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## Na putu - Synopsis nl + fr

### Na putu - Synopsis nl

Het jonge koppel Luna en Amar doet zijn best om de onverwachte obstakels te overwinnen die hun relatie bedreigen. Luna vergeeft haar man zijn feestjes tot in de late uurtjes, maar op zijn werk in de controletoren op de luchthaven wordt dit niet getolereerd. Amar wordt geschorst op zijn werk en moet in therapie voor zijn alcoholprobleem, wat hij na één keer koppig weigert. Even later krijgt het koppel nog een tegenslag te verwerken, na 2 jaar proberen, vernemen ze dat ze waarschijnlijk niet zwanger kunnen geraken. Hun enige uitweg lijkt artificiële inseminatie.

Bij een klein auto-ongeluk ontmoet Amar Bahrija, een oude orthodoxe vriend uit het leger. Hij geeft Amar een nieuwe job als informaticus. Luna is niet enthousiast wanneer ze hoort dat Amar een tijdje ver buiten de stad zal verblijven. Ook vindt ze de kleding van Bahrija en zijn volledig in het zwart gesluierde vrouw maar niks. Anderzijds beseft Luna dat de gefrustreerde Amar een goed betaalde job niet kan weigeren, nu hij steeds wanhopiger wordt door zijn werkloosheid.

Nadat Amar een tijdje niets van zich heeft laten horen, mag Luna hem eindelijk bezoeken op zijn werk in een geïsoleerde Wahhabi-gemeenschap aan een uitgestrekt meer. Ze ontdekt er een mysterieuze omgeving met gesluierde vrouwen en rituelen. Deze fundamentalistische moslimgemeenschap leeft in een gedateerde wereld: zonder alcohol, sigaretten of gsm en een samenleving waarin het dagelijkse leven van de mannen en de vrouwen strikt gescheiden is. Luna smeekt Amar om terug naar huis te komen, maar hij overtuigt haar dat hij op deze afgezonderde, gewijde plek in het gebed rust vindt, en dat het hem helpt om te stoppen met drinken.

Wanneer Amar een paar weken later terug thuiskomt, merkt Luna dat haar man erg veranderd is: door zijn hervonden geloof stelt hij zich aan op een familiebijeenkomst, spendeert meer en meer tijd in de moskee en wordt ook thuis een gedisciplineerd moslim.

Luna realiseert zich dat de kloof tussen haar en Amar steeds groter wordt, wanneer Amar haar een religieus dogma wil laten lezen. Hij wil niet meer vrijen noch een kind verwekken voor ze in het huwelijk treden, een islamitisch huwelijk. Luna biecht op dat ze zich voelt alsof ze hem niet meer kent, en Amar beweert dat hij enkel probeert om een betere man te worden.

Een paniekerige Luna probeert om de nieuwe Amar en zijn nieuwe geloof te begrijpen, maar ze is meer dan ooit verward. Ze stelt alles waar ze in gelooft in vraag, zelfs haar kindwens. Ze vraagt zich af of liefde wel voldoende is om haar relatie met Amar te redden op weg naar een gelukkig leven...

Luna et Amar forment un couple. Leur relation est soumise à rude épreuve. Dans un premier temps, Amar perd son emploi parce qu'il était ivre au travail. Luna est alors très inquiète ; elle se demande si son rêve encore fragile d'avoir un enfant avec Amar est réalisable. Ses soucis concernant leur avenir commun s'aggravent encore lorsque Amar accepte l'offre d'un travail bien rémunéré dans une communauté musulmane qui se trouve à des heures de route de chez eux. Ce n'est qu'au bout d'une longue période où ils n'ont eu aucun contact entre eux que Luna est autorisée à rendre visite à Amar dans cette communauté wahhabite conservatrice, installée au bord d'un lac idyllique. Elle constate que les hommes et les femmes, qui sont voilées, vivent strictement séparés et sous étroite surveillance. Luna demande à Amar de rentrer avec elle à la maison mais il persiste dans sa décision, affirmant que la vie dans l'isolation de la communauté de croyants lui apporte la paix et le retient de boire. Lorsque Amar rentre à la maison quelques semaines plus tard, Luna constate que son attitude vis-à-vis de la religion a profondément changé. Amar a beau prétendre qu'il ne s'agissait pour lui que de devenir un homme meilleur, Luna a beaucoup de mal à le croire. Elle commence à remettre en question tout ce en quoi elle croyait jusqu'à présent - même son propre désir d'avoir un enfant. Et quand se rouvrent de surcroît les blessures de son passé marqué par la guerre, Luna se demande si l'amour suffit vraiment à leur fusion et à leur vision d'une voie commune vers un avenir de bonheur.

