

ARRAS_

2019 DAYS



Book of projects
16th - 17th November

ARRAS

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LE JURY

PATRICE CARRÉ



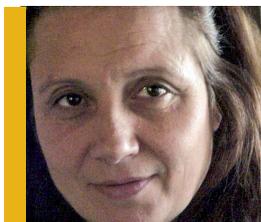
Film maker and journalist, Patrice Carré, has served on the short film selection committee at the Cannes Film Festival and on that of Critic's Week. Since 1998 he has written regularly for the weekly magazine, *Le Film Français*, responsible for the short films, technical industries, training, regions, Africa and Benelux columns. For 15 years he worked as the news editor for the Cinécourts show, broadcast on the Ciné+ Club channel. He has directed three short films and a documentary series and is currently working on the literary guidelines for several fiction and documentary series, including one which will be developed at the Groupe Ouest film lab.

DELPHINE SCHMIT



Delphine Schmit set up Perspective Films in 2008 in partnership with Belgian and Swiss producers and has produced more than 20 short films, (including one nominated for an Oscar in 2013 and one Golden Palm in 2019), 9 documentaries (selected for many international festivals) and three feature films, including *Nuestras Madres* which won the Golden Camera in Cannes in 2019. In 2017 she co-founded the company Tripode Productions with Guillaume Dreyfus. Together they have developed a dozen projects, mainly feature films and international coproductions. She took part in the Puentes d'Eave workshop with a Brazilian project in 2017. She chairs the Short Film Commission for Unifrance.

PAVLINA JELEVA



Bulgarian film critic and producer. In 1993-1994 she was both National representative at Eurimages and FIPRESCI coordinator of the Bulgarian Film Critics Guild. In 1995 she co-founded Geopoly, a production company successfully involved in Yavuz Turgul's box office topper. Geopoly's 46 parts documentary series *Etno* was awarded with Bulgaria's most important national prize. In 2014 she founded Geopoly Film through which she coproduced Bojan Vuletic's *Requiem For Mrs. J.* (Serbia/Bulgaria/Macedonia/France/Russia) and Stefan Ivanov's creative documentary *A New Life* (Bulgaria/Canada). In cooperation with Germany's B&T Film and Switzerland's Contrast Film Pavlina Jeleva is actually developing the big budget project "22 Meters".

At a very early stage, the Arras Film Festival engaged in a proactive policy to promote young European cinema. Back in 2004, we launched the Inédits d'Europe section for new European releases and presented the works of such film-makers as Joachim Lafosse, Giorgio Diritti and Emily Atef, at the same time offering the opportunity to discover all the richness of Eastern European cinema.

A new milestone was achieved in 2009 with the creation of a competition aimed at encouraging access to the French market of the selected new releases. This strategy bore fruit and every year a number of films appear on screens across France thanks to the Festival's backing. In our conversations with directors who were here at Arras to present their work, my colleagues and I felt that they had many concerns around the financing of their new film. And so it was that the ArrasDays saw the light of day in 2012.

For us, this constitutes a new way of supporting the directors and producers of the selected works. In coming here to present their film, they are able to submit their very latest project for consideration by a jury. In most instances, these have never before been shown. So the ArrasDays are a unique and precious opportunity to experience this absolutely premiere screening and to be the very first to see up-and-coming works. The most important thing about our event is exchange, discussion, meeting with a producer. Today, the goal of the ArrasDays is nothing less than to become a new co-production platform for European cinema and its young directors.

To support the development of these new projects, two grants are awarded by the jury: one for €7,500 funded by the Arras Film Festival and the other for €5,000, funded by the Town of Arras.

Éric Miot
Artistic Director

DROPS OF WATER

Robert Budina (Albania)

SYNOPSIS

Liljana(43) lives with her husband Ilir (45) and her son Sidriti (13) in a small town by a lake in southern Albania. Their family lives in prosperity and in a luxurious apartment thanks to the good jobs that the couple have at state institutions. But Liljana learns that her husband has a younger girlfriend. Sidriti is content with the material goods that his parents offer to him and he enjoys them with his friends and girlfriend Sibora, 13. But Liljana learn that his son is involved in a sex scandal. Sidriti is arrested by the police...

