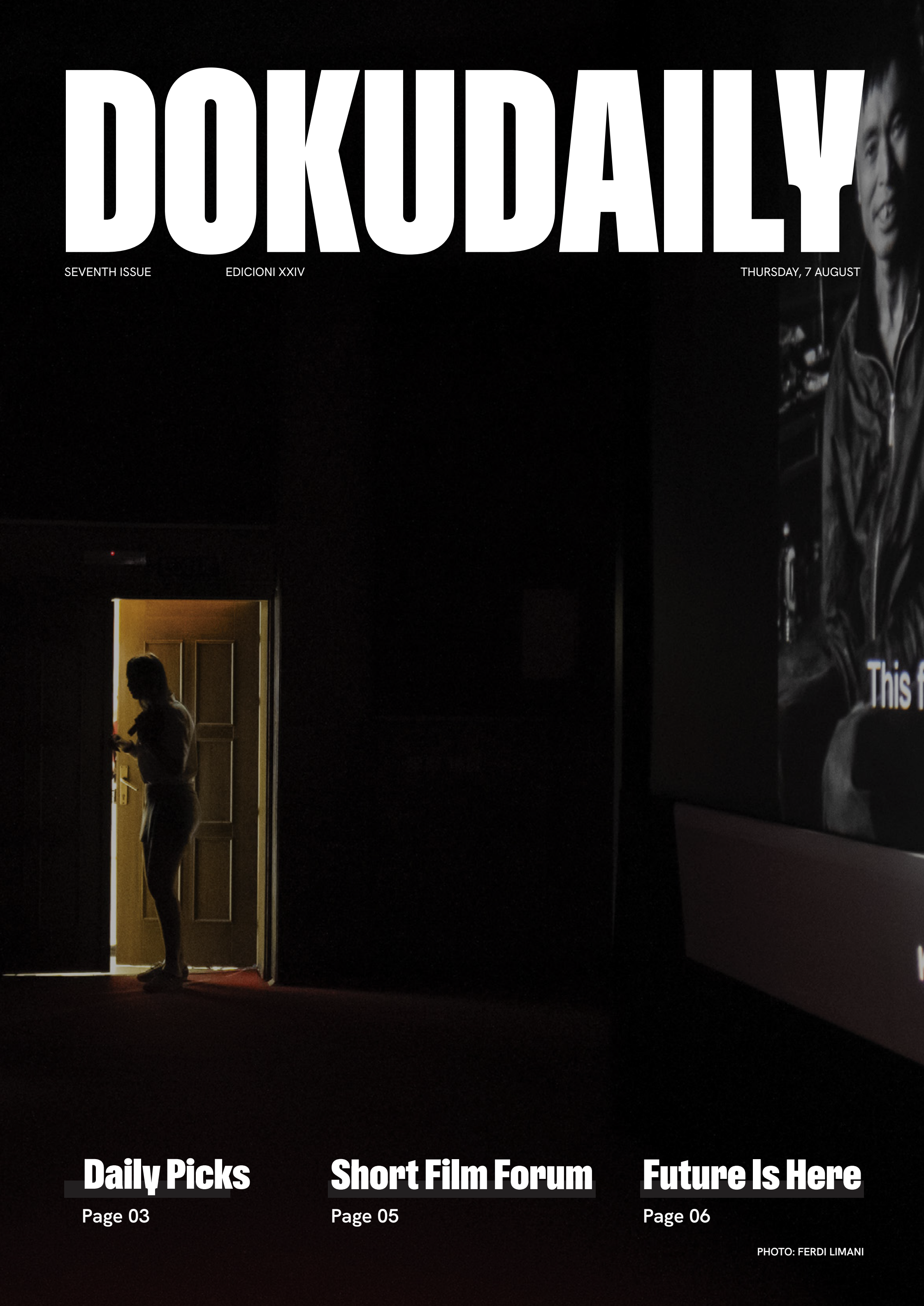


DOKUDAILY

SEVENTH ISSUE

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PHOTO: FERDI LIMANI

4:30am, Sunday.

Just checked into the hotel. As I unpack, I realize the fortress, once built to ward off death, now beams life across the city at 100Hz. This place always finds a way to welcome me. Maybe that red book made a pact.

