

# ANDREA ŠTAKA



Foto: Goran Potkonjak

With an introduction by Vinzenz Hediger,  
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## BIOGRAPHY

Andrea Štaka (born in 1973) lives in Zurich. In 1998 she obtained her MFA in Film & Video from the Zurich University of the Arts. Her graduation film **Hotel Belgrad** and her documentary film **Yugodivas** (2000), shot in New York, were both very well received and garnered many awards at international festivals. The two were nominated for the Swiss Film Award in their respective categories. Andrea Štaka was honoured with an Individual Artist Grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) in 2005. Her first feature-length fiction film **Das Fräulein** brought her the Golden Leopard at the International Locarno Film Festival in 2006, the award for Best Film at the Sarajevo Film Festival and the Swiss Film Award for Best Screenplay in 2007, among others. In 2007 Andrea Štaka founded Okofilm Productions in Zurich together with director and producer Thomas Imbach and produced Imbach's film **Mary Queen of Scots**, among others. She is a member of the European Film Academy.

## ANDREA ŠTAKA

### Biographical accidents and the question of exile: Andrea Štaka as *auteur*

Cinema is a collective art form that requires scores of technicians, a great deal of capital and of course a large audience to succeed. Yet we tend to believe that true art in cinema is only possible when an individual creator is at work. Since the 1920s such individual creators in the cinema have been called “auteurs.” Certain conditions must be met, however, before a mere director can warrant the title. An auteur must have artistic control, i.e. he or she writes the screenplay and is responsible for all artistic decisions, ranging from casting to postproduction and even marketing. More fundamentally, an auteur needs to have a signature, a “vision,” a distinctive style or a grand theme. Andrea Štaka has always deserved the title of “auteur,” since her first short film **Hotel Belgrad**, but now more than ever as her auspicious beginnings have given way to the contours of an important oeuvre. As the author, director and producer of meanwhile three feature films, Štaka does not do everything on her own. Artistic creation for Štaka is a process in dialogue, in dialogue with her co-authors, her actors, her editors, but also with those who serve as test-readers and test-viewers, all throwing productive obstacles in her way and helping her to improve first the script and then the film. Sometimes Štaka's primary role is that as a partner in dialogue of others: In her role as producer of the last two films of Thomas Imbach, **Day Is Done** and **Mary Queen of Scots**, for instance, which she realized in the “creation en couple” mode. Still, in the case of her own films, in the end the film is Štaka's; she bears the ultimate responsibility for every decision. In this process, improving the script and the film never means to make the final version more suited to the tastes and preferences of a purported audience. Improving means that the final version corresponds more closely to the original thought, the idea from which the process began. Great directors, it is said, keep making the same film over and over again, much like philosophers usually only have one central idea that they spend their lives developing further. The original thought, the idea at the center of Andrea Štaka's work, emerges from a single question: What does it mean to be a stranger in the place where one lives? Experiencing exile as a liberating, creative force was the theme of Štaka's feature-length documentary **Yugodivas**, a portrait of female artists from former Yugoslavia working in New York. The experience of exile an existential torpor was the theme of Štaka's award-winning feature film debut **Das Fräulein** in Locarno. Exile as a danger and a precipice of self-discovery is the theme of **Cure – The Life of Another**. The question Štaka addresses is a question that arises from her own biography. Yet from her first films onward, Štaka's work has transcended the boundaries of identity politics. Štaka's films give migrants a voice, as it were – all the protagonists of her films thus far have been women. But her art consists of giving shape to the experience of exile which links the coincidence of biography to a question of the kind that philosophers might ask. Or the great directors who keep making the same film. Only that here it is a young woman who – as a writer, director and producer – calls the shots.

Vinzenz Hediger is a professor of Film Studies at the Goethe-Universität Frankfurt a.M., Germany. Text: June 2014.