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Drops of Water is a movie about individual's failure of confrontation with the great truths that have marked the failures of his life, society's failure of confrontation with the disease it is suffering from.

Liliana a woman, mother of a teenage son and wife of a well-off husband who makes a comfortable living instead of confronting the truth of her life's failure, first tries to evade it, then to manipulates it and finally to pay to cover it up.

In this monstrous human endeavor, she will undergo a frightening metamorphosis until depersonalization.

Liljana's attempts not to confront with the bitter truth that her son has sexually abused, then threatened and prostituted his girlfriend, is a reflection of Albanian society, which refuses to face gross spiritual and social corruption that has marked the long and laborious period of transition.

Nobody cares about the truth, everybody has to find an alibi to escape from its clutches, testing the sick conscience of a morally corrupted society. Lying, corruption, manipulation are the tools that dig a grave where the truth is to be buried.

The lakefront city where the events take place creates a quasi mystical-poetic atmosphere initially, which will gradually reveal the darker parts of the event following its intensity, highlighting the great contrasts between the beauty of nature and the tasteless buildings of a part of town.

The camera will be constantly on a slight move, with "stedicam" in order to give a subjective dimension to history from Liljana's point of view, and will focus more on unraveling the inner world of characters and fears they have, through image, through building a carefully crafted framework and aesthetics.

Robert Budina



Born in Korca, Albania. He works as an independent film producer and director. He directed his first short film *Luleborë* in 2005, which won several awards. *Agon* his first feature film was screened in more than 30 festivals worldwide awarding in some of them, and was the Albanian Nomination for the Oscars in 2014. His second, *A Shelter Among The Clouds* has the world premiere in Tallinn Black Nights (Estonia), in the Official Competition in 2018 and then participated in more than 10 other festivals worldwide and collecting several awards.

TRIUMPH

Kristina Grozeva and Petar Valchanov (Bulgaria)

SYNOPSIS

In the times of social and economic woes immediately following the Fall of Communism, a classified task force of high-ranking army officers and alien contactees is digging a hole near a godforsaken village in search of something that will change the course of history and make Bulgaria great again. Over months of isolated co-habitation in a top-secret military field camp, the constant need to fabricate magical explanations for the lack of real findings propels the crew into a collective break from reality of tragic proportions, eventually leading to the inglorious shutdown of Operation "Triumph".

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Following *The Lesson* and *Glory*, *Triumph* will be the conclusion of our trilogy inspired by sensationalist news stories from the life in a country as controversial and absurd as Bulgaria. It is inspired by a case that took place between 1990 and 1992 in Tsarichina, a village near Sofia. Guided by a group of psychics, who were –allegedly– in contact with an advanced alien civilization, a team of high-ranking army officers were stationed there for nearly two years, digging a hole in search of something that would revolutionize science and change the course of history. The operation was classified, the dig site was off limits and the information that reached the public was scarce and speculative –so much so that it provides a great opportunity to put one's imagination to work.

Triumph does not pursue any biographical or historical accuracy, but rather tries to find a grain of rationality in this unaccountable story and examine the underlying humanity behind it. Our main focus are the relationships within an isolated group, put together by magical circumstances, subjected to powerful psycho-emotional stimulation and pushed to outright psychotic states. Borrowing from the methods of Mike Leigh and John Cassavetes, we will use guided improvisations and spontaneous interpretation to help the actors immerse themselves in the highly unusual situations and deliver a convincing ensemble performance. This method will also enable us to test the solidity of character motivations and the impact of dialogues. These rehearsing sessions will be filmed and used to write the final draft. We believe this approach will ensure the most accurate and true story material for the future film. We believe that this story has the potential to become a universally relatable tragicomic parable about the absurdity of the times we live in and the human condition in general.

