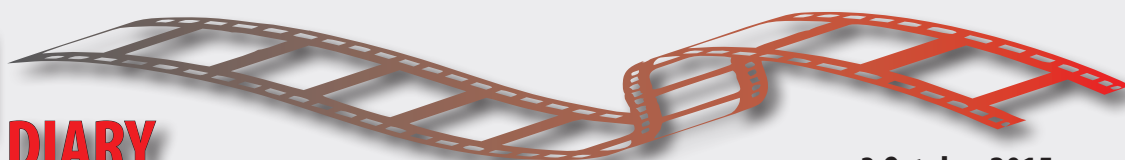




DIARY



3 October 2015

## THE WINNERS



The XVI International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films was officially closed on 3 October 2015 in SHC „Kamchia“ – Varna.

All the awarded participants were announced in an official ceremony and the Festival Director, Ilija Raev gave an honorable award to the Art Director, prof. Bojidar Manov for an overall contribution to the Red Cross idea.

Among the winners in the category Red Cross and Red Crescent Movies, as best film was awarded „Mustesfa“, Turkey, director Armagan Pekkaya. Mr. Pekkaya was reached through Skype and he thanked with the following words: „Cordially thank you on behalf of the Turkish Red Crescent for this award. I wanted very much to be with you, but I will become a father very soon. I dedicate this award to the little Aylian, thrown by the sea on our sea-shore. As a future father I would like to live in a world where the parents never grieve for their children.

The President of the Bulgarian Red Cross Award was given to the films „Disaster Management Unit I“ and „Disaster Management Unit II“, and „Emergency Medical Services I“, Lebanon, director Naji Becara.

The Best Documentary Film Award was given to the Bulgarian film „TOTAL Denial“ with director Milena Kaneva, and The Best Feature Film Award went to the Albanian masterpiece „Bota“, directed by Iris Elezi and Thomas Logoreci.

The Mayor of Varna Award for Significant Creative Achievement was given to „Shooting Star“, co-production Bulgaria-Italy with director Lyubo Yonchev.

According to the Regulations of the Festival the following awards were also given to the film „Holy Mother Pyre“, with director Hristo Stoychev by the Union of Bulgarian Film Makers; to the film „Diagnosis +“, director Alexander Yanev by Nu Boyana Film Studio; special award for contribution to the development of the humanitarian films and documentary was given to baroness Denislava Angelova for the realization of the film „The Diabetes Cause“ with director Iva Martinova. The little heroes, participants in this film, dedicated to the fate of children with diabetes, were invited on the stage and touched the spectators with their personal stories and strong spirit.



**MEET...*****Would you present yourself for the guests and spectators of the XVI International Festival of the Red Cross and Health Films?***

**Ilko Raev**, with a white moustache, diver, sapper, climber, 42 m. underwater, 5 200 above. I love extreme situations, humanism, good relations between people and I have found that in the structure of the Bulgarian Red Cross. I am happy to be chairman of the Regional organization and member of the National Council of BRC. I am concerned about the problems of the IFRCRC, about the fundamental principles of the organization and everything I do, I do it for the people I work with. By the way, before the festival, I was a director of the Festival Congress Centre in Varna for 25 years, where I confessed the same religion, to do interesting things, love people, have many spectators and help those who did not have money with free entrance.

***Is it difficult to organize such a large-scale international event?***

The organization of the event is the final phase of the whole thing. Before that there is a very complex phase called - to convince the others in what you want to do. And it's difficult, because such an event costs a lot. People have already believed that this is a great deal. The festival was created by the BRC in 1965, but due to negligence of the state in 1991 was canceled. Contacts and links with the 189 National Societies were lost. In the past there were guests from 56 different countries. I mean, that the actual organization begins only after all the people are convinced. No matter, whether you produce lathes, missiles or festival, organization is the same - nervous, but anyway, with a good team everything is possible. And our team is very good. We do not rely only on Varna's team, we work with the National Council and so do things become easier.

