and Italian producers of *War and Peace* by Martina Parenti & Massimo D'Anolfi presented in Latitudes as part of Visions du Réel 2021 programme, in order to explain how the co-production has developed between Rai Cinema, Montmorency Film (IT) and Lomotion (CH).

The group of all producers, 6 experienced personalities from Italy and Switzerland respectively, will also present themselves, their work and their companies and meet in individual encounters.

We thank our partners, the OFC, Federal Office of Culture / Media Desk Suisse and Doc/It.

Moderator



Joëlle Bertossa
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Producer
Close Up Films
Switzerland

Founded in 2012 in Geneva, Close Up Films has produced several critically acclaimed documentary and fiction films. These include *Il mio corpo*, directed by Michele Pennetta, which premiered at Visions du Réel and was presented at Acid, Cannes in 2020; *In The Shadow Of Women* and *The salt of tears* by Philippe Garrel, and *I Am Not Your Negro* directed by Raoul Peck, which won the best documentary Cesar and BAFTA in 2018 and was nominated for the 2017 Oscars. More recently, Karim Sayad's film *My English Cousin* premiered at TIFF docs in 2019, as did Rachel Leah Jones and Phillippe Bellaïche's *Advocate* at Sundance.

Guests



Silvia De Felice
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Commissioning editor
RAI 5
Italy



Fabio Mancini
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Commissioning editor
RAI Documentari
Italy



Laura Nicotra
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Cinema del Reale e documentari
Rai Cinema
Italy



Silvana Bezzola
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Producer
RSI Radiotelevisione Svizzera
Switzerland



Gaspard Lamunière
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Producer, Director
RTS Radio Télévision Suisse
Switzerland



Laurent Steiert
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Deputy Head
Film Department of the Federal
Office of Culture
Switzerland

Producers



Marco Alessi
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Dugong Films
Italy
www.dugong.it

Dugong Films is a Rome based film production company focused on exploring the blurred line between fiction and documentary in an international framework. The company draws its name by the "dugong", a large marine mammal, who unexpectedly inspired ancient alluring seafaring tales of mermaids. Dugong productions have been shown in the most important international festivals such as Cannes, Venice, Toronto, Locarno, Rotterdam, Viennale, winning awards as the European Film Award, l'Œil d'or for best documentary in Cannes, the David di Donatello and exhibited in important art venues such as Tate Modern, Art Basel, Moma, Venice Biennial, Maxxi Museum, Manifesta Biennial.

Films in production

Atlantide, (feature documentary) by Yuri Ancarani

Il Palazzo (The Palace), (feature documentary) by Federica Di Giacomo

Il Boemo by Petr Vaclav (feature film)

The Girl in the Fountain, (feature documentary) by Antongiulio Panizzi

Filmography

Tony Driver by Ascanio Petri, 2019

That Which is to Come is Just a Promise by Platform, 2019

Samouni Road by Stefano Savona, 2018

The Years by Sara Fgaier, 2019

Controfigura by Ra di Martino, 2017

The Challenge by Yuri Ancarani, 2016



Alessandro Borrelli
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La Sarraz Pictures
Italy
www.lasarraz.com

La Sarraz Pictures is a film production company founded in Turin in 2004 by Alessandro Borrelli, who has been working in cinema since 1996 as head of development and producer. Since 2010 La Sarraz Pictures has set up another department for the distribution of creative documentaries and feature fiction films in cinemas. In its 17 years of activity La Sarraz produced more than twenty creative documentaries, fiction films and short animated films that have been presented, and often awarded, in prestigious international festivals around the world, and distributed in Italy and abroad. La Sarraz Pictures has earned itself a position of importance on the national and international market, and is acknowledged as a "point of reference" by many authors for the production and distribution of quality films.

Films in production

Sand Roads by L. Conte & Gabriele Gianni, 2022

Maciste & Maciste by M. Sciarra, 2022

Nessun Posto al Mondo by V. Lappa, 2022

Filmography

Il Momento di Passaggio, (documentary) by C. Marotta, 2021

Una Promessa, (feature film) by G. and M. De Serio, 2020

River Memories, (documentary) by G. and M. De Serio, 2015

From the Depths, (documentary) by V. Pedicini, 2013

Cadenas, (documentary) by F. Balbo, 2012

Made in Chinatown, (documentary) by S. Basso, 2009

Italy



Enrica Capra
enrica@graffitidoc.it

Graffiti Doc
Italy
www.graffitidoc.it

Founded in 2004 in Turin, Graffiti has quickly gained a reputation as a high-level, refined production company, and is now one of the most renowned and internationally appreciated Italian documentary production companies. Since its first works, Graffiti has developed projects with international ambition both for theatrical release and for the main public channels worldwide. Most of its films have been selected in prestigious festivals. Its latest documentary *One More Jump* by Emanuele Gerosa won, among others, the Prix Europa 2020 for Best European TV Documentary of the Year. The MEDIA Program has repeatedly recognized the impact of Graffiti on the international market, with the support of four Slate of projects. Graffiti is also active in minority co-production and has developed an executive production activity for foreign companies.

Films in production

The World After. 1919-1946, *The League of Nations* by Patric Jean

An Italian Story by Giorgio Carella

Love Boat People by Giovanni Piperno and Stanislao di Ceva

A World Like Ours by Tamar Tal-Anati

Filmography

From The Planet of The Humans by Giovanni Cioni (to be released)

Up There by Bartolomeo Pampaloni (to be released)

Gluten, The Public Enemy by Patrizia Marani, 2021

One More Jump by Emanuele Gerosa 2019

Another Me by Claudio Casazza, 2016

Thy Father's Chair by Antonio Tibaldi and Alex Lora, 2015

Producers



Luigi Chimienti
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disparte
Italy
www.disparte.com

disparte is an independent production company established in Rome in 2015 by Alessandro Amato and Luigi Chimienti. Our mission is to give voice and image to emerging talents, focusing on character-driven stories and international art-house co-productions. Our name means "apart" and stems from the need to stand out of the chorus with a unique, polyphonic voice. disparte projects were developed in international workshops such as EAVE, TorinoFilmLab, Midpoint and MAIA and presented at the major international pitching and co-production markets. Our third feature film, *Maternal* by Maura Delpero, is an international co-production between Italy and Argentina and premiered at 72. Locarno Film Festival – Concorso Internazionale, where it won four awards, and is still enjoying a successful festival distribution world round.

Films in production

A Song That Slays by Mo Scarpelli

Paradiso by Giulio Mastromauro, produced by disparte and Indaco Film

Windless by Pavel Vesnakov, produced by Red Carpet and co-produced by disparte

Il Cileno by Sergio Castro San Martín, produced by disparte and co-produced by EQUICO

Adventure Hunters by Krzysztof Komander, produced by MD4 and co-produced by disparte

Marigini by Niccolò Falsetti, produced by disparte and Manetti Bros

Filmography

Maternal (Hogar) by Maura Delpero, 2019

Il Nostro Ultimo (Our Last) by Ludovico Di Martino, 2016



Emanuele Nespeca
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Solaria film
Italy
www.solariafilm.it

Solaria film was created in 2013 by producer Emanuele Nespeca. First movie produced was the documentary *I was born traveling* by Irish Braschi, with Rai Cinema and NBC Universal and *Hand* by Luca Lucini, in the project Short Plays. The company counts on the experience of Emanuele Nespeca, member of ACE since 2010 and Producers on the Move 2016, who began producing in 2005 with *Pietro* by Daniele Gaglianone (Locarno 2010) and *Notizie Degli Scavi* by Emidio Greco (Venice 2010), *Banat*, by Adriano Valerio, jury prize for best short film at Cannes 2010. Solaria Film produced *Arrivederci Saigon* by Wilma Labate, *Entierro* by Maura Morales Bergmann; *7 Days and What You Don't Know About Me* by Rolando Colla, *Il Banchiere Anarchico* by Giulio Base, *White Flowers* by Marco De Angelis and Antonio Di Trapani and movies for kids like *Glassboy* by Samuele Rossi.

