

PERSMAP

Vanaf 7 april in de filmtheaters en via Filmthuis

Amsterdam – EYE | Amsterdam - Het Ketelhuis | Breda – Chassé Cinema | Den Haag - Filmhuis Den Haag | Utrecht
- 't Hoogt | Hilversum – Filmtheater | Amersfoort - Lieve Vrouw | Verkadefabriek - Den Bosch

Distributie: Mokum Filmdistributie

Bulgarije, Nederland, Zweden, 2015 | 105 minuten | Bosnisch, Engels, Nederlands en Zweeds gesproken

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Synopsis

Een aanklager en een ambitieuze advocaat staan lijnrecht tegenover elkaar in het proces tegen Milorad Krstić, die ervan wordt beschuldigd oorlogsmisdaden te hebben begaan in de oorlog in Bosnië. Verdediger Mikhail Finn is erin geslaagd om alle beschuldigingen aan het adres van zijn cliënt te weerleggen. Overtuigd van Krstić's schuld, roept openbaar aanklager Catherine Lagrange een jonge man als getuige op, die een belastende verklaring aflegt. Hij beweert als kind door zijn ouders in de steek te zijn gelaten en een van Krstić's soldaten te zijn geweest. Advocaat Finn onderzoekt de betrouwbaarheid van de verklaring van de getuige – en ontmoet al spoedig de familie van de jongeman.

Logline

In een felle strijd tussen een aanklager en een ambitieuze advocaat, lijkt een onschuldige jongen slachtoffer te worden.

Regisseur Igljka Trifonova baseerde haar film op een waargebeurde rechtszaak voor het Joegoslavië Tribunaal. De film is gedeeltelijk opgenomen in Den Haag en is geproduceerd door het Nederlandse Phanta Film.



Regie en scenario: Igljka Trifonova | **Distributie:** Mokum Filmdistributie | **Productie:** Rossitsa Valkanova (Klas Film), Petra Goedings (Phanta Film) en Ulf Synnerholm (Filmlance)

Cast:

Romane Bohringer ... Catherine Lagrange
Samuel Fröler ... Mikhail Finn
Nermina Lukać ... Jasna
Izudin Bajrović ... Deyan's vader
Ovanes Torosyan ... Deyan-Miro
Krassimir Dokov ... Milorad Krstić
Sanne Vogel ... Marijn
Frank Lammers ... Ex-peacekeeper

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Over de regisseur: Iglia Triffonova

Regisseur Iglia Triffonova studeerde film & TV aan de Rijksacademie van Theater en Film Art in Sofia, Bulgarije. Haar carrière begon met de documentaire *Year of 1990*, waarin zij het jaar na de val van de Berlijnse muur documenteerde. Haar film *Murder Stories* over drie mannen die een moord hebben bekend, vormde de publieke opinie over de doodstraf in Bulgarije. Het thema doodstraf komt ook weer terug in haar bekroonde film *The Investigation /Razsledvane*.

Filmografie (selectie)

“The Investigation” (2006)

“Letter to America” (2001)

“Po patya” (1995)

“Murder Stories” (1993)



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Interview with Iglika Trifonova (in English)

Why did you decide to make the film?

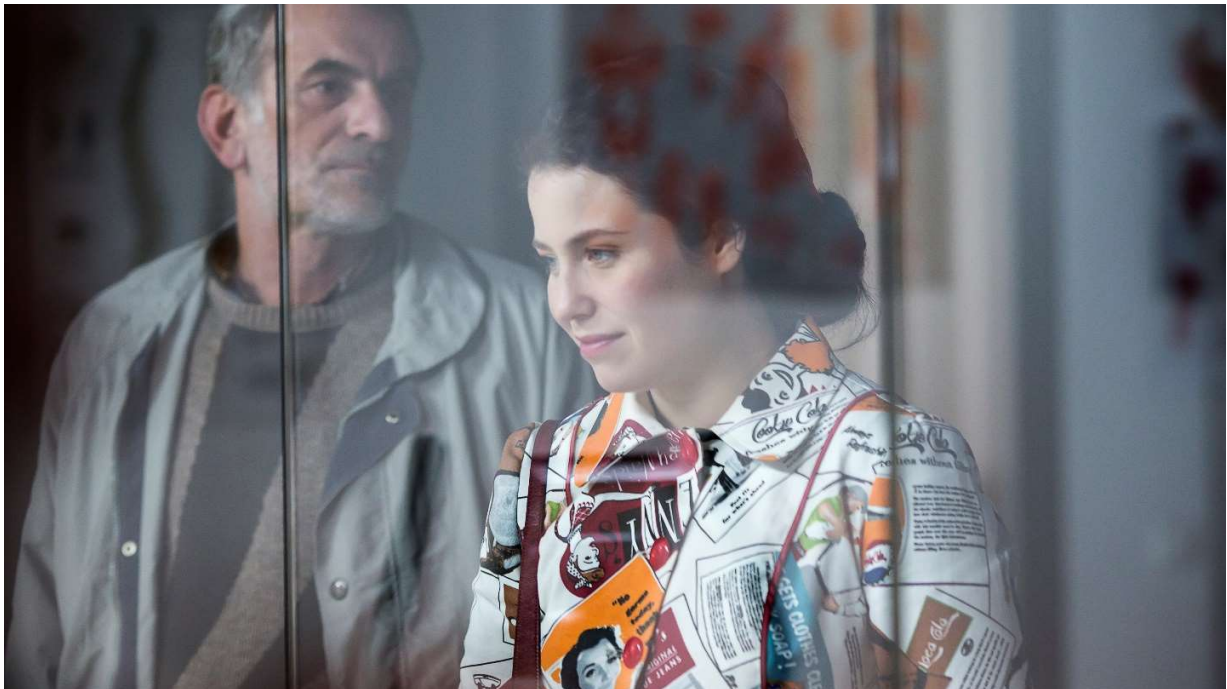
More than ten years ago I read an article in a Bulgarian newspaper, which was revealing some facts about a case of the ICTY (International Crime Tribunal for Yugoslavia). The story touched me deeply. I felt strangely emotional, as if all that had happened to me, I couldn't stop thinking about it, trying to step into the shoes of the conflicting participants in the drama, and I gradually started seeing the characters in a story of my own. That's when I gathered enough courage to turn it all into a film.

