

CROATIAN CINEMA

CROATIAN FILM MAGAZINE 1 / 2014

FILMING IN CROATIA WHY GAME OF THRONES AND BORGIA CHOSE DUBROVNIK?

NEVIO MARASOVIĆ

BRANKO LUSTIG

NICKLAS WIKSTRÖM NICASTRO

IVA BABIĆ

RIISING STAR OF CROATIAN CINEMA CROATIAN MOVIES IN 2014 **PULA FILM FESTIVAL**
NEW CONCEPT, NEW PROGRAMMES, NEW PEOPLE



Croatian
Audiovisual
Centre
Hrvatski audiovizualni centar

WELCOME TO MOVIE MOUNTAIN!

★ ★ ★

MOTOVUN



MOTOVUN
FILM FESTIVAL
26.-30./07./2014.

A GREAT QUEST FOR THE NEW HAS BEGUN



HRVOJE HRIBAR
CEO OF CROATIAN
AUDIOVISUAL CENTRE

In Russia, I was once shown a photograph of a commissary with a leather collar who was known for jumpstarting Andrej Tarkovsky's career. The faces of the gentlemen in bowler hats, the board members of RKO Pictures that have granted Orson Welles permission to film *Citizen Kane* weren't any more attractive. I don't believe that you would like to spend your summer vacation on an island with any of them. I think of those photos while watching myself in a mirror. I admit that I do not know the answer to the question of what exactly is the role of the system in the fate of an individual work of art. If someone knows the way to measure the effects that a management model has on the quality of cultural production, I kindly ask that he or she contact the editorial. It would be of tremendous help.

A few years ago, we overhauled the cinematic model in Croatia in terms of philosophy, energy, and practice. Consequently, the film production changed. We usually focus on numbers. For example: for the second year in a row, Croatian films represent a stable 11% of the total cinema repertoire, which is better than the previous 1-2%. Thanks to the audience, *Sonja and the Bull*, *The*

Priest's Children, *Lapitch*, *the Little Shoemaker* and *The Mysterious Boy* have become blockbusters and *Cowboys* (with 34,000 views) became the cult film of the year. Croatian minority and majority co-productions have travelled extensively and won a great number of international awards, in particular *Halima's Path* by Arsen Ostojić, *Circles* by Srđan Golubović, *A Stranger* by Bobo Jelčić. I am most excited about the trio *Cowboys*, *A Stranger* and *Projections*. These three films, which bear no resemblance to one another, are also radically different from any other film that was previously shot in Croatia. A great quest for a new and unknown kind of film has begun in Croatia, one that will be able to tell "new anecdotes of this unusual country", as Croatia's famous author Ivana Brlic Mazuranic would put it.

We have recently asked documentary author and producer Dana Budisavljević to join an international presentation of the Croatian audiovisual model. Dana brought along a PowerPoint presentation with photographs of various faces. She decided to present an entire generation of young filmmakers, both male and female, who, within the last two years, had the opportunity to produce their debut films with the support of the Croatian Audiovisual Centre. We spend too much time explaining the mechanisms of our operations – be it our financial battles or the procedural fitnesses. What we do has a simple goal: to awaken a new energy in the old and to simultaneously open up space for the energy of the new and younger generations. This is the entire purpose of what we do.

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DESTINED FOR BLOCKBUSTERS

Ankica Jurić Tilić and Ivan Maloča, producers behind the success of Croatian movies



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ROLL CAMERA, ACTION AGAIN!

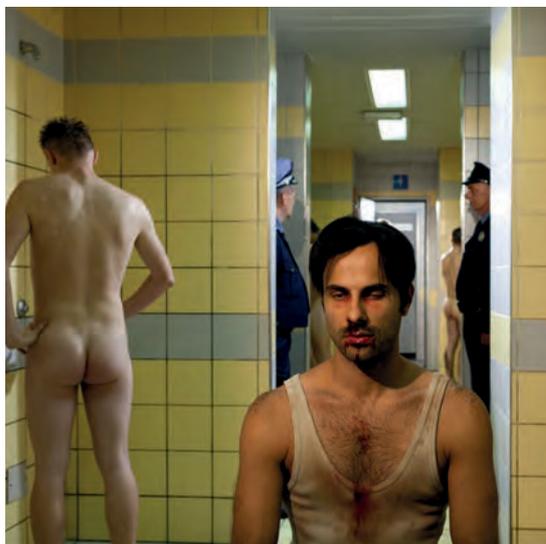
Famous TV series *Game of Thrones* and *Borgia* are shot in Dubrovnik



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The project that saved 28 independent cinemas in 27 cities



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IMPRESSUM

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* PHOTO ON THE COVER: VLADIMIR IMPRIĆ



Submit your Film!

The Zagreb Film Festival will take place from 19th to 26th of October 2014 in Zagreb, Croatia.

There is an on-going application for submitting films to the competition part of the Festival's programme.

The ZFF presents debutante (first and second) films and new film authors in the international competition in three categories: feature-length, short and documentary film.

Rules and application form are available on the www.zagrebfilmfestival.com.

Deadline for application is the 15th of July 2014.

For any further questions, you may contact us at: info@zagrebfilmfestival.com

**ZAGREB
FILM
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FILM

NEWS

ZRINKA CVITEŠIĆ WINS BRITISH OLIVIER AWARD

The Croatian actress receives an important UK award

Croatian film and stage actress Zrinka Cvitešić has won the prestigious British theatre award, the Olivier Award for best actress in a musical. For a year now, Zrinka has been performing in the London production of the Broadway musical *Once*, starring as a musically talented Czech immigrant who performs on the streets of Dublin together with her partner. The young actress auditioned her way to this West End role, but even before that, she already had an impressive acting career in Croatia. Her first on-screen appearance was back in 2000, in a small role of a nurse in Lukas Nola's *Skies, Satellites*. Although she made her breakthrough with the 2003 period drama *Horseman* by Branko Ivanda, her appearance in Hrvoje Hribar's 2005 hit comedy *What's a Man Without a Moustache* catapulted her to stardom. More recently, she starred in *On the Path* by Bosnian director Jasmila Žbanić, which earned her a European Film Award nomination for Best Actress.

PHOTO: Ian West/Press Association/PIXSELL

ZRINKA CVITEŠIĆ
Croatian actress won the award for the role of Czech immigrant in the musical *Once*



CROATIAN BLOCKBUSTERS

TEXT IGOR TOMLJANOVIĆ

2013 was the year Croatian film recorded highest viewership since Croatian independence



Five Croatian films that had their theatrical release earned the title of hit films, attracting several thousand viewers to the cinemas. Two of them even surpassed the 100,000 view threshold. The local hit of the year is Vinko Brešan's comedy *The Priest's Children*, seen by 158,000 people through regular distribution, plus several thousand more through special screenings, like the one in Pula's Arena in front of almost 5,000 people. The screen adaptation of *Lapitch, the Little Shoemaker* was not screened at the Pula Film Festival, but it achieved great results nevertheless, having been seen by 135,000 people through regular distribution. It is nice to see that some Croatian films, produced for amounts that Hollywood spends on catering alone, can compete with and often even surpass seven-figure mega-productions like *Man of Steel* or *Gravity*. Only a few films, such as *The Smurfs 2* and *Hobbit*, scored better results than *The Priest's Children*. Bearing in mind that in the 23 years of Croatia's independancy only four local films hit the 100,000 benchmark (*How the War on My Island Started* by Vinko Brešan, *What's a Man Without a Moustache* by Hrvoje Hribar, Milan Blažeković's animated film *Lapitch, the Little*

Shoemaker and Vinko Brešan's *Marshal*), this result is even more significant. The most pleasant surprise is definitely Vlatka Vorkapić's romantic comedy *Sonja and the Bull* (which garnered most of its viewership during 2012), which is also responsible for the promotion of the best emerging acting talent in Croatian cinema – Goran Bogdan. Although it ranked fifth on the list of most viewed films of last year, better results were expected from the comedy *Cowboys*. Especially since the theatre play the film was based on was seen by over 100,000 people.

Unfortunately, a large part of domestic theatrical releases still goes unnoticed and continues to attract a dissappointingly small number of spectators. It is a pity, to say the least, that Bobo Jelčić's arresting film *A Stranger* attracted only slightly more than 2,500 viewers, while many other Croatian films achieved even weaker results. Despite all that, 2013 was the best theatrical year for Croatian film ever since the country's independence - Croatian movies in cinemas saw 443.539 viewers (all time high). It was the year in which domestic titles finally deserved to be called blockbusters. ●

TOP 5 CROATIAN BLOCKBUSTERS IN 2013

FILM	NUMBER OF VIEWERS
<i>The Priest's Children</i>	158.000
<i>Lapitch, the Little Shoemaker</i>	135.000*
<i>Sonja and the Bull</i>	97.500**
<i>The Mysterious Boy</i>	69.000
<i>Cowboys</i>	33.500*

* distribution ended in 2014

** distribution began in 2012

CROATIANS LOVE TO LAUGH AT THEMSELVES WHEN TIMES ARE TOUGH

VINKO BREŠAN IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL CROATIAN FILMMAKER, AND ONE SONG A DAY TAKES MISCHIEF AWAY BY KREŠO GOLIK IS VOTED BEST FILM OF ALL TIMES, ACCORDING TO A POLL CONDUCTED BY THE AGENCY PROMOTION PLUS IN 2013. CROATIANS APPARENTLY LOVE COMEDIES, BUT HAVE POOR CINEMA ATTENDANCE, AND TV STILL CAN AND SHOULD PLAY THE KEY ROLE IN THE PROMOTION OF CROATIAN FILM.

TEXT DRAGO PERIĆ



The trend of increased production and quality of Croatian films, accompanied by impressive ratings of particular hit titles has still not changed some deeply rooted prejudices about Croatian film, despite recent box office success stories. In September 2013, agency Promotion Plus conducted the very first theatre audience poll for the Croatian Audiovisual Centre. The aim was to discover the film-watching habits, especially cinema-going habits, with a special emphasis on the perception of domestic film. The quantitative research was conducted on 1,000 interviewees throughout Croatia, with a standard error margin of $\pm 3.1\%$. Almost three quarters of the respondents, more accurately 73.6%, watch films, both domestic and foreign, on television, and only a little over 2% go to the movies. The

remaining 23.4 % watch films mainly over the internet. These include, above all, young audiences between 15 and 24 years of age. As much as 90% of the respondents over 50 watch films on TV, including 80% of those between the age of 25 and 50. Only a little over 45% of the population between the age of 15 and 24 use the TV screen, but over 50% use a computer to enjoy a film. Additionally, young 'netocrats' attend theatres twice as often as the others. The young shall inherit the earth, and the film along with it. When today's youth reaches their thirties, they will slowly remove television from the filmophile's throne, as they perceive it as a medium reserved exclusively for old people, at least when films are concerned. On the bright side however, things are looking up for domestic films,

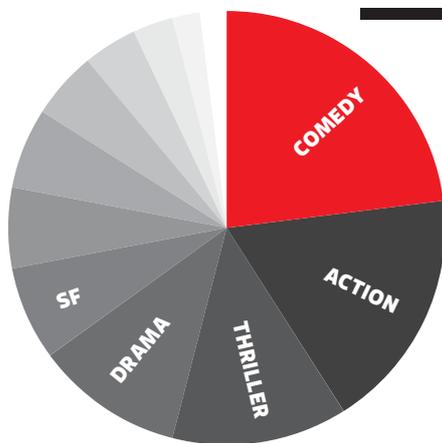
which will apparently not be gobbled up along with the popcorn, especially since last year's digitisation of 28 independent movie theatres throughout Croatia – an undertaking carried out by the Ministry of Culture and the Croatian Audiovisual Centre.

And what is it exactly that we like to watch? Comedies are number one, followed by action films, thrillers and dramas. Americans, for example, place comedy after action/adventure films. The fact that Croats love comedy can also be read from the "Best Croatian Films of All Times" list, where the 5 highest ranking films were all comedies. According to the Croatian audience; the best film of all times is *A Song a Day takes Mischief Away*, followed by *How the War on My Island Started*, *The Priest's Children*,

What's a Man Without a Moustache and Sonja and the Bull. The seventh place went to Marshal, Vinko Brešan's third film in the top ten.

Actors are the main reason for choosing a foreign film, especially an American production, which is not the case with Croatian films. The key reason for watching a domestic film is a friend's recommendation. Something is obviously wrong here. We have a generation of brilliant actors and actresses, just as before. We also have the possibility of exploiting the influence of media, but this has yet to be used to the benefit of Croatian film and its potential audience.

Box office results testify to the fact that Croats love their own films. Brešan's film *The Priest's Children*, with almost 160,000 viewers, was the most seen film in this century, beating Hribar's comedy *What's a Man Without a Moustache* by several thousand views. Vlatka Vorkapić's *Sonja and the Bull* reached almost 100,000 viewers, followed by *Koko and the Ghosts* by Daniel Kušan with around 80,000, and Dražen Žarković's *The Mysterious Boy* with 70,000. Between



2013 and 2014 another domestic hit, Silvije Petranović's children's film *Lapitch, the Little Shoemaker* entered the 100 club – it was seen by as many as 135,000 viewers.

Croatian films thus overshadowed many US blockbusters. However, American distributors still remain the preferred business partners of the local distributors and cinema operators because of their long-tail distribution strategy. National cinema cannot compete in quantity, however, this region's most successful

FILM GENRE PREFERENCES AT THE MOVIE THEATRES

Film genre	Share
Comedy	22.7%
Action	17.7%
Thriller	12.7%
Drama	11.3%
Science fiction and fantasy	6.6%
Love / romantic comedy	6.1%
I watch all film genres	6.1%
Children's	5.4%
Animated	4.4%
Horror	3.2%
History	2.1%
Musical / dance	0.3%
Adventure	0.3%
Art	0.3%
Crime	0.2%
Western	0.1%
I do not know	0.5%

cinema has apparently been bringing in good money to both distributors and cinema operators in recent years. ●

THE BEST CROATIAN FILM OF ALL TIMES

Film title	Share
A Song a Day Takes Mischief Away	17.0%
How the War on My Island Started	11.8%
The Priest's Children	7.3%
What's a Man Without a Moustache	5.7%
Sonja and the Bull	3.0%
Metastases	2.2%
Marshal	2.0%
Battle of Neretva	1.9%
Train in the Snow	1.4%
Sokol Did Not Love Him	1.3%
The Birch Tree	1.2%
Long Dark Night	1.0%
When the Dead Start Singing	0.7%
H-8	0.6%
Cannibal Vegetarian	0.6%
My Uncle's Legacy	0.6%
The Ninth Circle	0.5%
Horseman	0.5%
Play Me a Love Song	0.5%
The Noble Glembays	0.4%
Other	11.4%
I do not know	24.9%
None	3.2%
I do not watch Croatian films	0.3%

REASONS FOR WATCHING CROATIAN FILMS AT THE CINEMA

Reasons	Share
Friend's recommendation	13.0%
I like Croatian films	10.1%
Good film promotion	6.6%
Interesting plot	4.5%
Good reviews	4.5%
Socialising is the primary reason for going to the movies, the same goes for Croatian film	4.2%
Film's media coverage	4.0%
Curiosity	3.7%
Identifying with the subject matter	3.4%
Good actors	3.4%
I keep track of Croatian cinema	3.2%
I love watching all good films at the movies, including Croatian films	2.9%
Precisely because they are Croatian	2.1%
I love the movie theatre ambience	2.1%
It is the only place where I can see a recently released film	1.6%
The big screen experience	1.6%
To support Croatian film production	1.3%
Film story's freshness	1.1%
I expect a good film	1.1%
Entertainment	1.1%
Other	8.7%
I do not know	10.6%
No particular reason	5.3%

RISING STAR

Young Croatian actress Iva Babić is among the most notable emerging acting talents in Croatia whom we will have a chance to see in the film *Life Is a Trumpet* towards the end of this year

TEXT: IGOR TOMLJANOVIĆ

PHOTO: VLADIMIR IMPRIČ

STYLING: LAURA BULJAN

Expressive brown eyes and blond hair is the first thing a viewer notices on the young actress Iva Babić who, in the last couple of years, went from an anonymous student to one of the most interesting new Croatian actresses with a few respectable roles under her belt. Born in the town of Virovitica, Iva was first noticed by director Branko Schmidt who entrusted her with minor roles in his films *Metastases* (2009) and *Vegetarian Cannibal*. Her real breakthrough came with the TV series *Sunday Morning, Saturday Night* (2012) by Predrag Ličina where she played the role of a lesbian named Sonja and for which she received numerous praise. However, her acting skills were put to the test in another TV series, the Croatian version of the renowned Israeli series *Therapy*, where she played the role of a girl named Nina who falls in love with her psychotherapist. Because each episode in the series is in fact a single scene loaded with monologues and dialogues between only two people, the actors are faced with a challenging task, which Iva excelled at.

Her first big challenge in film came last year in the suspense drama *Shot* where she portrayed one of the two main roles, a girl who kills an innocent passer-by in an irresponsible shooting accident after which she starts bonding the female police inspector working on her case. This was an interesting and eye-catching role, but for this girl, often compared with Uma Thurman because of her good looks, big film roles are yet to come. One of them could be the one in *Life Is a Trumpet* by Antonio Nuić arriving to Croatian theatres at the end of the year (read more about the film on page 52).



NEXT ROLE

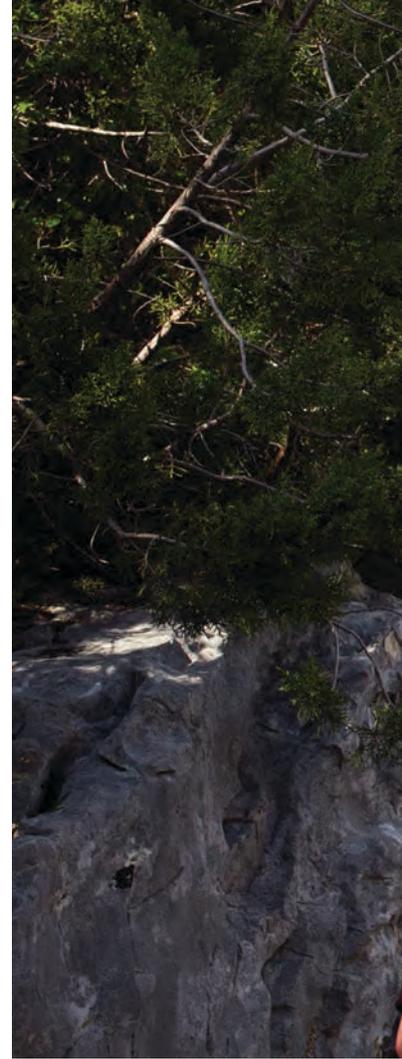
Iva is currently shooting comedy *Life is a Trumpet* which will premiere at the end of the year

SWEDISH PIRATES ON CROATIAN COAST

Nicklas Wikström Nicastro, the producer of the hit series *Christmas in the Sun*, explains why for the first time the series is filmed outside of Sweden, in Croatia

TEXT IGOR TOMLJANOVIĆ

PHOTO SARA GRANVIK



A PLEASED PRODUCER

Nicklas Wikström Nicastro plans to return to Croatia to make a feature film

The Swedish series *Christmas in the Sun* (*Piratskattens hemlighet*) will be part of the popular Christmas TV show *Advent Calendar* (*Julkalendern*) with half a century's long tradition. Towards the end of each year, more accurately between 1 and 24 December, it gathers millions of viewers of all ages around their TV screens and this year for the first time it is filmed outside of Sweden, on locations on the vibrant Dalmatian island of Brač. The project is managed by Tre Vänner production company, one of the most active production companies in Sweden boasting several TV and film hits.

The creators of this series are Tomas Tivemark and Johan Kindblom, the director is Anna Zackrisson, and it stars Lea Stojanov, Alexandra Breschi and Buster Isitt. Producer Nicklas Wikström Nicastro told us during his visit to the Croatian set why they decided to shoot in Croatia and described his current experiences with the Croatian partners and film crew.

THE SERIES HAS BEEN BROADCAST IN SWEDEN SINCE 1960, IT IS A REALLY GREAT TRADITION, WHAT IS THE SECRET OF THIS SUCCESS AND LONGEVITY?

- The theme of the series is centered on family and Christmas and since it always has been aired in

December before Christmas it has become a really strong tradition in Sweden where families, both young and old, watch the series together.

I ASSUME THAT THE IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THE SUCCESS OF THE SERIES IS ITS UNIQUE CONCEPT AND BROADCASTING STRATEGY?

- The strength in the concept is the universal theme and the broadness of the concept. I would say that the target audience of the series is everybody from 4 to 70 years old. To always broadcast in December before Christmas has also created a strong anticipation for the series where people always look forward to what the new season of the series will be like.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO SHOOT THE SERIES IN CROATIA?