Films in production

Ultraworld by Felice V. Bagnato

Bambini nel bosco by Samuele Rossi

Filmography

Glassboy by Samuele Rossi, 2021

What you don't know about me by Rolando Colla, 2020

Entierro by Maura Morales Bergmann, 2019

Arrivederci Saigon by Wilma Labate, 2018

White Flowers by Marco De Angelis & Antonio Di Trapani, 2018

7 Days by Rolando Colla, 2017

Redemption Song by Christina Mantis, 2016

Terra (Earth)! by Marco De Angelis and Antonio Di Trapani, 2015

Italy



Marta Zaccaron
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Incipit Film
Italy
www.incipitfilm.com

Incipit Film is an independent production company based in Friuli Venezia Giulia. We develop documentary and fiction projects with roots in the local area that address sensitive issues affecting contemporary society for an international market. Incipit Film works regularly with the FVG Audiovisual Fund, FVG Film Commission, MIBACT and RAI, and makes use of a network of expert professionals residing mainly in the region. Incipit Film is constantly working with foreign companies to co-produce products which are often selected for respected European festivals and distributed through prestigious European channels.

Films in production

ERTO - The Moon Beneath the Water, (documentary) by Alessandro Negrini

It is Not Paradise, (documentary) by Elisa Cozzarini

Amor Fu, (funeral comedy) by Daniel Baldotto

When the Waters Flow Together, (comedy drama feature film) by Anna Di Francisca

The Volta Cinema, (documentary) by Martin Turk

Filmography

SANREMO, (feature film) by Miroslav Mandić, 2020

Don't Forget to Breathe, (feature film) by Martin Turk, 2019

The Identity Dilemma, (documentary) by Sabrina Morena, 2018

Every Soul of My Body, (documentary) by Erika Rossi, 2016

Producers



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Akka Films
Switzerland
www.akkafilms.ch

Since 2003, Akka Films has dedicated itself to art-house documentaries, fiction films and television programs. Based in Geneva, at the crossroads of Europe, we favor works of international and universal scope, although strongly anchored and incarnated in their regions of origin: powerful, contemporary and singular films carried by an affirmed vision of their authors. This approach naturally leads us to co-produce most of our projects in order to offer them the widest resonance. Akka Films production board gathers founder and filmmaker Nicolas Wadimoff, and producers Philippe Coeytaux and Palmyre Badinier.

Films in production

The Shameless, (fiction) by Konstantin Bojanov
Venice, (fiction) by Rusudan Chkonia
1000 Fires, (documentary) by Saeed Taji Farouky
Heirloom, (fiction) by Larissa Sansour & Soren Lind
Purgatory, (fiction) by Ufuk Emiroglu
O Jacare, (fiction) by Basil da Cunha
Simon The Absurd, (hybrid documentary) by Felipe Monroy

Filmography

Far From You I Grew by Marie Dumora, 2020
Their Algeria by Lina Soualem, 2020
Maria Cobra Petra by Erika Nieva da Cunha, 2019



Nicola Bernasconi
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Rough Cat
Switzerland
www.roughcat.ch

Rough Cat is an independent film production company based in Lugano, Switzerland. Established in 2014 by producer Nicola Bernasconi, it aims at developing and producing documentaries, features and short films for cinema and television mainly by young and local authors, keeping an eye on European cinema and international co-productions.

Films in production

L'Uomo Che Parlava Come Un Bambino, (documentary film project) by Mario Casella
Allegra, (feature film project) by Giorgia Wurth
Il Covo, (*The Cave*) (tv series project) by Fabio Pellegrinelli, Fabrizio Coli, Francesco Balletta
Le Isole Torneranno, (experimental film project) by Carina Kaiser
Nevercrew - Arguing The Whale, (documentary project) by Nevercrew & Carina Kaiser
Somewhere On Earth, (short movie) by Fabrizio Rosso

Filmography

Anche Stanotte le Mucche Danzeranno sul Tetto (*Cows on the Roof*) by Aldo Gugolz, 2020
I Segreti Del Mestiere (*Learning the ropes*) by Andreas Maciocci, 2019
Tutto l'Oro Che C'è (*Gold Is All There Is*) co-production by Andrea Caccia, 2019
Stella Ciao by Vito Robbiani, 2015

Switzerland



David Fonjallaz
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Lomotion
Switzerland
www.lomotion.ch

Lomotion is an independent film production company based in Bern, Switzerland. Founded in 2001 by Louis Mataré and David Fonjallaz, today the company has seven full-time employees and is home to an important production infrastructure, including extensive post-production facilities. We produce films for cinema and television with a strong commitment to content and form. Since 2015, we have produced six feature-length documentaries, a TV series and two feature-length fictions for cinema, among others the Italian co-production *Spira Mirabilis*, which premiered in the international competition in Venice in 2016.

Films in production

The Miracle of Almeria, (documentary) by Moon Blaisse
My Old Man, (documentary) by Steven Vit
Antier Noche, (documentary) by Alberto Martín Menacho
Zimmerwald, (documentary) by Valeria Stucki
Don't let the sun (catch you crying), (fiction) by Jacqueline Zünd

Filmography

Guerra e Pace, (documentary) by Massimo D'Anolfi & Martina Parenti, 2020
Beyto, (fiction) by Gitta Gsell, 2020
Naima, (documentary) by Tamara Milosevic, 2019
Encordés, (documentary) by Frédéric Favre, 2017
Spira Mirabilis, (documentary) by Massimo D'Anolfi & Martina Parenti, 2016



Michela Pini
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Cinédočké
Switzerland
www.cinedokke.ch

Founded in 2007, in the years it has become a solid point of reference for young Swiss directors. Since then Cinédokké has produced more than 15 short films, documentaries and, in the recent years, features films. National consecration for the young production company from Ticino arrives with the Quartz nomination (the Swiss Oscars) as Best Swiss Short Film in 2013 for *Goal* directed by Fulvio Bernasconi and the Quartz nomination in 2014 for *Age 17* directed by the young director Filippo Demarchi. Since then Cinédokké has opened up to international co-productions, like *L'Ospite* by Duccio Chiarini, shown in Piazza Grande at the Locarno Film Festival in 2018.

Films in production

Party for Shy People, (feature film) by Francesco Rizzi
Stella Cadente, (feature film) by Dominique Margot
Becaària, (feature film) by Erik Bernasconi

Filmography

Gömmer Hei (feature film) by Caterina Mona, 2021
Miraggio (documentary) by Nina Stefanka, 2020
sòne: (documentary) by Daniel Kemény, 2020
Favolacce (*Bad Tales*) (feature film) by the D'Innocenzo brothers, 2020
Palazzo di Giustizia (feature film) by Chiara Bellosi, 2020
Love me Tender (feature film) by Klaudia Reynicke, 2018
Cronofobia (feature film) by Francesco Rizzi, 2018

Switzerland



Franziska Sonder
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Ensemble Film
Switzerland
www.ensemblefilm.ch

Ensemble Film GmbH in Zurich creates documentary films with their own signature – powerfully narrated and hitting the right tone to appeal to a national and international audience. We are convinced that in this fast-moving era the documentary format can provide deep insights into a subject, while telling a powerful story and has the ability to move audiences substantially. Franziska Sonder founded the production company Ensemble Film with Maurizius Staerkle Druex and Eva Vitija. The full-length documentaries *Loving Highsmith* by Eva Vitija, *Dida* by Corina Schwingruber Ilić and Nikola Ilić and *Love Will Always Come Later* by Julia Furer will be released in 2021.