Lengte: 100 min. / Taal: Bosnisch / Land: Bosnië-Herzegovina, Oostenrijk, Duitsland, Kroatië  
Durée: 100 min. / Langue: bosnien / Pays: Bosnie-Herzegovina, Autriche, Allemagne, Croatie

## Na putu - Cast

Luna  
Amar  
Bahrija  
Nadja  
Grootmoeder / grand-mère  
Šejla  
Dejo  
Dokter / médecin  
Jusuf  
Nachtwaker / veilleur de nuit  
Dija

Zrinka Cvitešić  
Leon Lučev  
Ermin Bravo  
Mirjana Karanović  
Marija Kohn  
Nina Viočić  
Sebastian Cavazza  
Jasna Ornela Bery  
Izudin Bajrović  
Jasna Žalica  
Luna Mijović



## Na putu - Crew

Scenario en regie / scénario et réalisation	Jasmila Žbanić
Camera / caméra	Christine A. Maier
Redacteur / rédacteur	Niki Mossböck
Geluidsmontage / montage son	Igor Čamo
Mixage	Lars Ginzler
Geluid / son	Brano Jakubović
productieleiding / directeurs de production	Lada Maglajlić Amir Vuk
Kostuums / costumes	Lejla Hodžić
Make-up / maquillage	Halid Redžebašić
Regie-assistent / assistant réalisateur	Bruno Anković
Casting	Oriana Kunčić
Producenten / producteurs	Damir Ibrahimović Bruno Wagner Barbara Albert Karl Baumgartner Raimond Goebel Leon Lučev
Co-Productie / coproduction	Coop 99 Film - produktion, Wien Pola Pandora Film - produktion, Berlin Production Ziva, Kroatien

## Comments from writer-director Jasmila Žbanić

ON THE PATH is a literal translation of the original title NA PUTU. In Bosnian, it means to be on the way toward something. Like in English, it also has a spiritual meaning used to explain someone's search for himself/herself, a person in the process of making choices, trying to reach some goal. As a couple, Amar and Luna are on the same path of love and life in unity. But then their path becomes different and they must make decisions as a couple and also as individuals. We also use NA PUTU to refer to a woman being pregnant, meaning that the baby is on its way to being born.

### CONDITIONS OF MOTHERHOOD

In ON THE PATH, Luna wants to have a child with the man she loves, and she actually has the choice of whether or not to conceive a child. In my first feature, GRBAVICA, Esma did not have this choice, having been raped while held in a war detention camp. Past is an important aspect for both women, but Luna has to make her decisions in the present. Her love is conscious of the responsibility towards her relationship, but also towards herself and her own future. She passionately desires to be a mother, but she also wonders about the conditions and the price. This is a decision she has to make on her own after (re)constructing her world.

### TWO DIFFERENT KINDS OF LOVE

GRBAVICA and ON THE PATH are very different films, telling stories about two different kinds of love. I even think that perhaps we should find a new word to differentiate the love between a mother-daughter and between a man-woman. These two pairs mobilize different elements of love and different social patterns. ON THE PATH is a story of a couple in contemporary Sarajevo. In addition to being in love, Luna and Amar are connected by a similar past which makes their bond even stronger. Both Luna and Amar are trying to make bearable the pain of their war-torn past within themselves. While writing the script, I looked at the two characters as one body made of two very different parts. They had similar interests, the same friends. But the obstacles of everyday life make them react differently. Their everyday situation begins to change and they react differently in trying to adapt to that change. I wanted to explore this need to adapt to the other in a relationship. I also wanted to explore the need to hold on to one's true self in a relationship. What is the set of emotions, acquired knowledge, experiences and imagination that shapes a relationship? How much does the perceptions of the world we believe in affect the rhythm of our bodies when we make love?

