



Karlovy Vary  
International Film Festival  
Official Selection - Competition

Andi Vasluianu

Voica Oltean

# BREAKING NEWS

a film by Iulia Rugină

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 MONTAJ: CATALIN CRISTUTIU, SCENARIU: ANDREEA POPA, COSTEL CARMEN MOLDOVAN, NICOLE CARNEA, IULIA RUGINA, OANA ROSEANU  
 IULIA ROSEANU, VOICU, ALEXANDRU DIMITRIU, FLORIN TABACARI, MONTAJER IULIA RUGINA, RACASAN  
 PRODUCER: OANA GUSCASA, TUDOR GURZUL, BOGDAN CRACIUN, IULIA RUGINA

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52<sup>nd</sup> Karlovy Vary  
International Film Festival  
June 30 - July 8, 2017

# BREAKING NEWS

**Drama, 81', 2017**

**Directed by:** Iulia Rugină

**Written by:** Ana Agopian, Oana Răsuceanu, Iulia Rugină

**Cinematography:** Vivi Drăgan Vasile

**Editing:** Cătălin Cristuțiu

**Art Director:** Andreea Popa

**Producer:** Tudor Giurgiu

Produced by Hai-Hui Entertainment and Libra Film Productions, with the support of the  
Romanian CNC

**Main cast:** Andi Vasluianu, Voica Oltean, Ioana Flora, Oxana Moravec

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Selected in 2009-2010 ScriptEast Training Initiative  
Nipkow Program 2008  
Sources 2, Graz 2008

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A psychological journey of redemption that turns into a coming-of-age experience for a 35-year-old famous news reporter who, in a crucial moment of his life, discovers that things have somehow taken a wrong turn.

## **Synopsis**

After the tragic death of his cameraman, which he indirectly caused, reporter Alex Mazilu has to make an in-memoriam reportage covering his life. Three days before Christmas, in a small town on the Black Sea coast, Alex puts together puzzle pieces of this man's life, all seen through the eyes of his troubled 15-year-old daughter. Trying to redeem the dead father, he slowly starts taking his place.

## **Director's Note**

*Breaking News* is a character driven drama, set in present day Romania, following three days in the life of a famous 40-year-old news reporter. After a tragic accident during a live broadcast, which leads to the death of his cameraman, reporter Alex Mazilu is given the difficult task of finding information for compiling a short tribute video about his dead 50-year-old colleague, Andrei Paraschiv. The only person who is able to help is Andrei's 15-year-old daughter, a troubled teenager who has her own unsolved issues with her father.

The film subjectively focuses on the main character's quest in digging deep inside a story. The more he tries to put together puzzle pieces of the life of a man he barely knew, the more he loses his objectivity and becomes part of the story. Driven by the guilt of having been the one who survived and trying to redeem the dead father in the eyes of his daughter, Alex slowly starts taking his place.

Despite the title, the film's main focus is not on television. The television works as a background, the breaking news relates to the character's revelation throughout the film. The main relationship the film follows is the one between the reporter who needs information and the daughter who won't share it. It touches themes like parenthood and father figures, fabricated stories and the deep layers that hide below the surface.

The film starts in a Christmas-crazed Bucharest and quickly shifts towards a deserted seacoast environment, the cameraman's hometown. The empty beaches, the deserted summer resorts and the dim traces of Christmas that pop up from time to time give the visual tone of the film. The camera is always handheld and it always comes close to the character, as if trying to get

inside their minds. The tone is dark, yet never melodramatic. Death triggers the exploration of life.

The film does not give verdicts, it asks questions that should linger in the viewer's mind at the end of it. What would a stranger make out of what's left behind when we're gone? Or, as one of the lines in the film states, "If I died tomorrow, what would they say on TV about me?".

## PRODUCTION NOTES



### Script

*Breaking News* was supposed to be Iulia Rugină's first feature film. It's a story that has changed a lot along the years, growing and transforming itself together with the team of three scriptwriters and friends.

