Dealing with the Past
In 1991, Christian Wurtenberg, a 26-year-old reporter from Switzerland and the protagonist of Anja Kofmel’s feature-length debut CHRIS THE SWISS, took a train from his hometown to war-torn Yugoslavia. In his diary, he noted that the sense of war became noticeable with every passing mile. “With each stop,” he wrote, “the train empties out a little more, until only a few shady characters remain.”

More than two decades later, it feels as though we are still on that same ride – except that now, with every stop, the train gets more crowded. The seats are occupied by human-rights organisations, lawyers, politicians, those directly afflicted by war, and many others who are still trying to cope with the perplexing legacy of the Yugoslav conflicts. Walking in the aisles are also filmmakers, regional and international, who use the possibilities of cinema to open up space where these various, sometimes contradictory voices and experiences, can be reflected upon, debated, and, above all, heard.

Such a polyphony of voices is exactly what we encourage with the Dealing with the Past programme, a selection of recent films that tackle painful events of recent history. The subjects they explore are different, as are their aesthetic approaches. Investigative documentary, animation, theatre that crashes through the fourth wall, and reality-based fiction are used to confront viewers with unsolved war crimes, ethnic hatred, resurgent nationalism, and many wounds that have yet to heal. This year, the programme has expanded to include experiences of facing up to the past in countries like Romania and Slovakia, ranging in time from World War II to the 1968 occupation of Czechoslovakia.

The films selected for Dealing with the Past had their premieres at prestigious film festivals, and, in addition to critical acclaim, they won prizes ranging from Best Film (I DO NOT CARE IF WE GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS BARBARIANS at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival and THE OTHER SIDE OF EVERYTHING at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam) to special mentions (SRBENKA at Visions du réel). Such prestige proves that these stories can cross regional borders, and incite emotion and spark conversation among wider audiences. With this in mind, the Sarajevo Film Festival has teamed up with the International Film Festival Rotterdam and its IFFR Live initiative, which will enable cinema-lovers in 15 cities across Europe to simultaneously enjoy the opening screening of Dealing with the Past. And what better film than CHRIS THE SWISS to take audiences on an investigative and heartbreaking journey to confront the past and its ghosts, which still haunt us in their search for understanding and reconciliation.

DEALING WITH THE PAST is a project of the Sarajevo Film Festival supported by the Robert Bosch Foundation.

Maša Marković,
Dealing with the Past Programme Manager
Programme schedule

Saturday, 11 August

11:00
Hotel Europe / Screening Room 2
In conversation with Tomislav Pulić

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN WORKING WITH BROADCASTERS

20:00
Meeting Point Cinema
Screening

CHRIS THE SWISS
Country: Switzerland, Croatia, Germany, Finland
Director: Anja Kofmel

Sunday, 12 August

9:30
Hotel Europe / Atrium
In conversation with Siniša Juričić

PRODUCTION CHALLENGES: WORKING ON FILMS THAT TACKLE SENSITIVE ISSUES FROM THE PAST
Moderated by Robert Tomić Zuber

12:00
Cinema City
Screening

OCCUPATION 1968
Country: Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary
Director: Evdokia Moskovina, Linda Dombrovsky, Magdalena Szymkow, Marie Elisa Scheidt, Stephan Komandarev

18:00
Meeting Point Cinema
Screening

THE OTHER SIDE OF EVERYTHING
Country: Serbia, France, Qatar
Director: Mila Turajlić

Monday, 13 August

9:30
Hotel Europe / Atrium
In conversation with Mila Turajlić

WORKING ON ARCHIVES AND THEIR USE IN ESTABLISHING NARRATIVES OF THE PAST
Moderated by Tue Steen Meuller

12:00
Cinema City
Screening

SRBENKA
Country: Croatia
Director: Nebojša Slijepčević

17:30
Hotel Europe / Atrium

TRUE STORIES MARKET
The True Stories Market connects filmmakers with organisations that are documenting and researching the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s, with the aim of bringing these stories to wider audiences. Five such organisations will present five cases that have not yet been the subject of film or television productions. In order to facilitate their transition from the market to the screen, after the Festival an open call will invite filmmakers to apply to execute a project inspired by one of them. The Heartefact Fund will award a €3,000 grant to support further research.