### UNDER THE LINE OF VISION

I am interested in characters who seem to be functional on the surface, but who, in fact, hide the hard experiences of life deep inside themselves. I am interested in the moment when this history springs up, like a seed from the soil. The story of Luna and Amar happens under the line of vision. Luna is a woman who has been able to find her way into the present. She is instinctive and she gave her past its rightful place, allowing herself to be functional. She thought that all her troubles were behind her. Now she can't understand what is happening when Amar becomes someone different to her. She tries to understand Amar wants to be a "better man" but she does not agree to allow "outside" rules to arrange their life. Under the surface Amar has layers and layers of past that have tectonic movements provoked by everyday life obstacles. He is trying to give his life a structure in the hopes of putting things deep inside him in order. Amar's new structure upsets the functioning harmony with Luna. When he tries to fix his past with new tools, she has to face her own past - returning for the first time to Bjeljina, to the house where she was born and which she was forced to leave during the war.

### ISLAM IN BOSNIA

The majority of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina are Bosniacs who are Muslims, either practicing or simply having been brought up around Islamic traditions, like myself. On one side of my family, my grandparents were very religious and they prayed five times a day. On the other side, they considered themselves Muslims but they were not practicing, were very liberal toward alcohol. However, they did respect basic Islamic tradition. The Eid celebration in ON THE PATH is pretty much how my family celebrates in Bosnia. My parents were children of Communism which regarded religion as opiate for the masses. Despite their Marxist ideas, they still participated in some Islamic holidays and customs. Religion has beautiful rituals and art and that was as much a part of me as the rites of socialism. After the war, Bosnian Muslims who survived the genocide were left on a

barren field where old ideas had been massacred along with their human rights. For many of them, religion became a comfortable blanket. Bosnian Muslims consider themselves Europeans, but the European Union isn't convinced that we belong with Europe. So the question is where do we belong?

#### A MORE RELIGIOUS WORLD

Numerous studies have shown that religion is becoming a bigger part of our lives than it was 10 years ago. There are claims that Western civilisation is not only becoming more and more religious, but also more right wing and puritanical. I myself have noticed that more and more people my age and younger are finding comfort in religion. As much as religion plays a crucial part in ON THE PATH, it was not my intention to make a film about religion. The issue is how Amar's religious transformation affects his relationship with Luna. Although Luna's attitude is often critical, I did not set out to make a film attacking Islam. Islam was chosen since it is the organized religion that I'm most familiar with. I think that ON THE PATH could easily have been about a couple in which one spouse turns to strict Orthodox Judaism, fundamentalist Christianity or even Hare Krishna.

#### REFUSING TO SHAKE HANDS WITH WOMEN

Once in the house of friends, I met a man who refused to shake my hand. He said he did not shake hands with women. I felt insulted. I wanted to know why he didn't and why it made me furious. I was told that this man was a Salafi Muslim and I decided to do some research on this relatively small group of people (in Bosnia). I was surprised to discover that many were ex-punk fans, some former drug addicts, but also some very ordinary young people from ex-Communist families. Most had very different motivations for turning to Salafism: a quest for sense and certainty in a world that is falling apart, the need to be accepted, a quest for identity, a quest for 'tranquillisers', an alternative... Those young men eventually became my inspiration for Amar in ON THE PATH. Salafism is a widespread orthodox Islamic movement which is often referred to as Wahhabism, a fundamentalist Islamic sect. But Salafis will never refer to themselves as Wahhabis and some might even consider it insulting. Although the word Wahhabi was originally used derogatorily by opponents, it has today become commonplace as modern Wahhabis are considered to be Salafis.

