



Let's Watch Together!
European Cinema Education
for Youth

CROATIAN FILMS PART 1 – TEENAGERS

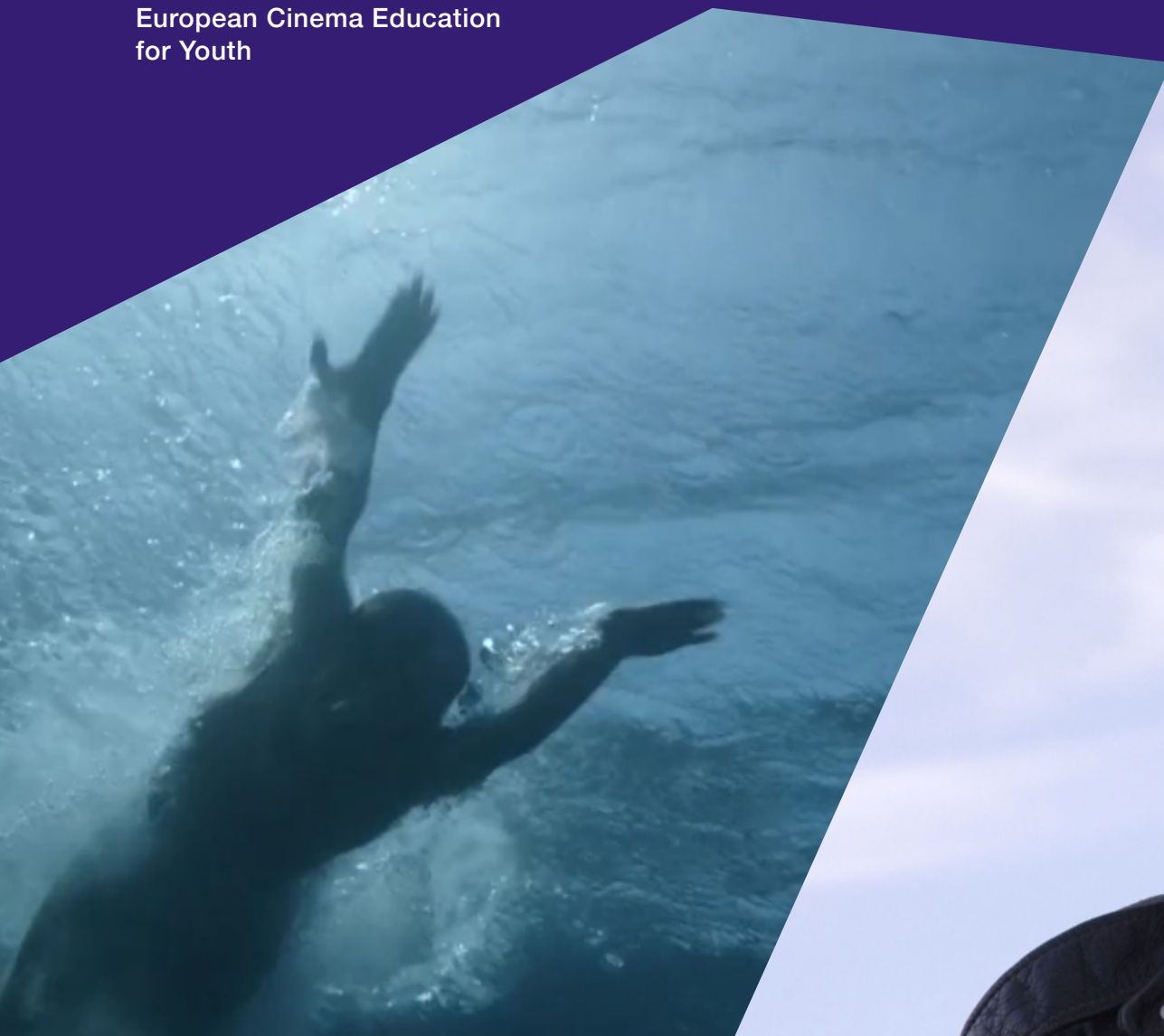
Then I See Tanja

Juraj Lerotić, 2010

Into the Blue

Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović, 2017

PEDAGOGICAL BOOKLET



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1. CINED: A FILM COLLECTION TOWARDS A EUROPEAN PEDAGOGY OF CINEMA

CinEd is dedicated to the transmission of the Seventh Art as a cultural object and a means to help conceive the world. To accomplish this, a common pedagogy was developed based on a collection of films selected from the filmographies of CinEd's partner countries. This approach aims to adapt to our times and to the fast, continuous, and significant changes in the way we see, receive, broadcast, and produce images. These images are seen on different types of screens: from the largest – that of a movie theatre – to the smallest on our smartphones, and likewise on TV and computer screens or tablets. Cinema is an art that is still young; its death has been predicted many times; needless to say, this did not happen.

These changes impact cinema and must be considered when thinking about the transmission of it – particularly in the increasingly fragmented way we watch films on various screens. CinEd's publications propose and assert a pedagogy that is sensitive, inductive, interactive, and intuitive, offering knowledge, tools for analysis, and the potential for a dialogue between images and films. The works are considered on different scales, naturally as a whole, but also in fragments and according to different temporalities – singling out stills, shots, and sequences.

This teaching material is an invitation to engage with the films in a free and flexible way. One of the main challenges being to seize the cinematographic images with intelligence, using different approaches: their description – essential step for any analytical process – and the ability to extract and select images, to organise, compare, and confront them. This includes images both in the film being discussed and in other films, as well as images from all visual and narrative arts (photography, literature, painting, theatre, cartoons...). The objective is that images no longer elude us, but rather make sense; in that sense, cinema is an art of synthesis that is especially valuable in building and strengthening the gaze of young generations.

The educational file and the student sheets were prepared by the Shadow Casters

Author of educational file: Anja Pletikosa is a playwright who has been actively participating in artistic and cultural work in Zagreb's independent scene since 2014. In authorial expression and pedagogical work, she combines several fields of her artistic and humanistic interests: theatre and theatre history; literary, performing, and philosophical text; film and animation (puppets, objects). She is the author of plays and performance concepts, as well as of the adaptations of twenty full-length plays for children and young people. As a pedagogue, she develops various multimedia workshop programmes for children.

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2. WHY THESE FILMS TODAY?

These films were selected as important achievements of Croatian filmmakers of the younger generation, and as a kind of prelude to their feature films. The films form the early works of two exceptional and extremely bold filmmakers that are worth introducing to a wider audience. *Then I See Tanja* is the first professional film by Juraj Lerotić, a director who showed real courage by playing himself in his debut feature-length and autobiographical film about his brother's suicide *Sigurno mjesto* [Safe Place] (Croatia, 2022.). Lerotić asserted his authorial boldness already with *Then I See Tanja* by choosing the form of stop motion for a conventional story about teenage love and growing up. Furthermore, on the content level, Lerotić revealed not only the subject which is going to “haunt” him in his later work but will also determine his poetics. In his above mentioned debut he radically developed the matter of a fatherless family and possibility of loss, but in *Tanja* the elements of death are omnipresent. Juraj Lerotić is not afraid of tackling this issue in front of his audience: he skilfully interweaves love and death in this coming-of-age film which, being on the verge of black humour, could challenge his audience, especially younger viewers.

Into the Blue is a prelude to Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović's first feature film, *Murina* (Croatia, 2021). Her courage is expressed in her authorial will to talk about complicated family relationships, which is not only difficult to do, but also very sensitive. In films, such topics often fall into pathos, while this author, on the contrary, shows impudence and sharpness through the character of the teenage girl Julija. The very fact that the film about growing up is placed in the context of domestic violence breaks the framework of the usual social discourse on this topic, which is still rarely and insufficiently discussed in public in Croatia.

With their films, Lerotić and Alamat Kusijanović move away from the gloomy film routine and life in the (wartime) past. Instead, they represent the voices of a generation of younger authors who find their inspiration in and around themselves.

These films may be the first encounter with recent Croatian cinematography, which in the last fifteen years has been marked by strong authors' works that have left their mark in the wider international film context.

FILM POSTERS



Then I See Tanja (2010), Juraj Lerotić



Into the Blue (2017), Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Original title: *Then I See Tanja*

Country: Croatia

Duration: 34 minutes

Format: colour

World Premiere: October 18, 2010,
at the Zagreb Film Festival, Croatia

Commercial release in Croatian cinemas: 2010

Director: Juraj Lerotić

Screenplay: Juraj Lerotić

Production: Hulahop, Lumen Film, and Art Production

Producers: Olinka Vištica, Dana Budisavljević

Production Assistant: Boris Veličan

Original Music: Christian Biegai

Director of Photography: Jakov Lerotić

Editing: Marko Ferković

Sound: Hrvoje Štefotić

Actors: Niko Gamulin-Vilogorac (Željko), Ena Mašić (Tanja), Marin Radman (Luka), Mirjana Rogina (mother), Trpimir Jukić (Tanja's father), Nikola Radan (Mr. Karlo)

Original title: *Into the Blue*

Country: Croatia

Duration: 22 minutes

Format: colour

World Premiere: February 9, 2017
at the Berlin International Film Festival, Germany

Commercial Release in Croatian cinemas: 2017

Director: Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović

Assistant Director: Timka Grin

Screenplay: Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović

Co-screenwriter: Christina Lazaridi

Production: Blade Production

Producers: Barbara Vekarić, Vlaho Krile, Zoran Dževerdanović

Co-producer: Karolina Berkell-Kirk

Original Music: Ivan Marinović, Evgueni Galperine

Director of Photography: Marko Brdar

Editing: Minji Kang

Sound: Julij Zornik

Scenography: Marijo Šimić

Costume Design: Zjena Glamočanin

Actors: Gracija Filipović, Vanesa Vidaković Natrlin, Dominik Duždević, Andro Režić, Nataša Dangubić, Marija Kohn

Growing up



Relationships and
loneliness

Teenage gaze



Local colour

Imagination

3. FOCUS OF THE FILMS, KEYWORDS

GROWING UP

A coming-of-age movie is a special genre in which children as main characters gradually grow up, and the story is told from the perspective of these maturing youths.

The protagonists of these films, teenagers Željko and Julija, go through changes. Like their peers, they deal with falling in love for the first time, their fears, and with getting closer to friends or growing distant from them. However, their reality is interrupted by background stories about their families. Because of a sick mother or an abusive father, these children have to find a way of coping with everything that (adult) life brings.

TEENAGE GAZE

The changes that the protagonists go through, and their emotional states are clearly visible in the long shots of their gazes. Željko's gaze towards Tanja shows tenderness, while throughout the film he is mostly worried about his work and his mum. Julija, on the other hand, shows her pain and not fitting into the new group with her long, serious gaze directed at her friend Ana and newcomer Pjero. The dynamics of the exchange of their gazes is a basis for understanding their relations: it is a trio in which the feeling of envy takes over friendship and starts to dominate.

RELATIONSHIPS AND LONELINESS

The main preoccupations of the protagonists are friendship and falling in love. After her absence, Julija returns to the island where she grew up, only to find that the summer routine has changed, and with it her relationship with her best friend Ana. But as the intruder Pjero enters this relationship, the girls also start feeling envy and become opponents.

Željko fantasizes about Tanja, but he does not know how to approach her. Both characters actually fear rejection and not fitting in, which are universal feelings when growing up. These films show omnipresent loneliness in adolescence, a unique and sensitive stage of growing up.

LOCAL COLOUR

Locations play an important role in the stories of these films. The blue of the sea dominates almost completely the film named after it. Jumping into the sea is an important narrative moment of the film, and Julija uses it in different ways – to prove herself, to escape, to show her resistance. For Julija, immersing herself in the sea means liberation. Željko's world is marked by living in a typical neighbourhood on the outskirts of Split. Modernist skyscrapers and hills in the background are characteristic images of that suburb. The interior of his room is often the place where he can reflect, while in his imagination he escapes to the open sea, where he imagines idealised situations. Different shades of blue and the recognizable urban landscape of Split form a special aesthetics of *Then I See Tanja*, which can be read not only from the colour or elements of the scenography, but also from the usage of light. Low light and playing with shadows illustrate the above-mentioned loneliness of the protagonists.

IMAGINATION

In order to escape from reality, we often immerse ourselves in the world of imagination. Before going to sleep, Željko imagines ideal situations that help him calm down and drift off. When he's upset, he does not manage to keep them in his head, and they get mixed up with real images of his mum in the hospital. The film *Into the Blue* ends with an argument between Julija and Ana. Julija pushes Ana off the cliff into the sea and then jumps after her. She hits his head and begins to sink. Although filmed as a real situation, it is not entirely clear whether this sequence of events really happened or whether it is part of Julija's fantasy.

SYNOPSIS

Then I see Tanja

Željko (16) and his younger brother live alone since their mother is being treated in the hospital. She will soon start a new phase of treatment, so Željko promised himself that he would buy her a wig, a real one, made of natural hair. But his mother's illness is not the only thing that troubles Željko. Tanja, a girl he met in the hospital during a visit, interferes in his dreams. In order to raise money, Željko finds a job as a videographer, and it seems that everything could be getting better again. His first job was recording the funeral of Tanja's mother. But when he saw Tanja, Željko focused the camera on her and forgot to record the lowering of the coffin into the grave. Despite the obvious problem, Željko, his brother, and his boss find a solution: they will stage the burial from another funeral. This is where the problems begin, and they will determine whether Željko will be happy with Tanja.

Into the blue

Fleeing domestic violence, thirteen-year-old Julija and her mother come to the idyllic island where Julija had spent her childhood. Returning to the island for Julija also means meeting her best friend, Ana. Julija's initial excitement about the meeting slowly subsides as she realizes that she is no longer Ana's priority. Ana has fallen in love with their peer Pjero and is trying hard to make an impression. When going to the beach together, Ana ignores Julija, who tries to establish contact with her and tell her about an important thing that happened to her. Realizing that Pjero is the reason for the rift in their friendship, Julija turns on her survival mechanism: she jumps into the sea from a great height, thus attracting Pjero's attention. The animosity between the two girls grows.