Host and moderator
Robert Tomić Zuber

Tuesday, 14 August

9:00
National Theatre Sarajevo
Screening

THE LOAD
Country: Serbia, France, Croatia, Iran, Qatar
Director: Ognjen Glavonić

15:00
Hotel Europe
In conversation with Ognjen Glavonić

FROM LOAD TO DEPTH TWO TO LOAD
Moderated by Robert Tomić Zuber

17:30
Meeting Point Cinema
Screening

I DO NOT CARE IF WE GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS BARBARIANS
Country: Romania, Czech Republic, France, Bulgaria, Germany
Director: Radu Jude

6 | DEALING WITH THE PAST 2018
DEALING WITH THE PAST 2018 | 7
Beginning of the 90ties: The Yugoslavian Wars had started. Young men from all over Europe were taking part. On January 7th 1992, a Swiss journalist was found dead in Croatia wearing the uniform of an international mercenary group. Twenty years later, his cousin, the director Anja Kofmel, researches the background to understand, why these men are so fascinated by war.

“If I really am a Freedom Fighter, the freedom I have won is the worst failure of my life” -- Srbijanka Turajlić (my mother) A locked door inside a Belgrade apartment has kept one family separated from their past for over 70 years. As the filmmaker begins an intimate conversation with her mother, the political fault line running through their home reveals a house and a country haunted by history. The chronicle of a family in Serbia turns into a searing portrait of an activist in times of great turmoil, questioning the responsibility of each generation to fight for their future.

Vlada works as a truck driver during the NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999. Tasked with transporting a mysterious load from Kosovo to Belgrade, he drives through unfamiliar territory, trying to make his way in a country scarred by the war. He knows that once the job is over, he will need to return home and face the consequences of his actions.

Occupation as occupants see it. 5 countries occupied Czechoslovakia in 1968. 50 years later, 5 directors from these countries are going to shoot a short film about the invasion.
True Stories Market

PEACEBUILDING IN COMMUNITIES IN EASTERN BOSNIA

From September 2012 through September 2014, an inter-ethnic group of Bosnian Serb and Bosniak women, living in Kravica and Konjević Polje, worked intensively under the guidance of a psychotherapist with the NGO Vive Žene. The group members shared their wartime experiences and trauma, as well as the difficulties they face in their families and communities in the present. The women have developed mutual feelings of confidence and understanding, as well as a basis for joint activities in both communities. They have been persistent in showing that it is possible to deal with trauma.

Vive Žene was founded in March 1994 during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the aim of supporting women and children, the most vulnerable victims of armed conflict. From initial material support and crisis interventions, Vive Žene has developed into a professional Centre for Therapy and Rehabilitation, which is located in Tuzla and active throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. Vive Žene has been dealing with facing trauma, a process that started several years before the war and continues in the present.

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NERMIN KARAGIĆ’S STORY

In the summer of 1992 in Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nermin Karagić was twice taken to be executed by shooting. He survived on both occasions, and again on a third, when he was separated from the convoy that was supposed to take him to exile. Karagić was a minor at the time. Traces of torture and beastly abuse can still be seen on his face. He also witnessed the murder of his father, as well as of over 100 other civilians, to which he testified in the Hague. The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia has selected his story as representative of the crimes that were committed in Prijedor. At this time, Karagić is back in his home town. He works hard to survive, still traumatised, but receiving no institutional support. His story remains unknown to the public of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Foundation for Building the Culture of Memory was founded in Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the aim of reconciling the consequences of war through documenting human-rights violations and war crimes. The foundation also seeks to establish a centre for informing and documenting, as well as to create new commemorative processes and memorialisation practices.