- Since the story is about saving a beautiful island from being destroyed, the right location was essential in order to make the story work. We contacted producers from all over Europe in order to find the right location with the best possible production facilities. After meeting the Croatian producer Ankica Jurić Tilić of Kinorama who invited us to see all the beau-



ON THE SET
Stars of the series
Christmas in the Sun

tiful and exciting environments that Croatia could offer, we soon decided to do the series together with her in Croatia.

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CASH REBATE FOR CHOOSING CROATIA?

- To shoot abroad is always a complicated and challenging process, and also very expensive. To be able to benefit from Croatia's cash rebate scheme was therefore essential in order to make this production in Croatia happen, I can't really see that it would have been possible to realize it without it.

WHAT OTHER BENEFITS OF SHOOTING IN CROATIA DID YOU FOUND— LOCATIONS, COOPERATION WITH LOCAL PARTNER, LOCAL FILM CREW...?

- My Swedish colleagues and I are extremely satisfied so far. The Croatian producer Ankica Jurić Tilić of Kinorama and her team have made an incredible and gratifying job in setting everything up. The locations are absolutely astonishing and the crew is a pleasure to work with.

NOW, YOU ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF SHOOTING, WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS WHEN IT COMES TO WORKING IN CROATIA?

- Croatia has a very good reputation in managing foreign productions, with excellent production facilities and professional and talented film workers. Based on my experience here I can I gladly confirm that Croatia more than lives up to its good reputation.

“LOCATIONS FOR SHOOTING IN CROATIA ARE ABSOLUTELY ASTONISHING AND THE FILM CREW IS A PLEASURE TO WORK WITH”, SAYS PRODUCER NICKLAS WIKSTRÖM NICASTRO

WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME BACK? DO YOU HAVE ANY PROJECT IN MIND THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHOOT IN CROATIA??

- I would love to come back to Croatia with future projects and we already have plans to continue the story of the series by making a feature film. If the series is successful, it is my wish to start shooting the feature film in 2016, and we would then of course return to Croatia in order to realize this. ●

FESTIVAL, AUDIENCE,

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After celebrating its 60th edition last summer, the oldest and most visited Croatian film festival returns with a new name, leadership and – plans

TEXT

BOŠKO PICULA

PHOTO

DUŠKO MARUŠIĆ / PIXSELL

This summer, one of the world's most spectacular theatre venues is once again opening its doors and – the skies. This year's 61st Pula Film Festival will be held from July 12 to July 26 2014, with the competition programme of new Croatian feature films scheduled to take place between July 19 and July 26. Following last year's jubilee, the festival took on a new direction, which is noticeable even at first glance. This year, instead of its longstanding name of Feature Film Festival, filmmakers will be participating at the Pula Film Festival. The film form has been dropped from the festival's name, which means that its new concept is opening up towards other film forms, primarily feature documentaries, as well as various other hybrid forms. This programme novelty could soon radically change the festival's programming slate and bring it closer to other similar global and European events that have been showcasing the forefront of national and global cinematography for years, regardless of the film's category, genre or the segment of work on the film. And this is clearly the intention of the festival's new artistic direction that is looking to create a new, or better-said, more comprehensive festival identity through raising awareness of this Pula event among audiences and filmmakers. Because one should start with what has been making Pula recognizable as a festival city for decades and build upon it a new

**NATIONAL PROGRAMME**

It is expected that this year's competition programme will again screen more than 10 feature films

image of a centre for film audiences, and the art and craft of filmmaking itself. And all that at the unique geographical and cultural crossroads of Central and Southeast Europe.

Namely, the festival's new slogan is *The Festival of the audience, art and craft of film*, and alongside the Croatian national programme, the festival is looking to position itself internationally through showcasing the cinema of Croatia's immediate and broader neighbourhood. This is the summary of the plans of the festival's new Artistic Council comprised of a three-member body that will be recommending film programmes, interna-

THE NEW ARTISTIC COUNCIL PLANS TO FOCUS, IN THE FUTURE, ON THE CINEMA OF COUNTRIES IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHEAST EUROPE

tional guests and the jury, starting this year. Irish director and producer Mike Downey has been appointed President of the Artistic Council, giving the oldest Croatian film festival an international expert in one of its key positions, which is also one of the more notable news in the last few months. In addition to Mike Downey, new Council appointees are the festival's current producer Tanja Miličić and film critic and TV anchor Hrvoje Pukšec. Finally, the appointment of Gordana Restović as Director of the Pula Film Festival - the public institute that organizes the festival - completed the all-new staff of this festival which has undergone

numerous programming, personnel and conceptual changes since 1954. However, thanks to its spectacular venue - an ancient Roman Arena from the 1st century - this Festival always was and continues to be a synonym for a unique film experience. What will this experience depend on at its upcoming 61st edition?

Focused on the synergy between the film audience and the art and craft of filmmaking, i.e. on all the aspects of filmmaking, the Pula Film Festival, in its first year under a new artistic and organizational management, will base the Croatian programme of the festival on new Croatian feature films and minority co-productions in which one of the co-producers is from Croatia. As has been the trend in the last few years, it is expected that this year's national competition programme will once again screen more than 10 films, thus stabilizing national production at an entirely respectable number. In this competition programme, the festival awards - Golden Arenas - will be chosen by an international festival jury comprised of artists and experts from Croatia and abroad, which is another novelty in comparison with the former practice of assembling the jury exclusively from Croatian members. The festival will continue to organize an International programme composed of short and feature film competition programmes. Special attention will be given to children and youth through the Pulica film and educational programme comprised of film screenings, workshops and the promotion of film literacy through media culture classes.

In the future, the Pula Film Festival should become a place where educational and professional development platforms for young filmmakers will be consistently developed, especially through various programs for students. This, along with the mentioned plans to focus on the cinema of countries in Central and Southeast Europe could lead to the development of the desired image of the Pula Film Festival which, through presenting and valorising national cinema, places Croatian film in a European context and focuses on the film networking of professionals and the audience. Finally, the 61st festival edition offers retrospective programmes as well as exhibitions and concerts that are integral elements of the festival's wider focus on art. ●

Croatian Documentaries

ATTRACT CINEMA AUDIENCE

As many as four documentary films in cinema distribution during 2014 testify of the bloom of Croatian feature-length documentary.

TEXT: IGOR TOMLJANOVIĆ

The film *Gangster of Love* with 7,480 viewers is the second most popular film this year in Croatian theatres (after Dalibor Matanić's comedy *Handymen*). This information in itself would not mean much were it not for the fact that this is a documentary film which hardly ever lives to see cinema distribution. Nebojša Slijepčević's documentary tragicomedy about a marriage broker called *Gangster* from rural Croatia was shown in 36 theatres, which alone is a real phenomenon, and has registered extremely high number of viewers for Croatian circumstances. Many years have passed since the last Croatian documentary in cinema distribution, however this year there will be four of them. In addition to *Gangster of Love* another interesting film is screened in theatres, the documentary biography of the popular Croatian poet and songwriter Arsen Dedić, whose title *Moj zanat* (*My Craft*) is a lyric from one of his most famous songs. This intimate portrayal of the famous songwriter was made in the Croatian-Serbian co-production and directed by Belgrade-based director Mladen Matičević. After good results scored in Croatian theatres (over 1,000 viewers and counting), in May *My Craft* was released in cinemas across Belgrade. Increased funds allocated to documentary film,



a raised bar in production standards, as well as a newly awakened interest in this film genre, which is in part due to Nenad Puhovski's outstanding documentary film festival ZagrebDox, resulted in a good and diverse feature-length documentary production. This autumn another two films will follow: *Dear Lastan* by Irena Škorić about the cult column and readers' letters in the Modra lasta school magazine, and *Cover Story*, Silvana Menđušić's biopic about the tragic demise of Croatian actress Dolores Lambaša. ●

GANGSTER OF LOVE

Documentary tragicomedy about marriage broker attracted almost 7,5 thousand viewers to theatres



destined for

BLOCKB

interview

Ankica Jurić Tilić &
Ivan Maloča

TEXT

ARSEN OREMOVIĆ

PHOTO

ALAN VAJDIĆ

The role of a film producer has been neglected in the Croatian film industry for years, but a series of commercially successful and creative local films have put forth two names that have become synonyms for top-notch Croatian film production

KOKO AND THE
GHOSTS

THE PRIEST'S
CHILDREN



BUSINESS

The nomination of Vinko Brešan's film *The Priest's Children* for the European Film Academy Award in the Best Comedy category is the acknowledgment of the good direction in which contemporary Croatian film is heading. And there are a few local producers who should be credited for contributing to the revival of Croatian film since its grim decline in the 90's. So we decided to sit down with two distinguished Croatian producers, Interfilm's CEO Ivan Maloča and Kinorama's CEO Ankica Jurić Tilić to find out the reasons behind this new momentum. Namely, the role of a film producer in Croatia has only recently progressed to what it always was and should be. These professionals are becoming creatives and not just mere technical support. The mentioned nomination represents the pinnacle of a successful period to which our interlocutors greatly contributed: Maloča's productions *The Priest's Children* and *Sonja and the Bull*, as well as the second film in the children's serial about Koko, *The Mysterious Boy*, produced by Ankica Jurić Tilić attracted over 300,000 viewers in just a few months. Thus, this duo's efforts resulted in the strongest run of commercially successful films since Croatia's independence.

COULD YOU COMPARE THE POSITION, I.E. THE ROLE OF THE PRODUCER IN CROATIAN FILM OF TODAY WITH RESPECT TO THE ONE 10 OR 15 YEARS AGO? IT SEEMS AS IF WE'VE MOVED AWAY FROM WHAT I WOULD ROUGHLY ARTICULATE AS THE GENERAL PUBLIC IMPRESSION – THE PRODUCER GETS A GOVERNMENT GRANT, SHARES THE FEE WITH THE DIRECTOR AND MAKES A FILM WITH WHAT'S LEFT.

JURIĆ TILIĆ: This assumption is very much like, for instance, the one about a teacher's job being easy and carefree because they have long summer holidays and short working hours. Our profession is not the only one suffering from wrong public perception. The situation is actually a lot better than it was some ten years ago, but still not good enough; we are still facing a tremendous job of raising awareness not only among the broader public, but also among our collaborators in the filmmaking process. What is ignored most often is our true contribution to the filmmaking process, the enormous legal and financial responsibility that is not being shared and of which we are the sole bearers, the fact that we are denied our share of the authorship, and so forth. I am afraid that it is going to take a lot of time to rectify this.

MALOČA: Lately, film producing has become a great challenge; the crisis created additional problems with closing the financial construction, which resulted in seeking partners and in an increased number of co-productions. The producer's role thus became even more important.

WHAT IS THE PRODUCER'S ROLE IN THE SO-CALLED CINEMA D'AUTEUR? CAN YOU, AND TO WHAT EXTENT, ASK THE DIRECTOR TO MAKE CERTAIN ADJUSTMENTS?

MALOČA: The producer's role mainly depends on the producer himself, on his expertise, dedication, experience etc., and the director's character/standpoint. If a director is intelligent and wise, he will use all the creative potentials of the producer to the film's best interest. With most directors and producers, I begin collaborating on a creative



MALOČA & JURIĆ TILIĆ

"Every year a film of ours, to use soccer terminology, plays in the Champions League and sometimes it even reaches the finals."

level from the the early stage of the synopsis, and with almost all of them from the first draft of the script, even though my job begins with the final version. I believe that the producer's role changed significantly in recent years, and that they've become more and more creative."

JURIĆ TILIĆ: This is definitely changing. In fact, I would say that it is the directors who have the best insight into all of the the things that we do, that we know and that we are capable of, and the amount of energy and passion that we put into producing each film together with them. My experiences in working with directors are good. In fact, they are based on a mutual respect which in turn, naturally generates good collaboration in all the aspects of film production – from working on the script, through production, and finally, to the film's post-production and promotion.

PRESUMING THE THESIS THAT THE DIRECTOR ALWAYS HAS THE FINAL SAY, HAVE YOU EVER HAD

A CREATIVE "CONFLICT" ABOUT THE FINAL VERSION OF A FILM?

JURIĆ TILIĆ: Of course, it would be naive to believe that two heads always think alike. What makes these squabbles easier is, of course, the common goal, which is always the same: we both want to make the film as good as possible.

MALOČA: I had plenty of "conflicts" with directors and/or screenwriters regarding the final version of the script. I always try to use a fresh set of eyes in order to help the director or writer see through the script. Besides, a producer should always be there to point out potential flaws during the script development process, which he should also be doing throughout the entire production process. However, it's always up to the author to make the final decision. A friend of mine, a director/screenwriter always keeps telling me during pre-production: "Tell me everything now, criticise as much as you can, don't praise the script, don't praise anything, I don't need it now, I'll receive (or won't) my praise when the premiere comes."

HOW DO YOU CHOOSE THE PROJECTS YOU ARE WILLING TO SEEK FUNDING FOR? DO YOU TAKE ON A LOT OF PROJECTS, SINCE IT INITIALLY COSTS YOU NOTHING TO TAKE AN OFFERED PROJECT AND FORWARD IT TO A FILM FUND, COME WHAT MAY?

MALOČA: A producer does not receive a finished project, but most likely the final draft of the script, after which he has to make an operative and financial plan, do a script breakdown and the translations, etc. Also, the scriptwriter and the director still have a lot of work ahead of them before completing the project. Preparing a project is time-consuming and costly, which is why we make a selection of scripts. Every producer has his own strategy in choosing one, and mine is – a good script with commercial potential or a script that represents an artistic breakthrough.

JURIĆ TILIĆ: Kinorama submits a really small number of projects to open calls for production financing. The reason for this is that we do not believe in production without a lengthy preparation, without thorough script development. Honestly, we were thrilled when HAVC introduced open calls for script and project development. This practice is outstanding and we really encourage our directors to join us through these development phases and to first compete in these categories, in order to make sure that we have an excellent text in our hands before we apply for the actual co-financing of film production. I believe it is exactly this approach and the long-term work we invest in the development that makes our success rate at open calls quite high – we never submit projects that

are in their initial phase of development or that have not been sufficiently developed.

MR. MALOČA, YOU CONDUCTED A POLL ON HOW THE AUDIENCE PERCEIVES CROATIAN FILM. THE RESULTS ARE NOT ALL THAT OPTIMISTIC. CAN YOU TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT THE POLL AND ITS SPECIFICS?

MALOČA: I first conducted a poll on the opinions and habits of potential consumers of Croatian film in order to determine the biggest problems behind theatre ratings of Croatian films. One of the questions was what do respondents think about when they hear the phrase "Croatian film". The answers were then grouped in order to find out the most common factors: war, drama (too much drama), boredom, slow, cheap (money), etc.

JURIĆ TILIĆ: Naturally, we are very critical of everything that is ours. In our theatres, we see high-budget, sensationally packaged American films or the best of what Europe produced in the current year. Of course it is difficult to compete.

NEVERTHELESS, THE RESULTS OF SEVERAL RECENT FILMS, INCLUDING YOURS, INDICATE THAT THIS IMAGE MIGHT CHANGE?

MALOČA: I believe that it could and that it is slowly changing. We registered a significant increase in the number of viewers, and both the viewers' and the public's perception of Croatian film is changing. Domestic films garner success on the international scene, where we go up against European, i.e. global competition. In football terms, every year we have a film playing in the Champions League. Some of them even make it to the finals, like *The Priest's Children* this year.

IVAN MALOČA established the production company Interfilm in 1995 and the Croatian Producers' Association (HRUP) in 2003. He is a member of the European Film Academy (EFA).

Maloča produced some of the most successful Croatian feature films: *Marshal* and *The Priest's Children* by Vinko Brešan; *Sonja and the Bull* by Vlatka Vorkapić; *Red Dust, Here, Behind the Glass* and *Projections* by Zrinko Ogresta; *Two Players from the Bench* by Dejan Šorak and other films that won many awards in Croatia and abroad. He also produced around 30 documentary films and TV serials *Bitange i princeze* and *Zakon!*



SERIAL ABOUT KOKO

The third film is in the works and the fourth will be a prequel

JURIĆ TILIĆ: It is evident that the perception is changing. In addition to children's titles and comedies that definitely have their fans, there are such wonderful surprises like Vlatka's film *Sonja and the Bull* or Jelčić's *A Stranger*, so we really cannot complain about Croatian cinema in the past few years. It's been diverse and exciting, at least lately, and never boring.

WHAT PROJECTS ARE YOU CURRENTLY PREPARING?

MALOČA: I am preparing a drama called *Trampoline* by debut director Zrinka Matijević Veličan, and a World War II comedy *Vatreno krštenje Ljiljana Vidića* by Ivan Goran Vitez.

JURIĆ TILIĆ: We finished *The Reaper* by Zvonimir Jurić and Daniel Kušan's short film *Together*. We are currently shooting the new film about Koko, *Love or Death*, and I hope that we will make Matanić's film *Zvzdán* and Snježana Tribuson's *Sve najbolje* immediately afterwards. ●

ANKICA JURIĆ TILIĆ graduated in comparative literature from Zagreb's Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. She is a graduate of EAVE and a member of ACE, Producers on Move and the European Film Academy (EFA).

After around 10 years of freelancing as a film professional for various independent production companies and the national television, she founded Kinorama in 2003. Her filmography includes 15 feature films, several TV series and a number of short films. The most successful are the short fiction film *Party* by Dalibor Matanić and the feature film *Blacks* by Zvonimir Jurić and Goran Dević. Her children's films *Koko and Ghosts* (2011) and *The Mysterious Boy* (2013), based on the novels of legendary Croatian author Ivan Kušan, attracted the most spectators.

EVERY EURO INVESTED IN FILM BRINGS BACK

TEXT
MARIO DUSPARA

PHOTO
ALAN VAJDIĆ
HAVC ARCHIVE

THREE

Last year, a photo of New Zealand's Prime Minister John Key holding a sword appeared on the cover of the New York Times. It wasn't „just“ a sword – it was a copy of the original sword from the *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy that was used by the hero Frodo Baggins. US President Barack Obama gave him this memorabilia as a symbol of the financial success brought to both countries by these Peter Jackson films.

A RECENT STUDY
MADE BY THE
INSTITUTE OF
PUBLIC FINANCE
RESEARCH
SHOWED THAT
THE FILM
INDUSTRY IS ONE
OF THE MOST
PROFITABLE
SECTORS TO
INVEST IN - IN
CROATIA

At times when Croatia is undergoing a financial crisis, it wouldn't be a bad idea to take a closer look at the success that the film industry brought to this country on the other side of the Planet. With a population of 4.4 million, New Zealand is a country similar to Croatia. However, for the time being, New Zealand remains an unattainable example to a country whose audiovisual industry just recently started regaining the trust of international productions. However, according to financial indicators, Croatia's small, but extremely successful film industry is already starting to deliver a multiple return on investment.

This is also confirmed by the results of the study entitled "Economic and Fiscal Effects of the Audiovisual Activity and State Subsidies" presented by Anto Bajo, PhD, from the Institute of Public Finance in front of the Croatian Parliament. If we were to summarize this study, we could say that investing in the film industry already brings a big profit to the state budget. Namely, the state invests approximately 9.5 million euro in the audiovisual industry through subsidies disbursed by the Croatian Audiovisual Centre, while this same industry returns 13.7 million euro back to the state budget. From this amount, 7.2 million euro comes from VAT alone.





ANTO BAJO, PHD

Author of the study on the economic impacts of Croatian film



HRVOJE HRIBAR

CEO of the Croatian Audiovisual Centre during a presentation of the study to the Croatian Parliament

Although it is a relatively small industry sector comprised of approximately 500 companies and directly employing a little over 1,000 people, it supports an additional 2,000 jobs as a direct result of its activities. Its annual turnover is around 100 million euro and recent years have shown an increase in profitability. Therefore, the gross operating profit of its audiovisual sector places Croatia among the highest-ranking countries in the European Union. In comparison with 2007, 2011 shows a 24.7% increase in Earnings Before Tax. This trend is also reflected in the profitability index of the entire industry, where the gross profit margin increased from 14% in 2007 to 16% in 2011. Respectively, the net profit margin increased from 12% in 2007 to 16% in 2011. The estimated direct value added of the film production and distribution activities is 25 million euro.

As much as three quarters of the total amount of the Production Incentive paid out for the production of audiovisual works in Croatia returns to the state budget through paid taxes and contributions. However, the overall impact is far more favourable. In 2012, between 1.5 and 2.3 euro was returned to the state budget per each euro disbursed as a subsidy for the encouragement of AV production.

An important fact for Croatia as a tourism-oriented country is that every euro of value added created by the film industry generates an additional 2 to 3 euro of value added in tourism and other industries in connection to the film production. Although Bajo's study shows great results, a comparison with New Zealand reveals that only the sky is the limit. Namely, in last year alone, New Zealand generated around 1.1 billion dollars from

film and TV production. It was a significant booster to their economy, and for Croatia it would be an incredible one.

