

CROSS ROADS

HOW FAR YOU CAN GO IN THE TRACE OF A LOST DREAM?

A FILM BY
FAYSAL SOYSAL

KRISTINA KREPELA
NIK XHELILAJ
TURGAY AYDIN
FAKETA SALIHBEGOVIC
RIZA AKIN
ALMA TERZIC

CINEMATOGRAPHY
SAHİN SİSİC

EDITING
FARSHAD NEKOOMANESH

SOUND DESIGN
BURAK TOPALAKÇI
MOHSEN ROŞHAN

MUSIC
KAYHAN KALHOR

SET & COSTUME
BARAN UĞURLU



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER



A TALE OF LOVE, REALITY, DREAM AND HEALING OF THREE LOST HEARTS, UNVEILED WITH A POETICAL CINEMATOGRAPHY.

CROSSROADS

A FILM BY FAYSAL SOYSAL



Written, Directed & Produced by
Faysal Soysal

Edited by
Farshad Nekoomanesh
Faysal Soysal

Director of Photography
Sahin Sisic

Sound Design
Burak Topalakci
Mohsen Roshan

Music
Kayhan Kalhor

Set & Costume Design
Baran Ugurlu

Executive Producer
Baris Yildirim
Edin Sarkic

Casting Director
Harika Uygur

Featuring
Kristina Krepala as Zrinka
Nik Xhelilaj as Bunyamin
Turgay Aydin as Joseph
Riza Akin as Yakup
Faketa Salihbegovic – as Hatice
Alma Terzic as Alma

Turkey, 116 min, Colour, 1.85, Shot with Arri- Alexa in Full-HD,
in English, Turkish, Bosnian, Kurdish with English Subtitles

A BALKON FILM RELEASE
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synopsis

When they were kids, Bunyamin (Benjamin) and his brother Yusuf (Joseph) fall in love with the same girl-Zeliha and a childish game leads to Zeliha's death. Bunyamin can never forgive himself and face up to his brother, instead; he keeps running away from home with excuses. After his graduation, he drifts to Bosnia to help with the discovery of victims bodies from the mass graves. The emotional pressure of his job brings his past back to him in his dreams, instead of being himself in his dreams; he turns into his brother Yusuf who struggles to find his well in the trace of a woman with Blue dressed and veiled.

Zrinka is a Serbian-Bosnian psychologist helps people with post-war suicide syndrome. While She considers committing suicide on Mostar Bridge Bunyamin helped her to avert her from her intent. Mysterious nature of Bunyamin attracts her. Zrinka tries to help him to be released from his qualms of conscience during his illness into the amnesia. Zrinka falls in love with him. After completing his job in the ICMP, (International Commission on Missing Persons), Bunyamin returns to Turkey to face his brother and of course to deserve Zrinka's love. While waiting for his return patiently, one day, Zrinka sees that something bad happens to him in her dream. She follows her instincts and begins a journey through Turkey to help him and find an answer to her love. In Hasankeyf, instead of what she expects, she finds another truth and the true love which we have been seen like in Bunyamin's dream. A new reality drenched in dreams by a new love definition.



director's note

As a poet-director who is inspired by modern Turkish poetry, I have imbued my first feature film 'Crossroads' with a poetry that embraced life and sought to reveal the myriad ways in which humanity manifests itself.