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Films

Srbenka

Monday, 13th 2018 @ 12:00
Cinema City

Director: Nebojša Slijepčević
Country: Croatia
Year: 2018.
Length: 72 min
Colour

I Do Not Care If We Go Down in History as Barbarian

Tuesday, 14th of August 2018 @ 17:30
Meeting Point Cinema

Director: Radu Jude
Country: Romania, Czech Republic, France, Bulgaria, Germany
Year: 2018.
Length: 139 min
Colour

In the winter of 1991, Aleksandra Zec, a young Serbian girl was executed in Zagreb. A quarter of a century later, theatre director Oliver Frljić is staging a play about the case in Rijeka. Rehearsals for the play turn into collective psychotherapy, and 12-year-old actor Nina feels as if the war has never ended.

“I do not care if we go down in history as barbarians.” These words, spoken in the Council of Ministers of the summer of 1941, started the ethnic cleansing. A young artist is planning to reconstruct a historical event from 1941, during which the Romanian administration through the Romanian Army carried out an ethnic massacre on the Eastern Front.
YES, IT HAPPENED, BUT I KEPT ON WITH MY CHIN UP

There was shooting, people were dying, but we all accepted it as normal. I didn’t have a sense of war, because in our city, everybody continued to live their everyday lives. But then, trouble came to town. The phones stopped working and I didn’t know what was going on. All of a sudden, the men were being taken away in the early morning hours – among them my father, who was taken away to a camp. The soldiers came into our shop, taking away our car, gold, and money. Feeling anxious and frightened, women started to organise gatherings with their children, hoping to feel better. We didn’t know, and we couldn’t ask, anything about my father. Soldiers were breaking into houses, taking whatever and whomever they wanted. I remember the night the soldiers broke into the house where we were hiding, and started taking women away. I was among those they took away and raped, although I had never had sexual intercourse before. I wasn’t supposed to tell anybody; my assailant threatened me with a rifle. The rape was repeated several times throughout the night. I was raped by three soldiers. Other women were raped as well. My mother was there, which I later told my father, because I didn’t have anything to hide. When I arrived at a safe place, everyone already knew. The next time I met my uncle, he took me in his arms and started crying. He knew, too. As did everybody else. I was the only one everybody knew about. After that, they never stopped pointing their fingers at me.

Medica Zenica is an expert non-governmental organisation that offers psycho-social and medical support to women and children who are victims of war and post-war violence, including victims of war rape and other forms of war torture. The organisation also treats victims of sexual violence in general, domestic violence survivors, and victims of human trafficking. Over the past 26 years, Medica Zenica has provided more than 450,000 beneficiaries with services throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, and has published more than 90 publications.

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I WAS HARDLY A NEWBORN

The Srebrenica Genocide, the largest mass crime committed after World War II, has shaped the destiny of a child who, at that time, had not yet been born. In July 1995, after the fall of an enclave protected by the UN, the Army of Republika Srpska killed approximately 8,000 men and boys. Ibrahim, the father of an unborn boy, was among those who fell victim to the massacre. His pregnant wife managed to reach the city of Tuzla. She gave birth in the hospital there, and ran away after three days, leaving her unnamed child behind. Growing up in an orphanage, the little boy’s life was entangled in the research into mass shootings and finding the remains of those who were killed in the massacre.

The Balkan Investigative Reporting Network in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIRN BiH) is a non-governmental media organization that specialises in monitoring and reporting on war-crime trials. Since it was formed in 2005, BIRN BiH has been analysing and informing the public about transitional justice issues and the work of war-crime chambers at state and local courts across Bosnia and Herzegovina. BIRN BiH supports the development of high-quality media, civil society, and the enforcement of human rights. In line with this purpose, BIRN BiH publishes a substantial body of high-quality reports, investigations into and analyses of crucial transitional justice, political, economic, and social issues. The organisation facilitates broad public debate on these topics through hosting cross-sector conferences.

