

THE EDITORIAL OFFICE

A FILM BY ROMAN BONDARCHUK



CONTACT
DARYA BASSEL
D.BASSEL@MOONMAN.COM.UA

[VISUALS](#)

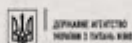
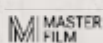
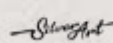
INTERNATIONAL PRESS
BARBARA VAN LOMBEEK
BARBARA@THEPRFACTORY.COM

MARIE-FRANCE DUPAGNE
MARIEFRANCE@THEPRFACTORY.COM

AFTER A FOREST IS SET ON FIRE, A YOUNG SCIENTIST BECOMES A JOURNALIST TO UNCOVER THE TRUTH BEHIND THE FLAMES.



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INTERNATIONAL PROMOTIONAL SUPPORT CAMPAIGN

SYNOPSIS

IN THE WILD STEPPES OF SOUTHERN UKRAINE, A YOUNG NATURE RESEARCHER NAMED YURA IS LOOKING FOR AN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF GROUNDHOG BUT INSTEAD WITNESSES A CRIME. EAGER TO EXPOSE THE TRUTH, YURA TAKES HIS PHOTO EVIDENCE TO THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER'S EDITORIAL OFFICE. HOWEVER, HE QUICKLY REALIZES THAT NOBODY THERE CARES ABOUT PURSUING JUSTICE. WHILE A BIG WAR IS LOOMING OVER THE HORIZON, YURA'S NAIVE WORLDVIEW IS SPLINTERING IN A STORM OF FAKE NEWS, RIGGED POLITICAL ELECTIONS, AND MYSTERIOUS CULT RITUALS. ON HIS QUEST, THE HERO IS ABOUT TO FIND OUT WHO HE REALLY IS—AN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF A GOOD MAN OR JUST A LOSER?

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The Editorial Office is the second feature film from southern Ukraine by acclaimed director Roman Bondarchuk, known for his debut feature VOLCANO (2018) and the documentaries EUROMAIDAN. ROUGH CUT (2014), UKRAINIAN SHERIFFS (2015), and DIXIE LAND (2016).

For me, cinema is a way of exploring the world. I've always been fascinated by and drawn to the south of Ukraine, which is not so well-described in literature or film; it's a sort of no man's land between Crimea and mainland Ukraine.

I grew up there. I grew up in a family of journalists in the '90s. The reality was quite grotesque and I grew up with it, witnessing how news could be created, invented. I always wanted to make a film about this news cycle in the Ukrainian provinces.

The Editorial Office is a metaphor, full of modern myths and obscurities, but it also shows real things that happened to real people. The people who made it and acted in it have a connection to the place and the past of southern Ukraine. They were all affected by the chaos before the war.

Many of the places we filmed no longer exist. They were destroyed, flooded, or burned down. The fates of many people in the film are unknown. Some left the country with their families; some turned out to be collaborators and fled to Russia. But most chose to stay and resist the invaders.



BIOGRAPHIES

ROMAN BONDARCHUK | DIRECTOR

A graduate of Kyiv National University of Theater, Cinema, and Television, Roman has directed short films, documentaries, music videos and the feature film *Volcano* (2018), which premiered at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, screened at more than 50 festivals worldwide, and won 12 awards, including the Shevchenko National Prize, the highest state prize of Ukraine for works of culture and the arts.

Roman's feature-length documentary *Ukrainian Sheriffs* won the Special Jury Prize at International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) in 2015,

Grand Prix of the IDFF Docs against Gravity, and was selected as the Ukrainian submission to the Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film. His second documentary, *Dixie Land* (2016), premiered at the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival in the USA and received a Golden Duke Award for Best Ukrainian Film at the Odesa International Film Festival. Roman also works as an art director of the Docudays UA International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival and has been a member of the selection committee for the Ukrainian submissions to the Academy Awards since 2019.