1. CONTEXT

CROATIA AS PART OF A MULTI-ETHNIC STATES, SHORT FILM, HAVC, NEW WAVE

After the end of World War I, Croatia became part of a multinational state under different names and varying compositions, though always connected to other South Slavic nations, such as Slovenia and Serbia. In these circumstances, the first Croatian feature film was *Brcko u Zagrebu* [Brcko in Zagreb] (Arsen Maas, 1917.). Unfortunately, it is lost. The period from 1945 to 1990, when Croatia was part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), is important for the development of film and of today's auteur creativity. During that period, we note two important moments for the films discussed here: the development of films for children and/or about children, and the development of short films.

The dissolution of the Communist Bloc in Europe had its consequences on the socialist regime in Yugoslavia, although the breakup of the state in 1990 was also the result of nationalist political agendas of the main political figures that emerged after Tito's death in 1980. The results were severe and long war events in Croatia lasting from 1991 to 1995. It is thus impossible to talk about film in Croatia without this insight into what had been filmed before the independence: Croatian film as an independent national phenomenon has only existed for about thirty years – previous creations must be seen in the context of Yugoslav cinema.

FILM AND CHILDREN

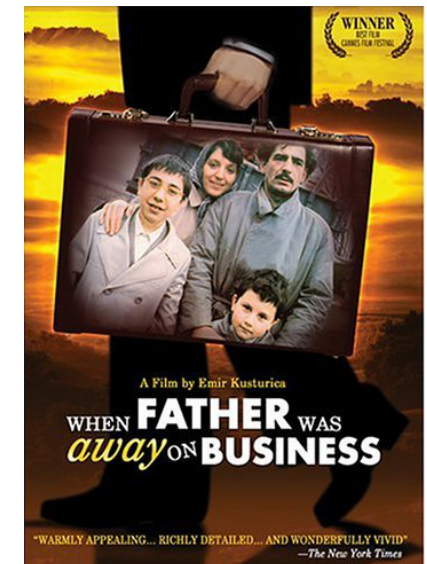
Several important films about children, or intended for children's audiences, were made in Yugoslavia. Highlights from the catalogue include *Sinji galeb* [Blue Seagull] (Branko Bauer, 1953), *Ne okreći se sine* [Don't Look Back, My Son] (B. Bauer, 1956), *Kekec and Sretno Kekec* [Good luck, Kekec] (both Jože Gale, 1951 and 1963), *Družba Pere Kvržice* [Pero the Lump's Gang] (Vladimir Tadej, 1970), *Vuk samotnjak* [Lone Wolf] (Obrad Gluščević, 1973), *Kapetan Mikula Mali* [Captain Mikula, the Kid] (O. Gluščević, 1973), *Vlak u snijegu* [Train in the Snow] (Mate Relja, 1976), *Tajna starog tavana* [The Secret of the Old Attic] (V. Tadej, 1984). They are mostly adventure movies which portray children experiencing exceptional events while solving a problem. In *Pero the Lump's Gang*, for instance, a group of village boys tries to restore an old mill, while simultaneously dealing with relationships and conflicts within their community. The plot of *Train in the Snow* is similar: children have to dig out their train from a snow-drift when travelling back home from a field trip, and at the same time they accept "outlaws" from their class. Only *Don't Look Back, My Son* is somewhat of an exception, because it takes place during WWII, when Croatia was under the fascist Ustasha regime. It therefore creates an extra-political tone and thematizes the struggle against fascism. It is interesting that at that time we also had our first child movie star, Slavko Štimac, who started his career in *Lone Wolf* and *Train in the Snow* and thus gained popularity, and later continued his film career to this day.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY

We'd like to single out in particular two films about children from the mentioned period. They talk about growing up and portray family events from the child's perspective. These are *Imam dvije mame i dva tate* [I Have Two Mothers and Two Fathers] by Krešo Golik (1968) and *Otac na službenom putu* [When Father Was Away on Business] by Emir Kusturica (1985), in which the protagonists witness unpleasant family events, while their father's absence from everyday life also plays an important role. In the first movie, a boy struggles when his parents separate and go on to form new families. Over the course of small and big arguments, the two families get a new form and the boy has to spend half his time at his mother's and half his time at his father's house. *When Father Was Away on Business*, the winner of Palme d'Or in Cannes in 1985, thematizes a father's affair in the context of Soviet pressure on Yugoslavia shortly after the WWII. The father actually was in jail because his mistress had accused him of spreading anti-Stalin propaganda, while his children were told that the father had gone on a business trip.



I Have Two Mothers and Two Fathers
(1968), Krešo Golik



When Father Was Away on Business
(1985), Emir Kusturica

SHORT FILM

According to statistical data, 6377 short films were shot in SFRY until 1982. We will single out two trends that are important for our two films. The first concerns short films for children and includes the animated Oscar winner *Surogar* [The Substitute] (also known under the title *Ersatz*, Dušan Vukotić, 1960) and the short fiction films *Piko* (Srećko Weygand, 1959), *Izgubljena olovka* [The Lost Pencil] (Fedor Škubonja, 1960), and *Moj stan* [My Apartment] (Zvonimir Berković, 1962). The second trend is particularly important for the development of the *film d'auteur* and includes examples of short films from the so-called Black Wave, a movement of auteur films in Yugoslavia at the end of the 1960s and throughout the 1970s, in which filmmakers experimented with form. Some of the most prominent ones were Želimir Žilnik, Vlado Kristl, Dušan Makavejev, and Karpo Godina. As censorship was enforced in those years, to be able to show a film, everything had to be approved by the committee. Despite censorship, very few films were rejected for public screening. Among other things, the films were shown at film festivals (the one in Pula being the most important), but there were also several festivals dedicated to short films (in Belgrade, Tuzla and other cities).

TODAY

The Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC)

Lerotić and Alamat Kusijanović are authors of the younger generation, who are said to be the leaders of the “new Croatian film wave” and the “women's wave”. Changes in Croatian cinematography – after it had been devoted to the war that took place in the 1990s because of the breakup of Yugoslavia – began with the establishment of the HAVC. Created thanks to the efforts of Albert Kapovic, a film producer and the first Chief Executive of HAVC, the Centre was founded by the Croatian Government as an independent body for the systematic promotion of audiovisual creativity. This marks the beginning of an era of transparent financing of Croatian films and of encouragement of international co-productions with funds from the Creative Europe MEDIA Programme.

In addition to film production, HAVC also finances educational activities, distribution, and film festivals. Today, the most important festivals are Zagreb Film Festival, Zagreb Dox, 25 FPS, Animafest, Liburnia Film Festival and Pula Film Festival. The festivals are an important platform for promoting Croatian film and for introducing international independent production to Croatian audiences. Established in 2003, the Zagreb Film Festival is held annually in November in several different cinemas and non-cinema venues in Zagreb. Long and short fiction films compete in several different categories for the Golden Pram Award. For Croatian authors the most important programme is *Kockice* (Checkers), which promotes short films of not-yet-

established filmmakers. ZagrebDox is the most important documentary film festival in this ex-Yugoslavian region and showcases more than 100 documentary films from all over the world. It has been held annually since 2005 between late February and early March and it offers Croatian audiences not only the newest documentary production, but also retrospectives of renowned documentary filmmakers. It additionally focuses on Croatian cinematography, which is showcased in several programmes: the Regional Competition, as well as ADU Dox dedicated to student films made at the Academy of Dramatic Arts; Factumentaries are produced with the Factum production company, while other works are developed at the Restart's School of Documentary Film. Factum and Restart are Croatia's most relevant production companies and are dedicated exclusively to documentary films.



**Hrvatski
audiovizualni
centar**
Croatian Audiovisual Centre

HAVC logo

NEW WAVE

This development of encouraging production on the one hand and distribution, as well as festival life on the other, encouraged young authors to get more and more involved in filmmaking. Therefore, in the last 15 years, many Croatian film workers have been continuously engaged in Croatia and beyond and have won awards for their work at major festivals, such as Cannes or the Berlinale. Feature film authors, such as Sonja Tarokić, Hana Jusić or Nevio Marasović, are deeply related to the social context they grew up in and thematize different aspects of Croatia's social fabric in Croatia: family ties, structural problems in, for instance, educational system, contemporary lifestyle and generational habits, among others. In their films, regional performers play a central role: Bojan Navojec, Janko Popović Volarić, Nataša Janjić, or Nikša Butijer, with the special appearance of the internationally recognized actors Goran Bogdan or Zlatko Burić Kićo. While Bogdan experienced filming in international productions such as *Fargo* (TV-series 2014-2024), Zlatko Burić is the winner of the European Film Award in 2022 for his role as a Russian tycoon in *Triangle of Sadness* (Ruben Östlund, 2022). The authors of documentary films of the same generation are Nebojša Slijepčević, Igor Bezinović, and Bojana Burnać. They have been recognized both in Croatia and abroad for their exceptional approach to various subjects. Filmmakers such as Ana Hušman, Tomislav Šoban, and Miro Manojlović have been present in Croatian experimental film for more than a decade and showcase their work at important national and international film festivals.

2. THEN I SEE TANJA

THE AUTHOR

Juraj Lerotić has shot two films. He shot his first professional film, the short film *Then I See Tanja*, while he was still a graduate student at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb. He then did not film anything for twelve years. His feature-length debut *Sigurno mjesto* [Safe Place] was released in 2022, and, among other awards and recognitions, it was the Croatian candidate for the Academy Awards (Oscars). After more than a decade of absence from the film scene, Juraj Lerotić became a media superstar with the first screenings of *Safe Place*, “a leader of the new film wave in Croatia”, whose debut was described by the critics as “impressive” and “the bravest and most personal”.

There is not much information about this director. He was born in 1978 in the German city of Kiel, and later moved to Split, where he completed primary and secondary school. He then studied theology, preschool education, and film direction in Zagreb and Zadar. In addition to his two films, Lerotić also worked on several television series. It seems that the twelve-year break between the two films says more about Lerotić than the little information we can find on the internet, and the same is true for the parallels between his two films. Just like *Then I See Tanja*, *Safe Place* is a story about two brothers and their mother. Lerotić’s own brother Jakov worked as a cameraman on *Tanja* and would ten years later become the main character of *Safe Place*. *Tanja* tells the story of a teenage boy falling in love, with the story of his mother’s treatment unfolding in the background, while *Safe Place* is about the suicide of Lerotić’s own brother.

Love and death are therefore the thematic backbone of both films, and they both feature the same family triangle ‘brother/mother/me’, overshadowed by the absence of a father (in *Tanja* the father is mentioned once, when the mother deliberately skips his name). This repetition



Juraj Lerotić

opens up a space for an autobiographical moment. *Safe Place* is not only an autobiographical film, but also one in which Lerotić plays himself, a guy who tries to prevent his brother’s suicide but fails to do so. As he himself stated in an interview: a debutant director who also plays himself in his own film, and is not a professional actor, is a risky move for the producer. Nevertheless, the creative tension arising from this specific constellation influenced the result of a film that would receive multiple awards at major and important festivals, both in Croatia and abroad, including a triple award at the Locarno Festival. Lerotić even won the Heart of Sarajevo for the best role in the film.

Safe Place was filmed in approximately thirty days, using real locations in Zagreb and Split. Filming in locations such as a hospital or a police station helped Lerotić in certain directorial decisions, because he drew a lot from the authenticity of these places. The fact that the film was shot during the latest pandemic, and public spaces, for example hospitals, were not easily accessible, did not weaken this authenticity. Finally, despite never having acted before, Lerotić’s acting also contributes to the success of the film. The producers felt, after seeing him giving instructions to the actors on the casting tapes, that Lerotić would be the best choice for the role. Since no other actor was as fit for the role as himself, the director agreed to take that risk.

FILMOGRAPHY

Then I See Tanja

Zagreb Film Festival 2010 – Checkers – Golden Pram Award for the best Croatian short film.

Ljubljana International Film Festival 2011 – special jury recognition.

Croatian Film Days 2011 – Grand Prix for Best Film and Oktavijan Award for Best Film in 2011.

Safe Place

Locarno Film Festival 2022 – Concorso Cineasti del presente – best director, best actor (Goran Marković), best debut feature film.

Sarajevo Film Festival 2022 – Heart of Sarajevo for best film; Heart of Sarajevo for best actor (Juraj Lerotić); CICA Award, Cineuropa Award.

Zagreb Film Festival 2022 – Main programme: Feature films – special recognition.
Eastern European Film Festival in Cottbus 2022 – Grand prize for the best feature film.

A FEW THOUGHTS OF JURAJ LEROTIĆ

“My decision to experiment with the form of stop motion started with my wish to make a film about a period when a lot of things happen to you for the first time and a lot of things are contradictory. For example: you would prefer if your parents didn't exist and at the same time you can't live without them; you would love to approach someone because you fell in love, but you just don't know how to.

It seemed interesting to me to be constantly in the head of such a character, so I decided to use voice-over. Then I thought about what would best accompany the narrator's voice and the fragmentary nature of his thoughts. I liked that with the combination of voice and photography I can very elegantly and at the same time suggestively jump from space to space or even from topic to topic, which seemed very important to me, considering the psychological state of the main character.

Words work when they move and connect, and photos work when they are still – it seemed to me that these opposite properties would mirror the character's inner world in an interesting way. Some kind of tearing/splitting, so to speak. In addition, there was also a strategic production reason. The decision to shoot with a camera only, and not with a camera and sound, enabled me and my team to borrow the equipment for an unusually long period, which was then reflected in the quality and variety of the recorded material.

When I wrote Then I See Tanja, I wanted to write something I could lean on, a film that believes in happy ending. In contrast, my other feature film Safe Place is something that you can trip over, that can throw you off balance. It's not my conscious decision – both films just reflect some of my world views. I was naive and innocent in a way when I was working on Then I See Tanja, and that's nice. Death and madness have brutally confronted me with how naive I am and how little control I have over life.

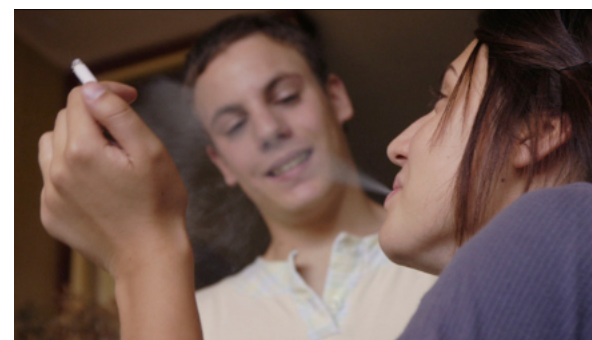
Then I See Tanja gave me confidence that I can make a film that I will like, a film which will give me the opportunity to express what I feel. It had a great influence on my further development.”