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CREATING A NEW NARRATIVE AND POLITICS OF MEMORY

Through exploring the dynamics that surround the building of a monument to children killed in war, this story shows how a new narrative and politics of memory have been created in the city of Prijedor. Local Bosniak politicians, including the municipality president, openly sabotaged this project, because the monument would include the names of every child killed in the conflict, regardless of their nationality. Local activists and parent organisations are striving to ensure that the children be remembered as innocent victims, and not as persons of a particular nationality. A film based on this story should be able to shift the conflict away from the imposed ethno-national lines towards one between disempowered citizens and corrupt politicians.

Youth Centre KVART is a locally founded activist organisation that has been actively working on dealing with the past in Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, since 2013. Kvart’s activities include dealing with human-rights and social-justice issues, as well as working with local youth, delivered through a cross-cutting approach.

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ROBERT ZUBER was born in 1976 in Pula. He spent 18 years working as a journalist and editor for various public and commercial media outlets in Croatia - including BBC, Radio 101 and Nova TV - and was twice awarded by the Croatian Journalists’ Association. After joining the Croatian Public Radio-Television, HRT, in 2004 he spent 11 years exploring and covering various socially-relevant and humanitarian issues, mostly for his TV show Mission. In 2001, he directed his debut documentary, AT A BUS STOP IN PULA, which was the highest grossing documentary in Croatian cinemas that year. His second, autobiographical, documentary accidental son - produced as part of the “Every Child Needs a Home” UNICEF campaign – received the Octavian Award for best documentary at the Croatian national film festival Days of Croatian Film. His film MILA SEEKS SENI-DA received the Human Rights Award at the Sarajevo Film Festival. In 2017 he directed MILLION DOLLAR LIFE which received Golden Studio media award for the best Croatian documentary. In 2016, after a three-year-stint as the head of the HTV’s documentary production department, Zuber left his post at the public broadcaster and founded his own production company, Toro Lab, which develops content for digital platforms and produces documentary films and series. Zuber works as an associate professor at the VERN University in Zagreb.

TUE STEEN MÜLLER was born in 1947. Danish. He worked with short and documentary films for more than 20 years at the Danish Film Board – as press secretary, head of distribution and information and as a commissioning editor. He’s co-founder of Balticum Film and TV Festival, Filmkontakt Nord and Documentary of the EU. He has travelled to European short and documentary festivals often to be seated as a jury member. He has given documentary courses and seminars in more than 30 countries. In 2004 he was awarded the Danish Roos Prize for his contribution to the Danish and European documentary culture. In 2006 an award for promoting Portuguese documentaries. In 2014 he received the EDN Award “for an outstanding contribution to the development of the European documentary culture”. In 2016 he received a handshaking from the President of Lithuania, and the Cross of the Knight of the Order for Merits to Lithuania. From 1996 until 2005 he was director of EDN (European Documentary Network). He has written articles for national and international newspapers and magazines. From 2006 he has been a freelance consultant and teacher in workshops like Ex Oriente, DocsBarcelona, Archidoc, Documentary Campus, Storydoc, Baltic Sea Forum, Black Sea DocStories, Cauacod as well as programme consultant for the festivals Magnificent7 in Belgrade, DOCSBarcelona, Message2Man in St. Petersburg and DOKLeipzig. From September 2007 he has taught at the Zeiğ Documentary Film School, Bolzano, Italy. He writes (almost) daily about documentary in English on www.filmkommentaren.dk.

