



Emerging
Swiss Talent Award
Zurich Film Festival

DOROTHEEA PETRE

ELINA LÖWENSOHN

THE MIRACLE OF TEKIR

A FILM BY RUXANDRA ZENIDE



BOGDAN DUMITRACHE, WERICA GEANTA CHELBEA, MIRELA OPRISOR, GEORGE PSTEREAU, MARIA NICULESCU, LIVIU PINTILEASA, CONSTANTIN DINULESCU PRODUCED BY ELEFANT FILMS (SWITZERLAND) - ELEFANT FILM (ROMANIA) IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH RTS (SSR / SRG)
SCREENPLAY ALEX IORDACHESCU, RUXANDRA ZENIDE, CINEMATOGRAPHY HELENE LOUVART (AFC) EDITING NELLY QUETTER, KARINE SUDAN MUSIC AISHA DEVI ART DIRECTOR CALIN PAPURA EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ALEXANDRU IORDACHESCU ASSISTANT PRODUCERS FRANÇOISE MAYOR, DOMINIQUE VIELINSKI
LINE PRODUCER GABI SUCIU WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE FEDERAL OFFICE OF CULTURE (OFC) - SWITZERLAND, CENTRUL NATIONAL AL CINEMATOGRAFIEI (ROMANIA), EURIMAGES, CINEFORDUM AND SUPPORT OF LOTERIE ROMANDE, SUISSEMAGE, POUR-CENT CULTUREL, MIGROS, ZENITH MEDIA





Elefant Films presents

THE
M I R A C L E
OF
T E K I R

DIRECTED BY RUXANDRA ZENIDE

PRODUCTION

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EMERGING SWISS TALENT AWARD - Zürich film festival
NOMINATION FOR THE PUBIC AWARD - Solothurner Filmtage



TEAM

Director	Ruxandra Zenide
Writer	Ruxandra Zenide & Alexandre Iordăchescu
Producer	Alexandre Iordăchescu
Cast	Dorotheea Petre - <i>Mara</i> Elina Löwensohn - <i>Lili</i> Bogdan Dumitrache - <i>Andrei</i> George Piștereanu - <i>Julio</i> Viorica Geantă Chelbea - <i>Mătășica</i> Mirela Oprea - <i>Victoria</i>
Cinematography	Hélène Louvart
Editor	Nelly Quettier & Karine Soudan
Sound	Adrien Kessler
Original soundtrack	Aïsha Devi
Production	Elefant Films (CH)
Co-production	Elefant Film (RO) RTS (SSR - SRG)

TECHNICAL DETAILS

88 minutes - Roumanian language - Subtitles - French/English/German
Ratio 1.1:85 - Sound 5.1 - DCP Format 2K
Production year - September, 2015
Production - Elefant Films
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the miracle of tekir

THE LEGEND OF TEKIR

The legend says that once upon a time a crippled and blind old man named Tekir, riding on the back of his donkey, reached the shore of this lake by mistake. The old man tried to get out of that smelly mud for hours on end, but his stubborn donkey didn't want to move at all, as if a mysterious force was not letting him out of the lake. It was with great wonder and joy that the old man realized, when getting out of the lake, that his eyes could see light again, and that his feet, which had stopped working a long time ago, began to obey him. As for his wise donkey - its bad wounds on the back had healed, and his body was younger than ever. When they found out about this, lots of people rushed to the shore of the lake, bathing and putting mud all over their bodies so that they'd be cured.



SYNOPSIS

Unmarried Mara has mysteriously fallen pregnant. This poses a problem for her fellow residents of the small fishing village on the Danube delta, where Europe's second longest river enters the Black Sea, and religion mixes with superstition like earth with water. Expelled from her village, Mara finds employment at the nearby spa hotel Tekir where infertile women are treated with the sacred Danube mud. When her world collides with that of the well-to-do, eccentric cosmopolitan Lili, magic combines with power and tradition with modernity to become the answer to Lili's desire to have children – and Mara's 'immaculate' conception.





DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Two women meeting each other and a priest's pilgrimage in search of answers – this is how the film takes us on board for a journey in two very different worlds: an invisible, unperceivable world and a concrete, controllable one. The mystical and shamanic roots of Mara seem to have been long forgotten and erased from the modern world that surrounds us. The interest that Ms. Lili – a cosmopolitan rich woman – takes in Mara will shake this popular belief.

Andrei, the priest, has lost his belief in God and therefore his mission on Earth. Meeting Mara and discovering her story brings him face to face with a fundamental question for a believer: If a miracle happened today, would we be able to recognize it? He leads his own search relying on reason, and this brings him closer to an answer that resembles a revelation – a deep emotion coming toward him, just like an echo of his master's advice: "Andrei, don't be afraid to love!".

As an occidental woman, I recognize myself in Ms. Lili, I understand her fear and her rejection of what seems to be a priori impossible, a mere remnant of superstitions. But then again, when science does not hold the answer, belief starts emerging. In this film, without taking either side, I intend to create a new and larger dimension than the one defined by the old dualism belief

vs. science, opposing concepts that are actually not opposable to each other. Life, creation – they remain a mystery that we can hardly grasp when relying only on pure logic.

On the other hand, Mara's pregnancy and the attraction that she stirs up in Lili raise a question about origins, about different cultures and about the assimilation process. The two characters will fight each other over more than just the child that Mara is bearing; they will fight over a seemingly inexistent matter, that eventually proves to be extremely important, symbolizing our whole inner richness: our deepest identity and our inner value system. Whilst for Mara this battle is, in fact, an existential struggle, for Lili, however, it seems to be just one of her caprices, a game of power or a challenge to conquer something that she can barely perceive.

Eventually, we realize that the encounter between these two women is, in fact, a symbol of all our inner battles and struggles, tearing our hearts apart in the confrontation between our deepest intuitions and the vital need of adapting oneself to the modern way of living.

Ruxandra Zenide

RUXANDRA ZENIDE



Half Swiss and half Romanian, Ruxandra Zenide was born in Bucharest. After obtaining her Master's Degree in International Affairs at the Institut Universitaire des Hautes Etudes Internationales (IUHEI) from Geneva, she continued studying film directing at the New York University (U.S.A.) and at FAMU Prague (Czech Republic). While studying at FAMU, she produced DUST, a short film that was included in the official selections of several famous festivals, such as the ones in Clermont-Ferrand, Bruxelles and Locarno, where the film was awarded the «Prize for Promising Talent». GREEN OAKS is her second short film that wins different prizes in competitions such as the film festivals from Brest, Drame, Olympia, Famu Fest.

Her first feature film, RYNA, has also received multiple awards in festivals all around the world.

THE MIRACLE OF TEKIR is her second feature film and it has just been awarded the «Swiss Talent Award» at the most recent film festival in Zürich.

In 2004, she was one of the founders of the film production company Elefant Films, where she produced several films, as well.

GREEN OAKS – PRIZES AND AWARDS:

- The Kodak Prize for best Swiss short film – Cinema Tout Ecran, 2003
- The Grand Prize awarded by Michael Hausmann – Famufest, 2003
- The Prize for the Best Photography – Famufest, 2003
- Dragon d'or- Spiez – 2004
- Prize for Best Film – Festival de Fano, 2004
- The Jury Prize – Drama, 2004
- Jury Jury Prize – Ismailia Int. Film festival, 2004
- Golden Unicorn –Alpinale, 2004
- Prize for middle length film – Brest, 2004
- The Prize for Best Short Film – Olympia film festival, 2004

RYNA – PRIZES AND AWARDS:

- Grand Prize – Cinema Jove 2006, Valencia, Spain
- Best Film – Festival de Bordeaux, 2005, Bordeaux, France
- Best debut for Dorotheea Petre (Ryna) – TIFF 2005, Cluj Napoca, Romania
- Reflet d'or and Critics' Award – Cinéma tout Ecran 2005, Geneva, Switzerland
- Jury's Award for Ruxandra Zenide and Dorotheea Petre – Mannheim-Heidelberg Film Festival, 2005, Germany
- Special Jury Award – Festival de Cottbus 2005, Germany
- Nominee at the Prix du Cinéma Suisse – 2006, Switzerland
- Cineclubs' Award – Festival de Tromse, 2006, Norway

Other selections: Karlovy Vary, Sarajevo, Montreal, Namur, Los Angeles, Angers, Miami, Trieste etc.
Nominated for «The Romanian Film Industry Awards» (Gopo Awards).

ELEFANT FILMS

Elefant Films is a film production company founded in 2004 by Alex Iordăchescu and Ruxandra Zenide. They created this company in order to produce and co-produce independent films (fiction and documentary feature films, short films and experimental films). The company has developed a network of international partners that work together on co-productions of the Swiss film industry and other European countries.

Elefant Films is a full accredited member of GARP (The Group of the Producers Filmmakers) since 2005 and part of its board of directors since 2006. Some of the films produced in the past years are: *The miracle of Tekir* (d: Ruxandra Zenide, 2015), *Le Mur et l'Eau* (d: Alice Fargier, 2014), *Sette opere di misericordia* (d: Gianluca De Serio, Massimiliano De Serio, 2012), *Lullaby to my father* (d: Amos Gitai, 2012), *Păcătoasa Teodora* (d: Anca Hirte, 2011), *L'enfance d'Icare* (d: Alex Iordăchescu, 2009), *L'Autre Moitié* (d: Rolando Colla, 2007), *Ryna* (d: Ruxandra Zenide, 2005).



CAST

DOROTHEEA PETRE - *Mara*



2004 brings her the lead role in the feature film "Ryna", acclaimed with over 30 de international film festivals' awards, out of which Dorotheea receives the Debut Award in Transilvania Film Festival, followed by the Jury's Special Mention at the Mannheim-Heidelberg International Film Festival. In 2005, she plays the leading role of Eva in „The Way I Spent the End of the World". This role brings her international recognition, throughout the Special Jury Award for Best Actress at the Cannes Film Festival, in the Un Certain Regard category. This award was especially created for her, as Un Certain Regard section didn't offer awards for acting until then. This award is still the greatest award ever received by a Romanian actor.

In 2007, Dorotheea is declared "Actress of the year" by the Film Critics and Journalists Association, receives the Romanian Film Industry Award (Gopo) for Best Actress in a Leading Role and UCIN award for Best Actress. In 2009 she wins a Special Jury Prize for Best Actress at Magna Graecia Film Festival, for the role of Angela in the film „MAR NERO". For her "talent and artistic sensibility in her work", she is assigned by a presidential decree the high distinction of Knight, for cultural achievements in the Entertaining Arts category.

ELINA LÖWENSOHN - *Lili*

Elina Löwensohn started her career in New York and became an important figure of the American independent cinema by starring in three films directed by Hal Hartley: THEORY OF ACHIEVMENT, SIMPLE MEN and AMATEUR. Afterwards, she is distributed in the cast of the New Yorker vampire movie NADJA, directed by Michael Almereyda and produced by David Lynch. She appears both in independent American productions such as BASQUIAT by Julian Schnabel and large-scale productions such as SCHINDLER'S LIST, directed by Stephen Spielberg or an episode in the TV show SEINFELD - "The Gymnast".

She continues her theatrical activity working with Travis Preston and Richard Foreman, in IDIOT SAVANT, sharing the stage with Willem Dafoe. Her carrier grows in Europe as well, as she's playing different roles in important European productions, such as SOMBRE, by Philippe Grandrieux, LA SAGESSE DES CROCODILES, by Po-Chih Leong, LOURDES, by Jessica Hausner or VÉNUS NOIRE, by Abdellatif Kechiche.