#### PREJUDICE

In the public eye, the media has successfully associated Salafism with terrorism. This is true in the case of the fundamentalist group Al-Qaida, but it would be unfair to say this about all doctrinally rigid Muslims throughout the world. I chose the Salafis for ON THE PATH because the general prejudice toward them seemed like the right challenge for my story of a young couple in Sarajevo. Since most Bosniacs are Muslims, there is a real anti-Wahhabism attitude in our region as everyone wants to make it very clear that they are not connected to terrorism just because they still celebrate Eid. From the start, Luna does not hide her prejudice toward Amar's "Wahhabi" friend and his veiled wife. Luna's TV journalist friend is representative of how quickly the media can spread both fact and rumor. Like Luna, I was not without prejudice. I felt very emotional and negative, of course, about the violence which has resulted from fundamentalist Islam. I had to be very careful not to impose ideas and beliefs that would turn the film into propaganda. I am not here to judge nor defend Salafism, Wahhabism, Islam or any other religion. I love my characters and I let their personalities dictate the story. I was more interested in creating realistic human characters than politically correct advocates. So prejudiced Luna remains suspicious, although she tries to understand. She wants to overcome her prejudice when she recognizes that good has come out of Amar's association with the Wahhabis. If nothing else, the former excessive drinker has given up alcohol completely. Where Luna draws the line is when she feels that her husband has been taken over by someone else. She feels like Amar is no longer hers. When I make a film, I go through a self-exploration and self-realization similar to my characters. In the case of ON THE PATH, in addition to trying to understand the time I live in and my place in it, I also asked questions about my own identity and beliefs.

#### AMAR'S TRANSFORMATION

Just like many other men in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Amar is a former soldier who lost the ground beneath his feet. He drinks to compensate for the emotional void created by his brother's death, the war, and the difficulties of modern life. He is fragile and he tries to find sense in the new circumstances. He feels the need for fraternity, for male support, for protection. He finds that in religion. On the other hand, Luna's love for him and his love for her are equally important. I wanted to explore Amar and his transformation. In my research, I found that transformation was usually very fast if the emotional void was huge. Amar seeks comfort, sense, explanation, and identity.

With the Wahhabi community, Amar finds the peace that he has been searching for, the answers that he so desperately needs and the feeling that he is a welcomed member of a group.

#### MEETING THE WAHHABIS

I met a former Salafi through a mutual friend, and he facilitated my contacts with the community. However paradoxical it may sound, on the basis of my experiences I can now say that the fact that I am a woman even facilitated my communication with the Salafis. I spoke with a lot with people who had turned Salafi. I went to mosques, talked to theologians and anthropologists. I attended religious studies. I spoke to their female partners. I studied how they felt and what they thought. All the other members of the creative team followed. The costume designer even included some of the women in her team. They helped select the clothes and set the veils. The make-up artist examined the specific features of Wahhabi beards and produced and applied dozens of them in mass scenes. The set designers collaborated closely with the organizers of the original Wahhabi camp on which our reconstruction is based in ON THE PATH. Everybody told us that this project was going to be dangerous, but we did not have any negative experiences in dealing directly with the Salafis.

#### RESEARCH BY THE CAST

Actresses Mirjana Karanović, Jasna Žalica and Luna Mijović met with veiled women. They spoke openly about their everyday lives and the actresses joined them in the mosque. While preparing for their roles, actors Leon Lučev and Ermin Bravo spent time in mosques and in Salafi circles. They learned how to pray, they explored the depths of life in Islam. Ermin had an especially difficult task as he had to recite the Koran to reach Amar's heart. He spent two months working with a hafiz, an expert in reciting the Koran, on this 1.5-minute scene. The hafiz was delighted, since it normally takes at least one year to master all the sounds of the Arabic language. We also had the real-life Salafis for shooting the mosque scenes. When Ermin recited the Koran, they said that they could not believe he was just acting, that he seemed to do it truly from the heart. Some of the men and women we met during our research ended up becoming extras in ON THE PATH.

