

Berlinale
 72nd Internationale
 Filmfestspiele
 Berlin
 Generation

Alis

#AlisExists

Close your eyes and imagine Alis,
 a 15-year-old classmate.
 Now, tell me her story

LOGLINE

How to imagine your future when you were born without opportunities?

Teenage girls who lived on the unforgiving streets of Bogota, close their eyes and dream up ALIS, a fictional classmate.

Their soulful narrative reveals an amazing strength to break the cycle of violence and embrace a brighter future.



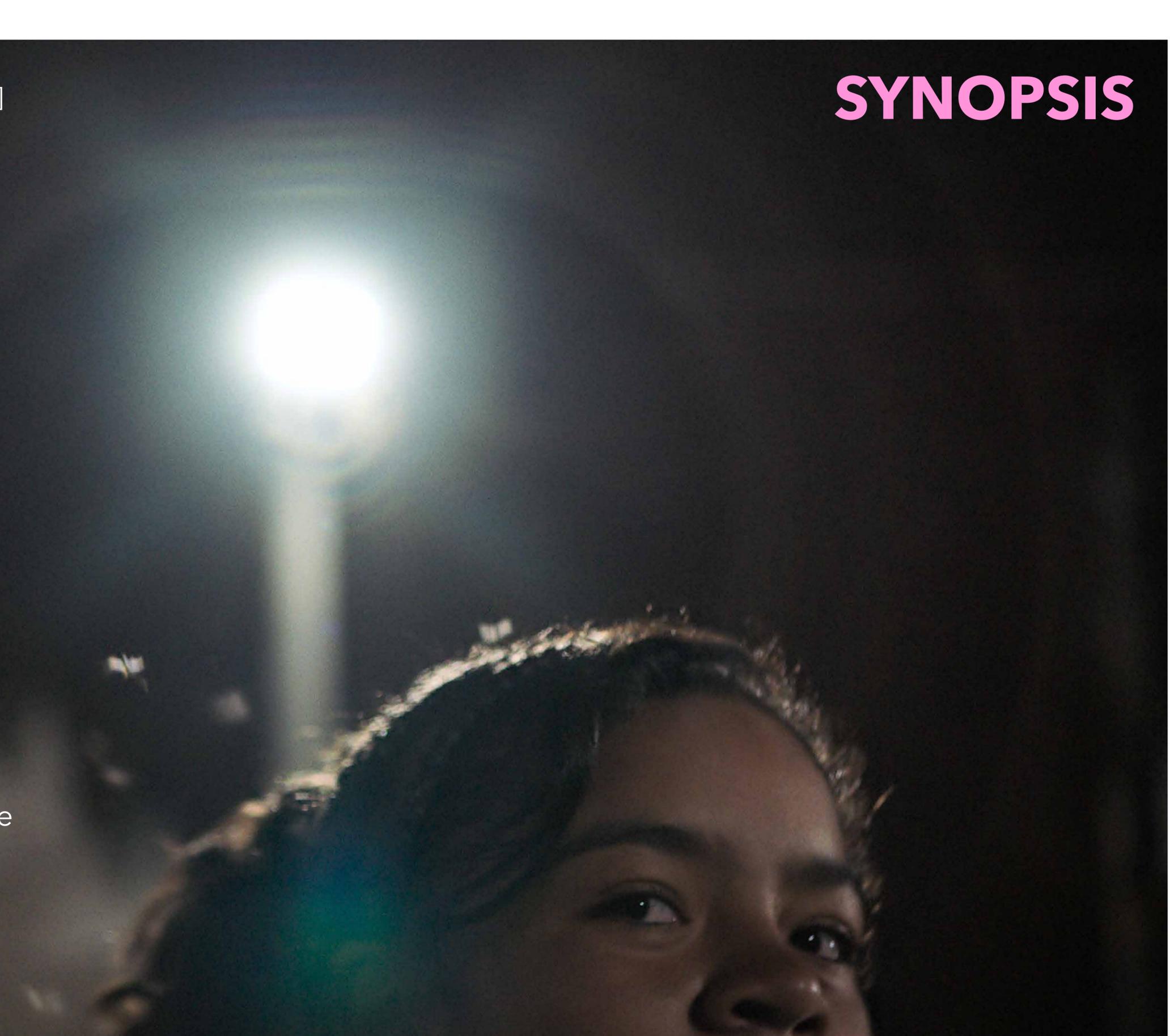
SYNOPSIS

[2021, Arcadia Public Boarding School, Colombia]

Through a creative act, teenage girls who lived on the streets of Bogota give life to ALIS, a fictional classmate. As their voices intertwine, the character comes to life revealing their past experiences, dreams and sufferings.