THE FILM CAN REMIND US OF... (AS RECOMMENDED BY THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOKLET)

1. *La Jetée* (Chris Marker, 1962), nostalgia and memories in a photo-film.
2. *Phantom Boy* (Jean-Loup Felicioli and Alain Gagnol, 2015), escape into imagination and the world of dreams.
3. *La Boum* [Party] (Claude Pinoteau, 1980) the saddest and happiest teen love.



La Jetée (1962), Chris Marker



Then I See Tanja (2010), Juraj Lerotić



Phantom Boy (2015), Jean-Loup Felicioli and Alain Gagnol



Then I See Tanja (2010), Juraj Lerotić



Party (1980), Claude Pinoteau



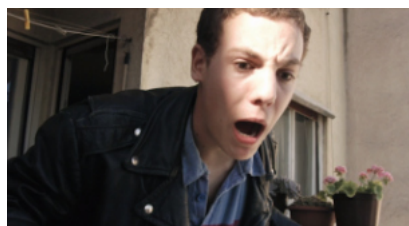
Then I See Tanja (2010), Juraj Lerotić

FILM CHAPTERS...

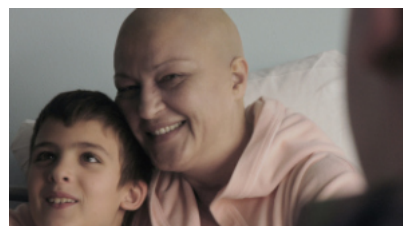
The chapter below is a tool for finding your way around the film.



1 – Introductory nightmare in which the protagonist Željko dreams about an awkward encounter with the girl he is in love with. (0:00 – 1:54)



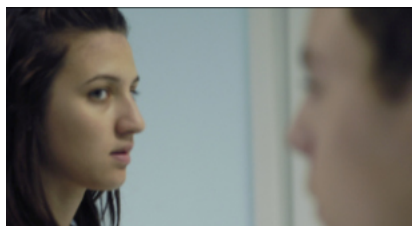
2 – Introductory nightmare no. 2, in which the dream continues, but now he dreams of his ill mother disappearing. (1:54 – 3:08)



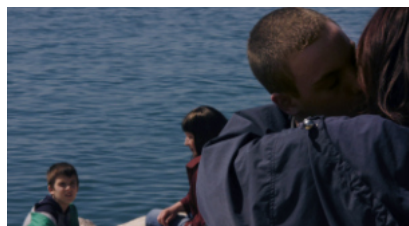
3 – With mum in a hospital. (3:16 – 4:47)



4 – The reason why Željko wants a job is to buy a wig for his mum. (4:47 – 5:22)



5 – Željko introduces us to Tanja, who is also visiting her mum in the hospital. (5:22 – 7:08)



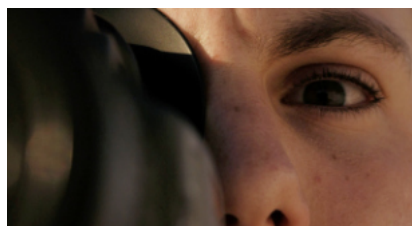
6 – Željko imagines an ideal situation where Željko and Tanja kiss in front of mum and Luka. (7:08 – 8:55)



7 – Luka wants to go to work with Željko. (8:55 – 9:46)



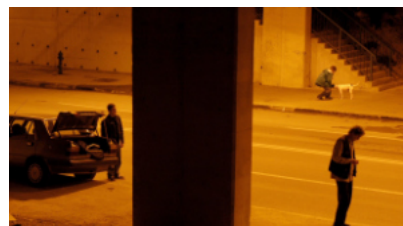
8 – Željko and his boss in the car, talking about the reasons why people film funerals of their beloved ones. (9:46 – 10:31)



9 – Željko is filming for the first time in his life. (9:46 – 10:53)



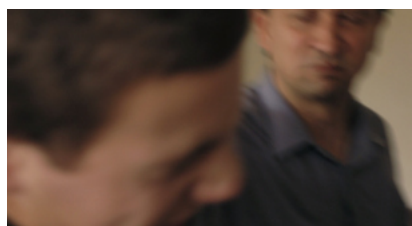
10 – The funeral captured with Željko's camera: he sees Tanja. (10:55 – 12:25)



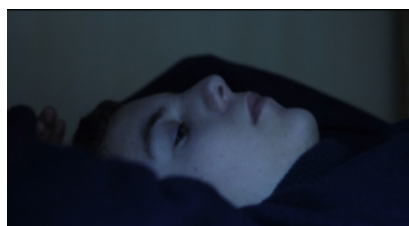
11 – On the way back, Željko realizes that he didn't record the entire funeral. (12:25 – 15:04)



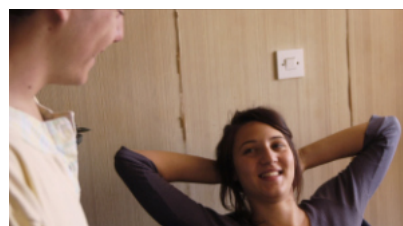
12 – Željko tries to imagine ideal images, but they disappear while Tanja's family watches the recording of the funeral. (15:04 – 21:05)



13 – Željko's world falls apart when Tanja's father slaps him. (21:06 – 22:49)



14 – His idealised images disappear while Željko lies silently in bed. (22:49 – 24:25)



15 – Tanja comes and spends the morning with Željko, together they laugh. (24:25 – 31:03)



16 – Happy pictures where Željko introduces Tanja to his mum. (31:03 – 34:25)

ANALYSIS OF A SEQUENCE sequence 0 – 3:16

from

Clip 1: introductory nightmare, in which the protagonist Željko dreams about an awkward encounter with the girl he is in love with

Clip 2: introductory nightmare no. 2, in which the dream continues, but now he dreams of his ill mother disappearing

CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

This long sequence opens the film, using several subjects, which are crucial content points of this film and its character development. It also introduces a particular filming technique and authorial decisions, which are fundamental peculiarities of this film. It ends with the film title.

The film was shot in stop motion technique, a technique of sequencing photos that allows the duration of frames and images to be extended and can thus “freeze” one moment of the action and highlight a certain reaction or emotion. This prolongation puts emphasis on a certain moment but doesn’t affect the overall rhythm of the film. The selected scene introduces us to the narrative logic of the film and includes fundamental film questions, such as rhythm, the relationship between image and sound, and imagination as a narrative strategy.

The scene opens with a shot of Željko sleeping. Željko dreams that he is in a store with a shopping list, and there he meets Tanja. They greet each other, and when shaking hands, Željko's hand stiffens and his middle finger begins to grow. Tanja leaves in disgust. The setting changes. Željko comes home. He sees his mother's shoes by the door and her clothes, but he cannot find her in the apartment. He sees her head without hair on the balcony, but when he gets there, his mum is gone. He sees her leaving the building in a hospital gown. Then he wakes up in panic.

DREAMS AND IMAGINATION

Dreams and imagination are an important “place of action” in this film. Every time Željko as a narrator needs support to credibly narrate the inner world of his character, he describes his visual imaginings. Those pictures, in turn, support Željko's character in content, which shows his emotional state to the viewers even better. Namely, the images line up like a stream of consciousness, and their coherence or incoherence convey to us how the character feels.

EXTENDED PICTURES

The first frame was shot with a camera approaching the sleeping Željko from a bird's eye view, so the viewer cannot guess that the film is filmed in stop motion.

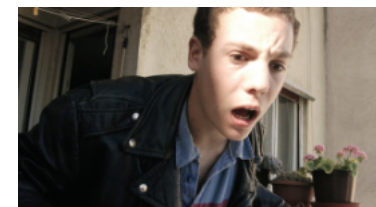
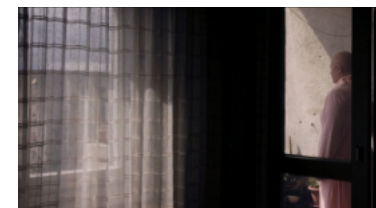
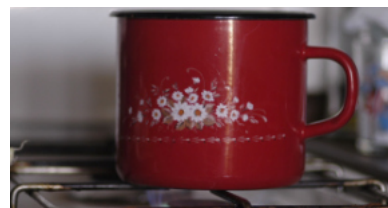
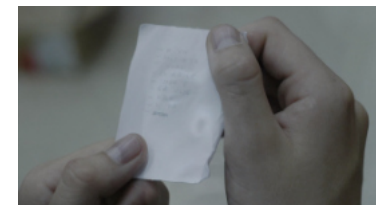
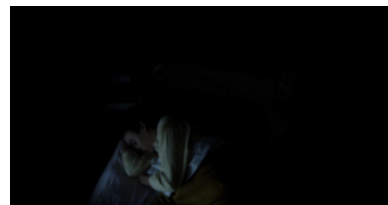
Only the next close-up of Željko's face and the transition to another position of his hand on his head give a hint that this is an unusual filming technique for a feature film. During the development of the scene, the images of close-ups and sometimes of details are extended and, with their duration, they emphasize that this particular moment is important for the plot. This is especially important with facial images where we see Tanja's amazement and disgust or the entire range of Željko's emotions: interest, satisfaction, panic, fear/despair (pictures 3 – 7). In addition, lengthening the images also affects the rhythm of the film and sometimes slows it down, which requires the viewer to engage and watch the film in a different way than watching regular feature films.

HOW A DREAM BECAME A NIGHTMARE

The film opens with music that sounds like a lullaby, later joined by Željko's breathing while he sleeps. We see Željko asleep, from above, while the camera closes in on him in a spiral movement. This kind of shooting suggests immersion in a dream – a series of dark shots, followed by suggestive music. The setting then changes, and the voice-over of the narrator – which is a dominant sound and a source of information throughout the film – explicitly says that it is a dream: Željko dreams that he is in a supermarket. Visually the impression of a dream is created by the image of a slip of paper with a grocery list written on it. The dream takes place in a very realistic space and uses elements from real life: supermarket, paper, characters – nothing is unusual.

The sense of unusual is given through several tricks the author uses to underline how real and influential this dream is for the protagonist. Željko watches the paper, but the view becomes blurry and the letters start to disappear and reappear. In this blurry image of the white paper Tanja's dark shoes appear and the mood changes. The music becomes bright and light (piano), and we hear the narrator saying his refrain: "then I see Tanja". The situation is again quite realistic. However, in the moment of the handshake, things start to develop in an unexpected way: Željko's hand freezes and the music becomes distorted. Željko's finger gets longer, which puts him into an awkward position. The unusualness of this moment is suggested by using a different kind of image. The lengthening of Željko's finger is created in post-production and it is the only moment of unstopped motion in this sequence.

The setting changes again: Željko finds himself in their apartment, which is again a familiar, everyday context. The realism of the space is emphasized by the use of sounds from everyday life such as boiling water, wind, traffic, ringing telephones, or the sound of front doors. Distortion from the previous scene continues, while all elements of a nightmare gradually start to appear. Željko sees his mother's personal belongings but cannot find her. Then he sees her on the balcony, but he cannot catch her. When he reaches the balcony, she disappears and reappears in the street. And then, by using stop motion, Lerotić makes the mother disappear completely. Željko's inability to catch his mother in a dream suggests the possibility of losing her, as we will later find out. The combination of sound distortion and close-ups of Željko's horrified face with elements of real, everyday life build up a peak of his fear and his nightmare: it is horrifying because it is possible.



Željko's dream becomes a nightmare.

ANALYSIS OF SHOTS

To better understand how the shooting technique affects the narrative and development of the film's action, we have chosen two different frames that serve as an example and explanation of the director's decision to combine stop motion with a documentary approach.

STOP MOTION: DISRUPTED FLUIDITY AND ANTICIPATION

shot 3:23 – 3:32

from

clip 3: with mum in hospital

It has already been discussed how extending the duration of an image affects the rhythm of the film and how the sound – recorded separately from the picture – can anticipate or precede the image and challenge the viewer to figure out what the sound belongs to, making him a forensic scientist of sorts. In this shot, we see Željko walking away from the camera and going down the hall. The room is dark and the only source of light, a modest bluish ceiling light, comes from the room whose entrance is set on the right side of the corridor. From the appearance of the corridor, one can guess that it is some kind of state building with many doors, narrow corridors, terrazzo floors, and an overall dilapidated impression. The frame consists of seven images of Željko's walk that lasts ten seconds that merge into each other, as Željko sets one foot in front of the other. The first six images last one second each, while the last one is extended and lasts three seconds. The transition as a montage cut creates for the viewer the impression of difficulty, a lack of fluidity, an interruptedness of Željko's walk, which technically may suggest that Željko's passage through that corridor is not easy. The last extended image only underlines this – before we switch to the next scene where Željko is in his mother's room and needs to stop and catch his breath. The sound of the entire frame begins during the opening credits in the previous frame, and we hear the sound of the door opening. It then develops into the sounds of hospital devices and instruments, which allow the viewer to conclude that the building Željko is in is a hospital, and not, say, a school.



Željko walking in the hospital.

STOP MOTION AND DOCUMENTARY

shot 20:08 – 20:14

from

clip 11:

Željko tries to conjure idealised images, but they disappear while Tanja's family watches the recording of the funeral

In this shot we see a television on which Tanja's family is watching a recording of her mother's funeral. Unlike the rest of the film, this shot is filmed in a documentary manner, and it shows a television framed in a slight overhead angle. The recording begins with a frame of Tanja and her father at the funeral, followed by a series of different moments of the funeral shown backwards while the tape is being rewound. It had started earlier, and we occasionally heard its sound as we have followed Željko moving around Tanja's apartment and seen the shocked faces of Tanja's family as they rewind the recording. The composition of characters in the picture designed in this way indicates that something important and worthy of attention is taking place on the television. The tight frame, together with the pointed index finger and remote control, brings into focus the recording played on their TV. The only moving action takes place on that screen: a recording of the funeral is being rewound and played again. The sound of the funeral music rewinding is heard. The very act of rewinding, accompanied by a distorted sound, gives the viewer a hint that important and possibly unpleasant events are to come. This impression is emphasized by the petrified gestures of the people in front of the TV: the bald man's head, the father's upper body and his static finger, all seem frozen by the content of what they have just seen.