#### THE WAHHABI CAMP

The camp in ON THE PATH is our reconstruction of an actual Wahhabi camp which existed in the same spot on Lake Jablanica. There have been several such summer camps in the region in recent years. For our reconstruction, I spoke to the organizers of the original camp and I corresponded with people who had been part of that community, even lived there. I searched for details like what kind of dishes they ate from, what were their daily activities, what their tents were like, etc. It actually took us a long time to find the right tents. The ones we saw in photos of the actual camp had this Eastern flavour; they were of ideal size, made of natural materials and released enough light, which was ideal for the camera. We tried similar models, but they didn't work as well. By chance, we finally tracked down the original tents that had been sold off when the camp was demolished. While scouting for a location to reconstruct the camp, we also realized that the original site was the best. First it seemed unrealistic, since the nearest road is five kilometres away, which was a problem for our trucks and generators. No drinking water or electricity at the site was also a huge difficulty, particularly in light of the heat we experienced during the shoot.

#### THE MOSQUE

We wanted post-war mosques, as they bring with them the spirit of new times. Old Bosnian mosques are always connected to poetic gardens and often cemeteries, to show that death is a part of life. Such mosques are small and warm, and in them a person feels big. The new mosques are huge structures with walls of cold-looking marble, blank slates with no art on the walls, like in the old mosques. A huge concrete wall and surveillance cameras surround these mosques, separating them from the neighbourhood. Flowers, trees and life have been erased by concrete. I insisted that we should use the King Fahd Mosque in Sarajevo's Alipašino Polje neighbourhood. It is right next to blocks of Socialist residential buildings. In two scenes in ON THE PATH, the residential blocks seem to be pulled aside like curtains, revealing the mosque at centre stage, as Amar walks towards it. For me, this image is a visual representation of the new societies in the Balkans.

#### THE LAYERS OF SARAJEVO

Sarajevo is a superbly beautiful and a superbly ugly city, highly sophisticated, and yet very primitive, all at the same time. All its layers of history live in parallel, in the same time, and they

all have their purpose. We looked for locations according to how Luna and Amar felt about the city. It was very important to immerse their intimacy into the city. We wanted a flat with a view, since the aspect of the city within their intimate space was important for us. Eventually, we created a flat in the attic of an office building in the city centre. Their flat is, in fact, their bedroom and their bathroom. This is the space that brings loneliness and togetherness, Eros and Thanatos, solid yet fragile, delicate yet stable and strong. That is why we used strong beams combined with frilly curtains and the softness of delicate bed linens.

#### “YUGOSLAV” CAST

Our cast is not only from Bosnia, but also Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia. Most of them had to learn Bosnian. Language brings in the spirit of the environment Amar and Luna belong to. In order to understand the soul of their characters, the actors had to accept their language. It was important for all of us that the characters belong to this community, and all actors did their best to understand its specificities. They worked very hard and they managed because they are great actors: Zrinka is an unexplored ocean filled with pearls, most precious shapes, undiscovered wells of emotions. Leon is such an incredible human being who gives himself completely to his art, approaching acting as also a way of self-exploration. Mirjana Karanović always surprises me with her richness, her unique and truthful view on life. Ermin Bravo is such a talent with huge passion and dedication. The entire cast enriched ON THE PATH with their energy and beauty: Nina Viočić, Sebastian Cavazza, Ermin Bravo, Luna Mijović, Marija Köhn, Jasna Ornela Bery, Izudin Bajrović, Vanesa Glodo... With my “Yugoslav” colleagues, I share the spoken language and similar traditions of being from the same cultural area. The horrific experience of war led to an erosion of this cultural area and people were forced to look out for new ones. Not attempting to defend myself from the adjective “Yugoslav”, although I think it has become an extinct form, now we work in much wider contexts. Our collaborators are from European countries, in addition to countries of former Yugoslavia, and this is the future of the cinema of our region.

## Jasmila Žbanić: Scriptwriter / directress



Na putu is de 2e karakteristieke film van Jasmila Žbanić's. In 2006 won ze met haar 1<sup>e</sup> film, Grabavica (ook bekend onder de titel 'Sarajevo, my love') de Gouden Beer op het filmfestival van Berlijn alsook de Oecumenical Award, de Peace prize, een AFI (American Film Institute) Fest Grand Jury Prize en de Grand Prix Odyssey van de Europese Kabinetsraad voor de rechten van de mens.

