

ANATOMY OF A LOST SOUND

A FILM BY
ZUKO
GARAGIĆ

Memory is a labyrinth built
by guilty architects

RAGILE HANDS PRESENTS A HISTORY WRITTEN, PRODUCED, & DIRECTED BY ZUKO GARAGIĆ
PRODUCTION MAXEN GARAGIĆ AND JENNY LEES WITH KLEZ BRANDAR, ROBIN BEZROUK, THE CHILDREN OF PRŮHONICE AND HILMAR BERGSON AND LEOPOLD ADLER
CINEMATOGRAPHY EDSON BICHON AND KOCA ISKRIC SOUND DESIGN ELIAS GARAGIĆ EDITED BY DAVID AJASIC SOUND RECORDING RONAK DESAI AND NUBI L. R. SITOMPUL
BASED ON GOVERNMENT ARCHIVES, MUNICIPAL AND STATE DOCUMENTS AND THE FRAGMENTS, DIARIES, POETRY BY THE ENIGMATIC ZULFIKAR VERITIC
PRODUCED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE MA FILM DEGREE AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Note to the Reader

Please know that I have created a sophisticated, creative hybrid film that confronts pressing realities, and I do not approach the subject matter lightly. I see myself as an anomalous figure: born of contingency, born out of war—born to a Jewish expatriate fleeing the traumas inflicted by her Vietnam veteran father; born to a Bosnian Muslim refugee who, at seventeen, escaped his war-torn homeland with nothing but a rucksack and the first seeds of PTSD. My very existence is contingent upon anger, frustration, and war.

As we teeter on the precipice of profound societal change, the discourse around child education in the 21st century—within the frame of rearmament, demographic anxieties, low birth rates, and the re-emergence of populist nationalism in Europe—must be brought to the forefront. Even the concept of elementary education, the seemingly sacrosanct K–12 system, can no longer be regarded as immune from scrutiny. The future appears increasingly bleak; but neither mass-producing AI-simulated children nor teaching them to load rifles before cultivating their faculties of reason and curiosity will offer salvation.

In an era where the phone camera has rendered nothing sacred, when video footage emerges of paramilitary camps training children as young as seven to "fight" and "defend their nation," the public remains mostly aloof—consuming it as just another flickering broadcast in an endless scroll of passive witness. The stakes are now more urgent than ever. Outlets such as TIME Magazine, the New York Times, France 24, and Radio Free Europe documented these scenes, but inevitably softened their presentation, diluting the truth for fear of alienating readerships. The question that arises is whether such sacrifices are made in the name of freedom. My wager is that they are not. They are concessions to capital—specifically, to accessibility—where truth is shaved down in the editing room, and the most unsettling realities are left on the cutting floor, excised in the name of comfort.

This film is a direct response: a composition fashioned from the very remnants, the excised, the abject; from that which festers in the ruins and lingers at the margins. To achieve this, I made the radical decision to have children articulate vile, troubling things—not as a gesture of provocation for its own sake, but because it was, to my mind, the only method capable of arresting the audience, of shattering their anesthetized reverie. It was a decision not made lightly. But if the shadows are to be spoken of, then it is the shadows themselves that must be summoned into speech.

My film builds upon the tradition of *Verfremdung* (defamiliarization). I do not shy away from the discomfort, the unease, the profound unsettlement provoked by watching this work. As both Peter Watkins and Bertolt Brecht once insisted that theatre ought to serve as an assembly where ordinary people confront the reality of their condition, so too can cinema re-find itself—forcing both participants and spectators into uncomfortable awareness. Through the experience of *Chockerlebnis*, a deeper reflection is made possible: reflection not only on the unsettling content but also on the viewer’s own complicity in the act of spectating.

Any work that seeks to disturb, unsettle, and expose suppressed truths runs the gauntlet of misunderstanding. True unsettlement, when achieved in form and not merely in name, risks alienating audiences precisely because it resists easy assimilation into normative ideas and familiar comforts. Out of respect for my craft—and for the viewers—the "answers" of the film are not laid bare in lines of dialogue or a neatly packaged close-up, but rather exist as scattered picklocks throughout the film: keys left for those who wish to search the in "the ruins of great buildings, whose plan speaks more impressively than in lesser buildings, however well preserved they are" (Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*).

