

8 VIEWS OF LAKE BIWA

Baltic Event Works in Progress
ESTONIA, FINLAND



ORIGINAL TITLE: BIWA JÄRVE 8 NÄGU

Countries: Estonia, Finland

Runtime (minutes): 110

Genre: drama, romance, war

Director: Marko Raat

Writer: Marko Raat

Cinematographer: Sten Johan Lill

Cast: Elina Masing, Tiina Tauraitte, Hendrik Toompere, Meelis Rämmeld, Kärt Kokkoto, Simeoni Sundja, Jarmo Reha, Maarja Jakobson, Toomas Saarepera, Jan Uuspõld, Jüri Vlassov, Peeter Tammearu, Tommi Korpela

Producers: Ivo Felt, Dora Nedeczky

Co-producers: Misha Jaari, Mark Lwoff

Production companies: Allfilm (Estonia), Bufo (Finland)

Completion date: March 2023

Production budget in EUR: 1 300 000

Financing in place in EUR: 1 300 000

Project status: post-production

Looking for: distributors, sales agents, festivals

Synopsis

The film portrays intertwined tragic love stories between the people of a single rural fishing village. Everybody knows everyone else and each story's protagonists are supporting characters in the other stories. All ballads are interrupted, only to continue in the next stories.

A devastating accident pushes the surviving inhabitants into a cascade of tragic consequences. Even in a community self-isolating from modern progress, their art and magic are fading. Christian and ani-

mistic faith are neglected and rituals harnessed for selfish purposes. Archetypal characters fluidly change roles between the views, but the teenage girl, Hanake is ever-present: she embodies the central theme of innocence lost and everything abandoned along with it. While we explore playfulness and intimacy across generations, it is crushing grief, ambition and a dogged fatalism that drive events toward a final reckoning with nature itself.

Director

Marko Raat is an award-winning Estonian writer-director, curator and academic, active in the fields of both arthouse fiction film and documentaries since 1999. He has a vast background in theatre directing, TV productions and in fine art. His latest feature length documentary *Funeral Diaries* (2019) after premiering at Dok.Fest Munich and opening DocPoint Tallinn, is still travelling the festival circuit. His most recent short film *A Chairman's Tale* (2015) had its debut at the International Art Exhibition of la Biennale di Venezia. His last feature length fiction film *The Snow Queen* (2010) had been developed at Sources2 and premiered at the Montreal World Film Festival, then was screened at Cairo and Mumbai among many acclaimed festivals.

Producer and production company

Founded in 1995, Tallinn based **Allfilm's** productions include Zaza Urushadze's *Tangerines* (2013) nominated for the Academy Award and Golden Globe as well as Klaus Härö's *The Fencer* (2015) nominated for Golden Globe. Debut feature *Truth and Justice* (2019) directed by Tanel Toom broke box office records locally, won a Satellite Award and was shortlisted for an Academy Award. Their latest production, *Kalev* (2022) premiered in Warsaw and is Estonia's official entry to the Academy Awards.

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ANNA LOL



ORIGINAL TITLE: ANNA LOL

Country: Latvia

Runtime (minutes): 100

Genre: drama

Director: Ivars Tontegode

Writers: Marta Sofija Trence, Ruuda Silman

Cinematographer: Martins Jurevics

Cast: Enija Selecka

Producer: Guna Stahovska

Production company: Mojo Raiser Production

Completion date: March 2023

Production budget in EUR: 154 241

Financing in place in EUR: 110 000

Project status: post-production

Looking for: gap financing, distributors, sales agents, festivals, streamers

Synopsis

Anna, a 19-year-old girl, still in school, has just lost a close friend, her first real romantic experience. After this loss she undergoes her own depressive and suicidal thoughts to the point where she loses any touch with reality. And, when her mother leaves, Anna is kicked out of home by her emotionally abusive father. Being so alienated from the

people around her, Anna gets into a lot of trouble – raping, overdoses of friends and problems with drug sellers, drowning in her fantasies about death and memories of happier days, trying to deal with her own sexuality, hate all people and becoming apathetic to her own life. It leads her to try suicide herself. She fails just by luck. After talks with a psychotherapist it seems that everything comes to a good end, but is it so?