Films in production

Loving Highsmith by Eva Vitija, 2021
Love Will Come Later by Julia Furer, 2021
Brave New Switzerland by Benny Jaberg und Maurizius Staerkle Druex, 2022
Caves by Carlos Isabel, 2021
Arctic Link by Ian Purnell, 2023
Another Day in the Garden by Lasse Linder, 2023

Filmography

Dida by Corina Schwingruber Ilić & Nikola Ilić, 2021
The Game, (short documentary) by Roman Hodel, 2020
The License, (short fiction) by Nora Fingscheidt, 2016



Aline Schmid
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Beauvoir Films
Switzerland
www.beauvoirfilms.ch

Beauvoir Films (Geneva CH) produces documentary and fiction features for festival and theatrical releases as well as TV. We work with directors who have a distinct visual and narrative approach and strive to push the boundaries of storytelling in compelling and creative ways. The film *Walden* by Daniel Zimmermann received the Special Jury Prize 2018 at the Karlovy Vary Festival and was presented at the Sundance Festival 2019. *Closing Time* by Nicole Vögele won a silver leopard at the Locarno Festival 2018 and *The Girl and The Spider* by Ramon & Silvan Zürcher the Best Director and the FIPRESCI awards (Section Encounters) at Berlinale 2021. The documentary *The Art of Silence* about Marcel Marceau, directed by Maurizius Staerkle Druex, and *SIRIRI - The Cardinal & The Imam* by Manuel von Stürler (Winter Nomads) are currently in post-production.

Films in production

The Art of Silence by Maurizius Staerkle Druex, (Doc cinema), 90', 2021
SIRIRI - The Cardinal and The Imam by Manuel von Stürler, (Doc cinema) 90', 2021
Echte Schweizer by Luka Popadić, (Doc cinema), 90', 2021
Les Histoires d'Amour de Liv S. by Anna Luif, (Fiction), 90', 2022

Filmography

The Girl & The Spider by Ramon & Silvan Zürcher, (Fiction), 2021
Closing Time by Nicole Vögele, (Doc Cinéma), 2018
Walden by Daniel Zimmermann, (Doc Cinéma), 2018

Prix RTS: Perspectives d'un Doc

Initiated by Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS), this competition aims at promoting creative documentary filmmaking in french-speaking Switzerland.

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About

Initiated by Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS), this pitching session aims at promoting a documentary project in its development stage. Producers and filmmakers present their selected projects to a jury of professionals and the general public. The choice of the award-winning team and project is based on its financing needs in the prospect of a long and complex development, as well as on our usual selection criteria, i.e. the team's potential, the interest and creativity of the project. The prize is worth 10,000 Swiss francs.

This pitching session will take place on-site and in French.

Moderator



Gaspard Lamunière
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Producer, Director
RTS Radio Télévision Suisse
Switzerland

Gaspard Lamunière has worked 20 years in the field as a journalist for RTS's "Temps Présent" television program. Over the years, he has directed more than 50 documentaries in different parts of the world and in Switzerland. Interested in all kinds of topics, he has made very different films. In 2004, joined RTS's Documentary unit, where he now works as Commissioning Editor and Buyer. His long experience as a filmmaker has won the respect of independent Swiss directors, with whom the RTS is in close contact. The documentary unit is also involved in many pre-purchases with international producers, that do usually run in the best festivals and often win substantial awards

Jury: Prix RTS



Steven Artels
Head of the Documentary Unit
RTS
Switzerland



Isabelle Christiaens
Head of Documentary Coproductions
RTBF
Belgium



Philippa de Roten
Head of Culture and Society Department
RTS
Switzerland



Antoine Duplan
Film Critic/ Journalist
Le Temps
Switzerland



Gaspard Lamunière
Producer/ Commissioning Editor
RTS
Switzerland

Award

Prix RTS
CHF 10,000
Best feature film project

A World in Perspective Un monde en relief

Philippe Calame
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: February 2022



Logline

The life of Jules Jacot-Guillarmod is a novel. His universe is a land of adventure: in Egypt the Sphinx is half-buried, Turkey is still the Ottoman Empire, trains are stopped by the events of the October Revolution...

Our desire is to respect the original work by exposing the relief originally created by the stereoscopic shooting. This ancient process, brought up to date with current techniques, immediately removes the dusty aspect from the images of the past.

Synopsis

Jules Jacot-Guillarmod was born on December 24, 1868 in the Swiss Jura mountains, in La Chaux-de-Fonds. He died on board a liner in the Gulf of Aden at the age of 57. A great explorer, and doctor by profession, he travelled the world at the dawn of the 20th century, visiting Europe, America, Asia, Africa

Adventurer Jules Jacot-Guillarmod is also a pioneer of mountaineering. He owes his international fame to two expeditions to the Himalayas that he made in 1902 and 1905, including the first attempt to climb the mythical K2.

Passionate about photography, he documented his daily life, his travels and his exploits with more than 12,000 photos. The particularity of these shots is that they are all in stereoscopy (in 3D or in relief). All the pictures are indexed and captioned by the author. This collection is completed by the daily account noted by Jules Jacot Guillarmod in his personal diary.

To follow the footsteps of Jules Jacot-Guillarmod is to discover Switzerland and the world at the turn of the last century; it is to bring to life an adventure novel in which each photo is a journey in itself.

We want to make a feature film in 3D using images from the Jules Jacot-Guillarmod photographic collection. Hybrid and innovative, it is a project where the image is fixed and it is the spectator who enters within to discover the constructive elements of the shooting. The additional dimension offers a new opportunity: to move inside the image. The impression of movement is therefore created.

Director's Biography

36 miles carré (64', 2014), L'œil du Khmer rouge (52', 2008), Pour l'amour du ciel (52', 2006).

Filming Location
Switzerland

Shooting Language
French

Shooting Date & Duration
2021, 4 months

Shooting Format
4K

Expected Runtime
90' / 60'

Production Company
REC production (Switzerland)

Producer(s)
Maria Nicollier

Total Budget
300,000 €

Financing in Place
76,000 € (25%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Göhner Stiftung, Switzerland
Sandoz, Switzerland
Casino NE, Switzerland
LORO GVE, Switzerland
Fond. Wilsdorf, Switzerland
SIG GVE, Switzerland
Fond Casino Meyrin, Switzerland

Looking for International Sales

Contact

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Maria Nicollier
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REC production
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Addictions

Jacques Matthey
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: 2022



Logline

In the 1990s, Switzerland becomes a pioneer in the fight against drug addiction. Why? How did it happen? What does it teach us about the evolution of addiction treatments and the perception of drug users? Through archive footage and testimonies, *Addictions* looks back at the key moments, from the 1970s to the present day, that led Switzerland to adopt an innovative policy on drugs and addiction.

Synopsis

"Drugs should no longer be a police issue but a public health issue. The human being must be placed at the center of the debate."