Kristina Grozeva and Petar Valchanov



They have been working together since they were students at Bulgaria's NATFA. Their short film *Jump* was nominated for the best short film at EFA 2013 and received many awards from international and local festivals. *The Lesson* is their first feature film, awarded at San Sebastian, Tokyo, Warsaw, Goteborg, Thessaloniki, Sofia Film Fest and many other festivals. Their second feature film *Glory* was in Locarno and won the Grand Prix in Arras Film Festival 2016. Their third one *The Father* won the Crystal Globe in Karlovy Vary Film Festival in 2019. They are members of the European Film Academy.

LOVE IN THE TIME OF RIOT

Uta Beria (Georgia)

SYNOPSIS

Love story is developing in the midst of social protests. Elene and Andro find each other among thousands of demonstrators and with the desire to meet one another they stay at the demonstration that grows violent. Fireworks shot by the demonstrators create a romantic atmosphere for Elene and Andro and they start kissing each other. But the Special Forces are starting to use rubber bullets. Elene and Andro loose each other in chaos.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Environnement

The story unfolds at a demonstration, our lead characters are among thousands of demonstrators gathered at a square. They get lost and then they re-emerge again in the big mass of people, they are either part of the general or the concrete time and again. The film environment is like a living organism, as much as the mass of people represents an immediate environment for the lead character as she changes her disposition and rhythm with it. The demonstration is sometimes calm but sometimes tensions increase, harmony is being replaced by chaos but next this gets sorted out again. The changing internal state of the lead character is reflected on the environment and vice versa, the environment dictates Elene the rhythm and feelings.

Voice Structure

Different people make speeches with a microphone at the demonstration. Their voices are heard very loudly through sound amplifiers, so loudly that our characters don't hear each other sometimes. Orators' voices from microphone, speeches of different disposition, calls of different nature and content create the background to the affair between Elene and Andro.

Visuals

Wide angle lens shots show us the intimate love story on a bigger scale. The riot at night has interesting visuals such as smoke, Molotov cocktails and fireworks used as arms.

The rhythm and the movement of the camera will be responsive to the unfolding events, which will allow us to make the viewer part of the events and be more than just an audience.

Uta Beria



Born in 1987, Georgia. He is a film director and screenwriter. In 2009 he graduated from Shota Rustaveli Theatre and Film State University with a B.A. in Film and TV Directing. In 2010-2012 attended Screenwriting Program at Shota Rustaveli Theatre and Film State University and graduated with a M.F.A. Degree. He is an author of short films: *In The Rain* (2007); *Tea* (2009). Director of a video clip: *Broadlands 10* (2011). Co-screenwriter of a feature film *The Last Stroll* (2011) directed by the Oscar nominated Zaza Urushadze. Uta Beria is an author of a short, fictional film *Ferris Wheel* (2014). *Negative Numbers* (2019) is his feature debut.

WHERE IS LIZA GOING

Nana Janelidze (Georgia)

SYNOPSIS

The journalist Liza worked as a war reporter during the Abkhazian war. 25 years after the war, during an edition of the TV show hosted by Liza, a former Abkhaz fighter is calling from Sokhumi, who, as it is gradually made clear, saved Liza's life during the war. Liza has been sure that the Abkhazian man died when he was trying to save her life during the war. The call made by him and his words turns Liza's life upside down altogether, so that she gets into her car and starts her journey across the country to get to the other end of the Enguri Bridge, meet the Abkhazian man and tell him something very important.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Our film is a live action road movie based on documentary diaries of witnesses and participants of Georgian-Abkhazian war (1992-93) with strong elements of animation. The diaries are written from both sides of war.

A little bit of history

After collapse of Soviet Union Georgia on her way to independence faced several internal wars. Among them the most brutal and crucial was Georgian-Abkhazian war the status of which remains unidentified; it is still unclear whether it was a Georgian-

Abkhazian war, a Georgian-Russian war, or even a war fought for the restoration of territorial integrity of Georgia. The result was tragic: today part of Georgia is occupied by Russia and there is no winner in this war – both sides Georgia and Abkhazia were defeated.

Nearly 250 000 of Georgians were forced to leave the place of their residence, and they still live in exile in their homeland and our project is based on the real diaries of Abkhazian as well as Georgian eye-witnesses and participants of the Georgian-Abkhazian war.