Director

Ivars Tontegode is widely known for his urge to experiment and depict the inner struggle and evolution of strong personalities in a highly creative and modern manner. Based on the awarded short he directed a full-length feature *The Mushroomers* (2013, Best Director, Audience Award in Warsaw IFF). In 2017, he finished his full-length documentary *Knutifiction*.

Producer and production company

Mojo Raiser Production was established by producer Guna Stahovska at the end of 2011. She graduated from the Latvian University (Master of Economics) and Culture Academy of Latvia (film critics), and, before establishing her own company, worked as development producer since 2004 on different projects such as: *Defenders of Riga* (2007) and *Rudolf's Gold* (2010). She is the producer of director's Rolands Kalnins feature *Bitter Wine* (2007) in Platforma; producer of Egils Mednis' short *Maschinima*, animation *The Ship* (Svešas Tehnoloģijas, 2006); director's Roberts Rubins' documentary *How Are You Doing, Rudolf Ming?* (2010, Juris Podnieks Studio). Films produced under Mojo Raiser: *The Lesson* (2014, dir Andris Gauja, co-producer), *Knutifiction*, documentary (2017, dir Ivars Tontegode, producer), *Jesus Shows You the Way to the Highway* (2019, dir. Miguel Llanso, co-producer).

Contact

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BLACK VELVET



ORIGINAL TITLE: MELNAIS SAMTS

Countries: Latvia, Lithuania

Runtime (minutes): 95

Genre: comedy, drama, women

Director: Liene Linde

Writer: Liene Linde

Cinematographer: Dāvids Smiltiņš

Cast: Inga Tropa

Producer: Guntis Trekteris

Production companies: Ego Media (Latvia), Tremora (Lithuania)

Completion date: April 2023

Production budget in EUR: 750 000

Financing in place in EUR: 680 000

Project status: post-production

Looking for: gap financing, distributors, festivals

Synopsis

Marta, once an emerging film director, is now in her 30s and given up on her film dreams. She spends her days working at a job she hates, taking care of her chronically ill cat, fighting with her stoner boyfriend and lying to friends that she will "soon" start working on her new script. While trying to handle her functional depression, Marta keeps dreaming about making films, drawn to the healing power of storytelling, but

not having the courage to act on these dreams. Through the course of this dark comedy Marta learns there is an unavoidable question that at some point every filmmaker needs to answer: if you really want to direct films, can you first direct yourself out of depression?

Director

Liene Linde (1986) is a Latvian film director, screenwriter, essayist, film critic, and educator. Received Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Film Directing from the Latvian Academy of Culture. Her short films *Fake Me A Happy New Year* (2012) and *Seven Awkward Sex Scenes* (2016) earned international acclaim and were awarded Latvian National Film Award Lielais Kristaps. In 2020, her debut documentary feature *Mothers and Others* came out (co-directed with Armands Začs) that received Lielais Kristaps for the Best Documentary Directing. Linde is currently working on her fiction feature. She is also an active essayist and film critic and is also teaching film directing and analysis at the National Film School of the Latvian Academy of Culture.

Producer and production company

Since 1995, **Guntis Trekteris** has produced and co-produced over 15 fiction and more than 30 documentary films. The recent selected titles include the local box office hit *City on the River* by Viestur Kairish, animated documentary *My Favorite War* by Ilze Burkovska-Jakobsen – the winner of Annecy Contrechamp award in 2020, as well as documentaries *D is for Division* by Davis Simanis, *Rodnye - Close Relations* by Vitaly Mansky and *Beyond the Fear* by the late Herz Frank and Maria Kravchenko. Most of the films have been made in co-production with other countries as well as distributed widely all over the world.