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SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

The Editorial Office (Feature, 126 min, 2024)

Volcano (Feature, 106 min, 2018)

Premiered at Karlovy Vary International Film Festival (IFF) 2018, East of the West Competition

- Grand Prix, Golden Apricot (Yerevan IFF)
- Best Director (Alma-Aty IFF)
- Grand Prix (Split IFF)
- Audience Award, Hidden Dragon (Pingyao IFF)
- Best Sound Design (Listapad IFF)
- Grand Prix (Morocco IFF)
- Special Jury Prize (Goa IFF)
- Ecumenical Jury Prize (Fribourg IFF)
- Special Jury Prize (Minneapolis IFF)
- Ukrainian Film Academy Award, three Golden Dzygas for best cinematography, best sound design, and best supporting role
- Laureate, Taras Shevchenko Artistic Prize (2019)

Dixie Land (Documentary, 60 min, 2016)

Winner Best Film in the National Competition, Odessa International Film Festival 2017

Other festivals include Full Frame (USA; world premiere); Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival (USA); Vilnius Documentary Film Festival (Lithuania); Noida IFF (India);

MakeDox (Macedonia); Batumi International Art House Film Festival (Georgia)

Ukrainian Sheriffs (Documentary, 85 min, 2015)

Ukraine's Official entry for Best Foreign Language Film at the 89th Academy Awards; IDFA (Winner Special Jury Award); Docs Against Gravity (Winner Grand Prix) Other festivals include Sofia IFF, Thessaloniki IFF, Hot Docs, Odessa IFF, Riga IFF

Euromaidan. Rough Cut (Documentary, 60 min, 2014)

- East Silver Prize at Jihlava (Czech Republic) IDFF, 2014
- International Competition and Best Documentary Film, Feelfest
- International Jury Prize, Document Human Rights Film Festival, Glasgow, UK

DMYTRO BAHNENKO **LEAD CHARACTER YURA**

Dmytro Bahnenko was born and raised in Kherson, where he lived until the age of 29. From 2018 to 2022, he worked for the local media platform Upwards ("Bropy"), where he held positions ranging from news editor to head of the video production department. In 2022, with the BBC World Service, he made *Occupied*, a film about his life and the life of his family during the occupation of Kherson by Russian forces.

Dmytro has been serving in the Armed Forces of Ukraine since March 2023. The Editorial Office is his acting debut.

DAR'YA AVERCHENKO **PRODUCER | CO-AUTHOR**

Dar'ya studied journalism at Kyiv International University and Free University of Berlin and has worked for print media and TV. In 2007 she (with Roman Bondarchuk) shot her first documentary, "Radunytysya," and switched to filmmaking and scriptwriting. She is a founder of South Films, a production company for documentaries and feature films. Since 2008 Dar'ya has played a critical role in Ukraine's documentary industry as a driving force for IDFF Docudays UA, a festival highlighting human rights films. She serves on the selection committee and is the head of the communication department. She also has worked as the chief of the Ukrainian branch office of the educational channel Da Vinci. Dar'ya's credits include the successful dramas *Volcano* (2018) and *Dixie Land* (2016), as well as the award-winning documentaries *Euromaidan. Rough Cut* (2014) and *Ukrainian Sheriffs* (2015). For the latter Dar'ya worked in Hollywood on the campaign for the Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film. She also has produced short films on social and cultural topics. Currently, Dar'ya is working on the documentary "Ukraine Is Not So Far Away," which will be her directorial debut.

DARYA BASSEL **PRODUCER**

Darya is an internationally acclaimed Ukrainian film producer. She started her career in Kyiv as a television and advertising producer. Since 2011, she's worked at the Docudays UA International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival in Kyiv as a programmer and head of the industry platform. Darya began creating movies as a professional in 2013. She served as a production manager on *Sickfuckpeople* (directed by Jury Rechinsky, which was named best documentary at Sarajevo IFF 2014), as a line producer on *Ugly* (directed by Jury Rechinsky, which premiered at Rotterdam IFF 2017), and *Volcano*, directed by Roman Bondarchuk (premiered at Karlovy Vary in 2018). She worked as an associate producer and festival agent for *My Father Is My Mother's Brother*, directed by Vadym Ilkov, which won the title of most innovative feature film at Visions du Réel in 2018. In 2019, Darya established Moon Man production company with Vika Khomenko. Together they have produced and co-produced a number of award-winning documentary films. In 2022 Darya produced *Butterfly Vision* (dir. Maksym Nakonechnyi) for Tabor Production, which premiered at Cannes 2022, in *Un Certain Regard*.