Het verhaal van een alleenstaande moeder Esma en haar 12-jarige tienerdochter Sara heeft het publiek veroverd. Jasmila's eerdere werken werden in vele kunst exhibitities vertoond.

Jasmila werd in 1974 geboren in Sarajevo en behaalde haar diploma aan de Academy of Dramatic Arts op het departement voor theater en filmdirectie. Voordat ze films begon te maken, werkte ze als poppenspeler in het Vermont-gebaseerde "Bread and Puppet" theater en als clown in een Lee DeLong winkel. Sinds 1997 regisseert ze films via haar zelf opgerichte vereniging Deblokada.

Na putu est la deuxième long métrage de Jasmila Žbanić. Son premier film, Grbavica, a gagné le l'Ours d'Or au festival du film de Berlin, le Oecumenical Award, le prix de la paix, un AFI (American Film Institute) Fest Grand Jury Prize et la Grand Prix Odyssey du conseils des ministres européens pour les droits humains.

L'histoire d'une mère solitaire et sa fille de douze ans a convaincu le public. Le travail de Jasmila a exposé dans beaucoup d'exhibitions d'art.

Jasmila est née en 1974 à Sarajevo et a obtenu son diplôme au Académie des arts dramatiques au département de théâtre et direction des films. Avant faire des films, elle était marionnettiste dans le théâtre « Bread and Puppet » et elle était clown dans un magasin de Lee DeLong. Depuis 1997 elle réalise ses films pour sa propre association Deblokada.

### SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

2009 ON THE PATH / NA PUTU

2008 PARTICIPATION (short, part of the omnibus STORIES ON HUMAN RIGHTS)

2007 BUILDER'S DIARY (documentary)

2006 GRBAVICA

2004 BIRTHDAY (short, part of the omnibus LOST AND FOUND)

2003 IMAGES FROM THE CORNER (documentary)

2000 RED RUBBER BOOTS (documentary)

## Zrinka Cvitešić (Luna)

De Kroatische actrice Zrinka Cvitešić was geselecteerd voor de "Shooting Stars" van 2010 (voor de beste Europese jonge acteurs), naar aanleiding van haar recente rol van Luna in Na putu. In 2003 speelde ze haar eerste hoofdrol in Horseman van Konjanik, in 2006 won ze verschillende awards op het filmfestival van Sarajevo en dat van Pula. Tijdens haar studies maakte Zrinka haar televisiedebuut in 2000 in "The big cleaning" van Veliko Spremanje. Ook was ze te zien in de serie "Vratice se rode" en verscheen ze in de films "Volim te" (I love you), "Cuvaj se sinjske ruke" en "the lady musketeer".

Zrinka werd geboren in 1979 in Karlovac in Kroatië. Ze behaalde haar diploma aan de Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb in 2002. Sinds 2005 is ze lid van de nationale Kroatische theatervereniging. Ook speelt ze piano en kan ze zingen en dansen. Samen met haar partner Nicolas Quesnoit was ze in 2006-2007 winnaar van de Kroatische versie van "Strictly Come Dancing"/"Dancing with the Stars". Binnenkort zal Zrinka te bewonderen zijn in Bella Biondina van Daniel Marušić.

L'actrice croate Zrinka Cvitešić était sélectionnée par les "Shooting Stars" de 2010 (pour les meilleurs jeunes acteurs européens), basé à sa représentation de Luna dans le film Na putu. En 2003 elle a joué son premier rôle principal en Horseman de Konjanik. A 2006 elle était la gagnante des awards aux festivals de films à Sarajevo et Pula. En étudiant, elle a fait son début à la télévision à 2000 en « The big cleaning » de Veliko Spremanje. Elle avait aussi un rôle en « Vratice se rode », « Volim te » (je t'aime), « Cuvaj se sinjske ruke » et « the lady musketeer ». Zrinka est née en 1979 à Karlovac en Croatie. Elle a obtenu un diplôme au Académie des arts dramatiques à Zagreb en 2002. Depuis 2005 elle est un membre de la société nationale de théâtre croate. Elle joue aussi le piano et elle sait chanter et danser. Avec son partenaire Nicolas Quesnoit elle a gagnée la version croate de "Strictly Come Dancing"/"Dancing with the Stars". A brève échéance elle se présente dans le film « Bella Biondina » de Daniel Marušić.

### SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

2009 ON THE PATH / NA PUTU (dir. Jasmila Žbanić)  
2009 ZAGREB STORIES (segment "Game Over", dir. Dario Pleić)  
2006 WHAT IS A MAN WITHOUT A MUSTACHE? (dir. Hrvoje Hribar)  
2003 HORSEMAN / KONJANIK (dir. Branko Ivanda)  
2001 CELESTIAL BODY / NEBO SATELITI (dir. Lukas Nola)

*I hope the audience recognises in Luna the beauty of both a woman's strength and her fragility. Luna, who is vulnerable and weak, and Luna who is strong and powerful. A woman and a child. A person fighting for the man she loves, but staying true to herself. A person withdrawn into her own world, yet joyful and lively. I believe that life and people are never black or white. Luna was an endless source of all shades, never just black, never just white. And shades are the field of my interest. That is why I found Luna in myself and why Luna found herself in me.*

*Luna and Amar have both experienced the horrors of war, which leave scars behind, as well as powerful emotions, which all engendered a special kind of bond and ultimately a special kind of love. What I'd like the most is for people to recognise the love in ON THE PATH -- the love that governs all of us and what it makes us do, what we're prepared to do for it. To remind people that we should fight for love. Until our last breath. But should save that last breath and stay true to ourselves. For whoever is not in peace with themselves and within themselves, cannot find happiness with others.*

*I was a child of war once too. I was the child of refugees, so I was already familiar with this part of Luna's personality. I had heard about the horrors in Bijeljina and Sarajevo, although not much as being a child at the time, in Croatian war, I was protected by my parents as much as possible from war news and images. I visited Sarajevo for the very first time in 1998, when everything was still very fresh.*



*I knew nothing about Wahhabism before we started working on this film, I didn't even know it existed. I try to keep a distance from political, religious or any other kind of extremism. I understand that people can find salvation and purpose in something like that, particularly in difficult times in their lives, when they lose sense of their own lives - but I am not one of those people. I personally believe that tolerance and understanding should be the greatest religions of the world, as they are the most wonderful and the most important elements of a human being. For those two words bring with them the key to the most precious thing for me: peace.*

*I'm very honoured to have been selected as one of the ten "Shooting Stars" for 2010 because of my work in ON THE PATH. Being recognised as one of Europe's best young actors is a wonderful gift, and of course, receiving praise always feels good. But the most important in this recognition for me is that I hope it will help me to continue to work on films which I believe in strongly, films that I feel could change something or at least point at certain issues.*

## Leon Lučev (Amar)

Leon Lučev is een van de meest populaire en bekende acteurs in Kroatië. In 2008 won hij de award van Best Supporting Actor op het Pula filmfestival voor zijn prestatie in de film "A woman with a body". Ook won hij de award van beste acteur op het filmfestival van Sarajevo voor "Buick riviera" in 2008. Leon was ook te zien in "What is a man without a mustache" van Hrvoje Hribar, "Witnesses" en "How the war started on my little island" van Vinko Brešan. Ook speelde hij mee in de tv series "Operacija kajman" en "Kazaliste u kuci".

Leon werd geboren in 1970 in Sibenik in Kroatië. Hij behaalde zijn diploma aan de Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb in 1994 nadat hij optrad met de onafhankelijke theatergroep "Montažstroj". Daarna bleef Leon verder werken in het theater. Hij speelde mee in meer dan 100 producties. Als medegrondlegger en directeur van de Ziva productie, nam hij de coproductie van Na putu op zich.