Funeral record watched by the family.

Suggestion for teaching and analysis: It is interesting and important to also observe this shot in a wider context of several shots that precede and follow it. They give us a context of the action – and by seeing angry or shocked faces, we can anticipate the unease which is about to take place. It is equally stimulating to compare them to the images unfolding on the television.

RECEPTION OF THE FILM

JANKO HEIDL: *In search of intimate communication*

With the *Kockice* (Checkers) programme of the 8th Zagreb Film Festival, Zagreb, October 17–23, 2010

Zapis (Record), bulletin of the Croatian Film Association, 70th issue

The most successful production of this year's Checkers programme was the film *Then I See Tanja* (awarded with the Golden Pram in its category) by Juraj Lerotić, a graduate of the Academy of Dramatic Arts, and produced by Hulahop Film and Art Production. Different from the other films participating in the Checkers programme, as well as from the prevailing trend of current domestic short films, *Then I See Tanja* is somewhat gripping in its portrayal of social circumstances in Croatia today. It offers a taste of the unhappy social reality with a twist in the story, in which the main character gets a part-time job as an assistant funeral cameraman in an improvised small business owned by a kind-hearted acquaintance. In a few strokes, that section of the film resembles a dark humour picture. It outlines how an amateur finds his way into a do-it-yourself business of the Croatian milieu of small business entrepreneurship. The story, relatively rich in content, is focused on depicting the feelings of sixteen-year-old Željko, a resident of Split, a boy without a father who, because their mother is in hospital, takes care of his younger brother by himself. Željko gazes at his peer Tanja, but being a shy teenager, he does not know how to approach her.

A simple film with a lot of spirit and a carefully balanced relationship between sentimentality and tragicomedy, makes an attractive and sympathetic portrait of an adolescent in an unfortunate life situation. But is distinctly different from the others, both at first glance and afterwards, because it is made with a rarely used form of photo-film, which makes it almost experimental. It is therefore composed of still camera-recorded images accompanied by an effective and imaginative use of sound. Of course, the most famous such film that immediately comes to mind is Chris Marker's (also half-hour long) classic from 1962 *La Jetée*. Marker's film will also be associated with a few touches of fantasy that appear at the beginning of *Tanja*, although in Lerotić's film this motif of fantasy is later lost without any explanation or reason. In both their works, Lerotić and Marker share a particularly prominent event for the main character (the narrator): a significant love encounter. However, while Marker's *La Jetée* perfectly presents its basic motif, that of memory, the reason for Lerotić's decision to shoot *Then I See Tanja* as a photo-film is not discernible, in other words, it does not seem that this form suits the content best.

However, this does not mean that it is inconsistent with the particular content and that the film is not enriched with a dimension that would not have been present in the standard feature form. First, it gains in strangeness and attractiveness because, watching it, we are additionally intrigued by the reasons for such a procedure and encouraged to watch the film with more focus. Secondly, it is almost self-evident that there are no live dialogues or scenic sounds in the photo film. Therefore, the sound image uses the narrator's voice (perfectly synchronized in rhythm, tone and colour), a procedure that automatically conveys, or better, enhances the atmosphere of nostalgia and melancholy (another connection with Marker's film, with which we draw comparisons only because it is the most famous example of this procedure, and not because Lerotić's film would directly refer to it). The over-synchronization of the other sounds, very obviously guided by the hand of the director, gains additional significance.

Although *Then I See Tanja* is composed of photographs, it is easy to recognise that the actors – Marin Radman, Ena Mašić, Niko Gamulin-Vilogorac, Mirjana Rogina and Trpimir Jurkić – achieved great roles or, rather, that their chosen, though static expressions and gestures, adequately express and build on the narrative basis. However, despite all the praise, in the end it seems that the film is somewhat too long, and despite the excellent performances by the actors, which can also be seen in the photographic form, the impression is that in general the film lacks the subtlety that can only be given by real, live acting in which the actors and characters are in actual contact with each other, rather than mere photographic contact.

On this topic, it might be useful to quote a part of the justification of the Checkers' jury (constituted by the Croatian director Uroš Živanović, the Croatian director of film photography Mirko Pivčević and the German-Austrian director Huseyin Tabak): "We don't know why it was made in a specific form, nor do we want to know, because it works great on all levels."

3. INTO THE BLUE

THE AUTHOR

JANKO HEIDL: *In search of intimate communication*

With the *Kockice* (Checkers) programme of the 8th Zagreb Film Festival, Zagreb, October 17–23, 2010

Zapis (Record), bulletin of the Croatian Film Association, 70th issue

Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović was born in Dubrovnik in 1985. In the early 1990s, as a result of the war on the Dubrovnik coast, she and her family first moved to Italy, then to Austria and afterwards to Germany. She completed her studies in production at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb, and then her studies in film directing at Columbia University in New York. Kusijanović says she grew up in a family of very strong women, so she only heard about feminism very late. She did not know that she had to declare herself a feminist because it was the only way of life in her family. Therefore, she sheds a light on misogyny as an all-pervading problem of Croatian society. Considering the dominant patriarchal relations in Croatian society, many viewers did not even realize that her feature debut *Murina* deals precisely with these topics, arguing that it is just the Mediterranean “blood” and hot mentality. However, she argues, that this is not about Mediterranean mentality, but about violence.

Before *Murina*, the director made several short films. The most famous of them, *Into the Blue*, won prizes at festivals in Berlin, Oberhausen and Sarajevo and was nominated for the student Oscar. Her non-classic sequel *Murina* was awarded the Golden Camera in Cannes. *Murina* is not an extended version of the film *Into the Blue*. The author herself says that it is about deepening the theme and the character. Both films are set on an island and the central character



Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović

in both is the girl Julija, played by a non-professional actor Gracija Filipović. However, Kusijanović points out that these are two different girls with different characters, and their families are also different. In *Murina*, Julija is sixteen years old and lives on an island with her family dominated by an extremely authoritarian father. Relations in the family start to fall apart when an old family friend from abroad arrives in their home. The author points out that she chose Gracija Filipović again because of her emotionality, intelligence and spirituality. Spirituality is an important aspect of her works, in which the symbolism of water is highlighted as a dominant visual element. Water is pervasive and we are made mostly of water, so it affects us and our mood. Her characters experience change, whether they are in puberty or going through some of its aftershocks. This is why she chose to work with children. The topic of family conflicts resonates deeper when told from a child's point of view and the perspective of someone who is growing up.

FILMOGRAPHY

Into the Blue

Berlin International Film Festival, 2017 – Special Mention (Competitive Section Generation 14plus).

Oberhausen International Short Film Festival, 2017 – Youth Jury Award.

Sarajevo Film Festival, 2017 – Heart of Sarajevo for best short film.

CinEast Film Festival of Eastern and Central Europe, 2017 – Audience Award.

Croatian Film Days, 2018 – Oktavijan Award for best feature film, Award for best editing (Minji Kang and Frano Homen).

Murina

Quinzaine des réalisateurs, Cannes Film Festival, 2021 – Caméra D'Or.

Pula Film Festival, 2021 – Breza Award for best debutant

(Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović).

Golden Arena for best supporting female role (Danica Ćurčić).

Golden Gate of Pula.

Hamptons International Film Festival, 2021 – Best Feature Film.

Mediterranean Film Festival in Brussels – Cinémamed, 2021 – Grand Prix;

Cineuropa Award. special recognition of the jury of critics.

SEEFest – South East European Film Festival, 2022 – Grand Jury Prize for best film.

THE AUTHOR'S WORD

Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović on the film – taken from the interview with the director on the occasion of winning a special award from the international jury in the Berlinale's section Generation 14plus (source: <https://dulist.hr/antoneta-alamat-kusijanovic-moje-price-proizlaze-iz-vlastitih-emocija-i-pitanja/399823/>):

“We really believed in the project. At such festivals you are surrounded by extremely talented people from all over the world. Just by being in Berlin, we already felt like winners. There was a wonderful atmosphere, there was a team and, of course, the children with their parents. We were one big, large team. We were not worried about whether we would get the award, we were satisfied with the existing success. I came to the award ceremony in old jeans, which were even a little short for me, and a sweater. It didn't occur to me at all that we could get the award” Antoneta told us with a smile and added that the children were very excited, but it was also a great reward for their overall work.

Q – How did the child cast handle the whole filmmaking process?

“They worked extremely hard and were obedient in everything. All four children are well-mannered, disciplined, emotional, empathetic and talented. They grew up with each other by hanging out all summer. As for the shooting of the film Into the Blue, the production started already at the end of June, and we were preparing throughout July and August. We made preparations with the cameraman ten days before we started filming. When the whole crew gathered, we shot for a week. I had already worked with the girls on certain projects, and the producer Barbara Vekarić also recommended them. I already knew their dynamics, their range of emotions, possibilities, endurance – everything that was needed for this film. We discovered the boys in an audition that was held in winter, five months before the shooting. Filming was extremely difficult. They would get up every morning at five o'clock. When we say that they filmed for five days on an island, in the sea, by the sea, many people think that it can't be difficult. But being disciplined, and doing one scene over and over again, in the sun, being in the sea when it's very warm... It's quite exhausting. Of course, we took breaks, they were taken care of, a nurse was with us. It's also a job where you have to express your emotions, which are extremely sensitive in this scenario, in front of forty people every day. For example, we filmed the final scene twice, because it was emotionally very demanding. Emotions exceeded the stage of acting and merged with reality. At the end of the scene, the two of them jumped off a high cliff together. That was a leap to freedom! We jumped after them, and I'm afraid of heights!”

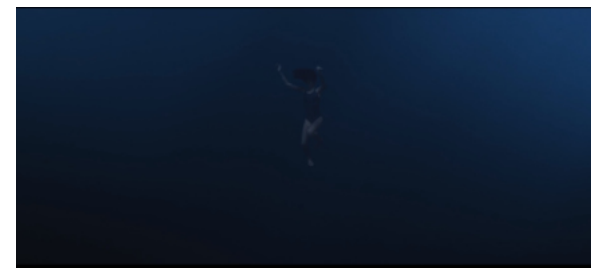
Q – What is the main message of the film that you wanted to convey to the public?

“The moment we are running away from something – and in this case Julija is running away from violence – we do not fully heal just by walking away from that situation. This insatiable pain is still smouldering in her, and since she finds no comfort, the pain flares up and erupts with the same force as what she ran away from. This is the main tension in the film. Of course, Julija regrets her reactions and gradually realizes that she carries this pain and aggression inside her, and that she too can become like that. In that one symbolic and metaphysical place, she breaks away from all that violence and finds the comfort she was looking for in her friend.”

INSPIRATION

Reviewing the interview Alamat Kusijanović gave, here are the top three films that she mentioned that have shaped her vision as a filmmaker:

1. *The Little Mermaid* (by John Musker and Ron Clements, United States, 1989)
2. *The Piano* (by Jane Campion, New Zealand – Australia – France, 1993)
3. *Noche de fuego* [Prayers for the Stolen] (by Tatiana Huezo, Mexico, 2021)



**The Little Mermaid (1989),
Ron Clemens and John
Musker, Walt Disney feature
animation**

“This is the first movie I remember watching as a child. I remember thoughts, having a sense of space, rhythm, and the arc of the plot. It's my favourite cartoon.”



The Piano (1993), Jane Campion

“This is the film that has defined me. It was the first time in my life where I saw a woman portrayed as a whole person. She is complex; an artist, a lover, violent, she has desire, she’s jealous, delicate, strong, a mother, in conflict with her own daughter.”



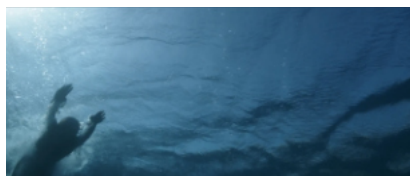
Prayers for the Stolen (2021), Tatiana Huezo

“It tells the story of three girls living in this idyllic village, oppressed by the omnipresence of an invisible antagonist. What we’re really sinking into are the delicate dynamics of these three girls. It’s not a classical coming-of-age, because their society and they themselves know that – any day – one of them can go missing. They are the future of that society.”

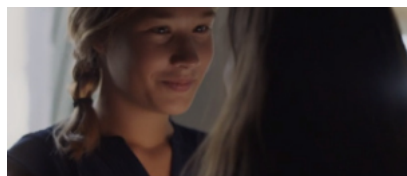


FILM CHAPTERS...

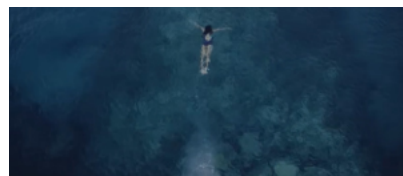
The chapter below is a tool for finding your way around the film.