"The Editorial Office" is Moon Man's first fiction production. Currently Darya is working on the documentary "Displaced" (dir. Olha Zhurba) and developing an animated documentary, "Red Zone" (dir. Iryna Tsilyk).

ALLA TYUTYUNNYK **SCREENWRITER**

Alla is the author of nine award-winning books of prose and poetry and five feature film scripts, including Roman Bondarchuk's *Volcano* (2018). She holds degrees in Literature Studies and Human Rights Studies and is a member of the Writers' Union and the Union of Journalists of Ukraine. She co-founded the non-governmental organization Docudays, which for 15 years has been in charge of the Docudays UA International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival. She is a member of the festival selection committee and director of the network development department.

VIKTOR ONYSKO

EDITOR

Viktor Onysko (to whom the film is dedicated) was a renowned Ukrainian film editor who contributed to more than 20 acclaimed movies and shows. His film credits included the war biopic *Battle for Sevastopol* (2015); Svitlana Shymko's documentary *The Fall of Lenin* (2017); and Frédéric Petitjean's action thriller *Cold Blood* (2019), starring Jean Reno.

HEIKE PARPLIES

EDIT CONSULTANT

After receiving her master's degree in media studies and German literature at Marburg University, Heike worked as an assistant editor from 1999 to 2002. Starting her editing career with student films and low-budget projects, she was nominated for the German editing award *Filmplus* for her first feature film *The Forest For The Trees* (2003) and won *Filmplus* in 2009 for *Everyone Else* and in 2017 for *Toni Erdmann* (all directed by Maren Ade). For the latter she also received the German Film Award 2017. For her work on *Un Certain Regard* winner *The Invisible Life of Eurídice Gusmão* by Karim Aïnouz she received the EDA editing award at *Mar del Plata* 2019 and was nominated for the Brazilian Academy Award. Heike's collaboration with Aïnouz *Firebrand* premiered at Cannes 2023 in the international competition. Her filmography includes German and international features, documentaries, installation art, and TV films. She is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the German and European film academies and has been a guest lecturer at German universities.

Onysko had served in the Ukrainian army since the start of the Russian invasion in February 2022, taking part in the defense of the southern Kherson oblast and the eastern Donbas region, among other assignments. He was killed in action in December 2022 and buried in Kyiv. He is survived by his wife, Olha, and his daughter, Zacharia.

HEIKE PARPLIES ON THE EDITORIAL OFFICE

Editing with Roman is always a lot of fun but also intense work, as we don't live in the same country, and the periods of us working together are short. Fine cutting *The Editorial Office* was especially challenging in this sense because I was working on a different project at that time so only had the weekends, and Roman was in an exceptional situation of course after the outbreak of the war. So we would meet in his interim home in England for a weekend or in Romania for a couple of days or via Zoom, and in between our meetings he would work on the edits and send me playouts and I would watch them and give feedback. The edit was already in a very advanced stage when Roman sent me the first playout. What I would bring in was my Western European perspective, saying where I needed more explanation or where I felt things were too long and over-explained. Coming from very different traditions of filmmaking and storytelling, we spent a lot of time talking about why scenes are directed and cut in a certain way; what is an intentional choice of style and what can be shortened or made more easily consumable for the audience"—especially a non-Ukrainian audience. My task was also to shorten the rough cut without losing any of its depth, humor, or sarcasm, and in shortening it also to find a new and still working pace and rhythm. While the situations our main character finds himself in often feel somewhat surreal, *The Editorial Office* tells a lot about Ukrainian society and tradition, about normal people's lives, and about politics and corruption. More generally, about how corruption unbalances a functioning society and how freedom of the press and democracy sometimes are more theoretical values than something you can actually rely on when money rules the world (and the press), and money is rarely in the hands of truth fanatics and philanthropists.

PRODUCTION COMPANIES

MOON MAN (UKRAINE)

Moon Man was founded in 2019 by multidisciplinary professionals who have experience not only in film production but also in cultural management and festival distribution. The company focuses on creative documentary and fiction films with a strong author's approach. The first Moon Man title was the documentary feature *Outside*, dir. Olha Zhurba (selected festivals: CPH:DOX, Hot Docs, Millenium Docs Against Gravity, Sheffield Doc/Fest).