The innocent game becomes a descent into hell where their luminous faces guide us to the depths of the dark world they once inhabited only to emerge with new skin, thus breaking the cycle of violence and embracing a brighter future.

ALIS is a psychological documentary, an intimate coming-of-age story of hope revealed through the amazing perseverance of the girls. By closing their eyes, they can believe that a new universe is possible.





Luisa



Magaly



David (Xiomara)

DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

"The problem is not the way we are relating to the planet, but the way we have been relating to our children."

Philip Franses, Schumacher College

It's very easy to find examples of how —through racial, sexual, religious, social, economic and political discrimination— the seed of violence is sown at birth and transmitted from generation to generation. In order to build a society where decisions are made in a diverse way, it's essential to break down the prejudices on which discrimination has been built. In male-dominated societies women have been made invisible and vulnerable, and greatly abused with impunity. At the

same time, in a very large percentage of cases, they've had to bear the responsibility of supporting families by themselves. As the parents of two girls, with this film we'd like to continue our personal exploration of what it means to be a woman in today's world. We believe in the power of women and thus in the urgency to have not only more women in power, but to empower the feminine perspective on all levels of society.

We chose to work at the girls public boarding school as it is not an exception, but a sample of this situation: it houses girls who once lived on the street. Some of them are already mothers and others are sure to follow, and the risk of perpetuating the cycle of abandonment and violence that they experienced is very high. How can they not repeat what they have experienced if that is all they know? This film had its origin at the documentary workshops we've hosted at the school since 2016, where

we witnessed how the young women appropriated the documentary language as a tool to reflect on their own experiences and express their emotions, and we discovered their own capacity for empowerment when given a chance.

In our initial encounters with them we are invariably met with resistance, apathy, and distrust. But once they engage with the process, they uncover their latent creative talent, powerful testimonies, and an innocence that, in spite of everything, remains intact. The strength, resilience and humor we found in them challenged our prejudices and awakened our admiration, giving rise to the desire to make this film.

We found the perfect device to explore these reflections in a game where we invited them to imagine a story. Though fictional, they paralleled their own lives, pointing

to the way that imagination mirrors our own experiences and can become a way of dealing with trauma. We discovered that imagination says more about us than our biography. The transfer exercise may result in a powerful catharsis as we see our life mirrored in somebody else. This led to an important understanding of the way that starring in their own creative performative game brings to light deeper truths that otherwise would remain hidden. During these years we've come to see that, despite what they have suffered, they have enormous potential if allowed to empower themselves and embrace their own destiny.

This is a film about girls who are not asked what they want to be when they grow up, because it's assumed that what they are today is already a sentence. As they listen to themselves tell the story of Alis, something intimate happens that can trigger the door to transformation to be

opened. Although we don't have the answer, we want to propose an approach to challenge those prejudices. So instead of asking them to tell us their story –which would revictimize them– we want to explore, break stereotypes and push things: by giving them the opportunity to look us in the eye, imagine life, and create, we position ourselves at their level and allow them to empower themselves.

We envision this film as a chance for viewers to empathize with the courage, sensitivity, and strength of these young women, overcoming their own prejudices to see beyond the stigma to the possibility of transformation and personal growth. This film speaks of the importance of perseverance and self-confidence in the creation of a new reality.



Shesley



Michel



Natalia

TRAILER



<https://youtu.be/IKZrHA2jyM>



"ALIS is a win-win opportunity for the protagonists and us, the future audience. The filmmakers' aim to facilitate, capture, and show the process of empowerment of young female protagonists coming from the harshest life-conditions in the streets of Bogota. The filmmakers' artistic vision is organically connected with an original and playful method in documentary filmmaking by using imagination. We believe there is a great potential for a film giving audiences a chance to empathize and grasp that there really is a hope for a better future."

