



## The FESTIVAL

ЧРЕЗ ХУМАНИЗЪМ КЪМ МИР И ПРИЯТЕЛСТВО



XIX МЕЖДУНАРОДЕН ФЕСТИВАЛ  
НА ЧЕРВЕНОКРЪСТКИТЕ  
И ЗДРАВНИ ФИЛМИ

Под патронажа на вицепрезидента  
на Република България г-жа Илиана Йотова



БЪЛГАРСКИ  
ЧЕРВЕН КРЪСТ

ОРГАНИЗАТОРИ



МЕДИЦИНСКИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ - ВАРНА

The 19th International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films, entitled "*Pandemic - Society - Cinema*", opened its competition program with screenings in Re-Bonkers, an artistic space created by Varna youth organizations in an ancient ammunition depot. Observing all precautionary epidemiological measures, the organizers - the Bulgarian Red Cross and the Medical University - Varna, aimed to promote through the cinema how the pandemic affected humanism.

The patron of the Festival is the Vice President of Bulgaria Iliana Yotova, its artistic director is Prof. Bozhidar Manov, and the overall preparation, organization and conduction are led by Ilko Raev, member of the National

Council of the Bulgarian Red Cross and chairman of the BRC-Varna.

At a **press conference** at Radio Varna with the participation of *Acad. Hristo Grigorov, Chairman of the BRC, Ilko Raev, director of the Festival*, member of the NC of the BRC and chairman of the BRC-Varna, *Prof. Dr. Krassimir Gigov, general director of the BRC, Velina Markovska, a representative of MU - Varna*, and the great *Bulgarian actresses Iskra Radeva and Marta Vachkova*, guests of the Festival, the journalists received information about the upcoming screenings, their locations and the closing press conference at which the awarded films will be announced.



# Дневник



As its patron, Iliana Yotova opened the festival with a greeting to the participants and spectators. It was read by the volunteer of the BRC-Varna Todor Tachev, dressed in a youth uniform since 1936 **on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Bulgarian Red Cross Youth.**

The greeting states: *"The virus keeps us 2 meters away from each other, but I believe that there are no abysses between our souls, on the contrary - we need to be together even more, to support and overcome crises more easily. The fear of the disease failed to kill our inherent feelings of empathy and responsibility for the other! The 19th edition of the International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films will write another successful page in its significant biography."*



The Selection Committee, chaired by **Prof. Dr. Temelko Temelkov**, was provided with 1281 films from 101 countries on all continents. 68 films from 18 countries participated in the program. The chairman of the judges was **Prof. Bozhidar Manov** - film critic, journalist, member of the European Film Academy, and its members were **Siya Papazova** - playwright, **Mihail Mutafov** - actor, **Velina Markovska** - MU, communications specialist, **Reni Petkova** - BRC, BRCY coordinator - Varna. They will assess the films in the competition categories: Red Cross, health, documentaries and feature films, and will announce the winners for 2021.



As part of the program of the 19th International Festival - Varna, a lecture on "**Boccaccio. Decameron**": Philosophy of the Fragile World" / part of the online course "Italian and Northern Renaissance" / gave *Assoc. Prof. Dr. Lisa Boeva*. The great Bulgarian actor *Yitzhak Finzi* performed excerpts from "Decameron" at Re-Bonkers.

## SELECTED FROM THE FESTIVAL PROGRAM

It is difficult to choose a few films from the plentiful program of the Festival. However, the format of the Diary does not allow us to present all the **68 titles**. Some of them are:



**"Life from the life"** is a Bulgarian documentary film directed by *Stefan Komandarev* and written by *Teodora Stoilova-Doncheva*. The film shows the real situation with the hundreds of people waiting for transplantation in Bulgaria. Its message aims to preserve the hope of Bulgarian citizens for a fairer society and affordable health care.



**"Away from the eyes, away from the mind"** – an American feature film directed by *Brian Folmer*. A shocking story about the power of friendship. The protagonist, risking more harm than good, returns to his friend, who suffers from schizophrenia.



**"Silent heritage"** – a Bulgarian documentary film directed by *Petya Nakova* and written by her and *Ognyan Statelov*. A teacher at her own educational center for deaf children, is forced to go abroad for a medical treatment. Her 20-year-old daughter takes the responsibility for the children in the center and her younger sister. With the power of friendship and family, mother and daughter successfully cope with the adversity.