Moon Man was a co-producer on the award-winning, Oscar nominated documentary *A House Made Of Splinters* (dir. Simon Lereng Wilmont).

Currently Moon Man is developing several fiction and documentary titles by award-winning filmmakers including Iryna Tsilyk, Kateryna Gornostai, Olha Zhurba, and Vadym Ilkov. The company also facilitates production services and consultations for international filmmakers coming to Ukraine to document the events and stories of the country.

SOUTH FILMS (UKRAINE)

South Films produces and co-produces feature films, documentaries and shorts, including Roman Bondarchuk's feature *Volcano* (2018; 12 awards at international festivals) and his documentaries *Euromaidan*, *Rough Cut* (IDFA 2014), *Ukrainian Sheriffs* (Special Jury Prize at IDFA 2015, Grand Prix at Docs against Gravity), and *Dixie Land* (Golden Duke Award for Best Ukrainian Film at Odessa 2016).

ELEMAG PICTURES (GERMANY)

Elemag Pictures develops, produces, and co-produces films with exceptional artistic quality and human stories capable of engaging worldwide audiences. Managing director Tanja Georgieva-Waldhauer represented 2020 Germany as European Producer on the Move and is network-member of EAVE, EWA, Produzent*innenverband, AG Dok, DAE, and the German and European film academies.

SILVERART (SLOVAKIA)

The Bratislava-based Silverart production company focuses on feature films and TV series and strives for eco-friendly, sustainable, and gender-balanced productions both on and off screen. The company's international co-productions have been theatrically released in Austria, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and France, acquired by RTVS, NPO, Netflix, and DAFilms, and screened at film festivals worldwide.

MASTERFILM (CZECH REPUBLIC)

Founded in 2011, independent, Prague-based MasterFilm focuses mainly on auteur-driven cinema of different genres. Its goal is to provide authors with production conditions that do not force them into creative compromises. MasterFilm's titles have been presented at Karlovy Vary, Rotterdam, Annecy, and Locarno.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Original title: Редакція

International title: The Editorial Office

Country of production: Ukraine, Germany, Slovakia, Czech Republic

Estimated release: 2024

Running time: 126 min

Format: 4K

Language: Ukrainian, English

Subtitles: English

Production: Moon Man, in co-production with Elemag Pictures, Silverart, MasterFilm and South Films

With support from: the Ukrainian State Film Agency, Eurimages, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, Slovak Audiovisual Fund, Czech Film Fund, European Solidarity Fund For Ukrainian Films (ESFUF), Ukrainian Cultural Foundation.

International promotional support campaign:

Ukrainian Institute and Eurimages.

CAST AND CREW

Director: Roman Bondarchuk

Script: Alla Tyutyunnyk, Roman Bondarchuk, Dar'ya Averchenko

DoP: Vadym Illkov

Production designer: Kirill Shuvalov

Music: Anton Baibakov

Sound: Serhiy Stepansky

Editor: Viktor Onysko, Nikon Romanchenko

Edit consultant: Heike Parplies

Casting director: Tetiana Symon

Costume designer: Sofia Doroshenko

Makeup artist: Oksana Pidopryhora

Producers: Darya Bassel (Moon Man / Ukraine), Dar'ya Averchenko (South Films / Ukraine)

Co-producers: Tanja Georgieva-Waldhauer (Elemag Pictures / Germany), Katarína Krnáčová (Silverart / Slovakia), Dagmar Sedláčková (MasterFilm / Czech Republic)

Yura: Dmytro Bahnenko

Lera: Zhanna Ozirna

Mother: Rymma Ziubina

Ruslan: Andrii Kyrylchuk

Mykhailo: Oleksandr Shmal

Beekeeper: Vasyl Kukharskyi

Editor-in-chief of Pectoral: Maksym Kurochkin

Editor-in-chief of The Truth of the Steppe:

Oleksandr Hannochenko

Leading journalist: Serhii Ivanov

Anton: Serhiy Stepansky

Vasyl Sirenkyi: Serhii Mykhailovskyyi

Nika: Anastasia Kapshuchenko

Zhenia: Artem Karataiev

Bob Trusk: Joel Kenneth Rakos

Political technologist: Serhii Malyuga

Museum director: Halyna Kobzar-Slobodiuk



INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR ROMAN BONDARCHUK

"YOU CANNOT change the way you write or the way you speak. IT'S SOMETHING THAT'S PART OF YOU, AND YOU CAN'T TELL STORIES ANY OTHER WAY. ALL THE LAYERS IN THIS STORY HAD STRONG CONNECTIONS TO ONE ANOTHER, AND I'M HAPPY TO HAVE THEM ALL HERE."

-ROMAN BONDARCHUK ABOUT THE EDITORIAL OFFICE

WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THE STORY PRESENTED IN THE EDITORIAL OFFICE? HOW DID IT COME ABOUT?

I was born and raised there in southern Ukraine; it's my country. I think I understand these people, and I can translate their voices to others.

I grew up in a family of journalists. My mother worked for the newspaper of the Komsomol [young Communist] movement. From time to time, she had to write about so-called socialist competitions. And her editor-in-chief always had a few bottles of red wine for these occasions. Everyone knew there was no competition, so they had to make one up. The editor-in-chief would bring the bottle of red wine into the newsroom and say: "Sorry, guys, but you have to write something about the socialist competition."

My father was a TV presenter on the local channel. Sometimes they didn't have the weather forecast ready, and he could always make one up on the spot: "Tomorrow there will be such and such a heavy storm, rain and so on."

The reality was quite grotesque, and I grew up with it, seeing how news could be created, invented.

CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE PROCESS OF WORKING WITH SCREENWRITER ALLA TYUTYUNNIK?

It was amazing. Alla is the person who worked at the Komsomol newspaper and had the bottle of red wine every time she had to write about this socialist competition. Alla is my mother, and she also experienced all the things I did, but from a slightly different angle. We always wanted to write a script and make a film about this newsmaking life in the Ukrainian provinces. We started to make some notes, and I realized that we were going to need to update this reality and collect some recent stories.

We've probably spoken to most of the local journalists and political consultants in the region and literally collected all their pieces and articles and read them all and made use of some of their stories too.

WHAT INFLUENCED YOUR DIRECTING STYLE?

Well, it all started with my graduation film from university. It's called Taxi Driver. It is based on the true story of a girl from a rural area in the south of Ukraine who was kidnapped by a taxi driver. He fell in love with her and locked her in his bathroom. I heard the story from another taxi driver, and then I wanted to make a short film about it.

It was one of the worst periods for Ukrainian cinema. We lacked resources; we had only an old camera and black and white film. I went to Kherson, engaging with locals to gather stories and craft a script that would integrate their stories. Eventually, our story took shape, primarily revolving around a girl and a taxi driver with many, many other side stories, and dead ends. In a way, I was poisoned by this method because I discovered that when real people play themselves as film characters, they can transfer much more. They can transfer authentic accents, emotions, the color of their skin, disabilities, their life experience, anything that is real and unique. Evers since then, it has been difficult for me to just cast actors for my movies. I always wanted to have local people and their local accents and their local spirit.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE WORKING WITH NON-PROFESSIONAL ACTORS? LET'S TALK ABOUT THE MAIN CHARACTER, YURA. HOW MUCH DOES HIS FILM CHARACTER'S LIFE RESEMBLE HIS REAL LIFE? HOW MUCH DOES YURA RESEMBLE DIMA – DMYTRO BAHNENKO?

Yura's character is totally inspired by Dima. Dima is a trained journalist and very active and remarkable in his real life; that's why I chose him.

He's known as the man who fought with Kirill Stremousov, one of the most notorious pro-Russian collaborators. A Ukrainian politician and conspiracy theorist who became the second most powerful man in the region after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine and occupation of the southern city of Kherson.

Dima was the one who literally fought with him. Along with other politicians, businessmen, and some rich

people, Stremousov was involved in setting fire to the forest. After the fire, they could cut down the forest and sell the wood. The forests are protected, and you can't cut down trees without a fire.

Dima was the investigative reporter who followed him. He worked with local activists. They set up surveillance cameras to spot the arsonists and their trucks and collected evidence.