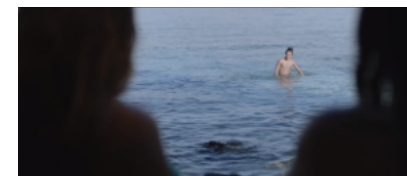
1 – Opening credits and arrival on the ship when Julija jumps into the sea to escape the discussion with her mother. (0:00 – 1:42)



2 – First meeting (reunion): Julia and her friend meet again, in church. (1:42 – 3:52)



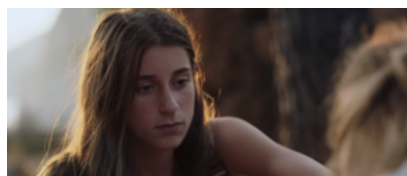
3 – Julija in the environment: first in touch with the solid ground, leaving a lizard on the rock, and then enjoying the sea. (3:52 – 4:27)



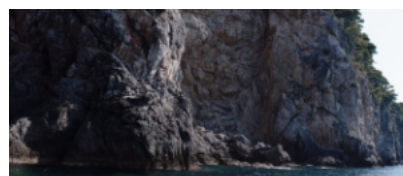
4 – A trio: Ana and Julija looking at Pjero while swimming, and Pjero looking back at them. (4:28 – 6:01)



5 – Julia watches the caresses with embarrassment: Pjero as a stumbling stone. (6:01 – 8:58)



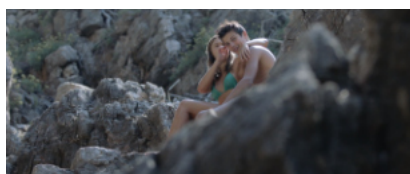
6 – Conflict: “Ana, we are friends, you should have told me”. (8:59 – 12:03)



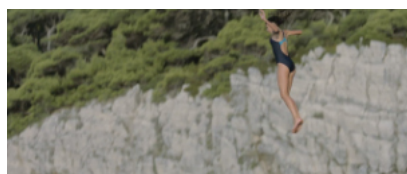
7 – Placeta bay 1: the jumping challenge. (12:03 – 13:21)



8 – Julija and Pjero: a kiss. (13:21 – 14:36)



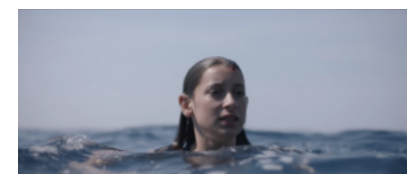
9 – Ana and Pjero: intimacy and Pjero’s ambiguity. (14:36 – 16:49)



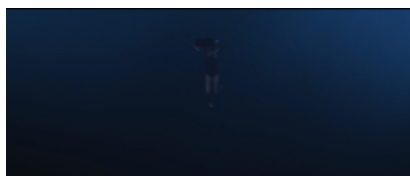
10 – Julija jumps and scares her friends. (15:17 – 16:10)



11 – Conflict: “And you know what, you’re just like your father!”. (16:49 – 17:32)



12 – Julija, shocked, jumps again and hits her head underwater. (17:32 – 17:58)



13 – Julija sinks, like in a dream, and the final credits roll. (17:58 – 22:08)

ANALYSIS OF A SEQUENCE sequence 3:52 – 8:58

from

clip 3: – Julija in the environment – first in touch with solid ground, leaving a lizard on the rock, and then enjoying the sea.

clip 4 – A trio – Ana and Julija looking at Pjero while swimming and Pjero looking back at them.

clip 5 – Julia watches the caresses with embarrassment – Pjero as a stumbling stone.

CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

The narrative logic of the film *Into the Blue* is largely determined by the alternation of wide shots on the one hand, and close-ups on the other, creating a kind of choreography between the gaze and the strong presence of water. In this sequence we follow the children on their way to the beach. The sequence was chosen because it has a strong visual element of the sea, whose blueness and vastness dominate against the land, which is sharp and pointy, but also because it perfectly illustrates how to build a complex human relation by using the film medium. In this sequence, the relation between characters starts to change and slowly develops in unexpected directions. The closeness of two female friends Julija and Ana is now being disturbed by a third wheel, a boy named Pjero. It becomes obvious that the protagonist feels envy in this new context: the boy took her position and replaced her. She tries to regain her place. It is a classic trio situation in which one figure feels excluded and becomes envious. This specific situation is created with several cinematic tools and authorial decisions. These include the use of particular film frames and camera movements, as well as a special treatment of light and sound, all underlined by the sensations of summertime: though the sounds of nature indicate it, it is the presence of the adolescents' bodies that most expressively highlights their sensuality and desire.

A TRIO: COMBAT OF TEENAGE GAZE

The sequence begins with a wide frame of Julija jumping into the sea, shot from an upper angle. Showing wide frames of Julija and the ocean, the director emphasizes the girl's confidence when she is in the water. But her enjoyment is interrupted by the intruder, Pjero, who provokes Julija with his daring look. This small gesture of interrupting and the bold stare open up the space for developing the characters' relations through the exchange of looks. There

are several methods with which the director gradually builds up tension and widens the crack between the teenagers. A small choreography takes place when Julija notices Ana's affection for Pjero. Almat Kusijanović shows this initial crack by filming close-ups of girls' facial expressions. From the close-up of Julija's suspicious look towards Ana, the camera moves to Ana's profile while she is fondly looking at Pjero. The camera returns to the close-up of Julija and her suspicion motivates her to take a decision: to approach Ana and talk to her about her secret.

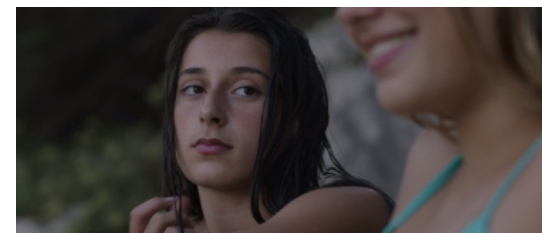
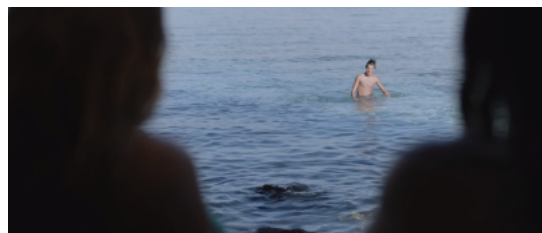
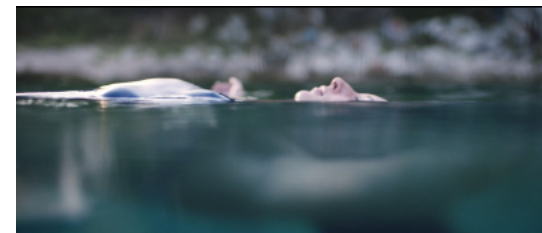
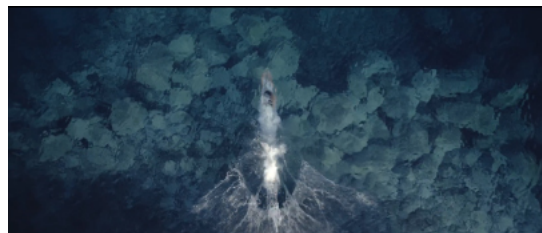
We see the girls in this intimate moment sitting next to each other, while the camera captures their whole bodies, but nothing else around them. Pjero interrupts the moment, which is visually illustrated by a shot taken from behind the girls' backs. We, as viewers, have almost the same view of the boy as Julija and Ana – his seductive and daring look towards them. But we also see something the girls don't see, the tripartite composition of the picture, in which the girls are backlit as a blurry frame, and Pjero is in focus, exposed under the sun in his youth and strength. The silent choreography of teenage gazes continues while Julija observes Ana in her sensual enjoyment of looking at Pjero. On the textual level this initial crack in their friendship is underlined with a short, but sharp conflict. To interrupt this silent seduction, Julija suggests going to the cave, and Ana refuses by explaining that it's not safe and that she knows this because Pjero has checked it. The conflict is shown in a quick montage of close-up frames of the girls' facial expressions. The crack between the friends is widening. This is indicated at the end of this sequence, by not filming the two girls' faces in the same frame, underlining the emotional separation with a spatial and technical one.

What we see in this sequence is an opposition of two different points in coming-of-age: friendship and affection. In the second part of the sequence there is a small physical seduction game happening between Pjero and Ana. They lay under the sun, and we follow their intimacy from two angles: a frontal one, which puts focus on their action, and the one taken from behind, where we see their bodies in the foreground, but in fact we are looking at Julija sitting (again) in the shade. The look on her face shows distrust and hostility. Her gaze does not reveal the target, so the viewer wonders if she is jealous of Pjero or Ana. Accompanied by nature's sounds of summer – crickets, birds and the sea waves – the director's decision to combine close-ups of the girls' gazes (mostly Julija's) with the wider frames of the sea and the young and strong bodies, additionally emphasizes the triadic structure of the relations between the characters, namely the trio whose dynamics (or tension) is based on envy.

ALL-PENETRATING WATER

“Nothing is as intense, as tender and strong, as the power of the water”, says the priest at the beginning of the film, and the author carries this thought through the entire film. The blue sea dominates the colour of the film, and it also serves as an escape strategy for the protagonist when she finds herself in a situation where she has to save herself – either from the environment that oppresses her, or from herself. In the sea, Julija feels powerful and free, and she knows that others consider her dangerous, even crazy, because of her diving skills. Therefore, she uses jumping into the sea as her weapon. The blue of the sea dominates the colour of the film, and its vastness, which simultaneously means freedom and danger, is emphasized in wide shots.

Against the sea, the land seems colourless, but also safe. The children are sitting on the shore and the director shows their relations mostly in close-ups.



ANALYSIS OF FRAMES: THE SEA GIVES, THE SEA TAKES

frame at 1:24

from

clip 1: opening credits and arrival on the ship when Julija jumps into the sea to escape the discussion with her mother.

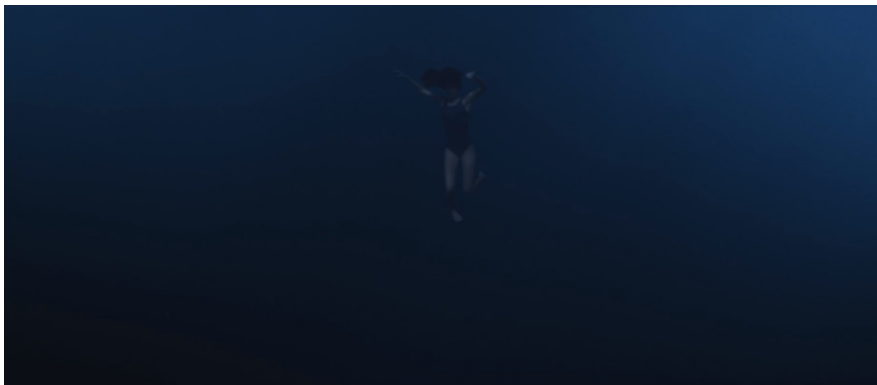


Julija dives into the sea.

frame at 18:15

from

clip 13: Julija sinks, like in a dream, and the final credits roll.



Julija sinks.

The selected frames describe the blue of the title, the setting, and Julija's attitude towards the sea. In the first one the protagonist dives, while in the second one she sinks. The first frame is taken from the very beginning of the film and represents Julija's first jump into the sea. The second frame takes place at the very end and represents the outcome of her final jump. Both frames describe the narrative escape strategy that the protagonist uses every time she finds herself in a situation that makes her uncomfortable. However, the attitude towards the sea is very different in each moment. In the first one, Julija rules the sea because, as she says, she is "good at diving". It is the result of her need to escape from her mother, who is talking about Julija's violent father. The second frame shows Julija sinking after a jump and a blow to the head. In it, the sea takes over the girl, it dominates and subordinates her. That frame depicts a consequence of the jump, which is a manifestation of the aggression that was building up in her: Julija jumps into the sea after pushing Ana off the cliff. These frames show the girl's escape from overall violence.

The two frames were taken underwater and are dominated by the colour blue. The first one is wide, taken from frog's eye-view (in low-angle), i.e., from the bottom towards the surface of the sea. Julija is present in the lower left corner, and we see the moment of her immersion, that is, the very moment in which she breaks the surface of the water with her hands. The sea is foamy and turbulent, which is the result of the impact of the body on the surface. Since the camera is directed towards the surface of the sea, the sunlight enters the frame and produces different shades of blue. The sea becomes darker from left to right for two reasons. Firstly, the source of light is placed in this way, so the light enters the frame on the left, making the water appear lighter, more transparent. It is important to mention that – since the film is mostly shot outside – decisions such as to shoot during a particular time of the day because of the angle of the sunlight are important. However, not all the possibilities and conditions can be anticipated, as when one is filming in a studio and controlling light and sound. Secondly, by jumping into the sea, Julija produced white bubbles, but also created the soundscape of this frame.

The second frame is a stylized, pictorial work that evokes many references in the history of art (see: Water as a motif, p.25). The camera is facing the sea and captures Julija while sinking. The lower part of the frame is dark (again, due to the source of light being above the water) and it suggests that Julija is going to disappear into the depth of the sea. This frame is shot to reflect Julija's inner state, her mental image of herself. There are two forces – one that pulls her upwards, to the surface of the sea, and the other, that pulls her downwards, to the bottom of the sea. When Julija sinks, the sound of the sea gradually fades, and the silence from the depths takes over the soundscape. From the beginning of the film, the sea is the place to find peace, to escape from what we don't want to hear. In this moment at the very end, she finds this silence."

RECEPTION OF THE FILM

Review: *Into the Blue*

Into the Blue (2017), the latest work of Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović, a Croatian director who started her film career 11 years ago at Talents Sarajevo, had the honour to be the first film in this year's Competition Programme – Short Film section at the Sarajevo Film Festival. The film had already won the Special Jury Mention for Best Short Film in the Generation 14Plus section at the Berlinale, the Youth Jury Award at the Oberhausen International Short Film Festival, and it has been shortlisted by the American Film Academy for the 2017 Student Oscars just a few days ago.

Inspired by her childhood memories from the small Croatian island of Kalamota (Koločep), Kusijanović juxtaposes adolescence with nature. *Into the Blue* tells a story of a 13-year-old Julija who returns to this island. In the opening scene the boat is getting closer to the coast of Kalamota, and we are listening to Julija's mother explaining that the two of them are trying to flee from an abusive household. As Julia gets annoyed with her mother's talk, she moves to the edge of the boat and plunges into the sea.

The “dive-in” is a repetitive gesture in contemporary youth films from the country, thus can be seen also as a moment of escapism and a signature move of the “Croatian everyday-life film movement” (*filmski val hrvatske svakodnevice*) that emerged several years ago. The movement is being characterized by stories that are relevant to the social and political situation in

Croatia, mostly showing us the lives of women with emotional trauma, chased by their past, lost in present time, always portrayed a bit on the edge of reality. The “dive-in” motif, when protagonists are trying to get away from their problems by taking a leap into deep water, was best represented in films like Ivona Juka's *You Carry Me* (Ti mene nosiš) (2015), Hana Jušić's *Quit Staring At My Plate* (Ne gledaj mi u pijat) (2016), and the TV series directed by Dalibor Matanić, *The Paper* (Novine) (2016).

As we follow Julija's struggle to fit into her childhood setting, the tension rises, so we get to the climax and the logical upshot of the “dive-in” trope: the drowning, though metaphorically depicted. Young director Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović succeeds in relaying the full spectre of this “everyday life movement” story in a short-film format and brings something important, a new insight, to the movement.