Upon the invitation from Hrvoje Hribar, CEO of the Croatian Audiovisual Centre, Juliane Schulze, media consultant, held a presentation to the Croatian Parliament, which demonstrated that it is possible to expect similar results in Croatia, if even to a smaller extent. Using examples of Great Britain's *Harry Potter*, New Zealand's *The Lord of the Rings* and New York's *Sex & the City* tourist route, she presented the members of parliament with cases of screen tourism achieving fantastic results. In addition to the fact that international co-production generates direct financial gain, Croatia also has a great potential to develop this type of tourism, which can increase the number of tourists and income in the long-term. ●

FILM AS THE BEST GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT

Audiovisual activities' contribution to the gross domestic product amounts to 25 million euro, and the total value added is between 50 and 75 million euro. The average annual direct fiscal impact is 13.7 million euro, and the overall impact is between 27.3 and 41 million euro. The total production cost of four projects financed by the production incentive program in 2012 amounted to 2.5 million euro. 14.6% of total production costs were payments towards taxes and contributions.

AS PART OF THE AMBITIOUS PROJECT TO DIGITISE THE NETWORK OF
INDEPENDENT CINEMAS, CONTEMPORARY SCREENING EQUIPMENT HAS
BEEN INSTALLED IN 28 MOVIE THEATRES IN 27 CITIES AND TOWNS

DIGITIS

TEXT SAŠA VEJNOVIĆ

PHOTO HAVC ARCHIVE

Cinema digitisation is not a matter of survival, but simply whether or not you are a cinema. "Without this digital equipment you can no longer be considered a cinema", says Marijana Bošnjak, CEO of Kinematografi Osijek, explaining what the digital projector installed in their cinema with the help of the government and local community means to her. Other cinema managers across Croatia, especially in smaller towns, claim that today many of them would be

THE DIGITISED CINEMA OPERATORS' NETWORK WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR VIEWERS ALL OVER CROATIA TO GET AN INSIGHT INTO EUROPEAN AND INDEPENDENT WORLD CINEMA THAT IS NOT AVAILABLE IN REGULAR CINEMA AND TV LISTINGS

long gone if it were not for the action launched in 2011 that digitised 28 Croatian cinemas in 18 counties and 27 locations; along with an additional six film festivals.

The entire project cost €1.63 million and a unified public bidding made it possible for the digital equipment to be purchased at affordable prices. It all began in November 2011 with a public call for interested participants in cinema digital equipment; half a year later, cinema operators fulfilling the requirements were selected.

They included large and once very popular cinemas, as well as smaller ones. However, regardless of their location, size, fame or the fact that

once there had been endless lines stretching before their box offices, until recently they were all struggling to make ends meet.

The action undertaken by the Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC), the Ministry of Culture and local communities are saving them from certain death. HAVC, led by Hrvoje Hribar, designed the project, which was financed by the Ministry of Culture and the local communities. This digitisation of independent cinemas officially ended on 10 October with the screening of the Croatian film *Cowboys* in all the newly equipped theatres. The largest Croatian theatrical release in history, the film opened simultaneously in 42 cinemas. "Such projects would never happen if someone did not have the courage to say, 'We are entitled to our cinema.' This type of cinema will give you an insight into a different reality and into a kind of film you usually cannot see in regular cinema and TV listings. The right to see something different means the right to a different life, to a change, to think differently and to keep following and implementing projects with courage. And our job is to recognise your ideas and support them," said Culture Minister Andrea Zlatar Violić, speaking at the official premiere of *Cowboys*, which took place at the Moslavina cinema in Kutina.

Every digital projector that screened *Cowboys* that evening cost almost €65.000, the amount unattainable to cinemas in both large cities and small towns in particular. Those who even dared to consider buying such a projector are very rare. One of them, perhaps, was the Valli Cinema in Pula, operating within the public institution of the Pula Film Festival, but its manager Tanja Miličić also admits it would not be possible to do it on their own.

"The Valli Cinema operates really well, partly because it is the only cinema in the city and does not

SATURATION

SAVES THE DAY

90 PERCENT DIGITAL

The idea to upgrade Croatia's independent cinemas came from HAVC, which included the digitisation project in its 2010-2014 National Programme of Audiovisual Promotion. The project was then approved by the Ministry of Culture, which included it in its strategic plan; the change of government never jeopardised it. The project went fast forward in September 2011, when HAVC's technical team started touring all the independent cinemas. This tour resulted in great differences since some cinemas in small towns had only two weekend screenings and not more than eight screenings a week, while cinemas in larger towns worked five to seven days a week. By signing the programme obligations contract with HAVC, all the cinemas have committed to screening at least six films a week. Forty cinema operators submitted their bids

to the public call, and 28 of them fulfilled the criteria for financial support for digital equipment procurement. Other theatres were either technically unequipped, did not screen continually, or screened too few films. HAVC's intention was to establish a network of independent cinemas so that they may exchange films more easily, jointly create programmes, promote good films and, last but not least, save money.

Ninety percent of big screens in Croatia are now digitised. According to the Ministry of Culture's plan, by the end of 2015 the remaining 15 theatres should be digitised as part of a special programme, after which all cinemas in the country will be digitised. Cinema operators will have to keep their 35mm projector in order to screen non-digitised repertory films.

have any competition”, she said. “However, if digitisation had not been implemented this way, we would have been forced to apply for City-backed subsidies (the City of Pula is the founder of the Pula Film Festival public institution which manages the Valli) and invest a part of our own means in the projector acquisition. The Valli is a true cinema in every sense of the word; there are no additional activities like plays, concerts and the like;

THE PROGRAMME-RELATED REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CINEMAS INCLUDED IN THE DIGITISATION PROJECT WERE INSPIRED BY THE PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION EUROPA CINEMAS AND THE MEDIA PROGRAMME

without the possibility to show films, we would be doomed”. Miličić manages the first cinema that got its own digital projector, in July of last year. Recently they had to change the projector lamp because their projector already turned its first thousand working hours. “Thanks to the Pula Film Festival, the Valli Cinema had the privilege of being the first independent digitised movie cinema in Croatia. We immediately began working full-time because our numbers were bad until June. Due to a very modest offer of 35mm films, we were forced to screen films from Blu-rays, DVDs, DVCAMs and other digital formats. Naturally, that was possible only with the distributors’ express permission and for independent films only. Commercial films, which attract a wider audience,

AGREEMENT SIGNING

At the Mimara Museum; Minister of Culture Andrea Zlatar Violić, CEO of the Croatian Audiovisual Centre Hrvoje Hribar and Tina Hajon, head of the digitisation project



mainly passed us by,” said Miličić.

And while the Valli Cinema may not have gone bankrupt that fast, without a digital projector the fate of other Istrian theatres would be quite certain. “I believe the new digital projectors in Rovinj, Poreč and Pazin literally brought their cinemas back to life. As far as I know, the cinema in Pazin was not even open in the last few years,” said Miličić, “and our numbers have certainly grown, as well as our profit.”

In receiving the projectors, each cinema operator is contractually stipulated to dedicate 35% of their programming schedule to European, Croatian and world independent films, while the remaining 65% of their schedule is left to their discretion. “The government invested in the cinemas’ technical upgrade, and the operators should create interesting and good film programmes and put in effort in the promotion of their activity.

The programming obligations featured in the contract serve as a basis for the development of the independent cinema network, and its successful implementation is a joint mission of HAVC and the cinemas,” explains Tina Hajon, head of the digitisation project and independent cinema network development at HAVC. At least six Croatian films should be shown in a year, and each should have at least six screenings.

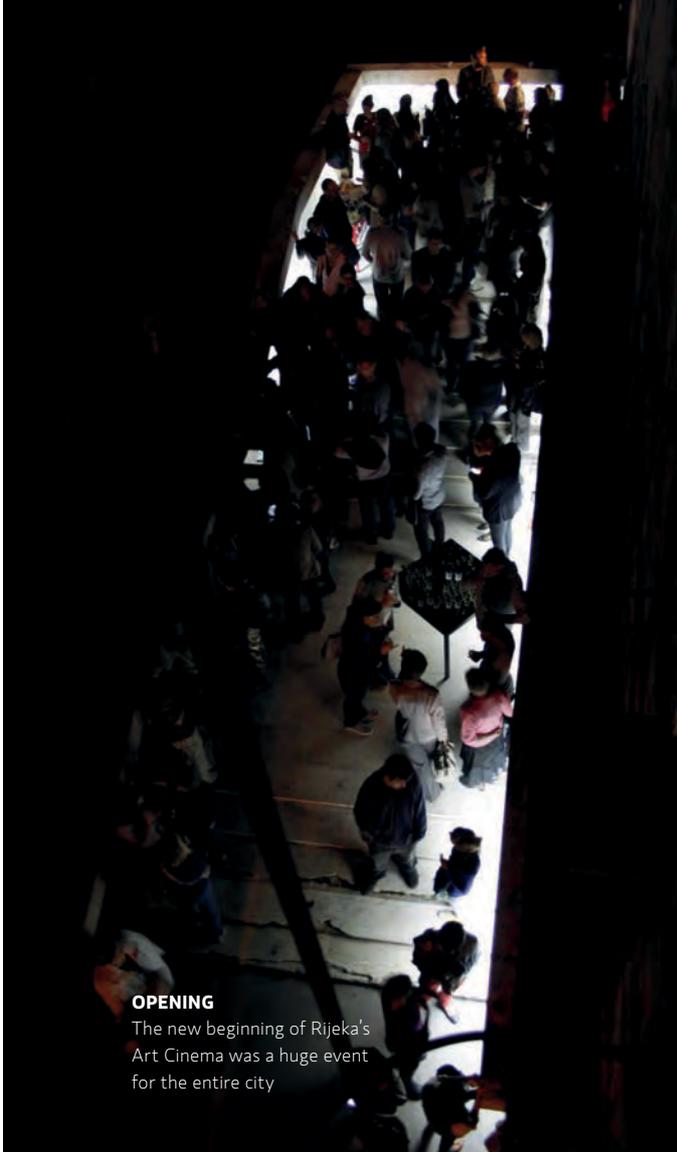
The Valli Cinema in this case will not score enviable results since the citizens of Pula see most Croatian films at the Pula Film Festival. “During the Festival, Croatian films at the Arena are seen by four to seven thousand viewers, which inevitably generates smaller interest in cinema distribution. We’ve pointed that out at the signing of the contract on programme guidelines and for that, of course, we were given some leniency.

Often a film is distributed before it appears at the Festival, as happened, for instance, with *The Priest’s Children* and *Lapitch, the Little Shoemaker*. In such cases there are no problems and our cinema, as well as the Festival later, is flooded with visitors,” said Miličić.

Otherwise, as Hajon explains, the concept of programming obligations was inspired by the principles of the Europa Cinemas international organisation and the MEDIA Programme, and was based on the analysis of specific data provided by Croatian cinema operators.

Most Croatian members of the Europa Cinemas network have been extremely active for years and fulfil all the requirements to a large extent. They include Osijek’s Urania cinema, which had so far been the leader in screening Croatian and European films. Of 390 films a year, 375 were Croatian or European titles. This is one of the cinemas whose life was saved by a digital projector.

“We had already closed down because it was impos-



OPENING

The new beginning of Rijeka's Art Cinema was a huge event for the entire city

sible to compete with the city's two multiplexes. Our listings were different and we have always had plenty of visitors. We do not have an issue with the audience, but without digitisation we would not longer exist," said Marijana Bošnjak, whose company Kinematografi Osijek manages the Urania. The procurement of digital equipment, however, does not mean that cinemas will no longer screen 35mm films. "There is a great chance that, until all the archives are digitised, we will still screen 35mm films for special series."

Ivica Čaćić, who manages Gospić's Korzo cinema, which also got a digital projector that made all of their lives much easier explains: "Now it is much easier to access the films and another advantage is that we no longer have to drag heavy parcels from one post office to another. We used to have problems when a film was distributed in Gospić and after the screening we had to send it to, say, Knin or Biograd. Because of poor connections sometimes we sent the films by post, and sometimes we gave some money to the train engine-man to carry heavy reels for us. Now it is much easier and more efficient, the film is scheduled for a month in advance and there are more distributors," says



VALLI CINEMA

Pula's cinema was the first digitised independent cinema in Croatia

Čaćić, who had to do some construction work at his cinema for the newly installed equipment to work. Film critic Diana Nenadić is also aware of the print transportation issues and therefore welcomes digitisation, which helped the smaller theatres survive. "This is definitely a big plus for smaller places and towns; in just one step they got access to films they could not see before. I hope they will all still be able to screen older repertory titles which are not digitised, i.e. that the old equipment will remain and be used occasionally," she said. Nenadić believes the state can always find the money to help the cinemas, regardless of the crisis. That the digital projectors saved cinema operators is something film critic Nenad Polimac does

ALL THE DIGITAL CINEMAS

From the signing of the contract for the digitisation of independent cinemas on 8 July 2013 at the Mimara Museum to 10 October 2013, 28 cinemas were digitised: in Biograd na Moru, Čakovec, Daruvar, Dubrovnik, Koprivnica, Korčula, Novska, Osijek, Pakrac, Poreč, Pula, Rijeka, Rovinj, Sisak, Split, Kutina, Pazin, Zabok, Gospić, Prelog, Samobor, Velika Gorica and Vodice, and Europa, Tuškanac and Gorgona MSU in Zagreb. The digitisation project also included the Zagreb Film Festival, Mediterranean Film Festival in Split, Vukovar Film Festival – Danube Region Film festival, International New Cinema Festival / Split Film Festival, Motovun Film Festival and the Pula Film Festival.

not have a doubt about. He points out that recent Croatian films could not be screened by any independent theatre because the films are no longer made on film. "Going digital makes sense first of all because this is how we can get low-budget films to all cinemas. For instance, the British digitised their cinemas several years ago, which has saved their local low-budget film production," says Polimac, giving the example of the acclaimed film director Martin Scorsese, who once stated that he would never abandon celluloid. However, parts of his latest film, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, were shot in the digital format. ●

interview: Nevio Marasović

TEXT
IVAN-VANJA RUNJIĆ
PHOTO
ALAN VAJDIĆ

The young Croatian filmmaker Nevio Marasović, director of *Vis-À-Vis*, which Cineuropa ranked amongst the five best European films of last year, talks about his movie to exemplify the advantages of no-budget films.

WHEN INTIMATE EXP BECOMES AN EXQUIS VIS-À-VIS WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO MAK

If opinions were torn on Nevio Marasović's (YOB 1983) feature film debut *The Show Must Go On* - a low-budget Sci-Fi drama that he directed as part of his graduation work at the age of 25 - a consensus was reached on his second film *Vis-À-Vis*: the Croatian film industry just got a new and exciting filmmaker! A filmmaker who used an experimental, guerrilla-style method to produce an unusual and minimalistic, yet rich and communicative film which the European film portal Cineuropa ranked amongst the top five European films of 2013. "The fact that Europe's most influential film portal placed *Vis-À-Vis* on the high fourth place is, of course, an exceptional honour and compliment. It is also a big deal for the Croatian film as a whole, because rarely has a domestic film received such high ratings from an international film authority", commented shortly Marasović on his international success.

SURELY A LOT OF PEOPLE ASK YOU ABOUT THE AUTHENTICITY OF EVENTS IN *Vis-À-Vis* (I.E. IN

WHAT MEASURE DOES THE STORY OF THE FILM COINCIDE WITH THE ACTUAL EVENTS IN THE LIVES OF THE FILM'S PROTAGONISTS). BUT WHAT WAS THE PATH OF A FILM THAT WENT FROM BEING DENIED FINANCIAL SUPPORT AT A NATIONAL CO-FINANCING TENDER TO AN IDEA TO MAKE A FILM ABOUT IT?

- We were aware of the fact that the public would perceive the film as an autobiographic account and we knew that we would not be able to escape this perception. The reasons behind this are the obvious resemblances between the character of the actor (Janko Popović Volarić) and the real persona of Janko, and the character of the director (Rakan Rushaidat) and myself. There are indeed a lot of elements from our lives that we have self-deprecatingly incorporated into the characters and the story. There was an agreement between the film's authors that we would never reveal which parts were real and which were fictional [laughs]. In general, there are a lot fewer autobiographical parts than the audience might think.



CLOSURE SITE FILM

KE USING A STANDARD PRODUCTION MODEL

| FOR EXAMPLE?

- One of these made-up parts is the project *Comic Sans* that just got “rejected” and around which the story of the film revolves. It is true that I wrote this screenplay, but it was never turned down for film funding. On the contrary, I have received financial support for project development for *Comic Sans* from Croatian Audiovisual Centre. Janko and I went to the island of Vis last fall to read the last draft of the mentioned screenplay in peace and quiet, because Janko was going to play the leading role in the film. However, because he recently underwent a divorce, we spent our entire stay on Vis talking about women, divorces, work, love, life, etc... We haven't even touched the screenplay. This week spent on Vis left such an impact on us that it inspired us to make a film about an actor and a director who go to an island to work on a screenplay. The big themes in *Vis-À-Vis* – divorce, death of a father, depression and rejection – are entirely fictitious elements. Apart

from not being turned down for film funding, my real father is, thank God, alive and well.

THERE WERE TWO FILMS IN THE CONFESSIONAL TONE THAT SPRANG UP IN CROATIAN CINEMA WITHIN LAST YEAR OR TWO (THE SECOND FILM IS *A LETTER TO MY FATHER*). IS THERE A NEW FILM WAVE/TREND IN THE MAKES, A SORT OF A CROATIAN CINÉMA VÉRITÉ?

- It is hard to pass judgement on this based on only two films, but I think it is pure coincidence. I doubt that the filmmakers will now start massively producing films that are dramaturgically and stylistically defined by such aesthetics. Some people have declared that *Autobiography* – an exercise film I produced during my junior year at the Academy – is one of the best works in the history of the Faculty, so I am inclined towards the autobiography motif in my own films. There are even autobiographical elements in my first film *The Show Must Go On*, although they are not as pronounced as in *Vis-À-Vis*. I have to announce that

**VIS-A-VIS**

Janko Popović Volarić and Rakan Rushaidat in search of a film and themselves

my next project will also be auto-referential. I wrote this film as a sort of psychotherapy where I cross-examined my own character.

IN TODAY'S WORLD OF FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND OTHER SUCH FORMATS OF "INTIMATE EXHIBITIONISM", IS IT NOT UNUSUAL THAT FILMMAKERS REACH OUT FOR SUCH EXTREME EXPOSURE IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA? OR IS IT, ON THE OTHER HAND, SOMETHING TOTALLY EXPECTED?

Correct, privacy has become something public in today's world of social media. However, this is nothing new. One should just watch any Woody Allen film in which every main character was in fact Woody himself. Therefore, I don't think this is some kind of a new trend. Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen have even inserted obvious self-referential elements in the musical *Singing in the Rain*,

where they were making fun of themselves and their profession.

IF YOUR DEBUT *THE SHOW MUST GO ON* WAS "LOW-BUDGET", ONE CAN SAY THAT *VIS-À-VIS* IS A "NO-BUDGET". FOLLOWING THIS ANALOGY, IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE WHAT WILL COME NEXT...

If I receive financial support from the Croatian Audiovisual Centre, the next project will be the film that the principal character in *Vis-À-Vis*, i.e. the director, is working on. So, you've guessed – *Comic Sans!*

ALL JOKES ASIDE, DOES SUCH A NO-BUDGET APPROACH HAVE ITS ADVANTAGES? A NEW KIND OF ARTISTIC FREEDOM FOR THE FILMMAKER?

I can guarantee that *Vis-À-Vis* would be impossible to produce if we made it in a traditional production model. Without adhering to any sort of strict plan, we filmed whenever and as much as we needed, we mixed scenes, cut them out, added new ones without previous plan, worked during day and night, organized shootings through e-mail just the day before and without previous announcement... So, except for serious work vested in directing, acting and screenwriting, nothing during the production process even remotely resembled a usual film production that we are accustomed to. ●



VINA BUHAČ

A GOOD FESTIVAL YEAR

BETWEEN TWO CANNES, THE CROATIAN FILM HAD A SERIES OF EXCELLENT PERFORMANCES AT PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVALS

The year that reached its peak with the European Film Academy's nomination of Vinko Brešan's *The Priest's Children* for best European comedy is another one in the series of successful years of the Croatian film at international festivals. One could say it all began right where it finished – in Berlin. In Berlin, where Brešan's film received the above-mentioned nomination. The successful 2013 festival year for the Croatian film also began in Berlin, when Bobo Jelčić's film *A Stranger* made it to the Forum programme of the Berlin Film Festival. Croatian cinema hasn't been featured in any of Berlin's programmes ever since Brešan's *Witnesses* (2004), which was screened in its main competition programme and won two awards. At this year's Berlinale, the Croatian film was represented by the Czech-Slovakian-Croatian documentary *Velvet Terrorists*, which won the audience award, the Tagesspiegel Readers' Prize, for the best film in the Forum section. Siniša Juričić, one of the producers of *Velvet Terrorist*, also signed the Croatian part of the German-Croatian co-production *Chicken*, a short film that will be shown at this year's Semaine de la Critique at Cannes. This drama set in wartime Bosnia is directed by young Una Gunjak from Sarajevo and tells a story about a mother and daughter whose husband and father sent them a live chicken from the war front.