History is full of darkness. The selfish and negligent may forget the past and carry on, the weak and failures may consider suicide in desperation, but artists and especially poets feel the pain deeper and burden that grief in their life and arts every time. To me, one of the darkest events of the modern history was the war in BIH (1992-1995). It was the most bloody of the conflicts that took place during the break-up of Yugoslavia. Out of a population of 3.4 million, The Bosnian war left an estimated 2.2 million people displaced and up to 110,000 dead, characterised by brutal war crimes. According to Chairman of the Bosnian Federal Commission for Missing Persons, Amor Masovic's research, there are 39,000 missing bodies are documented but so far only 18,000 of them are officially reported. Today, the fate of an estimated 10, 000 persons remain unknown. 400,000 hearts behind the losses are suffering every day in the hope to find, identify and give their loved ones, their real names and honour they deserved. The war also destroyed many historical treasures. The Mostar Bridge was designed by the Ottoman architect Mimar Hayreddin in 15th and 16th centuries and it was accepted as the twin structure of the Malabadi Bridge in Turkey. The bridge was blown up during the bitter fighting in 1993. It is restored recently and Poçitelj is one of the most historical villages close to Mostar which painters used to live before the war. It has been destroyed totally during the war and hopefully restored now.

Mostar Bridge is where my main characters Bunyamin and Zrinka first meet.

I am from Batman. It's been my concern that for more than ten years, Batman, a province in the eastern part of Turkey, has been known for a particularly high rate of suicide among young women. During 2000 alone, 22 suicide attempts resulted in death among women living in Batman area. 2011 Batman made the headlines again and reportedly there had been 9 suicides within 10 days period, most of them involving young girls and women. Hasankeyf is at very similar to Poçitelj but older than it. Unfortunately Hasankeyf is going to stay under water because of the dam building on Tigris River. Many NGO's tried to prevent this event and it did not work. Now my film is going to focus this issue and brings this beautiful city for audience who does not have any information about it.

Zrinka, a Serbian – Bosnian psychologist comes to Bosnia to work people who are effected by the war. However, many of her patients commit suicide including her best friend Selma. She gives up hope and considers ending her life, jumping off the Mostar Bridge.

Bunyamin from Batman volunteers to find missing dead bodies of the war. He sees Zrinka on the bridge and talks her out of her intentions. However Bunyamin deals with his own matters.

When Bunyamin and his brother Yusuf were kids, they involved in an accident that resulted in the loss off their beloved girlfriend Zeliha on the Malabadi Bridge in Batman. As my story unfolds, this appears to be the reason for Bunyamin's escape from– soon to be submerged by the new damn – Hasankeyf. This makes Bunyamin's encounter on the Mostar Bridge with Zrinka more special.

Crossroads is a modern interpretation of the Thomass Mann's book, Joseph and His Brothers which was desired to be filmed by the one of the greatest director of all times, Andrei Tarkovsky.

As I did in my short films, what I intended to do was to create new images, emotions and worlds without clearly identified borders; things that cannot simply be expressed through words but somehow hint at the territory of a man's solitude.

I hoped to come up with a new language with which we can hear each other's voice and feel each other's suffering; something that today's words seem to be increasingly incapable of attaining. My story contains supernatural elements in its central drama however; it is inspired by the experiences of real people. I wanted to tell my story through a poet who believes in a dream – you can call it either 'peace' or 'love'. I build a narrative with the twin philosophy: 'One needs to give up their beloved in order to achieve true love' and 'One needs to respond to hatred with kindness.'

My character Bunyamin seeks both. He goes back to his home, the ancient city of Hasankeyf - a place endangered by the construction of Turkey's Ilisu Dam. Locals are forced to move to other areas, perhaps larger cities. Furthermore, there are concerns that the thousands megawatt hydroelectric plant will cause massive environmental damage to native animals. Hasankeyf -like Počitelj in Bosnia- threatened of losing its architectural highlights and historical education centres Madrasas. The danger arouse from modernism.

I tried to be as realistic as I could while creating it. I wanted to achieve a level of realism through feelings, intuition, beliefs and dreams rather than the tried and tested typical methods. I tried to avoid manipulative, imposing and didactic styles as much as I could. In addition, during the editing process, instead of presenting a medley of scenes which would appeal to the reason and intelligence of the viewer through interplay of time and emotion; I aimed to recreate those real emotions for the audience, so he/she is simply left with his/her soul-searching. To do that, I used long plans to unveil a tale of love, death and the healing of three lost hearts, with a poetic cinematography edited with almost invisible moves.