Author: Arman Fatić

Talent Press Berlin

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1. NARRATION: WHEN TEENAGERS SPEAK UP OR STAY SILENT

In both films, we follow events from the lives of the main characters that unfold linearly, in sequence. The stories are told from the perspective of the main characters, teenagers, and each film is characterized by certain narrative strategies that attract and retain the viewer's attention. *Then I See Tanja* is told in a series of photographs and with the stop motion technique, which is very important for the narrative because it determines the special way in which the sound is treated. The sound must be specifically designed and recorded because it cannot be reproduced from a photograph. That's why the author introduces Željko's voice, the so-called voice-over, as the voice of an omniscient narrator who guides viewers through the film, while also giving them his perspective on things. Željko's voice sometimes truly corresponds with his gaze, which is "extended" in its duration (see: **Film question Rhythm and time, p. 20**). Extending the duration, as well as some other procedures, such as repeating the sentence *Then I see Tanja* and inserting scenes with the body language handbook, help slow down the action and maintain the viewer's interest. It also gives them time to think. The film abounds in these extended, quiet moments during which the viewer can find their own perspective. As in *Into the Blue*, the teenage voice in *Then I See Tanja* is a dominant perspective, but by adding these silent moments, the authors give us – the viewers – time to re-think what we see from our own perspective.

Into the Blue also abounds in long shots of Julija's gaze, whose silence speaks more than a thousand words. They create a pause in the action, which is accompanied by a strong interpretation of the actress Gracija Filipović, offering the viewers the opportunity to stop and think about what they're watching. What is Julija thinking, what is happening inside her? *Into the Blue* is characterized by an actantial model¹ in which a conflict occurs between the protagonist and her old friend due to the arrival of an intruder – a boy who intentionally or unintentionally brings unrest into the friendship. The dynamics of their relationship can clearly be read from the long glances that the three characters exchange in silence, without words or music. Julija's feelings are ambivalent: she feels attached and committed to her friend but is at the same time envious of her being so close to Pjero. Her feelings towards Pjero are also complicated: she is attracted to him, but also finds him repulsive. All these emotions form a foundation for this peculiar trio: various feelings boil inside of them, which creates tension and anticipates a surprising end.

¹ The actantial model is a narrative schema with six actants (from the word action) that helps break down a plot. The actants can be people or things. The *subject* desires an *object* and is either supported by a *helper* or impeded by an *opponent*. The action is started by the *sender*, while the *receiver* profits from the *action* or the *object*. For more cf. [The Actantial Model by Louis Hèbert](#).



Julija and Pjero's intimacy observed by Ana.



Julija watching at Pjero touching Anna.



Text: "You're just like your father."



Voice-over: "Then I see Tanja."

2. ESCAPE FROM THE UNSPOKEN: IMAGINATION AS A NARRATIVE STRATEGY

Prolonged looks remind the viewers that they are witnessing very personal events whose protagonists are children who come from adversity. Much of their narrative is unspoken. Željko mentions his father's name, but just like his mother, he quickly passes over it, leaving the viewer with a clue that the absence of his father is an important part of their family background. We have the general idea of Julija's father's violent temper already at the very beginning of the film, but we never find out what really happened. On several occasions Julija repeats to Ana that she must tell her something, but that does not happen. On the contrary, Ana tells her that she is the same as her father.

From that moment on, it is not clear whether the events that follow really happened or are the result of Julija's fantasy. Julija pushes Ana into the sea and then jumps herself, gets injured and drowns. The scene is marked by music, which up to this moment has not been an important element of the film language, and by the muffled voices of upset children. This suggests that it is a special moment of escape from reality. Julija, as previously during the film, plunges into the sea to avoid the ending of a friendship, and with the radical event of injury, she regains her friend's attention.

Željko's escape into imagination is much more clearly defined. On several occasions, he tells the audience how he dreams or how he imagines situations, thus giving us an insight into his emotional state (see: Analysis of the sequences: Then I See Tanja - Dreams and imagination p. 11). Through these digressions, we follow Željko's insecurities (introductory dream), we learn about Željko's desires (fantasies about ideal situations) and fears (the inability to conjure up happy images), and, finally, we experience the resolution of his problem. In the final scene, Željko, while fantasizing about ideal situations, says that he feels safe and shivers after realizing that it is no longer impossible, which completes the development of his character.



Friends saving Julija.



Ideal image.

3. RECORDING TECHNIQUES: “ALMOST EXPERIMENTAL” FILMS



Stop motion: four images in a row.



Recording at contact point between the sea and the air.

The recording techniques of both films are unusual, nonclassical, and therefore almost experimental. *Then I See Tanja* is a so-called photographic film in which elements of both animated and feature films appear at the same time. It was filmed using the stop motion technique, but the characters that are animated on the photos are not puppets or drawings, but real people. This means that instead of animating puppets or drawings, the actors must animate themselves with clear instructions from the director and a good cinematographer. At the same time, their facial expressions must be accurate, striking, and precise, so that the moment “captured” in their facial expression supports the action narrated by the narrator.

Into the Blue, on the other hand, is partly filmed underwater in dramaturgically very important scenes in which Julija uses plunging into the sea as an escape from the situation she finds herself in. Underwater filming has a long tradition and in the history of cinema it develops in parallel with other filming techniques. Underwater filming requires not only advanced solutions of filming technology, but also specific diving skills of the cameraman. In addition, shooting underwater also means there are special visibility conditions and light refraction, which further complicate the process of filming.

4. RHYTHM AND TIME

The rhythm of films is determined by the special filming techniques with which they are shot, and it is partly the result of certain narrative processes (see: *Escape from the unspoken: imagination as a narrative strategy* p. 19). Because of its specific technique (the animation of the human body), *Then I See Tanja* reminds us of the very substance of film art – the film image. In order to get the appearance of non-stop motion, it is necessary to record between 16 and 24 frames per second. Then, due to the image retention of our eye, the persistence of vision, we perceive this sequence in time as one smooth movement. In his film, on the contrary, Lerotić makes the discontinuity perceptible, and plays with different durations, images and frames, as well as different editing procedures. Sometimes the emotional state of the characters is highlighted by extending one frame, zooming from wide to close-up or by small shifts in the shooting angle. He often uses dissolve transitions, which contributes to the impression of fragmented rhythm and extended duration. Moreover, the film’s story is all about the missing image.

In contrast, in the film *Into the Blue*, water, as the dominant element, creates an impression of fluidity with its sound, colour, density and movement/rolling. In this film too, time is stopped or extended by filming long sequences of characters silently looking at someone or something. In both films, the camera plays with distances – while in *Tanja* it enters the personal space of the characters and captures their close-ups, even details, in *Into the Blue* it captures the characters in wide or close-up, but never zooms in. Shots of nature, taken overhead and wide, mostly show different shades and textures of the blue sea and are used to prolong or slow down the viewer’s perception of time. Shot in such a visual context and accompanied by the sound of water and surrounding nature, the film creates a sense of fluidity and suggests that nature, especially water, never stops: it is perpetually moving.

5. FILM LOCATIONS: IMPORTANCE OF COLOURS

The setting is one of the characteristics of these films: it supports them and emotionally “holds their back” or undermines and hinders them.

The sea has a significant role in both films. As a Mediterranean country on the Adriatic coast, Croatia has always been strongly connected to the sea, which has inevitably determined Croatian lifestyle. From traditional fishermen and fishing industry, when the sea was a source of food, to contemporary tourism, which is a dominant industry on the Adriatic coast and contributes to the national GDP, the sea is an important element for understanding Croatian identity. Therefore, it's not surprising that the authors, who both come from coastal cities, have chosen these locations for their plots and shooting.

In *Then I See Tanja*, Željko's happiest daydreams are located by the sea. These daydreams generally take place in Željko's room the room's darkness in contrast with the brighter outdoor scenes. The interior and exterior of Željko's world reflect a typical image of life in the suburbs, with a very important visual moment featuring skyscrapers as an architectural mark of socialist modernization in Croatia, in the former SFRY. They were built for the working classes, which also speaks of his family background. Most of the action of the film *Into the Blue* is set outdoors, by the sea.

The presence of water, as well as its blue colour, completely determines *Into the Blue* and its protagonist Julija. Water can be spiritual purification, fertility, and rebirth all in one, but also danger and destruction. The film begins with Julija's return to the island, where she had once lived, to escape from her violent father. The father is present in the mother's words and Julija further escapes from him by jumping into the sea. Returning to the island, she is happy to find her friend again, but the appearance of the third character of the triangle, Pjero, corresponds to the sharp grey cliffs as a contrast to the rippled blue surface of the sea. The film uses different shooting modes that place Julija in different relations with the sea. Wide shots from above show her floating confidently on its surface. She has already shown that she can “conquer” this water: she is good at diving and her confident floating on the surface shows how comfortable she feels. Shots taken underwater can have different meanings: some capture her when jumping into the water and, breaking its surface, whilst in several other ones she is floating on or even sinking into it. The differences are underlined by different shades of blue. The ones in which she breaks the surface are taken from a low angle, so the colour is brighter because of the sun beams that also break the surface. The ones taken wide and capturing her while floating are darker, without much sunlight. In this way Julija's human body is presented as small and limited in contrast to the power of the deep vast sea.



Immersion.



By the sea.

IV – CONNECTIONS WITH (OTHER) ARTS

1. IMAGES – REFLECTIONS

In this section, we present pairs of visuals which serve as free associations on some of the main motifs from the collections.

1. On a boat



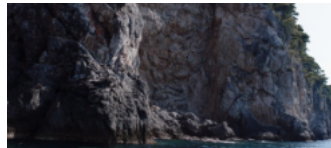
A Fair Wind/Breezing Up
(Winslow Homer, between 1873-76)



2. The cliffs



The Cliffs at Etretat
(Claude Monet, 1885)



3. The mermaids



The Little Mermaid
(Edvard Eriksen, 1913)



The Mermaid
(Howard Pyle, 1910)



The Prince Asked Who She Was
(Edmund Dulac, 1911), illustration



A Mermaid (John William Waterhouse, 1900)



Ulysses and the Sirens
(Herbert James Draper, 1909)



1. Bliss and imagination



Ecstasy of Saint Teresa
(Gian Lorenzo Bernini, 1647 - 1652)

2. The gaze



Girl With a Pearl Earring
(Johannes Vermeer, 1665)

3. The kiss

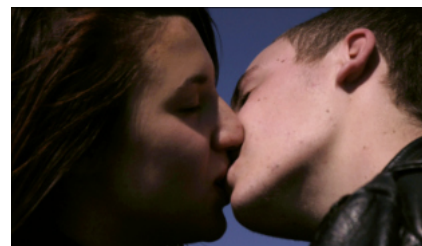
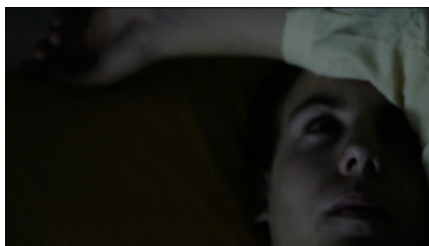


Kiss II
(Roy Lichtenstein, 1962)

4. Dreams make reality look different.



The Temptation of St. Anthony
(Salvador Dalí, 1946)



2. DIALOGUES BETWEEN FILMS

TEENAGERS, PARENTS AND SOCIAL CONTEXT OF *THE HAPPIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD* AND *SHELTER* COMPARED TO *THEN I SEE TANJA* AND *INTO THE BLUE*.



The Happiest Girl in the World
(2009), Radu Jude



Shelter (2010),
Dragomir Sholev

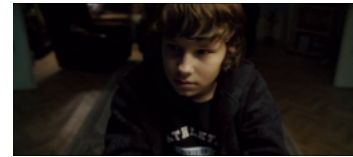
TEENAGE PROTAGONISTS

Teenagers are also the focus of the films *The Happiest Girl in the World* by Radu Jude and *Shelter* by Dragomir Sholev from 2009. Delia, a protagonist of *The Happiest Girl in the World*, wins a car in a prize game and comes to shoot a commercial in Bucharest. She is accompanied by her parents who are trying to convince her to sell the car so they can invest this money. The shooting turns out to be an unpleasant experience for the confused Delia, torn between her wish and her parents' brutal behaviour.

Radu, the protagonist in *Shelter*, shows resistance to his parents by choosing behaviour patterns typical for adolescents: escaping from home, hanging out with problematic older kids. After spending a night away, he brings two older tattooed, drinking and smoking adolescents to his parents' home. At first, his parents are confused by this act, but gradually the father himself starts to behave inappropriately, as if he wants to provoke these children.

These feature films are linked by an open criticism of society: teenagers are presented through the prism of their difficult contexts of Romania and Bulgaria, two post-socialist countries and their social implications – poverty, economic and political underdevelopment, predominance of traditional values. In the Croatian films, both teenagers are also socially endangered – Željko by the possibility of losing his mother and having to take (financial) responsibility for himself and his brother, and Julija by running away from her aggressive father, even if their situation (the social background) is presented differently.

Due to these social, parental, and aesthetic surroundings, the teenagers become resistant in order to survive. The resistance of these four youngsters does not arise from the simple fact that they are adolescents, but from their social and familial circumstances.

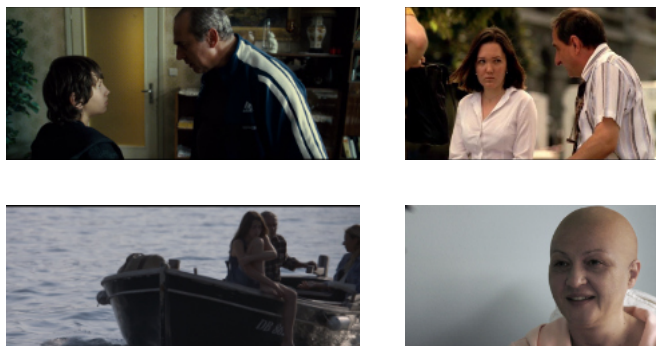


THE PARENTS

In these films, the family context and the protagonist's relationship with their parents is crucial. In the two films of this collection of Croatian films, the parental influence on Željko and Julija is presented through the absence of the father. In *Then I See Tanja* this absence is only stated by the very fact of not mentioning his name. Both Željko and his mother do not pronounce the father's name, but in this absence, we see the potential danger for the family. We don't know why there is no father, but we know that, if something happens to the mother, Željko has to take care of himself and his brother. In a way, he is already doing it, because his mother is in the hospital being treated for cancer.

