



Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival
East of the West – Competition

MAMONGA

press kit



Genre: drama
Runtime: 92 min
Year of production: 2019
Countries of production: Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro
Production Companies: Nana 143, Sarajevo Film Academy, SlovoFilm, Code Blue Production
supported by Film Center Serbia, Film Center Montenegro, Sarajevo Foundation for Cinematography
presented at Kino Der Kunst project pitch 2017 and Karlovy Vary Works in Progress 2018

Director: Stefan Malešević
Producers: Andrijana Sofranić, Aleksandra Cvijetić, Emina Ganić, Stefan Malešević, Bojana Radulović
DoP: Bogdan Babović
Editor: Jelena Maksimović
Sound designer: Bojan Palikuća
Set designer: Dragana Bačović
Costume designer: Lidija Andrić
Composer: James Stockton

Cast: Marta Bjelica, Dražen Pavlović, Nabi Tang, Vuk Janošević

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Logline

**They went down the road, the road to which they're bound.
Too late did they notice, that the road was round.**

Synopsis

1

The child refuses to speak. The Asian cannot understand the language of the locals in the mountains. The trucker's son won't raise his voice. She speaks only when necessary. Years go by. Trucks go by. Words go by. Time goes forward, but they run in circles.

2

Young and confident, Jovana works behind the counter at a bakery in the small town where she lives with her father. Her somewhat shy peer Marko is supposed to follow in his own father's footsteps and become a truck driver. But the events of one night change both their lives...



Director's biography

Stefan Malešević (1989) was born and raised in Belgrade. He studied at the PhD film.factory program in Sarajevo where he made several projects under the mentorship of Bela Tarr and other guest lecturers (Gus van Sant, Fred Kelemen, Tilda Swinton, Carlos Reygadas, Cristian Mungiu, Agnieszka Holland...).

Stefan directed a number of short films, many of which screened at international festivals (Trieste, Sarajevo, Tokyo, Tirana, Moscow, Paris, Sibiu, Edinburgh...). He was a jury member at the Herceg Novi Film Festival 2017, Roshd Film Festival in Tehran 2018 and BelDocs Film Festival 2018. Stefan participates at IDFAcademy Summer School 2019.

Selected filmography

2017 Gora, doc, 78';

best camera and best film @ BelDocs, Serbia 2017; Special Jury Mention at DokuFest, Kosovo 2017; screened @ Astra, Romania 2017; UnderHill, Montenegro 2017; Cinema City, Serbia 2017; Visions du Reel, Nyon, Switzerland 2018;

2015 The Bucketrider, fiction, 10';

screened @ Cannes Short Film Corner 2016; Divan Film Festival, Romania 2016; Kino der Kunst, Munich, Germany 2016;

2014 A Fine Day for Bananafish, fiction, 25';

Jury award @ B3F Pogradec, Albania 2015; Best short film @ Regards sur le Cinema du Monde Festival, Paris, France 2016; screened @ Trieste Film Festival, Italy 2015; DIFMF, Dublin, Ireland 2015; UnDependence, Edinburgh, Scotland 2015;



Director's statement

In three parts "Mamonga" portrays protagonists of different age trying to fit in three different environments, with the reoccurring theme being the lack of understanding in many different ways.

In the writing process I tried to retain a level of ambiguity, while having some points of focus. This film gives no answers, leaving the viewer with the freedom to choose which topic to concentrate on and what conclusions to make. There are no clearly defined heroes and anti-heroes, no expected catharsis and no predictable character development. Unlike standard narrative films, "Mamonga" possesses randomness and complexity of real life.

To that end, all the inconsistency in following the characters, every lack of a fantastic plot twist and final resolution, as well as every deviation from the standard plot structure was done intentionally.

The three stories, each possessing many layers and possible readings, connect together and reinforce each other. The first part deals with adolescents in a highly patriarchal province; the second part shows old age in a rural society dying out along with the patriarchal system; the third part shows childhood in an urban setting where patriarchal rules have no importance anymore.

Throughout the film the dialogue plays no big part and the main narrative elements are actually set design, actors' faces, lighting, and camera movements.

Using an unorthodox visual approach with a slow tempo and a small number of shots, I tried to raise the film above the level of everyday life and small human drama to the realm of universal. Sound design in this film serves the same purpose, intertwining direct sound with the composed soundtrack. With its ritual-occult energy, the music represents the invisible, unnamed force that ties the lives of our characters together; the destiny that puts our protagonists on trials, giving them tasks, offering different starting positions and ability to change, different gender and different challenges...

