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INDUSTRY DAYS
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How to contact us:

✉ Documentary@aljazeera.net ☎ +974 44896444

📁 To submit your project: ajdproposal@aljazeera.net



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INTRODUCTION

ADEL KSIKSI
Head of Industry Days



Greetings

Welcome to the 2nd edition of AJD Industry Days 2023, after a successful kick-off edition where we celebrated the power of storytelling and discovered projects that demonstrate an outstanding creativity and potential for impact.

Aljazeera Documentary Industry Days intends to support the expansion of documentaries worldwide, including international co-productions, and to become a launchpad to match filmmakers in different stages of production with key international players.

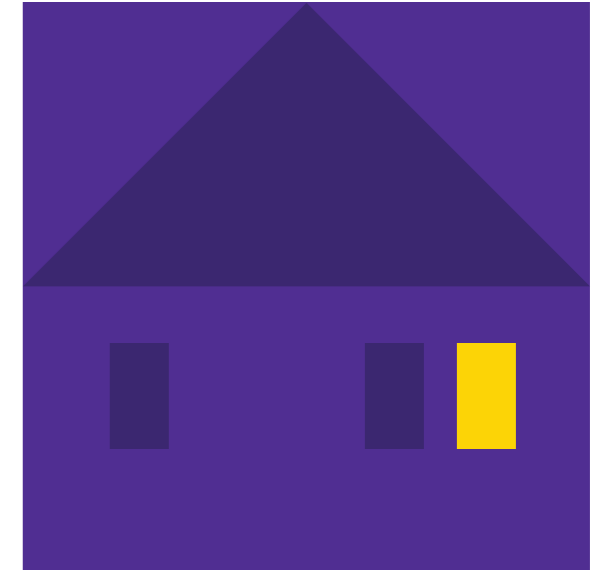
This year's forum promises to be a dynamic gathering of filmmakers, producers, commission editors, funders and experts. We received 177 projects from 52 countries from the MENA, SEE and Caucasus regions, and the selection committee achieved to select 22 finest storytelling projects created with tireless efforts by filmmakers and producers dedicated to shedding light on diverse perspectives and untold stories from underreported regions. The selected projects will have a chance to secure funding, distribution options, and co-production partnerships that can bring their visions to life on screens across the globe.

We are so grateful to our esteemed sponsors and decision makers comprised of industry experts, commission editors, funders and distribution companies from around the world for their loyal support and commitments to the art of storytelling. I encourage each of you to participate warmly, to engage in fruitful discussions and feedbacks, and to leave this forum not just with new insights, but with a renewed commitment to the documentary industry and the impact it can have on our world.

Thank you for being a part of the 2nd edition of AJD Industry Days. Let us embark on this incredible journey together, celebrating the stories that shape our lives and the lives of those around us.

GOOD TO → KNOW

 **HOUSE OF INDUSTRY**
Maršala Tita 56
(Kamerni teatar 55)



ACCREDITATION DESK

Bosnian Cultural Center (BKC)
Address: Branilaca Sarajeva 24
You can collect your accreditation every day from 08:00 until 18:00.

The House of Industry (HOI) is located in the heart of Sarajevo. All pitching sessions and roundtable meetings will be held at the HOI venue. More details can be found below.

THE HOUSE OF INDUSTRY LOCATION OFFERS THE FOLLOWING:

INFO DESK

The Industry Days Information Desk will provide you with your Industry Days Schedule and all other relevant information. During the Industry Days, you can set up additional one-on-one meetings with all Industry Days participants.

COFFEE PLACE

Complimentary coffee and tea will be served for the guests from 09:00 until 16:00, while bagels will be served during breaks.

MEETING ROOM

Industry Days participants will be able to use the meeting room from 09:00 until 15:00 for meetings that have been arranged at the info desk.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

INTERNET ACCESS

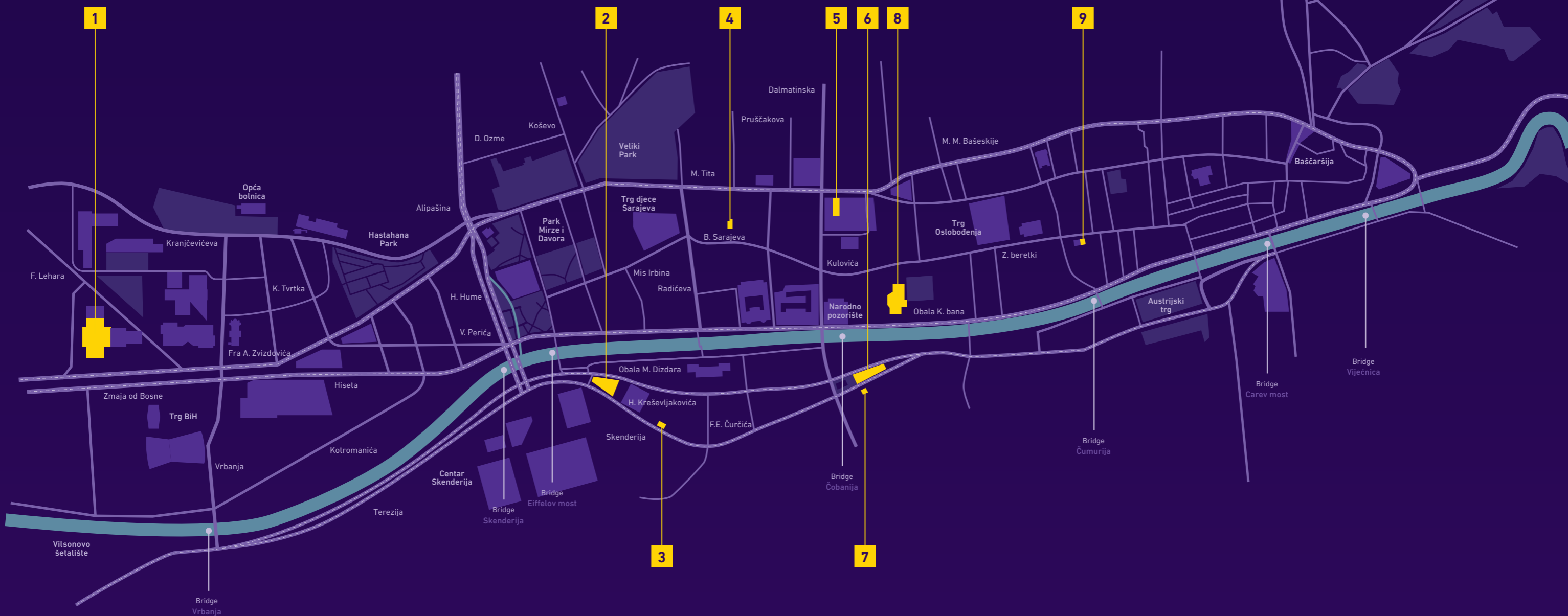
Wi-Fi will be available at all of our venues.

GATHERING PLACE

The gathering place for all accredited guests will be DECO BAR (address: Zelenih beretki 22), where there will be a 15% discount on all drinks for everyone wearing an Industry badge.

					
1 HOTEL HOLIDAY	2 HOTEL COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT	3 BBQ KUTCHA	4 LUNCH BREAK RESTORAN AMERIKANAC	5 KAMERNI TEATAR HOUSE OF INDUSTRY	6 HOTEL RESIDENCE INN BY MARRIOTT
Maršala Tita 23	Skenderija 1	Skenderija 15	Branilaca Sarajeva 5	Maršala Tita 56	Skenderija 43

		
7 HOTEL HOTEL FESTIVAL	8 AJBDOC BOSNIAN CULTURAL CENTER	9 GATHERING PLACE DECO BAR
Skenderija 58	Branilaca Sarajeva 24	Zelenih beretki 22



Al Jazeera Documentary Channel
INDUSTRY DAYS @ AJB DOC



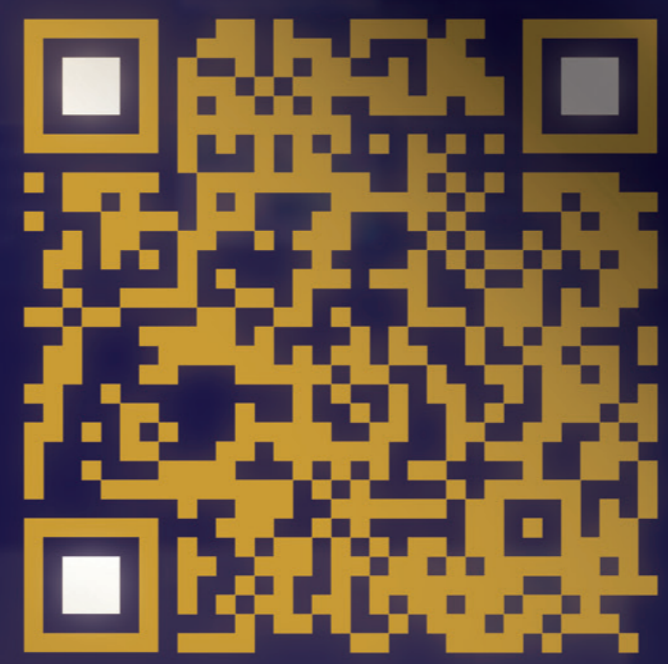
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Register here:



Hrvatska radiotelevizija

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Ono što volimo!
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8TH

September
FRIDAY

- 19:30
OPENING CEREMONY
● By invitation only
Screening of the opening film
"The Mind Game" by Sajid Khan Nasiri,
Eefje Blankevoort & Els van Driel
Location: Bosnian Cultural Center (BKC)
Address: Branilaca Sarajeva 24
- 22:00
WELCOME PARTY
● By invitation only
Location: S One Sky Lounge
Hotel Marriott

9TH

September
SATURDAY

- 09:00
**AJD INDUSTRY DAYS
OPENING CEREMONY**
- 09:30
MAIN PITCH
4 pitching sessions
- 10:30
Coffee break
- 10:45 - 11:45
MAIN PITCH
4 pitching sessions
- 12:00 - 13:15
**LUNCH BREAK HOSTED BY HAVC
(Croatian Audiovisual Centre)**
Alcohol-free event
Location: Restaurant Amerikanac
Address: Branilaca Sarajeva 5
- 13:45
ROUND TABLE MEETINGS
- 14:45
Coffee break
- 15:00 - 16:00
ROUND TABLE MEETINGS

10TH

September
SUNDAY

- 09:00
**PROGRESS SUMMIT
SHOWCASE**
- 09:30
WORK IN PROGRESS
4 pitching sessions
- 10:30
Coffee break
- 10:45 - 11:45
WORK IN PROGRESS
4 pitching sessions
- 12:00 - 13:15
LUNCH BREAK
Alcohol-free event
Location: Restaurant Amerikanac
Address: Branilaca Sarajeva 5
- 13:45
ROUND TABLE MEETINGS
- 14:45
Coffee break
- 15:00 - 16:00
ROUND TABLE MEETINGS

11TH

September
MONDAY

- 09:00
**ALJAZEERA DIGITAL
SHOWCASE**
- 9:30
BALKAN STARS
3 pitching sessions
- 10:15
Coffee break
- 10:30
BALKAN STARS
3 pitching sessions
- 11:15
Coffee break
- 11:30
ROUND TABLE MEETINGS
- 12:30
Coffee & Snacks
- 13:00
ROUND TABLE MEETINGS
- 14:00
Coffee & Snacks
- 14:30 - 16:30
AWARD CEREMONY
- 17:00
LUNCH & DRINKS - GOODBYE BBQ
Alcohol-free event
Location: Concept Kutcha
Address: Skenderija 15

MAIN AWARDS

MAIN PITCH

The co-production award of \$ 25,000 in this category is awarded by Al Jazeera Documentary Channel.

The co-production award of € 8,000 in this category is awarded by Al Jazeera Balkans.

WORK IN PROGRESS

The co-production award of \$ 15,000 in this category is awarded by Al Jazeera Documentary Channel.

The co-production award of € 7,000 in this category is awarded by Al Jazeera Balkans.

BALKAN STARS

The co-production award of \$ 10,000 in this category is awarded by Al Jazeera Documentary Channel.

The co-production award of € 5,000 in this category is awarded by Al Jazeera Balkans.

PARTNERS' AWARDS

THE AL JAZEERA DIGITAL DOCUMENTARY AWARD

An award of \$ 5,000 supports emerging documentary filmmakers who show promise of adapting long-form stories to digital format, including short documentaries.

CROATIAN RADIOTELEVISION (HRT) - HRT TV AWARD

Award of € 5,000 (€ 4,000 in cash and in-kind archive material worth € 1,000).

FILM CENTRE OF MONTENEGRO BALKAN STAR AWARD

Award of € 5,000.

BH TELECOM AWARD

Award of € 2,500.

SUNNY SIDE OF THE DOC AWARDS

Two Sunny Side 2024 invitations and one € 500 grant.

RADIOTELEVISION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - BHRT AWARD

In-kind award of archive material worth € 5,000.

PROGRESS FILM AWARD

In-kind award of archive material worth € 3,000.

EURODOC AWARD

Participation in a 5-day Eurodoc Session and a year-long membership worth € 3,000.

CZECH TELEVISION DEVELOPMENT AWARD

Development support, including editorial support/film archives/financial/in-kind resources, that are editorially suitable for further cooperation.

THE INSTITUTE OF DOCUMENTARY FILM (IDF) - EAST SILVER CARAVAN AWARD

One year of festival distribution service. During the year, films are submitted for consideration to international film festivals.

MARCHÉ DU FILM - FESTIVAL DE CANNES - CANNES DOCS AWARDS

Two participations in the 'Spotlighted Projects' at Cannes Docs 2024 with mentoring.

DOHA FILM INSTITUTE - DFI PRODUCERS LAB AWARD

Selection of one project to participate in the DFI Producers Lab 2023.

INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL BELDOCS - BELDOCS AWARD

The opportunity to present the project at the next Beldocs Pitching Forum, which will include free accreditation and accommodation.

JCC: CARTHAGE FILM FESTIVAL - TAKMIL - CARTHAGE PRO AWARD

Postproduction support.

MIA, INTERNATIONAL AUDIOVISUAL MARKET - MIA AWARD

Attendance in the MIA Co-Production Market and Pitching Forum.

MOVIES THAT MATTER IMPACT AWARD

One project will be selected to attend the Festival, Industry Days Film & Impact, which will include free accreditation and accommodation.

SHEFFIELD DOCFEST AWARD

Industry pass for Sheffield DocFest 2024.

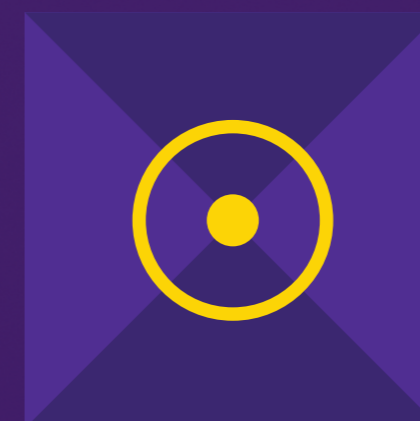
JEDINSTVENA BH. PLATFORMA ZA AUDIO-VIZUELNI SADRŽAJ

UNIQUE BH AUDIO-VISUAL CONTENT PLATFORM



Priče koje volimo.
Stories we love.

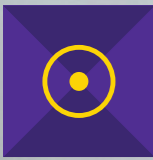
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MAIN PITCH

8 projects →

Main Pitch is a platform intended for independent filmmakers and production companies at an early stage of development. Eight projects carefully selected by the Selection Committee will take part in the Main Pitch. This will be an opportunity to secure funding for their productions and ensure support for overseas broadcasting, distribution, screening and sales. Producers will have up to seven minutes to present each project, including the trailer, budget and finance plan, followed by a moderated Q&A session.