IDFA Forum Award for Best Project Juries

Gitte Hansen, Lisa Kleiner Chanoff & Luis González Zaffaroni



Dayan



Nicol



Obando

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

During the years we have worked at the boarding school, the idea of making a film has been constantly challenged. We realized that focusing on one of the girls would re-victimize and expose her unnecessarily. We're not interested in making a film portraying life on the streets, but one where imagination opens the door to the interior world of the young women and enables transformation. In the boarding school they are in a space-time bubble away from the dynamics of the street, living a process that invites them to reflect

on their past and their future. It would be very different to make this film with characters who are living on the street, (it's also a panorama widely explored). Instead of asking about their past, we invite them to imagine and to take an active part in the construction of the story, as a way to enter their intimate universes from their own creativity. Alis is the trigger to get to know them. And from a practical point of view, this approach gives us more guarantees to be able to make the film, as we do not depend on unstable characters.

Stories like these are conventionally told from pain and marginality, but we want to show the characters giving themselves a chance, by allowing themselves to dance, to laugh, to be liberated and to have the opportunity to be someone different in the future. Will they succeed? We won't know. But the fundamental aspect is that we will see them imagine and contemplate the fact that another life can be possible. They will imagine the adult they want to be. And they'll answer that question themselves, no one will do it for them.

CREW

direction and production **CLARE WEISKOPF**
NICOLÁS VAN HEMELRYCK

production **RADU STANCU**
ALEXANDRA GALVIS

executive production **LISE LENSE-MOLLER**
VLAD RADULESCU
NICOLÁS VAN HEMELRYCK
CLARE WEISKOPF
RAMONA GRAMA

script **TATIANA ANDRADE**
ANNE FABINI
GUSTAVO VASCO
CLARE WEISKOPF
NICOLÁS VAN HEMELRYCK

editing **GUSTAVO VASCO [ECCA]**
ANNE FABINI

music **MIGUEL MIRANDA**
JOSÉ MIGUEL TOBAR

cinematography **HELKIN RENÉ DÍAZ G. [ADFC]**

sound **PATRICK ALEXANDER**

sound design and mix **MARIUS LEFTĂRACHE**

grading **CLAUDIU DOAGĂ**





CREDITS

produced by **CASATARÁNTULA**

in coproduction with **DEFILM**
PANTALLA CINES

with the support of **PROIMÁGENES COLOMBIA FDC**
PROGRAMA IBERMEDIA
IDFA BERTHA FUND with the support of
CREATIVE EUROPE MEDIA PROGRAM
SUNDANCE INSTITUTE DOCUMENTARY
FILM PROGRAM with the support of
OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS and
JUST FILMS | FORD FOUNDATION
AVANPOST
ROMANIAN FILM CENTER
CATAPULT FILM FUND
THE ROMANIAN TELEVISION
CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES

world sales **LATIDO FILMS**

specs **COLOMBIA, ROMANIA, CHILE**
2022
84'
5.1
1,85
COLOR

DIRECTORS & PRODUCERS



NICOLAS VAN HEMELRYCK

director-producer

Colombia / Belgium

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Filmmaker, architect and photographer. Cofounder of Casatarantula production company and DOC:CO Distribution and Promotion Agency. His debut AMAZONA (producer, codirector, DOP and sound) premiered at IDFA, was DocsBarcelona's opening film, was nominated for the Goya Awards, won 3 Colombian Academy Awards and was distributed in 11 countries. Nicolas has coproduced with France, Scotland, Chile, Brazil and US and his films have competed at IDFA, Cinema du Reel, Dok Leipzig, Sheffield, DocNYC and

won awards at Torino IFF, Bogoshorts and DocuDays-UA, and has been supported by Ibermedia, Sundance, Catapult, IDFA Bertha Fund, Chicken & Egg, Tribeca, the Colombian Film Fund-Proimagenes, the Romanian Film Fund and Señal Colombia TV. He has been selected for Dok Incubator, EAVE Producers Workshop, IDFAcademy, GoodPitch, Tribeca Network, Campus Latino and IFP Doc/Week. Nicolas is a member of the Colombian Film Academy, Global Impact Producers and Cinema 23. As a DOP he was nominated for best cinematography at the Fenix Awards. As a photographer his work has been exhibited in America, Europe and Asia.