An overview of some of the most important appearances and awards of Croatian films and minority co-productions at international film festivals follows. ●

48TH KARLOVY VARY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (JUNE – JULY 2013)

THE PRIEST'S CHILDREN, fiction, **DIR.:** Vinko Brešan; *competition*
GANGSTER OF LOVE, documentary, **DIR.:** Nebojša Slijepčević; *documentary programme*
DUAL, minority co-production, fiction, **DIR.:** Nejc Gazvoda; *competition selection East Of The West*
ADRIA BLUES, minority co-production, fiction,

DIR.: Miroslav Mandić; *competition selection East Of The West*

OCCUPATION, THE 27TH PICTURE, co-production, feature documentary, **DIR.:** Pavo Marinković; *non-competitive category of the official selection Out of the Past*

VELVET TERRORISTS, minority co-production, documentary, **DIR.:** Peter Kerekes, Pavol Pekarčík, Ivan Ostrochovský; *competition selection East Of The West – FEDEORA Award*

IDFA AMSTERDAM (NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2013)

KISMET, minority co-production, documentary, **DIR.:** Nina Maria Paschalidou; *medium-length film competition*

EUROPEAN FILM AWARD (December 2013)

THE PRIEST'S CHILDREN, fiction, **DIR.:** Vinko Brešan; *Best European Comedy nomination*

43RD INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ROTTERDAM (22/1-2/2/2014)

HAPPILY EVER AFTER, documentary, **DIR.:** Tatjana Božić; *competition*

ON SHAKY GROUND, short fiction, **DIR.:** Sonja Tarokić; *Spectrum Shorts category*

TINY BIRD, co-production, short fiction, **DIR.:** Dane Komljen; *Spectrum Shorts category*

MAMA EUROPA, minority co-production, documentary, **DIR.:** Petra Seliškar; *Signals Regained category*

36TH INTERNATIONAL DU COURT MÉTRAGE CLERMONT-FERRAND (31/1-8/2/2014)

HIDDEN TALENT, animated, **DIR.:** Miran Miošić; *L'école va au cinéma category*

FATHER, co-production, animated-documentary, **DIR.:** Ivan Bogdanov, Moritz Mayerhofer, Asparuh Petrov, Veljko Popović, Rositsa Raleva, Dim Yagodin; *Collections category*

64TH BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL (5-15/2/2014)

VELVET TERRORISTS, minority co-production, documentary, **DIR.:** Peter Kerekes, Pavol Pekarčík, Ivan Ostrochovský; *Forum category – audience award Tagesspiegel Readers' Prize*

60TH INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL OBERHAUSEN (1-6/5/2014)

WE THE PEOPLE, experimental, **DIR.:** Dalibor Martinis; *competition*

THE TINIEST, experimental, **DIR.:** Tomislav Šoban; *competition*

53 SEMAINE DE LA CRITIQUE CANNES 2014

THE CHICKEN, short fiction, co-production, **DIR.:** Una Gunjak; *competition*

54TH ANNECY INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FILM FESTIVAL (9-14/6/2014)

BREAKDOWN, animated, **DIR.:** David Lovrić; *graduation film competition*



CHICKEN

Short fiction film will be shown at this year's Semaine de la Critique in Cannes



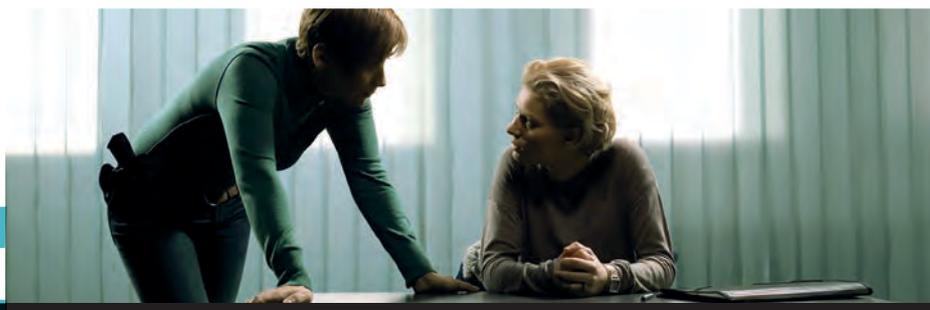
VELVET TERRORISTS

The documentary won the Audience Award at Berlinale

CROATIAN FILM IN

Last year was distinguished by a record number of films, a record in audience numbers, and much international acclaim, making the selection from this year's rich production a rather difficult task

FEA- TURE films



The Shot

(Hitac) 2013, crime drama **Directed by:** Robert Orhel **Written by:** Robert Orhel **Produced by:** Kinorama/Ankica Jurić-Tilić, Hrvoje Pervan, Goran Radman (Croatian Radiotelevision - HRT)

Cinematography: Stanko Herceg **Editing:** Ivana Fumić **Music:** Daniel Biffel **Cast:** Ecija Ojdanić, Iva Babić, Barbara Nola, Enes Vejzović, Milan Štrljčić, Milan Pleština **Duration:** 72' **Release Date:** 27 February 2014

Cinematic debut of experienced TV director Robert Orhel, who debuted back in 2004 with

the well-received TV film "Fly, fly", his latest work being a crime drama about two women connected by an accidental shot. The characters involved are a female police inspector (Ojdanić) investigating the case and a girl with family problems (Babić), whose relationship deepens when they both find out that they have gotten pregnant at about the same time.



Children Of The Fall

(Djeca jeseni) 2013, drama **Directed by:** Goran Rukavina **Written by:** Zvonimir Munivrana **Produced by:** Corvus Film / Zvonimir Munivrana, Josip Popovac (Croatian Radiotelevision - HRT) **Cinematography:** Darko Drinovac **Editing:** Vjeran Pavlinić **Music:** Davor Devčić **Cast:** Leon Lučev, Judita Franković, Anamarija Mandić, Ivana Roščić, Joško Ševo, Drago Utješanović **Duration:** 92' **Release date:** 5 December 2013

Double debut - that of director Goran Rukavina (TV veteran responsible for writing and directing five episodes of the acclaimed series "Rest in Peace" last winter) and screenwriter Zvonimir Munivrana, tells the story of a pathologist (Lučev) whose wife (Roščić) went missing, at a point where a new woman (Franković) enters the life he leads with his eight-year-old daughter (Mandić).



Cowboys

(Kauboji) 2013, comedy **Directed by:** Tomislav Mršić **Written by:** Tomislav Mršić **Produced by:** Kabinet / Suzana Pandek, Goran Radman (Croatian Radiotelevision - HRT) **Cinematography:** Predrag Dubravčić **Editing:** Hrvoje Mršić **Music:** Damir Martinović Mrle & Ivanka Mazurkijević **Cast:** Saša Anočić, Rakan Rushaidat, Živko Anočić, Hrvoje Barišić, Ivana Rushaidat, Kruno Klabučar, Radovan Ruždjak **Duration:** 105' **Release date:** 10 October 2013

Based on an extremely successful eponymous stage play (more than 100,000 tickets sold!), "Cowboys" is a story about a director (Saša Anočić, the author of the original play) who, upon returning to his small hometown, stages a play featuring complete amateurs, a motley crew of local layabouts, losers and wannabe actors with hilarious, occasionally even surprisingly touching results.



Not All About The Money

(Nije sve u lovi) 2013, thriller/drama **Directed by:** Dario Pleić **Written by:** Dario Pleić, Branko Ružić **Produced by:** Interfilm / Ivan Maloča **Cinematography:** Mario Delić **Editing:** Antonija Mamić Vukičević **Music:** Tomislav Babić **Cast:** Marko Cindrić, Sara Stanić, Nikša Butijer, Leona Paraminski, Doris Šarić Kukuljica **Duration:** 87' **Release date:** 31 October 2013

Another debut by another experienced TV director, Dario Pleić ("The Vine"), this crime story focuses on a couple (Marko Cindrić and Sara Stanić) finding themselves on the run from loan sharks and spotting their chance for salvation in a solitary banker (Nikša Butijer) whom they think of as a creditor. They end up in an unusual love triangle.

N 2013



Short Circuits

(Kratki spojevi) 2013, omnibus **Directed by:** "Birthday" – Hana Jušić and Sonja Tarokić / "Bomb" – Dario Juričan / "Subtenant" – Andrija Mardešić **Written by:** "Birthday" – Hana Jušić and Sonja Tarokić / "Bomb" – Dario Juričan / "Subtenant" – Andrija Mardešić **Produced by:** Croatian Radiotelevision - HRT / Mario Orešković, Goran Radman **Cinematography:** Dragan Ruljančić **Editing:** Iva Blašković **Music:** Dubravko Robić **Cast:** Marija Piliškić, Daria Lorenci, Mia Biondić, Rakan Rushaidat, Marko Cindrić, Ivan Glowatzky, Bojan Navojec, Damir Šaban **Duration:** 78'

At the request of its young authors, this omnibus made of three segments was screened out of competition at the Pula Film Festival last summer. "Birthday" portrays a 12-year-old with high hopes for her birthday party, while in "Bomb" an incident in a shopping mall changes a girl's outlook on life. "Subtenant" follows a newlywed husband and father-to-be whose "friendly" future neighbours do him more harm than good.

Handymen

(Majstori) 2013, comedy **Directed by:** Dalibor Matanić **Written by:** Dalibor Matanić **Produced by:** Croatian Radiotelevision - HRT / Goran Radman, Mario Orešković **Cinematography:** Vanja Černjul **Editing:** Tomislav Pavlic **Music:** Jura Ferina & Pavao Miholjević **Cast:** Areta Ćurković, Nikša Butijer, Goran Bogdan, Bojan Navojec, Mate Gulin, Krešimir Mikić **Duration:** 75' **Release date:** 13 March 2014

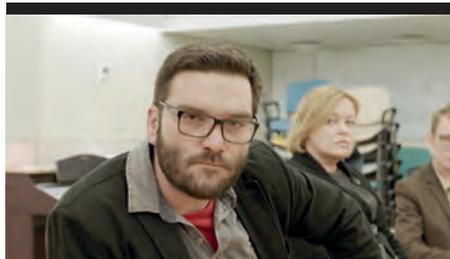
Director Dalibor Matanić is on his eighth film: this one is a pastoral comedy centring on an idle housewife (Ćurković). Torn between a disinterested husband (Butijer) and an annoying suitor, a handyman (Bogdan), she decides to set off on a trip to a coastal village. However, as she catches the eye of a local fisherman and "Casanova" (Navojec), she will discover the peace she seeks difficult to find.



A Stranger

(Obrana i zaštita) 2013, drama **Directed by:** Bobo Jelčić **Written by:** Bobo Jelčić **Produced by:** Spiritus Movens / Zdenka Gold, Goran Radman (Croatian Radiotelevision - HRT), Produkcija Kadar (BiH) **Cinematography:** Erol Zubčević **Editing:** Ivana Fumić **Cast:** Bogdan Diklić, Nada Đurevska, Ivana Roščić, Selma Alispahić, Rakan Rushaidat **Duration:** 87' **Release date:** 26 September 2013

Absolute winner of the Pula Film Festival, screened in the Forum section of last year's Berlinale, this film directed by Bobo Jelčić is a drama set in contemporary, still ethnically divided Mostar. When a Croat's (Diklić) Bosniak friend dies, he finds himself at a loss trying to decide whether to cross over to the "other side" of the city for his funeral.



Projections

(Projekcije) 2013, drama **Directed by:** Zrinko Ogresta **Written by:** Lada Kaštelan **Produced by:** Interfilm / Ivan Maloča **Cinematography:** Branko Linta **Editing:** Tomislav Pavlic **Cast:** Jelena Miholjević, Bojan Navojec, Polona Juh, Ksenija Pajić, Ksenija Marinković, Doris Šarić Kukuljica, Jasna Bilušić, Luka Petrušić **Duration:** 80' **Release date:** 23 January 2014

In Zrinko Ogresta's latest film, marked by an intriguing method and camerawork leaning towards the experimental realm, a group of people, namely, psychologists, social pedagogues and special education teachers are attending a psychotherapy course with a renowned American expert. But, as the professor is late to the last session, the attendees find themselves locked inside a room, which brings about a strange game of thrust and parry...

The Farewell

(Oproštaj) 2013, drama **Directed by:** Dan Oki **Written by:** Dan Oki **Produced by:** Kazimir Association/ Slobodan Jokić (Dan Oki) **Cinematography:** Raul Brzić **Editing:** Davor Švaić **Music:** Vjeran Šalamon **Cast:** Andrea Dea Mladinić, Nikša Arčanin, Bruna Bebić, Danijela Vuković, Elena Orlić, Leon Lučev, Danijel Rafaelić **Duration:** 80'

Ecological-social drama "The Farewell" is the third film Split-based experimenter and professor at the Split Arts Academy has made in three years. In this film, Slobodan Jokić, going under the artist pseudonym Dan Oki, an author now mostly devoted to the fictional form, addresses the well-known problem of asbestosis on the Split peninsula Vranjic, touching upon family relations, sexual identity crisis, brain drain and social activism.



The Priest's Children

(Svećenikova djeca) 2012, comedy **Directed by:** Vinko Brešan **Written by:** Mate Matišić **Produced by:** Interfilm / Ivan Maloča **Cinematography:** Mirko Pivčević **Editing:** Sandra Botica Brešan **Music:** Mate Matišić **Cast:** Krešimir Mikić, Nikša Butijer, Marija Škaričić, Dražen Kuhn, Jadranka Đokić, Goran

Bogdan **Duration:** 96' **Release date:** 3 January 2013

Having attracted more than 160,000 viewers to Croatian cinemas, "The Priest's Children" has seen the highest audience numbers any Croatian film has achieved since 2006. The plot revolves around a priest (Mikić) who enforces pronatalist policies in his village by poking holes in condoms with the help of a newsagent (Butijer) and a pharmacist (Kuhn).



Simon Magus

(Simon čudotvorac) 2013, black comedy **Directed by:** Petar Orešković **Written by:** Ivan Vidak **Produced by:** Alka Film / Jozo Patljak **Cinematography:** Darko Drinovac **Editing:** Dubravko Slunjski **Music:** Dubravko Robić **Cast:** Sven Jakir, Jadranka Đokić, Elizabeta Kukić, Mia Anović, Dean Krivačić, Goran Grgić, Krešimir Mišak, Dražen Šivak **Duration:** 90'

In a year abounding in debutants with considerable TV experience, Petar Orešković got his chance and seized it, which resulted in this peculiar black comedy about the title character, a man (Jakir) with supernatural powers who steals the body of his ex-girlfriend's (Đokić) mother from the morgue in order to revive her, thereby hoping to help his ex settle old scores with her mother. But, things turn out far more complicated than anything Simon had anticipated.



Lapitch, the Little Shoemaker

(Šegrt Hlapić) 2013, children's **Directed by:** Silvije Petranović **Written by:** Silvije Petranović **Produced by:** Maydi Film / Maydi Petranović, Silvije Petranović **Cinematography:** Mirko Pivčević **Editing:** Andrija Zafranović **Music:** Anita Andreis **Cast:** Mile Biljanović, Ena Lulić, Goran Navojec, Hristina Popović, Milan Pleština **Duration:** 102' **Release date:** 7 November 2013

Adaptation of the children's classic written by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić is another domestic blockbuster drawing more than 135,000 people to the cinemas. The story of beloved characters Lapitch and Gita is the second film by Silvije Petranović, as well as his second adaptation of a literary classic, the first being Jiri Šotola's "The Society of Jesus".



Hush...

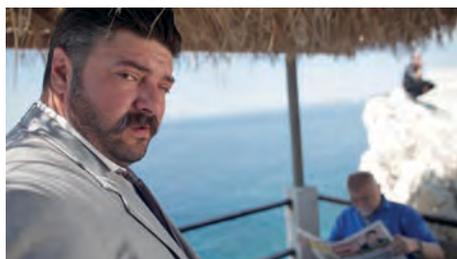
(Šuti) 2013, drama **Directed by:** Lukas Nola **Written by:** Lukas Nola **Produced by:** Kinorama / Ankica Jurić Tilić, Hrvoje Pervan, Goran Radman (Croatian Radiotelevision - HRT) **Cinematography:** Mirko Pivčević **Editing:** Slaven Zečević **Music:** Pavao Miholjević & Jura Ferina **Cast:** Tihana Lazović, Milan Pleština, Živko Anović, Lana Barić, Ksenija Pajić, Nika Mišković **Duration:** 86' **Release date:** 19 December 2013

Lukas Nola's eighth film received six awards at last year's Pula Film Festival, one less than the overall winner, "A Stranger". Alongside Best Editing, Music, Sound, and Make-Up, the actress Tihana Lazović was deemed Best Debutant Actress and her film "mother" Lana Barić was named Best Supporting Actress for their roles in this difficult, somber drama about a vicious circle of domestic abuse based on true events.

Vis-À-Vis

(Vis-À-Vis) 2013, metafilmic drama **Directed by:** Nevio Marasović **Written by:** Nevio Marasović, Rakan Rushaidat, Janko Popović Volarić **Produced by:** Antitalent Produkcija / Copycat Produkcija / Danijel Pek / Nevio Marasović **Cinematography:** Damir Kudin **Editing:** Nevio Marasović **Music:** Andrew Bird **Cast:** Rakan Rushaidat, Janko Popović Volarić, Krešimir Mikić **Duration:** 80' **Release date:** 13 March 2014

Second film by talented Nevio Marasović, miles away from his debut ("The Show Must Go On"), is a metafilmic experiment of sorts, in which a director (Rushaidat) and his leading actor (Popović Volarić) leave for the island of Vis in winter in order to work on a script. Instead of dealing with the script, they end up dealing with themselves and their own problems, and their self-referential abundance yields surprising results.



Tension

(Visoka modna napetost) 2013, art comedy
Directed by: Filip Šovagović **Written by:** Ivica Đikić, Robert Perišić, Filip Šovagović
Produced by: Zona Sova / Filip Šovagović
Cinematography: Mirko Pivčević **Editing:** Dafne Jemeršić **Music:** Filip Šovagović
Cast: Goran Navojec, Marija Škaričić, Bojan Navojec, Mijo Jurišić, Marijana Mikulić, Bojana Petrović, Stjepan Mesić **Duration:** 100'
Release date: 28 November 2013

Finally, eight years after the controversial "Pušća Bistra", here is the second film by the versatile Filip Šovagović, who collaborated on this script with writers Ivica Đikić and Robert Perišić. The film is set in a small island village with exactly 99 inhabitants whose head (Goran Navojec) tries with all his might to push that number over to 100, thereby gaining the status of town and at long last transforming the villagers into citizens, a task significantly more difficult than he first imagined.

The Mysterious Boy

(Zagonetni dječak) 2013, children's crime
Directed by: Dražen Žarković **Written by:** Hana Jušić **Produced by:** Kinorama / Ankica Jurić Tilić, Goran Radman (Croatian Radiotelevision - HRT) **Cinematography:** Mario Sablić **Editing:** Slaven Zečević **Music:** Dinko Appelt **Cast:** Antonio Parač, Karlo Maloča, Toma Budanko, Vanja Markovinović **Duration:** 80' **Release date:** 28 February 2013

Another children's classic and another box office hit (over 70,000 tickets sold!). Successful adaptation of children's novels written by Ivan Kušan continues after "Koko and the Ghosts", indicating that new generations of kids have embraced them as their own. This time, Koko (Antonio Parač, reprising his role from "Ghosts") solves the enigma of a mysterious new student.

CO-PRO- DUCTI- ONS



Circles

(Krugovi) 2013, war drama (Serbia/Croatia/Slovenia/France/Germany) **Directed by:** Srđan Golubović **Written by:** Srđan Koljević and Melina Pota Koljević **Produced by:** Baš Čelik Production House/ Jelena Mitrović **Co-Produced by:** Propeler Film (Croatia), Neue Mediopolis (Germany), La Cinefacture (France) Vertigo (Slovenia) **Cinematography:** Aleksandar Ilić **Editing:** Marko Glušac **Music:** Mario Schneider **Cast:** Leon Lučev, Hristina Popović, Aleksandar Berček, Jasna Đuričić,

Geno Lechner, Nebojša Glogovac, Vuk Kostić
Duration: 112' **Release date:** 24 October 2013

Awarded at the Berlinale (in the same Forum section that included Bobo Jelčić's "A Stranger") and Sundance (Best World Drama), this third film by Belgrade director Srđan Golubović ("The Trap", "Absolute Hundred") is inspired by widely known true events from war-ridden Trebinje in 1993 – the murder of a young Serb, Srđan Aleksić, whose act of saving his Bosniak friend from his armed compatriots cost him life.



