



## ZULFIKAR FILANDRA

(Bosnia)

SHIPBUILDING

**Producer:** Ishak Jalimam (Realstage)

### BIOGRAPHY

Zulfikar Filandra (1989, Sarajevo) is a film and theatre maker based in Sarajevo. Graduate of both Sarajevo Business School/Griffith College Dublin and Academy of Performing Arts Sarajevo. Besides directing and assistant directing, worked as a producer, actor, musician, promoter, photographer, educator, lecture organizer. Zulfikar successfully worked for, or

collaborated with, all the relevant mainstream cultural institutions in Sarajevo, Sarajevo's underground art scene, and is a contributor to several international film art organizations (Experimental Film Society in Dublin, OUTLINE in Amsterdam).

As a member of the youngest generation of Bosnian directors his topics touch on legacy of war in Bosnia but also a more intimate experience of living in contemporary times and the position of a small culture like Bosnia in a globalized world. In theatre, Zulfikar worked with texts of Sartre, Beckett, McDonagh, Ibsen, and on several personal projects.

In 2019, Zulfikar completed "Big Leap", poetic exploration of relationship between family and filmmaking, part of Sarajevo Film Festival's Sarajevo City of Film short film project. Also in 2019, Zulfikar completed another short film, "Zanzibar", produced by Marletti Sarajevo.

Zulfikar is currently working on "Minotaur", an experimental feature film essay produced by Experimental Film Society, developing two short fiction films ("Crash" and "Mirage") and developing his fiction feature debut film "Shipbuilding".

## SYNOPSIS

EL (26), an economics student with some artistic ambitions, is spending time with his girlfriend INDDU (23) at the small Croatian seaside town of Slano. El's mother died some time ago and the trauma of her death has made El leave left his hometown of Sarajevo for some time and to decide to come to Slano, where his family used to go on for family vacations when he was younger. El's FATHER (52) is a prominent and successful businessman, and El blames his father's habitual unfaithfulness and occasional family abandonments for his mother's death.

At the same time, El is not fully happy with his relationship with Inddu. Inddu is very nice to El, she has even decided to work in Slano, in a flower shop, to support herself and El while El is depressed, but the fact that she still did not have sex with El is too much for him. Inddu is religious and, in her view, sex should happen later in a relationship.

El is spending time in Slano reading and making videos with his handycam and taking images with his mobile phone. However, the sex issue with Inddu proves to be too much for him and he cheats her with a girl he meets on the beach (TEA, 25). When Inddu realizes this, she leaves Slano and leaves El there alone on his own.

El spends some time alone in Slano but after some time, El meets ELENA (24), while engaged in a strange ritualistic digging of a hole. With Elena, their relationship might be not only just sexual. El likes her a lot and they do have sex after several long conversations. But, the next day after sleeping together, Elena leaves El and his handycam gets stolen. El becomes desperate and decides to rob a small shop in Slano because Elena challenges his sense of audacity and his view on violence. After the robbery, El escapes the small town

and decides to hitchhike his way to Sarajevo. MIHAEL (45), an interesting Marxist and a translator picks El up.

El comes back to Sarajevo feeling disappointed. He says goodbye to Mihael. After buying some flowers he goes back to Inddu's house in order to rekindle their relationship. Nevertheless, Inddu refuses El, stating his general cruel treatment of her. El goes back home and unsuccessfully tries to commit a suicide by jumping out of his bedroom's window.

During his hospital stay, El has a conversation with his father that represents a breakthrough in their relationship. This leads to their reconciliation and mutual understanding.

After El comes out of the hospital, his best friend (MORIS, 26) takes him to the Sarajevo zoo where he meets a girl called AMINA (21). Amina fascinates El and he decides to get boxing lessons in a club where Amina works. He decides to change his life for better and tries to find a "real" job.

But, most importantly, El and his father take a trip to the graveyard. El has refused to visit his mother's grave and did not even attend her funeral. El and his father have a strong bonding moment while speaking on the graveyard.

El decides to leave his old apartment and to start packing his old things into boxes. El pays a visit to his mother's old room. His father helps him pack some of the boxes and they have tea together at the end of the film.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

"Shipbuilding" will be a coming-of-age and a road movie, and the main tropes that I am working with are: conflict with the father, death of the mother, lots of sex, dissatisfaction, youth, yearning for a higher meaning, travel, movement, sea, flirting with violence, fascination with filmmaking, and in the end – yearning for peace.

Sex is the mean of grieving the dead mother for my main character, El. The title *Shipbuilding* implies a certain process, a certain wholeness, and further – the complexity of the task to be done. Much of the story happens by the sea. El is caught in-between his habits and high unrealised ambitions, hindered by his youth and lack of capacity to articulate emotions. Likewise, El is very much more obsessed with how things seem to be than with how they are, a typical malady of our romantic age.

While writing the script, I was thinking most of first works by Xavier Dolan, Jean-Luc Godard, Jia Zhangke and Terrence Malick. Most of all, the structure of the script is directly inspired by the Bob Rafelson film "Five Easy Pieces" (1970).

Danis Tanović, Bosnian Academy Award Winner for Best Foreign Language Film of 2001 was a huge motivation and support while writing “Shipbuilding” – without Tanović, my script would not have happened. At the same time – I see this script as a way of summing up the first 27 years of my life and a sort of farewell to and remix of my past. Also, for me, “Shipbuilding” is both a generation film and an attempt to inject a new and different sensibility and cinematic style into present Bosnian and regional cinema.

Because of all of this, I feel that the most natural and appropriate way to turn my script into my fiction feature debut is to apply the methods and aesthetics of micro or low budget productions and documentary film and shoot tight, small, fast and instinctive in the attempt to generate and capture bursts of raw and poetic energy.

## MOODBOARD



## PREVIOUS WORKS

# PARTICIPANTS

**EMILIOS AVRAAM**  
SMARAGDA (Cyprus)

**SELCEN ERGUN**  
SNOW AND THE BEAR (Turkey)

**IVAN GERGOLET**  
THE MAN WITHOUT GUILT (Sloveni

**MAGDELENA ILIEVA**  
MONEY FOR A FUNERAL (Bulgaria

**IGOR JELINOVIĆ**  
HONEY BUNNY (Croatia)

**STEFKA MANCHEVA**  
BLIND SPOT (Bulgaria)

**HARIS RAFTOGIANNI**  
THE RIVER (Greece)

**VOJIN VASOVIĆ**  
THE END OF THE WORLD (Serbia)

# TUTORS

ALLAN STARSKI

GABRIELE BRUNNENMEY



SRDJAN KOLJEVIĆ

KARPO GODINA