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DEATH IS A PROBLEM FOR THE LIVING (WORKING TITLE)

Baltic Event Works in Progress
FINLAND, ITALY



ORIGINAL TITLE: KUOLEMA ON ELÄVIEN ONGELMA

Countries: Finland, Italy

Runtime (minutes): 95

Genre: comedy, drama, thriller

Director: Teemu Nikki

Writer: Teemu Nikki

Cinematographers: Jyrki Arnikari, Sari Aaltonen

Cast: Pekka Strang, Jari Virman, Elina Knihtilä

Producer: Jani Pösö

Co-producer: Andrea Romeo

Production company: It's Alive Films

Completion date: April 2023

Production budget in EUR: 955 000

Financing in place in EUR: 780 000

Project status: production

Looking for: distributors, sales agents, festivals

Synopsis

The cheapest drivers in the hearse business, gambling addict Risto Kivi and his friend, the 85% brainless man, Arto Niska, have found themselves in a situation where everything has gone wrong, and they are in need of a fresh start. Ultimately, Arto, the man without a brain, and Risto, the man without a heart, are forced to gamble with their

own lives. It is a film about addiction, friendship, and carrying dead bodies. Stylistically, it is a genre-bending It's Alive trip that will both entertain and shock the audience, helping them understand life's absurdities in even its ugliest shades.

Director

Teemu Nikki is a prolific self-educated, award-winning filmmaker and son of a pig farmer from Sysmä, Finland. His latest feature, *The Blind Man Who Did Not Want to See Titanic* won the Audience Award at Venice Film Festival. Nikki has also directed numerous short films, which have gained recognition at film festivals around the world, and popular TV series. Nikki's style is best described as a good-willed yet unapologetic political satire of humanity.

Producer and production company

Jani Pösö, the CEO of **It's Alive Films**, is a producer and screenwriter. He wrote and produced his first theatre play in 1996, first short film in 2006, first feature in 2011, and first book in 2018. He is also behind It's Alive Films's multi-remade TV format *Mental*. Jani has produced music, theatre and events, and established two advertising agencies and overseen a fashion brand.

It's Alive Films is a Helsinki-based production company founded by director Teemu Nikki and producer Jani Pösö. All their productions are entertaining takes on deadly serious subjects. In addition to *The Blind Man Who Did Not Want To See Titanic*, their best-known works are *Euthanizer*, Finland's Oscar candidate in 2018, *Mental*, a multi-remade black comedy about mental problems among young people, and Cannes-series winner *Mister8*. It's Alive has produced 17 short films, five feature films and three TV series, all of them internationally acclaimed.

Contact

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FREE MONEY



ORIGINAL TITLE: FREE MONEY

Country: Estonia

Runtime (minutes): 90

Genre: comedy, drama

Director: Rain Rannu

Writer: Rain Rannu

Cinematographer: Ants Tammik

Cast: Miklos Banyai, Priit Pius, Ivo Uukkivi, Steffi Pähn, Einar Kuusk, Amanda Hermiine Künnapas

Producer: Tõnu Hiie laid

Production company: Tallifornia

Completion date: April 2023

Production budget in EUR: 350 000

Financing in place in EUR: 300 000

Project status: post-production

Looking for: distributors, sales agents, festivals, streamers, festivals, cinema markets

Synopsis

Free Money tells three loosely interconnected stories about money, crypto, and the investment culture of the last few years when investing has become a form of entertainment and every taxi driver is trading in stocks and coins.

It's an ensemble movie that follows three men — a brash crypto entrepreneur (Miklós Banyai), a straightforward programmer (Märt Pius), and a conservative banker (Ivo Uukkivi) — and their relationship with money.

Director

Rain Rannu is an Estonian film director, producer, and tech investor. Rain has written and directed the road-movie *Chasing Ponies* (2016), the narrative virtual reality short *Beqaa VR* (2018), and the critically acclaimed start-up comedy *Chasing Unicorns* (Black Nights FF 2019). His third feature, the sci-fi adventure *Child Machine*, will premiere at Just Film 2022. Together with producer Tõnu Hiie laid, Rain is the founder of indie movie production company Tallifornia, helping Estonian filmmakers reach further.