HOW DID DIMA END UP ON THE BIG SCREEN, PLAYING HIMSELF IN THE FILM?

We had a big casting in Kyiv, and we saw many, many professional actors, but somehow, I always remembered Dima, who first inspired me.

We tried Dima several times. We did some auditions, and he was not so convincing. He was tired, and he was completely involved in his journalistic work, not in preparing for our auditions. Nevertheless, I couldn't get rid of the desire to cast Dima, and then we hired an acting coach. And along with Zhanna, who played Lera, they had personal acting training for about a month, and after the training he was just amazing.

THE FILM WAS MADE BEFORE THE FULL-SCALE INVASION. OR RATHER, MOST OF THE FILM. THE WAR IN THE EAST OF UKRAINE WAS ALREADY GOING ON. HOW DID THE EASTERN FRONT INFLUENCE THE FILM?

I was always surprised that the topic of the war was barely covered in the local media. It was a stark contrast to the turmoil I witnessed during my drives from Kyiv to Kherson after the Maidan in 2014. While the revolution raged in the capital, this province seemed untouched, especially in the media. Everything they publish is paid for by someone, so there is nothing about reality.

For me, it was crucial to talk about it and to show that the tanks were close, but they had more important things to do. Open the imaginary pipeline. Whatever stupid things they are doing every day. So, for them, nothing changed until the full-scale invasion came.

HOW DID THE WAR INFLUENCE THE FILM FROM A PERSONAL POINT OF VIEW? HOW DID IT AFFECT THE PRODUCTION AND POST-PRODUCTION AND THE WORK IN THE FILM?

Our editing director, Viktor Onysko voluntarily joined the army. I tried to ask him to wait until we finished the film. But he said that it was more important and practical for him to protect our country from the enemy than to continue with art. He felt indebted to those who had defended Ukraine since 2014, allowing us to continue filmmaking.

There was a moment when we didn't know what was going to happen—if we were ever going to finish the film. Viktor drove to the western border with our footage, to hand it over to me before joining the army.

Viktor became a commander, took part in the liberation of Kherson. "I am battling for your lands, which have already become mine," he texted me at the time. He took his career in the Ukrainian army very seriously. We decided to wait for him for a while. He was killed in action in eastern Ukraine on December 30, 2022.

We managed to edit about 60 or 70 percent of the film with Viktor. I initially took on the editing but soon realized I needed help. We brought in Nikon Romanchenko, a talented Ukrainian filmmaker and editor known for his work on Kateryna Gornostai's *Stop-Zemlia*, which won the Crystal Bear in Berlin in 2021 and the Ukrainian Film Academy's Golden Dzyga in 2022. Most of the time I worked remotely from the UK and Kyiv because of the difficult circumstances.



INTERVIEW WITH LEAD ACTOR DMYTRO BAHNENKO

*"I CANNOT think OF this FILM AS A mere memory. ... This FILM is Like opening A door into inti-
MATE And significant things within me."*

-Dmytro Bahnenko, INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALIST, ACTOR, ABOUT The EDITORIAL OFFICE

WHY DO YOU THINK ROMAN (DIRECTOR ROMAN BONDARCHUK) CHOSE YOU FOR THE LEADING ROLE?

As far as I know, the character of Yura is partly based on me and the course of my life. I worked as a journalist from 2018 to 2022, including as an investigative reporter. One of the issues I researched then was the destruction of Kherson's forests. It resulted in a series of articles, interviews, and videos, all dealing with the illegal logging of Kherson's pine forests that had been planted decades ago.

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH THE EDITORIAL OFFICE?

First, Roman asked me to do some research for a future film by interviewing Kherson's legendary journalists. Despite their questionable biographies, these people were the mammoths that created the image of Kherson journalism in the 1990s to 2000s. Some of them are no longer alive; some became collaborators after Russia's full-scale invasion. Roman and I had long conversations with a variety of local reporters and editors. We recorded our visits, capturing the atmosphere of their workplaces and apartments. I also did research in the [Oles] Honchar Kherson regional library, recently destroyed by Russians, reading their stories in the archives.