JANA

Duration: **75 MIN**
 Shooting formats: **4K, 2K, mobile phone and home video SD**
 Author: **Mohammad Reza Azadi**
 Productions: **Filmkhaana, Draw4Films**
 Contact: **Maaria Sayed | maaria.sayed@gmail.com**
 Production Countries: **Pakistan, Iran**
 Co-production Country: **Italy**
 Filming Countries: **Afghanistan, Pakistan, Spain**
 Original languages: **Hazargi (language spoken on the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan) and Spanish**
 Subjects: **Social issues, politics, human interest, migration, women, family**
 Production stage: **Development**
 Date of release: **March 2025**

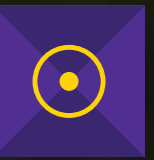
Synopsis:

A pregnant Leila and her husband Sajjad are wrapping up their entire life in a suitcase as they are fleeing from Kabul to head to Pakistan. The Taliban just took over their city and the news they received about Leila's 2 months pregnancy that day quickly transforms into a nightmare as they do not want their child to be born in Taliban occupied Afghanistan. Several thousands of people like them reach the border city of Quetta where they spend their first days hiding in a mosque with the aid of the Hazara community. This city is known to be dangerous for the community that Leila and Sajjad belong to, and thus, though they manage to rent a room in Quetta, they begin applying to various embassies hoping to escape to a western country where their child could be safe. Pregnant Leila begins talking to her belly, revealing to her unborn child the story about how she met Sajjad. Family archives reveal the way they fell in love, their wedding and their life before they were forced to leave. They do not get any reply from any embassy. Meanwhile, the conflict in Ukraine disappoints them further, as they are aware Europe would not prioritize them anymore. In the 6th month, they manage to move to Karachi, but they do not speak the local language and their money is running out. They continue keeping in touch with their extended family online – a family that is now scattered all over the map. Karachi turns out to be a nightmare, so they move back to Quetta, where they share language with the locals. During the 9th month, doctor informs them that the baby has not moved and they need to rush to perform a Cesarean section. They are left with no option, but to follow up with the surgical procedure in a hospital with very few facilities. On 30th March, Jana is born. Sajjad sends a photograph of their newborn to their relatives, each of whom lives in a different place. As the photographs reach 11 different places, Leila and Sajjad are hit with financial emergency. Sajjad finally manages to start an apprenticeship at a barber's shop in Quetta, hoping to be paid at some point. But soon, when they least expect it, Leila finds a sponsor in Spain. Now they know they will be in Europe before long. They shift base to Rawalpindi and eventually move to the capital Islamabad to begin their application process. They leave for Spain with Jana, who is now almost a year old, and try to integrate into the new life. Leila, who was earlier taking Spanish lessons, hopes to continue her education in Vigo. Jana takes her first steps in the foreign land. The couple, alongside their daily routine in Spain, continue to contact their family around the world as they reflect on their last year experience of moving from place to place. While they have reached their desired destination and are in a state of calm, they start feeling rootless, concerned about how they are going to raise their child.

Logline:

On the very same day that the Taliban take over Afghanistan, Leila and Sajjad learn that they're expecting their first child. To escape the Taliban, this Kabul-based couple is suddenly on its way to Pakistan. During the escape they change home 9 times. They are searching for a way to escape to a Western country, but each month, Leila's pregnancy multiplies the risk. Finally, they make it to Vigo, Spain, with their one-year-old daughter Jana.

Looking for: **Financing, broadcasters, distributors, sales and festivals**
 Total budget: **€ 270,556.00**
 Amount still requested: **€ 240,000.00**



THE SREBRENICA TAPE

Duration: **89/54 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Chiara Sambuchi**
 Production: **DOCDAYS Productions**
 Contact: **Antje Boehmert | ab@docdaysproductions.com**
 Production Country: **Germany**
 Filming Country: **B&H**
 Original languages: **Bosnian, Serbian, Italian, English**
 Subjects: **Human interest, society, personal history**
 Production stage: **Pre-production**
 Date of release: **Spring 2025**

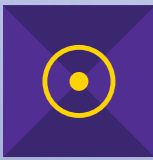
Synopsis:

Four hours of film are recorded on a VHS tape that Sejfo, a shoemaker, shot for his young daughter Alisa in Srebrenica between 1993 and 1995. Today, in possession of this tape, Alisa sets out on a journey back to Srebrenica. She will illuminate the dark spot that Srebrenica has always been to her. Our audience can easily relate to her question, i.e. what happened in the enclave? During her trip, Alisa will face images from which her father tried to protect her until she would get familiar with a larger history of Srebrenica. The documentary is an intimate search for traces her father left behind. In 1993, the town of Srebrenica became a protected enclave. Two years later, Serbian forces captured the town and massacred 8,000 Muslim boys and men. This act counts as the Europe's worst human rights injustice since 1945. Aiming to erase all evidence of the genocide, Serbian troops destroyed, every trace of Srebrenica's inhabitants: their diaries, photos, and personal belongings, nothing to remain of these people. The stories about perpetrators have long been told, but what remains of the lives of people in the enclave? There is little more than a few abstract news images. Now, there's an opportunity to tell this story in a new way. Alisa, now a 39-year-old mother, is a survivor of the Bosnian war. She is guided by the four-hour and two-minute long film, shot between 1993 and 1995. The man whose voice can be heard on the tape had a single viewer in mind, Alisa herself, his then nine-year-old daughter. Sejfo, an amateur filmmaker, chronicled life in the face of the oncoming catastrophe and described in detail to the camera the fears and hopes of the residents. Sometime in the spring of 1995, the tape was smuggled out of Srebrenica and remained as Sejfo's last message to his daughter. He perished in the genocide and it was only many years later that his remains were identified. After the war, Alisa moved to Florida and inwardly said goodbye to the conflict. Now she will return to Srebrenica. She is ready to follow her father's footsteps and meet survivors of the massacre from Sejfo's film. Alisa will visit former friends of her father for the first time, in search of information about the last years of Sejfo's life. She will also meet a nurse from "Doctors without borders", who in July 1995 tried to protect the injured men in her hospital from Serbian forces. And she will hopefully find the very person who smuggled the tape to her. Only now, after all these years, Alisa is ready to follow up on her father's tape. Alisa's search will bring to light new aspects of the events in the Bosnian enclave – up to the cold-blooded calculation that led to the 1995 massacre. Sejfo's "children's film" from the enclave is mirrored in the documentary, with the geopolitical history of Srebrenica.

Logline:

In possession of a rare VHS tape shot by her father during the Srebrenica genocide, a young woman goes on a journey to uncover her own family history set against the larger historical backdrop. She will not only meet the people who appear in her father's film, but her father's film is the point of departure in Alisa's quest for clues, to answer questions surrounding the family and their belongings, after her life is forever altered by one of the gravest crimes against humanity in modern Europe.

Looking for: **Financing, broadcasters, festivals and VOD**
 Total budget: **€ 397,000.00**
 Amount still requested: **€ 140,000.00**



FINDING THE WAY HOME

Duration: **75 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Zakaria Mohamed Ali**
 Production: **BM Entertainment Ltd**
 Contact: **Ali Ben Mohamed | info@bmentertainment.co.uk**
 Production Country: **UK**
 Co-production Country: **Italy**
 Filming Countries: **Italy, Somalia**
 Original languages: **Italian, Somali**
 Subjects: **Social issues, human interest, society, current affairs**
 Production stage: **Development**
 Date of release: **April 2025**

Synopsis:

"Finding the Way Home" follows Zakaria, a Somali journalist who has lived in Italy as a refugee for 15 years. Despite his new life and family in Rome, he is constantly haunted by thoughts of his past and the events that forced him to leave Somalia. In an attempt to find meaning in his journey, Zakaria sets out to revisit his homeland, retracing the perilous road he once took to escape the civil war. Throughout his odyssey, Zakaria encounters old companions and delves into long-lost memories, piecing together the pivotal events that have shaped his life and identity. The film poignantly explores the intricate relationship between identity and memories, as well as the profound significance of "home". "Finding the Way Home" is a reflective portrayal of the human spirit's resilience. It delves into the profound connection between memories and one's sense of self, as Zakaria grapples with the contrasting comforts of his newfound home and the unrelenting yearning to reconcile with his roots.

Logline:

A Somali journalist walks backwards the road of death in search of his memories, and visits his hometown for the first time in 15 years.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers, broadcasters, distributors and sales**
 Total budget: **€ 150,000.00**
 Amount still requested: **€ 105,000.00**



DECEMBER

Duration: **80 MIN**
 Shooting format: **2K**
 Author: **Grzegorz Paprzycki**
 Production: **Telemark**
 Contact: **Piotr Śmiechowski | piotr.smiechowski@telemark.com.pl**
 Production Country: **Poland**
 Co-production Country: **Lithuania**
 Filming Country: **Poland**
 Original languages: **Polish, English, Arabic, Pashto, Greek, Italian, Lithuanian**
 Subjects: **Social issues, human interest, society, politics**
 Production stage: **Late production**
 Date of release: **2024**

Synopsis:

December brings exceptional spells of cold and snowfall to Europe. The existing order is destroyed not only by the harsh weather, but also by "strangers" who want to get into the territory of the European Union. Some people try to live as if nothing has changed and get ready for the approaching Christmas. Others join the battle and, depending on their views, they either fight with the 'strangers' or try to save their lives. This is "December", a documentary manifesto made up of a number of mini stories set somewhere between empathy and indifference. Thirty-one autonomous scenes, varying in form and content, create a mosaic that is a mirror image of ourselves. "December" is a creative documentary, which focuses on the contemporary perception of migrants from the Middle East and Africa. People's indifference is juxtaposed with hostility and empathy, creating a tapestry of modern European society. The month of December is a harbinger of winter, not only in literal terms. Might be also associated with tragedies related to the migrant crisis as well as the 'coldness' symbolizing the lack of sympathy towards refugees. Significantly, December is the month of Christian holidays celebrating the birth of Jesus, the period during which it is advised to help people in need. That's why we planned to use December, along with its unique narrative arc, to build the structure of the film by means of thirty-one scenes along with the key and characteristic days of that month. The film is a patchwork of scenes, which differ in both the message and the form. Poetic impressions are intertwined with amateur phone footage and 'conventional' observational scenes. Each scene is usually an autonomous mini story. Additionally, main plots, such as the progress of destructive winter, the activists fighting and speaking up for migrants, the struggle of the refugees or Christmas preparations, are continued or reflected in a contrasting or symbolic manner in other, seemingly different scenes. There's also the narrator's poetic voice, which unites seemingly different scenes and emphasizes the structure of the film. The colour in the film, as the narrative progresses, loses its hues and turns into cold black and white.

Logline:

The arrival of December destroys the current order. Along with snow and frost, it brings to Europe travellers, who are offered no gifts or welcome, and causes a battle between empathy and indifference.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers, broadcasters, distributors, sales and festivals**
 Total budget: **€ 250,000.00**
 Amount still requested: **€ 150,000.00**



SOLO

Duration: **90 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Amine Boukhris**
 Production: **Donia Films**
 Contact: **Amine Boukhris** | amineboukhris.tn@gmail.com
 Production Country: **Tunisia**
 Co-production Country: **France**
 Filming Country: **Tunisia**
 Original language: **Arabic**
 Subjects: **Social issues, human interest, society**
 Production stage: **Development**
 Date of release: **2025**

Synopsis:

Akmal is a young rapper in his early twenties, whose only concern seems to be the launch of his artistic career in Tunisia. However, underneath this facade lies an incredible family secret: the young man was abandoned at the age of 16 by his mother, who left him alone, in the middle of the airport. She chose to leave with her younger children to Syria, to join the eldest of the siblings, and live amongst the Daesh terrorist militia. Since then, Akmal lives alone. Totally alone. Now, nearly a decade later, Akmal is at a crucial turning point in his life. Between his artistic ambitions, his secret love relationship with a young woman to whom he doesn't even dare to propose, his internal demons and his very real demons, and his strange friendship with all the outcasts and eccentrics of his village, Akmal leads a definitely busy life. Yet, the boy is obsessed by another haunting dream: to find his mother. The one who abandoned him. The one he has been secretly communicating with for months, hoping to bring her back home, or to visit her in the refugee camp where she now lives with the rest of his young siblings. We follow Akmal, in his daily life as a taciturn and withdrawn worker in the "fripes" (used/second-hand clothing) industry. We follow his introspective and actual/real attempts to find meaning in the midst of confusion and chaos, to understand and accept his exceptionally tragic past, in order to eventually move forward to a better future. He desperately attempts to get a second chance at life, any second chance, while searching for his own identity – individual, familial and human – after the abandonment and oblivion. It is, actually, the last attempt to find himself.

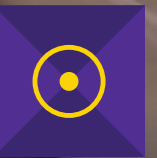
Logline:

Akmal, a young 24-year-old rapper, lives today for one simple reason: the hope of seeing his mother again. The mother who, ten years ago, made a terrible choice: to blindly follow her husband in joining the Daesh terrorist militia.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers, distributors, sales, festivals and VOD**

Total budget: **€ 268,605.00**

Amount still requested: **€ 150,000.00**



CON 24000 BACI

Duration: **70 MIN**
 Shooting format: **Full HD**
 Authors: **Alessio Bozzer, Ivana Marinić Kragić**
 Productions: **Marinis Media, Videoest**
 Contact: **Ivana Marinić Kragić** | ivana.m.kragic@gmail.com
 Production Country: **Croatia**
 Co-production Country: **Italy**
 Filming Countries: **Italy, Croatia, other Ex-Yu countries**
 Original languages: **Italian, Croatian**
 Subjects: **Society, popular culture, music**
 Production stage: **Development**
 Date of release: **June 2025**

Synopsis:

Dino, a young protagonist of the film "Sjećaš li se Dolly Bell?" by Emir Kusturica (Golden Lion for the best debut film in 1981), plays with his band of friends "24.000 baci", a song by Celentano presented at the Sanremo Festival in 1961 in duo with Little Tony. At the time, it became the most popular hit in Yugoslavia. The following year, the song Dolly Bell was released, by Italian-Yugoslavian songwriter Kemal Monteno. The lyrics say: "Dolly Bell, we had nothing but we had everything; as we grew up, we danced, we sung..."

We all knew Sanremo, but wasn't it the age of the cold war, of the rigid separation between Communist and non-Communist countries, of the post-war tensions between Yugoslavia and Italy? Indeed, it was, but clearly there was something else going on – a desire for something new, desire to leave the past behind. Ten years after the end of the Second World War, Italy was – in the eyes of young Yugoslavs – a reference point to capture the echoes of rock'n'roll revolution, which had broken out in the USA, and which the Communist authorities from Belgrade viewed with a certain degree of suspicion. The Italian rock was liked, because the 'Italian version' was void of the subversive elements found in the Anglo-Saxon world. The film portrays the spread of Italian music in Yugoslavia and its influence on the Yugoslavian music and culture.

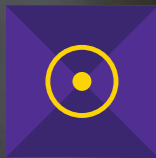
Logline:

Starting with the song "Con 24000 baci", the film introduces the audience to the influence of Italian music on the Yugoslavian pop culture. Imbued with nostalgic notes, it opens new positive worlds in the collective consciousness and history.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers, broadcasters and sales**

Total budget: **€ 148,000.00**

Amount still requested: **€ 107,000.00**



A BUTTERFLY HUG

Duration: **80 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Sally Abobasha**
 Production: **Sudan Film Factory**
 Contact: **Sally Abobasha | sally_abobasha@yahoo.com**
 Production Countries: **Egypt, Sudan**
 Filming Country: **Egypt**
 Original language: **Arabic**
 Subjects: **Coming of age, social issues, human interest**
 Production stage: **Pre-production**
 Date of release: **November 2025**

Synopsis:

"A Butterfly Hug" is a coming-of-age movie that follows two young friends living with a rare skin disease called Epidermolysis Bullosa. Shahd dreams of becoming a famous actress and social media influencer, and Abdelrahman wants to be a cinematographer and film director. Together, they have decided to make a short movie. Despite the difficult circumstances surrounding our characters, such as complications from the dreaded disease that prevents them from filming their movie and publishing new videos, and makes them lie in bed all the time, there is also the frustration that no one cares about their pictures and movie.

Their parents, however, worry they may not live long enough to achieve their goals. Shahd left school in ninth grade due to bullying. Not dropping out, EB has delayed her puberty. She is small for her age and suffers from low self-esteem. Shahd is confused and doesn't know what she wants to do and excel in, but she wants to go through the experience. She hopes that the film she is making with Abdelrahman will grow her social media following, boost her self-confidence, so that one day she may return to school. In contrast, Abdelrahman is studying to finish high school and pursue his college studies in Cairo.

The film follows their journey by using "cinema verite style". It deals with life, death, confusion, gender and uncertainties that teenagers face in choosing how to live their lives. Shahd chose to live a virtual reality, while Abdulrahman decided to live his reality and become an active player in his life.