For this film, I worked closely with children from Průhonice, the village where I myself spent over fifteen formative years. I grew up in the same fields and classrooms as many of the participants—though in an era when the mediation of screen technologies had not yet engulfed our every gesture.

What is spoken in this film—painful, at times almost unbearable—comes not from invention, but from personal interviews, municipal archives, state documents, fragments of journalism, scavenged between 2018 and 2024. This was present and articulated to the young participants as a means of teaching and reflection. Once these testimonies were recorded and re-enacted, shooting over a period of years, a distance was born: the distance necessary for recognition. The act of filmmaking thus became a pedagogical process in itself: the shoot was not merely a means of production but a site of reflection, confrontation, and transformation.

All participants—non-actors who had volunteered their presence—entered into a compact of mutual discovery. It was not simply the act of embodying these perilous ideologies that proved revelatory, but the far more unsettling experience of re-watching oneself—of confronting one's own image, suspended in time, complicit in gesture. In this mirror, distorted yet painfully clear, the participants encountered not only the roles they inhabited but the fragile boundary between performance and belief, between enactment and internalization.

Why is this film important today? History does not adhere to the comfort of fixed moral binaries; it mutates, unsettles, and collapses the architecture of eternal victimhood. In the film, the Sephardim of Z. Veritić’s family arrived in the Balkans under the aegis of Sultan Bayezid II, only to face persecution centuries later under the fascist regimes of the 1940s, some of whose survivors, in turn, became complicit in the expulsion of Bosnian Muslims—Veritić’s paternal kin—during the Bosnian War. The project was also in part inspired from personal experience: one half of my family Jewish, unwavering in their defense of Israel; the other half Muslim, steadfast in their condemnation of it.

This story from my great-uncle, who fought as a partisan resistance during World War II and later was involved in Vietnam, encapsulates this irony:

"I JUDGE PEOPLE BY LUCK. I OWE MY LIFE TO THE AMERICANS. I'LL ALWAYS LOVE THEM.
UNTIL THE END OF TIME: I'LL KILL GERMANS AND LOVE AMERICANS.
EXCEPT THAT NOW THE AMERICANS ARE THE VIETNAMESE’S GERMANS ..."

—Zuko Garagic, 13.04.2025



ANATOMY OF A LOST SOUND



SYN- OP- SIS

ANATOMY OF A LOST SOUND centers on a volatile sound recording—one that has cleaved the Czech population. For the SOUND eludes any singular meaning ... this “incomprehensibility” a consequence of its severance from its origin, from the image that once anchored it.

The mystery of the SOUND'S origin gnaws at the very fabric of reality. In the absence of a clear beginning, all things become uncertain, every truth an illusion, every fact open to doubt. Like a needed poison slowly creeping into the bloodstream, this dissontant SOUND reverberates across minds, eroding the very notion of authenticity.

On one point, all are in agreement: the Sound came from the margins, not from within— and yet, perhaps, this might not be the case ...

The author of the film moors his claims to his research of the Zulfikar Veritić diaries and personal recordings—artifacts that have not merely unsettled but wholly reconfigured the facts of yesterday.

"Our memories lie in wait within the misty ambushes of the past, like faceless, bloodthirsty warriors whose intentions elude us and whose intrusions we are powerless to prevent."

TESTAMENT OF THE ARTIST

This film—ANATOMIJA IZGUBLJENOG ZVUKA—is an assemblage of scattered testimonies, tattered archives, state documents, torn diary pages, confessions and reluctant memories of the enigmatic ZULFIKAR VERTIĆ—stitched together like a PALIMPSEST not to enumerate verifiable facts but to scrutinize the lies History prefers.