**"The Blessed One"** – a Bulgarian feature film. Director - *Stanimir Trifanov*, Screenwriters - *Emil Andreev* and *Boryana Milusheva-Dukova*, Producer – *Plamen Jordanov*, Actors - *Alexander Tonev*, *Lorina Kamburova*, *Paraskeva Dzhukelova*, *Stefan Denolyubov*, *Lyuben Chatalov*.

Immaculate love, priceless medicine, a chance of meeting with the future US President John F. Kennedy and the bombing of Sofia in January



 **Дневник**

1944 turned a man's life upside down, but he managed to save his innocent soul.



**“Mamonga” – a Serbian feature film directed by *Stefan Malashevich*.** It is a film about a child who refuses to speak, about an Asian who can't understand the local dialect, about the son of a truck driver who will never raise his voice. The time is racing and people run in a circle.

**“Crazy life” – a Belgian feature film with the directors and screenwriters *Rafael Balboni* and *Anne Sirot*.** The plot becomes a kind of school for parenting. The protagonists – Alex and Noemi, decide to have a child, but Alex's mother – Susan, turns from a mother into an unmanageable child due to “semantic dementia”, a fatal neurodegenerative disease.



**“Hell” – a Spanish short documentary with director and camera operator *Raoul de la Fuente*.** A dramatic story about the infernal life in prison of 15-year-old Channu, who wants to return after he is freed.



**“The shadow covered by a cockroach” – a short film directed and written by *Mega Lee*, Taiwan.** The film tells the story of a brother-sister conflict that is interrupted by a cockroach that will later change both of them.

**“Ana” – short feature film Ukraine, Great Britain, Israel.** The main character is a single mother who lives in war-torn eastern Ukraine. She desperately seeks change and thus finds herself at a party with a group of American men who are traveling the country looking for love.



**“Two gods” – a documentary from USA directed by *Zeshaun Ali*.** The film tells the story of Hanif, a Muslim coffin craftsman in Newark, who shelters two young men under his wing to teach them how to live better.



“Alive” – a Swedish short film directed and written by *Jimmy Olson*, which tells the story of two women – Victoria and her assistant Ida. Victoria is in a wheelchair and dreams of intimacy and love. Ida helps her meet Hokan on a dating site. How will she cope with the first meeting and the new situation?



Alive

## WE PRESENT YOU

**Stefan Komandarev**

### Present yourself

*I am Stefan Komandarev, a Bulgarian director, producer and screenwriter, I have made feature and documentary films, which won awards at a number of important international festivals and distributed around the world. I graduated medicine at the Military Medical Institute - Sofia (1993) and film directing at the New Bulgarian University in 1999. I am a member of the European Film Academy. I teach film directing and production at NBU.*



*I am a member of the European Film Academy. I teach film directing and production at NBU.*

**You are a guest of the 19th edition of the International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films. What is your opinion about the Festival? Would you support it in the future?**

*I have dedicated 11 years to medicine (6 years as a medical student and hospital orderly and 5 years as a medical practitioner). Later I graduated in film directing and I made feature and documentary films. I am a big adherent of the noble cause of the International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films. This is a unique festival that I will always support.*

**This year's slogan is "Pandemic-Society-Cinema". How do you perceive and interpret it?**



*Cinema is a mirror of reality and its most important analyst and critic. When a pandemic occurs in the world, it is natural for it to find a place in the films that are being made at that time. And the mass media is an important ally.*

**How has COVID 19 changed our lives and how has it affected the art?**

*Covid has put culture in the most difficult situation in many ways. The virus has put the authors on the brink of survival and has driven away the audience. As they say, this will pass. Life is short, art is eternal.*

**What do you associate the Red Cross with?**

*Solidarity, mutual aid, accessibility, care, health, Hippocratic Oath.*

**The international movement of the Red Cross is guided by 7 basic principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, universality? Which 3 of them are most important to you personally? And if it has to be 1?**

*Humanity is paramount. Caring for those who are sick and weak is a measure of the civilization of a society. All the others principles listed are also important, but humanity is the basis.*