## FILMOGRAPHY

as director:

- 2014 **Cure – The Life of Another** (Fiction)
- 2006 **Das Fräulein** (Fiction)
- 2000 **Yugodivas** (Documentary)
- 1999 **Daleko** (Short Experimental)
- 1998 **Hotel Belgrad** (Fiction)
- 1995 **Ruža** (Experimental)

as producer:

- 2014 **Love Island**  
by Jasmila Žbanić
- 2013 **Mary Queen Of Scots**  
by Thomas Imbach
- 2011 **Day Is Done**  
by Thomas Imbach

## AWARDS

### Das Fräulein

Pardo d'Oro, International Film Festival Locarno 2006;  
Heart of Sarajevo Award (Best Film and Best Actress) 2006;  
Swiss Film Award 2007 for Best Screenplay;  
Zurich Film Prize 2006;  
Premio Fipresci, International Film Festival Valladolid 2006;  
Grand Prix, Batumi International Film Festival, Georgia 2007;  
Primo Premio di "Sguardial-trove", Milano Sguardi altrove 2007  
Festivals: Locarno, Sarajevo, Pusan, Sundance, Rotterdam, Tribeca, AFI and more

### Yugodivas

Quality Award, Swiss Federal Office of Culture 2001  
Nominated for Best documentary Swiss Film Prize 2002  
Recognition Prize (Anerkennungspreis) UBS, Solothurn Film Festival 2002  
IBK Award (International Lake Constance Conference) 2004  
Festivals: Locarno, Duisburg, Munich, Solothurn etc.

### Hotel Belgrad

Quality Award, Swiss Swiss Federal Office of Culture 1999;  
Nomination Best Short Film Swiss Film Prize 1999;  
Director-Prize, Brooklyn International Film Festival 1999;  
Prize for Peace, Alpe Adria Cinema 1999;  
Festivals: Locarno, Sundance, Palm Springs, Turin etc.

### Ruža

Prize 10 Best of Springdance Cinema 1996

# ANDREA ŠTAKA

## Navigating Between Cultures and Languages

“When you switch languages you become a different person” says Mara, the main character in Andrea Štaka’s short film **Hotel Belgrad**. Like her character, the filmmaker grew up in Switzerland but has roots in the former Yugoslavia, namely in Bosnia and Croatia. An identity, she insists, that is not divided but double: “I’m not half-and-half, but both.” Štaka went to art school in London before attending film school in Zurich, and lived and worked in New York from 1998 to 2005. Her ability to navigate between cultures and languages shaped her work from the very beginning, lending sensitivity and nuance to her stories. On the international scene Štaka has been fêted as a promising newcomer. Within Switzerland she is a pioneer in a number of ways: as a member of the country’s first generation of film-school graduates, as a female director, as a filmmaker who represents a new approach to ethnic identity, and since 2007, the cofounder of her own production company Okofilm, together with her partner Thomas Imbach, whose last two films she supervised as the producer.

“I grew up in a family with many women, so I can only tell about such families. They have something wonderfully sheltered about them, and yet restrictively dominant, full of emotional entanglements”. Andrea Štaka, 2014

Štaka’s films are about women moving between countries and cultures, unsure where they belong, caught between their memories and their future. In **Hotel Belgrad** (1998) Mara lives in Zurich but loves a man who cannot or will not leave Belgrad. In **Yugodivas** (2000) Štaka portrayed five young Serbian women pursuing careers in the arts in New York in the aftermath of Yugoslavian collapse and civil war. In **Das Fräulein** (2006) Mila, Ruža and Ana meet in Zurich but are separated as much by their Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian backgrounds as by their different generations and experiences. In Štaka’s latest film, the Swiss-Croatian-Bosnian coproduction **Cure – The Life of Another** (2014) – ‘cure’ in Croatian means ‘girls’ or ‘brats’ – Linda, who grew up in Switzerland, returns to her father’s native city Dubrovnik after the war. She, too, is a character who has not found her identity yet. She finds a new best friend in Eta, who is deeply rooted in the local culture.

