

# WHAT'S SLOVAK IN CANNES?

A photograph of two young children laughing joyfully. The child in the foreground is a girl with brown hair, wearing a dark blue sweater, looking upwards and to the right. The child in the background is a boy with brown hair, wearing a dark blue t-shirt, looking upwards and to the left. The background is a soft, out-of-focus outdoor scene with a light sky.

MAY 14 – 25, 2019



FINANCIAL CRISIS ENTERS THE HOUSEHOLDS OF A PROVINCIAL TOWN AND PEOPLE START TO LOSE THEIR JOBS. TWO ADOLESCENT BROTHERS REBEL AGAINST THEIR FATHER, A FACTORY FOREMAN, WHO BECOMES A SCAPEGOAT FOR THE FRUSTRATED COMMUNITY.

SK 2018 30 MIN. FICTION

**DIRECTOR:** Martin Gonda

**SCREENPLAY:** Dominika Udvardová, Martin Šuster, Martin Gonda

**DOP:** Oliver Záhlava

**CAST:** Martin Piško, Adam Voloch, Jozef Pantlikáš, Lukáš Hamarič, Tomáš Baláž, Dana Košická

**PRODUCTION:** FTF VŠMU (SK)

**PRODUCER:** FTF VŠMU, [festivals@vsmu.sk](mailto:festivals@vsmu.sk), [www.ftf.vsmu.sk](http://www.ftf.vsmu.sk)

WORLD PREMIERE:  
CINÉFONDATION



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LA SÉLECTION

WHAT'S SLOVAK IN CANNES? CINÉFONDATION

# PURA VIDA

## INTERVIEW WITH MARTIN GONDA, DIRECTOR AND SCRIPTWRITER OF THE FILM

**Martin Gonda (\*1990) is a graduate of the Film and Television Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava, where he received his master's degree in Film and TV Directing. He spent several months at production company Atelier de Film in co-operation with Caragiale Academy of Theater Arts and Cinematography in Bucharest through the Erasmus Internship Programme, where he worked as a production assistant on various commercial projects. Furthermore, he was a head of programming at Arkadia Short Film Fest. Currently, Martin is working on a TV documentary cycle and preparing his feature debut.**

### Where did the title *Pura Vida* come from?

While finishing the script, I read an interview with Werner Herzog where he mentioned "Pura Vida", which he understands as life in its simplicity and roughness. It's the same as when you use simple sentences without any decorations – they are direct and genuine and pure and true. Suddenly I felt this was the key to our story.

### We don't see that often a young director making a film about kids and teenagers in rural areas. What inspired you to make the film?

It started with an idea that was supposed to be Dominika Udvardová's graduation script, in which an adult man tries to cope with the death of his brother who died when they were kids. Together with Martin Šuster, we were trying to adapt this story into a short film, but after a while we realized that we were more interested in the relationship between the protagonists than in one person's coping mechanisms. As we

knew more about kids and their world, it was easier for us to develop young characters so we started to focus on their childhood. Social inequality and poverty came into the script only later.

### Why did you set the story to Carpathian Ruthenia, the border area between Slovakia and Ukraine?

We wanted the story to take place in a neglected and "forgotten" region even though in the film, the location itself is not exactly specified. My family has an old house in Ulič Valley in the eastern part of Slovakia, home to a strong community of Rusyns. I used to spend my summer holidays there and saw people selling smuggled cigarettes, heard stories about human trafficking or about villagers finding old unexploded mines in the fields. We were running around with local kids, trying to find mines, helmets or badges from WWI and WWII which could be later sold.

Moved by all those local stories, we decided to set our film there. It was all in front of our eyes. We could see how herd mentality and depression coming from material uncertainty and harsh everyday reality impacts the brothers in our story, how they are ostracized on every level of their social life for something that is beyond their influence.

### How did you find the non-actors for your film?

First of all, we knew we didn't want actors who'd had any experience with acting, be it theatre or art school. We wanted people who live what they act. We organized castings in almost all schools in the region, where we did various exercises with the kids to see how they move, how perceptive they are, how they can improvise and learn. We were also interested in a specific type of per-



PHOTO © Mikuláš Škripeň

sonality. For example, when casting a bully, we were looking for guys who were tough at first look, informal leaders in class who were not afraid of us or any other "authority" – of course, this was their protective shell, they were basically nice guys. This way we chose some 15 boys and went on hanging out with them and talk or just play football.

On the set, they always knew what the scene was about and its general outline. But we never told them what to do exactly, just gave them some hints. I believe if we forced them to learn every line from the script, the film would end up with the worst type of theatrical acting.