My work inhabits a liminal space between fiction and nonfiction, driven by a process-oriented approach. Often, they are creative reenactments of historical testimony, constructed reinterpretations of documents, or recontextualizations of archival materials. In short, I am interested in scrutinising the abundance of what is already extant to challenge the overproduction of images.

My goal is for my works to open us to experience the hidden and forgotten discrepancy between the INDISPUTABLE and UNANSWERABLE, between PERCEPTIBLE and IMPERCEPTIBLE, between EXCLUSIVELY ACCESSIBLE and PERPETUALLY INACCESSIBLE. This is what compelled me to look at the archive as a political document with imagination, not beholden to the vulgarity and barbarity of sachlichkeit.

I understand my film as a repository of objects, documents, sounds, and anachronistic materials. However, this repository is not meant to bury its contents in obscurity—a direct challenge to the narratives that confine certain histories within parentheses. On the contrary, the aim is to awaken these silenced materials. This is why much of the dialogue is taken verbatim from archives, articles, anecdotal accounts, or personal interviews I conducted and the action repurposed and re-imagined from film archives from the National Archives and State Regional Archives in Prague and the Archives of the towns of Benešov, Průhonice, Květnice and Jičín.

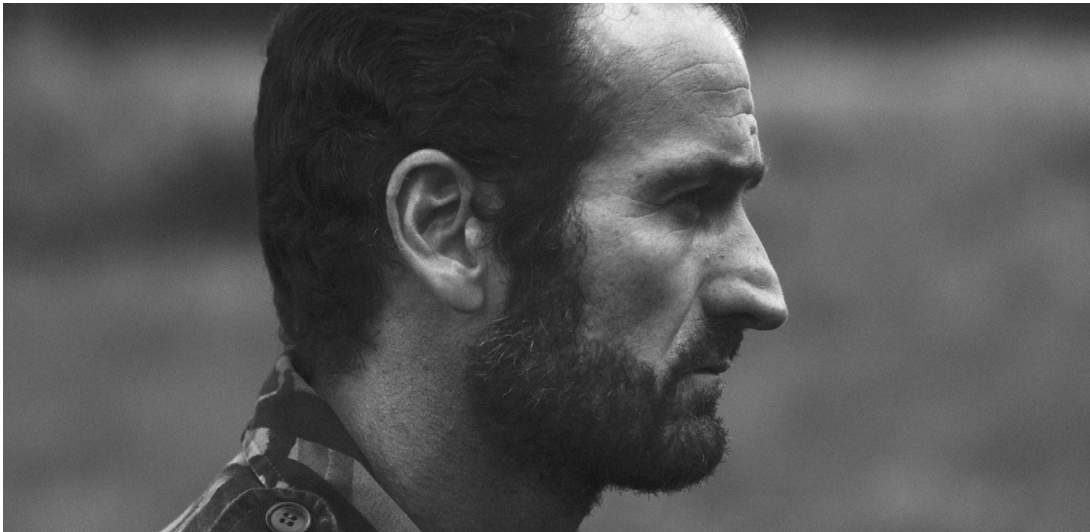
By reincorporating these “dead facts,” the film breathes contemporary life into them, transforming the past from a distant object of study into a haunting, imminent presence that acts as a reminder to resist the creeping threat of collective amnesia, all while negotiating the impossibility of retrieving the past in its entirety and acknowledging the present's influence.

However is forgetting not a necessary condition of freedom?
Or in the words of Paul Ricoeur: "the institution of amnesty can respond only to the need for urgent social therapy, in the name not of truth but utility."

— Zuko Garagić

"If only memories did not have lives of their own—parasitic—but still not subject to our commands. We can indeed summon them sometimes. In return, we're not in position to repel those that haunt us on their own."

— Konrad A. Rutkowski, Ph.D.,



How the Sound came into being,



Lost Childhoods

PITY THE CULTURE THAT SEES ITS HEIRS AS MERE FOOT SOLDIERS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM. The death of the Public—of its spaces, of its expectations—is inextricably linked to the gaping voids within these children, to the vacuous spaces filled with noise where their dreams and aspirations should have taken root. One need only recall the many accounts of childhoods spent in the aftermath of war.