Above all, my real hope is to draw attention to the tragic Batman suicide cases and Bosnian conflict where countless numbers of innocent people died and the most of their bodies remained missing or unidentified. I hope to serve the world peace for many years to come by reaching audiences from all over the world and I hope that Hasankeyf will survive.

We started filming in Turkey first, for three weeks in Malabadi, Hasankeyf, Batman and Midyat. Then we moved to Sarajevo, Visoko, Počitelj and Mostar in Bosnia – Herzegovina for another three weeks. I also worked with two different film crews with slight alterations in working approaches. This was a worthy experience for me during shooting 'Crossroads'.



director

Faysal Sosyal was born in Batman in 1979. He left medical school to focus on poetry and cinema in 2000. Between 2003 and 2007, he finished his Masters Degrees on “Film Directing” in Tehran Art University-Iran and at the same time “New Turkish Literature” at Van Yuzuncuyil Universities-Turkey. He did 4 short films in Iran those which were awarded at international film festivals. With his 35mm short film ‘Dreams of Lost Time, he’s become closer to find his own cinematographic expression and language.

In 2008, with a scholarship, he attended to the New York Film Academy. Faysal directed 4 short films; three of them were shot in 16mm. In 2002, he published his first poem book ‘Duse Yagmalanan Hayal Kuyusu’. He then published his latest poem book ‘Bir Olunun Defteri’ in 2011. Faysal also translated poems from Sohrab Sepehri and F.G.Lorca in his book ‘Akdenizdeki Col’ and Babek Ahmedi’s, one of the best books on Tarkovsky ‘The Re-found Hope’ in to Turkish.

He finished filming his first feature film ‘Crossroads’ in 2012, Turkey and Bosnia &Herzegovina. His articles on cinema and poetry have still been published in different magazines. At the same time, he volunteers for Doctors Worldwide Foundation and organizes film workshops at Bilim Sanat Vakfi and gives lectures on poetic cinema.



filmography

Somalia, Doctors Worldwide 2012, Documentary, HDV, 13'
Palestine, Doctors Worldwide 2011, Documentary, HDV, 59'
İstanbul 2008, 16mm, 4.20', New York
Ithaca 2008, 16mm, 7', New York
What Time It Is? 2008, DV, 15', New York
The Dreams of Lost Time 2007, 35mm, 16', Tahrán
Mise-en-scène 2007, 16mm, 2,30', New York
The Day I Became My Mother 2006 DV, 11', Alamut/Iran
Forbidden Dream 2005, DV, 5', Qazvin/Iran
Ithaki 2005, DV, 15', Qazvin/Iran

books

Bir Ölünün Defteri Poetry, 2011
Akdenizdeki Çöl, Sohrab Sepeheri & F.G. Lorca Translation. Poems, 2011
The Re-found Hope, Cinema of A.Tarkovski, Babek Ahmedi Translation. 2011
Düşe Yağmalanan Hayal Kuyusu Poetry, 2003

awards

The Dreams of Lost Time

 <p>WINNER BEST SHORT FILM BOSTON TURKISH FILM FESTIVAL USA 2008</p> 	 <p>WINNER BEST SHORT FILM ISTANBUL INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL 2007</p> 
 <p>WINNER BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY AND BEST FILM THE MARMARA UNIVERSITY FILM FESTIVAL ISTANBUL 2007</p> 	 <p>HONORARY AWARD TEHRAN INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL IRAN 2007</p> 

Forbidden Dream

 <p>WINNER BEST FILM HUMAN RIGHTS SHORT FILM FESTIVAL ISTANBUL 2005</p> 	 <p>WINNER BEST SCRIPT AND BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY KISA CEK UZUN OLSUN SHORT FILM FESTIVAL ISTANBUL 2006</p> 
 <p>WINNER BEST FILM QAZVIN SHORT FILM FESTIVAL IRAN 2005</p> 	 <p>SECOND SHORT PRIZE KRISTAL KLAKET FILM FESTIVAL ISTANBUL 2007</p> 

