

OFFICIAL SELECTION
SARAJEVO
FILM FESTIVAL
2015

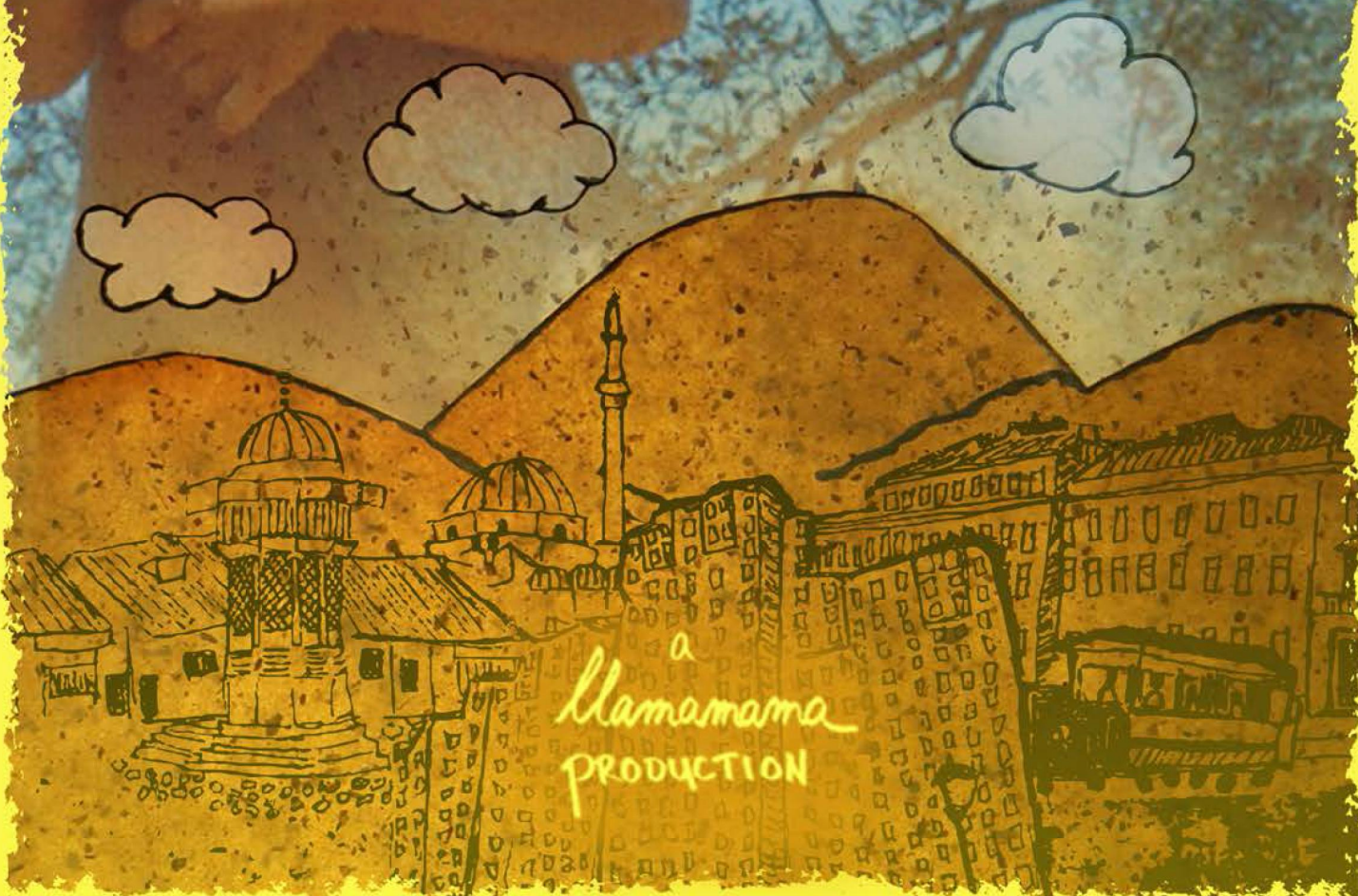
OFFICIAL SELECTION
St. Louis
International Film Festival

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The 43rd
Northwest
Filmmakers'
Festival
2016

RISING STAR AWARD
2015
CANADA
INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

FINDING BOSNIA

-DISCUSSION GUIDE-



a
llamamama
PRODUCTION



ABOUT THE FILM

Finding Bosnia presents an intimate and personal journey of a Bosnian war refugee raised in the United States who seeks to reclaim her Bosnian culture and identity. As a small child, Ivana Horvat fled to Sarajevo with her mother during the beginning of the Yugoslav wars, leaving her family and city behind. Once her family was reunited, her parents took turns capturing home videos of their new life together in Oregon, and twenty years later their footage becomes a lens with which Ivana watches her transition from being a young Bosnian child to an American woman.