They were kept by the people on both sides of the war till the end of their days.

These are the diaries capable of letting the Georgian side recollect the human tragedies that the war and the Georgians inflicted upon the Abkhazians; and, likewise, letting the Abkhazians feel the everyday sufferings of the Georgians depicted in the war-time diaries of the Georgians.

Nana Janelidze



Scriptwriter, film and drama director she has been working in film industry for 30 years. Tengiz Abuladze's film *Repentance* where Nana was script writer, music designer and assistant of director was premiered at the 1987 Cannes Film Festival, winning the Grand Prize of the Jury, the FIPRESCI Prize and the Prize of the Ecumenical Jury. The film became the symbol of Perestroika and was sold in 113 countries. Her film *Lullaby* (1994) won main prizes at International Film Festivals. She won best foreign film for *Will there be a theater up there?!* (2011). She hold position of the director of the Georgian National Film Centre from 2013 till 2016. She returned then to film directing. Her film project *Another Paradise* participated in the Eave workshop and Maia Workshop (2013).

THE ISLAND

Anca Damian (Romania)

SYNOPSIS

The Island is a musical comedy and an upside-down Crusoe story. Robinson is a doctor and unlike Robinson Crusoe, his solitude is voluntary but his island in the Mediterranean Sea is invaded by migrants, NGOs, guards. Friday is a castaway, the only one from his boat to have survived when sailing from Africa to Italy. During his strolls on the island, Robinson confronts his own solitude by writing a diary filled with extraordinary beings and events, which both fill and trouble his daily life. The island becomes a representation of our contemporary existence and the solitary destiny of the individual invaded by a surrealist and absurd reality.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The Island will be a musical, an animation, therefore the associated research makes a cross-genre film out of it. Post-modern is a key word, as all the used elements, images, objects, art references will get a different interpretation and a new reading. The absurd and humour can be visually supported by the contrast of these elements, and, as a counterpoint, amplified by the audio/music and musical comedy.

The characters seem to be archetypes: (new) Robinson, Friday, the NGO woman/Mermaid (ex-lover of Robinson and future lover of Friday), Mary (Robinson's mother and also Friday's mother eventually), the Pirates, Grandma the Ogre alias Mother-Nature.

In a Monty Python style, this visual metonymy will create a gap revealing the drama of the contemporary world through laughter. During the moments when Robinson constructs his imagination by converting reality into a story, we will be in an augmented reality on the tablet, so in 3D we will see this AR added on a layer.

This augmented (journal) reality is somehow stronger and more powerful, and also influences the reality, by changing the course of events.

The sets will be using real textures (such as metal, plastic, fabric) where it comes to human intervention and painted textures when it comes to representing nature.

We will also use minutely described elements, such as the objects adjusted or turned away from their primary function, thus leading to a futuristic design of a post-industrial world. The overall feeling should be that we are in a beautiful and fascinating reality, even if there is a sick feeling overall. The color of the sea will augment this paradisiacal but "sick"/rotten perception.

Anca Damian



She obtained a diploma in Cinematography and a Doctor's degree in Arts, Cinema and Media. In 2008, she made her first feature film *Crossing Dates*. In 2012, her second feature *Crulic - The Path to Beyond*, came to the international attention with great impact. The movie got more than 35 international prizes, among which the Cristal for Best Feature Film in Annecy. In 2015, her second animated feature *The Magic Mountain* continues to establish her visual innovation style combined with strong topics. It won 11 international prizes. She was also the first to receive the Audentia Award in 2016 offered by Eurimages. In 2018, her feature fiction *Moon Hotel Kabul* premiered in Warsaw IFF, where it received the Best Director accolade, while her latest animation film *Marona's Fantastic Tale* is selected in Annecy Festival.