Andrea Štaka was born in 1973 in Lucerne, and grew up in Zurich. When the art and design college in Zurich (today part of the Zurich University of the Arts) launched its Film/Video Department in 1992, her best friend urged her to enrol. She became part of the first group of film graduates to emerge in the years that followed. Significantly, this first wave of students included many women – including film directors Sabine Boss, Anna Luif and Bettina Oberli – also represented a new development within the Swiss film scene, where only a handful of feature films had been directed by women before the 1990s. Štaka’s graduation film **Hotel Belgrad** (1998) screened as a supporting film in Swiss cinemas. It was met with instant acclaim and was invited to many festivals, garnering her a diverse number of awards in both Europe and North America.

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After graduation Andrea Štaka moved to New York City, where she worked as an assistant director and production manager, and also continued making films: the experimental short **Daleko** (1999) and the documentary **Yugodivas** (2000). The idea for this documentary film project arose in part because of her encounter with the Serbian actress Mirjana Joković, who had starred in Emir Kusturica's *Underground* (1995) and was now attempting to re-start her career in the U.S. Štaka became interested in exploring the parallels between her own situation and the lives of young Serbian women pursuing artistic careers in New York – at a time when the conflicts in Serbia and Kosovo were still ongoing. The theme of war in the faraway homeland or as a reverberation in the present, which Štaka had already invoked in **Hotel Belgrad** and **Daleko**, would return again in **Das Fräulein** and **Cure – The Life of Another**.

In collaboration with the Croatian cinematographer Igor Martinović, Andrea Štaka developed in **Yugodivas** her trademark visual style: characterised by insightful and fluid camera work, and the use of lighting, colour and decors to subtly mirror the inner lives of her protagonists. **Yugodivas** is also impressively marked by Štaka's foregrounding of her own role as a filmmaker. Initially, her presence is restricted to discreet voiceover questions, but ultimately she appears in an intimate self-reflexive scene together with the "divas," in which she questions her role as director.

**Das Fräulein**, Štaka's debut feature film, was inspired by a novel by the Yugoslavian Nobel Prize laureate Ivo Andrić (1892–1975). In her film, she combined the theme of the lonely and rigid woman with ideas about exile that had surfaced while making **Yugodivas**, and with her growing interest in exploring the differences between generations of Yugoslavian migration to Switzerland. The film's three main characters represent three generations: the Serbian Ruža, a fortyish businesswoman whose monetary ambitions and repressed personal feelings most closely resemble Andrić's heroine; the Bosnian Ana, a young woman whose childhood was marked by civil war, who has come to Zurich to seek new experiences, and whose lust for life is overshadowed by her untreated and worsening leukemia; and the Croatian Mila, whose life-long plans to return home upon retirement become increasingly at odds with her wish to stay in Switzerland with her children and grandchildren. As in **Yugodivas**, Štaka's characters move beyond media clichés, fulfilling her intention to provide nuanced portrayals of "people like you and me."

**Das Fräulein** also gave Štaka an opportunity to portray her own "love-hate relationship with Zurich," staging scenes in some of her most, or least, favourite locations around the city and thus avoiding a picturesque, "postcard" approach. Štaka's Zurich is marked by a generation gap, juxta-

"I have always had an intense-creative-chaotic-painful-lovely relationship to my background. I think it's also a result of constantly defining my childhood by a here (Switzerland, school, everyday life) and a there (holidays, family, tombstones)." Andrea Štaka, 2006

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posing a distant and hostile older generation with the open-minded and fun-loving youth scene in which Ana finds an easy welcome. Shot on Super-16, the film benefited from the ongoing collaboration with cinematographer Martinović, unfolding a palette of colours, lighting and textures to underscore the subjective point of view of each of the main characters. Štaka's scriptwriting talents were demonstrated in her keen sense of dialogue and affinity for ellipses that communicate more than words.