Producer and production company

Tõnu Hiie laid is a co-founder and producer of **Tallifornia** – indie production company focusing exclusively on author-driven narrative features. Tallifornia's first production *Chasing Unicorns* (Black Nights FF 2019) became a box-office hit in Estonia. *Kratt*, directed by Rasmus Merivoo, (2020) has been well received internationally (Fantasia, BI-FAN, Cottbus FF, Leeds IFF). His third production *Tree of Eternal Love*, directed by Meel Paliale, premiered at Just Film FF 2021. Currently, Tallifornia has five other feature films at different stages of production.

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INFINITE SUMMER



ORIGINAL TITLE: INFINITE SUMMER

Country: Estonia

Runtime (minutes): 90

Genre: sci-fi, thriller

Director: Miguel Llansó

Writer: Miguel Llansó

Cinematographer: Israel Seoane

Cast: Teele Kaljuvee-O'Brock, Johanna-Aurelia Rosin, Hannah Gross, Katariina Unt

Producer: Tõnu Hiie laid

Production company: Tallifornia

Completion date: August 2023

Production budget in EUR: 350 000

Financing in place in EUR: 250 000

Project status: post-production

Looking for: gap financing, distributors, sales agents, festivals, co-producers

Synopsis

While spending the summer together at a beach house, Grete, Sarah, and Mia meet a guy who calls himself Dr. Mindfulness and sells his own meditation app. Although Dr. Mindfulness speaks and performs like a complete charlatan, his app and devices deliver a surprisingly mind-bending experience.

Detectives Jack (Interpol) and Katrin (local police) arrive on the scene to confirm that Dr. Mindfulness is a fraud and bigger, darker forces are behind the app. It is somehow connected to the operating system of

the Tallinn Zoo run by AI that can turn a human body into something between pollen and cosmic dust. The detectives race desperately to solve the case, not knowing whether they are trying to stop a cyber-crime or prevent a large-scale biological weapons attack.

Mia searches for Grete and Sarah to see what has become of her old friends, only to grapple with the choice to save them (from what) or join them (for what). It's been a long summer and it may just go on forever.

Director

Based in Tallinn since 2017, **Miguel Llansó** studied philosophy and cinema before embarking on his many adventures. A big fan of experimental-punk-weird music and films, his international recognition came when he started filming in Ethiopia. Sundance, Rotterdam, Locarno, Hamburg, Milano, Buenos Aires, Brussels, Tampere, Rio de Janeiro, Odense, and many other film festivals have shown selections of his works. His films have received positive reviews from *Variety*, *Screen Anarchy*, the *New York Times*, *Hollywood Reporter*, and *Film-maker Magazine*, among others.

Producer and production company

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LIFE INTERRUPTED



ORIGINAL TITLE: DŽĪVE PĀRTRAUKTA

Countries: Latvia, Lithuania

Runtime (minutes): 100

Genre: drama

Director: Ilze Kunga-Melgaile

Writers: Anna Kalniņa, Inga Rozentāle

Cinematographer: Maksim Efros

Cast: Ērika Eglija-Grāvele, Darius Meškauskas, Gints Grāvelis, Ilze Ķuzule-Skrastiņa, Sandra Kļaviņa

Producers: Aija Bērziņa, Marija Razgute

Production companies: Tasse Film, M-Films

Completion date: November 2023

Production budget in EUR: 1 079 163

Financing in place in EUR: 933 552

Project status: production

Looking for: distributors, sales agents, festivals

Synopsis

Alicija (33), a Polish-born liberal free-thinker, joins the Awakening movement. Her newlywed husband Ilgvars (53), a man with the experience of another generation, calls her to be more careful and cautious. With the support of a close friend, the poet Normunds (40), Alicija soon comes to the forefront of the Singing Revolution. However, alongside the first success, difficulties appear – Alicija receives an anonymous letter accusing Ilgvars of being a former KGB informant. His ambiguous answer leads to her wanting to find out the truth.