**Wish us something.**

*I wish you to continue to preserve and disseminate the cause and meaning of the Red Cross idea.*



**Iskra Radeva**

**Present yourself**

*I am a Bulgarian actress and singer who has played dozens of roles in theater, films and television. I am also the owner and manager of the Sparks and Seasons Theater, which has a jubilee this year - 25 years since its establishment.*

**You are a guest of the 19th edition of the International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films. What is your opinion about the Festival? Would you support it in the future?**

*In the previous years I was able to participate because the Festival coincided with the beginning of the active theatrical season. For the 19th edition, I rearranged my program so that I could attend, because I have known for years what a serious selection you make of the films and*



*what important health and human topics they affect. I am here because I support the efforts to promote the problems widely among the society, to discuss them and find their solution.*

**This year's slogan is "Pandemic-Society-Cinema". How do you perceive and interpret it?**

*The year is extremely difficult and it is important for people to know that the virus is very dangerous. I speak from a personal standpoint, because I myself had a very hard time fighting the virus. That is why I want to tell everyone that it is extremely important to get vaccinated so that they can be protected in some way. It is very important for people to be informed in order to make an grounded decision in the interest of their health and that of their loved ones. This is exactly what the Festival does - through art it provides reliable and verified information.*

*At the press conference I shared with the media my satisfaction that this year the program of the Festival covers the topics of donation and transplants. They need to be clarified and I am glad that people can see such films. We must understand that we have to be sympathetic to those who hope to get a chance for life, to donors and to their loved ones who at this difficult time of loss must decide whether to save another life or not.*

**How has COVID 19 changed our lives and how has it affected the art?**

*The pandemic had a effect on art. My theater has not been working for a year and a half. The artists are somewhat disillusioned, they have no contact with the audience, they don't feel its breath, although during a performance they breathe together. Not to mention how tragic the financial consequences are. I will give an example - the British government has allocated 1 billion and 560 million pounds to support culture in the pandemic. What can I say about the money that is given for culture in Bulgaria ...?*

**What do you associate the Red Cross with?**

*Humanity and voluntary service. It is remarkable how the volunteers are ready to help without thinking about any financial or material benefits.*

**The international movement of the Red Cross is guided by 7 basic principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, universality? Which 3 of them are most important to you personally? And if it has to be 1?**

*I have already said the two of them - humanity and voluntary service. I think I would choose unity for the third one, because people have closed themselves mentally. Maybe because of the pandemic, we have less and less contact with each other, we have separated. It is very important to be united now, because that is the only way we can fight everything.*

**Wish us something...**

*I want to wish the organizers from Bulgarian Red Cross-Varna and the Medical University to continue to make this Festival. I understand the difficulties at the moment and what they are doing is heroism. I am glad that the Festival enjoys authority and is a huge success here. I saw*



*how many people had gathered to watch the screening last night. The fact that we were closed for a long time seems to provoke our desire to be together now, even though 1-2 meters apart from each other. I am really happy to be part of the Festival this year and I hope to be together in the future as well. Let's get back the life we had sooner.*

**Marta Vachkova**

**Present yourself...**

*I am **Martina Vachkova**, actress, mother and daughter of the great actor **Grigor Vachkov**. I'm glad people still remember him. I am madly in love with the city of Varna.*

**You are a guest of the 19th edition of the International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films. What is your opinion about the Festival? Would you support it in the future?**

*I am very happy I'm here for the Festival of Red Cross and Health Films. I have a memory of this festival since I was a child. I still remember the films that were screened then and the crowded halls. Nowadays people are so oversaturated and over-informed that I don't know if the curiosity about the Festival today is so great. However, the films are very well chosen and very interesting.*



**This year's slogan is "Pandemic-Society-Cinema". How do you perceive and interpret it?**

*I think that the slogan of the 19th festival is very appropriate and it is very important to go together in one direction - art and humanism. Things that a doctor can explain in a complicated way, artists through their art can more easily suggest it to people. I am very glad that there is an ambulance at the entrance of the sea garden - a mobile vaccination point, but unfortunately very few people go there. I am shocked. It is such an insulting rudeness that we reject and give away vaccines, while in other places people cry and beg for them. The festival also does this - it informs people to prepare them to make a considered decision and get vaccinated.*