NATAŠA DAMJANOVIC was born in 1981 in Belgrade, where she graduated film editing at the Faculty of Drama Arts. She participated in the 2008 Sarajevo Talent Campus, 2011 Berlinale Talent Campus, was nominated for the 2010 Robert Bosch Stiftung Co-production Prize, in 2012 she participated as a script editor trainee to the Torino FilmLab, as well as in 2013 EAVE Producer's Workshop. Since 2006, together with Vladimir Vidić, runs DART film, a production company based in Belgrade. So far she produced two feature films - HUMIDITY by Nikola Ljuca (Berlinele Forum 2016, FEST 2016 – Best Film, Best Director, Best Male Actor, “Nebjoša Djukelic” jury special mention, Valencia Int FF – Jury Special Mention, Five Lakes Film Festival - Best Script, Vilnius Int FF, SFF, etc.) and ALL THE CITIES OF THE NORTH by Dane Komljen (Locarno 2016 - Signs of Life, Athens Ohio Int. FF - Best Feature Film, Sarajevo FF, New York FF, IFF Rotterdam, Valdivia IFF, Mar del Plata, PICUNAM, Jeonju etc.), edited several more features and documentaries and a vast number of short films. In addition to that, she has strong background in advertising, TV entertainment and corporate/brand communication, which includes commercials, drama series, TV shows, image films, promotional, awareness and other campaigns.

STAŠA BAJAC was born in 1985 in Belgrade where she graduated Film, Theatre, TV and Radio Dramaturgy at Faculty of Drama Arts. She is currently taking her second MA course in Narrative Film at Universität der Künste Berlin. With her first feature film HUMIDITY, that she co-wrote with the director Nikola Ljuca, she participated in Script Station of Berlinale Talent Campus and Sarajevo Talent Campus. The film, premiered at Berlinele Forum 2016 and went on to open Belgrade Film Festival, winning three awards (Best Film, Best Director, Best Main Actor) and a special mention from the Critics Association. The successful beginning was followed by an ongoing festival life with screenings at festivals in Sarajevo, Vilnius, Valencia (Special Mention), München (Best Script), to name a few. Her second feature THE LONGEST SUMMER that she co-wrote with director Maša Nešković was part of EAVE 2013 and is currently in preproduction. She is currently co-writing Nikola Ljuca’s second feature THE HEROES WERE DANCING, presented at CineLink 2016 as well as her own feature project “The Stranger” that she plans to direct.

Three of her original plays have been published in Serbian and the latest one entitled “Reconstruction” premiered in Serbian National Theatre of Novi Sad in December 2016. Aside from theatre and film, she worked as a journalist in several print publications, editor in chief of an online publication, a copywriter and translated books from English.

TOMISLAV PULIĆ (1972) was born in Šibenik. He graduated from the Zagreb Faculty of Political Sciences in 1998. Since 1992 he has been working for HRT. His managerial duties reached their peak between 2009 and 2011 when he acted as the Chief Producer at Croatian Television and CEO at ORFEJ from 2011 to 2013. Since 2013 he has been the executive producer at the Department of Culture, Art and Religion.
SINISA JURIČIĆ founded Nukleus Film Croatia in 2003, Nukleus Film Slovenia in 2012 and Jaako dobra produkcija (JDP) in 2013. Juričić’s focus is on producing films and helping talented filmmakers from the Balkans and the wider region achieve their full potential on the international stage. He regularly receives international film awards from institutions such as the Festival de Cannes and the Berlinale, and has successfully funded numerous films, both domestic and international. Recently he has lectured about film production and project management for the Academy of Drama Arts in Zagreb, and conducted case studies at a variety of training programmes. In 2012, he was awarded the annual Albert Kapović Award by the Croatian Producers Association for his contributions to the promotion of Croatian film.

OGNJEN GLAVONIĆ was born in 1985 in Pančevo, SFR Yugoslavia. ZIVAN MAKES A PUNK FESTIVAL (2014), his first documentary, had its premiere at Cinéma du Réel and has been screened at International Film Festival Rotterdam, CPH:DOX, and IndieLisboa, among others. Ognjen’s documentary DEPTH TWO (2016) had its premiere in the Forum section at the Berlinale. He is the founder of Pančevo Film Festival. THE LOAD is his first feature film.