The film explores what they wish for, what they will do for living and whether or not they are capable of working and mastering what they want in life.

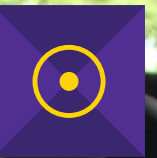
Logline:

Two confused teen friends attempt to find their own personalities by making short films on social media, while living with fatal genetic skin disorder and facing social stigma in their society.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers, broadcasters, distributors, festivals and VOD**

Total budget: **€ 199,218.00**

Amount still requested: **€ 168,642.00**



THE RABBIS' INTIFADA

Duration: **86/52 MIN**
 Shooting formats: **4K, HD, SD**
 Author: **Heather "Chana" Tenzer**
 Production: **Gefilte Fish Films**
 Contact: **Heather Tenzer | heather.s.tenzer@gmail.com**
 Production Country: **USA**
 Filming Countries: **Palestine, USA, Turkey, Israel, Egypt, UK, Canada, Jordan**
 Original languages: **English, Yiddish, Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish**
 Subjects: **Human interest, society, religion, history**
 Production stage: **Pre-production**
 Date of release: **December 2024**

Synopsis:

As a religious teenager, Chana unquestioningly loves Israel. But when, as an adult, she visits Palestine for the first time, she's shocked by Israeli violence. Her love for Israel begins to unravel. Feeling isolated, she embarks on a mission to find a religious Jewish voice for justice. She's stunned to discover Neturei Karta (Aramaic, meaning 'Guardians of the City'), a unique community of Orthodox Jews who support Palestinian liberation and oppose Israeli apartheid. Determined to find out what's inspiring their protests, she follows four Neturei Karta rabbis in their communities and on their travels. Filming in several cities around the world, she uncovers a shocking history of religious Jews paying a high price for resisting Zionism and taking a stand in support of Palestinian liberation. Now, she must share her findings with her religious community, but will anyone listen? This film is about growing up in an ideological bubble, being indoctrinated into an anti-Palestinian racist ideology. It's about unlearning racism and finding allies in unexpected places. The Rabbis' Intifada ("intifada" Arabic, meaning "uprising") employs observational and archival footage as well as interview and narration.

Logline:

An American Jewish progressive follows four rabbis from New York & Jerusalem as they speak out in cities around the world in support of the Palestinian liberation. She attempts to share their story with her former religious community. But will anyone listen? The film traces a Jewish uprising against Israeli apartheid.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers, broadcasters, distributors, sales, festivals and VOD**

Total budget: **€ 450,926.00**

Amount still requested: **€ 296,304.00**

Is your project ready?

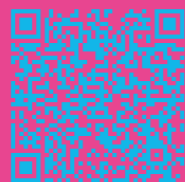


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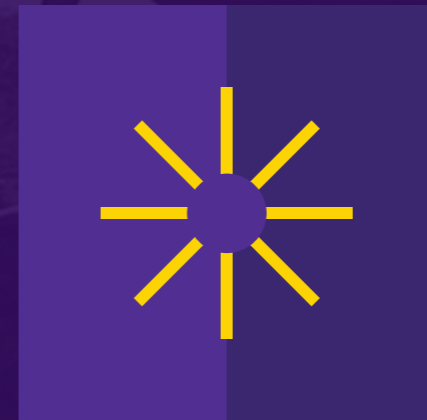
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WORK IN PROGRESS

8 projects →

Work in Progress is an international co-production platform aiming for the projects/ film to be broadcast on the Al Jazeera Documentary Channel and possibly on other Al Jazeera Channels, international broadcasters and partner platforms. The Work in Progress projects are selected according to their stages of production. Eight projects carefully selected by the Selection Committee will take part in the Work in Progress pitch. Producers will have up to 15 minutes to present each project, including film clips and financial plans. This will give an opportunity to filmmakers and producers to find funding, possible festival premiers, broadcasters and enable further networking.



WORK IN PROGRESS



MY MOTHER & I

Duration: **90 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Dilpak Majeed**
 Production: **Patchwork Productions**
 Contact: **Marwa Tammam | marwa.m.tammam@gmail.com**
 Production Countries: **Iraq, Egypt**
 Filming Country: **Iraq**
 Original language: **Kurdish**
 Subjects: **Family, social issues, human interest, marginalization**
 Production stage: **In production**
 Date of release: **End of 2025**

Synopsis:

Houri, a stubborn and moody woman in her seventies, lives in the village of Sharya in the mountains near Dohuk Governorate in Iraq Kurdistan, with her mother Shemi, who is almost a hundred years old. They are both Yazidis and have seen the wars and genocides that have affected their people. Houri and her mother live alone with their sheep, as Houri has a special love for these animals, which she has taken care of since her childhood. Houri and Shemi have always given priority to their sheep. Even when they sought refuge in a newly built village to escape ongoing conflicts, they chose to leave because the government did not allow animals in the new settlement. They made the brave decision to return to their war-torn village near the mountains, even if it meant living in isolation. Houri never got married. Their unusual way of life has made them known as eccentric within their community. The two women spend most of their time inside their house having funny arguments, surrounded by animals and disconnected from technology. The abandoned village has become a haven for refugees after the Sinjar massacre. Shemi falls ill, putting Houri under pressure to consider selling the sheep, which she strongly refuses. With time, wounds from the past and the complexities of the mother-daughter relationship are revealed. Tragically, Shemi passes away shortly after leaving her home, with Houri absent by her side. Overwhelmed by grief and loneliness, she embarked on a journey to adapt to her new life. However, societal expectations and pressures from her father's side brother intensify as everyone insists that she must abandon her lifestyle. As we follow Houri on her journey, we delve into the question of whether a woman in her seventies can embark on a new chapter in life.

Logline:

A woman in her seventies defies societal expectations and clings to her isolated life alongside her sheep with whom she shares an exceptional bond. But when her mother falls ill, she embarks on a journey to rediscover her own courage amidst the challenges of loss and the pursuit of a new beginning.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers, broadcasters, distributors and sales**
 Total budget: **€ 150,000.00**
 Amount still requested: **€ 120,000.00**

WORK IN PROGRESS



BITTER SUGAR

Duration: **70 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Ana Barjadze**
 Production: **Radium Films**
 Contact: **Irina Gelashvili | irina@radiumfilms.net**
 Production Country: **Georgia**
 Co-production Country: **France**
 Filming Country: **Georgia**
 Original language: **Georgian**
 Subjects: **Emigration, youth, coming of age**
 Production stage: **Postproduction**
 Date of release: **Late 2024 / early 2025**

Synopsis:

A small town in Georgia. Three brothers, Nika (19), Gika (16) and Levan (11) are huddled together over a video call from their mother. They look happy as they can finally see her and talk to her. For a while now, she has been living abroad, in Italy, where she looks after an old lady. Her voice is sometimes barely audible as she exerts all of her willpower to mask her pain and maintain a joyful disposition in front of her sons. This is the daily reality of Nika, Gika and Levan, who are left fending for themselves in the small town of Agara, only seeing their parents through a screen. The town where the brothers live is quiet; it was almost empty after the main factory closed its doors. This factory is where most of the town's inhabitants worked. The brothers re-invent family dynamics and relations to fill the void created by the absence of their parents and the empty town. Despite their many challenges, the longer their mother is away, the better the boys get at fending for themselves. All the while, they hope desperately for her return. Even though he technically lived with the boys, the father was barely home. He would come by after dark and rarely stay. Eventually, he decided to go to Germany to work at a factory. The parents are not divorced but live in different countries to support their kids and provide them with basic living conditions. With time, parents become voices on the other end of a device. For the boys, the only connection they have with their parents is through these distant phone calls. The change in the family dynamic is palpable; fewer people are at home as time passes, but the house is filling up with new household commodities. The walls became modern and renovated. The boys have new equipment and furniture. They also have a new dream of owning the latest smartphones because it is unlikely that their mother will be returning soon. Slowly, the house no longer has space in it for their mother, and neither does their daily life. Even the parrot gets a new cage that is considerably bigger than the old one. It is a universal story, yet an intimate one. The boys grow up in a leap of time, for it takes certain maturity to accept the absence of their parents for their own well-being. The parents, wanting nothing more than to provide a decent life for their children, can only attempt to do so by leaving them. Life changes, priorities level with commodities, and the family is raptured by a dire need for basic amenities. The children's loneliness is broken up by phone calls and new toys to play with. They are stuck in an endless "Waiting for Godot" cycle as they wait for the phone to ring.

Logline:

Three brothers living in a dying industrial town in Georgia struggle to cope with life independently, as their parents have been forced to go abroad in search of work.

Looking for: **Financing, broadcasters, distributors, sales, festivals and VOD**
 Total budget: **€ 117,000.00**
 Amount still requested: **€ 35,000.00**



WORK IN PROGRESS



GREEN LINE – THE CAT-CHILD

Duration: **109 MIN**
Shooting format: **HD**
Authors: **Sylvie Ballyot, Fida Bizri**
Productions: **TS Productions, Films de Force Majeure, Xbo Films**
Contact: **Céline Loiseau | cloiseau@tsproductions.net**
Production Country: **France**
Filming Country: **Lebanon**
Original languages: **Arabic, French**
Subjects: **History, human interest**
Production stage: **Postproduction**
Date of release: **Early 2024**

Synopsis:

"In my country, they call me "The Cat", because, like a cat, I died seven times, and seven times I came back to life". The film opens on a tale with animated figurines in miniature settings reconstructing Fida's childhood during the war in Beirut. It then shifts to a documentary style, with a series of real confrontations between Fida and ex-militiamen manipulating the small figurines. The miniature material becomes a bridge between different subjective stories, infusing collective history with individual details. The experience of this confrontational space turns out to be cathartic. The narrative moves around between realities and temporalities, proceeding from Fida's childhood in the eye of the storm during the war in the eighties until today. Logline: A woman in her seventies defies societal expectations and clings to her isolated life alongside her sheep with whom she shares an exceptional bond. But when her mother falls ill, she embarks on a journey to rediscover her own courage amidst the challenges of loss and the pursuit of a new beginning.

Logline:

"I renounced life, this was how they couldn't take it away from me." Today, Fida meets the militiamen who frightened her as a child.

Looking for: **Financing, broadcasters, distributors, sales and festivals**

Total budget: **€ 380,000.00**

Amount still requested: **€ 40,000.00**



WORK IN PROGRESS



MOSCOW NIGHTS

Duration: **120/90 MIN**
Shooting formats: **Archive Film, Archive Betacam**
Authors: **Irina Maldea, Brendan Culleton**
Production: **Akajava films**
Contact: **Brendan Culleton | brendan@akajava.com**
Production Countries: **Ireland, Romania**
Filming Countries: **USA, former USSR, UK, France, Italy, Germany – archive footages**
Co-production Countries: **Bulgaria, Germany, Netherlands**
Original languages: **English, Russian, German**
Subjects: **History, politics, society**
Production stage: **Postproduction**
Date of release: **March 2024**

Synopsis:

The ending of the Cold War was the biggest event of the postwar era, grabbing the attention of the whole world and making Mikhail Gorbachev one of the most famous people ever to exist. *Moscow Nights*, composed entirely of archives, takes us on an immersive journey back to that time, as the fate of humanity is decided by a small group of male politicians and their wives. The women feature prominently in the film, using previously unseen footage to emphasize their deleted presence. We sit in on the intimate fireside chats in Swiss villas, attend glittering events in the White House ballroom, and witness the sad resignation of Gorbachev and the end of the USSR. In an emotional retelling of his journey from all-powerful leader to outcast in his own land, Gorbachev is shown as a tragic character, brought down not only by his own actions but also by the machinations of jealous rivals and the predatory behaviour of the United States, aided by Germany. His vision of a world order based on non-violence was mocked, and new divisions were created instead of a common European home. Fear of nuclear annihilation was briefly replaced by hopes and dreams of a better world. But the opportunity to demilitarize and eliminate nuclear weapons was missed, and now disaster threatens yet again.

This film takes an archival vérité look at the epochal meetings between the superpower's leaders from 1985 to 1991, taking us to the heart of a key political moment in which the fate of the world is decided. Irina Maldea, an Irish/Romanian director, presents a fresh perspective on these dramatic events, with Mikhail Gorbachev and his wife Raisa as protagonists, using the vast trove of archive film shot as a record of events at the time. Through the immediacy of these films, she creates a unique archival vérité experience by placing the audience firmly in the centre of the action. The cumulative effect of selecting and editing the archives in order, back to back, allows a new story to emerge in front of our eyes on the screen, allowing the audience to make the connections for themselves and giving them a glimpse of what really happened during those momentous events. As the filmmaker rewinds and replays the familiar events, the material transforms, without the commentary; the images tell a different story, and a new narrative emerges, one that places more importance on the role of women. We see relationships developing between superpower leaders and their wives because we see and read people's expressions, body language, and spoken words. We see what happened before and after the famous news bites. Our interest is in the human story: how individuals can change history by building trust and friendship with their former adversaries but also through betrayal and hubris.

One thing is certain: the Cold War ended through collaboration, not the victory of one side.

Logline:

How could the current war in Ukraine have been prevented? Thirty years ago, the New Thinking of Mikhail Gorbachev was dismissed as a utopian fantasy, but a chance for long-term peace was lost forever in the pursuit of short-term gain.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers, broadcasters, distributors, sales, festivals and VOD**

Total budget: **€ 676,252.00**

Amount still requested: **€ 212,584.00**



WORK IN PROGRESS

UNTIL THE BUZZING STOPS

Duration: **90 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Abd al-Kader Habak**
 Productions: **Habak Films, Vrai Vrai Films**
 Contact: **Janay Boulos | janay@habakfilms.com**
 Production Countries: **UK, Lebanon**
 Co-production Country: **France**
 Filming Country: **UK**
 Original languages: **Arabic, English**
 Subjects: **Social issues, human interest, environment, mental health**
 Production stage: **In production**
 Date of release: **2025**

Synopsis:

Abd al-Kader Habak is a Syrian refugee in London haunted by his devastating memories of living the war in Syria and the siege of Aleppo. Every sight, sound, and scent of the bustling city brings him back to the horrors he once witnessed and filmed as a news cameraman. At night, sleeplessness takes him on a journey back in time to the darkest moments he experienced, and during the day, he finds solace in his camera, capturing the pulse of London's tumultuous life. But when hope seems fleeting, fate has a way of intertwining lives. Habak meets Ali, a captivating Syrian refugee who is a beekeeper. Ali claims that his bees hold the key to healing wounds that run deep, and it captivates Habak. Ali tends to bees with an almost mystical connection. For him, they symbolise both the sweetness of his childhood in Damascus, Syria, and the bitter sting of trauma from his life during the Syrian war. And as Habak and Ali's paths cross, an unbreakable bond forms between the two men, their souls resonating with shared struggles and burdens. Ali masks a harrowing past: once a man of privilege, he chose to return to Syria during the revolution, enduring unspeakable experiences that now cast shadows on his soul. Habak discovers this as he documents Ali's remarkable mission to build a bee farm in the UK, a sanctuary for refugees to thrive and for endangered bees to flourish. Ali's candidness about his struggles resonates, forcing Habak to confront the haunting memories he seeks to escape. As they journey together over three intense years, Habak embarks on a journey of rediscovery as he learns that true strength lies not in burying the past but in confronting it head-on. Each sleepless night becomes a battle for Habak against the ghosts that haunt him, represented by a bag of hard drives containing photographs and films he captured in Aleppo. In the face of their shared traumas, Habak and Ali forge an unbreakable bond. The camera becomes more than a tool; it becomes a lifeline, capturing not only moments but also the essence of their healing. As Ali's social initiative, Bees & Refugees, blossoms, their journey of redemption gains momentum. Together, they unveil their strength in vulnerability, learning to confront their deepest fears and nightmares. Scars will always be present for Habak and Ali as lingering reminders of their pasts. Yet, through their work and companionship, they discover a way to coexist with the ghosts and channel their pain into a force for good. Together, Habak and Ali learn to harness their painful pasts, turning them into powerful wings that carry them forward, driven by the burning desire to make a difference in a world still plagued by conflict and suffering. As they stand shoulder to shoulder, they prove that hope can arise even in the darkest of times as they learn to embrace their survivor's guilt and transform it into a driving force for change.