***Do you have a favourite movie, a favourite director or favourite actors?***

When I wander around, I always hum the beloved Russian actor Nikulin 'Nu, Zayac, pogodi' („Hy, zayu, nozogu“). I also have a huge movie collection. I love films about the sea. One of them, that may not be very popular, but it is very magnetic, it is „The Perfect Storm.“ Fishing boats in the sea, huge waves and so on. I love the sea very much. As I've already mentioned I am a diver and I have over 2 000 hours underwater... and here I will not quote Hemingway...

***What else do you want to see at the festival?***

When I was a director of the Festival Complex, I had a little secret hole in the curtain from which I used to observe the audience and when there was a good performance, I had the chance to see serious men, directors of banks and large companies, crying. This is the big thing I was always excited about - touch one's heart and soul. In such a situation a person is emotionally strong and emotional people are the ones who give love to the world. A good manager should not have emotions, but it does not mean you do not show them to your family in your spare time.

***What to expect at the next edition of the festival?***

In the past the festival was performed in 2 years. This year has its 50th anniversary. Now we've got a huge progress according to the previous retrospective edition and I think we shouldn't stop. We even have guests from New Zealand. So right now, I think we should keep going with a new edition per year. The IFRCRC already knows about us and the audience loves us and if we use this force, in order to acquaint

the RC structures all over the world with the idea of the festival and the fact that it's not only about health, but mainly about Red Cross films, I think it will be a great prestige for Bulgaria and the BRC as an organizer, in general. Films teach us humanism as the Bulgarian Vice President said, as well.

***Would you present yourself for the guests and spectators of the XVI International Festival of the Red Cross and Health Films?***

Yes, my name is **Carla Ronga**, I am Italian, a journalist, filmmaker and director. I am 52 years old and started my work as a journalist at the age of 14. Of course officially a little later, at the age of 20, because in Italy you have to pass an exam in order to be a professional journalist. Anyway my first steps were at that time in a newspaper with short articles. After that I had made a column about foreign and international politics and I had worked for 7 years in the Italian Parliament as a journalist and then I had become an editor of „Sky“. After that the Italian TV invited me as an author and director of a documentary. It is a programme that produces 60 documentaries per year for the globalization all over the world. After that I led a newspaper and realize that such activity is a great honour and at the same time a great responsibility, but you are stuck in one place and my roots are „anywhere and everywhere“ and I started from the very beginning, travelling and working as a director.



***How many films do you have?***

Finished, throughout my professional career, they are about 35. The last two were for the German TV about the environment. Now I am preparing another two documentaries about human rights and environment.

***Do you think that the International Festival for Red Cross and Health Films is an interesting initiative and would you support it in future?***

I have heard about the Festival long time ago. I know it was interrupted for a long period, because of financial reasons, and may be because of other political reasons, as well. However, its aim is very important. It opens the eyes of the world with the assistance of the Red Cross. I think the culture is the base of the future, without the culture of open and free-minded people we are lost. The organizers called me in the last minute, I took the plane and arrived immediately. Obviously I will always support it.

***We are pleased to hear that. What is your first impression when you hear the Red Cross?***

Humanitarian assistance. Not only assistance, but humanism.

***Do you have a favourite film, director and actors?***

It is a difficult question. I don't have a favourite film. There are films that touch your heart and as a film director I wouldn't say they are perfect. They are not perfectly shot, may be the story is not the best chosen, but somehow they come in the perfect moment to touch my heart and I will never forget them. There are other films which are art and you cannot say that you love them or like them, they just leave you speechless. They can be different, on different topics. I have grown up with the Italian neorealism, all those films are may be old, but they touch my heart forever. Anna Magnani is my teacher forever. I will never forget this actress, because there was humanism in her, not only talent. I like also young actors such as Agostino Ferrente. I like also films such as „Django Unchained“. It was my favourite this year. I have watched it ten times. And all films I watch now are far from neorealism, but I think here counts the motto Carpe Diem. When I was in the cinema, watching „Django“, after it ended, I went to the cash-desk, took another ticket and went to watch it again. I also like the films of Nanni Loy.