Adria Blues

(Adria Blues) 2013, drama (Slovenia/Croatia/BiH) **Directed by:** Miroslav Mandić **Written by:** Miroslav Mandić **Produced by:** Gustav Film, Filmostovje, Senca Studio / Frenk Celarc, Miroslav Mandić, Ida Weiss **Co-Produced by:** Propeler Film (Croatia), SCCA/PRO.BA (BiH), Comrad (Slovenia), TV Slovenija (Slovenia) **Cinematography:** Jure Černec **Editing:** Stanko Kostanjevec **Music:** Aldo Kumar **Cast:** Senad Bašić, Mojca Funki, Iva Babić, Peter Musevski **Duration:** 90' **Release date:** 28 November 2013

Toni Riff (Bašić), former Bosnian rock star of the 1980s, found himself in Slovenia during the war and got married to a fan (Funky) there. Ever since, he has done nothing but live off the salary his wife earns on the sex hotline. One day, a rich client of hers, a hotel owner and a fan of Toni's, offers to organise Toni's great comeback concert, but everyone neglects to tell Toni himself anything about it.

The Forger

(Falsifikator) 2012, comedy (Serbia/Croatia/BiH) **Directed by:** Goran Marković **Written by:** Goran Marković **Produced by:** Drina Film / Tihomir Stanić **Co-Produced by:** Jadran Film (Croatia), Balkan Film (BiH) **Cinematography:** Dušan Joksimović **Editing:** Snežana Ivanović **Music:** Zoran Simjanović **Cast:** Tihomir Stanić, Branka Katić, Sergej Trifunović, Dragan Petrović, Emir Hadžihafi zbegović, Haris Burina, Goran Navojec **Duration:** 80' **Release date:** 21 November 2013

Another seasoned Belgrade classic of the so-called Prague school, Goran Marković ("Special Education", "Reflections", Variola Vera") returns with a bitter-sweet dramedy about a principal (Stanić) of a school in a small Bosnian village in the late 1960s, who moonlights as a diploma forger for his fellow townspeople: this is his hobby, and he does it out of pure altruism.. Of course, the state and the Law beg to differ.

DOCUMENT

TIR

(TIR) 2013, drama (Italy/Croatia)

Directed by: Alberto Fasulo **Written by:** Alberto Fasulo, Enrico Vecchi, Carlo Arciero, Branko Završan **Produced by:** Nefertiti Film/ Alberto Fasulo, Nadia Trevisan **Co-Produced by:** Focus Media (Croatia)/ Irena Marković **Cinematography:** Alberto Fasulo **Editing:** Johannes Hiroshi Nakajima **Cast:** Branko Završan, Lučka Počkaj, Marijan Šestak **Duration:** 90'

Fifty-year-old teacher (Slovenian actor Branko Završan – playing in “Adria Blues” as well), having trouble earning enough to support his family, decides to get a job as a truck driver for an Italian firm. He travels across Europe with an experienced driver who teaches him the drills of the job, mainly consisting of endless hours spent on wheels or standing somewhere on the road, a lifestyle that has an impact on his family life.

Goltzius And The Pelican Company

(Goltzius i Pelikanova družina) 2012, historical drama (Great Britain/France/Netherlands/Croatia) **Directed by:** Peter Greenaway **Written by:** Peter Greenaway **Produced by:** Kasander Film (Nizozemska), MP Film Production (Hrvatska), Portpictures (Velika Britanija), CDP (Francuska) / Kees Kasander, Igor A. Nola, Mike Downey, Sam Taylor, Catherine Dussart **Cinematography:** Reiner van Brummelen **Editing:** Elmer Leupen **Music:** Marco Robino **Cast:** F. Murray Abraham, Kate Moran, Ramsey Nasr, Vedran Živolčić, Goran Grgić, Enes Vejzović, Goran Bogdan **Duration:** 129' **Release date:** 14 November 2013

Part of the latest film by famous British art director Peter Greenaway (“The Cook, The Thief, His Wife & Her Lover”) was filmed in Croatia. The story is set in the late 16th century, and it follows a famous Dutch painter and engraver Hendrik Goltzius (Oscar winner F. Murray Abraham) as he tries to finance the construction of a new printing press in a castle upon the Rhine. He is accompanied by a theatre group...

When Day Breaks

(Kad svane dan) 2012, war drama (Serbia/Croatia/France) **Directed by:** Goran Paskaljević **Written by:** Filip David, Goran Paskaljević **Produced by:** Nova Film / Goran Paskaljević **Co-Produced by:** Maxima Film (Croatia), Arsam International Sarl (France) **Cinematography:** Milan Spasić **Editing:** Kristina Poženeš **Music:** Vlatko Stefanovski **Cast:** Mustafa Nadarević, Mira Banjac, Nada Šargin, Ana Stefanović, Meto Jovanovski, Predrag Ejdus, Nebojša Glogovac, Zafir Hadžimanov **Duration:** 90' **Release date:** 10 February 2014

Film by Belgrade veteran Goran Paskaljević (“The Elusive Summer of ‘68”, “Special Treatment”, “The Dog Who Loved Trains”), “When Day Breaks” tells the story of a retired music professor (Nadarević) who, under unusual circumstances, discovers his Jewish origins, learning that his parents were killed in the Holocaust. He finds an unfinished composition written by his father, becomes obsessed with completing it, and it is this same composition that gives the film its title.

Shangai

(Šangaj) 2012, love drama (Slovenia/Croatia) **Directed by:** Marko Naberšnik **Written by:** Marko Naberšnik (based on the book by Feri Lainšček) **Produced by:** Arsmmedia d.o.o. / Franci Zajc **Co-Produced by:** Jadran film Zagreb (Croatia) **Cinematography:** Miloš Srdić **Editing:** Janez Bricelj **Music:** Saša Lošić **Cast:** Visar Vishka, Asli Bayram, Senad Bašić, Marjuta Slamić, Jasna Diklić, Emir Hadžihafi zbegović **Duration:** 124' **Release date:** 31 January 2013

New film by Marko Naberšnik, screenwriter and director of the second top-grossing Slovenian film of the new millennium, “Rooster’s Breakfast”: an epic story spanning over four generations of a numerous family is narrated by its patriarch who is at the centre of the tale, the self-proclaimed Roma kind Belmondo (Vishka), the founder of the titular Roma village and smuggler of “consumer goods” at first, and later, with the arrival of the war, weapons.



Gangster Of Love

(Gangster te voli) 2013 (Croatia/Germany/Romania) **Directed by:** Nebojša Slijepčević **Written by:** Nebojša Slijepčević, Vanja Jambrović **Produced by:** Restart / Vanja Jambrović **Co-production:** Kloos & Co. Medien, Sub-cult-ura Films, Fade In (Croatia) / Stefan Kloos, Florin Lepan, Calin Meda, Morana Komljenović **Cinematography:** Nebojša Slijepčević **Editing:** Nebojša Slijepčević, Iva Kraljević **Music:** Augustin Kujundžić Ago **Duration:** 80' **Release date:** 6 February 2014

Tragicomic story of a matchmaker with a quarter-century of working experience, ex-parquetry floor layer Nedjeljko Babić called Gangster, who finds himself in a tight corner when a single mother, 35-year-old Bulgarian Maja, comes to him asking for help. This will prove to be a particularly demanding case...

Fed Up!

(Pun kufer) 2013 **Directed by:** Tomislav Jelinčić **Written by:** Tomislav Jelinčić **Produced by:** Academy of Dramatic Art Zagreb (ADU) / Marina Jurišić **Cinematography:** Gašper Milkovič-Biloslav **Editing:** Denis Golenja **Duration:** 43'

Film by longtime RTL anchorman, journalist Tomislav Jelinčić, tells the story of the people who decided to leave city life behind and went to live in the nature, to be precise, in the village Blatuša near Petrova gora. A colourful community of nature-loving people from all parts of Croatia lives in this 21st century commune of sorts.

FARIES



Kismet

(Kismet) 2013 (Greece/Cyprus/Bulgaria/United Arab Emirates/Croatia) **Directed by:** Nina Maria Paschalidou **Written by:** Nina Maria Paschalidou **Produced by:** Anemon Productions, Forest Troop / Rea Apostolides, Yuri Averof, Nina Maria Paschalidou **Co-Produced by:** Agitprop, Nukleus Film, Veritas Films / Martichka Bozhilova, Siniša Juričić, Eva Star Sayre **Cinematography:** Michael Aristomenopoulos, George Karvelas **Editing:** Thodoris Armaos **Music:** Spyros & Michalis Moshoutis **Duration:** 48/52/70'

Film about the phenomenon of Turkish soap operas that has surpassed religions and cultures: "Kismet" follows the stars – the actors and creative crew of this soap opera industry, exploring how Turkish soap operas have helped spread the debate on women's rights in the Middle East, North Africa, the Balkans and Asia.

The Verdict

(Presuda) 2013 **Directed by:** Đuro Gavran **Produced by:** Pipser / Miljenka Čogelja **Cinematography:** Pavel Posavec, Nikola Sučević, Tamara Dugandija, Đuro Gavran **Editing:** Iva Mrkić **Duration:** 11'

Short fly-on-the-wall documentary that has already won several awards, chronicling, in a series of close-ups, the surge of emotions of the several thousand people gathered on Jelačić Square in Zagreb in 2011 in order to watch the live broadcast of the (first degree) verdict passed on generals Gotovina and Markač, a full sixteen years after the end of the war.



Velvet Terrorists

(Zamatovi teroristi) 2013 (Slovakia/Czech Republic/Croatia) **Directed by:** Pavol Pekarčík, Ivan Ostrochovsky, Peter Kerekes **Written by:** Pavol Pekarčík, Ivan Ostrochovsky, Peter Kerekes **Produced by:** Peter Kerekes s.r.o. / Peter Kerekes **Co-Produced by:** Sentimentafilm, Partizanfilm, Hypermarket Film, Nukleus film (Croatia) / Juraj Balaž, Albert Malinovsky, Slavomir Kralovič, Tereza Horska, Silvie Holovska, Filip Remunda, Siniša Juričić **Cinematography:** Martin Kollar **Editing:** Marek Šulík, Zuzana Cseplo **Music:** Marian Čurko **Duration:** 87'

"Velvet Terrorists" is a film about some lesser known and/or failed terrorist conspiracies and attempts in the shared socialist history of Czech Republic and Slovakia, such as assassins who missed their targets, bombers who blew up posters, revolutionaries and conspirators who were never taken seriously.



Mother Europe

(Mama Europa) 2013 (Slovenia/Macedonia/Croatia) **Directed by:** Petra Seliškar **Written by:** Petra Seliškar, Terra Ferro Seliškar **Produced by:** Petra Pan Films, PFPF / Petra Seliškar, Brand Ferro **Co-Produced by:** Restart / Oliver Sertić, Bojan Mastilović **Cinematography:** Brand Ferro **Editing:** Katrin Ebersohn **Duration:** 90' **Release date:** 6 March 2014

The story of Europe as seen by a six-year-old girl of "complicated" origins, including a Cuban-Macedonian father and a Slovenian mother, offers a slightly different view of the continent from innocent, but uncommonly experienced eyes of a child travelling through ex-Yugoslavia with her family.

Married To The Swiss Franc

(U braku sa švicarcem) 2013 **Directed by:** Arsen Oremović **Written by:** Arsen Oremović **Produced by:** Interfilm / Ivan Maloča **Cinematography:** Vjekoslav Vrdoljak **Editing:** Slaven Jekuc **Music:** Matej Meštrović **Duration:** 55'

Debut by journalist and film critic Arsen Oremović, awarded at the Sarajevo and Vukovar Film Festivals, speaks of the victims of credits undertaken in Swiss Francs. The increase in interest rates on loan repayments, in some cases up to 60 percent, has affected around 120,000 people: many barely survived, without any reaction from the government.

SHORT FICTION

films



Little Darling

(Balavica) 2013, drama **Directed by:** Igor Mirković **Written by:** Igor Mirković (based on a story by Olja Savičević) **Produced by:** Studio dim / Darija Kulenović Gudan, Marina Andree Škop **Cinematography:** Radislav Jovanov Gonzo **Editing:** Tomislav Pavlic **Music:** Vlada Divljan **Cast:** Đana Gudelj, Marko Boljat, Slavica Jukić, Nika Petrović, Petra Barbarić **Duration:** 15'

Igor Mirković's film, winner of several awards, depicts the secret life of a girl in a Mediterranean city who spends her days on the roof of the skyscraper she lives in, in the company of a local delinquent. She is eleven, he is fourteen, and they kill time by indulging in forbidden things parents mustn't know about – drinking, smoking, walking on the edge.



Zovko Teleport

(Teleport Zovko) 2013, SF comedy **Directed by:** Predrag Ličina **Written by:** Predrag Ličina **Produced by:** Kinorama / Ankica Jurić Tilić, Hrvoje Pervan **Cinematography:** Mario Sablić **Editing:** Tomislav Pavlic **Music:** Jura Ferina, Pavao Miholjević **Cast:** Linda Begonja, Krešimir Mikić, Bojan Navojec, Dado Ćosić, Ana Stunić, Rene Rehek **Duration:** 17'

About fifty years from now, teleportation has become a customary means of transport in affluent countries, but not in Croatia. Martina hears a radio ad for the first teleportation service in Croatia, Zovko Teleport, and persuades her husband to try it out and travel to Vis for a family vacation with their children.



White

(Bijela) 2013, drama **Directed by:** Zvonimir Jurić **Written by:** Zvonimir Jurić, Lana Barić **Produced by:** Petnaesta umjetnost / Hrvoje Osvaldić **Cinematography:** Bojana Burnać **Editing:** Dubravka Turić **Music:** Hrvoje Radnić **Cast:** Lana Barić, Filip Križan, Nikša Butijer **Duration:** 29'

A girl watches TV in a room as two young men paint the kitchen walls. Then they trade rooms. The two men paint the room, she sits in the kitchen. Then they eat. All three of them. They talk while eating. The men leave. They are finished. They have painted her apartment. She is left alone in the apartment. She leaves the apartment. She runs.



Lily On The Moon

(Lili na Mjesecu) 2013, drama **Directed by:** Dorotea Vučić **Written by:** Dorotea Vučić **Produced by:** Mainframe / Igor A. Nola **Cinematography:** Mark Moriarty **Editing:** Kristijan Kaurić **Music:** Aleksandar Spasoski **Cast:** Rebeka Čuljak, Anita Matić Delić, Krešimir Mikić, Martina Tomić, Mirna Horvat **Duration:** 15'

Lili is not an ordinary girl. Her nights are filled with dread. Every night, the Monster enters her room and she can't call out to her parents because she loses her voice. One night, a girl much like herself saves Lili from falling off the roof, but soon disappears. The Monster comes again that night, and Lili runs off to her fantasy world. There, she climbs up to where she will be safe, to the top of a crane.

ANI- MAT- ED

films

Bla

(Bla) 2013 **Directed by:** Martina Meštrović **Written by:** Martina Meštrović **Produced by:** Creative Syndicate / Igor Grubić **Animation:** Martina Meštrović, Siniša Mataić, Marko Meštrović **Editing:** Martina Meštrović **Music:** Kimiko **Duration:** 7'48"

Oppressive educational structures are one of the main weapons of every system. Do we give our consent voluntarily, or are we being charged without asking for the bill?

Fibonacci Bread

(Fibonaccijev kruh) 2013 **Directed by:** Danijel Žeželj **Written by:** Danijel Žeželj **Produced by:** Zagreb film **Animation:** Danijel Žeželj **Editing:** Dubravka Turić **Music:** Jessica Lurie **Duration:** 7'40"

The life of a baker told in black and white geometrical patterns. Every night he bakes the bread that he delivers every morning, weaving his way through the city on his bicycle. One day, he will experience a remarkable encounter...

The Dance Is Over, Maria

(Finili su Mare bali) 2013 **Directed by:** Natko Stipaničev **Written by:** Natko Stipaničev, Josip Žuvan **Produced by:** Academy of Fine Arts (ALU) / Natko Stipaničev **Animation:** Ognjen Tutek, Natko Stipaničev **Editing:** Natko Stipaničev **Duration:** 9'30"

Two people live alone on an isolated island in a patriarchal relationship. He catches fish on his boat and brings home the catch, she takes care of the daily housework. The film tackles the predictability of human actions and mechanical, deeply rooted reactions to every single one of life's events.

EX- PERI- MENTAL

films



Postcards

(Razglednice) 2013 **Directed by:** Ana Hušman **Written by:** Ana Hušman **Produced by:** Studio Pangolin / Ana Hušman **Cinematography:** Ivan Slipčević **Editing:** Iva Kraljević **Music:** Tomislav Domes, Nenad Romić **Cast:** Nicole Hewitt, Vili Matula, Tvrtko Jurić, Jadranka Đokić, Tanja Vrvilo, Boris Bakal, Damir Bartol Indoš **Duration:** 23'

The curriculum for teaching Croatian as a foreign language emphasises the use of role-play, drama, expressive reading, staging fairy tales, and reading and writing postcards. Combined with a textbook for learning Croatian as a foreign language and postcards sent from the United States to Croatia, these teaching methods become starting points for improvised situations performed by professional and amateur actors.



Amnesiac On A Beach

(Amnezijak na plaži) 2013 **Directed by:** Dalibor Barić **Written by:** Dalibor Barić **Produced by:** Bonobostudio / Vanja Andrijević **Cinematography:** Daniel Bakotić **Editing:** Dalibor Barić **Animacija:** Dalibor Barić **Music:** Tomislav Babić **Cast:** Ana Kolčeg, Dalibor Barić, Flavio Floričić **Voices:** Lada Bonacci, Marko Cindrić, Thomas Johnson **Duration:** 24'

The Near Life Experience might strike you as an odd occurrence, but in fact, it can happen to anyone. Why stay trapped in your unchanging identity as if you are never to rouse yourself, never to desire, never to experience anything new?

Strange Fruit

2013 **Directed by:** Ivan Faktor **Written by:** Jasna Žmak, Ivan Faktor **Produced by:** Croatian Film Association / Vera Robić - Škarica **Cinematography:** Boris Poljak **Editing:** Dubravka Turić **Duration:** 23'

There is something special about stopping in an empty plain and looking around after having walked in the fields for an hour. The sun sinks towards the horizon, reflecting in spring puddles. Wind howls across the plain, across desolate arable fields and broad roads. The first verdure emerges from the shrubs. The intense light overwhelms the enormous void. Deep underneath the surface, sprouts silently awaken.

WHEN THE CAMERA COMES INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

TEXT
MARIO SABLIĆ
PHOTO
HAVC ARCHIVE

The film *Projections* by director Zrinko Ogresta is one of the more interesting titles in recent Croatian production. It is a somber work that, alongside an impressive acting interplay and a symbolic literary text by Lada Kaštelan, has an intriguing director's approach. Just the fact that the story takes place in a single, bounded space (a hall where psychotherapist education takes place) and in a continuous time sequence would, in the hands of a less ambitious filmmaker, bring about a film that could at best be commended for impressive acting skills, but would remain on the level of a filmed theatre play or, at best, a solid TV drama. However, Ogresta has far greater ambitions and boldly sets out on an experiment whose outcome he could not have predicted. Namely, there are few films in the collective memory that are defined by such a consistent directorial style, especially those in which the subjective shot becomes the point of departure for cinematic narration. Under the direction of a less talented filmmaker, the concept of conveying a viewpoint solely through subjective shots of the characters could have resulted in a visual mess in which the story would have been lost. But this is exactly where Ogresta's directorial skills come to light, because by using this method, he not only improved the dynamics of a principally static situation, but he also managed to place

the viewer in the midst of action. Clearly, in order to go through with the devised directorial strategy, Ogresta needed an equally competent director of photography who was also willing to take the risk of filming within a single space, with a moving camera positioned almost exclusively at the protagonists' eye level (the only exemptions are in fact the shots of the surveillance cameras). At first glance, it seems that there was little space left for visual creativity, but the DoP is Branko Linta (*Blacks*, 2009; *Fine Dead Girls*, 2002), who skillfully found a way to realize and even strengthen the director's concept.