DO YOU HAVE A LOT IN COMMON WITH THE MAIN CHARACTER, YURA? DID YOU FEEL CLOSE TO HIM?

That's a very interesting question. Sometimes I had the feeling that Roman sees something in me that I don't see myself. For instance, the main character Yura has a bravery and confidence that I lacked at the time, and the ability to tell black from white, without getting caught up in shades of gray. At times it's very hard to have the courage to stay true to yourself. That's exactly what I had to find in myself and to highlight, in order to be able to convey Yura's character. Not simply to play Yura but to live him, to make him real.

While we were filming, I came to the conclusion that when you're just playing, there's no life: You have to become the character. But that's very hard—to live the role and at the same time maintain distance from the character; after all, he's a different person. I developed this role in the process of making the film, searching within for the right state of mind. And when I did manage to enter this flow, then it was very difficult to disengage from it afterward. I remember how when filming ended, I took a month off to "do nothing" but it was still a challenge. Getting out of character is no less important than getting into it.



COULD YOU DESCRIBE HOW YOU GOT INTO CHARACTER?

I resisted the process of searching for the character, since my previous experience had never required this degree of engagement and immersion to embody another's life. As somebody who had never done anything like this before, this was too difficult for me. At the same time, I was afraid to start exploring myself as a person. When something is both difficult and scary, then you don't want to do it at all. And yet you have to, if you want to give this role and this character your very best.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO DO THIS?

This is about investigating yourself. It's as if you live in a house with 30 rooms, but you inhabit only two of them. And here you get the chance to discover 10 more. It's scary, because there is so much that is unfamiliar in them, but it's new—and interesting. And you also have to clean up those rooms, and that too is difficult. But you go there because you want to get to know yourself.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAY TO THE PEOPLE WHO WILL SEE THIS FILM?

The Editorial Office was filmed in Kherson and the surrounding area. Many of the places we filmed have been destroyed or are currently occupied by Russia. So when I think about this film, I understand that it is much more than a simple record of a certain period of my life. This film is more than an artistic reflection of reality. The film offers both me and the audience a certain record of these spaces of the Kherson region. I can't think of this film as a mere memory. I cannot imagine that I will never again go to the Oleshky Sands or to the Dnipro floodplains where we filmed and where I once loved to spend my leisure time. Now it feels like my former life, which I try to protect carefully. And this film is like opening a gate into intimate and significant things within me. It makes me happy that, thanks to this film, I can carefully share this life with viewers all over the world. I know I will return to these places, and thanks to The Editorial Office, it will be a little sooner.



INTERVIEW WITH SCREENWRITERS ALLA TYUTYUNNYK AND DAR'YA AVERCHENKO

WHEN DID YOU START WORKING ON THE SCRIPT OR THINKING ABOUT IT?

Alla: Back in 2018, Roman once shared his feeling with me: The chaos in the world is growing, accelerating, and gaining the energy of a tornado. I had the same feeling. We returned to this topic from time to time, trying to understand where the sources and "places of power" of this chaos were. We read the news, listened to various experts and political scientists and ... pushed through the fakes, manipulations, and fakes again.

HOW MUCH WERE YOU INSPIRED BY THE REAL CHARACTERS AND WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN UKRAINE?

Alla: Almost all our characters in the film have real-life counterparts and almost all of the stories in the film, no matter how fantastic they may seem, are not completely fictional.

But most of our people—even those who behaved less than honorably and honestly in times of peace—stood up for Ukraine. That is why there are not clearly "white" or clearly "black" characters among our heroes.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE MESSAGE OF THE FILM?

Alla: How easy it is to fall into temptation and how hard it is to get out of it. The film is full of characters who make bad choices and end up in trouble.

Dar'ya: The film is for me about the struggle between good and evil, and how we can resist the temptation of chaos and violence. It is also about the desire for justice and freedom. I think this is very relevant for Ukraine, because we have suffered a lot from the war with Russia and we have lost many friends and relatives. We need to remember their sacrifice and live with purpose and dignity, not giving up on our dreams of a better country and a better world.

WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE CHARACTER?

Dar'ya: Of course, Yura. I can identify with him, his search for his true self. He had a hard time, with lots of letdowns. Yura is an inspiration for me. He was



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