CLARE WEISKOPF

director-producer

Colombia / Ireland

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A filmmaker and journalist, Clare has spent more than fifteen years working on various social issues, ranging from the armed conflict in Colombia and sexual violence as a weapon of war to the spread of cumbia music in Latin America and Europe. Her debut Amazona premiered at IDFA, was DocsBarcelona's opening film, was distributed in 11 countries, was nominated for the Fenix Awards and the Goya Awards and won 3 Colombian Academy Awards. She was twice a winner of the Colombian National Journalism Award. She was

selected for IDFAcademy, Dok.Incubator, GoodPitch and Campus Latino, and her projects have been supported by Ibermedia, Sundance, Catapult, the IDFA Bertha Fund, Tribeca and the Colombian Film Fund (Proimagenes). She has directed several documentaries and doc series for TV channels. She is a founding member of Casatarantula and DOC:CO Distribution and Promotion Agency. Clare has been a teacher of filmmaking in several universities and frequently is invited as a jury in film funds.





CASATARANTULA - COLOMBIA

Colombian film production company committed to creating films that challenge the way we understand life and reality. Specializing in author-driven documentaries, it combines the experience of Clare Weiskopf and Nicolas van Hemelryck, who have worked for more than 15 years in the design, development and production of audiovisuals. Their films (Amazona, Homo Botanicus, Limbo) have been selected in festivals such as IDFA, Dok Leipzig, DocNYC, Sheffield, Cinema du Reel, DocsBarcelona, La Habana and Torino. Their work has been nominated for the Goya (Spain) and Fénix (Latin America) Awards, awarded at Torino IFF, Bogoshorts, Docudays-UA, twice at FICCI (Cartagena) and they have won 3 Colombian Academy Awards (Macondo). Their work has been supported by Sundance, Catapult, Ibermedia, IDFA Bertha Fund, Chicken & Egg, the Colombian Film Fund-Proimagenes, Tribeca, Señal Colombia, SCAM, and SACEM. They have been selected for Dok Incubator, EAVE Producers Workshop, IDFAcademy, La Fabrique Cinema, GoodPitch, Campus Latino-Doc Campus, Tribeca-TFI Network, and IFP Documentary Week. They are members of the Colombian Film Academy, Cinema 23, Global Impact Producers, and DOC:CO.

FILMOGRAPHY - COMPLETED

AMAZONA

Feature-length documentary. 82 + 52. Colombia. 2016

D&P. Clare Weiskopf. Nicolas Van Hemelryck

P. Casatarantula (Colombia)

Supported by: FDC-Proimagenes, IDFA Bertha Fund, Tribeca Latin Fund, Dok.Incubator.

Sales: Cinephil

Festivals: IDFA, DocsBarcelona Opening Film, Edinburg, DocNYC, Thessaloniki, ZagrebDocs, Zurich IFF, Biografilm, EIDF-Korea, La Habana, DocsMX...

Awards: Colombian Academy Award for Best Documentary, Best Editing and Best Music; Goya Awards, nominee for Best Iberoamercaon Film; Fenix Awards, nominee for Best Cinematography and Best Music; Audience Award, FICCI (Cartagena IFF), Andriy Matrosov Award, Docudays UA, Ukraine; Best Colombian Film (CCB – Bogota Film Critics Circle).

Amazona.co

HOMO BOTANICUS

Feature- documentary. 88. Colombia, France, 2018.

D. Guillermo Quintero

PRODUCTION COMPANY

P. Nicolas Van Hemelryck, Clare Weiskopf, Guillermo Quintero, P.E. Urcun

Produced by: Casatarantula (CO), Stank (FR)

Coproducer: Señal Colombia-RTVC

Supported by: FDC-Proimagenes, Scam, Sacem, Tribeca Film Institute.

Festivals: Dok Leipzig, Torino IFF, FICCI (Cartagena), Malaga, Trento, FIDBA, Biarritz, MIDBO, Cinelatino Toulouse.