Realising that her husband's actions in the KGB have affected the fate of her close friend, Alicija faces an unenviable choice. Torn by internal contradictions, she continues her work to restore the country's independence, unable to find courage to resolve the situation. Alicija buries herself in her work and the emotional connection with her husband gradually fades away. The regime she is fighting so fervently has suddenly touched her so personally.

Director

Ilze Kunga-Melgaile is a first-time Latvian director. After graduating from the St. Petersburg State University of Cinema in 2004, Ilze has directed various short films, such as *Rendez-Vous* (2005), *Pine Tree Children* (2005), *Spiral* (2007), and *The Signs Of Light* (2010). The latter won the main prize in the section New Baltic Cinema at Scanorama/European Film Forum. *Life Interrupted* will be her first feature.

Producer and production company

Aija Berzina is the owner and producer at **Tasse Film**. She has been active in the film industry since 2003 and has worked with many national and international crews as first assistant director and later – production manager and line producer. Since 2011, she has been active as a film producer and in 2012 she produced the feature documentary *Documentarian*, which premiered at DOK Leipzig and received the Best Film Award in Latvia. In 2011, she established her own company Tasse Film. Since 2013, Aija has headed the Producers Association of Latvia and in 2015, was elected as the chairman of the Film Council at the Ministry of Culture. In 2014, Aija established the Riga International Film Festival. Aija is a graduate of EAVE Producers' Workshop 2015 and Producers on the Move 2018.

Contact

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ORIGINAL TITLE: LOTUS

Countries: Latvia, Lithuania

Runtime (minutes): 110

Genre: comedy, history

Director: Signe Birkova

Writer: Signe Birkova

Cast: Severija Janušauskaite, Vilis Daudziņš, Rēzija Kalniņa, Baiba Broka

Producers: Dominiks Jarmakovičs, Roberts Vinovskis

Production companies: Studio Locomotive

Completion date: September 2023

Production budget in EUR: 890 000

Financing in place in EUR: 850 000

Project status: post-production

Looking for: gap financing, distributors, sales agents, festivals

Synopsis

Baltic German Alice von Trotta returns to her father's manor in Latvia in 1919. During her stay, she meets some local labourers who demonstrate hostility. Moreover, Alice discovers that she has been lured into a trap, organised by the demonic lawyer Emil Keyserling, the decadent organisation Viva la Mort, and its necrophile leader. While trying to escape the clutches of her decadent "friends," Alice meets cinema enthusiasts who have been working on their own silent film. She learns to edit films and starts to work on her own experimental film. Alice uses filmmaking as a tool for self-discovery and a weapon for confronting her enemies.

Director

Signe Birkova is a filmmaker from Riga and has studied Philosophy, Journalism, and Film. Since then, she has directed short fiction films, experimental films, documentaries, TV programmes as well as analogue film performances. She makes experimental films using 16mm and Super 8 film stock, and different animation techniques. Her short fiction film *Upon Return I'll Be a Flaming Rose* received a special FIPRESCI award in Latvia in 2014. Signe is a member of the Baltic Analog Lab artist collective.

Producer and production company

Dominiks Jarmakovics holds a degree in Audiovisual Arts and a MBA. Having different managerial experience in projects across the creative industry – festivals, music concerts, contemporary art events, dance performances, for the past seven years, he has focused on the compelling nature of audiovisual arts. Even though the first self-produced feature *Despair* (Karlis Lesins, 2020) was released just recently, Dominiks' work is associated with many projects, such as *Invisible* (Ignas Jonynas, 2019), *Christmas in the Jungle* (Jaak Kilmi, 2020), *The Year Before the War* (Davis Simanis, 2021) and others, where he acted as Associate Producer, Co-Producer, Production Manager or Line Producer.

Roberts Vinovskis is the producer, director and founder of **Studio Locomotive**, which produces fiction, creative documentaries, and animation. Founded in 1995, it has become one of the fastest growing film studios in the Baltic countries. Nearly all films produced and co-produced by Studio Locomotive have been premiered at the most influential international film festivals such as San Sebastian IFF, Karlovy Vary IFF, Moscow IFF, Warsaw IFF, and others.

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