UN General Assembly, 16th April 2016, New York. While attending a session discussing the world drug problem, Alain Berset, a member of the Swiss government, restates the principles running Switzerland's drug policy.

How did Switzerland become a pioneer in the fight against drug addiction? Why did this issue become particularly relevant in our country?

In a 52' format, *Addictions* proposes to look back at the key moments, from the 1970s to the present day, which led Switzerland to adopt an innovative policy on drugs and addiction.

Two themes will constitute the narrative thread of the film: the evolution of the drug addicts' treatment and the change of view towards them from the public opinion and from political, health, and judicial authorities.

Through a narrative essentially made of archive footage and filmed testimonies, *Addictions* will bring a new light on this subject, rarely touched upon in Swiss historiography.

Director's Biography

After studying Cinema at the University of Lausanne, Jacques Matthey takes directing classes at the CLCF in Paris. He joins the Montreux Jazz Festival and works alongside Claude Nobs in preserving the festival archives (UNESCO's heritage). As of today, he has produced and directed two documentaries *Afghan Memento* (2010) and *Jazz The Only Way Of Life* (2017), selected in various festivals and broadcasted on TV and cinemas. He currently has two documentary projects, *Addictions* and *Retour en montagne*.

Filming Location
Switzerland, Jura

Shooting Language
French

Shooting Date & Duration
2021-2022, 2 months

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
52'

Production Company
Box Productions (Switzerland)

Producer(s)
Elena Tatti

Total Budget
283,734 €

Financing in Place
33,288 € (12%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Succès Passage Antenne, Switzerland
Fondation culturelle BCN, Switzerland

Looking for International Sales

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Cash Crash

Anne Pictet, Sandra Roth
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: January 2023



Logline

Dreaming of a less cynical and fairer finance, a few Swiss financiers are launching – through a popular initiative – a novel concept: taxing by a micro-tax all electronic payments in Switzerland, which are equivalent to at least 149 times the GDP, the current tax base. Considered either as a naive or even dangerous utopia or as a visionary project, this proposal raises questions, fears and hopes.

Synopsis

The 2008 crisis could have been the end of the capitalist system. However, the financial apparatus has taken off again, arming itself with ever more sophisticated techniques. In Switzerland, a small group of financiers is dreaming of a finance where the obsession with profit would give way to the collective interest and respect for the living. Their observation is clear: with the rapid digitalisation and financialisation of the economy, the volume of money flow on the markets is gigantic. At the same time, in the real economy and for the majority of the population, debts are accumulating and inequalities are increasing.

They therefore propose, in the form of a popular initiative, the introduction of a revolutionary tax that would tax – at a single, minimal rate – all electronic transactions in Switzerland, the volume of which is 149 times greater than GDP. In their view, such a tax would relieve the middle classes and would be enough revenue to abolish all existing taxes. With a slightly higher rate, this tax could even finance the growing needs in health, education, old age insurance, or even an unconditional basic income or the ecological transition.

Naïve utopia – “such a tax would be immediately circumvented” – or even dangerous for some, or (too) visionary for others, we will bring this proposal to the attention of the Swiss circles concerned, with a view to clarifying the usefulness – real or desired – of finance for the whole of society.

Director's Biography

In 2017, Anne Pictet got her Masters Degree in Screen Documentary at Goldsmiths College, University of London, UK. From 2011 to 2016 she studied to become a criminal lawyer.

Filming Location

Switzerland

Shooting Language

French, German, English

Shooting Date & Duration

2019-2022

Shooting Format

4K

Expected Runtime

90'

Production Company

Alva Film (Switzerland)

Producer(s)

Britta Rindelaub, Thomas Reichlin

Total Budget

300,000 €

Financing in Place

24,000 € (8%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

OFC, Switzerland
Succès Cinéma, Switzerland
Cinéforum Aide complémentaire, Switzerland
Apport producteurs Alva Film, Switzerland
Team's own investment, Switzerland

First Feature film

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Colostrum

Sayaka Mizuno
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: July 2023



Logline

Since the death of his father and the recent loss of his brother, Pascal, 45 years old, dairy farmer in Val d'Illicz (VS), has to take care of the family business alone, occasionally helped by his mother, Nelly. The arrival of summer and Salomé, a young city girl who volunteers for the Caritas-Montagnards association, disrupt the frantic rhythm of the farm and the family dynamics.

Synopsis

Since the death of his father and the recent loss of his brother, Pascal, 45 years old, dairy farmer in Val d'Illicz (VS), has to take care of the family business alone, occasionally helped by his mother Nelly. One summer, Pascal welcomes Salomé, a young city girl who volunteers for Caritas-Montagnards, an association that helps farmers in distress.

Salomé is dedicated and mysterious, and her presence confronts the protagonist with his condition as a man, between his mother and the young woman, between the countryside and the city, tradition and modernity.

Pascal, who is a bit of an eternal child, with his miniature farm machines on display in his room, does not find any meaning in his actions if it is not to bequeath the family business to a son. This strong desire for fatherhood seems to be constantly recalled through the obstinacy of procreating cows and the observation of bodies in perpetual transformation.

Director's Biography

Born in 1991 in Geneva, Sayaka Mizuno obtained a bachelor's degree in cinema at HEAD – Geneva in 2016 and a master's degree in directing at ECAL / HEAD in 2018. Her medium-length documentary *Kawasaki keirin* received several awards including The Flaherty Talent Award Award at the Nara International Film Festival in Japan 2016, the SSA / SUISSIMAGE Jury Prize for the most innovative Swiss film at Visions du Réel 2017 and the Audiovisual Training Prize – MAIF Prize at the Traces de Vies festival in Clermont-Ferrand 2017. In 2016, she won the Hans Wilsdorf Excellence Award in cinema and in 2017, she participated in the Locarno Filmmakers Academy.

Filming Location

Valais, Switzerland

Shooting Language

French

Shooting Date & Duration

Winter 2021, Summer and Winter 2022

Shooting Format

HD

Expected Runtime

90'

Production Company

MNEMOSYN FILMS (Switzerland)

Producer(s)

Stéphanie Argerich, Charlie Petersmann

Total Budget

300,000 €

Confirmed Financial Sources

MNEMOSYN FILMS, Switzerland

First Feature film

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L'Ellipse

Frédéric Gonseth, Catherine Azad
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: Mars 2022



Logline

Twelve 40-year-old adults are shocked to see and hear the statements they made at the age of 7 on an autumn day in 1988. In these filmed testimonies, they talked about love, money and death. Do these adults still have a connection with the children in front of them?

Synopsis

It happened one autumn day 33 years ago. On that day, a camera captured the spontaneous statements of a dozen children. Between them, they addressed themes as universal as love, death, money, jealousy and family. Without any filter.

The same camera finds these children transformed into adults with a wave of the wand, today on the edge of forty. They are confronted with that which was still only a sketch of themselves for some, while the foundation of the person they have become for others...

How do these women and men of 2021 feel about these images frozen in time? What do they see that we may not see in these children on the screen? Do they want to enlighten us on the intimate trajectory that separated them from their childhood dreams or that, on the contrary, was already leading them there?

Has a gap opened up to the point where there seems to be no relationship between these two people, beyond surface similarities?

We will place markers along the route to help us find our way, in particular audiovisual archives that will allow us to reconstitute the setting in 1988.

At that time, Frédéric Gonseth made a 10-minute short film for an RTS programme *Mon Œil (My Eye)*, tinged with humour and spontaneity, made up entirely of children's words, without commentary. Today, the filmmaking couple Gonseth & Azad propose to play with this 33-year-old void.