Also **Cure – The Life of Another** illustrates the bright and bleak sides of a city – this time Dubrovnik, the director's second hometown. The two teenagers Linda and Eta, who are on the verge of becoming adults and become entangled in an obsessive, sexually charged game of swapping their identities, are like two different facets of one person. This duality can be found in motifs throughout the entire film: Linda with an absent mother, Eta with an absent father. Petka Mountain in Dubrovnik and Uetliberg in Zurich. The dualism is also repeated in objects – in mirrors, clothes and hairstyles.

**"All of my films are autobiographical, but of course not one-to-one. Nevertheless, I draw on my emotional experiences."**

Andrea Štaka, 2014

Andrea Štaka's commitment to telling women's stories and exploring multiple ethnic identities is neither dogmatic nor forced. Be it with real-life protagonists or fictional characters, her portraits also address darker elements or troubling themes, and are compassionate and nuanced.

Text by Marcy Goldberg (2009), abridged and updated by SWISS FILMS in 2014.



## INTERVIEW



***There were very few women making feature films in Switzerland before you and your colleagues emerged from the new film schools in the 1990s. Was that something you were conscious of at the time?*** I was aware that the film school in Zurich accepted a lot of women students from the beginning. As a young girl at school, I felt I could do anything boys could do, I didn't feel I had a harder time. I think the generations before mine paved the way. We were able to benefit from their struggles. In previous generations most women in this business had to choose between having a family or working in film. It's still a tough business, but I can make films and be a mother. It's a lot of work, it's not easy, but my generation enjoys the right to live that way. At film school there were some women directors who encouraged me, like Tania Stöcklin, who was my mentor when I edited **Hotel Belgrad**. They gave me the courage to direct – because it does take a lot of courage!

***Who were your other mentors or important influences during that time?*** When I was at film school I didn't feel that we had any great masters here in Switzerland. We don't seem to celebrate our artists as much as other countries do. People like Daniel Schmid, Fredi Murer or Alain Tanner are really interesting filmmakers, but I was influenced more by Bergman, Bresson, Resnais, Tarkovsky. When I saw Tarkovsky's *The Mirror* for the first time, or Coppola's *Rain People*, I was really blown away. Funnily enough, I was also inspired by Thomas Imbach, who's now my partner. I had just started film school when he came out with his documentary *Well Done* (1994), which was one of the first films ever to be shot on consumer camcorder. It was the first Swiss film I'd seen where I felt there was something new going on.

***Together with Anna Luif, you have taught script seminars on writing dialogue in Swiss-German dialect. And in your films, people often switch between languages, like the YUGODIVAS speaking Serbian and English in New York, or the women in DAS FRÄULEIN speaking to each other in German. What role does language play in your films?*** In my new film CURE, the main character Linda is in fact bilingual, like me. Mixing languages comes naturally to me, because I grew up speaking several languages. From a distribution point of view, it's difficult to make films where more than one language is spoken, but for me it's important, since I'm interested in characters who have two cultures inside them. It's closer to my reality. It can be difficult, but it depends what you want to talk about, who your protagonists are, and then you take it from there. I can also imagine making a film some day just in Swiss-German dialect. Until recently, there was a long period where films here were being made in High German. My generation came along

# INTERVIEW

and said: we want to go back to making films in dialect, because that is our language, our reality. But we knew where the difficulties lay. The Swiss mentality does not always take joy in Swiss culture.

***Your films also combine documentary and fiction elements. I'm thinking of YUGODIVAS, which as a documentary contains many staged elements, and DAS FRÄULEIN, which also has a documentary quality, especially in the outdoor scenes shot in and around Zurich.***

For me fiction and documentary are not two different worlds. They both belong to the same cinematic language in which we try to tell our stories. In documentary the process can be more central, and more direct. You can react within a situation, you don't have to imagine everything beforehand. A fiction film shoot requires a vast amount of organization. Being on the road with a smaller crew, reacting more to the moment, is also something I very much enjoy doing.