NEBOJŠA SLJEPEČEVIĆ has directed numerous creative documentaries (GANGSTER OF LOVE, SOMETHING ABOUT LIFE, REAL MAN’S FILM, IN 4 YEARS, OF COWS AND PEOPLE). His films have been awarded at many international festivals, including two awards at Sarajevo Film Festival and two awards at ZagrebDox. For his TV documentaries he has been three times nominated for Prix Europa Award. His first documentary feature, international co-production Gangster of Love, premiered internationally at Hot Docs (Canada) and was one of the biggest documentary box office successes in Croatia. Nebojša is mentor and lecturer at School of Documentary Film in Zagreb.

MILA TURAJLIĆ is a documentary filmmaker born in Belgrade. Her most recent film, THE OTHER SIDE OF EVERYTHING, had its premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2017, and went on to win 20 awards, including the prestigious IDFA Award for Best Documentary Film. OTHER SIDE was HBO Europe’s first co-production with Serbia, and had a record-breaking theatrical release there. Mila’s debut documentary film, CINEMA KOMUNISTO, premiered at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam and the Tribeca Film Festival, and went on to win 16 awards, among them the Gold Hugo at the Chicago International Film Festival in 2011, and the FOCAL Award for Creative Use of Archival Footage.

NEBOJSHA SLJEPECEVIC was born in 1985 in Pancevo, SFR Yugoslavia. ZIVAN MAKES A PUNK FESTIVAL (2014), his first documentary, had its premiere at Cinema du Real and has been screened at International Film Festival Rotterdam, CPH:DOX, and IndieLisboa, among others. Ognjen’s documentary DEPTH TWO (2016) had its premiere in the Forum section at the Berlinale. He is the founder of Pancevo Film Festival. THE LOAD is his first feature film.

The Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH is one of Europe’s largest foundations associated with a private company. In its charitable work, it addresses social issues at an early stage and develops exemplary solutions. For this purpose, it plans and implements its own projects. Additionally, it supports third-party initiatives that have similar goals.

The Robert Bosch Stiftung is active in the areas of health, science, society, education, and international relations. Moreover, in the coming years, the Foundation will increasingly direct its activities on three focus areas:
• Migration, Integration, and Inclusion
• Social Cohesion in Germany and Europe
• Sustainable Living Spaces

The Robert Bosch Stiftung is committed to upholding the values and example of its founder Robert Bosch and continuing his philanthropic work. With more than 50 years’ experience, the Foundation has extensive knowledge, the qualifications for developing solutions, and a comprehensive network of partners, experts, and practitioners.

The Robert Bosch Stiftung is owner of the Robert Bosch Hospital and the associated research institutes in Stuttgart, the Institute for the History of Medicine, and the Dr. Margarete Fischer-Bosch-Institute for Clinical Pharmacology, as well as the International Alumni Center in Berlin. The Robert Bosch Stiftung is founding partner of the UWC Robert Bosch College in Freiburg and the German School Academy in Berlin. The Foundation holds about a 92 percent stake in Robert Bosch GmbH and finances its operations from the dividends it receives from this holding. Since it was established in 1964, the Robert Bosch Stiftung has invested around 1.6 billion euros in charitable work.

Heartefact was founded in 2009. Heartefact strengthens critical awareness and builds an open and free society in the region of the Western Balkans through creative, expert, and artistic exchange. Heartefact supports and encourages contemporary and engaged cultural and artistic creativity, and thus creates the conditions for producing a new generation of progressive individuals. Ever since its establishment Heartefact has been committed to creating a regional cultural space which is responsible towards the past and builds a secure future. Heartefact gives special attention in its work to marginalized and discriminated social groups. Heartefact has productions, a foundation, and an institute. So far we have produced more than 50 art programmes in the theatrical and visual arts, published over twenty authors of contemporary drama, supported over 80 programmes through the foundation, and organised over 100 exchanges in the region.
Team

**Project Manager:**
Maša Marković

**Project Coordinator:**
Ishak Jalimam

**Host of the programme Dealing with the Past:**
Robert Tomić Zuber
Tue Steen Muller

**Selection board for True Stories Market:**
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