Director's Biography

Peste et Corona (15', 2020), *Virula* (6', 2020), *Le Printemps du journalisme* (72', 2017), *La Bataille du Gripen* (90', 2017), *Yvette Z'Graggen - Une Femme au volant de sa vie* (90', 2016), *Baguette magique* (70' + 52', 2013), *Botiza* (2013), *Léman-Mékong* (67', 2010), *Walter raconte Maffi* (40', 2009).

Filming Location
Switzerland, Canada

Shooting Language
French

Shooting Date & Duration
2021-2022, 2 months

Shooting Format
4K

Expected Runtime
60'

Production Company
Frédéric Gonseth Productions (Switzerland)

Producer(s)
Frédéric Gonseth

Total Budget
250,000 €

Financing in Place
15,000 € (6%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
RTS, Switzerland
Cineforum, Switzerland

Looking for International Sales

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On the Irrawaddy, a Floating Dispensary Sur l'Irrawaddy, un dispensaire flottant

Emmanuelle De Riedmatten
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: 2022



Logline

Thanks to the coronation of an old dream of Maurice, a retired Swiss pharmacist, the RV INRA dispensary sails the Irrawaddy River, which crosses Burma, in order to provide health care to the inhabitants of the riverbanks, all ethnic groups included. While the country is breaking up, this floating dispensary, where all the staff are Burmese, is a kind of emblem of humanity and togetherness.

Synopsis

Since the accession to the government of Aung San Su Kyi, a glimpse of democracy seemed to take shape in Burma. But on February 1st, 2021, chaos set in everywhere following a coup d'état perpetrated by the military junta. Far from the urban turmoil, on the Irrawaddy River, the RV INWA, a dispensary boat continues its mission, plying the river almost relentlessly. Until 2018, the RV INWA was a pleasure boat, bought by Maurice, a Swiss pharmacist, whose dream was to put a floating dispensary on the water. Completely redesigned and rehabilitated for medical needs, the RV INWA has been operational for a little over a year, with a doctor, medical staff, pilot and stewards on board. According to Maurice's wish – who lives in Switzerland – all the medical and sailing staff are Burmese. Today, the RV INWA travels the Irrawaddy River from Mandalay to the North before returning to its base, stopping regularly for one or two days on the banks to receive patients. 60 to 70 consultations are provided daily. Minor surgery, wound care, dressings, prevention and basic care. Babies are born in complete safety.

The interest in making a documentary on the RV INWA dispensary boat is that it allows a privileged insider view into a rather unknown area of Burma. It also gives a better idea of the strategic importance of the Irrawaddy River, pillar of the Burmese economy, strategic geographical backbone, to better understand the history, the multiplicities, the stakes, the hopes of a people who, for decades, have been living between hope and despair.

Director's Biography

Madre Habana (2018), *Carole Roussopoulos, une femme à la caméra* (2011), *Vivement samedi!*, (2006), *Blandine et les siens* (90', 2004), *Les visites de la lune* (2001).

Filming Location
Burma

Shooting Language
Burmese, French, English

Shooting Date & Duration
2021, 1 month

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
90' / 52'

Production Company
Louise Productions (Switzerland)

Producer(s)
Heinz Dill

Total Budget
250,000 €

Confirmed Financial Sources
Louise Productions (Switzerland)

Looking for International Sales

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Roger Rey

Gaël Métroz
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: February 2023



Logline

After his son's death in a car accident, the driver Roger Rey stops racing to care for his wife Marylou. Thirty years later, she dies asking him to resume racing in her honour. But Roger is 84 and his car is 40 years old.

Director's Biography

Noces Maliennes (52', 2021), *Sâdhu* (90', 2012), *Kalash* (52', 2010), *Nomad's Land - Sur les traces de Nicolas Bouvier* (90', 2008).

Filming Location
Switzerland

Shooting Language
French

Shooting Date & Duration
2021

Shooting Format
4K

Expected Runtime
90'

Production Company
EPYC Films (Switzerland)

Producer(s)
Bertrand Coppey

Total Budget
500,000 €

Financing in Place
85,000 € (17%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
EPYC Films, Switzerland

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She from the Mountains Celle des Montagnes

Blaise Harrison
Switzerland, France
Expected Release Date: 2023



Logline

She from the mountains is seventeen, her name is Antonia and she leads a solitary life in an isolated farm. As sensitive as adventurous, she likes to face the elements, passing time in nature amidst its creatures, steering clear of the men of the valley. As new desires and encounters arise, they hint at the possibility of another life, elsewhere. The choice between staying and leaving becomes the first great dilemma in her existence.

Synopsis

Antonia lives isolated in the mountains with her parents, whose decision to settle far from the city's heart dates back to her childhood, and to their initial agricultural project, as they turned their backs to their previous lives.

Today she is seventeen. She studies at home and helps her parents with the farm. She is solitary and likes spending time alone in nature. She leads a simple life, almost wild. She occasionally meets with young people of her age, with whom she doesn't share much. She is found to be a little strange, she intimidates as much as she intrigues.

There is the mountain, her cocoon, and the Valley lower down, where the closest city lies. It looks like a rather ordinary France, strained by numerous crises, trying to cope as best as it can. Stretched all around are pavilions, a ZAC and its supermarket, and a small town made of three bars built in the 1970s.

Here, youth floats by. For Antonia, this place is death, no horizon in sight. From parties to drinking, between apprenticeships and homes, there are those who become passive, resigned. And others, less numerous, who believe that to survive you've got to get out.

One day, Antonia meets one of the latter types, one that is out of air, and no longer accepts the social predetermination to which he feels subordinated. They get along well. They discover a shared sensibility, and the need to go see what lies beyond their neighbourhood. Somehow, this bright connection also appears heartbreaking to Antonia, who has always loved her mountains and animals more than anything.

Torn between her attachment to the rural world and her dreams of emancipation, the choice between staying and leaving becomes the first great dilemma in her existence.

Director's Biography

Les Particules (2019), *L'Harmonie* (2014), *Armand, 15 ans l'été* (2011), *Bibeleksae* (2006).

Filming Location
Switzerland, France

Shooting Language
French

Shooting Date & Duration
2022, 4 months

Shooting Format
16mm / HD

Expected Runtime
90'

Production Company
Bande à Part Films (Switzerland)

Producer(s)
Agnieszka Ramu

Total Budget
450,000 €

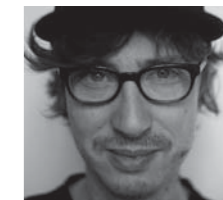
Financing in Place
28,000 € (6%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Les Films du Poisson, France

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SWISS FILMS Previews

SWISS FILMS Previews presents 5 high-end swiss documentary films at a production stage ready to be launched on the festival circuit and the international market. The SWISS FILMS Previews offers sales agents, international distributors and festival delegates the opportunity to discover these new documentaries.

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About

In collaboration with Visions du Réel, SWISS FILMS presents promising and upcoming Swiss documentary films in post-production by giving a first glimpse of their artistic approach. The SWISS FILMS Previews offers sales agents, international distributors and festival delegates the opportunity to discover these new documentaries. Each film will be presented with a pitch accompanied with film material and a moderated Q&A with the producer and/or the director.