The first draft of the script was written in 2007, just after Iulia's graduation. But many rewritings followed, therefore filming took place when draft no. 14 was ready. Initially, Alex Mazilu was not a reporter but a news producer and the story was very different. Simona Paraschiv, the teenager's character, appeared only in draft no. 10.

Knowing that the budget will probably be a small one, they tried to keep the balance between the action, the characters and the locations. The main documentation was made in the PRO TV (commercial television) newsroom, where they talked to reporters and news editors. Though the importance of the news has somehow dropped in the structure of the film, the research period was very important for the whole film.



## Shooting

The shooting started mid-December 2014 and finished in February 14, 2015, the day the youngest actor, Voica Oltean, celebrated her 16th birthday. The freezing weather and the reduced shooting time proved to be big challenges. Also, some scenes had to be re-filmed because of the snow.

The filming took place in Bucharest and at the seaside. Even though much of the action in the film is happening in Mangalia, some scenes were filmed in Eforie Sud and Saturn resorts. The local television station, the factory at the beginning of the film, the news editorial and the main character's house are all located in Bucharest.

The art direction team had its challenges as well: the interiors of Paraschiv's house were made from scratch, including the walls, the ceiling, the floor, the inlets. Also, the explosion scene – a 3 minute long take ending with the collapse of the ceiling - needed a lot of extras, smoke and complex movements of the camera. No special effects were used, a false ceiling was actually built, then mounted on an aluminum skeleton and lowered with pulleys, to avoid breaking it and hurting the crew and actors. In terms of acting and camera movements, the fire scene proved to be an intense and complex one.



## IULIA RUGINĂ

**Iulia Rugină** (b. 1982, Bucharest) holds a master's degree in direction from the National University of Theater and Film in Romania. She has a dozen short films to her credit, on which she cooperated as writer and director. *Bună, Cristina! Pa, Cristina!* (2006), *Vineri în jur de 11* (2006), and *Captivi de Craciun* (2010) - together they collected awards at festivals in Oberhausen, Munich, Trieste, Brussels, and Poitiers. Despite its ultralow budget of €50,000, in the year of its production, *Love Building* (2013) became the second most commercially successful movie in Romanian theaters. A year later she shot the sequel *Alt Love Building* (2014). In addition to directing, Rugină organizes cultural events and social projects. At present she is slogging away at her doctoral dissertation on the topic of low-budget films; she also teaches screenwriting.



## ANDI VASLUIANU

A very familiar and loved face among the Romanian audience, Andi has worked with directors such as Radu Muntean, Corneliu Porumboiu, Tudor Giurgiu, Szabolcs Hajdu, Cristian Nemescu, Cătălin Mitulescu, Paul Negoescu, and had over 100 roles both in cinema and theatre. Among the feature films in his portfolio: *Two Lottery Tickets* (2016), *Of Snails and Men* (2012), *Bibliothèque Pascal* (2010), *California Dreamin'* (2007), *The Paper Will Be Blue* (2006). Highly appreciated by directors, Vasluianu shows both a highly developed expressiveness and a fantastic ability to easily move from one role to another.



## VOICA OLTEAN

The young actress is at her first role in a film. She was discovered after a long casting among high school theater groups in Bucharest. Voica was 15 years old when she made the shortlist and she was studying at Dinu Lipatti Music High School in Bucharest. "She was on her first film experience, but she was extremely open and enthusiastic, and that was a big deal", says director Iulia Rugină.



## IOANA FLORA

Appearing on screen, on television and the stage, Ioana Flora had leading parts in acclaimed Romanian films, starting with Cristi Puiu's *Stuff and Dough/ Marfa și banii* (2001). She received the Best Actress Award at the Thessaloniki Film Festival for *Hooked/ Pescuit sportiv* (2008), directed by Adrian Sitaru, followed by prestigious national awards such as Best Supporting Role for *Outbound/ Periferic* (2012), directed by Bogdan Apetri, and Best Romanian Actress (2016) for *Back Home/ Acasă la tata*, by Andrei Cohn. She also took home the Best Actress Award at the Aubagne IFF for *A Long Story* (2014), by Jorien van Nes.