Logline:

Ali, a resilient beekeeper, and Habak, a filmmaker, escaped the ravages of war in Syria and found refuge in London. But their struggles have not stopped, as they continue to confront haunting guilt, memories, and relentless flashbacks from their traumatic past. Can the mystical world of bees, the power of a camera's lens, and the unbreakable bond of newfound friendship be the keys to transforming their pain into a triumphant and prosperous future?

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers and broadcasters**
 Total budget: **€ 349,912.00**
 Amount still requested: **€ 314,912.00**



WORK IN PROGRESS

MY MOTHER THE STATE

Duration: **75 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Ieva Ozolina**
 Production: **FA Filma**
 Contact: **Madara Melberga | madara@fafilma.lv**
 Production Country: **Latvia**
 Co-production Country: **Iceland**
 Filming Countries: **Latvia, Iceland, USA, Russia**
 Original languages: **Latvian, English, Russian**
 Subjects: **Social issues, human interest, society**
 Production stage: **Postproduction**
 Date of release: **2022, 2023**

Synopsis:

As a healthy and happy kid, Una was fortunate; she got adopted when she was three. In fact, it was she who chose her stepfather. In the playground where the new parents-to-be were observing the kids, Una approached Oscar, put her arms around his neck and called him dad. Una later states that her childhood ended when she was eight years old. Her stepmother married for the second time and had twin daughters. Una became a servant of the household and the black sheep on every occasion. In those gruesome days, Una remembered that in the orphanage she had an older sister, Zane, who was sweet and caring to her, but they were separated when Una was taken away. For the next thirty years, Una never stopped wishing to see her again. Una is a strong and persevering character. She moved to the United Kingdom with her daughter. She used to travel often. They went to Iceland in one of these trips, and Una fell in love with the place - the majestic nature, the gentle people - and decided she wanted to live there. Una sold everything she owned, found a one-bedroom flat for Arta, who was already eighteen, began learning the fourth language, and began looking for work in Iceland. But no matter where she travelled, the desire to find her sister remained. Una began visiting state archives, but the new Latvian adoption law, which now allows the adopted person to access information about her pre-adoption identity and biological mother, nevertheless denied her access to information about her siblings. Una's request for her sister's surname was denied, implying that perhaps she did not want to meet with her. But then, the first major twist occurred. During one of these visits, the archivist did something odd. Perhaps because of the presence of the film crew, the lady agreed to show the case folder from a distance. Without breaching the law, but through its loopholes, she told Una that the last person to see the same folder was a woman named Zane Buka. Una recognized her as her sister from the orphanage. Zane lived in the Netherlands with her husband and eighteen-year-old daughter. Una was looking forward to their meeting with both excitement and worry - what if Zane didn't want to welcome Una into her life? It turned out to be the exact opposite. Their meeting was a joyful occasion. However, the story does not finish there. Even before learning Zane's surname, Una discovers in one of the state archives that she has three sisters instead of one. They decide to look for the rest of them together. The search for the lost sisters becomes her mission, which brings her through Europe, Russia, and the United States. She posts her call in 32 different languages around the world. When we meet Una, we appreciate how fortunate we are to know our parents, siblings and nationality. And we grasp what it is to be rootless. My Mother the State tells a story of a young woman's search for a true feeling of belonging. Five countries, five sisters - Una's almost inconceivable journey to find her origins hidden in the jungle of what we call life.

Logline:

Una was the first person to use the change in Latvian Law to locate her sister, who had gone missing during the adoption procedure. After breaking through the bureaucratic jungle, she suddenly discovers that she has not one but four sisters, all adopted and scattered over the world. The search for the lost sisters becomes her mission, which brings her through Europe, Russia, and the United States. She posts her call in 32 different languages around the world. The media, friends, courage, and persistence all help with the nearly impossible endeavour.

Looking for: **Financing, broadcasters, distributors, sales, festivals and VOD**
 Total budget: **€ 145,000.00**
 Amount still requested: **€ 40,000.00**



WORK IN PROGRESS



LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL

Duration: 90/52 MIN
 Shooting format: 2K
 Author: Mohamed Jabaly
 Production: Stray Dogs Norway
 Contact: KriStine Ann Skaret | stine@straydogs.no
 Production Country: Norway
 Filming Countries: Norway, Palestine
 Original languages: Arabic, English, Norwegian
 Subjects: Human interest, social justice, politics, mysticism, immigration, exile
 Production stage: Late production
 Date of release: Autumn 2023

Synopsis:

Young filmmaker Mohamed Jabaly (24) has an unshakeable belief in the power of storytelling and uses film to spread positive images from his hometown, Gaza. He is invited to share his work on a month-long cultural exchange in Tromsø, northern Norway. He is excited for his first trip to Europe. When he arrives in October, snow is already on the ground and the nights are longer than the days. His work is met with enthusiasm, and new opportunities open up for the young director. Little does he know that this experience will cost him years in exile.

During his visit, the border between Gaza and Egypt closes indefinitely. Mohamed is stuck in the Arctic, but due to his sense of humour and charm, he is quickly accepted into his new community. They take him on treks up snowy mountains, ski trips, whale watching. Just like in Gaza, he uses his camera as a diary, filming everyday life around him.

Unable to return home, Mohamed extends his artist visa. He completes his first feature documentary Ambulance together with his new colleagues in Norway. In the film, Mohamed follows an ambulance crew during the 51 days attack on Gaza in 2014. Working with the material brings back difficult memories, but Ambulance becomes a great success and is shown at film festivals and TV-channels around the world.

However, Mohamed cannot attend screenings nor meet his audience because of his ongoing visa situation. He follows the awards ceremonies online and alone in Tromsø. Despite his achievements, Norwegian authorities eventually reject his application for a work permit on the grounds that they do not recognize him as a professional filmmaker.

Mohamed's friends back home tell him to seek asylum or get married to stay in Norway. But Mohamed refuses to give up his Palestinian identity and insists on being recognized for his work. With a growing group of supporters in Norway and abroad, he decides to take his case to court.

As this unfolds, Mohamed lives a parallel life online, staying connected with his family in Gaza. They provide him solace, but also face their own hardships. When Gaza is attacked again, Mohamed relives the horror, as well as the pain of being separated from his loved ones and powerless to help. This lands him in a new dilemma. Crossing the border is still very difficult, but no longer impossible. If he moves home, he might not be allowed to travel in the future, effectively ending his opportunities as a filmmaker to share stories with the world.

Logline:

"Life is Beautiful" is a story of overcoming a life put on hold by international politics and rigid bureaucracy, told from the inside by a director who insists on generating joy and beauty whatever the situation – a young man who uses all his creativity to connect with the world and forge a way forward.

Looking for: **Financing, broadcasters, distributors and festivals**

Total budget: € 330,000.00

Amount still requested: € 50,000.00



WORK IN PROGRESS



DAKAR SISTAZ

Duration: 52/3x22 MIN
 Shooting format: Full HD
 Authors: Jan Těšitel, Zuzana Kučerová
 Production: Frame Films
 Contact: Zuzana Kučerová | zuzana@framefilms.cz
 Production Country: Czech Republic
 Filming Countries: Czech Republic, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, France
 Original languages: English, Czech
 Subjects: Youth, sport, female empowerment, mental health
 Production stage: Postproduction
 Date of release: March 2024

Synopsis:

Episode 1 Competitive Sisterhood

Teenage twins Aliyyah and Yasmeen Koloc are race car drivers, and their fame only keeps growing.

The main coach and manager of the whole team, to whom everyone answers, is their father Martin Koloc. We see how hard and taxing the training under his direction is. The sisters intend to take on the best racers from around the world in one of the toughest races, the Dakar Rally.

Archive footage reveals that before motorsport, they aimed for a tennis career. That's why they have never had a regular school education and have found it difficult to make friends their own age.

The sisters push their limits when they test for the Euro Nascar, and both achieve great result. Aliyyah even attacks the circuit record. Yasmeen wants to push herself even further, but she is involved in an accident at the important endurance race in Belgium. As she approaches the corner, she goes into a skid, and a rival's car crashes into hers at full speed. Is Yasmeen going to be all right?

Episode 2 Breaking Apart

As the medics approach the destroyed car, they find out that Yasmeen is well, but she has a hand injury. Yasmeen undergoes treatment for her wrist, but the doctor doesn't have good news for her. She needs to take a break from racing. This could seriously jeopardize her start in the Dakar Rally! Aliyyah fully commits to training and racing, and soon enough, she enjoys one racing success after another. Yasmeen is quickly realizing that Aliyyah is becoming a much brighter star than she ever was.

Yasmeen and Aliyyah's worlds begin to drift apart unavoidably. Aliyyah, who has Asperger's syndrome, puts her focus on one thing and one thing only: the upcoming season highlight, The Dakar Rally.

Yasmeen tries to recover from her injury, but it is clear that she will need more time to heal. She has to give up her start in the Dakar.

Episode 3 We're in This Together

The big day is approaching. The event for which the Aliyyah has been training for so long is finally here. Right before the race, the sisters speak openly about their fears and hopes. The desert observes a pre-race reconciliation, but the cracks in their relationship are still apparent.

Aliyyah begins her Dakar Rally debut. Sand, wind, flooding, you name it! She keeps pushing, and soon finds herself in the top ten. That is an outstanding accomplishment for an eighteen-year-old driver! We see how Aliyyah interacts with her navigator, father Martin, and the rest of the crew to develop not only as a driver but also as a person. Meanwhile, Yasmeen is trying to assist the team from the headquarters while struggling not to feel sad and lonely.

After significant inner struggle and serious consideration, Yasmeen has finally accepted the fact that the Dakar Sistaz brand is gone. The sisters are no longer a car racing duo. Aliyyah Koloc's meteoric rise after Dakar is unstoppable! But where does Yasmeen fit in? Is racing also in her future? Or will she have to take a different course in life?

Logline:

Teenage twins Aliyyah and Yasmeen Koloc are a well-known and well-established brand. They win car races and have hundreds of thousands of followers on social media. But what happens when the sisters' paths diverge as they reach adulthood? How will this affect the important upcoming Dakar race, their careers, and, most importantly, their relationship?

Looking for: **Financing, broadcasters, distributors, festivals and VOD**

Total budget: € 165,000.00

Amount still requested: € 30,000.00



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MAIN PITCH

Con 24000 baci

by Alessio Bozzer, Ivana Marinić Kragić

BALKAN STAR

Rear Admiral

by Mladen Ivanović

**Another Film About
the War, Father & Home**

by Damir Markovina

Cordon

by Anton Mežulić



BALKAN STARS

6 projects →

Balkan Stars is a regional and international co-production platform aiming to highlight the work of Al Jazeera Balkans and Al Jazeera Documentary, and subsequent regional and international developments of relevant projects. Six projects carefully selected by the Selection Committee will take part in the Balkan Stars pitch. This will offer filmmakers and producers the possibility to search for funding, possible festival premiers, broadcasters, and enable further networking.



THE PARTISAN NECROPOLIS

Duration: **70/55 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Chris Leslie**
 Production: **Journey Film Productions LTD**
 Contact: **Chris Leslie | chris@chrisleslie.co.uk**
 Production Country: **UK**
 Filming Country: **B&H**
 Original languages: **English, Bosnian**
 Subjects: **Art, politics**
 Production stage: **In production**
 Date of release: **Late 2023 / early 2024**

Synopsis:

Built between 1959 and 1965, the Partisan Necropolis in Mostar is a memorial cemetery park dedicated to those who died fighting as Yugoslav Partisans against the Independent State of Croatia, a puppet state of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy in WWII.

It was built and designed by renowned architect Bogdan Bogdanovic and is listed as a National Monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is his most renowned and prominent design, a hillside landscape explicitly conceived as a "city of the dead" facing the "city of the living" to remind Mostar of the sacrifices made. When first completed, it was labelled as one of the crown jewels of Mostar. Today, not even the local residents visit it, claiming it's overrun with drug takers and an eye sore. Many residents and politicians would prefer Necropolis to disappear, claiming it is a communist relic from the past and not part of 'their history'. In the past few decades, neo-fascists have been vandalising and attacking the Partisan Necropolis site and leaving swastikas and symbols of Ustaša, the Croatian Nazi puppet state, on its walls and gates.

The most recent full-scale attack on the Necropolis was in June 2022, when around 700 of the stone flowers that bore the names of the anti-fascist fighters were smashed into pieces overnight. Like the divided city of Mostar itself, the Necropolis divides opinion, and the site has now become a bitter ideological battleground at a time when fascism and far-right revisionism are on the rise across the world.

Sead Đulić, a theatre director and head of the National Association of Anti-Fascists, argues the necropolis is more than a cemetery: "This is our Statue of Liberty, our Triumphal Arch, our Taj Mahal. It is a celebration of life and Mostar. It was built as a city of the dead, mirroring the city of the living, for a city that lost so much." The Croatian Catholic church disagrees, claiming it's a communist relic and alleging that the land where the partisan cemetery sits was unlawfully taken away from them in the late 1960s.

The mayor of Mostar, Mario Kordić, agrees and says there are no human remains at the site. He denies that the attacks were organised by local fascist groups, and instead blames the vandalism on local children. Local police said there were no witnesses to any of the incidents, so they were unable to conduct an investigation. Some argue that police inaction is part of the problem and evidence of larger political forces at work.

Marina Mimoza, a local artist, cherishes the site and wants to separate it from politics. She views the memorial cemetery simply as one of the country's greatest works of land art. As part of her project, she uses candles to illuminate the devastated site at night. She says, "I always view this place outside of a political context. I wanted to do something simple and spontaneous with light – to remind the people of Mostar of the beauty of this location before it is completely destroyed."

This documentary will tell the story of the Partisan Necropolis - its history, design, cultural heritage, and legacy, and most importantly, its fight for survival. It will feature previously unseen archive material (including original sketches and photographs by Bogdan Bogdanovic) as well as archival photography from relatives. It will be narrated through exclusive interviews with the story's essential players - those opposed to the Necropolis and those trying to save it.

The aim of this documentary is to shine a new light of attention, hope and urgency to save one of Bosnia and Herzegovina's most unique cultural and architectural treasures.

Logline:

The most significant architectural and anti-fascist landmark in former Yugoslavia, the Partisan Necropolis, is under attack. A small group of citizens and activists are fighting an uphill battle to protect it and preserve their city's history.

Looking for: **Financing, broadcasters and festivals**
 Total budget: **€ 70,206.00**
 Amount still requested: **€ 47,916.00**



I DON'T WANT TO

Duration: **65/52 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Hanis Bagashov**
 Production: **Hithra Films**
 Contact: **Hanis Bagashov | hithrafilms@gmail.com**
 Production Country: **North Macedonia**
 Filming Country: **North Macedonia**
 Original languages: **Macedonian, Turkish, Romani**
 Subjects: **Society, family, tradition, religion, environment**
 Production stage: **In production**
 Date of release: **March 2025**

Synopsis:

Despite their peaceful rural life, a Turkish middle-aged couple from North Macedonia strives for closeness and clarity on a daily basis. They are bound together by their wish to reunite with their daughter, who left 20 years ago to marry her Roma lover from the house next door. After she married him and became a member of the Roma community, one of Europe's most marginalised people - the mother, upset and outraged with their daughter, embarrassed in front of the village - publicly disowns her daughter. They live next door to one another but have never spoken in all these years. Now, the mother wants to reconcile with her daughter and wishes to act, at first secretly from the father, because he appears to be a stumbling block, as he opposes public recognition of the daughter. Hanis (the filmmaker) appears to be the couple's last viable link to their daughter, but even he can't break down the wall that has been built between the humiliated daughter, and her parents, who are now remorseful.