Moderator



Andreas Bühlmann
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Consultant Film & Industry
 SWISS FILMS
 Switzerland

Andreas Bühlmann holds a MA in film studies from the University of Zurich (Réseau Cinéma CH). After working for several years for Swiss film festivals since 2007, he became Head of Industry at Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur in 2013. He continued working as a curator in Winterthur and for other festivals (short and feature films). He joined SWISS FILMS in 2016 as film consultant where he focuses on first features by emerging Swiss talents in the Festival & Markets department. Since August 2019 he's a film and industry consultant at SWISS FILMS and Artistic Co-Director of Pink Apple Film Festival Zurich.

I Coroneri

Daniel Kemény
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: August, 2021



Logline

A couple hit by the lockdown and the discovery of a betrayal: the impossibility of leaving each other combines with the dystopia of reality, and the city of Rome empty and beautiful.

Synopsis

The forced isolation of a couple in Rome during the outbreak of COVID19: when the city empties out and appears as it had never been seen before – all the symbols of its greatness are left alone in their majesty, the couple also becomes naked. Life as it has always been conceived and lived is transformed day by day into a dystopian dimension that is the new reality. The discovery of a possible betrayal, the difficulties of a dead-end relationship echo with the world outside, in the midst of a pandemic.

Directors' Profile

Born in 1981 in Pietrapaola. Daniel Kemeny studied Art and Sculpture in Berlin, Athens and Bologna. He has been exhibiting over ten years in cultural and art institutions in Europe and around the world, creating spatial installations and videos. Since 2010, he works cinematographically, where he combines expressive skills with his narrative needs, combining different points of view and languages.

His first feature-length documentary *sône*: premiered at Visions du Réel 2020.

Filming Location
Rome (Italy), Calabria (Italy)

Shooting Language
Italian

Shooting Date & Duration
2020, 4 months

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
50' / 40'

Production Company
Cinédoché

Producer(s)
Michela Pini

Total Budget
80,000 €

Financing in Place
54,494 € (68%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
FilmPlus Svizzera italiana, Regional fund, Switzerland
RSI Radiotelevisione svizzera, TV broadcast, Switzerland
Succès Passage Antenne, premium generated by TV audience (production own investment), Switzerland

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Loving Highsmith

Eva Vitija
Switzerland, Germany
Expected Release Date: Summer 2021



Synopsis

Based on Patricia Highsmith's personal writings and accounts of her family and lovers, the film casts new light on the famous thriller writer's life and oeuvre, permeated by themes of love and its defining influence on identity.

Directors' Profile

Born 1973 in Basel, Switzerland. Degree as screenwriter from the German Film and Television Academy Berlin. She has written for cinema and television, including *Meier*, *Marilyn*, *Madly in love* and *Summerbirds*. Her first feature documentary *My life as a film* (2015) was nominated for the Swiss Film Prize and a prize of the International Documentary Association, Los Angeles, and garnered various prizes, such as the Prix de Soleure, the Basel, Zurich & Manchester Film Prizes.

Filming Location
United States, France, Germany, Switzerland

Shooting Language
English, French, German

Shooting Date & Duration
2019

Shooting Format
HD / 2K

Expected Runtime
83' / 52'

Production Company
Ensemble Film (Switzerland)

Producer(s)
Franziska Sonder, Maurizius Staerle Druх, Carl-Ludwig Rettinger

Total Budget
1,020,000 €

Financing in Place
948,600 (93%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Federal Office of culture, Switzerland
Zurich Film Fund, Switzerland
Kanton St. Gallen, Switzerland
SRF, Switzerland
RSI, Switzerland
Redaktion Sternstunde, Switzerland
UBS Kulturstiftung, Switzerland
Alexis Victor Thalberg Stiftung, Switzerland
Ernst Göhner Stiftung, Switzerland
Volkart Stiftung, Switzerland
Suissimage, Switzerland
SSA, Switzerland
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LUX

Raphaël Dubach, Mateo Ybarra
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: August 2021



Logline

In early fall 2019, Geneva faces an unprecedented security crisis: the imminent attack by an anti-capitalist terrorist group known as the Global Liberation Front (GLF). The Swiss army is immediately called upon to assist the police force in containing the threat to Calvin's city as quickly as possible.

Synopsis

In early fall 2019, Geneva faces an unprecedented security crisis: the imminent attack by an anti-capitalist terrorist group known as the Global Liberation Front (GLF). The Swiss army is immediately called upon to assist the police force in containing the threat to Calvin's city as quickly as possible.

Such is the extraordinary log line of LUX, the huge army simulation exercise that took place in Geneva from 1st to 10th October 2019. Ten days where 1,500 soldiers took part in a life-size game, between city and countryside, to tackle a fictitious threat.

While exploring the ambiguous relationship between reality and fiction, LUX offers a poetic desire to draw the viewers away from preconceived ideas in the heart of one of the most unique armies in the world and one of the most controversial institutions in Switzerland.

Directors' Profile

Born in 1992, Raphaël Dubach is a director, cinematographer, camera assistant and colorist. 2013 he holds a BA in Cinema with a specialization in cinematography from École Cantonal d'Art de Lausanne (ECAL). He directed *Sempervirens* (2015), selected at the IDFA and Les États généraux (Lussas, France).

Mateo Ybarra studied film production at the University of the Arts in London (2015) before training as a HGV driver. 2018 he specialized in directing in the film department at the School of Art and Design (HEAD-Genève). He directed several short essays and documentaries and is currently pursuing two editing film projects.

Filming Location
Switzerland, Geneva, Bern

Shooting Language
French, German

Shooting Date & Duration
2019

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
75'

Production Company
Jeunes Sauvages

Producer(s)
Raphaël Dubach, Mateo Ybarra

Total Budget
80,000 €

Financing in Place
80,000 € (100%)

Confirmed Financial Sources
Private Foundation, Switzerland
Pour-cent culturel Migros, Switzerland

Looking for International Sales

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My Old Man

Steven Vit
Switzerland
Expected Release Date: March/April 2022



Logline

In *My Old Man*, filmmaker Steven Vit follows the transition process of his father Rudy from working life into retirement – a journey that takes us to three continents and immerses us in unique worlds of contrasts, be it the bustling city of Tokyo, the skyline of Shanghai, the vast Canadian wilderness or the Swiss Alps.

Synopsis

Told from my perspective, *My Old Man* follows the transition process of my father Rudy from working life into retirement. Over a period of three years, I accompany him through the most formative phases of this radical change: from his last business trip, to the first day in retirement, through the crises and challenges in the relationship with my mother Käthi, until the day he begins to adjust to his new life. It is a journey that takes us to three continents and immerses us in unique worlds of contrasts, be it the bustling city of Tokyo, the skyline of Shanghai, the vast Canadian wilderness or the Swiss Alps.

In my observations and thoughts on my parents' lives, I discuss themes that are extremely personal in their origin, but universal in their essence. They question the foundation of our interpersonal relationships, the importance of work in our lives, and they also meditate on our constant confrontation with our own mortality. The shared confrontation of these questions allows me to approach my father on a new level. And through this closeness, I ultimately begin to get to know not only him, but also myself, better.

Directors' Profile

Born in 1990 in Bellach, Switzerland. He holds a joint Swiss and Canadian citizenship. 2014 BA in Film from HSLU (Hochschule Luzern, Design & Kunst). 2020 MA in Film and Media from SKH (Stockholm University of the Arts). His filmography includes: *Traces* (2014) and *Innerorts* (2013).