What do you want to tell your audience?

There is a scene in the film, taking place in the Olympic Stadium in Amsterdam where the invincible football "dream team" of Ajax used to play during the early 70-ties. It's a very intimate and a very "Bosnian" scene. The actors Izudin Bajrovic and Nermina Lukac made it so personal that we, who were around them, were moved to tears. The film crew consisted of people from ten different nationalities and not everyone understood Bosnian, but everyone felt the pain and the emotion beyond the actors' performance. I hope the audience will feel the way we did that day. Besides that, we've simply told a story and everything we'd like to say to the people is there, in the film.

Why did you choose this case?

It captured my imagination because I saw in it a strong metaphor of how relative truth and justice & jurisdiction can sometimes be, not only in everyday life, but also in the realm of big politics. It's a story about a human sacrifice, in which an "insignificant person" is consciously sacrificed in the name of the "great purposes" of democracy.



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Are those fights in the international administration something usual? Is this case a unique specificity or are similar cases known?

As the Tribunal has the legal right to classify certain information, it's difficult for me to answer the question. I wouldn't like to speculate on the subject because I'm not conducting an investigation in order to judge somebody. I just made a sincere attempt to step into the shoes of all my characters and to understand the motives behind their actions as I'm pretty convinced this is the only way one can learn something about oneself. I don't know for sure if there is another parable in the Bible that touches the matter of human sacrifice as deeply as the one about Abraham and Isaac, but this biblical story is a revelation that provokes hundreds of generations to reflect on the meaning of human sacrifices and our right to make them.

Why do you deal with this matter although your country isn't involved in this case?

This story didn't happen in my country but it could have happened in it and – what is even worse – can happen in the future. Both Bosnia and Bulgaria are Balkan countries, so the sparkle which caused the war in Bosnia could cause a fire in Bulgaria as well. I'm well aware of the human pain inflicted by ethnic separatism, the burden of unredeemed historical wrongs and the reckless ways in which some modern politicians are taking advantage of this pain. The war in Bosnia and its heavy consequences are not a local problem: not only Serbians and Bosnians participated in this war, but some very important European and American politicians also took part in it and made certain decisions. We are all part of this war and we have to understand it, especially now. I think that the lessons from the past are contained in the small stories and in the details because we can't get them wrong.

What kind of reaction are you expecting from the viewers?

I really wish the audience will dive deep into the story and feel it as a real one. I hope the people will grow to love the characters or at least sympathize with them. I hope they will have the feeling of having been present both at the scarce dinner of the Bosnian family in the godforsaken village and the lonely dinner of a Bosnian and a Swede in a rich home in Amsterdam. I hope, of course, they will consider the existential problems of the characters important and pertaining to all of us.

Was the production difficult? If yes, why?

The preparation for the film took us almost ten years. It was a serious challenge: we experienced different kinds of fears, which we were gradually overcoming on every single stage of the working process. I'm grateful to the entire team who supported me throughout this journey. The stress of the prep period was the greatest: we had to shoot in three countries, with time gaps from October to March, with a constantly changing crew consisting of people from ten different nationalities, and we were working with famous European actors. The producers put their hearts and souls in the project and that was very important for everyone. In spite of all the difficulties, the shooting period felt like a celebration, like falling in love. I believe this joyful atmosphere is reflected in the film itself.

Was there any input from the actors or was everything already in the script?

My work with the actors in this film was the most important professional experience I've ever had. Together with actors from six different nationalities, belonging to different professional schools, having gone through different working processes and speaking different languages, we had to create a

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convincing and authentic whole. It was quite a challenge, but I was really lucky to work with immensely gifted actors. Our work was strongly based on the script and we had some preliminary conversations in which we got to know each other and got closer to each other. I think that during those conversations they gradually started to believe me. Together we made some small changes to the script, which rendered the lines closer to them. All the actors put their souls in the characters and adopted their personalities. At some point, I was forgetting they were pronouncing the lines I've written, I just believed them and sympathized with them. That's real magic.



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