Linta decided to go for a uniform lighting pattern in a coloristically unobtrusive space by using soft, top and unflattering lights. However, the intention was not only to respect the logic of lighting by which such a space would ordinarily be illuminated, but to strip the protagonists down to their core, and leave them unprotected and vulnerable. Devoid of any objects behind which they could hide, that is, of any shadows that would offer even an illusory shelter, the characters in *Projections* are focused on one another in their desire to sort out their personal problems, while the surrounding space, as benign and dull as it appears, only seems to increase the tensions between them. Such a visual technique blended in perfectly with the camera movements that suggest a constant

The film *Projections* by Zrinko Ogresta is a remarkably interesting experiment in style, screenwriting and camera, shot in real time, in a single space, and using exclusively subjective shots.



exchange of subjective views. This segment, nevertheless, seems as if it still had room for visual upgrade. When just wondering about without paying attention to the other characters or the story itself, the point of view shots of the protagonists appear rather inchoate and come across as rather confusing. Given that there is no objective shot that would explain or justify such abstract POV's, they cease to be part of the subjective shot and take on an added significance.

The abstractness and decomposure of such frames (the stripes on the wooden floor, the walls, the decomposing of frames in which the remaining characters are at their edges, etc.) becomes a slightly confusing component of the *Projections'* visual statement.

The resulting impression is that this strict adherence to the physical laws (i.e. what the protagonist can see from a certain standpoint) turned out to be a restrictive factor, that is, a source of potential obscurities. The same is true for the abstract shots, as well as for the camera movements that are, at times, not clearly enough defined. In real life, we do not even notice these things, except at times when our attention is directly focused on a particular object. It is just like failing to notice the moments in which we turn our heads around. However, in the film space, by the pure existence of a film frame, these moments are all too notice-

able and can, apart from their purely descriptive function, take on additional meanings.

The surveillance camera shots that were occasionally inserted also have a dual meaning. They can be read as an objective portrayal of the film world, but also as an additional level of the dramaturgical context. However, as Ogresta does not even try to precisely explain each and every element of his work, the aforementioned viewpoints, which are equally ambiguous and left open to interpretation, also fit into this strategy and, in a way, represent the director's invitation for communication.

The most inspiring moments of *Projections* offer an almost perfect, organic blend of form and content. Especially impressive is the closing shot of the film that, in its simplicity and skillfull play of the subjective/objective, clearly renders the character's inner world, while metaphorically speaking about the film as a whole. *Projections* by far surpasses the filmmaking standards in this region and is a real refreshment with regards to its choice of theme, and especially form.

At the time when craft skills are often mistaken for filmmaking, and the director's skills are often judged by his showcased competence in decomposing film frames, *Projections* brings back the faith in the existence of filmmakers whose ambitions are far greater and who have the courage to venture into less explored cinematographic paths. ●

THE DUBROVNIK SET OF HBO'S MEGA POPULAR
SERIES *GAME OF THRONES* IS JUST THE TIP OF
THE ICEBERG OF INTERNATIONAL
CO-PRODUCTIONS RETURNING TO CROATIA

CAMERA ROLL,



ACTION! AGAIN!

TEXT
IGOR TOMLJANOVIĆ
PHOTO
MARIO ROMULIĆ

A total of 126 international co-productions were filmed in Croatia in the last century or so, which, apart from being an interesting trivia fact for cinema lovers, represents a significant contribution to the development of the Croatian film culture, as well as to the development of Croatia's professional, technical and production potential, to say nothing of the financial influx. The war and devastation of the filmmaking infrastructure brought this valuable economic and cultural activity almost to an end; however, within the last few years, Croatia is once again becoming an attractive location for international co-productions.

The main reason for the return of international film crews to Croatia is the incentive programme, offering productions filming in Croatia a 20% rebate on local spend. This benefit was adopted in 2012, and soon resulted in a significant increase of international film production in our country. To be eligible for the rebate, productions must meet the minimum point threshold in the so-called "cultural test" and other requirements prescribed by the Regulations to Encourage Investment in the Production of Audiovisual Works, such as the prescribed minimum local spend, local film crew hire and production resource quota.



INTERNATIONAL CO-PRODUCTIONS

On the set of the movie *Red Tails* in Motovun (upper left and in the middle); on the set of *Game of Thrones* in Dubrovnik (upper right)

The most famous example with the biggest publicity is the popular HBO series *Game of Thrones* that was the first beneficiary of the program. The second and third season of the series was filmed in Dubrovnik and its outskirts, while the fourth season was filmed last autumn in Dubrovnik and Split. Besides the direct, financial benefits of such international film crews shooting in Croatia, there's no doubt about the huge marketing benefits, especially when it comes to such famous titles. This is clearly illustrated by the fascinating fact that, when "game of thrones croatia" is typed into the Google search engine, over 1.5 million results are offered.

There's another film that recognized the potentials of attractive Croatian locations and its film infrastructure in 2012: *Diana*, a biography of Princess Diana, with Hollywood star Naomi Watts in the leading role. The movie was filmed on locations in Zagreb, Rovinj and Opatija, and the production recruited some 130 Croatian film workers. We recently had the opportunity to see the cult English director Peter Greenaway's newest film *Goltzius and the Pelican Company* in theaters, which was filmed in Zagreb in 2011. Simultaneously, the cinemas were showing *Eyjafjallajokull*, a French comedy by Alexandre Coffre, with Valerie Bonneton and Dany Boon in leading roles. In this film Croatia "played" Albania, Slovenia and Greece, showing the big potential of its already praised natural and cultural diversity.

Among other film and TV titles produced in Croatia in 2012 and 2013, it is worth mentioning the Finnish-Croatian co-production *A Patriotic Man*, directed by Finnish director Arto Halonen; the Swiss movie *Cure (Girls)* by Andrea Štaka, filmed in Dubrovnik and featuring many established Croatian actors led by Leon Lučev and Marija Škaričić (the movie also features Mirjana

Karanović from Belgrade); feature film *Itsi Bitsi* by famous Danish director Ole Christian Madsen (*Flame and Citron*, *Superclásico*) and TV series *Borgia*. ●

CASH REBATE

THE AMOUNT OF THE BENEFIT?

Up to 20% of qualifying local expenditure

MINIMUM EXPENDITURE FOR THE CASH REBATE?

300,000 HRK for documentary
500,000 HRK for animated film
750,000 HRK for a TV series episode
2 million HRK for feature film

EXPENDITURE CAP PER PROJECT?

20 million HRK

TYPES OF QUALIFYING PROJECTS?

Feature films, documentaries, TV films, animated films, TV series

QUALIFYING EXPENDITURE?

The benefit is based on the cost of Croatian cast and crew working in Croatia, as well as goods and services purchased in Croatia

2014/2015

FILM FESTIVALS IN CROATIA

May 2nd - 9th 2014, Zagreb
European Film Days / Dani europskog filma

May 3rd - 17th 2014 Zagreb
Subversive Film Festival

May 15th - 24th 2014, Sisak
Sisak Eco Film Festival / Sisački ekološki filmski festival – SEFF

May 18th - 24th 2014, Zagreb
Festival of Tolerance / Festival tolerancije / Festival židovskog filma Zagreb;

Festival of Tolerance / Festival tolerancije June 7th - 9th Rijeka; October 25th - 27th Sarajevo

May 28th - 31st 2014 Požega
Croatian One-Minute Film Festival / Festival jednogminutnih filmova

June 3rd - 8th 2014, Zagreb
Animafest Zagreb – World Festival of Animated Film (short film edition) / Svjetski festival animiranog filma – ANIMAFEST Zagreb (kratkometražno izdanje)

May 27th - June 1st 2014, Slavonski Brod
Documentary Film Festival "New Films Festival 2014" / Festival dokumentarnog filma 'Festival Novih 2014'

June 6th - 14th 2014 Split
Mediterranean Film Festival Split / Festival mediteranskog filma Split

June 12th - 21st 2014, Desinić
Tabor Film Festival

June 25th - 28th 2014, Đakovo
Đakovo Cuts / Đakovački rezovi

June 27th - July 5th 2014, Zagreb
Fantastic Zagreb Film Festival

July 12th - 26th 2014, Pula
Pula Film Festival / Festival igranog filma u Puli

July 15th - 19th 2014, Supetar
Supetar Super Film Festival

July 18th - 22nd 2014, Svetvinčenat
Dance & Non-Verbal Theatre

Festival San Vincenti / Festival plesa i neverbalnog kazališta Svetvinčenat- audiovizualni dio programa

July 22nd - 27th 2014, Pašman
Pasman Film Nights / Pašmanske filmske večeri

July 26th - 30th 2014, Motovun
Motovun Film Festival

July 27th - August 1st 2014, Šibenik
Supertoon Šibenik – International Animation Festival / Supertoon Šibenik - međunarodni festival animacije

July 31st - August 3rd 2014, Postira
Postira Seaside Festival - International Festival of Short Film / Međunarodni festival kratkog filma Postira Seaside Festival

July 2014, Osijek
Gastro film fest

August 2nd - 7th 2014, Starigrad Paklenica
SPFF 2014. Starigrad Paklenica Film Festival – International Music Documentary Festival / Starigrad Paklenica Film Festival - međunarodni festival glazbenog dokumentarnog filma

August 18th - 24th 2014, Vukovar
Vukovar Film Festival – Danube Region Film Festival / Vukovar Film Festival - Festival Podunavskih Zemalja

August 18th - 23rd 2014, Opuzen
Opuzen Film Festival

August 20th - 24th 2014, Beli Manastir
Danube River Basin Countries' Film Festival / Revija filmova podunavskih zemalja

August 23rd - 29th 2014, Zadar
Avventura Festival – Film Forum Zadar

August 26th - 30th 2014, Ičići
Liburnia Film Festival – Croatian Documentary Film Festival / Liburnia Film Festival – festival hrvatskog dokumentarnog filma

September 2014, Karlovac
Highschool Youth's Film Festival ili Film Festival for Talented Youth / Filmska revija mladeži i Four River Film Festival

September 3rd - 7th 2014, Ston
Kinookus Food Film Festival

September 3rd - 7th 2014, Varaždin
Trash Film Festival – Festival of Low-Budget Action Movies / Trash Film Festival - međunarodni festival niskobudžetnih filmova

September 13th - 20th 2014, Split
Split Film Festival – International Festival of New Film / Splitski filmski festival – međunarodni festival novog filma

September 25th - 28th 2014, Varaždin / Ludbreg / Čakovec
Film and Video Festival for Talented Children / Revija hrvatskog filmskog i videostvaralaštva djece

September 25th - 28th 2014, Rovinj
Underwater Film Festival „Bijeli lav“ / Festival podvodnog filma „Bijeli lav“

September 25th - 28th 2014, Zagreb
25 FPS Festival / Internacionalni festival eksperimentalnog filma i videa - 25 FPS

October 4th - 10th 2014, Bjelovar
DOKUart Festival / DOKUart - Dani dokumentarnog filma

October 16th - 19th 2014, Dubrovnik
DUFF - Film Festival for the Children and the Youth of the Mediterranean Countries / DUFF – Festival filma djece i mladeži zemalja Mediterana

October 19th - 26th 2014, Zagreb
Zagreb Film Festival

October 31st - November 2nd 2014, Rijeka
Film Festival "Seize this Day with Me!" / Filmski festival „Uhvati film“

November 6th - 7th 2014, Split
International Archaeology Film Festival / Međunarodni festival arheološkog filma (MFAF)

November 6th - 9th 2014, Zagreb
PSSST! Silent Film Festival / PSSST! Festival nijemog filma

November 7th - 9th 2014
Croatian Film and Video Festival / Revija hrvatskog filmskog i video stvaralaštva

November 14th - 19th 2014, Zagreb
Vox Feminae Festival / Filmska Vox Feminae

November 17th - 21st 2014, Zagreb
Children's Rights Festival / Festival o pravima djece

November 21st - 23rd 2014, Zagreb
One Take Film Festival – International Festival of Films Shot in One Take / One Take Film Festival – Međunarodni festival filmova snimljenih u jednom kadru

November 22nd - 23rd 2014, Zagreb
Croatian Animated Film Festival / FHAF - Festival hrvatskog animiranog filma

November 28th - December 7th 2014, Zagreb / Rijeka
Film Mutations – Seventh Festival of Invisible Cinema / Filmske mutacije: sedmi festival nevidljivog filma

November 2014, Zagreb
Amateur Film Festival / RAF Revija amaterskog filma

December 2014, Sisak
Documentary Film Festival Fibula / Revija dokumentarnog filma Fibula

December 7th - 20th 2014, Zagreb / Rijeka
Human Rights Film Festival

February 2015, Zagreb
Antique Film Festival / Antičke filmske večeri

March 29th – April 5th 2015, Zagreb
ZagrebDox – International Documentary Film Festival / ZagrebDox - međunarodni festival dokumentarnog filma

March 19th – 22nd 2015, Vinkovci
DORF – Documentary Rock Film Festival / DORF - festival dokumentarnog rock filma

April 23th - 26th 2015, Zagreb
Croatian Film Days / Dani hrvatskog filma

April 21st - 26th 2015, Varaždin
VAFI – International Children and Youth Animation Film Festival Varaždin / VAFI - internacionalni festival animiranog filma djece i mladih Varaždin

April 23rd – 25th 2015, Rovinj
Ethnographic Film Festival ETNOFILM / ETNOFILM - festival etnografskog filma

PRVIĆ ŠEPURINE

With only a few interventions, the central square of this Dalmatian village became the ideal setting for *The Priest's Children*



The Priest's Children and *Handymen* are two comedies that epitomize the creative manner of fully drawing on what the scenery of the Dalmatian coast has to offer. Their art directors and DoPs Damir Gabelica, Bojan Drezgić, Mirko Pivčević and Vanja Černjul corroborate this fact

With almost 160,000 viewers, Vinko Brešan's film *The Priest's Children* was not only the top-grossing film of the season, but it has also become the second top-grossing Croatian film since the declaration of independence, following in the footsteps of another Brešan film, *How the War Started on My Island* (1996). Dalibor Matanić's atypical romantic comedy *Handymen*, packed full of slapstick and gags as well as references to the still beloved domestic classic *One Song a Day Takes Mischief Away* (1970) by Krešo Golik, has also great popularity potential. The storylines of both films are set on the Adriatic coast, but each uses this captivating setting in different ways, as revealed to us by art

Production Design, Photography, the Sun, the Sea...

AND A LITTLE BIT OF LUCK

TEXT JANKO HEIDL

PHOTO PRIVATE ARCHIVE

directors and cinematographers Damir Gabelica and Mirko Pivčević (*The Priest's Children*), and Bojan Drezgic and Vanja Černjul (*Handymen*).

WAS PRVIĆ ŠEPURINE YOUR FIRST CHOICE FOR THE VILLAGE FEATURED IN *THE PRIEST'S CHILDREN*?

GABELICA: After our first visit to Prvić Šepurine, we decided that we should go on looking because we encountered an insurmountable problem there. We paid a visit to many small Dalmatian towns, touring the coast and the islands, all the way up to Fažana in Istria. None struck us as ideal at first sight – something was always missing. For example, Sutivan came quite close to what we wanted, but the church and the square face northwards, leaving the façades in the shade for the better part of the day, which didn't suit us at all. However, after seeing Zlarin, Kaštela and Brač, I thought up a solution to the "Prvić problem". We had been left with the impression that the main scene of events was too small and useless. But, if we were to throw a bridge over the two piers, the view would open up and we would gain a square of the exact size we required. Not in the aesthetic sense alone, but in the practical sense too. We returned to Prvić Šepurine, discovered that my idea was feasible, and that was how we acquired our main location, even if it was not ideal in terms of organization, since there is no ferry line connecting Prvić Šepurine to the mainland, which called for additional efforts. Basically, we didn't take the right approach to Prvić on our first visit. We stood in front of the church, everything seemed

too small, and that was it. Upon our return there, when we considered Prvić from another angle, and with the aforementioned solution in mind, we realized that it actually suited us.

PIVČEVIĆ: Since the very beginning, before we even started location scouting, Vinko Brešan was rooting for Fažana; it struck him as exactly the right thing. According to the topography described in the script, the newsstand, parish house and church were situated on the same stretch, and this was where Fažana fitted the bill most accurately. However, when it comes to visual quality and atmosphere, its main square is too colourful and studded with ice-cream vendors. It has much more Italian spirit than most of us would imagine in a typical Dalmatian village. Besides, the story is set in a Dalmatian village. If it were set in Istria, that's what the script would read. This isn't a matter of nit-picking and blind adherence, because the script should be respected as a piece of work that steers the direction the film should be heading in.

THAT IS TO SAY THAT NO PARTICULAR, PERFECT LOCATION POPPED INTO YOUR MIND UPON READING THE SCRIPT; INSTEAD, YOU EMBARKED ON A SYSTEMATIC QUEST?

GABELICA: We definitely needed to find a place that seemed traditional, somewhat frozen in a previous era, without any modern buildings – vacationing towns were out of the question. As I was reading the script, I couldn't help but think that



VANJA ČERNJUL

"Croatia is teeming with locations I would love to shoot in"

**BOJAN DREZGIĆ**

"Colourful lamps were the only scenographic intervention in Vinjerac"

Kaštela was an ideal choice, but when we got there, neither Vinko nor Mirko thought that it was the location we were looking for.

PIVČEVIĆ: We felt it was too gloomy, incompatible with the comical, light-hearted note that was so crucial for setting the mood. Because *The Priest's Children* is a film that poses as a comedy for a long time before it turns into something quite different. It was necessary to evoke that on a visual level as well, relying on the colouristic background above all else.

HOW MUCH DID YOUR TEAM STRUGGLE WITH THE FIRST IMPRESSION THAT VINJERAC WAS THE IDEAL LOCATION FOR THE SHOOTING OF *HANDYMEN*?

ČERNJUL: I believe Dalibor had been keeping an eye on Vinjerac for a while, waiting for a chance to use it in a film. The scenes set on the coast in the *Handymen* script were written with Vinjerac in mind.

DREZGIĆ: Keka (Areta Ćurković), the heroine of *Handymen*, runs away from her husband to a village where they had spent their honeymoon. From a visual point of view, she escapes from her small city home, where they are isolated from the world, to an isolated coastal spot that in turn represents something entirely different. She leaves one isolation for another. Therefore, we were looking for a secluded coastal village that needed as few scenographic interventions as possible. I think Matanić used to spend his summers there as a child. The place stayed with him. When we surveyed the location, Vinjerac turned out to be a beautiful, picturesque village by the sea that, aside from the visuality we were looking for, graced us with the

big advantage of having studio-like shooting conditions because of its extremely small number of inhabitants. The locals were very supportive and helpful, which meant a great deal to us. The only things we added to Vinjerac were the colourful lamps in the exterior, adorning our characters' evening walk with a fairytale tinge.

DID THE CINEMATOGRAPHER PLACE ANY SPECIAL DEMANDS BEFORE THE ART DIRECTOR?

GABELICA: Once we adopted Prvić Šepurine as the exterior of *The Priest's Children*, it turned out that almost everything was a perfect fit for what we needed, therefore very few interventions were called for. Our biggest problem was the contemporary post office building next to the church - a white structure in the middle of a row of old stone houses. It is generally thought to be "beautiful". It even won a certain architecture prize. However, we managed to carry out alterations and turn it into our film's pharmacy. On the other hand, for production reasons, all interiors - with the exception of don Fabijan's (Krešimir Mikić) room in the parish house that is directly linked to the sea - were shot in the vicinity of Zagreb.

PIVČEVIĆ: There is a delightful anecdote to tell. As Damir was taking us location scouting in the vicinity of Zagreb, he got a phone call from Vladimir Tadej who, among other things, asked him what he was up to. Damir told him that he was near Velika Gorica, looking for Dalmatian locations. To which Tadej replied: "Oh yes, there's a beautiful riviera in those parts." Tadej, an old school production designer, coming from the times when films were shot over much longer periods of time and when funding was significantly more lavish, simply couldn't believe that we were filming Dalmatia in Zagreb.

GABELICA: Most interior scenes were shot in Odra and Bregana. I think we managed to secure interiors that, aided by adjustments of the set and a certain level of stylization, matched the Mediterranean spirit of the exteriors. The church interior is perhaps the most dubious. Although it belongs to a truly beautiful baroque edifice patinated enough to correspond with the exterior, it still differs from the architecture found in Dalmatia. To be specific, due to the film's content, finding a church that would allow us to use its interior to film *The Priest's Children* was not easy, but a priest in a church not far from Zagreb, I won't say where exactly, allowed us to film in it for five days

“I CAN EASILY IMAGINE
A JAMES BOND FILM
ON HVAR,” SAYS
CINEMATOGRAPHER
MIRKO PIVČEVIĆ

**DAMIR GABELICA**

“Filming locations for some Dalmatian interiors were found inland”

in the periods between morning and evening mass.

DREZGIĆ: The interiors in *Handymen* were also shot in Zagreb. In the house located on Nazor Street we were free to do anything we wanted, so we turned that natural object into a kitchen, room, corridor, whatever was required.