**How has COVID 19 changed our lives and how has it affected the art?**

*Covid situation had a detrimental effect on art. These days we can watch movies at home more, but the theater, galleries, concert halls - there is the living art and it is very sad to watch a half-full or half-empty hall. We miss the contact with the audience. The halls are dark, so you*



*don't really see how empty it is when you perform on stage, but at the end you hear how weak the applauds are.*

**What do you associate the Red Cross with?**

*I imagine the brightest and the most warmhearted people who want to help and save others.*

**The international movement of the Red Cross is guided by 7 basic principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, universality? Which 3 of them are most important to you personally? And if it has to be 1?**

*For me, the most important principle of the Red Cross is voluntary service. This is a sublime thing – the willingness to help. People think, "Why I am going to help others?", but in fact, they help themselves, in fact, thus they become humans. Only someone who has volunteered can understand this. It is fantastic that one of the Red Cross missions is to awaken the volunteer spirit in young people and children. They are the pure empty book in which whatever you write will remain.*

**Wish us something...**

*I want to wish the Festival to reach more people. This is extremely important. Let's look for all sorts of ways for people who are not in Varna, but would like to see some of these films, to be able to download them. Most of the festivals do so both in Bulgaria and around the world.*

On 20<sup>th</sup> of September, at a meeting, **the judges** of the 19<sup>th</sup> International of Red Cross and Health Films, composed of:

1. **Prof. Bozhidar Manov** - film critic and journalist - chairman;
2. **Siya Papazova** - playwright, theater and film critic;
3. **Reni Petkova** - coordinator of BRCY at the RC of the BRC - Varna;
4. **Mihail Mutafov** - actor, winner of 2 Askeer awards, winner of the IKAR award and other film awards;
5. **Velina Markovska** - Head of the Communications and Television Department at the Medical University of Varna;

**HAS DECIDED** to award the following:

**AWARDS**

**The grand prize of the festival** is awarded to the film "Life from the life", Bulgaria, directed by *Stefan Komandarev*.

**The Special Jury Award** for the film "My Voice Will Be with You", Belgium, directed by *Bruno Tract*.

**Best Screenplay Award** - *Rafael Balboni* and *Anne Sirot* for the film "Crazy Life", Belgium.



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**Award for Best Film** in the **Red Cross and Red Crescent Films** category – the film "**Preparation with Pedro**" by the **American Red Cross**.

**The special award** in the **Red Cross and Red Crescent Films** category from the **CHAIRMAN** of the **BRC** - the film "**Angel of mercy**", **Bulgaria**, RC of the **BRC** - Ruse.

**Award for Best Film** in the **HEALTH FILMS** category - the film "**Flyers**", **Russia**.

**The special award** in the category **HEALTH FILMS** given by the **RECTOR** of the Medical University - Varna - the film "**The Disease of the Kings**", **Bulgaria**, directed by *Valentina Fidanova-Kolarova*.

**Award for the best feature film** in the category **DOCUMENTARY** – the film "**Silent Heritage**", directed by *Petya Nakova*, **Bulgaria**.

**The award for best short film** in the **DOCUMENTARY** category - the film "**She is not different**", screenwriters *Genoveva Donkova* and *Prof. Dr. Violeta Yotova*, **Bulgaria**.

**Special Award** in the **DOCUMENTARY** category - the film "**Wandering**", **Canada**, directed and written by *Melanie Carrier* and *Olivier Higgins*.

**Award for Best feature film** in the **FEATURE FILM** category - the film "**Mamonga**", **Serbia**, directed by *Stefan Mileshevich*.

**The award for best short film** in the **FEATURE FILM** category - the film "**Alive**", **Sweden**, director and screenwriter *Jimmy Olson*.

**The special award** from the Mayor of Varna Municipality is awarded to the actress *Lorina Kamburova*, *posthumously*, for her role in the film "**The Blessed One**", directed by *Stanimir Trifonov*, **Bulgaria**.

**Outside the rules** of the festival, the judges decided to award a special **DIPLOMA** to the film "**HELL**", documentary, **Spain**, directed by *Raul de la Fuente*.