

A SARAJEVO STORY

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United Kingdom / Bosnia-Herzegovina
First feature film

Denijal Hasanovic

Denijal Hasanovic was born in Tuzla, Bosnia in 1969. His studies in Film Direction at the Academy of Fine Arts in Sarajevo were interrupted by the war. Hasanovic left Bosnia and eventually went to Poland where in 2000 he graduated from the Polish National Film School in Lodz. Hasanovic received the first prize for this graduation screenplay, *The Letter*, which was shot in 2002. The film went on to receive 8 international awards.

Filmography

2000 Writer/Director – *The Scent of Rain*, 16 min, 35mm, fiction, Film School, Lodz
 2001 Writer/Director – *The Letter*, 50 min, s16mm, fiction, Polish Television TVP S.A.
 2003 Co-writer – *Milchwald*, dir. Cristhoph Hochhausler, 94 min, 35mm, fiction, Germany
 2003 Co-writer - *Polar Light*, dir. Arni Asgeirsson, 90 min, 35mm, fiction, Iceland
 2005 Co-writer - *Pay Off*, dir. Slawomir Fabicki, 90 min, Opus Film, Poland

Production Company :	Curious Film Productions (United Kingdom)	Shooting format:	35mm
Category:	Fiction	Locations:	Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia
Length:	90'		
Language:	Serbo-Croatian, English, French, Russian		
Shooting dates:	Autumn 2006		

Introduction

A Sarajevo Story is a drama set in contemporary Sarajevo about people who survived the war physically but not emotionally, about people who are seemingly immature precisely because the response to the life they lead is more emotional than rational, and about the question of whether a rational solution to one's problems is always possible or indeed right.

Synopsis

Tarik, a 35 years old man, lives with his best friend Sasa and his girlfriend Aida, whom he met during the war. Tarik saved Sasa after a mine took off his legs, and delivered Aida's niece under heavy bombardment. He was a doctor then. Now, ten years older, Tarik is jobless and aimless. When Maja, Aida's best friend from before the war, arrives from abroad, she brings something new to his life. Her presence also reveals the fragility of the bonds he has with his increasingly dependent friends. On a trip to the Croatian coast, Maja and her foreign boyfriend Thomas, finally help to liberate all of them from their own worst enemy – their war-traumatized selves.

Director's statement:

One way to reflect the situation and culture in which our characters live is to show something of them which is in some sense larger than life – they are slight caricatures of themselves in a way which we can loosely identify as Balkan. In the middle of this we have someone who cannot fit in an appropriate mold which is part of his dilemma and the audience must feel this frustration. There is a balance to be drawn between universality and authenticity in this regard which I want to address dramatically and stylistically.

The change in environment from Sarajevo to the sea, from somewhere very specific to somewhere more archetypal, as well as the introduction of a foreign element, turns the story around - once our characters get out of their real world it is harder for them to maintain the same illusions and action becomes inevitable.

I want to draw emotional content from the scenes and allow the audience to feel this traumatized world from our main character's point of view. Until we move away from the reality of Sarajevo, the pace of the story is slow and studied although the tensions that are building up are large. In the world of open landscapes and the sea, anything is possible and choices have to be made.

Production company:	Curious Film Productions (United Kingdom)
Budget:	1.2 million euros
Partners attached:	Forum Sarajevo (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Gral Film (Croatia)

Company Profile

Curious Film Productions is based in London. It was founded with the aim to bring stories, both fiction and documentary, and young talent from Eastern Europe and the Middle East to the attention of Western European audiences. In terms of fiction, its focus is on Art House films; in terms of documentary its focus is on socio-political themes. Curious Film Productions has been working closely with Dutch Independent Producers.

Curious Film Productions is currently developing 2 feature film projects with Bosnian film-makers, and one documentary with a Jordanian film-maker.

Goals at Paris Project : Finding Co-producers

People attending Paris Project: Alexander Goekjian (producer), Denijal Hasanovic (director)

Curious Film Productions

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