As I lie down, the call to prayer rises, perfectly synced with the beat from the fortress. Sacred chant and devil's music, forced into harmony. And God knows I'm not a believer, but in that moment, I felt the universe had something to tell me.

Films are psalms and people are the rhythm.

In the diversity of what's shown each year, Dokufest opens resonance zones between realities we thought were opposed. It shows us we could coexist without erasing one another.

I am the silent plea, and Kosovo is my breath.

My very first step here was at night; the moment I arrived, the city lights went out. Talk about a sign. As if someone wanted me to see how beautiful this country is in the dark. And I've see

We are the hymns. The world is the tempo.

How much sense does it all really make?
One day, the universe will find a way to force peace upon us.
Might be wise to get ahead of it.

128 bpm prayers
Subversion is sacred
Long live Dokufest!

Written by Jeremy Lauricheese



DAILY PICKS

Canone effimero
SLANTED & ENCHANTED: MUSIC ON FILM



DOKUKINO 10:00

SPORT ON FILM



KINO LUMI 20:00

Through Our Kosovo
SPECIAL SCREENINGS



DOKUKINO PLATO 20:30

Palace of Youth
SLANTED & ENCHANTED: MUSIC ON FILM



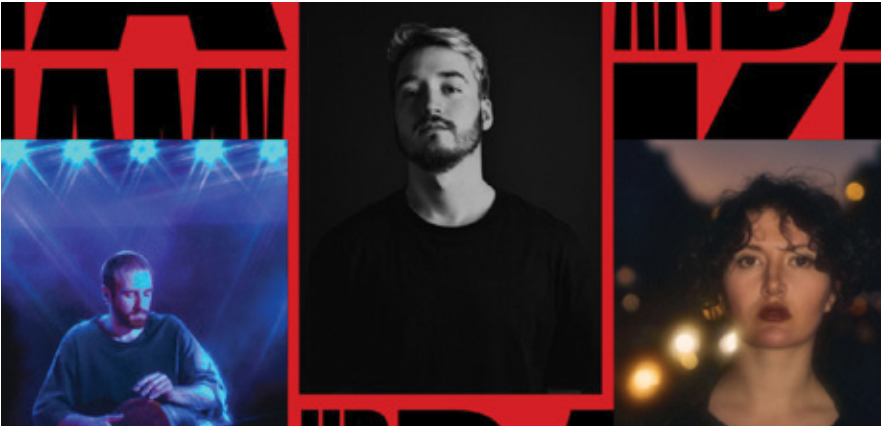
DOKUKINO PLATO 21:00

Against the Void: How Artists Resist Numbness
DOKUTALKS



SHKOLLA E MUZIKËS 'LORENC ANTONI' 17:00

LUXE x upsammy
DOKUNIGHTS



SONAR STAGE 22:30

DOKUTALKS

What Does It Mean To Watch?
To Watch Is To Care!

In a world oversaturated with images, from TikToks to drone strikes, what does it really mean to watch? Who is watching, and who is being watched?

This year's DokuTalk panel at DokuFest, held at Shkolla e Muzikës 'Lorenc Antoni' on August 6, brought together filmmakers and thinkers grappling with one of the most urgent ethical questions of our time: in an age of normalized violence and indifference, how can film disrupt the cycle of apathy?

Moderated by Dea Gjinovci, the panel titled What Does It Mean to Watch? featured Lyuba Knorozok (Special Operation), Juliette Le Monnyer (Ramallah, Palestine, December 2018), and co-directors Corinne van Egeraat & Petr Lom (The Coriolis Effect). Each brought a radically different lens but all converged on the power and responsibility of filming in times of crisis.

For Lyuba Knorozok, the story began with silence; surveillance footage from inside the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, occupied during the first hours of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. "We received over 700 hours of high-resolution footage," Knorozok shared. "It wasn't just documentation. It was resistance."

The footage, captured and preserved by plant workers at great personal risk, forms the backbone of Special Operation. The workers, both operating and secretly saving the CCTV material, flipped the script: while held captive, they were also silently observing their captors. "Each frame is an act of nuclear terror," Knorozok said, referencing international laws banning military presence at nuclear facilities.

From Ukraine to Palestine, Juliette Le Monnyer took a minimalist yet powerful approach in Ramallah, Palestine, December 2018, a 10-minute single-take short. "It was just me, holding the camera," Le Monnyer said. The film opens with people watching something off-screen, and quickly, the viewer becomes both participant and outsider.