Ivana makes it her goal to create her own "Bosnia" by returning to her hometown and interviewing other Bosnian refugees from around the world. Home video footage, stories from various generations of Bosnians, and experiences with newfound friends and family paint an authentic picture of this post-war, post-socialist country while highlighting the magnificent spirit of the Balkans. Finding Bosnia explores the spirit of the Balkans, the experience of living between two cultures and sheds light on the aftershock of starting a new life as a refugee.

DIRECTED BY:

LLAMAMAMA Productions

Ivana Horvat
Adrian Hopffgarten

GENRE:

Documentary

RUN TIME:

87 min

LOCATIONS:

Bosnia & Herzegovina, France,
Croatia, United States

THEMES

- BALKAN STUDIES
- EASTERN EUROPE
- FORCED MIGRATION
- INTERCULTURAL STUDIES
- REFUGEE STUDIES
- AFFECTS OF WAR
- POLITICAL STUDIES
- SOCIO-CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
- IDENTITY
- CONFLICT STUDIES



HISTORY TIMELINE

1914



WWI begins after Gavrilo Princip kills Archduke Franz Ferdinand in the streets of Sarajevo.

1918



WWI ends. The kingdom of Yugoslavia is established.

1945



WWII ends. Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Serbia, and Macedonia unite to form the People's Republic of Yugoslavia.

1980



The Benevolent Dictator, Joseph Broz Tito dies after leading his country for 40 years.

1984



Yugoslavia hosts the Winter Olympics in the capital city of Sarajevo.

1991



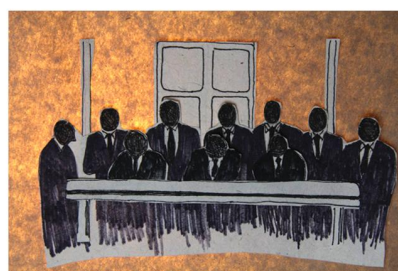
The collapse of communism. It is unclear of what will happen to Yugoslavia.

1992



The Siege of Sarajevo begins. Serbs surround the city targeting civilians.

1995



The war ends with the signing of the Dayton Accords, which instate a three president system for the country.

MISSION

The War in Bosnia (1992-1995) received a tremendous amount of international news coverage, searing images of death, starvation, and displacement to the world. This war, along with every war on Bosnian soil since the 15th century, was marked by conflict between Bosnia's three main ethnic groups: Serb, Croat, Muslim (Bosniak). The capital city of Sarajevo, notorious for being a tolerant, multicultural and cosmopolitan city, was besieged at the beginning of the war by the Bosnian-Serb nationalist army. This siege lasted for four years. Bosnian & Herzegovinians continued to live their daily lives while under attack. Over a million fled and hundreds of thousands died. The war was ended by splitting the country into three entities and instituting three presidents: one Serb, one Croat and one Muslim (Bosniak). Thus, a war which began with ethnic tensions between Bosnian citizens, was ended not by unifying its citizens, but dividing them. With Bosnians identifying as Serb, Croat, or Muslim, what did being Bosnian mean? What happened to the Bosnian families that fled and started their lives over in a new country?

Through Ivana Horvat's story, Finding Bosnia puts a human face on the aftermath of displacement and speaks to the struggles refugees face long after asylum is reached. In an effort to stray away from the most common associations with Bosnia which are primarily negative and tainted with death and destruction, Finding Bosnia embraces Bosnia as it is now in a positive light, separate from images of war. Bosnia is more than its war. Through the lens of Ivana's return to Bosnia, we explore where she came from and what could have been. From the beginning, she wanted to share her experience with those who grew up distanced from their cultural roots, inspire others to embrace their own backgrounds and show the human experience of resilience and displacement. This film will hold a special place in the heart of anyone who has a distorted concept of identity, family and "home."

At this moment, there are millions who have been displaced or are being displaced from their homes because of war or political persecution. Many of these people will grow up distanced from their cultural identity. This is especially true today with the Syrian refugee crisis. We believe it is essential to understand these pertinent issues on a human level and to portray refugees as relatable characters as our world becomes increasingly interconnected. There is very little dialogue about what happens to refugees after asylum is reached. Finding Bosnia fills this gap of the refugee narrative.

Since the completion of the film, Ivana is now personally connected with other members of the Bosnian diaspora and has received an astonishing amount of feedback that has opened our eyes to how many non-Bosnian people have resonated with her story. Finding Bosnia has helped her connect to the refugee community throughout the world. The dream is to continue to connect.