ČERNJUL: *Handymen* is a relatively modest TV project. We had to make do with a very short pre-production period and only twenty shooting days. Since the film is a physical comedy incorporating madcap stunts performed by the actors themselves, we had to find a way of providing them with maximum freedom of movement. Owing to the strictly defined colour palette and the applica-

tion of widescreen format in comedy, we made Wes Anderson's films *Bottle Rocket* and *Rushmore* our initial reference. During my first meeting with Bojan and our costume designer Morana Cerovec, I told them about the abundance of colour that we were aiming for, saying we should not be afraid of applying impertinent primary colours. We decided to assume a cooler approach to the Zagreb locations, designing the homes of the main characters in dominant blue and green tones. This decision was based on purely practical reasons – on the Zagreb set, we were supposed to shoot a great deal in the kitchen in a very short period of time, using wide shots to capture the entire space. Bojan and Dalibor suggested that fisherman Lujó's apartment be in reds and oranges. At first, that struck me as too stark a contrast to the Zagreb spaces, but on the day before the shooting, at an on-location rehearsal, I realized that it actually worked marvelously. Our goal was to organically blend in the colours into the photography; we strived to avoid any drastic image manipulation in post-production.

After shooting *Mother of Asphalt* and *Daddy*, some collaborators expected us to work with a handheld camera and minimum artificial lighting again, so the controlled camera movements achieved by using classic grip equipment, and high-key lighting with large, diffused light sources took them by surprise. It seemed as if we wouldn't have enough time to maintain this approach throughout the entire shoot, but working on *Daddy* with Dalibor taught me that his energy, coupled with the strategy of assistant director Dragan Jurić could do wonders. I wouldn't be afraid to shoot *Marching of the Penguins* with those two.

ARE THERE ANY PLACES IN CROATIA THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE FILMED MORE OFTEN, OR SHOOT THERE YOURSELVES?

GABELICA: Klis, the Knin Fortress, Senj... I'm an admirer of older architecture and I wish some of the beautiful old castles in Croatia were used for filming more often. But I guess now is not a good time for such historical themes that demand larger budgets, although I believe contemporary stories could be set in those edifices just as well.

PIVČEVIĆ: I can easily imagine a James Bond film in Hvar because Hvar truly has everything necessary for the setting and atmosphere of a film in that series. ●

**THE PRIEST'S CHILDREN**

Set design sketch of the interior of Petar's house

PREVIEW

2014

25 Croatian movies we can't wait to see this year

Feature movies, short fiction films, documentaries, animated and experimental films that will premiere until the end of the year

FEA- TURE film



These Are the Rules

(Takva su pravila) drama, 80' **Director:** Ognjen Sviličić **Screenplay:** Ognjen Sviličić **Cinematography:** Crystel Fournier **Cast:** Emir Hadžihafizbegović, Jasna Žalica, Hrvoje Vladislavljević, Ljubomir Bandović **Producers:** Damir Terešak, Janja Kralj, Nikolina Vučetić Zečević, Svetozar Ristovski **Production:** MaXima Film (HR) **Co-Productions:** KinoElektron (FR), Biberche Productions (RS), Trice Films (MK)

This is a story about violence and what it can do to regular people. After their son is beaten up in the street, two ordinary parents find their world collapsing as their illusions of security are proven to be false. They must re-examine their lives and question everything in which they once believed.



Number 55

(Broj 55) war drama, 90' **Director:** Kristijan Milić **Screenplay:** Ivan Pavličić **Cinematography:** Mirko Pivčević **Editor:** Veljko Segarić **Cast:** Goran Bogdan, Marko Cindrić, Alan Katić, Jan Kerekeš, Darko Milas, Dražen Mikulić, Marinko Prga **Producer:** Stanko Babić **Production:** Telefilm, Croatian Radiotelevision (HRT)

In the autumn of 1991, a small group of Croatian soldiers go on patrol in an improvised armoured vehicle. Soon, they are ambushed and forced to take refuge in a nearby house. Their resistance to attack by rebel Serbs, the Yugoslav Army and Serbian Special Forces lasts for 24 hours.

The Bridge at the End of the World

(Most na kraju svijeta) drama, 114' **Director:** Branko Ištvančić **Screenplay:** Josip Mlakić **Cinematography:** Branko Cahun **Editor:** Veljko Segarić **Cast:** Aleksandar Bogdanović, Sanja Radišić, Boro Stjepanović, Vlatko Dulić, Nela Kocsis, Slobodan Ćustić, Miralem Zubčević, Đorđe Kukuljica, Slaven Knezović, Jelena Perčin **Producer:** Irena Škorić **Production:** Artizana film (HR) **Co-Productions:** Kinematografska kuća (RS), HEFT (BA), Dari films (FR)

When the Croatian War of Independence ended, Bosnian Croats whose villages had been destroyed in the fighting were rehoused as refugees in the homes of Croatian Serbs who had left Croatia. Now, the Serbian owners are returning and the Croatian residents are facing an uncertain future. Somewhere in this powder-keg atmosphere, an old man called Jozo, a Bosnian Croat, disappears without a trace...



Zagreb Cappuccino

drama, 74' **Director:** Vanja Sviličić **Screenplay:** Vanja Sviličić, Ognjen Sviličić **Cinematography:** Danko Vučinović **Editor:** Vanja Sviličić **Cast:** Nela Kocsis, Mila Elegović, Igor Kovač, Robert Budak, Jadranka Elezović, Dušan Gojić **Producer:** Damir Terešak **Production:** MaXima Film

Zagreb Cappuccino is the story of two best friends, Petra and Kika. Both women are in their early forties. Petra, in Zagreb, is getting divorced, and Kika arrives from Cologne to console her. Kika, a cosmopolitan party girl, teaches Petra how to carry on with her life without a husband and a family. Over several cups of coffee and nights out we get to know their fears and problems, their solitude, insecurities and inner strength.

A Patriotic Man

(Domoljub / Isänmaallinen mies) sport comedy, 97' **Director:** Arto Halonen **Producers:** Arto Halonen, Igor A. Nola **Production:** Art Films Production – AFP (FI) **Co-Production:** MP Film Production (HR)

A Patriotic Man tells the story of Toivo, the secret weapon for the Finnish ski team. His rare blood type can improve any athlete's performance and lead the skiers to success. Toivo's ethical dilemma takes us through a dark comedy with ultimately tragic overtones, as he works increasingly closely with one of the most talented skiers on the team, a young woman named Aino.

You Carry Me

(Ti mene nosiš) drama, 155' **Director:** Ivona Juka **Screenplay:** Ivona Juka, Anita Juka **Cinematography:** Mario Oljača **Editor:** Vladimir Gojun **Cast:** Lana Barić, Vojislav Brajović, Nataša Janjić, Goran Hajduković, Nataša Dorčić **Producer:** Anita Juka **Production:** 4film (HR) **Co-Productions:** Vertigo (SI), Sloane Film Production: (RS)

Dora's father suddenly returns after four years. Neglected by her mother, a make-up artist in a successful soap-opera, Dora longs for parental love. She struggles not to let her father disappear from her life again, thus giving him a second chance. Ives, the soap-opera director, is taking care of her father who has Alzheimer's. She finds it increasingly difficult to cope with her father's progressive dementia. His personality changes put their relationship on trial. Nataša, producer of the successful soap-opera, is facing a grave illness while pregnant and in strained relations with the baby's father Marin. She is forced to come to terms with her past and her estranged father. The three daughters carry their fathers.



COMEDY ABOUT A FAMILY

Director/writer Antonio Nuić (on the right) with *Trumpet DoP* Radislav Jovanov Gonzo

Antonio Nuić's third feature film is a comedy about the social and cultural misunderstanding between two different families from Zagreb whose children are planning a wedding.

LIFE IS A

TEXT: IVAN RAMLJAK PHOTOS: PROPELER FILM

"After two difficult gigs abroad I am returning home, and I think this time for good", says Antonio Nuić with a huge smile and an apparent sigh of relief, adding: "It is great to be filming in Zagreb again. I've known the surroundings in which I shot my first two films from childhood. But in the practical and technical sense, it is hard to film in places where you are not at home. When writing a

"IT IS A VERY COMMUNICATIVE FILM THAT HAS A POTENTIAL TO BECOME A REGIONAL HIT", BELIEVES NUIĆ

script for a film that takes place in your own city, you know exactly what to expect and you can prepare yourself much better. And in our modest circumstances, this is always a welcomed fact."

And so, after exciting adventures in Bosnia (*All For Free*, 2006) and Herzegovina (*Donkey*, 2009), Nuić decided to return to the streets of Zagreb with his third film, which was also the arena for his excellent student films, as well as the extremely successful episode of the 2004 anthol-

ogy film *Sex, Drink and Bloodshed*. The film will be entitled *Life Is A Trumpet* and Nuić describes its genre as a comedy about a family, highlighting the fact that it should not be confused with a family comedy. Therefore, it will not be a film targeting the young and the old, i.e. everyone between the ages of 7 and 77.

And what kind of families does the film talk about? One family is that of the leading character – Boris Burić, a 35-year-old trumpet player of an alternative jazz band from Zagreb called Boro Bura (played by Bojan Navojec) and the other is the family of his girlfriend, a psychologist named Jana Krajač (played by Iva Babić). Boro's family are rich butchers and Iva's are classic bourgeoisie. Given that Boro and Jana are about to wed, the families must meet and get to know one another (the parents are played by Mirela Brekalo, Zlatko Vitez, Filip Šovagović and Ksenija Marinković). However, there are problems that are about to arise... Nuić insists that the film turned out to be a bit more comical than he initially thought it would be, that it is extremely communicative, "silly in its own way" and that it speaks to the audience in their mid-thirties, the generation he himself



belongs to, as well as the film's main characters who are also members of Zagreb's underground scene.

The film was produced by his steady collaborator Boris T. Matić (Propeler Film) and the director of photography is Radislav Jovanov Gonzo. An interesting fact worth mentioning is that the soundtrack was made by the same band that also appears as the protagonist's band in the film. In addition to Bojan Navojec, the band consists of composer Hrvoje Štefotić, as well as Stipe Madžor, the trumpet player of Croatia's most famous rock band Hladno Pivo [Cold Beer].

Nuić does not expect a record-breaking audience for *Life Is a Trumpet*; however, he does think it might become a regional hit. This estimate is based on the fact that the film is a co-production between Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to each co-producing country's film fund supporting the film, the film was also financially supported by the Croatian Radiotelevision and MEDIA. The distribution plan for the entire region has already been made and the film's premiere is set for December 23rd 2014.

LIFE IS A TRUMPET

(Život je truba) drama, comedy,

100' **Director:** Antonio Nuić

Screenplay: Antonio Nuić

Cinematography: Radislav Jovanov Gonzo **Editor:** Marin Juranić **Cast:** Bojan Navojec, Iva Babić, Zlatko Vitez, Mirela Brekalo, Goran Navojec, Filip Križan, Ksenija Marinković, Filip Šovagović **Producers:**

Boris T. Matić, Miha Černec,

Jelena Mitrović, Srdan

Golubović, Ivan Đurović,

Goran Radman **Production:**

Propeler Film (HR) **Co-**

Productions: Staragara

(SI), Baš Čelik (RS),

Artikulacija Production

(ME), Croatian Radiotelevision

(HRT), Zagreb Film Festival (HR)





THE REAPER

The new film by Zvonimir Jurić, director of *Blacks*, which is considered to be one of Croatia's best contemporary films, follows the story of a sixty-year-old reaper in its attempt to portray a grim picture of Eastern Croatia that is still making psychological recovery from the devastation brought about by war.

TEXT: JANKO HEIDL
PHOTO: KINORAMA

Who is "the Reaper" from the title of Zvonimir Jurić's new feature film? Is it a phantom personification of death in a black hood that goes around reaping human lives, a farmer who reaps the fields, or a migratory bird Corncrake called the "Reaper" in Croatian, whose grating call sounds like the sharpening of a scythe?

Director and co-writer Jurić replies: "The Reaper is Ivo Gregurević, that is, his namesake character who is, among other things, a reaper", avoiding to emphasize or mystify the strong and convincing associations that the title of the film, shot in the outskirts of Zagreb in the fall of last year, evokes. "It is not a horror movie or a thriller, nor do we deal with ornithology. It is what we call drama in the broadest sense of the word, although it is not to say that we should completely ignore the fateful implications of the meaning behind the title *The Reaper*."

Through three stories whose events take place in one night, in today's provincial part of Slavonia, *The Reaper* paints a gloomy picture of a sixty-year-old man named Ivo and of the life of an

**INTERNATIONAL
CAST**

Croatian Ivo Gregurević
and Serbian Mirjana
Karanović

entire region that was in a way put to a stop and held under arrest by war.

Talking about the inspiration for the camera's visual treatment, director of photography Branko Linta describes the film very suggestively: "*The Reaper* is a story about the attempts to find traces or hints of warmth, friendship, love and peace in the nocturnal planes of corn fields, sinister rooms of decaying factories, rowdy bars and forgotten houses on the edge of the village. Our film is dark and hard to navigate, shot on the verge of visibility at times, and in painful bursts of light. It is almost as if it is trying to feel its way through the dark, to find a path on which it is often caught up in positions which only capture echoes of events that take place. Wanting to bond with his heroes who kept catching each patch of light that they came across in their quest to find the most beautiful images from their lives, the cinematographer made a rare and unusual decision to place himself in a world that had no solid support, where the photometer showed letters (E as in error) instead of clear numbers."

The initiative for the screenplay came from Jurić, without a clear idea on the story or the theme of the film. "In William Faulkner's novel *Sanctuary*, which I very much admire, there is a rape scene that takes place in a corn field. It is immensely strong and brutal. It has haunted me for a long time and I kept returning to it. Immediately after wrapping the film *Blacks*, which I directed together with Goran Dević, I suggested to Jelena Paljan that we try to write a screenplay I knew nothing about. I usually like to write without knowing where it will take me. I form sentence after sentence, dialogue after dialogue, and scene after scene. As long as each brick is solid, I do not necessarily have to know what the house will look like.

"THE IDEA FOR THE FILM CAME
FROM THE RAPE SCENE IN WILLIAM
FAULKNER'S NOVEL SANCTUARY"

I told Jelena: 'Look, I have this image and nothing more. Let's start with it.' We have worked diligently for three and a half years from the initial words to the final draft of the screenplay".

Produced by Zagreb-based company Kinorama, and co-produced by Forum from Ljubljana, Slovenia, *The Reaper* gathers together an acting crew from the entire so-called region. Alongside Cro-

**THE REAPER**

(Kosac) drama, 100' **Director:** Zvonimir Jurić **Screenplay:** Zvonimir Jurić, Jelena Paljan **Cinematography:** Branko Linta **Editor:** Dubravka Turić **Cast:** Ivo Gregurević, Mirjana Karanović, Igor Kovač, Nikola Ristanovski, Lana Barić **Producer:** Ankica Jurić Tilić **Production:** Kinorama (HR) **Co-Production:** Forum Ljubljana (SI)

atian actors Ivo Gregurević, Igor Kovač and Lana Barić, other significant roles are played by Slovenian actor Peter Musevski, Macedonian actor Nikola Ristanovski, Croatian-Danish actor Zlatko Burić, and Serbian actress Mirjana Karanović. "It is amazing when you can cast the actors that you think best suited for certain roles without any limitations. The only hypothetical drawback of such a spattered casting is that it is very hard, that is, impossible, to get them all together for pre-shooting rehearsals", says Jurić.

"When I finished reading the script, I thought this was one of the best screenplays I have ever read and that I was incredibly lucky to have Zvonimir pick me for this role", remembers Mirjana Karanović. "The woman, also named Mirjana, hides much more than she reveals. In fact, she reveals almost nothing, although the entire time you suspect what's going on inside her. It was terribly exciting to continue on revealing her inner world and the way in which she opens up upon meeting a strange and rather intimidating man on an unknown path in the middle of the night".



The Enchanting Porkers

(Svinjari) black comedy, satire, 91' **Director:** Ivan Livaković **Screenplay:** Ivan Livaković **Cinematography:** Daniel Ruljančić **Editor:** Maida Srabović **Cast:** Goran Bogdan, Iva Mihalić, Ana Maras, Marina Redžepović, Ivana Roščić **Producers:** Goran Mečava, Sanja Vejnović **Production:** Fos Film co-Production: Croatian Radiotelevision (HRT)

Money is not enough anymore. Fame is the most sought-after currency. A journalist decides to do everything she can to get a scoop. She fabricates a story; she will stop at nothing: she will destroy lives if she has to. But her victims, we soon realise, are also addicted to the fame game. Set between reality and illusion, this satirical anti-musical deals with the media clichés that dominate our everyday lives.



Love or Death

(Ljubav ili smrt) children's film, romance, 90' **Director:** Daniel Kušan **Screenplay:** Daniel Kušan **Cinematography:** Mario Sablić, Filip Tot **Editor:** Slaven Zečević **Cast:** Antonio Prač, Kristijan Bonačić, Nina Mileta, Vanja Marinković, Filip Mayer, Marin Stević, Tesa Litvan, Korana Ugrina, Tara Filipović, Ilijana Knežević **Producer:** Ankica Jurić Tilić **Production:** Kinorama

While fifteen-year-old Koko is more interested in football, his best friend Zlatko is obsessed with classic novels about romance. He reproaches Koko for being an immature kid who does not understand true love. So Koko shares his own love story: the tale of his encounter with a mysterious girl called Ana.

Love Island

(Otok ljubavi) drama, comedy, 90' **Director:** Jasmila Žbanić **Screenplay:** Aleksandar Hemon, Jasmila Žbanić **Cinematography:** Christine A. Maier **Cast:** Ariane Labeled, Ada Condeescu, Ermin Bravo, Franco Nero, Leon Lučev, Bojana Gregorić, Jelena Lopatić **Producers:** Damir Ibrahimović, Leon Lučev, Fred Roos, Marie-Pierre Macia, Juliette Lepoutre, Maren Ade, Janine Jackowski, Andrea Štaka, Thomas Imbach, Jonas Dornbach **Production:** Živa Produkcija (HR) **Co-Productions:** Komplizen Film (DE),

Okofilm Productions (CH), Deblokada (BA) Holidays. Seaside. Sun. Sunkissed bodies. Beauty. The Grebo family travels from Sarajevo to the Adriatic coast. The mother is expecting a baby, the father is proud – they are all set for a blissful, relaxing, well-deserved holiday. Then a new person comes into their lives. The charismatic and alluring Flora will put their marriage to the test. A long-concealed secret cannot stay hidden for much longer, on Love Island.





SHORT FIC- TION

film



Girls

(Cure) psychological drama, coming of age, 83' **Director:** Andrea Štaka **Screenplay:** Andrea Štaka, Thomas Imbach, Marie Kreutzer **Cinematography:** Martin Gschlacht **Cast:** Sylvia Marinković, Lucia Radulović, Marija Škaričić, Mirjana Karanović, Leon Lučev, Franjo Dijak **Producers:** Thomas Imbach, Andrea Štaka, Leon Lučev, Damir Ibrahimović, Jasmila Žbanić **Production:** Okofilm Productions (CH) **Co-Productions:** Živa Produkcija (HR), Deblokada (BA)

Linda was born in Croatia, but grew up in Switzerland. The 14-year old returns to Dubrovnik with her father in 1993, shortly after the war. Linda's new friend Eta takes her up to the dangerous forest above Dubrovnik. There, the two girls become entangled in an obsessive, sexually charged game of swapping identities. In a scuffle, Eta is sent hurtling to her death over a cliff. Left alone with her grief, Linda gradually takes her friend's place in the female household of Eta's mother and grandmother. She becomes entrapped in another world on the edge in which she is haunted by images of a strangely detached Eta. The tension between a precise portrayal of post-war Croatia and powerful inner images lends the film *Cure* suggestive and unsettling impact. Will Linda manage to find herself and her own identity again?

Manjacha

(Manjača) drama, 20' **Director:** Tin Žanić **Screenplay:** Tin Žanić **Cinematography:** Jana Plečaš **Editor:** Jan Klemsche **Sound:** Martin Semenčić **Cast:** Matija Ferlin, Venceslav Kapural, Roberta Milevoj **Producer:** Tena Gojić **Production:**, distribution Kinoklub Zagreb

Manjacha is a film about a young man who decides to take his life into his own hands for the first time. Trying to distance himself from his old life, he takes the plunge and moves in with his grandfather.



The Chicken

(Kokoška) drama, 15' **Director:** Una Gunjak **Screenplay:** Una Gunjak **Cinematography:** Matthias Pilz **Editor:** Anja Siemens

Music: Bernd Schurer **Cast:** Iman Alibalić, Mirela Lambić, Esmā Alić, Mario Knezović **Producer:** Jelena Goldbach **Production:** Zak Film Productions (DE) **Co-Producer:** Siniša Juričić **Co-Production:** Nukleus film (HR)

This is a story about a six-year-old girl called Selma, set in wartime Sarajevo. Her dad, who is away on the front, sends her a chicken as a present for her birthday. Selma is convinced that the bird is meant to be her new pet. When she realises that her mother plans to prepare it for dinner, Selma decides to free the chicken.