This unbroken shot becomes a meditation on helplessness, documentation, and the frailty of perspective. "I turned to my camera to try and make sense of the chaos in front of me," she said. In doing so, she raises uncomfortable but essential questions: What does it mean to film violence? What happens to the filmmaker's role when witnessing becomes an act of resistance?

She reflected on the ongoing conflict in Palestine and the ethical responsibility of filmmakers. "It's not just about capturing suffering. It's about refusing silence. Even small films can be acts of protest."

Corinne van Egeraat and Petr Lom's The Coriolis Effect took the conversation into a different orbit, literally. Shot in Cape Verde, the film explores the planet's fragility through a poetic, non-human-centric lens. "It's a meditation on life in the eye of the storm," Lom explained.

Their camera doesn't seek out protagonists or climaxes, it dives underwater, floats in the air, crawls across soil.

"We wanted viewers to feel like they're part of something larger, something deeply interconnected," van Egeraat said.

In contrast to the urgent realism of war footage, their film feels like a prayer. It evokes the subtle magic of existence, while still sounding a quiet alarm about climate crisis.

The conversation took a serious turn as the panel discussed the intersection of art and justice. Knorozok spoke about collaborating with Ukraine's Prosecutor General's Office, using film as legal evidence of war crimes. "Even if the film doesn't get global attention," she said, "it preserves memory. That, in itself, is justice."

Le Monnyer echoed the sentiment. In a world of filtered media and fleeting attention spans, documentaries have the power to break through, if only for a moment and demand reflection.

Meanwhile, van Egeraat emphasized that storytelling doesn't have to shout to be heard.

The panel closed with a lively Q&A exploring how film festivals like DokuFest can engage younger generations and offer alternative narratives. "Not everyone connects with slow cinema," a person from the public acknowledged, "but that doesn't mean we stop trying."

Whether its surveillance footage repurposed for justice, handheld observations turned into poetry, or underwater meditations on life itself, these filmmakers challenge us to reconsider how we see and what we choose to look away from.

In the end, watching isn't passive. It's a moral act. And DokuFest's What Does It Mean to Watch? panel made one thing crystal clear: to watch is to care and sometimes, to care is the first step toward change.

Written by Shefket Bujari

SHORT FILM FORUM

A Promising Debut: The Inaugural Short Film Forum Launches New Visions from the Balkans



PHOTO: ELMEDINA ARAPI

In a historic first for the region, the Short Film Forum, a new regional co-production and pitching platform, successfully concluded its inaugural edition during the 24th edition of DokuFest, held in Prizren from August 4-6, 2025. Designed to uplift and connect emerging filmmakers from Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Albania, the three-day forum showcased a dynamic spectrum of storytelling across fiction, documentary, animation, hybrid, and experimental genres.

Conceived as a regional hub for the development of short films, the forum was the realization of a long-held ambition by DokuFest.

"We've always had this dream of doing something similar to what's being done in the Nordic countries," said Eroll Bilibani from DokuFest, during the forum's final day. "For political reasons, it never happened, until now. I'm deeply grateful to our partners in Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Albania. And especially to the Film Center of Montenegro, which has confirmed participation for next year."

The forum was initiated in June 2025 and culminated with an in-person program that brought together selected filmmakers for mentorship, development, and industry networking in Prizren. The pitching sessions, held on the final day, were moderated by Jing Haase, who guided the participating teams through the process.

"They've been mentored by Martijn te Pas, they've trained and polished their pitches, and now they're ready," Haase announced. "After the pitch, we'll have questions from the jury, and eventually, we'll award seven recognitions, three monetary and four industry-based."

The final day culminated in a celebratory award ceremony, highlighting the talent and promise of the region's emerging voices. Each award was both a recognition and a launching pad toward further development and collaboration.

Euro Connection nomination during the Short Film Market in Clermont-Ferrand, France went to "I Still Haven't Cry", by director Flaka Kokolli (Kosovo).

"I love being at DokuFest and I love all you do for all kinds of films. I do animation, and I'm so happy that you always include animation. And for all the collaborations that we've had, it's always a pleasure," said Kokolli.

Documentary Association of Europe Award - Accreditation and accommodation for Thessaloniki Film Festival's AGORA MARKET went to Discobox by director Romina Ruda (Albania).