We shot **Yugodivas** on film. Because we had very little material, it was almost made as a feature. I had to really direct a lot of the scenes – though not the interview situations. With our budget for **Das Fräulein** it would have been impossible to stage all the outside scenes from A to Z, so we had to be fast and react spontaneously. Besides, I really believe in developing a visual concept and a language for a film at a very early stage.

For **Das Fräulein** my cinematographer Igor Martinovic and I wanted a slightly different cinematic language for each of the three women. For Ruža it was very stiff in the beginning, becoming more organic toward the end. Mila had to float across the screen the way she floats through life. And with Ana everything was more physical: faster, livelier. We also worked with the production designer from the very beginning, talking about who these people are and where they live, and which colors and interiors could reveal more about them. These are small details that viewers are not always consciously aware of, but can sense. It's important to take time and gain inspiration from the natural light and the landscape around you. They say that Bergman and his cinematographer Sven Nykvist used to sit on the beach watching the sunrise and talking about colour and light...

For my new film **Cure - The Life of Another**, for which I worked together with the Austrian cinematographer Martin Gschlacht, the work on the decoupage was also an important part of preparing for the film. For us it is always a matter of finding the best way to tell the story, the most suitable way of telling precisely this story. Martin is tall and slim, but we shot the film in a house that was small and narrow. He had to work like a contortionist at times to find the way to his beautiful images.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marcy Goldberg was born in 1969 in Montreal, Canada and has been living in Zurich since 1996. She is a film historian, media consultant, university lecturer and translator. She is working on a doctoral dissertation at the University of Zurich on selfcritical images of Switzerland in Swiss film.

# INTERVIEW

***The acting in your films, even in an early work like Hotel Belgrad, is very precise and nuanced. What strategies have you developed for working with actors?*** I always choose strong actors. Already as an inexperienced director I was fortunate enough to work with professionals who were experienced and very well known in their home countries, like the Serbian actor Nebojša Glogovac who played Igor in **Hotel Belgrad** or Mirjana Karanović, who played Ruža in **Das Fräulein**. Even the protagonists in my documentary **Yugodivas** were strong personalities who challenged me as a director, which is what led to the scene in the film where I question myself. It was tough to work with all of them, but also very rewarding. Because they were so creative and contributed so much to their characters, it forced me to clarify my own intentions, and become more precise as a director. I had to guide them in my own way. When the actors realized I had my own vision, they came to trust me too, as their view from the outside. I took them seriously and they took me seriously, and I think this energy can be felt on the screen.

For **Cure** I worked together again with the two acting greats Mirjana Karanovic and Marija Skaricic from "Das Fräulein." It was the first time in front of the camera for the two protagonists Sylvie Marinkovic and Lucia Radulovic. With them it was necessary to build confidence first.

***After DAS FRÄULEIN, you started your own production company and became active in film politics. What made you decide to get involved?*** Before **Das Fräulein** I wasn't engaged in political issues on the film scene. Then I was invited to join the film funding commission of the Federal Office for Culture. And Thomas Imbach and I founded our production company Okofilm to be able to produce our films independently. I felt it was time to take responsibility, to be an active part of the political discussion. It takes enough energy just to make your own films! But since I had the opportunity, and the energy, I said: OK, I don't want to be one of those people who just complains and criticizes. As much as I can, I want to help make good films in Switzerland, both artistically and commercially.

Interview by Marcy Goldberg, May 2009; abridged and updated by SWISS FILMS in 2014.