Logline:

Despite their peaceful rural life, a family of three is haunted by mistakes they have made in the past.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers and broadcasters**
 Total budget: **€ 88,000.00**
 Amount still requested: **€ 37,000.00**



REAR ADMIRAL

Duration: **75 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Mladen Ivanović**
 Production: **Restart, Artikulacija Film**
 Contact: **Oliver Sertić | oliver@restarted.hr**
 Production Countries: **Croatia, Montenegro**
 Filming Country: **Montenegro**
 Original languages: **Montenegrin, Croatian**
 Subjects: **Dealing with the past, society, war, human interest**
 Production stage: **Development**
 Date of release: **Spring 2025**

Synopsis:

The film *Rear Admiral* re-examines stereotypes of heroism and honour through the example of Krsto Đurović, a rear admiral in the Yugoslav People's Army who refused to follow orders to bomb Dubrovnik at the very beginning of the war in Croatia. Đurović was murdered in an unsolved and still uninvestigated staged helicopter crash while flying over Konavle near the Croatian border, just a few days after refusing to obey orders. A new commander was appointed soon after the accident, and the city of Dubrovnik was bombarded with unimaginable fury. Despite the fact that the place where the helicopter crashed was under the control of YPA and the reserve force at the time, the Montenegrin side used the rear admiral's death for propaganda purposes as a symbol of 'utmost heroism against immoral Croatian nationalists'. An official investigation was never conducted, local TV archives mysteriously disappeared, and Krsto Đurović was quickly obliterated from public consciousness. The field where the helicopter fell in Konavle's hinterland is covered in apple orchards, and eyewitnesses 'from both sides of the front know nothing' for years. Krsto Đurović's disobedience, which cost him his life, as well as the subsequent law of silence that reigned not only in Montenegro but also in Croatia, are the central motifs of this film. The director is looking for the 'moral heritage' of the war generation, questioning the point(lessness) of war and re-examining deeply rooted national stereotypes that transcend state borders. Despite the fact that the war ended two and a half decades ago, when he was just eight years old, he still bears the stigma of a nation incapable of confronting its own past. Through minute, emotionally charged, and passionate interviews with the protagonists of the 1990s war, members of the Yugoslav national security services, the YPA reserve force, Croatian soldiers, and Dubrovnik defenders, as well as the family of rear admiral Đurović, the director piece together a puzzle burdened with a continuation of destructive policies, but also with the power of individuals capable of defying the dominant hysteria and making honourable decisions, regardless of the potential sacrifice. Through a series of interviews, metaphorical visuals, and kept private archive materials, as a combination of in-depth research and essay, *Rear Admiral* attempts to puzzle out how honour overcame heroism and humanity triumphed over valour, two deeply entrenched motifs of national tradition on which the future of these areas would depend for decades to come.

Logline:

The unsolved murder of Krsto Đurović, a Montenegrin rear admiral in the Yugoslav People's Army who refused to invade Dubrovnik during the 1991 war, reveals a story about unachievable justice in the Balkans of the twenty-first century and illustrates how society perceives moral decisions when honour triumphs over valour.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers and broadcasters**

Total budget: **€ 238,000.00**

Amount still requested: **€ 107,000.00**



ANOTHER FILM ABOUT THE WAR, FATHER & HOME

Duration: **75 MIN**
 Shooting format: **HD**
 Author: **Damir Markovina**
 Production: **Wolfgang&Dolly LLC**
 Contact: **Tamara Babun | tamara@wolfgangdolly.com**
 Production Country: **Croatia**
 Filming Countries: **B&H, Croatia, Serbia**
 Original language: **Croatian**
 Subjects: **Human interest, family, politics, history, archive**
 Production stage: **In production**
 Date of release: **October 2024**

Synopsis:

Another Film About the War, Father & Home is a film about the myth of a perfectly moral war path, the impeccable public persona which the film director's father, Roko Markovina created, and the price that we, his family, are still paying as a result of his decisions.

This is a documentary on the history and nature of the most difficult emotional relationship in my life – the one with my own father. The history of the societies emerging from the breakup of Yugoslavia always prefers a good story over the historical facts.

It enjoys romanticising facts about defeats and turning them into moral victories. In this part of the world, well-crafted fiction is socially far more significant than the acceptance of regular, plain, and notorious realities of life and history. This is a film about a man who has been held captive by one of these narratives for thirty years. My father's unwavering commitment to the idea of a united Bosnia and Herzegovina throughout the war, combined with his sense of justice, made him one of the only six voters against the unjust Dayton Agreement, making him both a mythical figure of the Bosnian left and a pariah for the ruling nationalist structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We see him as a parliamentary delegate engaged in rhetorical clashes with today's convicted war criminals, who's warmongering from the parliament's podium resulted in Bosnia and Herzegovina's entry into the war only months later. That war has forced us, his family, into exile and has taken away our family home. The tale of that home, a classic high-rise socialist flat, is actually featured in the photographic and Super 8 archives my father had been creating as an amateur filmmaker for years, and this is one of the film's possible emotional punctuations. My father has

been politically correct, much to his pride and his family's great sorrow. Because of this, he created a religion around his own righteous sacrifice. He chose to live in self-imposed exile, constantly mourning the pre-war Mostar and indulging in its apotheosis.

Accompanied by a film crew, I took him on a tour of the focal points of his own past, contrasting his perceptions of these sites and events with their current condition. Certain scenes of his today's everyday island life portrayed this PhD scholar as someone who nihilistically believes that it would have been better if our ancestors had never left the island (Korčula) for schooling. Nowadays he is a farmer, cultivating the land, salvaging old boats and writing memoirs. He was once an enthusiastic amateur painter and filmmaker, but after the war he never picked up a brush or a camera again. I intend to use his existing work archive to emotionally punctuate our on-camera conversations about the sensitive issues regarding our shared family history and my upbringing. This film is a chronicle of those conversations as well as a kaleidoscope of his defeat's history.

It's my last chance to save my father from the 30-year-long loop of ex-Yugoslav post-war misery and, at the very least, to finally get on the same page with him before he dies. I'm hoping for an optimistic ending to this Balkan tale about surviving a war and a universal problematic father - son relationship.

Logline:

Thirty years after the war, an estranged son is trying to help his father overcome his war trauma and accept the return to the city that exiled them. A turbulent family history of disputes, different ways of life, and political views, stand in the way of their ultimate reconciliation and acceptance.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers, broadcasters, distributors, sales, festivals and VOD**

Total budget: **€ 127,046.67**

Amount still requested: **€ 56,856.21**



CORDON

Duration: **80 MIN**
 Shooting format: **4K**
 Author: **Anton Mezulić**
 Production: **Restart, Cinephage Productions**
 Contact: **Oliver Sertić | oliver@restarted.hr**
 Production Country: **Croatia**
 Co-production Country: **France**
 Filming Country: **Croatia**
 Original language: **Croatian**
 Subjects: **Dealing with the past, society, war, human interest**
 Production stage: **Development**
 Date of release: **Spring / summer 2025**

Synopsis:

Cordon is an observational documentary about Nikola (17), a teenager living in the tiny town of Vojnić in Croatia, where everything is split by nationality. There are two churches, two cultural associations, two cemeteries, and, surprisingly for such a small town, two football teams, which serve as a vital identity marker for both nationalities, Croats and Serbs. Both clubs are using the same football field, calling it by two different names. The divide is the outcome of the Croatian war in the 1990s, refugee flows, and the current circumstances in which they live side by side yet must make their own path. Nikola is the child of a mixed marriage between a Serbian father and a Croatian mother. He is currently playing for FC Vojnić '95, a Croatian team competing in a higher league where he has a better opportunity of progressing as a player. Even though his father urges him to return to FC Petrova Gora, where he played in his young age, Nikola refuses to play for one of the region's weakest clubs. In fact, he dreams of leaving Vojnić as soon as he finishes high school, but that won't be easy because his parents don't want to leave the house where they returned after a decade of living in Serbia as refugees. The film follows his coming-of-age journey in an unique setting: a family, a football club, and a society still divided by war. As a member of a generation that didn't live through the 1990s conflict, he wants to find a way to be free from the remnants of war, which means that he has to break away from some of his family traditions. He is analysing the dynamics at the shared stadium, where he meets two janitors, a Serbian Pići and a Croatian Pavo, who maintain the football pitch for their respective national teams. They are the key supporting characters in „Cordon“, and their relationship is a metonymy for the social division in the city. Their stories provide a rich context for comprehending the challenges that Nikola faces in his quest for independence.

Set in Vojnić, a Croatian town of about 4,000 people, the divisions between the Serbian and Croatian communities are still quite visible. Although the war officially ended over 25 years ago, the fear of the other, fueled by the pressure by each national corpus and local political interest, continues to have an impact on both communities. Furthermore, the younger generation, dissatisfied with nationalism and with no future possibilities, wishes to leave town, threatening both clubs with a player shortage. Through Nikola's personal journey and the backdrop of the nationalistic struggle within the football stadium, „Cordon“ follows the process of reconciliation in this godforsaken town, striving for a model that may bridge the divide and unite the community rather than leaving them living on opposite tracks formed by their tribe leaders.

Logline:

Pavo and Pići, the janitors of two nationally divided football teams in a small Croatian town, are trying to overcome the divide and find a way for reconciliation as people leave and both clubs risk being without players.

Looking for: **Financing, co-producers and broadcasters**

Total budget: **€ 260,000.00**
 Amount still requested: **€ 104,000.00**



I'M SORRY I DIDN'T DIE

Duration: **30 MIN**
 Shooting format: **Full HD**
 Authors: **Ana Lalić, Aleksandar Reljić**
 Productionss: **CORE DOX, NDNV**
 Contact: **Ana Lalić | ana.lalic@nova.rs**
 Production Country: **Serbia**
 Filming Country: **Serbia**
 Original language: **Serbian**
 Subjects: **Social issues, human interest**
 Production stage: **Pre-production**
 Date of release: **September 2024**

Synopsis:

Petar Matić Dule (age 103) is the last living national hero and a witness to Vojvodina's development and demise. The life story of Petar Matić Dule, born in 1920 in Irig, Srem, is actually a story about the history of his Vojvodina: from the unification with Serbia after the First World War, which was quickly followed by a painful sobering up; through the heroic struggle of Vojvodina's, particularly Srem's, partisans in the Second World War; through the construction of socialist Yugoslavia, which was based on the ideology of brotherhood and unity of its peoples and nationalities, which was especially expressed in multicultural Vojvodina throughout centuries; until the deadly nationalist standoff with the shared Yugoslav state. When "that shameful war" broke out in the 1990s, he was "grateful" that many of his wartime comrades had died, so they wouldn't see "what all those careless people did with something they built with sweat and blood". "Looking at what was happening, I regretted more than once that I didn't die in time, because I experienced the destruction of that great and beautiful country as a personal defeat," Matić explained.

Logline:

Petar Matić Dule (age 103), the last living national hero from the Second World War, suffered a personal defeat with the demise of Vojvodina's autonomy at the end of the 1980s and the collapse of Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

Looking for: **Financing and co-producers**

Total budget: **€ 40,997.50**
 Amount still requested: **€ 38,000.00**

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WHO
IS →
WHO



ALI KHECHEN | QA
Doha Film Institute
Qumra Industry Senior Manager
akhechen@dohafilminstitute.com

After a Master's Degree in International Projects Management with a specialization in Film Studies and Film Financing, Ali Khechen has worked as Project Coordinator at the Cannes Courts Mètrages– Festival de Cannes, Industry Manager at the Guanajuato International Film Festival in Mexico and was part of the Projects Selection Committee of the Sanad Film Fund of the Abu Dhabi Film Festival. He is currently working for the Doha Film Institute as Film Training Senior Manager, he is also the Industry Senior Manager of Qumra, an initiative that seeks to provide mentorship, nurturing, and hands-on development for filmmakers from the Arab world and around the world.



ANDRIJANA SOFRANIĆ ŠUĆUR | RS
Beldocs IDFF
Head of Industry
andrijana.sofranic.sucur@beldocs.rs

Andrijana graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy of Belgrade University, and holds an MA in Classical Studies. In 2014, she started working in film industry, resulting in her becoming producer of both live action and animation films. Her first feature fiction "Mamonga" premiered in 2019 at KVIFF. Andrijana is the producer of the documentary „Roots”, which premiered in 2021 at KVIFF and received the Best Camera Award at Beldocs IDFF. She is one of the founders of the production company SET SAIL FILMS and producer at the animation studio To Blink Animation since 2019. Andrijana's current co-productions include films from North Macedonia, Croatia, Turkey and USA. She is an alumna of Maia Workshops, Sarajevo Talents, EAVE Marketing Workshop, Midpoint Feature Launch, CEE Animation Workshop, New Horizons Studio+, EURODOC, Rotterdam Lab and Emerging Producers. She was one of the Producers in Focus at Clermont Ferrand IFF in 2022. She is a member of the Documentarist Association in Serbia – DocSerbia and EWA. Since 2023, Andrijana is Head of Industry at Beldocs IDFF.



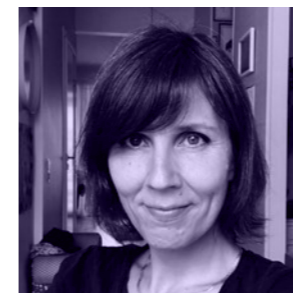
ANNA FERENS | PL
Telewizja Polska TVP
Documentary films and archives commissioning editor
Anna.Ferens@tvp.pl

Documentary filmmaker and screenwriter. Laureate of Awards: Main Prize of International RomaFictionFest in Rome, Main Prizes at Polish Film Festivals in New York & Los Angeles and Gold Medal at Chicago International Television Festival, among others. Expert of the Polish Film Institute. From 2016 Head of Documentary Films Production Unit in TVP (Polish Public TV). From 2020 Documentary Films and Archives Commissioning Editor in TVP.



JANE RAY | GB
The Whickers
Artistic Director
jane.ray@whickerawards.com

Jane Ray, from London UK, set up and now runs The Whickers, a global production fund for emerging documentary talent. She is a multi-award-winning documentary maker in her own right with 29 years on staff at the BBC. Jane has started there as a radio reporter, worked as an investigative journalist, and ended up as an Editorial Guardian for Worldwide Content and Production. Now she combines the Whickers with running her own company Cat Flap Media. Cat Flap has consulted on docs selected this year for Sundance, Venice and Sheffield Film Festivals and created a podcast for BBC Sounds. As well as being a sought-after judge and advisor, Jane has also devised and run documentary courses for the BFI and various colleges and has an Honorary Fellowship for services to Documentary at University College London.



ASTA DALMAN | SE
SVT - Sveriges Television AB
Commissioning editor, feature documentaries and current affairs

I look after feature docs and current affairs for SVT. I have extensive experience of the field, after more than 20 years of working with international pre-buys and co-productions.



JEAN-JACQUES PERETTI | FR
Sunny side of the Doc
Programming & Training Coordinator
jj.peretti@orange.fr

Studied films and literature in France and the US. Peretti has worked many years in documentary production before joining Sunny Side of the Doc in 2002. At Sunny Side, Peretti is in charge of programming the market. Peretti is also working as an expert with many international festivals and markets.



CLAUDIA BUCHER | FR
ARTE GEIE
Head of THEMA and Geopolitics
claudia.bucher@arte.tv

Claudia Bucher joined the ARTE Group at its very beginning in 1992. Since 2000 she is working for ARTE GEIE in Strasbourg in the Theme evening and documentary department. In January 2013 she is nominated Head of THEMA and Geopolitics. The THEMA-Slot investigates current political, socio-economic, environmental, and public health issues. The GEOPOLITICS-slot observes and analyses the accelerating changes in a world of globalization. Claudia is member of the EBU documentary expert group and tutor at Documentary Campus.



IMAM HASANOV | AZ
DokuBaku IDFF, Free Art Films
Founder, Director
jabirovich@gmail.com

Imam Hasanov is an award-winning filmmaker from Baku, Azerbaijan. His first feature film, HOLY COW, was an Arte/ZDF co-production garnering support from the Sundance Institute, the Doha Institute, and Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg. It premiered in the First Appearance Competition at IDFA in 2015, going on to play at Hot-Docs, and many film festivals, and selling to TV channels around the world. While in development, HOLY COW won the Best Pitch at Caucadoc, Tbilisi International Film Festival, and participated in East Doc Platform, GoEast, TalentLab, Doc.Incubator, IFP, La Fabrique Cinéma De L'institut Français - Les Cinémas Du Monde, Nipkow Fellowship, and IDFA Academy. Imam is also an alumnus of the Berlinale Talents and Sarajevo Talents.

Imam Hasanov founded the independent production company Free Art in Baku, Azerbaijan. Free Art supports author-driven, art house films, as well as creative documentaries with local impact and global relevance. Imam is also the co-founder and director of DokuBaku IDFF, the first international and the only independent documentary film festival in Azerbaijan, as well as the founder and director of "Çıxış – Cinema&Theater;" independent cinema-theater, and in 2020 the "Doklad iSchool" school for emerging Azerbaijani artists.

He is currently working on a new feature-length docu-fantasy film "Dreamers Apocalyptic Yesterday" in post-production.