***Do you have a favourite film from the festival programme?***

As a jury I cannot share such information yet, but I will mention the Albanian „Bota“. Beautiful, real, well done, well shot, with good actors, real story that touches your heart and make you think about it. It speaks about many relevant topics.

***The motto of the festival is „Through humanity to peace and friendship“. Do you think that it is up-to-date and if not - how would you change it?***

It is not only up-to-date. These are the greatest topics nowadays with all these migrants, with everything we are going through. The humanism is the great question. And I liked the fact that the festival was opened with the film for Salgado („The Salt of the Earth“), because it shows exactly the lack of humanism in the world. We lost our humanism, we are losing it every day and it's all about the little things in our life. All these migrants are not going to take away our bread and our jobs. They are just people, mothers, fathers, human beings like me and you. There is a lack of humanism and my biggest fear is that we can start using this word without fulfilling it with meaning. It is not a slogan, the humanism must be kept and filled with meaning. I would like to add it was a pity that although there were many young people, mainly volunteers, working for the Red Cross, at the festival there was a huge lack of young ones in the public. This is the main thing you have to work on – to attract young people. Most of the shown films must be seen by the young ones to make them realize that no one can give you meaning, but you have to find it on your own, to find the right way, that works out for you. This festival gives you the opportunity to understand that.

***Would you present yourself for the guests and spectators of the XVI International Festival of the Red Cross and Health Films?***

My name is **Bettina Kummer**, I am working for Swiss Red Cross at the „Marketing“ Department.

***Do you think that the International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films is an interesting initiative and would you support it in future?***

I think it is a very interesting initiative, an interesting event because it supports culture.

***Which is your first impression when you here Red Cross?***

Help for the people.

***You are part of the jury. Do you have a favourite film from the festival program?***

I saw a lot of interesting movies, but I will not tell you.

***And what kind of movies do you prefer in your spare time?***

Most of the time, I should admit, I read books. Books are the old-fashioned way. They develop the imagination. And since I have worked mainly with photos, in my spare time I prefer reading, as well as visiting exhibitions. I love art, paintings. My father and my sister are artists.

***The motto of the festival is „Through humanity to peace and friendship“. Do you think that it is up-to-date and if not - how would you change it?***

I think it is quite up-to-date, because nowadays there is so much suffering in the world. We need to act, to help humanity.



***Would you present yourself for the guests and spectators of the XVI International Festival of the Red Cross and Health Films?***

My name is **Fatih Istchi** from Turkey and I work for the Red Crescent in the Communications Department, but in general I am a journalist, a photographer and a filmmaker. All these activities are combining in one and the result is the documentaries I make.

***What is your first association when you hear the Red Cross?***

This is a very good and very important organization for the humanism and the people around the world. I love this organization.

***Do you think the International Festival of Red Cross and health films is an interesting initiative and would you support it in the future?***

There are many film festivals in Turkey, but not like this one and I would like to organize something similar in my country. Your festival brings together many people in one place. It is a good opportunity for exchanging experience and contacts as well as for future projects.

***Do you have a favorite movie, a favorite director, and favorite actors?***

Of course, I have some favorite Turkish film directors like Nuri Bilge Ceylan. I want to produce science fiction movies, but first I have to write the script and then to shoot it. (Smiling).

***Do you have a favorite film of the festival program?***

I like a lot of films in the three categories – Red Cross and Red Crescent films, documentaries and feature films. There are many good films included in the program. This is a festival with traditions. I appreciate not only the movies, but also the accompanying events and discussions on various topics, the contacts between people and the ideas for new projects.

