



Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival
East of the West – Competition

Mia GIRAUD

Antonija BELAZELKOSKA

SISTERHOOD

LIST PRODUCTION PRESENTS



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SISTERHOOD

A FILM BY

Dina DUMA

2021 – NORTH MACEDONIA/ KOSOVO/ MONTENEGRO – DRAMA/ COMING OF AGE – MACEDONIAN – 90'



SCREENINGS IN KARLOVY VARY

Sunday 22 at 3:30 pm

Cinema A - Press & Industry Screening

Monday 23 at 4pm

Karlovy Vary Municipal Theatre – Official Screening

Tuesday 24 at 12 pm

Čas Cinema - Additional Screening

Wednesday 25 at 10am

Lazne III Cinema - Additional Screening

Thursday 26 at 10:30am

Husovka Theatre - Additional Screening





SYNOPSIS

Teenagers Maya and Jana are inseparable and do everything together. Headstrong Jana usually takes the lead and Maya follows. One night at a party they catch Elena, the most popular girl in school, having sex on video with Maya's long term crush. Jana convinces Maya to post the video and when it goes viral, Elena's life is ruined. A heated confrontation between the three girls leaves Elena missing and Maya wanting to go to the police...but that isn't what Jana wants. Maya becomes her new target and must find the courage to get out of her toxic relationship and the secret that threatens to ruin her life.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



SISTERHOOD is a coming-of-age story about the breakdown of a friendship between two teenage girls, in the essence, a story exploring the social media bullying phenomenon spreading amongst adolescents.

We live in a time where one “click” holds great power. When I first started writing the script, I always questioned myself: Am I exaggerating with the peer violence and social media bullying? I thought that these things were happening in my generation and are now past. I was secretly hoping that somehow this new generation has evolved, but after I have done my research, I realized I was unfortunately wrong. While researching the world of adolescents, I learned that how they represent themselves on social media is more important than who they really are. I was now even more eager to make this film and open a discussion, turning the attention to this young generation struggling.

Every aspect of the film’s visual style is conceived to contribute to representing the reality of this world, the directorial focus is on the main characters at all times, depicting the world as she experiences it.

Dina Duma, July 2021.



DIRECTOR'S Q&A

The main characters in your film are teenagers.

Was it difficult to find the right girls?

We started casting very early in the process of pre-production because this film was going to be made with non-actors and I wanted to see every girl between the ages of 15-18 in Skopje. In a month we had a shortlist of a hundred girls so me and the casting director started talking with the girls. I must say that very soon my casting process turned into a case study. The girls were very open to share with us their experiences and during the interviews I realized I was not exaggerating in the script with the peer violence, the reality was much more alarming. Everyone from the girls could relate to the problems from my story, everyone had a similar experience or knew someone who had. What connected their different experiences is that no one addressed these problems, not even the teachers from the schools or any other adult in their lives. I realized that they felt alienated

as if they didn't have support and no one they could talk to. This is the moment that I realized how truly important this story was for these girls and how important it was for someone to tell it. After a six months process of casting we found our Maya and Jana.

As you were working with non-actors did you use some special techniques during the process of rehearsals and shooting?

For me, the main focus was that they give their own experiences to the story, so we spent a lot of time talking and building the characters together. Many of their experiences are infiltrated in the film and in the characters. This was the most important thing in order to build the adolescent world in the most authentic way. They had only read the script once and were not allowed to read it again so that they would give the most authentic performance on set.

What was the inspiration for this film?

The film was inspired by true events, when I was a teenager there was a sex tape from one girl and boy from my school. The video immediately became viral. The boy became a hero and the girl had to move away to a different country because she was ashamed and bullied. It was unfair how she was treated and how the school authorities didn't do anything to help her. This event stayed with me for a long time, and this is how the first thoughts for the film came to me.

What does the water represent in the film?

The water in the film represents the subconscious state of Maya, her character arch. As she changes, her perception of the water changes as well. At first the water represents freedom but then it becomes her cage. It represents her struggle for freedom from the secret and the toxic friendship with Jana and by the end it is the point from where she rises and regains her inner power to make the right decision and free herself.

Sisterhood it's your first feature film. What challenges did you come across? What was the journey getting this film financed and off the ground?

When making a debut feature film in a country where the industry is not as developed and where the working environment is patriarchal, every step becomes a challenge when you are a woman so I am extremely proud that my producer Marija Dimitrova managed to finance the film and that we made the film. Every film brings its own challenges on the shooting. We were working with young teenagers, we had shooting underwater, jumps from a high and dangerous cliff, first time director, first time producer, first time actors, budget limitations ... The process was full of challenges and risks, but I am glad that we had them because ultimately it pushed us into making the film.

Do you expect your film to have an impact on how the adults and the educational institutions, especially in your country, will handle the peer violence among the teenagers, the slut-shaming and other deviant behaviors, in the future?

I sincerely hope that this film will open a discussion and will get the attention of the educational institutions, because the only way we can change something is by talking about it openly.



DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Dina Duma was born in 1991 in Skopje, North Macedonia. She graduated film and TV directing at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Skopje in 2014 and in 2016 attended Berlinale Talents. Dina has made several short films. *SISTERHOOD* (2021) her debut feature film will premiere in East of the West competition at Karlovy Vary Film Festival.



DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

SISTERHOOD (2021) (1st Feature)

WITHOUT LOVE (2018) (short)

THEY COME FROM THE CENTER OF THE WORLD (2017) (short)

ELENA (2016) (short)

CAST

Antonija Belazelkoska
Mia Giraud

CREW

Director **Dina Duma**

Screenwriters **Dina Duma & Martin Ivanov**

Director of photography **Naum Doksevski**

Art Directors **Kiril Spaseski & Simo Branov**

Editor **Martin Ivanov**

Costume Designer **Roza Trajceska Ristovska**

Music **Igor Vasilev - Novogradska**

Producer **Marija Dimitrova**

Co-Producers **Liridon Cahani, Biljana Vusovic, Guillaume De Seille**

Production Company **List Production**

Co-Production Companies **Added Value Films, Videa Production, Arizona Productions**

In association with **The Post Republic**

Supported by **North Macedonian Film Agency, Kosovo Cinematography Center, Film Center Montenegro, See Cinema Network**

World Sales **Cercamon**



Download Photos, Trailer, Clips, Press-kit, on our website www.cercamon.biz

INTERNATIONAL SALES

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Attending Karlovy Vary Film Festival August 22-25

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