



***THE KILLING OF A JOURNALIST* OPENS SOFIA DOCUMENTAL**

Two-time Oscar-nominated filmmaker Liz Garbus with a film about the life of Jacques-Yves Cousteau

The third edition of Sofia DocuMental will open on September 19th at Largo Sofia, with the film *The Killing of a Journalist* (2022, dir. **Matt Sarnecki, USA**). "The film's themes have been at the festival's core since its inception in 2020 - freedom of speech, investigative journalism, and the fight against corruption. Sofia DocuMental's films cross boundaries with extraordinary courage and honesty that change the status quo. Such is the case with Matt Sarnecki's *The Killing of a Journalist*. The filmmaker shows us up close the investigation into the murder of Slovak journalist Ján Kuciak and reveals the shocking extent of the corrupt connections within the political elite. This film is a continuation of Kuciak's extraordinary work and reminds us that we need to pay attention to what is happening in our own country as well," said Marticka Bozhilova, festival director and Evi Karageorgou, festival's programmer.

28 films from Bulgaria, France, Croatia, Sweden, Germany, Lithuania, Ukraine, Czech Republic, Denmark, Great Britain, Italy, Georgia, Serbia, Belgium, Poland, Hungary, Brazil, and the USA will be screened at this year's edition of Sofia DocuMental. Among the titles, viewers will be able to see **Navalny**. The documentary looks more like a spy thriller. It follows Navalny and his work with Bulgarian investigative journalist Hristo Grozev, who is trying to find out who poisoned Alexei Navalny on a flight from Siberia to Moscow in 2020. Viewers will also see **TikTok, Boom** which peaks into the massive success of the first Chinese app to outperform Silicon Valley giants.

In **Becoming Cousteau**, two-time Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Liz Garbus peers into the life of Jacques-Yves Cousteau, his iconic films, inventions, and experiences that made him the most recognizable environmental voice of the 20th century - the man who inspired generations to protect the Earth.



The audience will also be able to see two Bulgarian premieres. For the first time in Bulgaria, **No Place For You In Our Town** will be screened. The film is the first HBO Max co-production for Bulgaria. Director Nikolay Stefanov's observational documentary takes the audience to the football team of Bulgaria's "toughest" city - Pernik. Thanks to unprecedented access, Nikolay Stefanov's camera follows social and personal crises to show life beyond the tough exterior and clichéd jokes. The director explores the lives of the characters with openness and genuine interest, showing that nothing is black or white and that everyone, regardless of their background, wants a better life for themselves and their children.

The Cars We Drove Into Capitalism by Boris Missirkov and Georgi Bogdanov will close Sofia DocuMental. This film explores the fascinating history of socialist cars, showing several personal stories that bear witness, not without humor, to the events and hardships of times gone by. The automobile was also once seen as a weapon against the imperialist enemy.

GUESTS

The third edition of the Sofia DocuMental International Film Festival will take place between 19-28 September 2022. Producers and directors of award-winning films are coming to Bulgaria for the festival. All of them will also have meetings with the audience. Mridu Chandra is a New York based producer with BAFTA and EMMY nominations. She will be presenting her latest film **Becoming Cousteau**, directed by two-time Oscar-nominated director Liz Garbus.

Vanja Jambrovic is the producer of the film **Museum of Revolution (2021)**, which tells the story of an unfinished socialist museum and the grim reality of the people who are forced to live in the ruins of the abandoned construction site. In 2014, Jambrovic won the Jury Prize at the South East European Film Festival Los Angeles, for her film *Gangster of Love*.

How the Room Felt (2021) will be presented by director Ketevani Kapanadze, who received a nomination for Best Documentary at the Amsterdam International Documentary Film Festival. In Georgia, films that talk about same-sex love are the subject of protests and sabotage. In this setting, Ketevani Kapandze created a poetic film



about the members of a local women's soccer team that brings together girls and non-binary queer people.

Beauty of the Beast (2022) by director Anna Nemes follows the stories of Hungarian women who have dedicated their lives to being strong and achieving the perfect body according to their vision. The film shows the reality of women bodybuilders - their hopes, dreams, challenges, and the stereotypes they have to fight. The film had its world premiere at the Sheffield International Film Festival and was then part of the official selection at the Sarajevo International Film Festival.

Another hit from this year is the movie **Calendar Girls (2022)**. Directors Maria Loohufvud and Love Martinsen will come to our country to present the film, which was awarded at Bergamo Film Meeting, Cleveland International Film Festival, Fort Myers Film Festival, Jecheon International Music & Film Festival, Millennium Docs Against Gravity, Nashville Film Festival, Nordisk Panorama, Southside Film Festival, US and Tempo Documentary Festival. The leader of Calendar Girls states: one person does not make the team, the team is above all. However, each "Calendar Girl" has a deeper motivation to be part of the team - to escape a toxic relationship, to find meaning beyond the label of mother and grandmother, to further her artistic career, to feel a sense of belonging, to discover her creative potential.

The director Lucy Kralova is also coming to Bulgaria to present her latest film, **Kapr Code (2022)**. It follows the life of Jan Kapr, a prominent Czech composer whose music was banned after Kapr spoke out against the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968 in a letter to Shostakovich. Kralová won the Grand Prize for Documentary Film at the 2007 Karlovy Vary Film Festival for her film *Ztracená dovolená*.

Viewers will also meet Masha Kondakova, who comes to Bulgaria with her film **Inner Wars (2020)**. Women in the military are often appointed to administrative positions and portrayed by the media as exceptions who care more about having enough time for a manicure. But even if women at the front don't give up their femininity, they want to play an important role and fight for their country just like men. Bravely and selflessly, Masha Kondakova keeps a close eye on three of these women during the war and spares the audience nothing - not even the scenes of fierce shelling. Kondakova has won awards at festivals such as Locarno International Film Festival, Odesa International Film Festival, and Lviv International Short Film Festival Wiz-Art.



The third edition of the international film festival will take place between **19-28 September 2022**. Audiences will be able to watch the documentaries at Cinema House, Czech Centre, Lumiere Cinema, and at the festival's own pop-up cinema at Largo Sofia. The full program and screening times can be found here: <http://www.documental.bg>

More about the festival:

Sofia DocuMental is the first international festival in Bulgaria for creative documentaries with a focus on human rights. Organized by the Balkan Documentary Center and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, in partnership with Czech Center Sofia and the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Sofia. It shows the best contemporary documentaries from Bulgaria and abroad. Through screenings and discussions, the festival focuses on the most pressing human rights issues, making the subject accessible to a wider audience. In this way, the forum will contribute to increasing the level of social engagement and to the expansion of civil society in Bulgaria, as well as to the opportunity for Bulgarian audiences to have access to state-of-the-art documentaries.

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With the support of National Film Center - Bulgaria, Sofia Municipality, the Embassy of the US in Bulgaria, The European Parliament in Bulgaria, the State Institute for Culture at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bulgaria, and the National Fund Culture.