### *Pura Vida* is your graduation film, what are your next plans?

While researching in the region we found new stories worth turning into a film. The most touching one was the story of the displacement of seven Rusyn villages because a new dam was being built in the area. There are various ways we can approach it and we are yet to decide which one will be the best – we can follow the people who lost the houses they had been building for years and generations, or we can focus on artists who were documenting the situation at the time... We want to start with a documentary, which was already supported by Slovak Audiovisual Fund, about the displacement of one of the villages. The idea is that this way we can dig deeper and prepare for the fiction feature we would like to make afterwards.

This film was financially supported by



SCREENING

MAY23 > 11:00 > SALLE BUÑUEL \*WORLD PREMIERE



IRINA (40) IS A SINGLE MOTHER, A UKRAINIAN LIVING IN A SMALL CZECH TOWN. ONE NIGHT, HER TEENAGE SON IGOR CLAIMS THAT HE WAS ASSAULTED BY THREE YOUNG ROMA. IRINA DEMANDS JUSTICE, AND IS MET WITH GREAT SOLIDARITY BY HER NEW SOCIETY. UNTIL SHE SPOTS INCONSISTENCIES IN HER SON'S ACCOUNT.

SK, CZ, UA FICTION IN DEVELOPMENT

**DIRECTOR:** Michal Blaško

**SCREENPLAY:** Jakub Medvecký, Tomáš Hrubý

**PRODUCTION:** nutprodukcia (SK),  
nutprodukce (CZ), ESSE Production House (UA)

**PRODUCER:** nutprodukcia, Jakub Viktorín,  
jakub.viktorin@gmail.com, www.nutprodukcia.sk



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WHAT'S SLOVAK IN CANNES?

CINÉFONDATION - L'ATELIER

# VICTIM OBĚŤ

**INTERVIEW WITH FILM  
DIRECTOR MICHAL BLAŠKO  
& FILM PRODUCER  
JAKUB VIKTORÍN**

In 2017, Michal Blaško (\*1989) introduced his bachelor degree film *Atlantis, 2003* in the Cinéfondation section of the 70<sup>th</sup> Festival de Cannes. Now he is back to present his upcoming feature debut *Victim* in L'Atelier, together with producer Jakub Viktorín (\*1990). The story of *Victim* is based on real events and opens a discussion about important social topics. The project has gained international recognition at various co-production markets and forums (coco 2018; WEMW 2019 – FLOW Postproduction Award, EAVE Scholarship; Budapest Debut Film Forum – Award for the Most Promising Project).

**Michal, what is it like for you to be back in Cannes after two years? What have you been up to in the meantime?**

MB: It's great to be back. Last June, I finished my studies in Film directing at the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava. My graduation film *The March* served in many ways as preparation for my feature debut *Victim*. The final project showed us on one hand what we can build on, and what doesn't work quite as well on the other. Ever since working on *Atlantis, 2003*, I have been in touch with producer Jakub Viktorín and scriptwriter Jakub Medvecký. Slowly, in my case still during my university studies, we were preparing everything so we could start shooting *Victim* in 2019.

***Victim* is inspired by real events, just like *Atlantis, 2003*. The protagonists of both films are from Ukraine. Was it planned? What are the ties that link you to the country?**

MB: Actually, both films have more in common, but in the end, it is just a coincidence. Ukraine is becoming a close partner of Slovak cinema, mostly due to the success of *The Line* (d. Peter Bebjak, 2017). That is also the reason why we are shooting Slovak-Ukrainian historical drama TV series *The Slavs* in Ukraine during summer. I am convinced there will be more similar mutual projects

made in the near future. The Ukrainian origin of the protagonists is a key aspect for *Victim* and is tied, as a part of the minority nationality to Czech Republic, to the region where the story is set.

**To what extent do you let the producer intervene in the creative process?**

MB: Jakub gave us his full trust from the very beginning of the script writing process. It's crucial that when we talk about *Victim*, we all see the same film, so the communication among the entire team is very beneficial and moves the film forward.

**Jakub, after Teo Kuhn's successful debut *By A Sharp Knife*, you are developing another debut with Michal. Both projects are dealing with important social topics and are inspired by real events in Slovakia. Are these similarities just a coincidence? According to which criteria do you choose your projects?**

JV: It is important for me as a producer not only to find a story I like, but a story presenting a subject matter important (for the director), who has to be able and ready to work on it for several years. The topic of *Victim* is a strong at multiple levels and it works very well in a fiction film. That was appealing to me. Nevertheless, the similarities between the two projects are coincidental. I look for strong stories and always try to envision how the stories can work for its potential audience. Since it is quite a long process to make a film in our environment, I see as very important that the main authors have a strong motivation to finish the project. The same applies to me of course.