ABOUT THE DIRECTORS

IVANA HORVAT

Ivana Horvat began directing films as a young child. A decade later while attending one of the Claremont Colleges with Adrian Hopffgarten, she discovered her passion for creating films which shine a light on misunderstood places and people. She produced her first documentary highlighting the voices of transgender youth which premiered in Los Angeles, California and toured at film festivals and universities in 2009. She co-founded LLAMAMAMA Productions in 2010 in Portland, Oregon where she has continued producing documentaries and videos. Finding Bosnia is her first feature length film.

ADRIAN HOPFFGARTEN

Adrian Hopffgarten is a multimedia producer whose background is in social justice documentary and stop-motion animation. Her passion for storytelling begins with her curiosity and belief in human potential. She makes up one-half of LLAMAMAMA Productions. She produces documentaries and crafts compelling and engaging stories in Washington, DC.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

My name is Ivana Horvat. I am a Bosnian-American. I have Serbian, Croatian and Muslim roots. I have an English accent when I speak Bosnian but I love stuffed cabbage, drinking espresso, and I would never leave the house with wet hair.

I was displaced from my home along with over two million others in 1992 when I was four years old. After living in the U.S. for 20 years, I became increasingly aware and bothered by my hyphenated identity. I kept asking myself how I was Bosnian if I had been raised in the U.S. for almost my entire life. And more confusingly: Why did this matter so much to me? What did it mean to be Bosnian?

In 2012 I attempted to answer this question by documenting my journey of discovery while living in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the first time since fleeing the country. The making of Finding Bosnia enabled me to gain a deep understanding of my roots through conversations with taxi drivers, shopkeepers, family members, and strangers I may not have interacted with otherwise. I delved into my past and came away embracing my dual identity. Most surprising was how many different Bosnians and non-Bosnians shared my experience growing up distanced from their cultural identity and family.

I still struggle with rarely getting the chance to engage my "Bosnian side" through language, jokes and a slow pace of life because my life in America continues to be filled with non-Bosnians. Yet, connecting with people who relate to facets of my story even though they have no connection to Bosnia is cathartic. It is important to continue discussing the implications of belonging, history and cultural identity because these are topics that are becoming more and more pertinent what with families getting displaced every day because of war or political persecution. My goal is to create positive interest in the Balkans and foster a community where oddball diaspora members can engage with each other and feel less alone.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

CURRENT EVENTS

1. HOW IS WHAT HAPPENED IN BOSNIA SIMILAR TO WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SYRIA?
2. WHAT ARE SOME FORMS OF IDENTITY PEOPLE IN THE U.S. IDENTIFY WITH? HOW IS IDENTITY INCORPORATED INTO THE US CULTURE? HOW IS IT IMPORTANT? DANGEROUS?
3. HOW HAS THIS FILM CHANGED THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT _____ (YOUR OWN IDENTITY, NATIONALISM, THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING A REFUGEE?)
4. HOW CAN YOU PERSONALLY RELATE TO IVANA'S STORY OR THE ISSUES PORTRAYED IN THIS FILM?

REFUGEE DISCUSSION

1. HOW ARE REFUGEES DIFFERENT FROM EMIGRANTS?
2. HOW IS THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS SIMILAR TO THE BOSNIAN REFUGEE CRISIS? DIFFERENT?
3. WHAT ARE THE TOP 5 LARGEST REFUGEE GROUPS IN THE US OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS? ANSWER: FORMER SOVIET UNION: 380,000, VIETNAM: 182,000, FORMER YUGOSLAVIA: 169,000, IRAQ: 106,000, MYANMAR: 104,000
4. HOW AND WHY DID THE U.S FOREIGN POLICY DURING BILL CLINTON'S PRESIDENCY EMPHASIZE THE HUMANITARIAN OVER THE MILITARY IN THE CASE OF BOSNIA? HOW IS SYRIA BEING TREATED DIFFERENTLY?
5. HOW MANY BOSNIAN REFUGEES DID THE U.S. ACCEPT OUT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER DISPLACED? ANSWER: 169,000 OUT OF 2.2 MILLION. HOW MANY SYRIAN REFUGEES DID THE U.S. ACCEPT SINCE 2011? ANSWER: 18,007 OUT OF OVER 10 MILLION.

POLITICAL DISCUSSION

1. WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS WITH THE DAYTON ACCORDS?
2. WHAT COULD BE DONE TO IMPROVE BOSNIA'S BLEAK FUTURE? ALTERNATIVE IDEAS FOR BOSNIA'S CONSTITUTION/DAYTON ACCORDS?
3. WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO AID A COUNTRY WHICH IS ETHNICALLY SPLIT DURING AND AFTER WAR? BOSNIA, SYRIA, RWANDA...
4. WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE WAR IN BOSNIA?
5. HOW CAN ETHNIC IDENTITY IN BOSNIA BE COMPARED TO RACIAL IDENTITY IN THE U.S.?

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