CHEMISTRY

Adina Dulcu (Romania)

SYNOPSIS

Ana is the captain of a major Romanian handball team, sponsored by a chemical factory on the shores of the Black Sea. She suffers a heavy injury on court and the club management hires Emilie, a renowned French physiotherapist, in order to bring her as quickly as possible back in the game. Thanks to Emilie's free speech, Ana begins to realize that the battle against her own body had only been a prologue to a battle against an entire corrupt and patriarchal system. Ana readies herself for the ultimate match: the one that will tell her what price she needs to pay in order to regain her own freedom.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The starting point of *Chemistry* is a personal questioning that has been preoccupying me for a long time: that of personal identity and construction, of the position we take within a corrupt socio-political context and the consequences it engenders. Ana's story is about the emancipation of a woman in search for her own freedom, who runs into the ruthless wall of a patriarchal society marred by corruption and intolerance.

The sporting world, in conjunction with the industrial world - both of them in decay - struck me as the most appropriate background to implement Ana's story. The title enfolds all the values I want to explore: the industrial chemistry of the factory and its ultra-polluted environment, the chemistry of the bodies thrashing out on the handball court, the organic chemistry installing between Ana and Emilie and condemned by everyone. It's this multiplicity I would like to capture, between the atmosphere of a social drama and a more intimate and poetic film.

This story speaks about Romania and the look I take at it as a woman, but it also carries the grain of universality that pushes us towards a questioning about individual freedom and taking position for oneself, regardless of our nationality, culture or gender. And last, but not least, it's also a story about that kind of encounter that overwhelms and changes our lives. Call it friendship, love, alter-ego, soul mate or chemistry, we all need a mirror in order to better see ourselves...

Adina Dulcu



She graduated from UNATC Bucharest and obtained a Master's degree in Film Studies at Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès. She has developed a multi-layer career as a producer, scriptwriter, head of development and assistant director. Enriched by all these experiences, she began directing her own projects. *Chemistry*, her first feature, was initiated at L'Atelier Scénario Fémis and is supported by development grants from MEDIA-Creative Europe and the Romanian Film Centre. The project was already selected at Transilvania Pitch Stop 2017, CineLink 2018, Baltic Event 2018 and ScriptEast 2019.

A PLACE WHERE WISHES COME TRUE

Miha Mazzini (Slovenia)

SYNOPSIS

Mark (30) always knew he would be a famous photographer one day. Down and out in big city, jobless and homeless, he returns home. His father has disowned Mark's sister because she has a child who is black. What if he would take his nephew up the mountain and set up a shot of an immigrant child dying in the snow? Could such a photograph finally make him famous? And if the child really dies, the photo wouldn't just be fake news.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

"More than half of Millennials expect to be millionaires someday, according to a new study" says the newspaper title. How come that people who will be paying off their student debts forever are so optimistic? Modern Western society is a system based on faith, not reality, where wishes are called dreams.

I want to build the film on contrasts. John (55) is an older, "hardware", generation – dealing with land and buildings while his son Mark (30) and daughter Tanya (27) belong the new, "software" generation, with apps and videos that will make them famous.

The images will also be contrasting: bleak, almost monochrome scenes from the village, empty houses, closed factory, old clothing and worn out shoes. Tired and bitter faces. It is a winter without snow when everything is grey and frozen, like John's feelings. On the other side the ads for the shopping center, glittery and shiny, a fairy tale of perfect humans born in stock photo labs. The camera is intrusive, relentless; the colors hurt our eyes, with optimistic and loud music. We are in consumerist heaven.

The contrast of winter in spring, whiteness and color, mountain snow and flowers in the meadows. Hope and despair, fighting, existing side by side, resolving in the end into optimism, but not a happy end.

The contrast in sound: the buzz of the city, the silence of the mountains covered in snow.

The contrast in words: what people are saying and what they really mean.

Miha Mazzini



Writer of more than 30 books published in 10 languages with short stories selected for many anthologies including Pushcart Prize 2012 (USA) and Best European Fiction 2018. Screenwriter of award winning feature and TV films, documentary and short films. Director of feature film *Erased* (best screenplay at FEST festival, Serbia), five short films and TV documentary. Transmedia author with international web video project *A Very Simple Story* (nominated for Prix Europe award) and *Eat for Democracy!* web project (winner of Memefest award).



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DANS LE CADRE DE L'ARRAS FILM FESTIVAL

BOURSES ATTRIBUÉES PAR



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