**As a producer, how much do you intervene in the creative process of filmmaking?**

JV: I don't like to call it intervening in the creative process. It's much more about the dialogue with the director and the scriptwriter. The most important thing is that we all know and agree what the project is about and how we want to make it. Afterwards, the authors have full creative freedom but we keep the discussion opened throughout the whole process. As I've already mentioned, making a film takes long, therefore it is very



PHOTO © Paul Grandsard



important to regularly reassure each other that we are all still on the same page.

**You have pitched *Victim* at several co-production markets and forums, often bringing home awards too. How did it help the project and what are your expectations from L'Atelier?**

JV: The above-mentioned platforms brought international awareness to the project which has helped us finding partners, just like our Ukrainian co-producers or potential new partners from Germany and France. From L'Atelier we expect the possibility to consult the project with a wider professional audience and to present it to the public in order to prepare the ground for the international premiere of the film.

MB: Taking into account that we start shooting in mid-October, participation in L'Atelier is very encouraging and at the same time, it gives us a great starting position for future negotiations with distributors and sales agents. For many crew members this will be the debut feature as well, therefore every success in the pre-production stage comes as an encouragement. We really hope that the resulting film will meet the expectations and at the same time bring something new into Slovak film.

This project was financially supported by





## WHAT'S SLOVAK IN CANNES?

### BY A SHARP KNIFE OSTRÝM NOŽOM

## MARKET SCREENING

**SK, CZ > 2019 > 89 MIN. > FICTION**

**DIRECTOR:** Teodor Kuhn

**SCREENPLAY:** Jakub Medvecký, Teodor Kuhn

**DOP:** Denisa Buranová

**CAST:** Roman Luknár, Ela Lehotská, Miroslav Krobot, Marián Mitaš, Ela Štefunková, David Hartl

**PRODUCTION:** nutprodukcja (SK), nutprodukce (CZ), Rozhlas a televízia Slovenska (SK)

**PRODUCER:** nutprodukcja, Jakub Viktorín, jakub.viktorin@gmail.com, www.nutprodukcja.sk

**FESTIVALS:** WIDE, Matthias Angoulvant, ma@widemanagement.com, www.widemanagement.com

**SALES:** WIDE, Danya Hannah, dh@widemanagement.com, www.widemanagement.com

**WWW.OSTRYMNOZOM.SK**

## ACCOMPANYING EVENTS

# SCRIPTEAST 2018 – 2019

**SK, CZ, FR > FICTION > IN DEVELOPMENT**

**SCRIPTWRITER:** Barbora Námerová

**DIRECTOR:** Tereza Nvotová

**PRODUCER:** BFILM, Peter Badač, peter@bfilms.sk, www.bfilm.sk

*The Nightsiren* is a drama set in the wild Slovak mountains. Charlotte is coming back to an abandoned cabin from which she ran away as a child. The local villagers believe that her return has awakened a malicious old witch. Only the town weirdo Mira is not afraid to help Charlotte unravel her past and confront her own demons.

# INDUSTRY WORKSHOP

## THE SAILOR

**SK > DOCUMENTARY > IN PRODUCTION**

What is the price of freedom? Paul Johnson lives on his boat on Carriacou, an island in the West Indies. Both he and his boat are unfit to sail. The way he has lived all his life has become untenable due to the advancing age, yet he knows no other way. The hurricane season is approaching and his engine doesn't work. What is he going to do?

**CONTACT:** TOXPRO, Nazarij Klujev, nazarij.klujev@toxpro.sk, www.toxpro.sk

A story of a father whose son has been murdered. Four perpetrators are charged with the crime, but because of an erroneous court ruling, they soon get to walk free. Determined to uncover the truth, the father enters into an uneven struggle with a passive police force, a corrupt judiciary, and a dominant mob. Can he prevail in such a crooked system?

This film was financially supported by



**SCREENING  
MAY 18 > 9:30 > PALAIS B**

ScriptEast is a year-long training programme designed specifically for experienced scriptwriters from Central and Eastern Europe. It focuses on the script development, as well as on the overall promotion of film projects and their authors. The final session will take place at the 72<sup>th</sup> Festival de Cannes, during which the winner of the Krzysztof Kieślowski Award for the Best Eastern and Central European Script will be announced. For the 2018 – 2019 edition, Tereza Nvotová and Barbora Námerová have been selected to further develop their film project *The Nightsiren*.

## WHAT'S SLOVAK IN CANNES?

### ECO TERRO ECO TERRO

**SK, CZ > 15 MIN. > ANIMATION > IN PRODUCTION**

**DIRECTOR & SCRIPWRITER:** Matúš Vizár

**PRODUCTION:** nutprodukcja (SK), nutprodukce (CZ)

**PRODUCER:** nutprodukcja, Jakub Viktorín, jakub.viktorin@gmail.com, www.nutprodukcja.sk

A group of four activists is on their way to rescue tens of hens struggling along in tiny cages at the chicken farm. Maybe they do it for the first time, maybe not, but it seems they know what to expect.