In *Into the Blue* it is explicit from the beginning that the father is aggressive and therefore is no longer present in this family (yet his actions remain a secret). It is also clear that the mother is not very present and does not protect her daughter. Nonetheless, the father's absence is also marked by Julija's inability to tell her friend what has happened. When her father is men-

tioned (“You’re just like him!”), we can imagine that Julija takes over his behaviour patterns or that it is the worst thing you can accuse her of. What in the end characterizes these two protagonists is their strategy of diving into imagination.



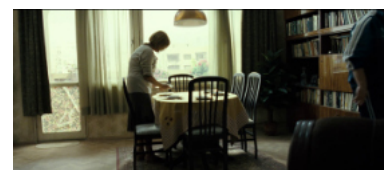
Unlike them, in the other two films, Radu and Delia are always surrounded by both their parents and cannot avoid them. In this emphasized, sometimes even exaggerated and absurd presence, these parents interfere in their children’s private sphere, which becomes impossible to handle. The stubbornness of both Delia’s mother and father is taken to an absurd level in the sequences in which they blackmail her to sell the car – if she does not, she is no longer their daughter. Radu’s father in *Shelter* is almost humorous when discussing with the older kid, Tenx. But in his absurd humour he becomes aggressive and desperate, which results in Radu leaving home. The teenagers in *Then I See Tanja* and *Into the Blue* seem to be more on their own, whereas the parents in *The Happiest Girl in the World* and *Shelter* are more present (also physically) and involved in their children’s lives, impacting their decisions – they can neither escape nor emancipate themselves.

THE LOCAL SETTING

Shelter and *The Happiest Girl in the World* are set in the metropolises, Bucharest and Sofia, which is why these cities and their architecture become a very important element of the story and film language. *The Happiest Girl in the World* is almost entirely shot on the streets of Bucharest and in very wide shots, so the viewer catches many details from the street as the frames change – from traffic signs to the clothes of passers-by to the architecture itself. In *Shelter* the architecture of the big city is visually present only in part, but it is reflected in the actions of the teenagers’ characters and moods, namely when, in their quests and escapes, the characters wander around a rainy and dreary city with socialism’s brutalist architecture in the background.

The interior of a family’s apartment plays a very important role because it is where most of the action takes place. The style of the apartment is very typical for post-socialist society – these kinds of kitchens and living rooms can still be seen in the countries of the former Eastern Bloc and Yugoslavia. Visually and aesthetically, both films are strongly marked by the socialist and post-socialist context of their countries. Similar marks are partially present in *Then I See Tanja*, with regard to both the suburban landscape and recognizable interiors (apartments, hospital, supermarket) of Split playing an important visual role (see: Keyword – Local colour, p. 5). Skyscrapers are a landmark of socialist architecture in Croatia and, together with the specific interior aesthetic of the apartments, they still present a standard of living. Since socialist modernism strongly influenced the development of urban centres, this architectural heritage is an important part of urban living, and the interiors are still filled with furniture from that period. For instance, the blinds on the windows cast a specific light into Željko’s room and this light creates a special atmosphere which matches Željko’s mood when he is anxious and unable to imagine his ideal pictures. The same feeling is transmitted by the colourless interior of the hospital. Interiors depicted in *Then I See Tanja* are representative for Croatia even today and are therefore a visual reference for middle-class lifestyle.

The Mediterranean surroundings of *Tanja* and *Into the Blue*, together with the narration strategies of their protagonists to escape into imagination and fantasy, softens their characters. Positioned in the natural landscape of the Dalmatian coast, where the Adriatic’s blueness dominates, and accompanied by the sound of crickets and wind in the case of *Into the Blue*, they are put in a context that evokes a different feeling than the lifestyle of big urban centres such as Bucharest or the even smaller town Split. The coastal surroundings always evoke peace and underline human connection with nature.



Interior of the apartment of Radu’s parents in *Shelter*.



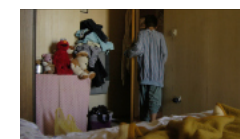
Apartment building in *Shelter*.



Bucharest in *The Happiest Girl in the World*.



Apartment buildings in *Then I See Tanja*.



Željko’s room in *Then I See Tanja*.

3. COMING-OF-AGE AS A FILM GENRE

As we have seen so far, growing up is a very important and prominent theme of Croatian cinema, but also of cinema in general. Coming-of-age films are an important part of film history, and a special subcategory consists of films about teenagers who run into a problem with their environment and, by solving that problem, they experience a change or grow up in some way. Many coming-of-age films thematize teenagers' resistance to a system – school (professors and principals), family (parents and other relatives), society (friends, neighbours and the rest of the environment).

We will only list some of those we haven't mentioned so far, and they can serve as an incentive to think about our two films: *Les 400 Coups* [The 400 Blows] (François Truffaut, France 1959), *La Boum* [The Party] (Claude Pinoteau, France, 1980), *Stand by Me* (Rob Reiner, USA, 1986) and *Leto kad sam naučila da letim* [How I Learned to Fly] (Radivoje Raša Andrić, Serbia, 2022). The subject of coming-of-age is also present in nearly all films in the CinEd collection. We recommend the following: *Cum mi-am petrecut sfârșitul lumii* [The Way I Spent the End of the World] (Cătălin Mitulescu, Romania, 2006), *Zhaleika* (Eliza Petkova, Bulgaria/Germany, 2016), *Uma Pedra no Bolso* [First Stone in my Pocket] (Joaquim Pinto, Portugal 1988), *O Sanguie* [Blood] (Pedro Costa, Portugal, 1989), among others. The readers of this booklet are encouraged to continue exploring this genre on their own.

4. MUSIC AS RESISTANCE



Teenage Dirtbag (2000),
Weezer, music video

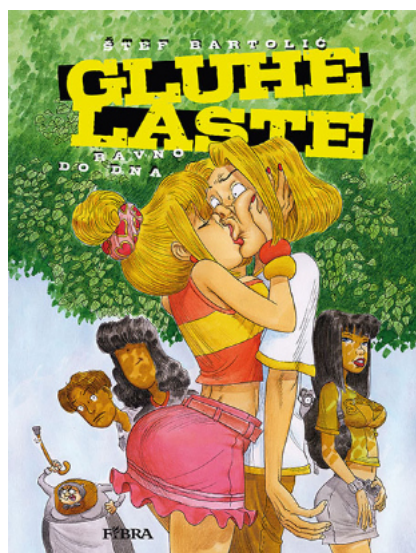


Željko's expression when he looks at Tanja.

In the two films analysed here the power of musical resistance or rebellion is present as a latent, implicit content. Music has always been a particularly interesting and inspiring medium for expressing various revolutionary thoughts, including rebellion against certain pressures from the environment. In these circumstances, in the late 1970s, punk developed as a musical response of anarchists to the rigid norms of civil society, and after it, grunge as one of the main directions of alternative music in the 1990s. We hear the resistance of children and teenagers in various anthology songs such as *Another Brick in the Wall* by Pink Floyd, *Smells Like Teen Spirit* by Nirvana, *Teen Age Riot* by Sonic Youth, *American Idiot* by Green Day. Feeling insecure in one's own skin, wanting to resist the world that is against them, the need for emancipation... All those themes resonate in the fierce sound of the songs listed above, as they do with our protagonists Julija and Željko.

While the songs that reflect the domestic violence, that plagues Julija, are more frequently found in rap, for example in Eminem's autobiographical family sagas in which he deals with an aggressive father and a drunken mother. We will list some of them that are about something similar to Željko's worried or happy and smitten look. *Teenage Kicks* is an indie hit by the Irish punk-rock band The Undertones from 1978, which talks about the unbreakability of teenage dreams and falling in love: "Are teenage dreams so hard to beat? / Every time she walks down the street / Another girl in the neighbourhood / Wish she was mine, she looks so good / I wanna hold her wanna hold her tight / Get teenage kicks right through the night". The song *I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend* by the Ramones, another important punk band, also resonates with Željko's layered infatuation, in which the lyrical subject very directly addresses the girl he likes with the words "Hey, little girl, I want to be your boyfriend / Sweet little Girl, I want to be your boyfriend". Željko doesn't say those words, but he thinks about them while reading instructions on how to behave in society. Finally, there is also the hit *Teenage Dirtbag* by the group Weezer, which, despite explaining very well how teenagers don't fit into their surroundings, has a happy ending and connects the lyrical subject with the girl he fantasizes about, just as Željko believes that eventually everything he dreams about will no longer be impossible. Željko doesn't say those words, but he thinks about them while reading instructions on how to behave in society. Finally, there is also the hit *Teenage Dirtbag* by the group Weezer, which, despite explaining very well how teenagers don't fit into their surroundings, has a happy ending and connects the lyrical subject with the girl he fantasizes about, just as Željko believes that eventually everything he dreams about will no longer be impossible.

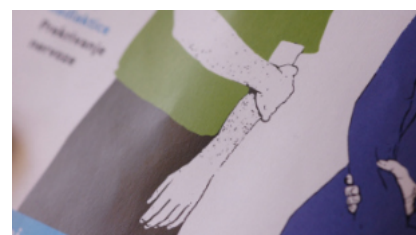
5. PHOTO FRAGMENTS



Deaf Swallows (since 1994), Stjepan Štef Bartolić, comic book

Being a photo-film, *Then I See Tanja* resembles a comic book – an art that is defined by a sequence of drawings in a row. The series of drawings used to tell a story in a comic is always fragmented, so it is very important to follow which visual elements enter each drawing and whether they are repeated or disappear in the next drawing, or if new motifs are introduced. The comic combines the written word with the visual, just as in the film *Then I See Tanja* the series of photographs are combined with Željko's voiceover (See p. 19: **Narration – when teenagers speak up or stay silent** *Escape from the unspoken – imagination as a narrative strategy* p. 19). The usual comic book protagonists are fantastic superheroes, ordinary people with extraordinary abilities that save them from almost impossible situations. Others are about anti-heroes who always end up in trouble, which give the stories a comical effect. A special category consists of comics in the form of serials or novels whose protagonists are teenagers. Their stories – just like in coming-of-age movies – are told from the teenagers' point of view and deal with very realistic situations and problems. The Croatian comic book

series *Deaf Swallows* by Stjepan Štef Bartolić has been serialized since 1994. It is a comic “about those kids who make a band. About kids deprived of moralizing and lessons, but still with their hearts in the right place when it comes to important things” (source: <https://www.fibra.hr/index.asp?page=comic-view&ComicID=317>). Themes from teenagers' family lives are also treated by the French cartoonist and author Bruno Chevrier (aka Nob) in his comic *Les Souvenirs de Mamette* [Memories of Nanette] or in episodes 1-3 of the comic television series *Les Filles de Dad* [Dad's Daughters]. Finally, the comic novel *Heartstoppers: Boy Meets Boy* by the English author Alice Oseman goes a step further and introduces the topic of same-sex love as part of teenage growth. They all made a big impact.



A handbook for teenagers on how to act in social situations in *Then I See Tanja*.

6. WATER AS A MOTIF

“Nothing is as intense, as tender and strong, as the power of water.” The sentence that introduces the motif of water in *Into the Blue* resonates until the end of the film. Apart from the dominant connection of the protagonist to the sea, which is a crucial point for *Into the Blue*, this film also stresses the spiritual strength of the water by introducing holy water as a small, but important element in the story development. In the beginning of the film, just after the preacher said the sentence above quoted, Julija plays with a lizard and puts it in the holy water. It is a symbolical gesture of baptising and will open the whole range of associations and symbols in the film (see: **ANALYSIS OF TWO FRAMES: THE SEA GIVES, THE SEA TAKES, p 18**).

In the Bible, the motif of water is ubiquitous and an inspiration as content and form for all types of art. Water is present in Scripture as a symbol, because of its multiple meanings, but also because of its diversity. We find its manifestation in basic Christian rituals, but also in many rites from the pre-Christian era. In all of them, water is the primary element from which life developed, as everything alive needs water to live. In these texts, water plays a primordial role in the creation of the world and of life. At the same time, in many cultures and civilizations that appeared at the dawn of humanity, we also find the story of great floods as the primordial experience of great natural disasters. In this context, water no longer creates, but destroys.



The Ten Commandments (1956), Cecil B. DeMille

We find water in the context of salvation: Moses, like Romulus and Remus over one thousand years latter, is saved from the river as an infant, and later leads his people to freedom across the Red Sea. Water in all its forms and meanings has inspired artists throughout the centuries. In cinema, it is present in different ways throughout all genres and species: as a location, as a symbolical value, as a source of fear or disaster, as a subject. Some of the films about the sea from the CinEd collection are, for instance: *Fishermen and Fishing* (Leon Loisos, Greece 1961), *Bathers* (Eva Stefani, Greece, 2008), *Uma Pedra no Bolso* [First Stone in my Pocket] (Joaquim Pinto, 1988). Other classical films that are not in our collection but worth mentioning are: *The Ten Commandments* (Cecil B. DeMille, USA, 1956), *Jaws* (Steven Spielberg, USA, 1975), *Le Grand Bleu* [The Big Blue] (Luc Besson, France/Italy, 1988), *Titanic* (James Cameron, USA, 1997), *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* (Wes Anderson, USA, 2004), among many more.

7. BLUE COLOUR OF THE COVER

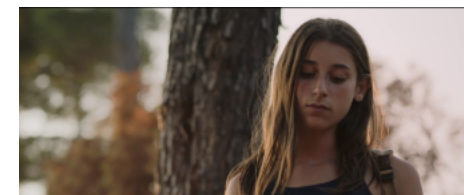
In visual art, the colour blue is associated with nature, and it represents the sky and the sea. Artists from the Renaissance onwards have used it to evoke different emotional states – from seriousness and calmness to melancholy and sadness. The sea is a motif that has been present in the history of art for centuries and inspires artists with its beauty, power and mystery. We find it in numerous paintings, frescoes, murals, and reliefs, either in its literal meaning – as a setting – or in its figurative meaning – as a symbol. Botticelli's Venus was born from sea foam, and the sea here is the place of birth of a new myth, a new beginning.