The Day I Became My Mother

 <p>SPECIAL MEDIA PRIZE BAKU AUDIO-VISUAL FILM FESTIVAL AZERBAIJAN 2006</p> 
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cast



KRISTINA KREPALA – ZRINKA

Kristina Krepela is a Croatian actress, the best known for playing in movies “La Femme Musketier” - along with Gerard Depardieu, Michael York, Nastassja Kinski, John Rhys-Davies and Susie Amy and “The Hunting Party” - along with Richard Gere. Krepela was trained on the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb. Her first role was in the short-movie Leptir (Butterfly), in 2003. Kristina has also been acting in David Benioff, D.B. Weiss’s the famous TV series “Games of Throne” since 2012.



NIK XHELILAJ – BUNYAMIN

Albanian born Nik Xhelilaj had begun working in theatre and cinema during his time as a drama student. He made his film acting debut with the short film “Single Use” (Erion Hasanllari, 2005) and followed this with leads in Piro and Eno Milkani’s Albanian-Czech co-production “Sorrow of Mrs. Schneider” (2008) and Artan Minarolli’s “Alive!” (2008). In 2010, the German-Albanian co-production “The Albanian” (Johannes Naber, 2010), earned him the Silver George for ‘Best Actor’ at the 32nd Moscow International Film Festival as well as the ‘Best Actor’ awards at the 2nd PriFilmFest in Prishtina, Kosovo and the 47th International Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival. Nik Xhelilaj was named as one of European Films’ Shooting Stars by European Film Promotion in 2011 for the Berlin Film Festival.



TURGAY AYDIN – YUSUF

Germany born actor Turgay Aydin completed his education at German State Theatre. He made several movies such as “September” (Cemil Agacikoglu, 2011), “Mommy I’m Scared” (Reha Erdem, 2004), “Propaganda” (Sinan Cetin, 1999), while acting on TV Series in Turkey.



ALMA TERZIC – ALMA

Alma Terzic was born and raised in city of Zenica in Bosnia where she lived with her family during the war. She graduated from Sarajevo Academy of Performing Arts. Recently she played the part 'Hana' in Angelina Jolie's Golden Globe Nominee for Best Foreign Language Film; "In the Land of Blood and Honey". Some of her other films are; "The Abandoned" (Adis Bakrac, 2010), "Do not Forget Me Istanbul" (Hany Abu-Assad, Stefan Arsenijevic, Aida Begic, Josefina Markarian, Eric Nazarian, Stergios Niziris, Omar Shargawi, 2011), "Snow" (Aida Begic, 2008). She is also known for her roles on TV series in Turkey.



FAKETA SALIHBEGOVIC – HATICE

Sarajevo born actress Faketa Salihbegovic have started her career in 1987 with a TV drama "Nadvoznjak" (Faruk Piragic). Since then she appeared in various TV series, feature films; "Halima's Path" (Arsen A. Ostojic, 2012), "Body Complete" (Lukas Sturm, 2012), "The Abandoned" (Adis Bakrac, 2010).



RIZA AKIN – YAKUP

Riza Akin was born in Adana, Turkey. He started acting community centre theatres when he was very young then moved to Ankara to pursue his career in acting. He studied communications and worked as a journalist in between 1969 and 1977. In 1997 he founded Seyhan Communiy Theatre. He won the the 'Best Supporting Actor' award at 47th International Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival with his role in "Hair" (Tayfun Pirselimoglu, 2010). He also appeared in renowned Turkish feature films such as; "Watchtower" (Pelin Esmer, 2012), "In Darkness" (Cagan Irmak, 2009), "Milk" (Semih Kaplanoglu, 2008) and "Summer Book" (Seyfi Teoman, 2008).

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