**EXPECTED RELEASE: 2020**

✿ **Matúš Vizár's** short film *Pandas* received the 3<sup>rd</sup> prize ex-aequo in the Cinéfondation section at the 66<sup>th</sup> Festival de Cannes.

This project was financially supported by



## UPCOMING SHORTS

### SH \_ T HAPPENS SH \_ T HAPPENS

**CZ, SK, FR > 14 MIN. > ANIMATION > IN POST-PRODUCTION**

**DIRECTORS & SCRIPWRITERS:** David Štumpf, Michaela Mihályi

**PRODUCTION:** BFILM (SK), BFILM.cz (CZ), Bagan Films (FR), FAMU (CZ)

**PRODUCER:** BFILM, Peter Badač, peter@bfilms.sk, www.bfilm.sk

**SALES:** NEXT FILM DISTRIBUTION, Anthony Trihan, anthony@nextfilmdistribution.com, www.nextfilmdistribution.com

A caretaker exhausted of everything. His frustrated wife. A totally depressed deer. Their mutual despair leads them to some absurd events, because sh\_t happens all the time.

**EXPECTED RELEASE: 2019**

This project was financially supported by



### WILD BEASTS DIVOKÉ BYTOSTI

**SK, CZ > 10 MIN. > ANIMATION > IN POST-PRODUCTION**

**DIRECTOR:** Marta Prokopová

**SCREENPLAY:** Marta Prokopová, Michal Blaško

**PRODUCTION:** Super film (SK), MAUR film (CZ)

**PRODUCER:** Super film, Simona Hrušová, simona.hrusovska@gmail.com, www.superfilm.me

Three short stories. Three broken relationships. Through the eyes of one girl and two animals.

**EXPECTED RELEASE: 2020**

✿ **Michal Blaško's** *Atlantis*, 2003 world premiered in Cinéfondation at the 70<sup>th</sup> Festival de Cannes.

This project was financially supported by



# SLOVAK FILM INSTITUTE AT MARCHÉ DU FILM

This year, Slovak cinema is present at the Marché du Film's Village International for the 16<sup>th</sup> time. The pavilion traditionally serves as an information point for international film professionals interested in Slovak cinema and audiovisual industry, as well as a networking place for Slovak film professionals and their international counterparts. New and upcoming Slovak films will be presented, together with up-to-date promotional materials, the Slovak Films 18 – 19 catalogue, the Upcoming Slovak Films online database, and Report on the Slovak Audiovisual Situation in 2018 published by Creative Europe Desk Slovakia.

**MEET US AT PAVILION NO. 130!**  
**Pavilion No. 130 > Slovak Republic - Czech Republic > Village Int'l. > Marché du Film**

## REPRESENTATIVES IN CANNES 2019

### SLOVAK FILM INSTITUTE

**Peter Dubecký**, May 15 – 18, sfu@sfu.sk  
**Rastislav Steranka**, May 15 – 22, rastislav.steranka@sfu.sk

**Kristína Aschenbrennerová**, May 14 – 24, kristina.aschenbrennerova@sfu.sk

**Tomáš Hudák**, May 15 – 22, tomas.hudak@sfu.sk

**Imelda Selková**, May 14 – 24, imelda.selkova@sfu.sk

### SLOVAK FILM COMMISSION

**Zuzana Bieliková**, May 15 – 22, zuzana.bielikova@filmcommission.sk  
**Eva Pospíšilová**, May 14 – 24, eva.pospisilova@filmcommission.sk

### SLOVAK FILM INSTITUTE

National Film Archive, National Cinematographic Centre, Creative Europe Desk Slovakia, Lumière Cinema, Klapka.sk store, member of FIAF and EFP

## CONTACT

Slovak Film Institute / Slovenský filmový ústav  
Grösslingová 32, SK-811 09 Bratislava  
+421 2 5710 1503, sfu@sfu.sk; www.sfu.sk,  
www.aic.sk, www.klapka.sk, www.filmsk.sk,  
www.skcinema.sk

Slovak Film Commission / Slovenská filmová agentúra  
www.filmcommission.sk



### THE NIGHTSIREN SVETLONOC

### NAZARIJ KLÚJEV PRODUCER

SLOVAK FILM INSTITUTE  
AND SLOVAK FILM COMMISSION  
JOIN FORCES TO PROMOTE  
SLOVAKIA AT INTERNATIONAL  
FILM MARKETS.

EUROPEAN FILM MARKET  
BERLINALE



MARCHÉ DU FILM  
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