"This is so much fun. Thank you so much. Oh my God, I can't wait to meet you in Thessaloniki!"

Invitation to pitch at the ShorTO Film Market's You Only Pitch Twice session, selected by the Italian Short Film Center went to "Who is singing?" by director Ana Morina (Kosovo).

"Thank you. Thank you to Anita and to everyone who's already in the project. This is very exciting".

Square Eyes Festival Strategy Award - two consultations and a tailored festival strategy for a project selected by Square Eyes went to "Soil" by directors Kiril Karakash and Svetislav Podleshanov (North Macedonia).

"Thank you. So we would like to thank first of all the whole team of DokuFest, and everyone involved in making this first short film forum. We are very happy to be here and looking forward to see you next year as well".

Talent Doc Award, presented by Kosovo Cinematography Center went to "Soundtrack of a People: Boom", by director Fjolla Muharremi (Kosovo).

"Thank you so much for being so transparent and for helping us. And I want to thank

my team for just being on the same page and really having the same passion behind it all. And I want to thank you, Eroll Bilibani. If it wasn't for you, and how do I see you, I don't think I would have ever met these people. So I am forever in debt to DokuFest".

Best Pitch - Emerging Filmmaker presented by DokuFest and Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports went to "Sveti Antun Pustinjak" by director Antonio Dimovski (North Macedonia).

"I want to say thank you very much to everyone. This is my first time in Kosovo. And from the very first moment I got here, I felt at home. I am so grateful for this opportunity. I am looking forward to collaboration in the future. And to represent what this stands for collaboration in the Balkans," said Dimovski.

Best Project - Creative Force presented by DokuFest and the Swedish Embassy in Kosovo went to "Who is singing?" by director Ana Morina (Kosovo).

"Thank you DokuFest for these opportunities. I'm so excited. It's lovely being here. Every time I'm here, it feels like home. So, thank you very much".

While this was the first edition, the energy and potential it unlocked left no doubt that the Short Film Forum is here to stay. One-on-one meetings between decision-makers and filmmakers were also facilitated, sowing the seeds for future co-productions and industry support. "This is just the beginning," concluded Bilibani. "All the projects are winners. And next year, with Montenegro joining, we grow even stronger."

As the sun set over Prizren, the filmmakers and jury celebrated not only the completion of the forum, but the beginning of a new era for short film creation in the Balkans, one where borders blur, stories soar, and creativity is the only passport required.

FUTURE IS HERE

Soul on Screen: Good luck to the 13th generation of Future is Here



PHOTO: FERDI LIMANI

It is one of the most exciting moments of the year. The first of the new generation of films of Future is Here at DokuFest. This time the thirteenth generation shows us the way to their stories. They have been in Prizren for a long time to have their work mentored by Eroll Bilibani, Dea Gjinovci, Leart Rama and Flutura Balaj, who have been an inseparable part of the process of emotions developed, for many of their first films.

At Kino Lumi, we first watched the Bridging the Gap program, with five films from Scotland starting with "Friends on the Outside" directed by Annabel Moodie, then with "The Bayview" directed by Daniel Cook, "A Long Winter" directed by Eilidh Monroe, "Hole in the Stoney Moon" directed by Meray Diner. A glimpse of suburban life, seemingly bleak, vast from the noise of urbanity, about the foundation of people and tangible. This program, realized in collaboration with the Scottish Documentary Institute, brings the best of Scottish filmmakers straight to Prizren.

But even in the new film of Future is Here they were felt in the air, so we were not familiar with the title "Mes Nesh" (Between Us), a narrative about a message of the director and her mass while in a painting studio deepening the presentation of the report, not only in relation to the artistic blood. Then we continued with the film "Dritë në Errësirë" (Light in Darkness) by Erlisa Buzhala that invites us to place the world as she sees it, with her limitation in vision. And we know Erlisa's strength, patience and vulnerability in full form.

"Tavani" by Lekë Cërvadiku introduces us to a personal and emotional view of a space that holds memories, history and a lot of nostalgia. Often over the years we have seen their lives and documents that happen in a way that may seem ordinary, but that flow in a very stable time. One such thing was the documentation of some moments from the life of Donjeta Krasniqi, part of the Kosovo Special Forces, captured in the film by director Diellza Musliu, with the film titled "Her".