ERKKO LYYTINEN | FI
Yle - The Finnish Broadcasting Company
Commissioning Editor

Erkko Lyytinen is the commissioning editor for feature length documentary films and documentary series for all broadcasting channels and platform of Yle, the Finish Broadcasting Company.

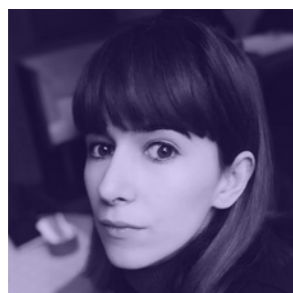


BEN PACE | IT
MIA Market
Doc & Factual - International Programming Manager
b.pace@miamarket.it

Ben Pace has worked for Mia Market since 2016. He has been coordinating the Documentary Division and has been appointed International Programming Manager in 2022.

Ben is well-experienced as a curator for a variety of film festivals including Capalbio International Short Film Festival, Milano Film Festival and the renowned SXSW where he assisted the VR/AR track production team.

Ben studied Journalism at the University of Palermo and he received a Master's degree in Film at the Edinburgh Napier University where he was awarded the university medal for his short film Mura, which has been screened in many film festivals around the world.



ESMA SARIĆ | HR
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Festivals and Acquisitions Manager
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Esma graduated in film and TV directing at the Academy in Sarajevo and is currently the first generation of Film master's students at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Montenegro. She worked as an educator in the field of film directing at workshops organised by the UN and the University of Bologna, as well as a director at numerous international co-productions in Austria, Qatar, Turkey, Italy and Germany. Her short feature films were screened at numerous international and regional festivals. Her current position is at Split Screen and she works as a Festival and Acquisitions Manager. She's also an award winning and published poet.

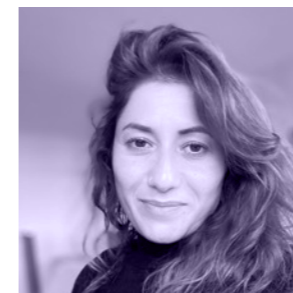


JUAN SOLERA | GB
Sideways Film
Sales & Acquisitions Manager
juan@sidewaysfilm.com

Juan Solera has worked distributing and producing documentaries for over ten years, and he is part of the Sideways Film crew for the last five years. During his career he has represented documentaries like Cobain: Montage of Heck, Martha: A Picture Story or Nomad: In the Footsteps of Bruce Chatwin by Werner Herzog.

He is usually invited as a Decision Maker to events like Sheffield Doc Fest, HotDocs, RIDM Montreal, Rio2c (also as a consultant), MiradasDoc, Doc Montevideo, Docs SP, Thessaloniki and more. He has also participated as a Juror for the International Emmy Awards and invited as an expert to EAVE. He is also usually present in panels and pitching forums in diverse international festivals and markets.

He has also produced a documentary on e-waste (Blame Game, 2018) which licensed to several broadcasters and platforms worldwide and got awarded in different international festivals.



GUEVARA NAMER | DE
DOK Leipzig
DOK Co-Pro Market
namer@dok-leipzig.de

DOK Leipzig is the oldest festival for documentary and animation film and also a renowned meeting place for the international film industry. It presents artistically outstanding, socially relevant films and XR experiences and is guided by the values of diversity, human dignity, inclusion and peace.



GÜN AKYUZ | GB
C21 Media
Research Editor
gun@c21media.net

An experienced journalist and media researcher specialising in content trends in the global television market. Gün currently leads C21's premium Content Strategies strand.



GUNNY (GUNE) HYOUNG | KR
EBS Korea/EIDF
Artistic Director

Gunny studied film & TV in America. His first career was with an international advertising company and then he moved to TV documentary production sectors, EBS Korea. He was one of program producers in the Netherlands and ABU (Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union) in Malaysia. Gunny's first mission was one of the founding members of EIDF (EBS Intentional DOC Film Festival), program programmer and then he moved to the EP later. EIDF will have most films aired by Public TV channels during the festival. Now he is in charge of Industry & Films partially.



IRENA JELIĆ | HR
Croatian Audiovisual Centre
Head of Promotion and Festivals
irena.jelic@havic.hr

Irena Jelić was born and raised in Zagreb, Croatia (1977). With degrees in History of Art and Spanish language, she built her career in marketing agencies as a copywriter and creative director, and in the last ten years has dedicated herself to film. She has designed and implemented more than 100 PR campaigns for Croatian and foreign films, Blitz-CineStar multiplex cinemas and CineStar TV channels. From 2017, Irena works for the Croatian Audiovisual Center (HAVC). She is the head of the Department of Festivals and Promotion at HAVC and Croatian representative in the European Film Promotion.



MARKETA STINGLOVA | CZ
Czech Television
Head of International Co-Productions
Marketa.Stinglova@ceskatelevize.cz

Marketa is the Manager of International Content Projects Centre in CT, and is responsible for international cooperation across genres, with a focus on documentaries. She is in charge of cooperation between CT and ARTE. She participates in international co-production/pitching forums and acts as a member of international festival juries. In 2022, she was re-elected as a member of the Bureau of the EBU Documentary Experts Group, of which she is a member since 2016.



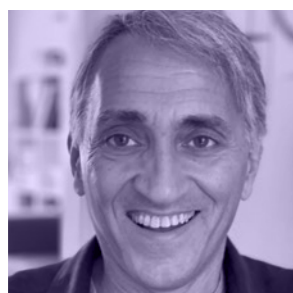
IVANA PAUEROVÁ MILOŠEVIĆ | CZ
 Czech television /Institute of Documentary Film
 Head of Projects /Board Member
 ivana.pauerova@gmail.com

Born in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She graduated in humanities at Charles University and in documentary film at FAMU in Prague. Her creative professional experience includes direction of documentary films mainly on social and political topics. Ivana is one of founding members of Institute of Documentary Film (IDF), Prague where she was head of workshop, Ex Oriente Film and East European Pitching Forum from 2002 - 2012. Ever since she has been involved with the Institute (IDF) as a Lead Tutor for the Ex Oriente Film workshop and its Board member. Since 2014 Ivana has been cooperating and working with Czech Television as a documentary film Script Editor and Head of Projects for creative docs, series in co-production and in-house production.



KEN-ICHI IMAMURA | JP
 NHK Enterprises
 Producer
 ken@imamura.tv

Imamura entered NHK in 1983. He was the Commissioning Editor of the slot "World Documentary" from 2009 until 2012. Since 2012 he has been working with NHK Enterprises and is in charge of co-production, pre-buy and commission of TV programs mainly documentaries. He is one of the founders of Tokyo Docs which started in 2011. He is also the CEO of his own company called Studio IMAKEN created in 2022. As the producer of NHK or NHK Enterprises, he co-produced many Asian documentaries such as Plane of Snail (Best Feature-Length Documentary, IDFA 2011), The Chinese Mayor (Special Jury Prize, Sundance 2015), Kabul, City in the Wind, After the Rain (2021), Organic Terrorist (TV version, 2022). He is now actively supporting Asian documentary projects as an independent executive producer or as a co-producer.



KRISHAN ARORA | AU
 SBS Television
 Int'l Content Consultant
 krishan.arora@sbs.com.au

Krishan Arora is an experienced producer and TV exec who is currently International Content Consultant for Australian public channel SBS. He began his career at the BBC, and was one of the first programme execs at Arte in Strasbourg when the channel launched in 1992. At the BBC and Antelope Productions he developed, produced and directed documentaries in the areas of history, culture, and international affairs. Rejoining the BBC in 2001 as commissioning exec in Specialist Factual, he commissioned and exec produced documentaries in the areas of Science, History and Arts for all BBC channels. He's a regular at documentary festivals and forums as decision maker and moderator.



MARCELLA JELIĆ | HR
 Split Screen
 sales and acquisitions
 marcella@splitscreen.hr

Marcella Jelić - Established Split Screen for festival distribution and film sales in 2022. She is also collaborating with Restart in Croatia where she is in charge of theatrical distribution. Previously she worked for Taskovski Films where she held the position of sales and acquisitions executive. She was festivals and promotion coordinator at Croatian Audiovisual Centre and programming director of film TV channel Klasik TV and documentary TV channel DOX TV. Her background is in journalism and film criticism. Her main focus are documentary films, shorts and features – with exquisite usage of film language, intriguing characters and provocative, thought provoking topics.



LAMIA BELKAIED-GUIGA | TN
 CARTHAGE FILM FESTIVAL
 ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
 Lamiaguiga.jcc@gmail.com

Lamia Belkaied Guiga Graduated from Paris II University. Doctor in information - communication, she is a film critic who teaches History of cinema and film analysis at the Higher School of Audiovisual and Cinema (ESAC) Carthage University, Tunisia where she is currently the Director. She is nominated as the artistic Director of JCC (Carthage Film Festival 2023) after having been involved in various artistic responsibilities of several editions (2015-2019) Within the JCC she supervised the implementation of several partnerships with international festivals : North-South and/or South-South. She is a founding member of the research group HESCALE, Sorbonne Nouvelle (History, Economy, Sociology of African and Middle Eastern Cinema). Her work focuses on Tunisian and African cinema and she published in Africultures, the African Women in Cinema Blog and in scientific journals. In 2020 - 2021, she contributed as an expert to the UNESCO report: "The Industry of Filming in Africa: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities for Growth". She acts as an expert on several educational projects of audiovisual training schools and cinema in the MENA region, in particular with the COPEAM program (Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Algeria...). As a cultural expert, she is a programmer of international events and she has been jury member of several festivals. She is a permanent member of the "Critics Awards for Arab Films" and for the "Mentor Arabia". Founding member of the Tunisian Association of University Cinematographic Creation, she is very active in the Tunisian associative fabric.



MARA PROHASKA MARKOVIĆ | RS
 Beldocs International Documentary Film Festival
 Festival Director
 prohaska.mara@beldocs.rs

Mara Prohaska Marković graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, with an MA in Art History and obtained curatorial status in the National Museum of Serbia. She has over 15 years of experience working in the cultural sector in producing and curating numerous cultural events, festivals, screenings, exhibitions, art residencies, art works in Serbia and Internationally. She worked at the National Museum of Serbia, Student's City Cultural Center, and the maramaida curator duo. She was coeditor of dipassage.org (web magazine for contemporary art), Art Fama (magazine for contemporary art scene), and is co-founder of "Dislocations: Photo Residency at Orlovat". She is a member of the International Association of Art Critics AICA, Association of Fine and Applied Art of Serbia and Documentary Association of Europe. Since 2009 she is part of the organization team of Beldocs IDFF, where she holds the position of Festival Director and curates the XR Exhibition: Immersive Reality.



MARGJE DE KONING | NL
 Movies that Matter
 Artistic director
 m.dekoning@moviesthatmatter.nl

After finishing her studies, Margje de Koning directed documentaries for various broadcasting companies for 12 years. For some years Margje was a teacher for documentaries at the University of Amsterdam. In August 2004, Margje became Commissioning Editor for a documentary slot of 52' docs. This meant producing and co-producing creative single 52'- documentaries on contemporary social, social-cultural and moral issues with a strong human interest angle. The focus is on Dutch subjects but surely also on subjects from over the whole world. Since January 2005 Margje de Koning has been responsible for the Television Department of IKON and on January 2012 she became Head of TV, Radio and New Media programming at IKON. From January 2016 IKON has been incorporated within EO with Margje de Koning as Head of Documentaries for EOdocs. Since September 2019 she left the Public Broadcaster in order to become the new artistic director of the film festival Movies that Matter.



MARTICHKA BOZHILOVA | BG
AGITPROP
 Producer
producer@agitprop.bg

Her high-end author-driven films have been selected and awarded at Cannes, Berlin, IDFA, Toronto, Sundance, Tribeca, Pusan and broadcast all over the world. Among her films are: Touch Me Not (Golden Bear Winner, Berlinale), Palace for the People - film (Dok Leipzig, Dok Buster Award) and four-part TV docuseries for ARTE, aired on BBC, MDR, NHK, SVT; Georgi and the Butterflies (Silver Wolf, IDFA), The Mosquito Problem and other stories (Cannes), Corridor #8 (Berlinale), The Boy Who Was a King (Toronto), Dad Made Dirty Movies (sold to more than 30 territories), The Cars We Drove Into Capitalism (Dok Leipzig, CPH:Dox). Producer of successful factual TV series for National Geographic and HBO and of Father's Day high-end drama series for BNT. Co-producer of the first official drama series co-production in South Eastern Europe, SABRE (in production). Jury member at prestigious film festivals and lecturer at international documentary workshops. Mentor at European Women's Audiovisual Network. Commissioner at Re-Act Co-Development and Malik Bendjeloul Memorial Foundation's Fund. Director of Balkan Documentary Center behind two acclaimed training initiatives: BDC Discoveries and Docu Rough Cut Boutique, organized in collaboration with Sarajevo Film Festival. Director of Sofia DocuMental Film Festival. Member of the European Producer's Club.



NATALIA ARSHAVSKAYA | US
Current Time TV
 Commissioning Editor
arshavskayan@currenttime.tv

Natalia Arshavskaya is a Commissioning Editor for Current Time TV, overseeing production and acquisition of the best world documentaries for the Realnoye Kino (Real Cinema) strand of the channel, which aims to make the world of documentaries more familiar to Russian-speaking audiences. Since the Realnoye Kino launch in 2017, it has become a real home to the most daring documentary films and series and the biggest documentary platform for Russian-speaking world. Among the films co-produced by Current Time TV are multi-award-winning Putin's Witnesses and Gorbachev. Heaven by Vitaly Manski and State Funeral and Mr. Landsbergis by Sergei Loznitsa, as well as films by prominent first-and second-time filmmakers such as Alisa Kovalenko's We Will Not Fade Away (Berlinale 2023), Earth Is Blue As An Orange by Iryna Tsilyk (Sundance 2020) and Mariupol. Reconstruction by Svitlana Lishchinska. Current Time is a project of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) in cooperation with the Voice of America. CT TV broadcasts on Satellite, Cable and via 24-hour stream on its website and YouTube channel.



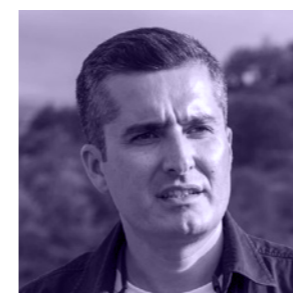
OPAL H. BENNETT | US
American Documentary | POV
 Senior Producer, POV | Executive Producer, POV Shorts

Opal H. Bennett is an Emmy-winning Senior Producer at POV and Executive Producer at POV Shorts. Her first season curating POV Shorts won the 2020 IDA Award for Best Short Form Series and the series broadcast the 2021 NewsDoc Emmy Winner for Short Documentary, The Love Bugs. Previously, Opal was Shorts Programmer and Director of Artist Development at DOC NYC and Senior Programmer at Athena Film Festival. Prior to that, Opal also worked with Nantucket Film Festival, Aspen ShortsFest, Tribeca Film Festival and consulted for The Gotham (formerly IFP). She is a Programming Consultant for the March on Washington Film Festival. Opal is a member of the AMPAS Documentary branch. She has served on juries for SxSW, HotDocs, Aspen & Palm Springs ShortsFests, Cleveland, Milwaukee and Seattle International Film Festivals and IndieMemphis Film Festival among others. She has also served on the shorts selection committees for Cinema Eye Honors and the IDA. A Columbia Law grad, Opal holds a Master's in Media Studies from the LSE, and received her B.A. from New York University.



NENAD PUHOVSKI | HR
Factum, ZagrebDox
 Director
nenad.puhovski@gmail.com

Nenad was born in Zagreb, where he completed his primary and secondary education, the Faculty of Philosophy and Academy of Dramatic Arts (ADU). As a stage, film and TV director he has directed over 250 productions. He worked as a dramaturgist of &TD Theater. As of 1980, he worked as a Professor on the Film and TV Directing Department of ADU. Today he teaches there as a Professor Emeritus of Documentary Directing. He is the founder of the Graduate Studies of Documentary Film. He taught and mentored projects of young professionals in Europe, Asia, South America, Near East, Africa and USA. In 1997 he founded and is managing Factum, the most important Croatian independent documentary production. He has produced more than 80 documentary films that were shown at more than seventy festivals. In addition to numerous international awards, including Heart of Sarajevo, they won several Grand Prix and Best Production Awards at the Days of Croatian Film. In 2005, he founded ZagrebDox, the biggest international documentary film festival in the region. He received the City of Zagreb Award and the Order of Danica Hrvatska. He is also a winner of the Albert Kapović Award for outstanding contribution to the art of film in Croatia (awarded by the Croatian Producers Association) and Gold Medal for best producer at Belgrade Documentary and Short Film Festival. For his work on documentary film, particularly for launching and managing ZagrebDox, he received in 2009 the European Documentary Network (EDN) Award and Medal of the City of Zagreb. He is a member of the European Film Academy.