President Nixon's Present

(Poklon predsjednika Nixona) comedy, 26' **Director:** Igor Šeregi **Production:**, distribution Grupa 7 **Co-production:** Film and Music Entertainment (F&ME)

Stipe and Peđa are intelligence officers with the Yugoslav People's Army in the early 1970s. They receive a special assignment: to transport a present from the United States of America's President Nixon to Yugoslavia's President Tito. The present is - to make things even more complicated - a living creature. Or rather, it was...

On Shaky Ground

(Tlo pod nogama) drama, 29' **Director:** Sonja Tarokić **Screenplay:** Sonja Tarokić **Cinematography:** Danko Vučinović **Editor:** Martin Semenčić **Music:** Borna Buljević, Miro Manojlović **Cast:** Tamara Šoletić, Stojan Matavulj, Roko Sikavica, Karla Brbić, Raul Brzić, Petra Težak, Mila Sopta, Lina Blažević, Bojan Brajčić **Producer:** Isa Živanović **Production:**, distribution R44

This is a film about the break-up of a family. Everything starts to fall apart when the father sinks into serious depression because of financial problems that, until now, he has managed to conceal.

DOCU- MEN- TARIES



Consumed

(Potrošeni) 93' **Director:** Borut Šeparović **Screenplay:** Borut Šeparović **Editor:** Jan Klemsche **Producer:** Borut Šeparović **Production:** Montažstroj

Consumed follows a project entitled '55+', and the project's participants, who are all 55 years of age or older. Each participant is given a specific number of seconds, corresponding directly to their age, during which they present the most important minute of their lives. In its pursuit of social change, Generation 55+ proves that it still has plenty to offer and has not yet been consumed.



The Cover Story

(Naslovnica) 55' **Director:** Silvana Menđušić **Production:** Studio dim

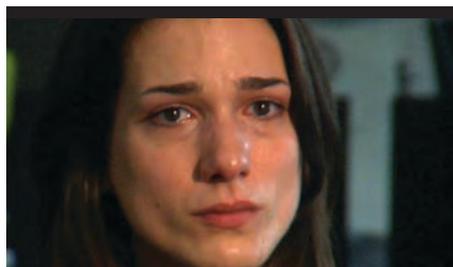
In 2013, Croatia entered its fifth year of recession, joined the European Union, and conservative activists banned gay marriage. Despite all this, the most popular news story in 2013 was the tragic death of a young actress named Dolores Lambaša.



Happily Ever After

(Ljubavna odiseja) 83' **Director:** Tatjana Božić **Screenplay:** Tatjana Božić, Alexander Goekjian **Cinematography:** Ton Peters **Editor:** Boudewijn Koole music Alex Simu **Producers:** Boudewijn Koole, Iris Lammertsma, Nenad Puhovski, Lidija Zelović **Production:** Jongens van de Wit - JvdW Film (NL) **Co-Productions:** IKON (NL), Zelovic Productions (NL), Factum (HR)

When filmmaker Tatjana Božić has for the umpteenth time found the love of her life and again things threaten to go terribly wrong, she decides that she should turn over a new leaf. This relationship must succeed! Tatjana visits five exes in Moscow, Hamburg, London and Zagreb to find an answer to the question why do all her love affairs end on the rocks. With a good dose of self-mockery, but also with deeply felt passion, she unravels her past relationships and confronts her (ex-) men and herself with the complexities of contemporary loving.



The 4th Monkey

(4. majmun) 61' **Director:** Hrvoje Mabić **Screenplay:** Hrvoje Mabić **Cinematography:** Almir Fakić, Bojana Burnać **Editor:** Žarko Korač **Music:** Marko Mihalinec, Ivan Čadež **Producers:** Hrvoje Mabić, Morana Komljenović, Robert Tomić Zuber, Sanja Ivančin **Production:** FADE IN, Croatian Radiotelevision (HRT)

In 2002, the psychiatric hospital at Lopača, near Rijeka, started admitting children with behavioural disorders. Soon, shocking stories about the hospital's treatment of children began to spread.

Denis the Mayor

(Gradonačelnik Denis) 20' **Director:** Dario Juričan **Screenplay:** Dario Juričan **Cinematography:** Igor Jelinović, Zvonimir Tivon, Lana Račić, Bojan Radanović **Editor:** Toni Skorić **Producer:** Dario Juričan **Production:** distribution Blank

In the 2013 local elections, young Denis Sgagliardi decides to run for mayor and pull down the twenty-year-old political stronghold in the town of Vodnjan. Is there anything more difficult to do than that in Vodnjan?

ANI- MAT- ED

film



Simulacra

stop motion / 8'35" **Director:** Ivana Bošnjak, Thomas Johnson **Screenplay:** animation, puppets, sets Ivana Bošnjak, Thomas Johnson **Cinematography:** Ivan Slipčević **Editor:** Iva Kraljević **Music:** Hrvoje Štefotić **Compositing:** Mario Kalogjera **Producer:** Vanja Andrijević **Production, distribution:** Bonobostudio

Which image is real – the one staring at us from the mirror or the one standing in front of it? In hallways filled with illusions, a simulacrum stands behind the looking glass, he is trying to find out if he is looking at a stranger or a hidden part of himself.



Breakdown

(SloM) 2d / 3' **Director:** David Lovrić **Screenplay, Editor, animator:** David Lovrić **Music:** Aufgehoben **Sound designer:** Luka Bartolić **Production:** Academy of Fine Arts (ALU) **Co-Production, distribution:** Zagreb film

An anthropomorphic figure with an elephant's head stands in front of a mirror. As we sink deeper and deeper into layers of a strange organism that resembles both a nervous system and a plant at the same time, the character reacts in a violent way.



Hunger

(Glad) 2d / 6'09" **Director:** Petra Zlonoga **Screenplay, design:** Petra Zlonoga **Animation, colouring:** Petra Zlonoga, Jelena Oroz **Editor:** Iva Kraljević **Compositing:** Stjepan Milas **Sound:** Andrea Martignoni **Producer:** Vanja Andrijević **Production, distribution:** Bonobostudio

Everything that is alive is hungry; the seed is hungry for light, the bird is hungry for flight, man is hungry for the touch of another. The seed of longing grows into what feeds us.

EX- PERI- MEN- TAL

film



A.D.A.M.

10' **Director:** Vladislav Knežević **Screenplay:** Hrvoje Pukšec, Vladislav Knežević **Cinematography:** Igor Zirojević **Editor:** animation Mario Kalogjera **Sound designer:** Gideon Kiers **Voices:** Rei Hayama, Thomas Johnson, William Linn **Producer:** Vanja Andrijević **Production, distribution:** Bonobostudio

A.D.A.M. is a film about surveillance; a networked search for lost space junk; a sonic collage about a cacophony of languages, codes and symbols; a dishevelled chart of sounds from lost horizons and frail urbanities; a film about the lost and found; an atlas of possible encounters; a meta-fictional fable about the relationship between machines and people; a space soup in which strange objects and entities swirl, like the ones that crawled out from the sea onto land some 80 million years ago.



1000

2d / 6' **Director:** Danijel Žeželj **Production:** Zagreb film **Co-Production, distribution:** Petikat

A city is sleeping under grey clouds. Hardly anyone remembers blue skies any more. Although a song can still be heard coming from the inns by the harbour about 'the wind that will chase away the clouds when a thousand suns rise over the streets', it seems nobody really thinks that the blue skies will ever return.

Spirit Diary

(Rakijaški dnevnic) 62' **Director:** Damir Čučić **Screenplay, Editor:** Damir Čučić **Cinematography:** Boris Poljak **Cast:** Eric Maria Strom **Producer:** Vera Robić-Škarica **Production:** Croatian Film Association (HFS)

When Eric Maria was a little boy, four friars taught him how to make brandy. Forty years later he still illegally distills fruit spirits. Eric Maria is a sound engineer. For more than a decade, he has been recording conversations around the spirit fermenter...

A portrait of an elderly man, Branko, wearing a dark brown fedora hat, glasses, and a dark, textured shawl over a light-colored striped shirt. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a thoughtful expression. The background is a warm, textured wall.

Interview:
BRANKO

LUST

**CO-PRODUCTIONS ARE THE ONLY PATH TO
SUCCESS FOR EUROPEAN AND CROATIAN CINEMA**

Upon his return to Croatia, big-time Hollywood producer and owner of two Oscars for the films *Schindler's List* and *Gladiator*, comments on the differences in film production and distribution of before and now, as well as the different approaches towards film in Europe and the US

ING



TEXT

ARSEN OREMOVIĆ

PHOTO

VLADIMIR IMPRIĆ

“Oh well, it’s really no big deal,” says distinguished Croatian producer Branko Lustig a few days after The Daily Beast website listed him among fifty greatest Hollywood producers of all times. Two-time Oscar winner for Steven Spielberg’s *Schindler’s List* (1993) and Ridley Scott’s *Gladiator* (2000) was ranked 29th, ahead of Ismail Merchant, the Coen brothers, William Wyler and other famous names behind some of the most popular and greatest films in Hollywood history.

Of course, Branko Lustig finds every such award gratifying, but he harbours no particular enthusiasm for such lists, not even for the Oscars, which he deems far less powerful than they may seem. - Oscars will certainly secure your reputation. But when you see *Gladiator*, you don’t need an Oscar to

“MY GREATEST SUCCESS UPON RETURNING TO CROATIA IS THE FESTIVAL OF TOLERANCE, WHICH HAS MADE IT TO ITS EIGHTH EDITION, AND I AM ESPECIALLY PROUD OF IT”

tell you it was made by people with a certain degree of knowledge and ability. However, an Oscar is no guarantee for a future job offer; it’s more of a reference for party invitations. And a reference for fees: if you’ve previously earned five, after an Oscar, they can’t offer you less than ten, which is good, but it doesn’t serve as a promise that you will be working again soon. It is also a reference for getting featured in lists such as this one: the fifty greatest producers in Hollywood history, but that is all – says the producer who, upon his decision to return to Croatia after his retirement, started the Festival of Tolerance – Festival of Jewish Film here, but whose role in the Croatian film industry never went any further than that of a “retiree”.

AFTER WORKING FOR SO MANY YEARS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES, WHAT DOES THE WORD “PRODUCER” MEAN TO A MAN OF YOUR EXPERIENCE?

- In the late 1970s and early 1980s, it didn’t mean much to be a producer in this region. We had a state-controlled film industry that was trying to make money, and since the state provided all the grants, producers were forced to make domestic films. At the time, the directors of those state-owned companies, such as the leading Jadran Film, Croatia Film and others, called themselves executive producers, even though this title didn’t correspond to their actual role. According to the American classification system, they were line-producers. In the States, producers, together with directors, transform the money arriving from the studio into a film, while here producers were in fact company directors whose money came directly from the state and who assumed the title of producers, although the only thing they ever did was drink coffee with the director... But the film distribution was well-oiled back then. Yugoslavia Film had branch offices all over Europe, even in the States for a while, and this is something we miss severely today. The money from these sales, mainly comprised of earnings from major co-productions we had at the time, went to film companies, and a part of this money was set aside for domestic films. This allocation of funds to domestic authors, which was run independently by film companies, increased the role of producers because it was a clear-cut example of the capitalist system: you were able to invest your earnings from one film into the makings of the next. Thanks to co-productions, this system was extremely well developed. So much that, even before I left for the States, we already operated the American way and did work for the Americans here: *Fiddler’s Roof* (1971), *Sophie’s Choice* (1982), the series *The Winds of War*... In the nineties, producers weren’t real producers either because all they did was take the money from the Ministry of Culture and make films with it. However, in recent years, probably owing to the fact that the funding they receive from the Croatian Audiovisual Centre no longer suffices, they are forced to find their own feet. This is exactly what it means to be a producer. Nowadays, the eternally dynamic, antagonistic relationship between directors and producers is much healthier because directors in auteur cinema, especially in Croatia, no longer see producers as mere clerks getting in their way. Today, even our directors, those clever enough, realize that they wouldn’t be around at all if it weren’t for the producers, who are there to help them. A producer and a director make up a part of the same body.



“I WANTED TO MAKE A FILM ABOUT JASENOVAC CONCENTRATION CAMP AND I STILL DO, BUT I STILL DON'T HAVE A REAL SCRIPT”

ALTHOUGH YOU HAVE PARTLY ANSWERED THIS QUESTION ALREADY, COULD YOU FURTHER ELABORATE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE BASIC DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ROLE OF A PRODUCER IN THE PRODUCER-DRIVEN HOLLYWOOD SYSTEM AND THE EUROPEAN ART CINEMA?

- In the States, producers originated from studio owners. If directors wanted to make a film, they had to go to studio owners, who provided the money and thereby called all the shots. This is why the system that arose in the States was, from the production point of view, largely independent from directors. There have been some changes with the arrival of directors prepared to argue about who was going to star in their films, how certain things were to be done, but the system has principally remained the same. Those directors who want more influence have to be producers as well. You can still find signs such as Warner, Paramount, Columbia, Universal or other great studios mounted on American buildings, but these studios have actually ceased to exist. Their real owners are Sony, Westinghouse, a range of multi-

national companies; capital rules over the contemporary film world. The Westinghouse board of directors decides whether a certain film is going to be made and not the studio, because they are the ones providing the money. In Europe, films were largely financed by the state, so the directors were the ones giving out the orders, as the development of their role took a completely different path. In such a context, when young people willing to reinforce the role of a producer appear, they don't have enough money at their disposal. Taking Croatia as a frame of reference, which bank would be prepared to invest its money in a film? If a Croatian producer were to ask the bank for a 10 million euro credit, the minimum for making a decent

“AN OSCAR ENSURES INVITATIONS TO PARTIES AND BETTER FEES, BUT SERVES AS NO GUARANTEE FOR A FUTURE JOB OFFER”

film for the global market, the banker would tell him to go to hell. The fact that we have half a million euros at our disposal to make a film is laughable. And when the film sells only 300 tickets, the newspapers call it a disgrace. That is no disgrace - that is poverty!

ON A GLOBAL LEVEL, IS THERE STILL A CHANCE FOR THE CROATIAN FILM TO ADVANCE?

- In spite of everything, we have to go on shooting films; otherwise even this small industry runs the danger of dying out. It is important that the Academy of Dramatic Art goes on raising young people who will eventually get their chance. For European cinema, especially Croatian cinema, the chance lies in co-productions. Co-productions are our only way of moving forward, because we have good screenwriters, dramaturges, directors, and actors. Our actors are truly excellent, some of them are on par with the best Hollywood actors. We have good films, they only need to be upgraded. Mr. Hribar [CEO of the Croatian Audiovisual Centre] has got the right idea; he understands that co-productions are the key to the solution and his insistence on promoting them is the only way for Croatian cinema to get out of a tight corner. I see Mr. Hribar in Berlin, Cannes; he is everywhere - that is very good. That's the only way to make it on a global level.

HOW DO YOU ACCOUNT FOR THE FAR MORE COMMERCIAL FACE THAT OUR CINEMA HAD IN SOCIALIST TIMES, COMPARED TO THE CAPITALIST ERA WHEN IT IS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY SUBSIDIZED? ADMITTEDLY, THE SITUATION HAS CHANGED SLIGHTLY IN THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, BUT, GENERALLY SPEAKING, THE LAST TWENTY YEARS SAW ALMOST NO CHANGE AT ALL.

- The whole system depends on the people. It just so happened that there were excellent people at that time, better film workers... When it came to co-productions, Zagreb was one of the leading cit-

“NOWADAYS, THE DIRECTOR-PRODUCER RELATIONSHIP IN THE CROATIAN FILM INDUSTRY IS MUCH HEALTHIER THAN IT USED TO BE. THE DIRECTORS NO LONGER REGARD PRODUCERS AS MERE CLERKS, AND THEY REALIZE THAT PRODUCERS ARE THERE TO HELP THEM”

ies in Europe because the West couldn't go beyond the Iron Curtain during the Cold War. My departure for the States was greatly helped by the fact that we had already learned the drills of the Hollywood system here in Croatia. I didn't set off for the States by chance; we were well-trained. After the ex-socialist countries opened up, things took a significant turn and nowadays we have trouble putting together a single film crew.

DO YOU BELIEVE CROATIAN CINEMA COULD HAVE CAPITALIZED BETTER ON YOUR TWO OSCARS?

- I think so, but, although it's hard to believe, nobody ever asked me anything about it. This is the first real conversation about cinema that I've had in Croatia ever since I won the Oscar.

I WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

- Exactly that. Nobody ever asked me any of these questions about cinema or any kind of strategy, all they cared about were trivialities related to actors, actresses, arguments on the set, what working with Spielberg was like, why Ridley Scott and I had an argument, what I said backstage at the Oscars, what I was told... Nobody ever asked me - not the newspapers or anyone else - how Croatian cinema could be improved. The only thing my Oscar helped me create in Croatia was the Festival of Tolerance, which I am extremely proud of.

IS THAT THE ONLY THING YOU WANTED TO DO OR THE ONLY THING YOU SUCCEEDED IN DOING?

- The only thing I succeeded in doing. I wanted to make a film. Yes, I wanted to make a film about Jasenovac [concentration camp] and I still do, but I now regret speaking about it publicly because there are those who take issue with it, as it always turns into an advertisement against neo-Nazism. Very few films are made about the Holocaust today, and I wish there would be as many as possible. Why? Because I claim that it should never happen again, it should never come to that again, it cannot. When I came back to Croatia, I wanted to speak about tolerance, neo-Nazism, and similar topics as much as possible. So, I am very pleased with the way in which the Festival of Tolerance was received here, I am pleased with the support. We have already reached the eighth edition - that would have surely been impossible if the festival was no good.

AND WHY IS A FILM ABOUT JASENOVAC STILL JUST A PLAN?

- I still don't have a real script, and even if I had one, the issue of finances that could guarantee a level of quality I would be content with would undoubtedly arise. We can set up four barracks and start filming tomorrow, but I'm interested in a film that would attract global audiences rather than remain on our local scale. ●

WITNESS TO BERGEN-BELSEN

LOST HITCHCOCK DOCUMENTARY

YOU WERE RECENTLY IN BERLIN AS ONE OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE FILM NIGHT WILL FALL, TELLING THE STORY OF HITCHCOCK'S "LOST" DOCUMENTARY ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST. HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT?

- I had the bad luck to spend time in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. I was there when the camp was liberated. I was twelve, thirteen years old. Hitchcock arrived with a caravan of British cameramen and made a film about the liberation of the inmates. This film has remained hidden at the Imperial War Museum in London ever since. At the time, they didn't want to screen a film showing pity and compassion for the Jews because of the vote on Israel in 1947. Now they've found the film again, realized it was good and decided to show it to the public, so they asked me for a comment on my experiences there.

PEOPLE

HRVOJE HRIBAR RECEIVES FRENCH NATIONAL AWARD OF THE ORDER OF ARTS AND LETTERS

The Minister of Culture and Communications of the Republic of France, Aurélie Filippetti, awarded the title to CEO of the Croatian Audiovisual Centre for the organisation of the festival of Croatian cinema in France

On 4 December, the French Ambassador to Croatia Michele Bocoz bestowed the title of the Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters for 2013 on Hrvoje Hribar, CEO of the Croatian Audiovisual Centre, for his merits in cultural collaboration and strengthening the ties between the Croatian and French audiovisual sector. The explanation says that Hribar is bestowed the title for his dedication to strengthening the ties between France



and Croatia since he became the CEO of HAVC, his merits in signing the contract on French-Croatian film co-production, organisation of the Croatian film festival *Croatie, la voici!*, held last year in Paris, and his support to the French National Centre for Cinema in the fight for the cultural exception of the European audiovisual sector from the trade agreement between the European Union and the USA.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD AND A FILM ABOUT BORIVOJ DOVNIKOVIĆ

The master of Croatian animated film, comic books, illustration, design and caricature, Borivoj Dovniković-Bordo has won the Golden Oktavijan, the traditional award presented by the Croatian Film Critics' Association for lifetime contribution to film art. One of the most famous filmmakers of the Zagreb School of Animation and the author of classics like *Untitled* (1964), *Curiosity* (1966), *Krek* (1967),



The Flower Lovers (1970), *Second Class Passenger* (1973) and *Learning to Walk* received the award on 22 April, at the opening ceremony of the Days of Croatian Film.

For this 84-year-old cartoon master this has been an eventful period since earlier this year there was a premiere of biopic *Bordo – Everlasting Comics Youth* by Bernardin Modrić.

VANJA JAMBROVIĆ IN PRODUCERS ON THE MOVE



Producer Vanja Jambrović (Restart) has been selected as the Croatian representative in Producers on the Move, the initiative of Europe Film Promotion (EFP) taking place during the Cannes Film Festival and gathering 34 member countries of this organisation.

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