In the words of the Serbian writer Momo Kapor, nothing good arises:

"KADA SU JEDINE IGRAČKE BILE ČAVRE OD META-KA I RASTAVLJENE HAND-GRANATE IZ KOJIH SU SE VADILE ŠIPKE BARUTA"

"when the only toys were bullet casings and dismantled hand grenades, their powder rods carefully extracted."



OR A BRIEF NOTE ON THE ORIGIN OF THE FILM.

It was the summer of 2018, while working on a documentary about the abandoning of towns—present-day mausoleums—in the Nagorno-Karabakh that I learned of these military camps for youths, where children learn "to defend thesmelves," supposedly. Beyond the desolation of economic collapse and the abyss of unemployment, what was most striking was MAN'S QUEST TO SEVER HIS ROOTS. No civilization has ever stood closer to immortality than ours. We are the Last Men. And yet, when Man thinks only of eternity, the Nation loses all purpose.

By the mid-to-late 2010s, major news outlets—National Geographic, TIME Magazine, The New York Times, France 24, Radio Free Europe—embarked on the treacherous task of sensationalism without scrutiny, reporting without reason, incitement disguised as revelation. These youth camps, emerging across Central and Eastern Europe, flickered in and out of focus, their nature dictated by editorial whim: one season, "patriotic summer camps"; the next, "nationalist militia trainings." The shift was not in the camps themselves, but in the words used to contain them. The public discourse was just as capricious: what was discussed was not the what was going on but how what they were doing was being framed. It is political meta-discourse: images of images being produced; talk about the talk being raised to the level of the Thing.

Amidst this decline, or is it rather decay, we ought to acknowledge the dialectic—grim, unshockingly circular. And in doing so, confront today's unshakable, sardonic truth:

the ARMED RESISTANCE of today
is the NATIONAL FUNDAMENTALIST
(or the liberal fascist, if such a thing exists).



"If it were up to me I would make them sleep with their weapons, eat with their weapons ... a man should always have a weapon with him."



MEMORY IS A LABYRINTH BUILT
BY GUILTY ARCHITECTS:
NEVER UNIFORM, BUT LAYERED
WITH SECRET PASSAGES, HIDDEN
CHAMBERS, AND WALLS THAT
ECHO THE VOICES WE PREFER
NOT TO HEAR



The nationalist's gingerbread heart



WHERE
ARE
THE
INTERNATION-
ALISTS?



If anything good came out of the Prague Spring of 1968, it was a confirmation that the art was flourishing, and amongst ordinarily people, nonetheless. The most illustrious painted along the guard rails of the Jiráskův most:

LENINE, PROBUĎ SE, BREŽŇEV SE ZBLÁZNIL
LENIN, WAKE UP, BREZHNEV HAS GONE MAD.

The reaction of some of the experts—the APOLOGISTS, those chameleons of ideology, lurking on both the left and the right —is nothing but a confirmation of the ease in finding refuge in today's iteration and return of nativist politics. If this is the path big capital is destined to take, in its winter years, we must also accept, if we are to watch helplessly on the periphery, our succumbing to the vulgar need for immediate self-aggrandizement. Before we await a new insanity stripped of confusing memories of our old insanity, we must note we are becoming illiterate, blind, and unable to read History.

SOMEONE'S MONONATIONAL 'TRUTH,' BY VIRTUE
OF BEING SUCH, CANNOT BE THE TRUTH.
IT STIFLES THE REASON OF FREE CITIZENS.

- Koča Popović



The short biography of Zulfikar Veritić

The literaphilosophical career of Zulfikar Veritić began one night in 1989 in a *čaršija* in Sarajevo. While crossing the Latin Bridge with his uncle Sejo Veritić, then dean of the *Druga Gimnazija*, Veritić recited a poem. He said it was by a friend of his.

"You wrote it yourself!" exclaimed Sejo. "Ti si **MAJSTOR**!"
("You are a maestro!")

The next morning, as Veritić later recalled in his diaries, