



YOU WON'T BE ALONE

PRESS NOTES



A film by **Goran Stolevski** (*WOULD YOU LOOK AT HER*)

Starring **Noomi Rapace** (*THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO*, *PROMETHEUS*) **Alice Englert** (*BEAUTIFUL CREATURES*, *TOP OF THE LAKE*), **Anamaria Marinca** (*4 MONTHS, 3 WEEKS AND 2 DAYS*, *SEX TRAFFIC*), **Félix Maritaud** (*BPM - BEATS PER MINUTE*), **Sara Klimoska** (*WOULD YOU LOOK AT HER*, *WILLOW*), **Carloto Cotta** (*TABU*), and **Arta Dobroski** (*LORNA'S SILENCE*, *GANGS OF LONDON*).

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LOGLINE

In an isolated mountain village in 19th-century Macedonia, a young witch abducted by an ancient, shape-shifting woman is abandoned in the wilderness, where her curiosity about the lives of humans leads her to inhabit the bodies of a series of local villagers.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

In 19th-century Macedonia, Maria (Anamaria Marinca), a 200-year-old witch, abducts a young girl to raise as her own. But after transforming 16-year-old Nevena (Sara Klimoska) into one of her own kind, Maria quickly loses interest in her protégée. Abandoned in the woods, Nevena accidentally kills a peasant woman (Noomi Rapace) and assumes her shape. Enraptured by the wonders and hardships of life, Nevena continues to kill and inhabit both female and male villagers as she learns to treasure the range of human experience. But when Maria suddenly reappears, Nevena is forced to make a heartbreaking decision in **You Won't Be Alone**, a hauntingly humanistic, poetically supernatural story steeped in Macedonian folklore.

LONG SYNOPSIS

For centuries, the Macedonian mountains have concealed dangerous supernatural secrets, including the existence of “Old Maid Maria” (Anamaria Marinca). An embittered witch whose tragic story has terrified children for 200 years, Maria yearns for a daughter to keep her company. She attempts to abduct a newborn peasant girl, Nevena (Sara Klimoska), forcing the child’s desperate mother to make an unthinkable bargain: If the mother is allowed to raise her baby daughter, she will surrender the child when she turns 16 and allow Maria to take Nevena as her own. Maria marks the girl to seal the covenant, rendering her mute.

On Nevena’s 16th birthday, Maria returns and transforms the girl into a witch. But motherhood is not for Maria, and she eventually abandons Nevena after teaching her how to assume the shape of any creature she kills. Left on her own, Nevena’s loneliness and curiosity about the human world draw her to a nearby village. When she accidentally kills a peasant, Bosilka (Noomi Rapace), she takes the woman’s place in the village. Life there is brutal and unpredictable but strangely fulfilling for Nevena — until she is assaulted and slays the attacker. After discarding her assumed body, she seduces and kills a handsome young man named Boris (Carlo Cottafava), taking pleasure in the freedoms his life offers.

When a 10-year-old girl is critically injured, Nevena seizes the opportunity for a fresh start. As Biliana, she lives the joyful childhood she was denied. When she reaches young womanhood, Biliana (Alice Englert) marries Yovan (Félix Maritaud), a handsome young man from her village, and soon becomes



pregnant. But the sudden reappearance of Maria means Nevena will have to make an unthinkable choice of her own. The feature film debut of Sundance Award-winning filmmaker Goran Stolevski, **You Won't Be Alone** is a haunting, poetic, supernatural becoming-human story steeped in Macedonian rituals and traditions. **You Won't Be Alone** is written and directed by Goran Stolevski (*Would You Look at Her*). Producers are Kristina Ceyton (*The Babadook*, *The Nightingale*) and Samantha Jennings (*Buoyancy*, *Good Madam*). The film stars Sara Klimoska (*Would You Look at Her*, *Willow*), Anamaria Marinca (*4 Months, 3 Weeks, and 2 Days*, "Sex Traffic"), Noomi Rapace (*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, *Prometheus*), Alice Englert (*Beautiful Creatures*, "Top of the Lake"), Carloto Cotta (*Tabu*, *Diamantino*), Félix Maritaud (*BPM (Beats Per Minute)*, *Savage / Wild*) and Arta Dobroschi (*Lorna's Silence*, "Gangs of London"). Director of photography is Matthew Chuang (*The Mandela Effect*, *Blue Bayou*). Production designer is Bethany Ryan ("High Life," *Buoyancy*). The film is edited by Luca Cappelli (*Ruin*, *Acute Misfortune*). Makeup artist is Dusica Vuksanovic ("Black Sun," "The Outpost")



ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

When writer and director Goran Stolevski took home the 2018 Sundance Festival prize for his short film *Would You Look at Her*, it immediately attracted the attention of producers Kristina Ceyton and Samantha Jennings, partners in Sydney-based Causeway Films. The pair, who actively seek out filmmakers with unique voices and work with them to launch their careers internationally, were intrigued to learn of an Australian filmmaker who made a Macedonian film. After screening the acclaimed short, Ceyton and Jennings immediately reached out to Stolevski to ask if he had any scripts they could read.

“It was obvious Goran has an authentic directorial voice,” says Ceyton. “He sent summaries of about 10 films including *You Won’t Be Alone*. Literally the next day, we both said, ‘We’re making this movie.’” According to Jennings, Causeway’s priority is to identify original Australian voices outside of the mainstream film industry. “When we find someone as creatively evolved as Goran, it’s thrilling,” she adds. “His short had beautiful performances. It had a sensibility and sensuality that we loved. *You Won’t Be Alone* containing a complete and original world. It uses genre elements in an entirely new way, one that is lyrical and poetic. We had never read anything like it.”

Stolevski estimates he has made about 25 short films in his career, but nothing at this scale. “I thought I’d write something that messes with the traditional structure and story and see what comes out of it. I had never written a genre film before. My work is mostly relationship-based. I knew that if I were going to do a genre picture, it would have to be horror, but I would only take the conventions that served my vision and sensibility.”

“My first thought was that I wanted to delve into the everyday life of ordinary people,” he continues. “And I love the notion of an idiosyncratic arthouse filmmaker taking on a genre diametrically opposite to their entire body of work, embracing many of its conventions, trampling just as many, and delivering an arresting, profoundly unique film.”

The initial pitch for **You Won’t Be Alone** described the film as a supernatural film set in the 1800s in Macedonia. As time went by and the story developed, it became more of a fable that explores deeper themes of connection and motherhood, with a feminist slant. “It is a story with a lot of emotion and passion told in a very unique way,” says Jennings. “It’s a distinct combination very relevant in the world today.”

Born and raised in Macedonia until the age of 12, Stolevski began researching the folktales of his homeland. “I wanted to be transported somewhere that I could capture a way of life that has almost disappeared,” he explains. “The part of history that enralls me is not the rulers and the warriors. It is the ordinary people, their day-to-day reality, the way they felt about living and dying and love, and



what they thought constituted happiness and beauty.”

“I found a lot in my research about women being burned for being witches. They were often accused of taking over the bodies of other human beings and animals. If you take that premise very literally, what an amazing insight into the world. I thought if my protagonist were isolated from other humans, through her eyes the audience could see the commonplace as extraordinary and strange.”

Stolevski’s first feature film draws inspiration from an unlikely combination of sources that range from James Rebanks’ *The Shepherd’s Life*, which recounts a traditional way of life that is virtually unchanged after 5,000 years; Taiwanese auteur Hou Hsiao-Hsien’s 2015 subversive take on wuxia (martial arts), *The Assassin*; and a Romanian film called *Aferim!* a tale set in the Roma community that reminded him of a classic American Western. As all these ingredients coalesced, Stolevski added one more.

He was reading Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves*, which moved him to try and employ stream-of-consciousness in a cinematic way rather than a novelistic way. The result is a curious, insightful voiceover that represents the protagonist’s unique point of view. “Goran is a beautiful writer with a very rigorous vision,” says Ceyton. “He created an inner monologue in which the ultimate outcast is trying to make sense of a normal world.”

THE FACES OF THE WITCH

To portray the inhabitants of his fictional village, Stolevski has handpicked an international cast that includes actors from Macedonia, Romania, Sweden, Portugal, Yugoslavia, and Serbia. Sara Klimoska, who plays Nevena, had worked with Stolevski on *Would You Look at Her*, and the two forged a strong connection, according to Ceyton. “She’s raw, real and sensitive, as well as quite mature for her age,” says the producer. “Because the character is mute, she doesn’t have her voice or the dialogue to hang on to. She was fearless in putting herself out there.”

“Sara is such an exceptional actor,” adds the director. “She is connected to everything around her: the environment, the people, the concept of the film. When Nevena first sees humans, she becomes curious about living as one of them. She mimics the behavior of the people around her, without understanding what the impulses are. When someone is smiling, when she sees someone crying, she mimics the motion but doesn’t understand the feelings. Sara is just so alive and real in those moments.”

Klimoska says she was completely swept up by the story. “In its simplest form, it’s a horror drama based in 19th-century Macedonia,” she points out. “But I hope people who come expecting to

see a classic witch movie are delighted to find it is also a very intimate story about loneliness and the struggle to belong. Nevena’s ability to transform herself is fascinating to me. I would really like to be able



to do that. Her goal is very simple: to find who she is, where she belongs, and how to love and be loved.”

The actress agrees with Ceyton that the single biggest challenge in the character is to communicate depths of emotion without ever speaking. “We hear her thoughts in the narration, but she can’t express herself through words. I had to find a way to do that using body language. And so, did all of the other actors that Nevena inhabits.”

To that end, Klimoska spent time with the other actors to brief them on what she had already established for the character. “Sara would often be the first person to meet them,” says Stolevski. “She would explain the vocabulary of body language she developed for Nevena and they would build on it through each of her incarnations.”

As a Macedonian, Klimoska says the culture does not seem exotic to her. “There are still remote villages where people are living like that. But Goran found a new way to share it. He’s very creative. I can see why he set his story there.”

Noomi Rapace, the Swedish actress who shot to international stardom in the original *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* trilogy, plays Bosilka, a young mother accidentally killed by Nevena. Bosilka becomes the young witch’s first avatar. “She has to guide us through that first transition,” says Stolevski. “Noomi took on all that Sara established and built on it. Every actor who portrayed this character brought something of themselves.

With Noomi that was raw, childlike awe.”

The award-winning actress says once she started reading the screenplay, she was unable to put it down. “It’s a movie that asks, who are we?” she says. “As an outsider who can take on different bodies, Nevena experiences people’s reactions to her from different perspectives. Bosilka is a farmer, taking care of the household, having a baby. She has a violent husband and she’s suffered a lot of abuse but that’s normal to her. When Nevena comes into her body, all of that is new. She is caught between realities, still a bit disconnected from everything around her.”

Rapace admits she herself was somewhat disoriented by Bosilka’s transformation. “The setting is so brutal and real. It’s like stepping into a different universe, like we did a time-travel. There was nothing fake to help me as an actress merge into this reality. To me this is a one-in-a-million movie and I believe the audience will be taken on a ride they won’t forget.”

In the relatively short time Rapace is on screen, she leaves a powerful impression, says Ceyton.

“She’s got spirit and lightness and humor even though it’s a very serious role. This is a woman who is well-known within her community. She is a competent wife and mother. Suddenly she becomes someone who has no idea about the world. It takes a phenomenal actress to pull that off, and Noomi was just incredible.



We were very, very fortunate to have her in the film to give that character another level.”

After abandoning Bosilka’s body, Nevena deliberately chooses her next identity for the first time. She selects Boris, one of the village’s handsome young men, and uses his body to explore the privileges his gender affords him. Portuguese actor Carloto Cotta, who plays Boris, says one of the reasons he originally signed on to **You Won’t Be Alone** was that he had always wanted to make a horror film. “But I can’t categorize the movie as strictly horror,” he says. “It’s a complex story of initiation, of self-discovery and discovery of the world around Nevena. Her journey takes her in search of love, compassion, freedom, and human experience. It also focuses with surprising sympathy on the witch who damned her, Maria, and the relationship between them.”

The producers had been watching Cotta’s career for some time, according to Jennings. They admired his performances in the film *Tabu* and the series “A Teia” and had been looking for a role to cast him in. “Here he is playing a man in a man’s world,” says the producer, “but actually there’s an innocent young girl inside of him. It’s a unique opportunity for an actor like Carloto to play those two roles. He had an incredible trust in Goran’s vision.”

Cotta says he took on the challenge of playing a character who does not speak by channeling two of his favorite performers: Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin. “I love silent movies in general so that was a great inspiration,” he explains. “It was so intriguing to play, partly because my character is completely mute, but also because I only play Boris for a couple of short scenes. After that, I am playing Nevena. Most of what I did was pure spontaneous improvisation. I want to thank Goran for allowing me the freedom to explore. It was a bit frightening, but very fulfilling.”

The shoot itself was intense, he says, with long hours and extreme weather. “But it gave me a feeling of fellowship with Goran and a whole bunch of talented and incredibly nice people. I totally enjoyed working with my fellow colleagues. The experience was incredible throughout.”

After a short time living as Boris, Nevena comes upon Biliana, a critically injured child. She seizes the chance to assume her body and begin anew. Growing up in a loving family, she learns to manage her interior life, while connecting with other people and even falling in love with a young villager. Stolevski cast Australian actress Alice Englert as the adult Biliana in part because of what he calls her lack of sentimentality. “All the actors playing Nevena needed that quality,” he says. “Alice carries multiple lives with her when she enters the film. She builds on them and keeps us connected to Nevena through the story’s climax.”

Englert and Stolevski first met at a film festival where both had directed films that were screening. “One day, out of the blue, he requested that I read this script of his and see if there was anybody in it, I was drawn to,” Englert remembers. “I just loved it. It felt like something I’ve wanted to see on screen. It’s



such a different approach to the legend and the culture of witches.

“When I first read the script, I just felt shaken,” adds the actress. “It was so tender *and* so violent. Like a fairy tale, it takes the mundane and transforms it into the mysterious. Goran and I agreed that it made us feel vulnerable, because it makes you see the absurdity of being human.”

Englert points out that by the time Nevena becomes Biliana, she has lived life in the bodies of a young woman, a man, a dog and what Englert describes as “her creature-like self.” “She has had a traumatic, disturbing adolescence. She is no longer female or male. But she also reclaims her childhood and becomes somebody who has managed to keep on going, even find security. Her heart has been broken over and over, but it stays open. That is the most important quality that I tried to embrace.”

With an elusive combination of earthiness and ephemerality, Englert’s screen presence is essential to this last incarnation of Nevena, according to Jennings. “There’s a realness to her that is beautiful,” the producer speaks. “By the end she has become the person she wanted to be all this time. She intends to stay in that life and that body. She’s the most human form possible of that lost, tragic young witch, the perfect place for her to land at the ending of the film.”

As Biliana, Nevena finally seems to find happiness with Yovan, a young man in her village. She marries, has a child, and for the first time a future she looks forward to. Their relationship changes both their lives, says French actor Félix Maritaud, who plays Yovan. “For most of his life, Yovan, too, is something of an outcast in the village. He’s excessively shy until he falls in love with a witch. She teaches him to appreciate his manhood and he teaches her how to trust the feelings she craves.

“I was so happy to work with Alice,” adds the French actor. “She is a paradox who balances strength and wariness. She’s so radiant and pure. I was so blessed to have her as a partner in this movie.”

THE WOLF-EATERESS

Anamaria Marinca, perhaps best known for her work in the Cannes Film Festival Palme d’Or winning drama *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days*, plays Maria, the ancient spirit who abducts and then abandons Nevena. Like Nevena, the 200-year-old witch yearns to belong, but circumstances have left her unable to connect to another human being.

“Anamaria is another actor we have admired for years,” says Ceyton. “This is a challenging script for all the actors, but she wears a full-body prosthetic skin almost the whole time. She’s primarily left with her eyes and her voice to work with. And yet, her performance is so nuanced that it turns the whole expectation of who she is around by the end of the film.”

Maria is the flipside of her young protégée in the way she approaches life, says Stolevski. “Nevena is always looking for joy and fulfillment, even where it doesn’t exist. Maria looks at things as they are, without wishing away the darkness. At the beginning of the film, she seems a completely destructive



force, but you will come to realize how she became this way. Anamaria was the natural choice to play this sort of operatic character because she doesn't like to show off at all. So, when she allows you to see her feelings, it can be overwhelming — even while she is doing horrific, unjustifiable things.”

Marinca and Stolevski have been friends for almost a decade and have long been on the lookout for a film to make together. “The film opened up an extraordinary new world for me,” says the actress. “It gave me the chance to explore feelings and thoughts that I hadn't come across before. It's quite spectacular because I go from being quite a regular woman in the 16th century to becoming a witch. Having the freedom to play with the character and with this extraordinary power of transformation is a gift.”

Finding the character was a unique experience for Marinca. “To me it was very much about meeting my shadow and encountering a monster,” she believes. “Every culture share some of the same archetypes and the same stories. For women, there is Circe, there's Medea and there are all sorts of shapeshifters throughout mythology. But technically it was very difficult. I'm wearing this head-to-toe costume. At times I'm covered in blood. At times I burn. There is a lot of sadness. We treated it in a psychologically realistic way, but I chose not to know what the motivations of the character are. Otherwise, I don't think we would tell the story we wanted.”

A MOUNTAIN HIDEAWAY

Bethany Ryan, the production designer for **You Won't Be Alone**, had the task of finding a seemingly remote Balkan village that appeared untouched by time for at least 150 years. After reading Stolevski's screenplay and having extensive conversations with the director about how he envisioned the film, she had a clear vision of what it should look like, but concrete information about the area was scarce.

She finally discovered the work of Polish ethnologist Jozef Obrebski, a keen observer of cultural change among eastern European peasantry in the years before the Second World War. “In the 1930s, he spent time in Volche, a small village in the Poreche region of Macedonia,” says Ryan. “He had taken a lot of black-and-white photographs, which became the backbone of my research.”

Coincidentally it turned out that as a child, Stolevski spent nearly every summer weekend in Poreche visiting his grandmother. “She lived in a literally crumbling farmhouse in the mountains,” he recalls. “My father spent years attempting to get me involved in things like sowing, reaping, raising pigs, digging ditches. I was more interested in sitting and gossiping with the toothless ladies that formed my grandmother's extended social circle. Who would've thought that one day it would turn out to be useful to my professional life?”

Obrebski's photographs also helped location manager Stefan Todorovic guide the filmmakers to their dream location. With Macedonia's Shar mountain range as a visual reference, “We found an almost



abandoned village in South-East Serbia named Pokrevenik with exactly the feeling and architecture they were looking for,” he says. “The houses are between 100 and 200 years old, mainly made from local mud, bricks and stone. The youngest man in the village is about 65 years old.”

But the atmosphere and look were not enough on their own. The area is known for rough terrain and dirt roads that would make transporting gear and personnel to the mountaintop difficult. “We couldn’t get there with regular trucks or cars, so we used a lot of SUVs and tractors. Fortunately, we could stay about 20 kilometers away in Pirot, the big city in this region of Serbia.”

Using the existing houses as a base, Ryan added details that took Pokrvenik back in time. “It was necessary for me to understand how the people lived and what resources were available,” she says. “We demodernized a lot of the houses in the village using building techniques that they used at that time. We were allowed to harvest wood from the area and dig the local mud to add to the buildings, which hopefully makes the changes unnoticeable.”

Because there are no color photos of the historic villages, the palette is based on the natural environment. Ryan describes it as restrained, with pops of color from the chili peppers and corn that make up a large part of the local crops. “We were lucky enough to have been there from late summer through autumn, so we could take advantage of the explosion of beautiful autumnal colors. We put a lot of emphasis on how people lived, what vegetables were grown in their garden, how they cooked, how they sheared the sheep and cut grasses. The set dressing is not decorative. It is all intended to show a way of life.” Similarly, authenticity was paramount when it came to costumes, according to Ceyton. Based on Ryan’s research, historical village attire throughout the Balkan Peninsula was made from coarse white home spun linen designed to be practical for work on the farm. Men are dressed in loosely fitting trousers, shirts, and vests, while women wear traditional white pleated skirts or chemises paired with aprons embroidered in vivid red and black. The villagers in the film are clad in the plainest of garments that are often faded and tattered from hard work. “We took the same approach to makeup,” says Ceyton. “We wanted to see the blemishes, wrinkles, sweat and dirt that felt appropriate for the time and of the place.” Klimoska, a native of Macedonia, was awestruck by the faithfulness of the physical elements of the film. “The landscape is amazing,” she marvels. “The houses are very old, and they hadn’t been touched in forever. I felt the spirit of the people who had lived there. This is a movie that could never have been shot in a studio.”

The filmmakers agreed to use natural light wherever possible in the film. “There was no fancy equipment of any kind,” says Ceyton. “The natural lighting creates intimacy and puts the audience right inside that world. Our cinematographer Matt Chuang pretty much used hand-held cameras, which opened up the whole world and allowed the driving force to be the performances.”

Ryan remembers spending hours with Chuang, Stolevski and the producers working out which scenes would play our best in which locations, then strategizing the ways to introduce natural light, making



sure that windows were big enough and in the right places or deciding where to position a fireplace to provide justified interior lighting.

Chuang calls the director's approach daring, instinctual and spontaneous. "The most exciting thing about working with Goran is that he's always searching for something that feels real and honest and sincere," says the cinematographer. "He doesn't use gimmicks; he doesn't try to force anything. He always wants it to be organic, natural and believable."

Although there are dark supernatural elements in the movie, the filmmakers' objective was to never emphasize that aspect of the film visually, according to Chuang. "The audience needs to buy into a tangible, visceral world," he says. "The filmmaking needs not to distract from the performances. The camera had to stay with the actors, to be spontaneous with them, to move with them. We didn't want to have the mechanics of filmmaking obstruct that."

Shooting with a handheld ALEXA Mini helped accomplish that, Chuang says. "The lenses have a little more of a vintage look. Shooting in the squarer 1.44:1 aspect ratio allowed us to frame in an abstract way that gave us a sense of what Nevena is going through. That was quite exciting and challenging to work with. My team embraced the uncertainty of it and the excitement of being ready for anything, like moving extremely quickly when there's a magical moment with the sun or with the fog."

Although much of the action is captured in close-up, Chuang managed to stay out of the actors' way, according to Stolevski. "They didn't even feel like he was there," says the director. "They had a lot of freedom. They could move around pretty much anywhere, without worrying about the camera position or the light. How the hell do you do that? You get Matty C. to shoot your film."

'THE MIRACLE OF BEING HUMAN'

You Won't Be Alone more than delivers on the promise of the screenplay that grabbed their attention three years ago, Ceyton and Jennings agree. "It will sweep you away on this incredible journey that asks what it means to become human from the outside in," says Ceyton. "It's beautiful and melancholy, sad and life-affirming all at the same time. And perhaps it will move people to change in some way, which is why we make movies in the first place."

For Jennings, what is special about the film is that it tackles huge themes about humanity and belonging and motherhood, but in the everyday. It is a reminder that everyone must fight to find their place in the world.

"Yes, the scope of the film is enormous," she says, "but it remains a personal story that reminds us to take delight in every little moment, because it is so easy to lose that sense of wonder." Although it has been years since Stolevski first heard Nevena's voice in his head and recorded her stray phrasings in a notebook, his personal attachment to her remains intense. "I want the viewers to feel like they are under



Nevena’s skin. And not just Nevena, but also Maria — and watch how that shifts their way of looking at even ordinary things. Two people try to overcome the same horrific suffering and retain a faith in other humans. One of them manages, but one of them tragically doesn’t. Why?”

And finally, he says, he wants audiences to feel Nevena’s seismic yearning, her endless sense of wonder and curiosity, her hunger for human connection, the overwhelming comfort she finally finds in such a connection and her horror when she stands to lose it. “Perhaps that will lead them to look at life and nature from a new perspective and be reminded of how much strangeness and unassuming beauty goes into the miracle of being human.”

ABOUT THE CAST

NOOMI RAPACE (Bosilka) first captured the eyes of the international entertainment community with her commanding, unnerving and critically acclaimed portrayal of Lisbeth Salander in *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, *The Girl Who Played with Fire* and *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet’s Nest*, the film adaptations of Stieg Larsson’s Millennium Trilogy. She was also recognized internationally for her performance in Ridley Scott’s *Prometheus*, opposite Michael Fassbender. In addition to her powerful presence on screen, as a gifted creative and thought leader Rapace has a discerning eye for material with strong instincts that aid in translating and realizing storytelling for audiences around the world.

More recently, Rapace starred in Yuval Adler’s *The Secrets We Keep*, opposite Joel Kinnaman and Chris Messina (executive producer as well); Valdimar Jóhannsson’s *Lamb*, which won several awards including the Un Certain Regard - Prize of Originality at Cannes 2021; and Tommy Wirkola’s *The Trip*, alongside Aksel Hennie. On the small screen she recently starred in the second season of the Amazon series “Tom Clancy’s Jack Ryan,” opposite John Krasinski. Rapace plays a formidable agent in Germany’s Secret Intelligence who meets up with Jack Ryan in South America.

Up next for Rapace is Oscar®-nominated director Tom Van Avermaet’s short film, *Hearts of Stone*, and Adam Berg’s feature *Black Crab*.

Rapace began her acting career at the age of 7, in Iceland’s feature *In the Shadow of the Raven*. She has since gone on to appear in more than 20 films and television shows. In 2007 Rapace made her mark on the big screen with a breakthrough performance in the Danish film *Daisy Diamond*. She was honored with Denmark’s prestigious Bodil and Robert awards (Best Actress). Rapace also garnered high praise for her breakthrough performance in *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, winning Sweden’s Guldbagge Award and Germany’s International Jupiter Award (Best Actress), in addition to being nominated for a BAFTA and European Film Award for her role. Rapace garnered praise for her performances in the second and third installments of the film trilogy as well.



In 2011 Rapace starred in Pernilla August's *Beyond*, for which she won the Guldbagge Award for Best Actress. That same year she starred in Pål Sletaune's thriller *The Monitor (Babycall)*, for which she received Best Actress honors at the Rome Film Festival.

Rapace's other film credits include Kim Farrant's *Angel of Mine*, Robert Budreau's *Stockholm*, Vicky Jewson's *Close*, David Ayer's *Bright*, Mikael Håfström's *Unlocked*, Tommy Wirkola's *What Happened to Monday*, Steven Shainberg's *Rupture*, Daniel Espinosa's *Child 44*, Michaël R. Roskam's *The Drop*, Niels Arden Oplev's *Dead Man Down*, Guy Ritchie's *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* and Brian De Palma's *Passion*.

ALICE ENGLERT (Biliana) is an actor, writer, director and singer best known for her role in the supernatural romance *Beautiful Creatures*, for which she was nominated for the Choice Movie Breakout Award

at the 2013 Teen Choice Awards, or for her performance in the second season of Jane Campion's award-winning series "Top of the Lake," starring Elisabeth Moss. 2020 saw Englert appear in Ryan Murphy's Netflix series "Ratched," alongside Sarah Paulson, Sharon Stone, Judy Davis and Cynthia Nixon. Her previous television credits include the BBC's historical fantasy series "Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell," which was nominated for several BAFTA Awards and recognized by the British Film Institute as one of the most important television programs of 2015, and the Channel 4 drama "New Worlds."

Most recently Englert was seen in Jane Campion's award-winning drama *Power of the Dog*, the crime drama *Body Brokers*, written and directed by John Swab, and the BBC/Netflix series "The Serpent," starring Tahar Rahim.

Previously, Englert played a lead role in the indie *Them That Follow*, opposite Olivia Colman and Thomas Mann, and starred opposite Elle Fanning in Sally Potter's *Ginger & Rosa*, for which she was nominated for Best Supporting Actress at the British Independent Film Awards. Her other film credits include Roland Joffe's time travel adventure *The Lovers* (2013), the British psychological horror film *The Fear* and Alison Maclean's New Zealand film *The Rehearsal*, based on Eleanor Catton's book of the same name.

Also a director, Englert wrote and helmed the short *The Boyfriend Game*, which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2015 and the following year screened in competition at the Berlin Film Festival. She also won the Best Achievement in Screenplay Award at Australia's St. Kilda Film Festival. Her short film *Family Happiness*, starring Ben Whishaw, screened in competition at the Sydney Film Festival in 2017.

ANAMARIA MARINCA (Maria) is best known for her acclaimed turns in the 2004 TV miniseries "Sex Traffic," which won eight BAFTAs, and the 2007 feature *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days*, which won



more than 40 international awards. Marinca took home BAFTA and Gemini awards for her performance in “Sex Traffic” and was recognized with a host of international awards and critics circle honors for *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days*.

Marinca’s many other film credits include *Summer Holiday*, *Five Minutes of Heaven*, *Europa Report*, *Fury*, *The Old Guard* and *The Bike Thief*. Her small-screen work includes roles in National Geographic Channel’s “Mars,” Amazon’s “Tin Star,” Sky One’s “Temple” and Apple +’s “Invasion.” Up next is the BBC series “The Chelsea Detective.”

FÉLIX MARITAUD (Yovan) recently starred in Yann Gonzales’ *Knife + Heart* and Camille Vidal Naquet’s *Sauvage / Wild*. The latter role earned him the Louis Roederer Foundation Rising Star Award at the International Critics’ Week at Cannes. Maritaud’s television credits include “I Am Jonas,” directed by Christophe Charrier.

The actor received training at l’Ecole nationale supérieure d’art in Bourges. Maritaud was first noticed after his performance in *BPM (Beats Per Minute)*, directed by Robin Campillo. The movie screened at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival and won the César Award for Best Film in 2018.

SARA KLIMOSKA (Teenage Nevena) is a film and theater actor and a former modern ballet dancer who notably played the lead in Milcho Manchevski’s *Willow*. In 2017 Klimoska played the leading role in *Would You Look at Her*, directed by Goran Stolevski, which won the prize for Best Short Film at the Sundance Film Festival. She has acted in films spoken in Macedonian, Serbian, English, French and Turkish. Her latest credits in a leading role are *Lena and Vladimir*, directed by Igor Aleksov, and *Sabattier Effect*, directed by Eleonora Veninova, and she also had a supporting part in Eline Gehring’s *Nico*.

Klimoska was born in Struga, North Macedonia, and in 2017 graduated from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Skopje with a degree in acting. She made her feature debut in Vardan Tozija’s 2016 film *Amok*. Since then, Klimoska has appeared in numerous shorts, features and TV series.

CARLOTO COTTA (Boris) is a Portuguese actor who has starred in many popular television series, films and theater productions in his native Portugal. He is best known for his roles in Miguel Gomes’ *Tabu*, which won both the Silver Bear and the FIPRESCI Award at Berlinale, and *Diamantino*, which was directed by Gabriel Abrantes and Daniel Schmidt. *Diamantino* won the Critics’ Week Grand Prize at Cannes and also earned Cotta the Best Actor Award at Portugal’s Golden Globes.

Cotta’s recent and upcoming film projects include Paula Gaitán’s *Light in the Tropics* and João Mário Grilo’s *Campo De Sangue*. He will also be seen in the Netflix series “Glória,” for acclaimed director Tiago Guedes.



Cotta was born in Paris and studied at EPTC in Cascais, then at the Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute in Los Angeles. His diverse and varied screen work includes Eugène Green's *How Fernando Pessoa Saved Portugal*, João Salaviza's short film *Arena* (which won the Palme d'Or for Best Short Film at Cannes), Valeria Sarmiento's *Lines of Wellington* and Ira Sachs' *Frankie*.

ARTA DOBROSHI (Stamena) is often cited for her striking presence and ability to breathe authentic life into the roles she plays. Dobroschi shot to international renown for her depiction of the title character in *Lorna's Silence (Le Silence de Lorna)*, directed by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne. The film won Best Screenplay at the Cannes Film Festival and Dobroschi's remarkable work in this role was recognized with a Best Actress nomination at the European Film Awards, among many other honors.

Dobroschi currently stars in the AMC/Sky Atlantic series "Gangs of London," created by Gareth Evans. The show's second season will air in 2022.

Dobroschi was born in Kosovo and grew up between Pristina, Tirana and, in the U.S., North Carolina. She lived through the Kosovo War and as a refugee in 1999 worked with International Medical Corps to help build a hospital in the refugee camp in Macedonia. After the war she went on to work with NATO troops in Kosovo, helping people return to their homes. As a student in the Pristina Academy of Arts' acting department, she appeared in numerous stage plays and short films.

Dobroschi's performance in *Three Worlds*, directed by Catherine Corsini, won her the Barbara Tipple Best Actress Award at the Women's International Film and Television Showcase in Los Angeles and she also received a nomination for Most Promising Young Actress at the César Awards in France. Dobroschi also won the European Shooting Star Award at the Berlinale Film Festival.

With her New Zealand film *Stray*, directed by Dustin Feneley, Dobroschi won Best Actress honors at Festival des Antipodes in Saint-Tropez. She also stars in the Massive Attack video "Come Near Me," featuring Ghostpoet.

In 2020 Dobroschi was decorated by the French government with the Medal of Knighthood of Arts and Letters for her contribution to the arts. Prior recipients of the award include Paul Auster, Ornette Coleman, Marilyn Horne, Jim Jarmusch, Robert Redford, Meryl Streep and Uma Thurman. Dobroschi is an advocate of peace and speaks out about human rights throughout the world.



ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

GORAN STOLEVSKI (Director, Writer) is an award-winning Macedonian-born and Australian raised writer-director who is making his feature film debut. He came to prominence with short films such as *Would You Look at Her*, winner of the Best International Short at Sundance 2018. Collectively his short films have played at over 200 festivals worldwide including Clermont-Ferrand, Palm Springs, Melbourne and Raindance. Stolevski also directed three episodes of the fourth season of International Emmy®-winning series “Nowhere Boys.”

CAUSEWAY FILMS (Production Company) is an Australian film production company founded by producers Kristina Ceyton and Samantha Jennings. With a passion for fostering exceptional new talent, Causeway Films focuses on the development and production of entertaining, socially relevant stories that allow original voices to achieve international success. Causeway’s first feature film was the award-winning psychological thriller *The Babadook*, from writer/director Jennifer Kent, which premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival to great critical and cultural success. The film went on to win many Best Film and Best Screenplay awards including three Australian Academy Awards (AACTAs) and the 2014 New York Film Critics Circle Award for Best First Film.

In 2018 Causeway launched Kent’s highly anticipated second feature, period drama *The Nightingale*, which won two awards at the prestigious Venice Film Festival including the Special Jury Prize. That same year they released *Cargo*, starring Martin Freeman, which received five AACTA award nominations including Best Film and was released as Australia’s first Netflix Original feature film in 2018.

Causeway then released the Cambodian-shot feature debut by Rodd Rathjen, *Buoyancy*. The film won the Ecumenical Jury Prize at the 2019 Berlin Film Festival and won Best Youth Feature Film at the Asia Pacific Screen Awards, Best Indie Film at the 2019 AACTAs, the Silver Gateway Award at the 2019 Mumbai Film Festival and the Grand Jury Prize at the 2019 Political Film Festival Porto-Vecchio. It was the Australian submission for Best International Feature Film at the 2020 Academy Awards®.

In 2020 Causeway completed principal photography for *Blaze*, directed by two-time Archibald Prize winner Del Kathryn Barton and starring Simon Baker. Also completed was *Good Madam (Mlungu Wam)*, directed by acclaimed South African filmmaker Jenna Cato Bass (*Flatland*), which premiered as part of the Platform Competition at TIFF 2021, receiving an Honourable Mention.



MATTHEW CHUANG (Director of Photography) has worked internationally on films shooting across the U.S., Europe and Asia. He recently served as co-cinematographer on the feature film *Blue Bayou*, written and directed by Justin Chon. The film stars Chon, Academy Award winner Alicia Vikander, Mark O'Brien, Linh-Dan Pham and Emory Cohen. Chuang has also been working with director Allen Hughes on the five-part documentary series "Outlaw: The Saga of Afeni and Tupac Shakur," in collaboration with FX Network and Disney.

Chuang lensed the Fractures' "It's Alright" music video, which was shot on location in Chernobyl, Ukraine, and later handpicked and featured as a Vimeo Staff Pick. It was nominated for Best Music Video and Best Cinematography at the prestigious Camerimage International Film Festival of the Art of Cinematography in Poland. Chuang's short-form projects include *Yo! My Saint*, directed by Ana Lily Amirpour, and *Adult Baby*, a 30-minute visual album directed by Eva Michon.

BETHANY RYAN (Production Designer) is an Australian production designer working across film, television and commercials. In 2018 she travelled to Cambodia to design *Buoyancy*, directed by Rodd Rathjen. At its world premiere at the 2019 Berlinale, *Buoyancy* won the Ecumenical Jury Prize and was nominated for both GWFF Best First Feature and the Berlinale Amnesty Award. The film went on to be selected as Australia's 2019 submission for Best International Feature Film at the Oscars and won the AACTA Award for Best Independent Feature.

Most recently, Ryan designed the Canal + miniseries "High Life," winner of a number of international awards, and Jonathan Ogilvie's *Lone Wolf*, an adaptation of Joseph Conrad's novel The Secret Agent. The latter film was nominated for an AACTA Award for Best Indie Feature Film.

Ryan has just completed work on the feature film *Of an Age*, a queer coming-of-age love story that reunites her with director Goran Stolevski and Causeway Films.

A graduate of RMIT's prestigious design school with a degree in interior design, Ryan began her career in architecture. To pursue film she continued her studies at AFTRS in Sydney, specializing in production design. Her initial feature film credits were Tony Prescott's *The Pretend One* and David Barker's *Pimped*. Ryan has designed numerous short films including Shane Danielsen's *The Guests*, nominated for the Palme d'Or in official competition at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival. Most recently she worked on Jon Bell's acclaimed horror short *The Moogai*, which won the SXSW Grand Jury Prize for Best Short Film in the Midnight Selection as well as Best Australian Short Film at the 2020 Melbourne International Film Festival.