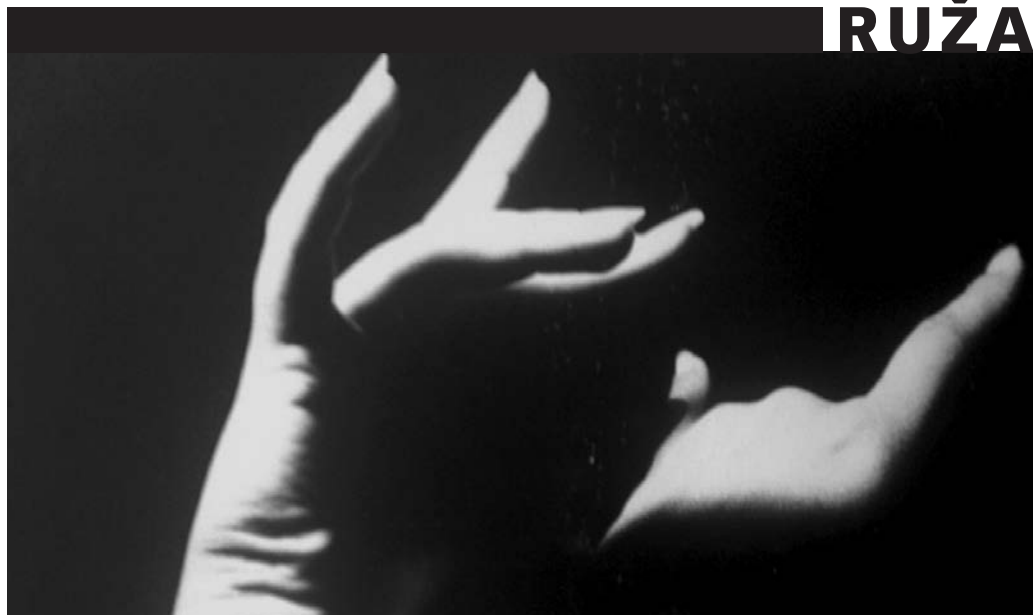


Written by: Andrea Štaka  
Cinematography: Anna Luif,  
Andrea Štaka

Editing: Andrea Štaka, Helena  
Gerber

Guitar: Pablo Miguez  
Dancer: Nina Maltsis

Production: Zürcher Hochschule  
der Künste  
World Rights: Zürcher Hochschule  
der Künste



| 1995

| 16 mm

| b&w

| 2'

**R**hearsals of flamenco dancer. An experimental short film – poetic in image and tone.

**Written by:** Andrea Štaka  
**Cinematography:** Eeva Fleig  
**Sound:** Pavol Jan Jasovisky

**Editing:** Andrea Štaka, Tania Stöcklin  
**Music:** Harvey Brough, Jacqui Dankworth

**Cast:** Vesna Stanojević, Nebojša Glogovac  
**Production:** Zürcher Hochschule der Künste

**World Rights:** Zürcher Hochschule der Künste  
**Original Version:** Bosnian/Swissgerman

Precisely how, in the course of 13 minutes with the meeting of two lovers in a hotel room – that of a young man who remained in Sarajevo and his girlfriend who emigrated to Switzerland – the strife of the former Yugoslavia is visibly portrayed here is of striking professionalism. Also due to the excellent script and convincing performance of the actors. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Christoph Egger, 20.11.1998

Thirteen minutes with a Yugoslavian couple in a hotel room – and suddenly one feels how the heart beats faster when something in the cinema does not remain a dead letter, but is rather transformed into image and emotion. *Tages-Anzeiger*, 28.1.1999

An aesthetic, intense and dark short fiction film. *St. Galler Tagblatt*, Verena Zimmermann, 15.11.2001

In *Hotel Belgrad* Štaka demonstrates her sense for precisely placed overtones, intimations and highlights. *Berner Zeitung*, 25.10.2001



| 1998 | 35 mm | colour | 13'

**A** couple makes love in a hotel. She lives in Switzerland, he in Belgrade. What has been destroyed by war will be resurrected in this hotel room.