Leon Lučev est un des acteurs le plus connus et populaire en Croatie. En 2008 il a gagné l'award de « Best Supporting Actor » au festival de film à Pula pour son prestation en "A woman with a body". Son autres performances étaient en "What is a man without a moustache" de Hrvoje Hribar, "Witnesses" et "How the war started on my little island de Vinko Brešan. Il a aussi joué dans les séries "Operacija kajman" et "Kazaliste u kuci".

Leon est né en 1970 à Sibenik en Croatie. Il a obtenu son diplôme au Académie des arts dramatiques à Zagreb en 1994 après un performance avec un group de théâtre indépendant "Montažstroj". Ensuite il a encore joué à plus de 10 productions de théâtre. Il était directeur de la production de Ziva, et il était le coproducteur de Na putu.

### SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

2009 ON THE PATH / NA PUTU (dir. Jasmila Žbanić)  
 2009 STORM (dir. Hans-Christian Schmid)  
 2008 BEHIND THE GLASS / IZA STAKLA (dir. Zrinko Ogresta)  
 2008 A WOMAN WITHOUT A BODY / NIJE KRAJ (dir. Vinko Brešan)  
 2008 BUICK RIVIERA (dir. Goran Rusinović)  
 2007 THE TRUE MIRACLE / PRAVO ČUDO (dir. Lukas Nola)  
 2006 THE MELON ROUTE / PUT LUBENICA (dir. Branko Schmidt)  
 2006 GRBAVICA (dir. Jasmila Žbanić)  
 2005 WHAT IS A MAN WITHOUT A MUSTACHE? (dir. Hrvoje Hribar)  
 2004 WITNESSES / SVJEDOCI (dir. Vinko Brešan)  
 2003 INFECTION (dir. Krsto Papić)  
 2001 ALONE / SAMI (dir. Lukas Nola)  
 1999 CELESTIAL BODY / NEBO SATELITI (dir. Lukas Nola)  
 1996 HOW THE WAR STARTED ON MY ISLAND (dir. Vinko Brešan)



*I am connected to Amar by the war, by the post-war destruction and the need to be accepted again after all that. Amar is one of thousands of young men whom I know, and I am one myself -- those who experienced the war actively and left it behind them with trauma and pain, who tried to move*

on with their lives. But it didn't work. I see Amar as an injured human being, whose youth was marked by the war and the loss of his brother, as a man who is trying to live his life with his pain, hiding behind alcohol and his seemingly 'normal' life and his love for Luna. Once his inner problems start to escalate and his world begins to crumble, he seeks security and acceptance.

While I was in Sarajevo, I tried to live through as much of Amar's own experiences as I could. I learned how to pray and how to behave properly in a mosque. I also met members of the Salafi movement and some of them have become my friends. I tried to meet people who resembled Amar's own friends and I tried to learn actively about the Salafi movement (through prayer and visits to the mosque) and then I tried to memorise that within my acting space, so that by the time of the shooting I could be the real Amar.

Amar chose to make Salafi his life and, as an actor, I had to agree with this. Amar would say that he felt acceptance, security and fulfilment with the Salafi. I say that I respect Amar's choice but that his lifestyle contains slightly too many rules. But I was surprised by my inner acceptance and understanding of the Salafi movement, which played

itself out through Amar. During some of the shoot, particularly in the mosque scenes, I was even extremely irritated by people who did not observe the rules. I found this slightly disconcerting as I see myself as a tolerant liberal.

My production company Živa participated in ON THE PATH, helped raise money for the film. It was very interesting to work on a project that I believed in and I wanted to convey this belief to others. There were days when I had to travel to Zagreb after a day of shooting, then back to the set, but not too often. We had decided beforehand, that as soon as the shoot started, playing Amar would become my primary focus.

The process of working with directress Jasmila Žbanić is a great shared learning experience. What remains of the very intense and very profound experience after nine weeks of shooting -- when your actual body starts to complain and protest the gruelling 12-hour days -- is that my inner being was so filled with Amar that I could have continued to work on that character for a few more months. All this for me is an indication that work with Jasmila is a two-way process, an open-ended creation.