LUCA CAPPELLI (Editor) is an Italian film editor living in Melbourne, Australia. His editing credits include *The Inland Road* (Berlin Film Festival Selection 2016), *Strange Colours* (Venice Biennale Fund 2017) and *Acute Misfortune*, which won the Age Critics Award at the Melbourne International Film Festival in 2018. Since then Cappelli has worked on documentaries and short films, and in 2019 he edited *The Visiting Room*, a documentary about inmates incarcerated without parole in the Angola prison in Louisiana. After completing a degree in art history in Pisa, Cappelli moved to Milan to study directing and screenwriting at the Civica Scuola di Cinema. There, he began working as a TV editor and in 2010 Cappelli moved to Melbourne, where he started his collaboration with Amiel Courtin-Wilson and Michael Cody. They would later team up for the feature film *Ruin*, shot on location in Cambodia. Cappelli won the Best Editing Award at the 2014 Asia Pacific Film Festival and the film won the Orizzonti Special Jury Prize at the 2013 Venice Film Festival.

DUSICA VUKSANOVIC (Makeup Artist) specializes in traditional screen and television makeup, special-effects makeup, wig design, prosthetic appliances and mold-making. She has worked on features such as *The Raven*, *The Living Man*, *Bad Blood* and *Pack of Sheep*. Her notable television credits include CBS' "SEAL Team," the Serbian series "Black Sun" and CW's "The Outpost."



Focus Features Presents
In association with Screen Australia
and
Film Victoria
Head Gear Films

A Causeway Films Production
In association with Balkanic Media

YOU WON'T BE ALONE

Written and Directed by
GORAN STOLEVSKI

SARA KLIMOSKA

ANAMARIA MARINCA

ALICE ENGLERT

FÉLIX MARITAUD

with
CARLOTO COTTA

and
NOOMI RAPACE

Produced by
KRISTINA CEYTON AND SAMANTHA JENNINGS

Co-Produced by
JONATHAN ENGLISH AND NATAŠA IVIĆ

Executive Producers
STEPHEN KELLIHER
PHIL HUNT
COMPTON ROSS
NOOMI RAPACE

Director of Photography
MATTHEW CHUANG ACS

Production Designer
BETHANY RYAN

Editor
LUCA CAPPELLI



Costume Designer
SLADJANA PERIĆ-SANTRAČ

Hair and Makeup Designer
DUŠICA VUKSANOVIĆ

Prosthetics Designer
LARRY VAN DUYNHOVEN

Sound Designer
EMMA BORTIGNON

Composer
MARK BRADSHAW

Music Supervisor
ANDREW KOŤÁTKO

Visual Effects Supervisor
MARTY PEPPER

CAST (in order of appearance)
Yoana KAMKA TOCINOVSKI
Baby Nevena PETRA ĆIRIĆ
Maria ANAMARIA MARINCA
Nevena SARA KLIMOSKA
Woodcutter DJORDE KOCIĆ
Boris's Wife MILENA NIKOLIĆ
Elica IRENA RISTIĆ
Boris CARLOTO COTTA
Young Biliانا ANASTASIJA KARANOVICH
Bosilka's Baby LAZAR DŽONIĆ
Bosilka NOOMI RAPACE
Bosilka's Mother-in-Law JASMINA AVRAMOVIĆ
Bosilka's Husband GENC JAKUPI
Bosilka's Father-in-Law VLADIMIR CVEJIĆ
Stamena ARTA DOBROSHI
Stamena's Husband ARTAN SADIKU
River Boys DJORDJE MIŠINA
MARKO ČUPIĆ
DJORDJE ŽIVADINOVIĆ
GRGUR TEODOR VINČIĆ

Boris's Father BRANISLAV ČUBRILO
Milan NIKOLA RISTANOVSKI
Little Girls VIKTORIJA JAKOVLKEVIĆ



LENA IVKOVIĆ

Young Yovan DANILO SAVIĆ

Boris's Grandmother DOBRILA STOJNIĆ

Boris's Aunt GORJANA JANJIĆ-ŠULJAGIĆ

Biliana's Mother SOFIJA JEREMIĆ

Young Biliana's Sisters ANGELA BOSKOSKA

JANA JANKOVIĆ

JULIJA MILJKOVIĆ

EMMA PENDLEBURY

Biliana's Grandmother ŠENKA KOLOZOVA

Biliana's Father DANIEL KOVAČEVIĆ

Old Shepherd IVAN GOCIĆ

Maria's Father MIODRAG MIŠA GAJIĆ

Ur Witch MARIJA OPSENICA

Groom's Father NIKOLA MARKOVIĆ

Groom's Mother VERICA NEDESKA

Groom PREDRAG VASIĆ

Priest SINIŠA MAKSMIMOVIĆ

Groom's Aunts MILA KRUŠČIĆ LJUBICA NEDIĆ

Biliana ALICE ENGLERT

Biliana's Sisters MIRA JANJETOVIĆ

MILICA SUŽNJEVIĆ

TAMARA STANISAVLJEV

Biliana's Sister-in-Law JELENA VELKOVSKI

Yovan FÉLIX MARITAUD

Yovan's Groomsmen SAŠA DJURAŠEVIĆ

MILOŠ PANTIĆ

MLADEN VUKOVIĆ

STEVAN ZDRAVIĆ

Biliana's Baby SARA DŽUNIĆ

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Armanian Translator & Language Coach ANITA ČOVIĆ

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A Camera Second Assistant Camera NIKOLA MEDIĆ DIT LJUBOMIR ANASTASIJEVIĆ

Video Split Operator DUŠAN RADIĆ

Additional First Assistant Camera UROŠ STEPIĆ

Additional Second Assistant Camera MILOŠ TEJIĆ

Additional Video Split Operator ŽELJKO NIKOLIĆ

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