Later in the Renaissance and in the period of Baroque and Romanticism, artists often highlighted the power of the sea as a simultaneously sublime and disdainful experience of the littleness of man before the greatness of nature. The motif of the sea's mercilessness in various stylistic formations is emphasized by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (*Storm at Sea*, an unfinished and probably the author's last painting from the late 17th century), Théodore Géricault (*The Raft of Medusa*) or William Turner in his series of paintings from the first half of the 19th century dedicated to the sea. One of the most famous images of the sea outside of Europe can be found in the painting *The Great Wave of Kanagawa* by the Japanese artist Hokusai, also from the first half of the 19th century. Hokusai was inspired by his sea journey to Europe and by the works of the Impressionists and their use of colour.

Lastly, we would like to highlight a well-known case of the use of water motifs in contemporary popular culture. We have already mentioned the group Nirvana (see: chapter Music as resistance, p. 24) and their hit *Smells Like Teen Spirit* as one of the examples of musical criticism of society from the perspective of teenagers. This song was the first single from the album *Nevermind* released in 1991, which achieved great success, but also caused a lot of controversy. The album cover features the photo of a baby swimming towards a US dollar bill. In this way, Nirvana frontman Kurt Cobain underlines his criticism of society through his music: we are born from water as pure and innocent as a baby but, on his cover, even the baby is not innocent. It reaches for money and falls under the influence of capitalism. And that is what the blue colour says at the end of *Into the Blue*, when it rejects Julija – no one is innocent, and everything can come back to haunt us.



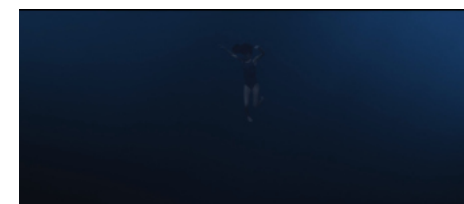
The Birth of Venus
(Sandro Botticelli, mid. 1480s)



Julija in *Into the Blue*.



Storm at Sea
(William Turner, 1822-23)



**The power of the sea,
Into the Blue.**



The Raft of the Medusa
(Théodore Géricault, 1818-19)



On the boat, *Into the Blue*.

The ideas for working with students are based on the principles of the CinEd project, which are described at the beginning of the booklet (see p. 2). The material supports an intuitive and sensitive approach to film analysis, with the aim of supporting film learning. You will find additional tools on the pages of this booklet. Using the clips list (see p. 10-11) you will find the corresponding scenes in the film.

To work on the question of sensation in cinema, we also refer you to the resources of *Cinéma, cent ans de jeunesse* that can be found on their education website (presentation, analysis, film extracts, exercises, etc): <https://www.cinemacentansdejeunesse.org/en/resources/all-the-questions/sensation.html>

BEFORE WATCHING THE FILM

1. ANALYSIS OF FILM POSTERS

- Show students the posters of these films. Analyse them: what colour are they, what is the composition and who is on them? Look at the film titles and discuss the relationship between the title and the poster. How well do they match? How much does the poster explain the title and vice versa, how much does the title confirm or deny the poster?
- Considering the poster and the title, what do the students think – who are the main characters? What is the film about?

The posters are completely different, but also very informative. From them we can learn about the characters, the main drivers of the plot and, based on that, we can draw conclusions and try to imagine what happens in the film. Sometimes a frame or a photo of a motif from the film is used for the poster, and sometimes the poster is illustrated or graphically processed, subtly or literally evoking certain elements

from the film. The photo from the poster of the film *Into the Blue* clearly communicates that the action of the film is related to the sea, while the poster of *Then I See Tanja* contains illustrations inspired by the body language handbook for teenagers, which is an important motif of the film. From this, students can also infer something about the personality of the characters, making these posters very stimulating for exchanging thoughts about the film. This analysis should be done without giving any specific answers, leaving the students' imagination wide open instead. Of course, once the films have been viewed, the students can be invited to create their own poster, focusing on any aspect of the film.

2. WARM-UP: GENRE, METER, FORM

These films have several very specific characteristics that make them different from the films that students at this age usually watch. These are short films about growing up that were shot in a special way. *Then I See Tanja* is a feature-animated film, while *Into the Blue* was filmed underwater due to the specific location of the action.

- Discuss with the students whether they have ever seen a short film before. In film theory, we also call this a short meter. What defines a short film? How long does it have to be to enter this category? What do you think, is it easier to make short films or feature films? If they have seen a short film before, let them try to remember what it was about and where they saw it.
- A coming-of-age film is a very common genre intended for children's audiences, but it is also very often "camouflaged" into another genre: adventure, comedy, drama, romantic comedy. Try together to come up with a definition and description of a film about growing up. Have they seen such films before? Which ones?
- Can they remember some films that were shot using the stop motion technique? Who is the main character in them and how were they created? Have they seen before films that were filmed underwater? If yes, what scenes do

they remember?

AFTER WATCHING THE FILM

This part of the film analysis can be divided into three phases.

1. CONVERSATION ABOUT IMPRESSIONS

Go back to the beginning and discuss how well the students guessed the plot and characters based on the poster and title. There are no wrong answers when talking about films: even if their prediction of the plot does not match the plot itself at all, explain to them that this is not a problem, as long as they know how to justify their claim.

- What are the key moments in the film? Why are they key? Encourage the students to try and think of how the plot would develop if, at a certain key moment in the film, something else had happened instead of what really happened.
- What are the characters like? How similar are they to the students? Can I identify with them, their problems and views? What happened to them in the film, and can I imagine what happens to them after the film ends?

2. NOTICE, DESCRIBE, ANALYSE: WHAT DO I SEE AND HEAR, AND WHAT DO I CONCLUDE?

- What makes these films special? List together the substantive and formal elements that caught the eye and ear of the students. Discuss the plot of the film: how does it unfold? Do they have the impression that it is fast or slow? Let them explain their answers.
- Who narrates these films? From whose angle do we observe the events in the film? What are the tactics of those storytellers and on what basis can we conclude that this is their view of the world?
- What are the lives of the protagonists like? Who sur-

rounds them? Who helps them and who does the opposite? Who is absent from their lives and why?

- How would you rate the acting of the actors who play their peers? Are they professional actors? Do they act “naturally”, are they convincing?
- What is the sound in *Then I See Tanja*? What different registers does it belong to? How do they think it was designed and recorded?
- What is the sound in *Into the Blue*? Does it seem more natural to them than in *Then I See Tanja*? Let them explain.
- What role does film music play? What does it bear witness to and what does it lead us to?
- *The Little Mermaid* is an important inspiration for *Into the Blue*. Read H. C. Andersen's fairytale and see what points it has in common with *Into the Blue*.

3. INTERACTIVE EXERCISES: I WILL TELL YOU A STORY

- List on pieces of paper the characters and the objects that appear in the films. Hand them out to the students. Some characters and items will appear more than once. Let the student whose character appears in the first scene of the film start telling the story from the beginning in the first-person singular. Let them follow the flow of the story, remembering as many details as possible. When a new character or object appears in the frame, let her/him take over the storytelling from her/his point of view. The story can also be taken over by someone/something who/what is not present in the scene: let them also tell the story from the position of their absence.
- Show the students a few images from the film (see Narration: when teenagers speak up or stay silent p. 19). What are they thinking, who are the characters looking at and

what are they thinking about at that moment? What is happening?

- Show them the images from the films again. You can use the ones from this booklet or others of your own choice. What do they think, what can be heard at that moment? Words, everyday sounds, or music? Can I design my own sound for the selected image? Let them use the objects they have in the classroom.

4. INTERACTIVE EXERCISES: A PHOTO NOVEL

Tell the students to choose one event from their life (an encounter, a moment of embarrassment, an argument) and to write it down in detail. Then have them analyse their story and find the key elements.

- Their task is to choose these key points and make matching photos in order to finally create a photo novel by using a few still images to depict the chosen situation. They themselves play the characters and record the voice-over and other sounds.
- The following questions will arise: who is the viewer of the situation? Does this change the choice of images, their pace and how they are understood?

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IMAGES CREDITS

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- p. 4 *Into the Blue* (2017), Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović - with courtesy of Blade Production, Ljubljana, Slovenia
- p. 8 *I Have Two Mothers and Two Fathers* (1968), Krešo Golik - https://m.media-amazon.com/images/M/MV5BMTU4Njg0ZWItOWE0Ny00ZWJkLTkxOGItMzZiNjZjMmE2YTY5XkEyXkFqcGdeQXVyMzg1ODEwNQ@@_V1_.jpg
- p. 8 *When Father Was Away on Business* (1985), Emir Kusturica - <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/a/a9/WhenFather.jpg>
- p. 9 HAVC logo – <https://hvac.hr/infocentar/press-kutak>
- p. 10 Juraj Lerotić – <https://cineuropa.org/en/newsdetail/429014/>
- p. 11 *La Jetée* (1962), Chris Marker – <https://archive.org/details/la-jetee-1962>
- p. 12 *Phantom Boy* (2015), Jean-Loup Felicioli and Alain Gagnol - <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1856057/mediaviewer/rm3232665089/>
- p. 12 *Party* (1980), Claude Pinoteau - https://trailer.kinopolis.de/assets/szenenbilder/xlarge/217772_05.jpg
- p. 18 Antoneta Alamat Kusijanović – <https://www.novilist.hr/mozaik/antoneta-alamat-kusijanovic-nominirana-za-nagradu-americkog-udruzenja-redateljja/>
- p. 19 *The Little Mermaid* (1989), Ron Clements and John Musker, Walt Disney feature animation – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ariel_%28The_Little_Mermaid%29#/media/File:Ariel_disney.png
- p. 20 *The Piano* (1993) Jane Campion – <https://www.popmatters.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/piano-jane-campion-fi-1024x576.jpg>
- p. 20 *Prayers for the Stolen* (2021), Tatiana Huezo - <https://assets.mubicdn.net/images/artworks/454025/images-original.png?1647009551>
- p. 31 *A Fair Wind/Breezing Up* (Winslow Homer, between 1873-76) – <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/breezing-up-a-fair-wind/OgHYzsaNTiFIWQ?hl=en-GB&ms=%7B%22x%22%3A0.5%2C%22y%22%3A0.5%2C%22z%22%3A9.886443884672444%2C%22size%22%3A%7B%22width%22%3A1.0827290023097085%2C%22height%22%3A1.2375995023250228%7D%7D>
- p. 31 *The Cliffs at Etretat* (Claude Monet, 1885) - https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/da/Claude_Monet_The_Cliffs_at_Etretat.jpg
- p. 31 *The Little Mermaid* (Edvard Eriksen, 1913), public sculpture in Copenhagen - <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/art-industry-news-august-18-2-1999980>
- p. 31 *The Prince Asked Who She Was* (Edmund Dulac, 1911), illustration - https://artsycraftsy.com/dulac/dulac_prince.html
- p. 31 *The Mermaid* (Howard Pyle, 1910) -<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7d/The-Mermaid.jpg>
- p. 31 *A Mermaid* (John William Waterhouse, 1900) - https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/55/John_William_Waterhouse_A_Mermaid.jpg/412px-John_William_Waterhouse_A_Mermaid.jpg
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- p. 32 *Girl With a Pearl Earring* (Johannes Vermeer, 1665) - <https://slate.com/culture/2013/10/vermeers-daughter-was-the-girl-with-the-pearl-earring-and-painted-later-vermeer-works.html>
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- p. 33 *The Happiest Girl in the World* (2009), Radu Jude - https://m.media-amazon.com/images/M/MV5BZDc1YWE5ZGYtMDNjMi00OWZlLTk2MWMtOGI1MGRmOWEwOWUzXkEyXkFqcGdeQXVyNDkzNTM2ODg@_V1_.jpg
- p. 33 *Shelter* (2010), Dragomir Sholev - https://m.media-amazon.com/images/M/MV5BNTYwMTBiMTAtYjgyMC00ZmJhLWE0YjAtNDlmMjAwODg4Y2U1XkEyXkFqcGdeQXVyNzgxMjc0OQ@@_V1_FMjpg_UX1000_.jpg
- p. 35 *Teenage Dirtbag* (2000), Weezer, music video - <https://perthamplify.wixsite.com/mysite/post/20-years-of-teenage-dirtbag>
- p. 36 *Deaf Swallows* (since 1994), Stjepan Štef Bartolić, comic book - <https://www.fibra.hr/index.asp?page=comic-view&ComicID=317>
- p. 37 *The Ten Commandments* (1956), Cecil B. DeMille - <https://manchesterinklink.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Screenshot-2019-03-31-at-6.21.08-PM.jpg>
- p. 38 *The Birth of Venus* (Sandro Botticelli, mid. 1480) - <https://www.italianrenaissance.org/botticelli-birth-of-venus/>
- p. 38 *Storm at Sea* (William Turner, 1822-23) - <https://www.stephenongpin.com/object/790595/18216/a-storm-at-sea>
- p. 38 *The Raft of the Medusa* (Théodore Géricault, 1818-19) - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Raft_of_the_Medusa#/media/File:JEAN_LOUIS_TH%3C%89ODORE_G%3C%89RICAULT_-_La_Balsa_de_la_Medusa_\(Museo_del_Louvre,_1818-19\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Raft_of_the_Medusa#/media/File:JEAN_LOUIS_TH%3C%89ODORE_G%3C%89RICAULT_-_La_Balsa_de_la_Medusa_(Museo_del_Louvre,_1818-19).jpg)



CINED.EU: DIGITAL PLATFORM DEDICATED TO EUROPEAN CINEMA EDUCATION

CINED PROPOSES:

- A multilingual platform, accessible free of charge in 45 European countries, to organize non-commercial screenings
- A collection of European films for ages 6 to 19
- Teaching materials to introduce and accompany the screenings: booklet on the film, pedagogical suggestions for the facilitator/teacher, worksheet for a young audience, educational videos for comparative analysis of film excerpts

CinEd is a European Cooperation Program for Education to the European Cinema.

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CINEMATECA PORTUGUESA
MUSEU DO CINEMA, I.P.



os filhos de LUMIÈRE



DEUTSCHE FILMKADEMIE



Hrvatski audiovizualni centar
Croatian Audiovisual Centre



VLADA REPUBLIKE HRVATSKE
Ured za udruge