Even the experimental sound experiments part of the analyses of these were generated especially with the film "Tingëllimë" directed by Blertë Ibrahim, which summarizes, metaphorically how only through sounds can we understand that we are at home and thus

see in a sensory form a space that is both intimate and collective.

After the reflection, we followed the conversation of a fantastic trio, Erza, Erenik and Andi, as their fantastic stories are included in a film full of humor and spirit, titled "3 in 1".

The last one was dedicated to the social aspect of Termokiss in Prishtina, titled "TermoKiss has no Borders" directed by Korab Jashari and Tea Jashari, which reflect on activism, responsibility and creating a safe space for everyone.

After the screening of the films, the Kino Lumi hall was filled with applause as Eroll Bilibani invited the new generation to take the stage together with their mentors. Dea Gjinovci said "I am very impressed by your work. It was a pleasure to see you at the beginning of the program launch, and how your ideas transformed on how your projects can develop further and that these stories are unique because they are yours and I am very proud of you."

Leart Rama, who was also part of Future is Here years ago, and has been a mentor to the younger generations for years, said: "We are very proud of the thinking you have done and we have been very proud of all of you and I hope to see more projects from you in the future."

Also, like Rama, Flutura Balaj has been part of the Future is Here program and has been an important part of the work as an editor and she said: "I join this feeling of pride and we continue to recognize teenagers who are confident in their vision and I am also proud of how determined these young people are on how they wanted their films to look."

The young filmmakers shared with us their first emotions on stage, thanking their parents for supporting their projects, and with these feelings flying in our stomachs, we can't wait to see what their futures in film will look like.

ON FILMS

Through Our Kosovo



There is no record of any cinematic activity in Kosovo prior to 1912. However, following the Balkan Wars, the presence of film cameras in the region became possible. Still, these early visual records are limited, mostly war-focused, and consist of short sequences that have largely not survived to the present day.

This fragmented and war-centric narrative began to shift partially in the 1930s with the state's increasing interest in cinema. In 1931, the "Law on the Regulation of the Film Trade" established a legal framework for cinema, bringing more structure to the field. That same year, the "Yugoslav Educational Film", founded under the Central Press Office of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, produced numerous films documenting Kosovo. Among the most notable are *In Old Prizren* (U Starom Prizrenu, 1932) and *From the Kosovo Field to Lake Ohrid* (Od Kosova Polja do Ohridskog Jezera, 1934).

Another significant work featuring some of the oldest surviving footage of Kosovo is the 1933 documentary *Through Our Kosovo* (Kroz naše Kosovo). It was produced by the School of Public Health (Škola narodnog zdravlja), which was established in Zagreb in 1926 with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation, under the leadership of Dr. Andrija Štampar. Initially focused on producing health-education films, the school expanded into documentary filmmaking in the 1930s.

Through Our Kosovo, a silent film of approximately 25 minutes, was written and directed by Dr. Drago Chloupek, with cinematography by Aleksandar Gerasimov. The film documents cities and regions such as Pristina, Janjevo, Lipjan, Mitrovica, Ferizaj, Trepça, and Gracanica, and showcases mosques and churches, multicultural daily life, traditional crafts, agriculture, and animal husbandry. Visually, the film is notable for its photographic quality, coherent editing, and aesthetic composition.

However, the intertitles in the film are filled with propagandistic language and reflect the political climate of the time. Despite this, *Through Our Kosovo* remains one of the most comprehensive visual records of the region during that period.

The film will be presented with a live musical performance composed by Ilir Bajri and performed by the Experimental Ensemble. The Experimental Ensemble is an initiative of the Lumbardhi Foundation, which annually organizes experimental events that merge archival visual material with music.

Note: Much of the information presented in this text about cinematic activity in Kosovo before 1945 is based on the books and articles of Dejan Kosanović.

Written by Bengi Muzbeg

INTERVIEW From One Cinema to Another - Three Years in a Row A Conversation with Urata Kajtazi



We often focus on those who make films, those who work in writing, those who go above and beyond to overcome the barriers of grants and funding, so that the stories of directors and various artists can be brought to the screen. We must always remember that there is colossal work behind it all. And all of it exists so that curious and attentive eyes may find and see them and here at DokuDaily, we know someone like that. Her name is Urata. For those who know Urata closely, they know that for the things she is passionate about, she finds a highly organized way to enjoy them to the fullest.