Ioana Flora also played important parts in *One Floor Below*, directed by Radu Muntean and selected for Un Certain Regard, Cannes 2015, *Déjà Vu* (2013), and Adrian Sitaru's *Domestic* (2012).



## OXANA MORAVEC

Oxana Moravec is known both for her performances on the stage, especially the Toma Caragiu Theatre in Ploiești, and in film. Some of the titles in her portfolio are *One Floor Below* (2015), which premiered in Un Certain Regard, Cannes 2015, *Child's Pose* (2013), awarded with Golden Bear in Berlinale, *Chasing Rainbows* (2012), *Crossing Dates* (2008), *The Way I Spent the End of the World* (2006). She previously worked with director Iulia Rugină on her short film, *Bună, Cristina! Pa, Cristina!*.

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## HAI-HUI ENTERTAINMENT

**Hai-Hui Entertainment** is an independent film/TV production company founded in 2000, having a focus on producing feature films, but shorts and documentaries as well. Hai-Hui co-produced together with Parada Film the Berlinale 2013 Golden Bear winner, *Child's Pose*, by Calin Peter Netzer. The company was also involved in the production of *The Mission of the Human Resources Manager*, by Eran Riklis, an Israel-Germany-France-Romanian co-production, which won the Audience Award in Locarno in 2009. Another international co-production was *Aglaja*, by Krisztina Deak, winner of Golden Orange Award at Antalya IFF 2012.

Hai-Hui was the Romanian partner for Kornél Mundruczó's Cannes 2008 competition film *Delta*, awarded with FIPRESCI Prize, and a minority partner in the British-Romanian co-production *Katalin Varga*, by Peter Strickland, European Discovery of the Year at the 2009 European Film Awards and winner of a Silver Bear in Berlinale. In 2004, Hai-Hui provided production services for the award-winning *The Death of Mr. Lazarescu*, directed by Cristi Puiu and produced by Mandragora Film.

## **LIBRA FILM**

Libra Film is an independent film and TV production company, founded by Tudor Giurgiu in 1994. Between 2000-2013, Libra produced around 30 films, 9 out of which were international co-productions, such as *The Great Communist Bank Robbery* (2004), a documentary by Alexandru Solomon co-produced with Les Films D'Ici (France), *Katalin Varga* by Peter Strickland, Silver Bear winner in 2009 and European Discovery of the Year at the EFA Awards, *Cannibal* by Manuel Cuenca, a Spanish-Romanian-French-Russian co-production, premiered in Toronto IFF 2013 or *The Japanese Dog*, by Tudor Cristian Jurgiu, selected in New Directors competition - San Sebastian IFF 2013.

Libra was also the local partner for Kornél Mundruczó's Cannes 2008 competition film *Delta*, winner of FIPRESCI award. It also produced the 2012 Best European Short Film, *Superman, Spiderman or Batman*, by Tudor Giurgiu. *Why Me?* (2015), by Tudor Giurgiu, was selected in the Panorama section in Berlinale, while his second feature, *Of Snails And Men* (2012), a local box-office hit, won awards in Warsaw, Sankt Petersburg and Valladolid IFF.

Libra Film also produced *The World is Mine*, a debut by Nicolae Constantin Tănase, and two documentaries: *Aliyah DaDa* by Oana Giurgiu, developed in Archidoc program and *Cinema and Mon Amour* by Alexandru Belc, a coproduction with HBO Europe. Other titles under development include *At the Side of the Moon* by Tudor Giurgiu and *Draculatour* - an animation project by Cecilia Felmeri.

Libra Film is the only Romanian production company which has been granted three times (2009, 2011 and 2014) development support by MEDIA Program of EU for its slate of projects including features and documentaries.

## **CONTACT**

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