***The motto of the festival is „Through humanity to peace and friendship“. Do you think that it is up-to-date and if not - how would you change it?***

I think it's a good motto, it sounds like the Red Cross. Humanity is the eternal theme. It is related with film art as well, because in most cases, the films reveal humanity and good nature of the world.



***Would you present yourself for the guests and spectators of the XVI International Festival of the Red Cross and Health Films?***

My name is **Karla Lee**. I am coming from New Zealand. I work for the Red Cross, in „Marketing and Fundraising“ Department. I am very happy, because thanks to my work I was able to produce the DVD with which I am having the opportunity to participate in the Festival. This is a film dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Red Cross in Hawkes Bay, for all the old members of the organization in the region. Our organization was founded in 1915 and this year is very important for us, so we memorialized it with the movie. And thanks to this I am here after 60 hours of travel. However, I think that this is a great experience because Bulgaria is a country with very rich history. Until now I saw so many things in Varna and I am amazed. I did not know that your country is so beautiful, the oldest gold treasure is amazing, the beaches are great, Varna is so beautiful, people are so nice and polite. For me it is a great honour to be here.



***Do you think that the International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films is an interesting initiative? Would you support the festival in the future?***

This is an incredible initiative, not only because of the films, but also because it gathers many different nationalities in one place. It is wonderful to sit together with Turkey, Switzerland, Norway, Italy, Russia, all these different countries, and we have a common topic – the Red Cross. We are family. I was travelling with airplane on my way to Varna. I was with my Red Cross jacket and a man told me exactly that. We might be from different parts of the world, but we are the same, we are united by the Red Cross idea.

***What is your first association when you hear Red Cross?***

Humanism. The fact is that humanism is universal, international. It starts regionally, but it spreads globally all over the world. Due to that all discussions and round tables accompanying the festival are so interesting. They show that we are all concerned about the world, about Syria, about the assistance we can give. New Zealand is relatively small, but it has always been borderless.

***Do you have a favorite movie, a favorite director, and favorite actors?***

Can I sound patriotic? I am proud of our productions in New Zealand. We are very proud with Peter Jackson and his work. Thanks to him, many people, even here around the table know facts about New Zealand. But in general I like different movies. I like the movies that I saw during the Festival so far. I prefer mainly comedies, they help me a lot, especially when I am in a dilemma or depression, and they bring light and human face on the situation.

***The motto of the festival is „Through humanity to peace and friendship“. Do you think that it is up-to-date and if not - how would you change it?***

I think that even a few people can do great good, although there are many conflicts in the world. I think that we can show more kindness even with a simple smile or by saying „hello“ Small things make a big difference. Even if only two people do this and spread it to the others, we will go in the right direction. This is my philosophy. That's why I like the Red Cross and it fits me perfectly. The slogan of the Festival is very good and I felt it with all my heart. Humanity, friendship and peace, of course... we all want peace.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### BOTA/BOTA



*Albania, 2014, 106:51 min.*

*Director and script: ELEZI & Thomas Logoreci*

*Production ERAFILM Albania*

Albania, present day. At the edge of a haunted swamp, Juli (Flonja Kodheli), Nora (Fioralba Kryemadhi) and Ben (Artur Gorishti) work together in an isolated village where their families were exiled during their country's intense communist rule. Under the disapproving eyes of Juli, Ben juggles an affair with Nora while dreaming of expanding his cafe into the Balkan big time. Their quiet world ceases to exist when a highway crew begins to widen the road nearby. Juli falls for engineer Mili but worries about her ailing and confused grandmother, Noje. As the new road approaches, the village inhabitants have one last glorious night of fireworks and celebration. But

when the dawn arrives, Juli, Ben and Nora must face a shared secret from their traumatic past. BOTA is written and directed by Iris Elezi and Thomas Logoreci and stars Flonja Kodheli, Fioralba Kryemadhi, Artur Gorishti and Tinka Kurti.