Filming Location
Switzerland, Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai, Canada

Shooting Language
English, Swiss German

Shooting Date & Duration
March 2018, January 2019, August 2019, January 2020 - June 2021

Shooting Format
HD

Expected Runtime
90'

Production Company
Lomotion AG Filmproduktion

Producer(s)
David Fonjallaz, Louis Mataré

Total Budget
253,026 €

Financing in Place
225,334 € (89%)

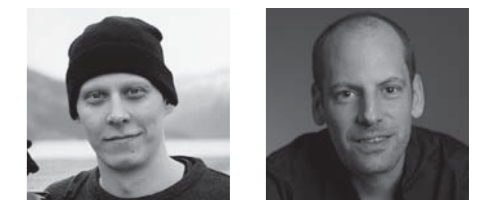
Confirmed Financial Sources
National Film Fund, Switzerland
Bernese Film Fund, Switzerland
Swiss National Television, Switzerland
Suissimage, Switzerland
Burgergemeinde Bern, Switzerland
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Looking for International Sales

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Women's Africa L'Afrique des Femmes

Mohammed Soudani
Switzerland, Ivory Coast, France
Expected Release Date: May 2021



Logline

A film that will make us understand that the future of Africa belongs to women.

Synopsis

A trip that will take us to 7 African countries (Ghana, Senegal, Rwanda, Mozambique, Kenya, Ivory Coast, Burundi) to meet powerful women determined to do everything in their power to offer a better future to the African people. These women will explain how they think they are working to save the continent, which must resolutely embrace integration into the world's economy because the years of totalitarian male rule of Africa have been catastrophic. A film that will make us understand that the future of Africa belongs to women.

Directors' Profile

1949 in Algeria. Mohammed Soudani is an acclaimed Swiss-Algerian filmmaker. He emigrated to Southern Switzerland, Ticino over 30 years ago, where he became one of the most appreciated and creative Swiss film and television directors. Very sensitive to the African situation and relations with Europe, he won the 1998 Swiss Film Award for the Best Fiction Film *Walo Fendo*. He taught audiovisual at the I.T.A.M. Institute and Video Presse in Paris, and at Fininvest in Milan. He currently teaches audiovisual at University of Applied Sciences of Southern Switzerland (SUPSI) and at International Academy of Audiovisual Sciences (CISA) in Lugano.

Filming Location

Ghana, Senegal, Rwanda, Mozambique, Kenya,
Ivory Coast, Burundi, Switzerland

Shooting Language

French, English, Portuguese

Shooting Date & Duration

2019

Shooting Format

HD

Expected Runtime

90'

Production Company

Amka Films Productions

Producer(s)

Tiziana Soudani, Amel Soudani, Michela Pini

Total Budget

560,000 €

Financing in Place

560,000 € (100%)

Confirmed Financial Sources

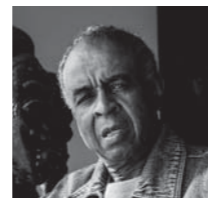
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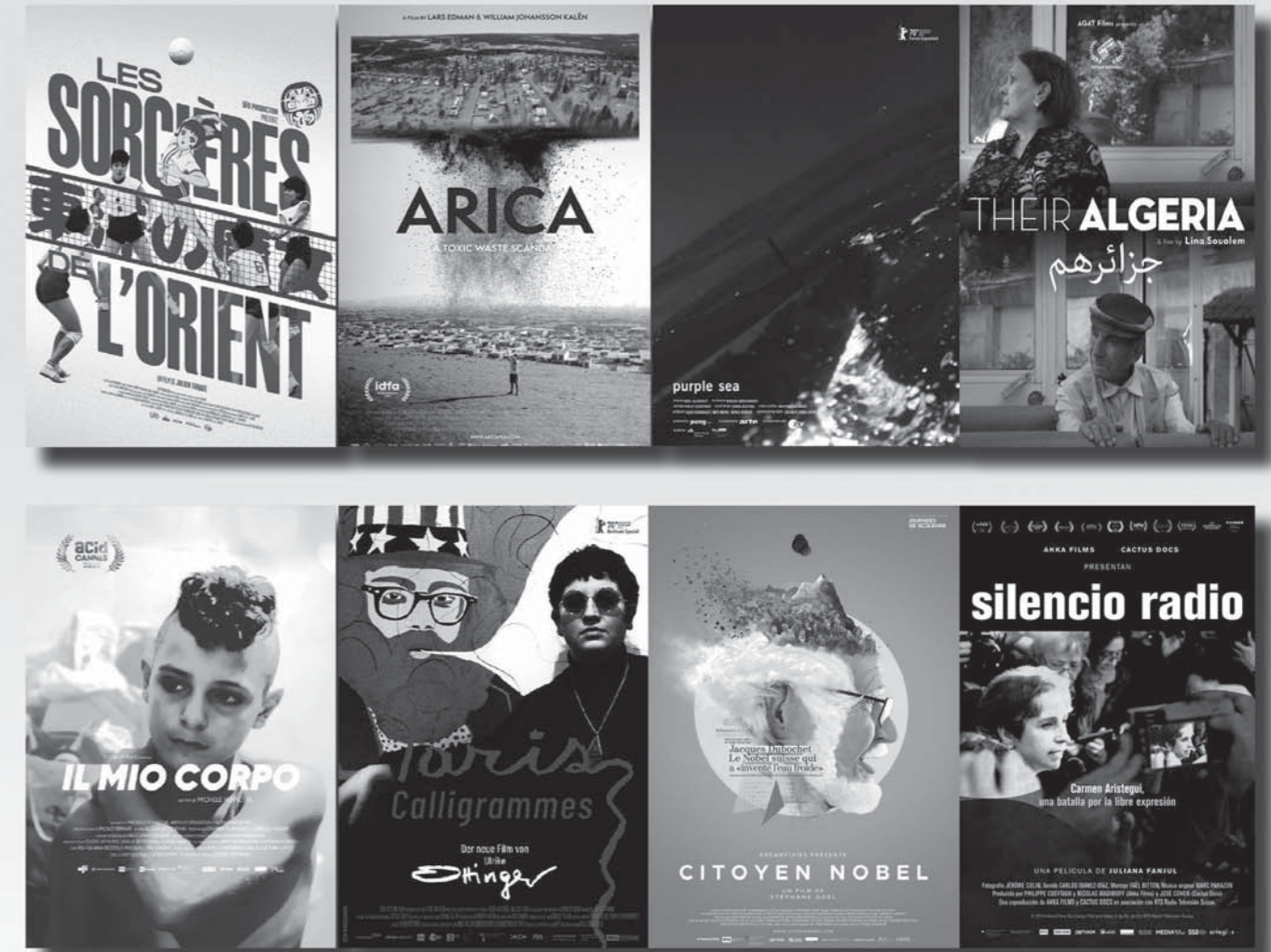




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Alle Branchen-Anlässe des Festivals