**Written by:** Andrea Štaka  
**Cinematography:** Igor Martinović

**Sound:** Juliano M. Cacia  
**Editing:** Sabine Krayenbühl  
**Music:** D'Divaz

**Production:** Dschoint Ventschr  
Filmproduktion, Zurich

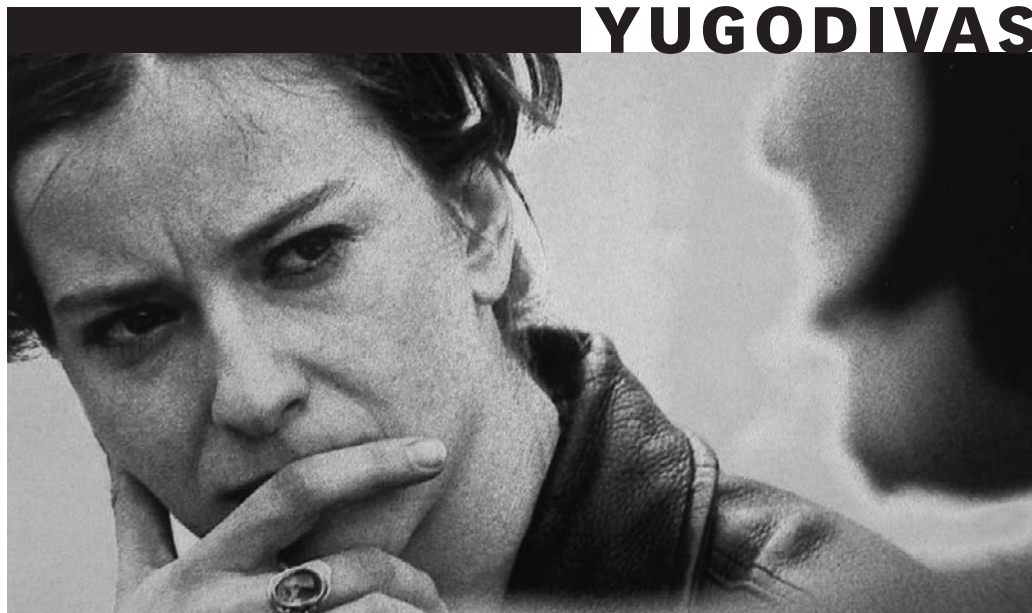
**World Rights:** Dschoint Ventschr  
Filmproduktion, Zurich  
**Original Version:** Serbian/English

In *Yugodivas* the author translates (...) the immediacy of the conversations into an aesthetic principle and brings the vitality of the work, narratives and reflections to bear. The past is present in the inner images, but it is trapped. All the more important is the present, for the film remains in it at every moment. The film captures the pace of the conversations, laughter or contemplation, opening prospects on varying creative horizons. *St. Galler Tagblatt*, Verena Zimmermann, 25.11.2001

The visual composition of *Yugodivas* also differs from conventional artist portraits and even the manner in which Štaka carries out her project. Any attempts to find the documentary filmmaker's own biography reflected in the strata of the lives of the women portrayed might easily give rise to suspicions of self-referentiality. In approaching her characters, however, Štaka proceeds not only far too delicately to walk right into such a trap. She is also, as her film demonstrates, too much of an artist herself that the confines of her own biography could ever unduly appear with those of the portrayed. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Vinzenz Hediger, 19.10.2001

*Yugodivas* is a personal, intimate film. Even the camera shuns no distance. In most cases, the women's faces appear in close-ups. In their creative work, in which they also deal with their roots, the artists reveal a bit of their identity.

*Basellandschaftliche Zeitung*, Karin Müller, 14.12.2001



| 2000 | 35 mm | colour | 60'

**A**n actress, a painter and three musicians from Belgrade leave their homeland to venture a new beginning in New York. The outbreak of the war in 1991 and especially the bomb raids on Bgrade in the spring of 1999 have changed their lives forever. Memories and a painful analysis of the old homeland preoccupy their thoughts. The film tells us the story of their everyday live, the theatre, painting, music and the search for a lost homeland.