BOGDAN DUMITRACHE - *Priest Andrei*



During his 6 years since the start of his acting career, Bogdan starred in some of the most awarded shorts and feature films of the time: "TRAFFIC", directed by Cătălin Mitulescu, "THE DEATH OF MR. LĂZĂRESCU", directed by Cristi Puiu, "LE TRAMWAY D'ANDRÉA", directed by Alex Iordăchescu, "THE WAY I SPENT THE END OF THE WORLD", directed by Cătălin Mitulescu, "LECȚIA DE BOX", directed by Alexandru Mavrodineanu, "PORTRAIT OF THE FIGHTER AS A YOUNG MAN", directed by Constantin Popescu, "CAPTIVI DE CRĂCIUN", directed by Iulia Rugină and "BEST INTENTIONS", directed by Adrian Sitaru.

The role he played in "CHILD'S POSE", the winner of the Golden Bear, during the 2013 Berlinale, brings him once again into the spotlights.

CREW



HÉLÈNE LOUVART - CINEMATOGRAPHY

French cinematographer Hélène Louvart graduated in 1985 at the prestigious Louis-Lumière Collège in Paris. That same year, she starts working for the first time on the production of the fiction feature film COEURS CROISÉS. In just 22 years since then, Hélène has served as cinematographer on more than sixty feature films, around fifty short films, ten television shows and several experimental films and video projects. During these years, she worked with numerous directors from all over the world, such as Wim Wenders, Marc Fitoussi, Agnès Varda, Claire Denis, Christophe Honoré, Jacques Doillon, Nicolas Klotz, Virginie Despentes, Dominique Cabrera, Sandrine Veysset, Christian Vincent, Marc Recha or Léos Carax.

NELLY QUETTIER - EDITING

Nelly Quettier is one of the most important film editors in the French independent cinema industry. Her name is associated with the ones of several directors, to whom she has been loyal. One of them is Leos Carax, alongside whom she has been working since 1986, for MAUVAIS SANG, then for LES AMANTS DU PONT-NEUF (1991), POLA X (1999) and HOLY MOTORS (2012). She also edited several films directed by Claire Denis, starting with J'AI PAS SOMMEIL (1994), then BEAU TRAVAIL (1999), TROUBLE EVERY DAY (2001), VENDREDI SOIR (2002), L'INTRUS (2004). She also worked with young directors such as Sandrine Veysset, for MARTHA...MARTHA (2001), Anne Villacèque, for E-LOVE (2011) and WEEK-ENDS (2014), and Ursula Meier - L'ENFANT D'EN HAUT (2012).



AISHA DEVI - MUSIQUE ORIGINALE

She was first spotted in 2004 by Viking Records, performing under the name of Kate Wax, then by Mental Grove. In 2012, she returns to her real name – Aisha Devi – and starts her own label called Danse Noir and based somewhere between Geneva and Lausanne. Her collaborations start counting up, as she works with various artists in Switzerland and from outside the country. After a large number of national and international concert tours, Aisha Devi becomes one of the most reputed artists of the pop/electronic genre. In 2014, she collaborates with a new label – Houndstooth, in parallel with her own label Danse Noir, and she releases an EP, shortly followed by an album “Of Matter And Spirit”, in October, 2015.

This represents her new start in a carrier that would get her cited and aired by The Guardian, Fact, XLR8R, The Fader, Q, Rolling Stone, Spex, NME, MTV, Exclaim, Resident Advisor, The Wire, The Quietus, Les Inrocks, Tsugi, Vice, Trax, Pitchfork, Uncut, Mojo, Clash, Dazed & Confused, Spin, Electronic Beats and her discs distributed and sold all over the world. She also engages in different types of projects, such as her collaboration with The Museum of Quai Brantly in Paris – a record inspired by the Nepalese music.



INTERNATIONAL SALES

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