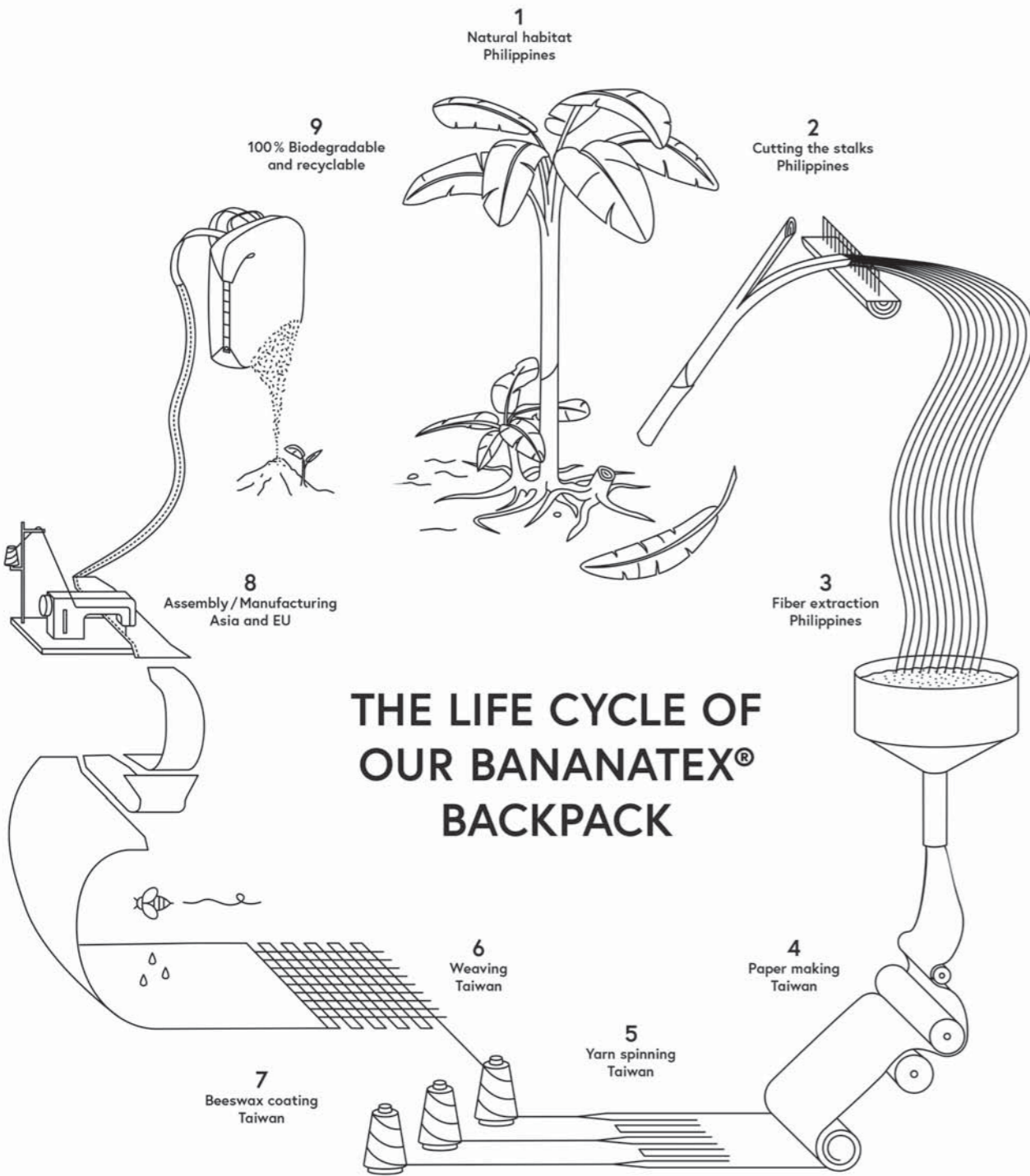
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Quoi qu'il arrive, nous nous engageons
pour l'avenir de la Suisse.

la Mobilière

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VdR-Industry Team



Émilie Bujès
Artistic Director



Madeline Robert
Head of Industry



Mateo Ybarra
Industry Coordinator



Jasmin Basic
Projects Selection



Gudula Meinzolt
Industry Special Advisor



Violeta Bava
Industry Consultant



Ludivine Barro
Film Market Intern



Teresa Mignolli
Publications Intern



Antigoni Papantoni
Matchmaker & Industry guest coordinator

Special Thanks

Academy of Media Arts Cologne,
 Ute Dilger
Andana Films, Stephan Riguet & Léa
 Valentin
ARF/FDS, Barbara Miller & Roland
 Hurschler
Aropa, Elena Tatti & Daniel Wyss
Arte France, Rasha Salti
Auguste Orts, Marie Logie
AVEK, Ulla Simonen
Barro Ludivine
Berg Jordana
Berlinale, Carlo Chatrian & Nadja
 Tennstedt
Bitton Yaël
Brasil Cine Mundi
**Cannes Docs Marché du Film-Festival
 de Cannes**, Jérôme Paillard & Pierre-
 Alexis Chevit
C&Co, Catherine Chevassu
ChileDoc, Flor Rubina, Paola Castillo &
 José Gil Rincón
Cinando, Jérôme Paillard, Charlotte
 Hurni, Corentin Besnier
Cinébulletin, Pascaline Sordet
Cinéforum, Stéphane Morey & Gérard Ruey
Cinélibre, Robert Richter
Close Up Films, Joëlle Bertossa
DAE, Brigid O'Shea
Daisybell, Sacha Béraud
Doc Alliance, CPH:DOX, Doclisboa,
 Docs Against Gravity FF, DOK Leipzig,
 FID Marseille, Jihlava International
 Documentary Film Festival
Docedge Kolkata, Nilotpal Majumdar
**Doc/it - Associazione Documentaristi
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 Pornaro, Gianluca De Angelis
DOK Leipzig, Christoph Terhechte &
 Roland Loebner
Drozdova Marina
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ECAL
Edkins Teboho
Eurimages, Roberto Olla
EURODOC, Maria Bonsanti
Eventival, Tomas Prasek & Ales Fuchs
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FIFF, Sebastiano Conforti
Filmbulletin, Michael Kuratli
Filmexplorer, Giuseppe Di Salvatore &
 Ruth Baettig
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German Films, Julia Teichmann
Hansen Gitte

HEAD
**IDFA, International Documentary Film
 Festival Amsterdam**, Orwa Nyrabia,
 Isabel Arrate & Laurien ten Houten
IFP, Gabriele Capolino
Imersis, Julien Lüthi
INCAA
Interlignes, Élodie & Émilie Flachaire
Ji.hlava IDFF, Marek Hovorka & Jarmila
 Outratová
Krakov Film Festival, Krzysztof Gierat &
 Barbara Orlicz
Krakov Film Foundation, Katarzyna Wilk
Le Temps, Antoine Duplan
Lightdox, Anna Berthollet
Locarno Film Festival, Daniela Persico
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Marta Andreu
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 & Florian Pflingsttag
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 & Philippa de Roten
Sarajevo Film Festival, Jovan
 Marjanović & Rada Šešić
Schaffter Sahli, Joanna Schaffter &
 Vincent Sahli
Sixpack Film, Gerald Weber
Square Eyes, Wouter Jansen
SRF, Urs Augstburger
SSR SRG, Irène Challand, Sven Wälti &
 Alina Corradi
Sundance Film Institute, Bruni Burrell
**Swiss Agency for Development and
 Cooperation SDC**, Barbara Aebischer &
 Rudolphe Von Planta
SWISS FILMS, Daniel Fuchs, Andreas

Bühlmann & Aida Suljic
Taiwan Docs, Jessie Yang
Taskovski Films, Maria Shajahan
Tënk, Jean-Marie Barbe, Alizée
 Mandereau, Pierre Mathéus, Line Peyron
 & Eva Tourrent
The Party Film Sales, Sarah Chazelle,
 Estelle De Araujo, Clémence Lavigne,
 Théo Lionel & Melen Bouëtard
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trigon-film, Meret Ruggle
Venice International Film Festival,
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Venice Production Bridge/Final Cut,
 Alessandra Speciale
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 **META**



idfa

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