Urata Kajtazi, who previously worked in the hospitality department at DokuFest, has for more than three years now regularly followed everything she can at the festival. Her programs are full of notes and details, structured with color-coded markings. She says her preparation to watch the films begins the moment the program is published, and she starts navigating it by beginning with the Human Rights Dox category, as it usually includes her favorite films. "True stories, coming from real people," she says.

In fact, this routine which intertwines countless unusual paths on the screen is a well-arranged hobby, thanks to her nature that seeks order in the world. And usually, Urata finds and establishes that order.

When we ask her about how the nature of the films or the festival atmosphere has felt over the years, she says the films themselves are the atmosphere, especially in the past two years. Being a former staff member, years ago, the usual hustle of festivals made cinema visits feel like a daily wish, but not always feasible. She notices thematic shifts each year, mentioning the many films about Palestine last year and this year many on Iran. Two years ago, the "lottery" of her film-watching schedule happened to include international short films. Last year, counting by hand, she watched 64 films. But numbers don't matter. She says: "What matters is that the number of people in the cinema has grown, and that's something we should feel good about."

Urata explains the mechanism she uses to select films, keeping the program in hand: "I mark the synopsis in blue in advance, use red for noting the encore screenings, and black for writing my thoughts on the film or any sentence that sticks with me."

We ask her which films she's liked most so far, and she mentions "Cutting Through Rocks", all the films in "International Short Dox, and "Blue Heart". Also "Hippopotami", which is very dark. "But I like dark things," she says.

Naturally, her method extends to how she interacts with the cinema space too, so you'll most likely find Urata at DokuKino, in the second-to-last row, center seat, because according to her, that's the best view. At the House of Culture, she sits in the first row of the second section of seats. Not too far, not too close. In

other venues, as far back and as centered as possible.

She can't stand being told what happens in a film. No spoilers, please. She dislikes when people get up and leave in the middle of a screening. And she's right. If you know how long the film is and you've committed to watching it, what could possibly make someone leave suddenly? She also doesn't like people who make exaggerated comments in the cinema. That's something you should not do, at least not in Urata's presence, because even if she doesn't like a film, she stays until the end, just in case the ending changes everything.

There's a time and place for opinions, and that's outside the cinema. When the lights go down and the screen lights up, eyes should follow the story. As a regular cinema-goer, especially of DokuFest programs, she finds herself somewhere between being a staff member and a "tourist" in her own city, and she sees how her love for the festival has transformed over time. Even though she doesn't remember the first film she saw at DokuFest, she never stops recommending "Our Males and Females" directed by Ahmad Alyaseer.

Between finding a balance between watching films and spending time with friends, we notice this healthy, thoughtful, and deeply curious relationship that Urata has with cinema, all while her sharp character doesn't tolerate insincerity. She speaks openly about the need for narration in film. About understanding context. About learning without needing to over-aestheticize the image.

She hasn't watched the news in years. She tells us that she's replaced it quite naturally with watching documentary films. She stays away from the online world. What interests her more is the deep, subtle perspective that arrives from all corners of the world, right into Prizren.

So, if you see Urata in the cinemas during the festival, please, let her be. She's on her well-deserved break, thinking about which film she absolutely can't miss next.

DOKUNIGHTS

Magic In Kalaja



PHOTO: SARA ÇAFLESHI

I won't pretend to know how Cinna Peyghamy conjured up the sounds created last night using just his tombak—a small Persian hand drum—and a modular synthesizer, nor will I understand how the shuddering, pulsing soundscapes engineered by YAAND (Anda Kryeziu) and urbau in the sets that followed somehow felt both loose and masterfully designed, but, caught in their atmospheric fog, I found myself letting go, taking in the magic of it all. This was music not to be intellectualised but inhaled, letting the vibrations reverberate through the body and into the soul.

Peyghamy, perched cross-legged on his deck at the front of Kalaja's Sonar stage, tombak resting in his lap, cut an unpretentious figure: "Hello, I'm Cinna. I'm going to play some music" he began, hilariously underselling the wizardry on display for the next hour. Tombak as his tool kit, the range he squeezed out of the instrument was astonishing, rattling away intensely captivating beats turned inside out by his modular synthesizer. First, a dotted, intriguing build up, and then complete rapture: shards of broken glass, echoing tribal beats and, somehow, the tones of what sounded like a sitar all spilling out of his drum, all seemingly improvised.