ORMAN ALIYEV | AZ
Baku Media Center
 CEO
o.aliyev@bakumediacenter.az

Orman Aliyev, Ph.D. CEO of Baku Media Center. Baku Media Center is an innovative company in the media sector of Azerbaijan with experience in several international events. BMC is a multifunctional company that provides a wide range of services in the field of audiovisual production. Along with commercial work, the company also provides services to the government agencies. Orman Aliyev directed more than 40 documentaries in different genres. He produced different television projects, documentaries, broadcast projects etc.



PALMYRE BADINIER | FR
EURODOC / RITA PRODUCTIONS
 Producer, consultant, production tutor
palmyre@ritaproductions.com

Palmyre Badinier started producing films while based in Ramallah (Palestine). She cofounded Les Films de Zayna, a Paris-based company which has nurtured the emergence of Arab filmmakers like Erige Sehiri or Raed Andoni. Through her editorial line, Palmyre has developed a passion for hybrid formats and approaches. In 2017, she received the Berlinale Best Documentary award as producer of Ghost Hunting by Raed Andoni. Palmyre settled in Geneva in 2018 developing and (co-) producing a wide range of Swiss and foreign films, and developing documentary series through Akka Films. In 2022, she joined Pauline Gygax and Max Karli at Rita Productions, one of the leading independent production companies in French-speaking Switzerland. In parallel, Palmyre provides regular mentorship and consultancies for and through several institutions (Eurodoc, Rawiyat, Head-Geneva...). She is a member of the European network EAVE, the European Film Academy, the Swiss Film Academy and Eurodoc General Assembly.



RADA ŠEŠIĆ | NL
Sarajevo Film Festival
Competition Programmer and co-head of the Docu Rough Cut Boutique
 radasesic@yahoo.co.uk

Festival programmer, film lecturer, film director. Born in the former Yugoslavia, lives in the Netherlands. Head of the Documentary Competition at the Sarajevo Film Festival, regularly collaborates with the IDFA in the Netherlands. Takes part in the selection of Hubert Bals Fund of IFFR, and DOHA film fund as well as IDFA Bertha Fund. Lecturer at the Master of Film in Amsterdam and is a mentor at various documentary workshops in Europe in Asia. Artistic director of the 15 years old Eastern Neighbours FF in The Hague. Programmer of the Competition at the Trieste Film Festival. Thirteen years ago, she started and is co-head of Docu Rough Cut Boutique, the platform that takes part in Sofia, Cluj and Sarajevo as a part of Cine Link Industry Days at SFF. In Italy, Rada leads for already 10 years Last Stop Trieste platform for projects in fine cut stage. Directed several dox and short films. Collaborated on books on cinema in the USA, UK, Bosnia and Herzegovina and India.



RAUL NINO ZAMBRANO | GB
Sheffield DocFest
Creative Director
 raul.ninozambrano@sheffdocfest.com

Raul Niño Zambrano is the Creative Director of Sheffield DocFest since 2023, a role that has been granted after successfully delivering the 29th edition as the Head of Film Programmes in June 2022. He was previously a Senior Programmer at IDFA (International Documentary Film festival Amsterdam) where he started as a programmer in 2008. During his thirteen years at IDFA, Raul conducted a ground-breaking study on the position of women within the documentary world (The Female Gaze, 2014) and initiated the IDFA Queer Day (2013, ongoing). In addition to being a lead programmer on the overall selection, he curated such programmes as Emerging Voices from Southeast Asia and Cinema do Brasil. He has participated in many international festivals as a juror (Hot Docs, DocPoint, Guanajuato International Film Festival, Edinburgh International Film Festival, Taiwan International Documentary Festival) and as an expert/tutor (DocMontevideo, FESPACO, If/Then Shorts Global Pitch, DocNet Southeast Asia, Guadalajara Doculab). Raul followed his true passion for documentary film, studying Media & Culture and Film Studies at the University of Amsterdam, after working in the Netherlands as an engineer specializing in wind energy.



RUDY BUTTIGNOL | CA
NXT - Broadcast Strategy & Brand
President
 rudybuttignol@outlook.com

Rudy Buttignol, C.M., President of NXT Strategy + Brand, offers professional development and consultation for international broadcasters and producers and moderator services for documentary financing forums in Asia and Europe. From 2007 to 2022, Buttignol was President & CEO of Knowledge Network, British Columbia's public broadcaster. Concurrently, he served as President of the BBC Kids network from 2011 to 2019. Buttignol's award-winning documentary commissions include series Emergency Room: Life + Death at VGH; The Space Suites; British Columbia; An Untold History; Emmy/Grammy-winner Yo-Yo Ma: Inspired by Bach; The Corporation; and Afghanistan; The Wounded Land. Feature documentaries include Manufactured Landscapes; Dark Red Forest; and Oscar-nominated Writing with Fire. Buttignol was the Commissioning Editor, Executive Producer, and Head of Network Programming at public network TVOntario from 1993 to 2006. From 1975 to 1993 he worked as an independent writer, director and producer of documentaries and children's programs. Buttignol is the winner of nine Canadian Academy Awards, an Honorary Doctor of Letters, and Member of the Order of Canada. He was born in Pordenone, Italy, graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts at Toronto's York University, and completed executive programs at Stanford and Harvard Schools of Business.



MAŠA MARKOVIĆ | BA
Head of Industry
Sarajevo Film Festival
 masa.markovic@sff.ba

Maša Marković graduated from studies in aesthetics at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague. She has extensive knowledge of the European documentary scene and coordinates Ex Oriente Film, an international documentary training programme with a focus on Central and Eastern Europe organised by the Institute of Documentary Film. Marković is a long-term member of the CineLink Industry Days team and worked as a meeting co-ordinator for several years. Upon her return to Sarajevo in 2016, she became the Sarajevo Film Festival Industry Coordinator. Her expertise includes understanding the needs of individual projects, and she has 10 years of experience in dedicated industry matchmaking. Apart from arranging meetings at CineLink, Marković has organised meetings for and was a matchmaker at platforms including When East Meets West, Ties That Bind, East Doc Platform, and Connecting Cottbus, among others. Since 2017, she has managed and curated the Sarajevo Film Festival's non-competitive Dealing with the Past section, and since 2022 has been Head of CineLink Industry Days.



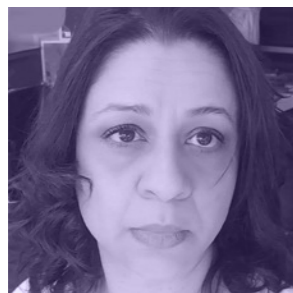
SOLEIL GHARBIEH | LB
The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture - AFAC
Grants Manager
 soleil.gharbieh@arabculturefund.org

Soleil joined AFAC as a Grants Manager in 2017; she has managed both AFAC film programs, Documentary and Cinema, and the Music Program since then. Through her role with AFAC, Soleil sat on different film funding panels and pitching forums in the region and abroad.



NURHAN ÖZSOY TAŞDEMİR | TR
Manager
TRT
 nurhan.ozsoy@trt.net.tr

Graduated from the Department of Radio Television and Cinema of Ege University, Faculty of Communication. During student days, she received the Best Documentary Award in the Young Communicators Competition (1999) with the documentary "Crete and Population Exchange". Worked in the fields of camera, edit and animation and acted as Department Manager at BITAM (Ege University Information and Communication Research Center). Gave private lessons on the use of Adobe Premiere Pro and After Effects at BITAM and various companies. She has been working at TRT since 2001, served as director and producer in kid programs, music and entertainment programs, and TRT1's woman oriented programs until 2008. In 2008, participated in an ABU meeting, held in Malaysia, with the film "Making Bicycle" as the director and in an EBU meeting, held in Italy, with the project "Animal in Dangers", on behalf of TRT. Directed and produced; "Turkey with Folk Songs (21 Episodes)", "Do You Know It? (13 Episodes)", "Taste (13 Episodes)", "Sundials (3 Episodes)", "Frames from Life (10 episodes)", "Piva Monastery", "Being a Woman in Kars" and "Gooseherd". The documentary "Gooseherd"; received the Feature Film Eco Award at the Rural Film Festival held in Spain in 2017, became finalist in several festivals such as the 28th Ankara International Film Festival, Docademia's 3rd Short Documentary Contest Film Festival, Film Egypt Festival, Miami Epic Trailer Festival, San Mauro Torinese International Film Festival, and took place in Bozcaada Film Festival Panorama Special Selection. Member of the Advisory Board at Yaşar University Faculty of Communication in 2018. Jury member in several festivals such as the feature film eco category of Rural Festival for two consecutive years in 2018 - 2019, Contact International Student Films Festival of Yaşar University in 2018, Short Film Festival organized by Konya Selçuk University in 2019 and 20th İzmir Short Film Festival. Board member of the Ministry of Culture Documentary Film Production Support Board in 2020 - 2021. She has been working as a manager at TRT Documentary Channel since 2017.



SOUMAYA BOUALLEGUI | TN
Doc House – Organisation
 Executive Director
s.bouallegui@doc-house.org

Soumaya Bouallegui is the founder and Head of Doc House – Tunisia since 2016. She collaborates with regional and international organizations and institutions. She studied business and theater and directed plays and documentaries, and gradually integrated the international documentary landscape.



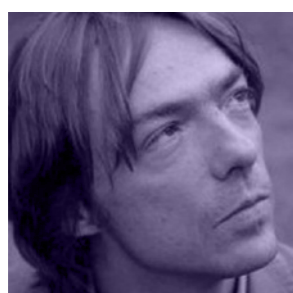
STEPHANIE FUCHS | AT
Autlook Filmsales
 Sales Manager
stephanie@autlookfilms.com

Stephanie Fuchs has been a part of the Autlook Filmsales team since 2014. Through her work as Autlook's Festival Manager, Stephanie has overseen the festival runs of acclaimed films like Venice premiered THREE MINUTES – A LENGTHENING, OSCARS® nominees WRITING WITH FIRE and FOR SAMA. In 2023, Autlook launched four feature docs at Sundance, including SMOKE SAUNA SISTERHOOD. In 2022 Stephanie has expanded her area of expertise as part of the sales team, licensing films to theatrical distributors, broadcasters and VOD platforms. She offers her expertise as a consultant, industry advisor and panelist, and has been part of several international festival juries.



ALMIR ŠEĆKANOVIĆ | BA
 Director
 MY TV, BH TELECOM
almir.seckanovic@mymedia.ba

Almir Šećkanović is the Director of the Television channel MY TV. Earlier in his career, he was the Director of O Kanal, which is part of the oldest Bosnian-Herzegovinian media group Oslobođenje. His career highlights include his engagement with regional TV channel Al Jazeera Balkans, where he served as the Head of News Planning. Almir has gained professional training as a scholar of the Thomson Reuters Foundation, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, and the American media organization Internews.



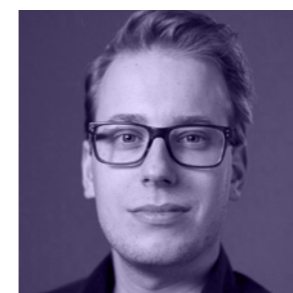
THIERRY DETAILLE | BE
VISIBLE FILM / Belgian Docs
 Founding manager
thierry.detaille@visiblefilm.com

With a Master's Degree in Journalism & Mass communication, Audiovisual Dpt. and a European special studies master in Film Writing and Analysis, Thierry was a radio and printed press journalist prior to initiating Belgian documentary indies' export catalog Ventes-CBAWIP-Sales in 1997 (Now Belgian Docs), bringing it on the world map, continuously participating since then to main coproduction forums and TV markets. Founding Visible Film in 2014, Thierry opened reach to foreign films, actively taking part in tutoring, decision making and experting. Bringing distribution upstream with a pre-sales, he has since 2018 developed Visible Film into an international coproduction activity while offering feature length documentaries with TV hour reversions, with confronting society and art programs, as well as revealing current affairs and history contents, series and mini-series.



THOMAS MATZEK | AT
ORF Austrian Broadcasting Corporation
 Head of Specialist Factual
thomas.matzek@orf.at

Thomas Matzek, born 1964 in Vienna, is basically a journalist and documentary filmmaker. He has been working for Austria's public broadcaster ORF for more than 30 years. His record includes all fields of TV factual programs, such as magazines, reportage series and documentaries. He authored and directed more than a dozen films on Austrian contemporary history. After ending his career as filmmaker, he worked nearly a decade as commissioning editor for the Natural History Unit as well as series editor for ORF's Universum History strand. His current post is Head of Specialist Factual – the department covers science and educational programs in all TV formats – from news to magazines and documentaries.



TIM KLIMEŠ | DE
DW (Deutsche Welle)
 Head of Documentaries
tim.klimes@dw.com

Tim Klimeš is the Head of Documentaries at DW (Deutsche Welle), Germany's international broadcaster. He was born 1986 near Frankfurt/Main, Germany and graduated from the Journalism School in Munich. After several years in different positions at AVE Publishing, the TV and documentary unit within the Holtzbrinck Publishing Group, he joined DW in early 2021. Together with his team he is responsible for all documentary strands at DW, ranging from 28min to 90min-slots. DW Documentaries broadcasts 365 documentaries a year and reaches a monthly audience of 75 million via their five YouTube channels.



VERONIKA FIDRMUC DVOŘÁČKOVÁ | CZ
The Institute of Documentary Film (IDF)
 East Silver Manager
dvorackova@dokweb.net

Veronika is in charge of the East Silver, managing both the East Silver Market and the East Silver Caravan. Veronika has been working in the film industry for over 15 years in different positions including organising a festival, coordinating the program, dramaturgy, guest service, production and training programme (MidPoint). Veronika started to work with the IDF team last autumn in 2020. She knows IDF activities as a user as well as from within, which gives her the unique opportunity to bring innovations reflecting good practices.



GUNNAR DEDIO | DE
 CEO
 LOOKS Film & TV Produktionen GmbH
dedio@looks.film

Gunnar Dedio was born in the East German city of Rostock. After studying in Germany and France, he founded LOOKSfilm in 1995 and has been producing documentaries, feature films and series for cinema, television and VOD since then. His most important productions are "Kids of Courage" (among others nominated for the Grimme Award 2020), "Clash of Futures" (CIVIS Media Award 2019), "14 - Diaries of the Great War" (Robert Geisendörfer Preis 2014) and "Michael Kohlhaas" (Césars 2014), as well as "Life Behind the Wall", a 10-part documentary series for which he received the prestigious Grimme Award in 2005. Gunnar Dedio teaches at University of Applied Sciences Mittweida, the FU Berlin, the University of Hanover and the University of Montpellier. In 2019, due to his love for film and photo archives, Dedio took over PROGRESS, one of Europe's largest archives, which contains, among other collections, the entire film heritage of the East Germany - thousands of previously unseen treasures from life east of the Iron Curtain.



PIERRE-ALEXIS CHEVIT | FR
Head of Cannes Docs
Marché du Film - Festival de Cannes
 pachevit@festival-cannes.fr

Pierre-Alexis Chevit runs Cannes Docs, a tailored industry program & networking platform for all creative documentary filmmakers and decision-makers at the Marché du Film - Festival de Cannes. With a predominant focus on documentaries, he has also freelanced for – and still collaborates with – a variety of film festivals, markets, and organisations, both on the coordination and programming sides, including Ji.hlava, Visions du Réel, Eurodoc, Cinéma du Réel, DOK Leipzig, and more. Formerly, he has worked in the VOD/DVD field, dealing mainly with docs and short films. Pierre-Alexis regularly serves as jury, moderator, tutor, and consultant/expert on various international events.



MARKO ERAKOVIĆ | ME
International Promotion Advisor
Film Centre of Montenegro
 marko@fccg.me

Marko Eraković (b. 1985) works as the International Promotion Advisor at the Film Centre of Montenegro, where he heads the "Film in Montenegro" filming incentives programme that promotes Montenegro internationally as a film-friendly destination. Marko has graduated from "Roma Tre" University in Rome (Italy) and holds a Master's degree in Film, Television, and Multimedia Production. Before joining the Film Centre of Montenegro in 2020, he worked as a corporate communications specialist in Italy and the Middle East.