**Written by:** Andrea Štaka, Barbara Albert, Marie Kreutzer  
**Cinematography:** Igor Martinović  
**Sound:** Max Vornehm  
**Editing:** Gion-Reto Killias

**Music:** Till Wyler, Peter von Siebenthal, Daniel Jakob  
**Cast:** Mirjana Karanović, Marija Skaričić, Ljubica Jović, Andrea Zogg, Pablo Aguilar, Zdenko Jelčić, Tiziana Jelmini, David Imhoof

**Lighting:** David Satz  
**Production:** Dschoint Ventschr Filmproduktion, Zurich  
**Coproduction:** Quintefilm, Freiburg; ZDF, Das kleine Fernsehspiel; Schweizer Fernsehen

**World Rights:** Media Luna, Cologne  
**Original Version:** Swiss-German, German, Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian

Sensitively drawn and lensed with special attention to characterization and tone, Andrea Štaka's Golden Leopard winner "Fraulein" introduces a strong new voice in Swiss cinema.

Jay Weissberg, *Variety*, 08.08.2006

With a great deal of visual sensitivity, Andrea Štaka tells of uprootedness and the search for a home – universal emotions in a globalised world. Štaka has an eye for detail. For apparent trivialities, for the – sometimes magical – poetry of an instance and for those fleeting moments in which the truth reveals itself. She relies on concentration, consolidation and internalisation, while avoiding any hint of sentimentality. *Der Bund*, Thomas Allenbach, 15.11.2006

Štaka's film depicts different versions of alienation, varying possibilities of never completely arriving in another country, in another time or in one's own biography burdened by a difficult past. And yet the three women in Štaka's script become a mirror to one another, unconsciously reflecting the secret desires, un-lived dreams and repressed fears of the respective counterpart. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Alexandra Stäheli, 17.11.2006

*Das Fräulein* is a personal film about rootlessness and yearning in our day and age, when more and more people live between cultures, religions and countries. *20minuten*, 16.11.2006

The film impresses with its outstanding actresses, maverick imagery and gripping portrayal of the feeling of uprootedness. *Sonntagszeitung*, Matthias Lerf, 2006



| 2006

| 35 mm

| colour

| 81'

**R**uža left Serbia, her country, over thirty years ago and lives in Zurich. Her daily life is a string of repetitive moments until, one day, Ana arrives on the scene and upsets Ruža's painstakingly organized world. A subtle friendship develops between the two strong-willed women. Nevertheless, a certain distance remains between them: Ruža does not dare to open up, and Ana has a secret she cannot confront.

**Cinematography:** Martin Gschlacht  
**Editing:** Tom La Belle  
**Sound:** Predrag Doder Doco,  
Peter Bräker  
**Music:** Milica Paranosic

**Art Direction:** Su Erdt  
**Costume Designer:** Linda Harper  
**Cast:** Sylvia Marinkovic, Lucia  
Radulovic, Mirjana Karanovic, Marija  
Skaricic, Leon Lucev, Franjo Djak

**Production:** Okofilm Productions  
GmbH, Zürich; Ziva Produkcija, Zagreb;  
Deblokada, Sarajevo; Schweizer Radio  
und Fernsehen; ZDF/ARTE

**World Rights:** Okofilm Productions  
GmbH  
**Original Version:** Croatian/Swiss-  
German (english, french, german  
subtitles)

# CURE



| 2014

| DCP

| colour

| 83'

**19**93: after the Siege of Dubrovnik. 14-year-old Linda has moved back to Croatia from Switzerland with her father. Her new best friend Eta takes her up to the forbidden forest above the city. The two girls become entangled in an obsessive, sexually charged game of swapping identities that leads to a fatal fall. The following morning Linda comes back alone; slowly she begins to take Eta's place in her family. Ivo, Eta's boyfriend, is drawn in as well. In troubled times dominated by women and the losses they have suffered in the war, Linda threatens to lose her footing, becoming entrapped in another world on the edge, a world in which Eta keeps coming back to confront her with herself.