YAAND followed suit, surrounded by dense fog and beams of light, staging another continuous, daring performance that swung across an entire spectrum of experimental music with apparent ease. Incorporating incisive spoken word amid swathes of glitch and sketches of hyperpop, she consistently surprised, flirting with imprints of breakbeat and techno before pulling back, or, in a particularly astonishing, cathartic sequence, basking in layered vocals and soaring synth lines—a moment of pure ethereality.

urbau, in response, conjured up a distorted, wrangled beast of a set, stuttering and transcendent, endlessly explorative. Toying with discordance and laying the atmosphere on thick, his performance was richly textured and constantly shifting, offering up pulsating rhythms among rising sonic melodies or completely breaking down into a fog of noise. His set summed up the entire night: unafraid to take left turns, massive in scope and style, and packing in a sense of giddy experimental eclecticism that defines DokuNights.

Tonight, the sonic exploration continues as we are treated to two renowned electronic producers at the top of their game. First, London-based experimental artist LUXE presents a genre-defying live performance uniting classical compositions with atmospheric soundscapes and high-tempo electronic rhythms, before we are treated to the lush, introspective reverberations and microtextures of Amsterdam-based artist upsammy, who presents a live, audiovisual rendition of her stunning 2024 album *Strange Meridians*. Personally picked out by the co-curator of DokuNights as a highlight, this is a night not to be missed.

Written by Gus Edgar-Chan



PHOTO: SARA ÇAFLESHI

INTERVIEW

Back in DokuFest

A CONVERSATION WITH MATEJA RAIČKOVIĆ



FOTO: LUKA STRIKA

Back at it. Meeting the filmmakers while they just touched down in Prizren. And so is the case with Mateja Raičković. The first time she came to DokuFest, she just went straight to DokuNights. Yesterday, she joined the busy nightly crowds of Prizren.

She says: "So DokuFest for me is very special, and I'm honored to come this year with the film, because the first time I was introduced to the festival was when I was just starting my bachelor's in Montenegro, in the city and there was this call for a documentary workshop. At that moment, I didn't know what exactly documentaries were. I thought it was just, you know, the reportages you see on TV, like the boring things. Yes, you talk, you learn something new, and that's it, and that. But I still decided to come because in our school, we didn't have any classes in documentary film, so I actually wanted to learn. And then the whole world opened up to me."

The first time she got the courage to touch the camera and go shoot, it was during her study years, having a moment of curiosity and just trying to collaborate with people, they made a film for fishermen in Montenegro. And it ended up being quite nice. And it was the way that I came to DokuFest. She remembers coming to the edition when the "Truth Lies Here" campaign installments were everywhere, and she still holds on that sticker in her laptop. She felt an immediate sense of familiarity. Even the parts when the city seems always to be in an under construction situation. But what she likes most is the roasted corn stands in the city. It feels like summer, like home.

Last year she worked at Dokufest, this year she is part of the Balkan Dox competition with her film "Lavander" dealing with the delicate and tough real life story of the director. It is touching, and deals with her own traumatic experience of overcoming violation, a secret she kept from everyone until this film was made. When we talk about the competing side she seems relaxed and calm, the real stressful event was when she showed this film in her hometown, wondering how people would react.

It is a raw depiction of her own life, hence the response has been parallel to that feeling. From detaching from the personal, working with an humble camera she sends us on a journey of self-reflection, yet connecting like never before with the experience of being a woman.

"You know, I had this doubt, but at the same time, I knew it's gonna be very well received with women, because there's so many women that went through something similar." - she says.

But the aftermath of how the film was received in different screenings has been that of establishing a sense of girl power and sharing deeply touching stories, and coming up to a sense of liberation. Coming together is also something that happens regularly at DokuFest, when the moon comes from behind the castle, she says, there is a sense of reunion that is unmatched. She says, "just think about how many meaningful collaborations have started just from a conversation in this street?"

Through seeing what makes us all confide in each other and celebrate the courageousness of it all and then just reflect together, the Sun kept approaching Mateja as we finished this conversation, in all beauty and might.

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