ELINA KEWITZ | DE
CEO
NEW DOCS
 elina.kewitz@newdocs.de

Elina Kewitz graduated from the University of Siegen in Germany with a degree in media planning, consulting and development. She gained her first professional experience as a PR consultant and artists' manager. She spent almost seven years working as an International Sales Manager for documentary and factual films with united docs GmbH, the distribution subsidiary of Germany's public broadcaster ARD and its regional channels. She founded her own independent company in 2012 and since then has been managing director of NEW DOCS – a Cologne-based sales agency for documentary films. She is a regular lecturer at the Documentary Campus Masterclass, Masterclass Non-Fiction at ifs Filmschule and at the Mediengründerzentrum NRW.



DŽENITA ZIRDUM | BA
Editor of the Documentary Programme
BHRT
 dzenitaz@yahoo.com

Dženita Zirdum, a journalist, was born in Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina on October 16, 1975. She is a business skills trainer with many years of experience as a journalist, entrepreneur, and non-governmental activist. She is a lecturer in the field of public and media appearances and she is also a lecturer in the European Entrepreneurship Network (EEN) project Art of Balance and Public Performance in Zagreb. Over 30 years of media and audience communication experience. During her work so far, she has achieved exceptional results in advising individuals and leaders on public and TV appearances. She has received several awards, including one from the Bosnian Parliament and the OSCE for her efforts to increase gender equality, as well as one from the European movement "European TV programme and journalists of Bosnia". She is the author of several documentaries and short films.



VLADIMIR BRNARDIĆ | HR
HRT
Head of Documentary department
 vladimir.brnardic@hrt.hr

Vladimir Brnardić was born in Zagreb in 1973. After graduating from the University of Zagreb with a History degree, he trained as a journalist in the Documentary Program of the Croatian Television. He worked in broadcast TV calendar for more than 20 years as a journalist and editor and besides that he realized around 30 documentaries as screenwriter, editor and director. From 2016 he is Head of the Documentary Department of the Croatian Television.



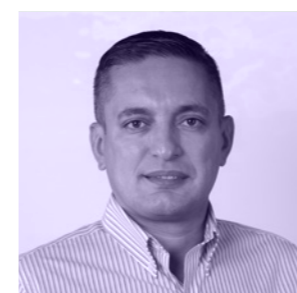
MARIJA KOSOR | HR
Director of Production of HRT
Croatian Radio Television/HRT

Employed at HRT for 28 years; collaborated on numerous documentary and feature films and series: director's secretary, scriptwriter, producer, drama and documentary program production manager, manager of the department for selection and acquisition of programs from independent producers; led HRT's biggest feature projects; since the beginning of 2022 in the position of production director of HRT.



VUK PEROVIĆ | ME
Radio Television of Montenegro
Editor of Film and Series Program
 vuk.perovic@rtcg.org

Editor of film and series program on Public Service RTCG. Co-founder and art director of UnderhillFest, festival of feature length documentaries. Author of a TV show about the film "The Seventh Continent". Member of juries at various film festivals (Los Angeles, Bratislava, Belgrade, Herceg Novi...). Member of FEDEORA (Federation of Film Critics of Europe and the Mediterranean) and FIPRESCI (International Federation of Film Critics). Member of the Panel of European film critics at the International Film Festival Cinematik with colleagues from 17 countries. Former editor of film and series program on TV Atlas and author of a TV show about culture. Done interviews with well-known film authors at prestigious film festivals (Cannes, Berlin, Venice). Wrote about film and culture for various media. Lecturer.




TAHIR ALIYEV | AZ
Baku Media Center
Executive Producer

Tahir Aliyev is an executive producer of Baku Media Center. He produced different documentaries, TV commercials and broadcast projects.



EMMANUEL CHICON | CH
Programmer
Visions Du Réel
 echicon@visionsdureel.ch

A member of Visions du Réel's selection committee since 2010, he has been, among others, a journalist, a documentary film critic for the daily L'Humanité and has produced around twenty radio broadcasts for different French and Belgian public stations.

 <p>institute of documentary film</p>	<p>SUPPORTING CREATIVE DOCUMENTARY FILMS FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE SINCE 2001</p> <p>DOKWEB.NET</p>
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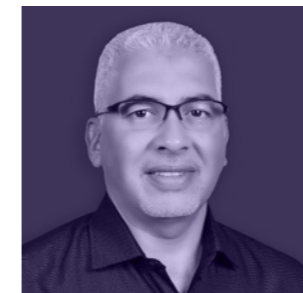
AHMED MAHFOUZ NOUH | EG
Al Jazeera Documentary
Managing Director

Ahmed Mahfouz is an Egyptian filmmaker who has been working in this field for more than 20 years. He joined Al Jazeera Media Network in 2008 as Managing Director of Al Jazeera Documentary Channel. Mahfouz was born on June 15, 1970 in Cairo. He completed high school at Al-Fistat Military School in Cairo. He studied Law at Cairo University but then preferred to study Cinema at the High Cinema Institute, at the Arts Academy in Egypt. He graduated in 1995. Mahfouz worked as an assistant director and a film director with several Egyptian and foreign production companies. He worked in 2003 at the Egyptian Ministry of Culture and was appointed as Head of Cinema and Video Tech at the Cairo-based Arts Creativity Centre for three years. In December 2005, he was appointed as a documentary filmmaker at Al Jazeera Media Network. He has been occupying the post of Managing Director of Al Jazeera Documentary Channel since 2008 until the present time. Ahmed Mahfouz has special professional expertise as he has worked in all kinds of audio-visual production; including commercials, documentary films, TV and cinema drama series. He has worked as an assistant director with many Arab and foreign filmmakers and later directed many TV commercials. He directed his first TV series in 1998/1999 entitled "Boys and Girls". In 2002, he wrote the scenario and directed a documentary film entitled "A One-way Trip" in Rome, Italy. Mahfouz directed an 18-episode documentary series on the political history of Islam, which was produced by Al Jazeera Channel in 2009. Mahfouz participated in distinguished international cinema festivals as a member and head of the arbitration committee. He has been honoured at several distinguished international documentary film production festivals and was awarded Egypt's State Award for Creativity, granted by the Egyptian Academy in Rome.



EDHEM FOČO | BA
Al Jazeera Balkans AJB DOC Film Festival
Managing Director

Edhem Fočo, Director of the Al Jazeera Balkans Documentary Film Festival studied law at the International Islamic University in Kuala Lumpur and has lived in Asia for nearly twenty years. As the initiator of the idea to bring Al Jazeera brand to this region, he was one of the founders of Al Jazeera Balkans, a news channel surpassing the boundaries of the turbulent Balkan region whose work and success was recognized by a great number of awards. During his business career, Edhem Fočo gained considerable experience in various business sectors such as Consultancy, Oil and Gas, Food and Beverages, as well as Investments, through which he established himself as an experienced manager and a visionary. He participated in many international conferences dealing with media, economy, and Middle East politics.



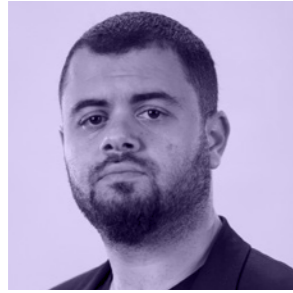
ADEL KSIKSI | QA
Manager of Programming & Head of AJD Industry Days
Aljazeera Documentary Channel

Adel joined Aljazeera Documentary Channel in 2010. He is the Manager of Programming responsible for developing plans for programme strands and preparing the programme grid on a daily, weekly and monthly basis, as well as overseeing the global planning effort with regards to special events, series and long and short-term programme planning to increase viewership ratings. Adel Ksiksi is also the Head of AJD Industry Days. It is an event that intends to support the expansion of documentaries worldwide, including international co-productions, and aims to match key decision-makers with interesting and valuable projects.



JAMEL DALLALI | QA
Manager of Production
Al Jazeera Documentary Channel

Jamel Dallali is Manager of Production at the Aljazeera Documentary Channel. He holds a master's degree in Documentary Filmmaking from the Brunel University (London, UK). He is a filmmaker, whose work has won awards at the festivals in Bahrain, Morocco, Tunisia and Iraq. He was the president of selection jury for the LatinArab Forum in Argentina, 2016; a member of the jury for FEDEO in Tangier, Morocco, 2017; and a member of the jury for AJBDoc in Sarajevo, 2021.



JAMAL ELSHAYYAL | QA
Manager of Content Strategy, OTT Platforms
Al Jazeera

Jamal Elshayyal is currently spearheading Al Jazeera Media Network's most strategic project – an OTT streaming platform that will be the first of its kind. He is managing a team, which is currently in the process of building what promises to be a gamechanger in the world of news consumption, streaming platforms and the digital media industry. Before this, Jamal was a senior correspondent for the Network, primarily working for Al Jazeera English, where he covered the biggest news stories around the world since 2006. In that time, he also produced several programmes and documentaries in both English and Arabic.



ASEEL MANSOUR | QA
Manager of Digital Content Strategy
Al Jazeera Media Network

Aseel Mansour is Manager of the Digital Content Strategy at Al Jazeera Media Network. He is a writer/director/producer, and has written, produced and directed several films, TV series, and digital shows. He holds a bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering, and a Master's degree in Media Psychology.



LEJLA DEDIĆ | BA
Al Jazeera Balkans
Program producer - Acquisition

Lejla Dedić was born in Konjic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1972. In 1997 she graduated from the London South Bank University in Media and Society. She has over 20 years of experience working in the media sector. She worked at BBC World Service Trust / Media Action, and since 2011, Lejla has been working at the Programme Department of Al Jazeera Balkans as a Programme Producer, Acquisitions.



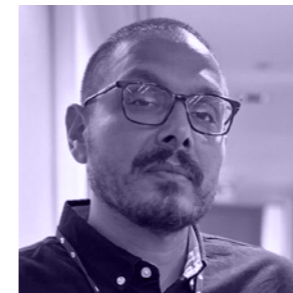
FATMA RIAHI | QA
Producer
Aljazeera Documentary Channel

Fatma Riahi studied cinema and television technologies in Tunisia. She was a producer/director on short documentaries and mid-length films in Tunisia. In 2011, she joined Al Jazeera Documentary Channel, which produced several documentaries from all around the world and contributed to their development into ready-to-broadcast films. In 2015, she started working on her first feature film, "A Haunted Past," which was nominated in IDFA 2018 for the first appearance competition. The film won ANHAR Award for Best Human Rights Film 2019 at KARAMA Film Festival – Amman and The Bronze Tanit in JCC (Carthage Film Festival) 2019. Fatma is working on her second feature, "My Father Killed Bourguiba."



DANI HASEČIĆ | BA
Al Jazeera Balkans
Head of Reversioning

Dani Hasečić was born in Sarajevo in 1986. He graduated from the Cairo University in Egypt, Faculty of Mass Communication. He has been working in the media sector for the last 16 years. He currently works in the Programme Department of Al Jazeera Balkans as the Head of Reversioning.



MOHAMED ELMONGY | QA
Senior producer and commissioning editor
Al Jazeera Documentary

In 2011, Mohamed Elmongy joined Al Jazeera Documentary Channel as a senior producer and commissioning editor. He commissioned and coproduced dozens of films in multiple regions of the world (MENA, Europe, and Africa), which were screened at notable film festivals such as Sundance, Cannes, Locarno, IDFA, and Hot Docs. Elmongy is an avid professional in the international film industry who has participated in several film events as an expert, speaker and commissioning producer.



SEAD KREŠEVLJAKOVIĆ | BA
Al Jazeera Balkans
Commissioning Producer

Sead Kreševljaković was born in 1973 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Between 2007 and 2012, he worked as a producer and editor for the Documentary and News Program at TV Sarajevo. At the same time, he worked as an independent producer and filmmaker. Since 2012 he has been working at the Programme Department of Al Jazeera Balkans as a Programme Producer, Commissioning.



MOHAMED SIDI | QA
Head of Corporate Communications
Al Jazeera Media Network

Currently working with Al Jazeera Media Network as Head of Corporate Communications. Leading the development of the Network's internal and external communications, including press releases, intranet, newsletters, and improving the editorial content of all network's communications.



HORIA EL HADAD | QA
Senior Commissioning Producer
Al Jazeera English

Horia El Hadad is a documentary filmmaker and commissioning producer at Al Jazeera English. Horia commissions Europe-based observational documentaries for the Witness, Al Jazeera English's flagship documentary strand. She works with filmmakers from around the globe. Witness documentaries have won dozens of awards, and have been nominated for the Academy Awards, Grierson Awards and International Emmy Awards. With more than 15 years' experience in broadcast television in the United Kingdom and Qatar, Horia has produced and directed numerous documentary films and is currently working on her first documentary feature film shot in Syria and the UK. Horia is interested in multi-layered, non-judgmental and impact-driven films that explore global issues through personal narratives.



DEAN ADAMS | GB
Documentary Filmmaker/Digital Awards Specialist
Al Jazeera Digital

Dean Adams is an Emmy nominated, award winning Producer/Director of documentary. His work on the feature documentary Burma VJ: Reporting from a Closed Country was team nominated for an Oscar in the 2010 Academy Awards. He went on to win a Media Excellence Award at the International Association of Broadcasters (IAB) for his coverage of the troubles in Rangoon. In 2009, the ARTE film he shot and produced – Birmanie: au bord du précipice – was nominated for the Best Long-form Documentary at the Bayeux-Calvados Prize for War Correspondence. Working as Southeast Asia correspondent for France 24, Dean also spent four years covering military crackdowns, people's uprisings and war crimes tribunals. During this time, he trained a group of Burmese dissidents intent on using video to expose the abuses of a longstanding Myanmar dictatorship. He later joined his students to film during a popular uprising in 2007 that ended in a deadly military crackdown. Dean spent the last five years building the Awards Unit at Al Jazeera Digital with its video, print, VR and interactives teams winning record numbers of awards. He comes to AJB DOC Industry Days as part of the Partnerships and Planning team, with an eye to quality long-form documentary content that can be adapted to shorter-form work across Al Jazeera's digital platforms.



ABDUL KAREEM AOUIR | QA
Senior Producer
Al Jazeera Digital

Abdul Kareem Aouir comes to Industry Days 2023 with an eye to discovering fresh and emerging talent for Al Jazeera's new incubator project. He seeks to meet potential partners who share the network's commitment to expanding opportunities for people to tell their stories. With a diverse background spanning engineering, journalism, and media production, he began his academic journey Salford University with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. His passion for learning and keen interest in science led him to pursue a Master's Degree in Petrochemical Engineering, further honing his technical expertise. Fueled by his love for science and journalism, he focused on science journalism for Al Jazeera. There, he excelled in producing science-focused content and in playing an influential role in the launch of Al Jazeera O2, a project geared toward Arab youth and young adults. Always on the lookout for innovative media ventures, he then was promoted to the role of Senior Producer for Al Jazeera Podcasts, where he produced 22 long-form podcasts on diverse global topics. His technical expertise and unswerving commitment to science communication brought into clear relief his ability to recognize and develop potential in the media industry and to identify and work with people living at the heart of major global stories and events.



IDA MAKAREVIĆ | BA
AJB DOC
Executive Producer

Born in Sarajevo in 1984. Studied Product design at the Academy of Fine Arts, Sarajevo. Executive Producer of the AJB DOC Film Festival since 2019. Worked as Event Manager at Sarajevo Film Festival for six years. From 2014 started working in film production SCCA/Pro.ba as a part of the production team. Still working in film production as a production manager and collaborates with many production companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and abroad.



NEJRA KOZARIĆ | BA
AJB DOC
Executive Producer

Nejra Kozarić is an Executive Producer of AJB DOC Film Festival since 2019. Prior to that she worked as journalists and TV producer at Current Affairs section of Al Jazeera Balkans. Nejra also worked as a journalist and reporter for AJB-Business Magazine, covering different business/political related stories. She has 10 year-long work experience on different projects in different backgrounds. Nejra has also worked four years as Inter - national Relations coordinator for Sarajevo Film Festival. Nejra Kozarić obtained Bachelor of Arts in Business Studies degree at Griffith College Dublin and in October 2015 became Master of Science of Faculty of Business and Economics in Ljubljana.

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