Awards: Best International Film at Torino IFF, Best Documentary at FICCI (Cartagena), Best Documentary at Film Festival Della Lessinia.

LIMBO

Short Documentary. 26'. Colombia, USA. 2019.

D. Alex Fattal

P. Nicolas Van Hemelryck, Clare Weiskopf, Alex Fattal

P. Casatarantula (CO), Break the Frame Films (USA)

Festivals: Sheffield DocFest, Cinema du Reel, Bogoshorts.

Awards: Jury Award Best Documentary-Bogoshorts.

Supported by: FDC-Proimagenes, Harvard University, Fejos at Wenner-Gren Foundation, U. de los Andes. U. Javeriana, Penn State U.

COPRODUCTION COMPANIES

DE FILM - ROMANIA

deFilm is a Bucharest-based production company founded in 2009. While we started by producing independent shorts that were met with international success, the company has in time developed steadily to embrace a diverse portfolio and a growing network of partners as well as financing resources. We engage all types of cinematic productions that take on the creative stakes that match our values and interests. We enjoy growing together with filmmakers that we can build long-lasting relationships with.

PRODUCER: Radu Stancu

Radu Stancu is a Romanian film producer, owner of independent production company deFilm. He studied film production, film editing and sound design at the Film University in Bucharest (UNATC) and is alumni of Making Waves, EAVE Producer's Workshop, EAVE Ties That Bind, EAVE Marketing Workshop. He has engaged an array of cinematic productions, ranging from short to feature-length, fiction, animation and documentary, including various approaches and styles. His work was awarded in international film festivals such as Cannes, Locarno, IDFA, Karlovy Vary, Sarajevo or AFI.

PANTALLA CINES - CHILE

PRODUCER: Alexandra Galvis

Producer, distributor, cultural manager and teacher. She has been executive producer of: Human Tower (Cano Rojas), Bikes vs. Cars and Push (Fredrik Gertten), and "La Cordillera de los Sueños" (Patricio Guzmán, Golden Eye at Cannes'19-Official Selection). She has also worked as a producer for the BBC, BBC World and Canal 13. As a distributor she runs Market Chile since 2012, a platform that seeks to spread Chilean cinema in commercial and cultural circuits. In this context, she also runs the program Efecto Cine, a mobile cinema tour that takes cinema to places where there are no theaters (remote regions, hospitals, prisons) and Efecto Pedal, a professional platform of itinerant cinema that works with the energy of bicycles. Alexandra has led the distribution strategy for more than 150 Chilean films and some international films, as the documentary hits Tea Time and The Grown-ups (Maite Alberdi), El Botón de Nácar (P. Guzman), and Human Flow (Ai WeiWei). She has worked for 13 years on the development of the audiovisual industry in Chile on several programs. She has been a teacher on various universities and film festivals, and regularly is invited to evaluate national and international film funds.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

MAGIC HOUR FILMS - DENMARK

Set up in 1984 by producer Lise Lense-Møller the company has produced and co-produced a wealth of high-profile creative documentaries and art-house films, such as the Oscar nominated BURMA VJ by Anders Østergaard (2008) and INTO ETERNITY by Michael Madsen (2009). Recent releases include: HEARTBOUND by Janus Metz and Sine Plambech, premiered at TIFF, Sep. 2018. JOURNEY TO UTOPIA by Erlend E. Mo, premieres in competition at cph:dox, March 2020. In the pipeline: CHILDREN OF THE LOWEST HEAVEN - a hybrid film by Birgitte Stærmose to shoot in Kosovo 2020. THE SKY ABOVE ZENICA by Zlatko Prajnic and Nanna Frank, shooting 2020 in Bosnia.

PRODUCER: Lise Lense-Møller

Film producer, founder, and CEO of Magic Hour Films. Lise has produced over 60 films - both documentary and fiction - many of which have won international awards and many of which have been international co-productions. In addition, she has a long track record in professional education and consultancy a.o. since 1993 as group leader for EAVE and now Head of Studies. Lise also runs a small publishing house, The Wisdom Books, and teaches yoga.

CONTACT

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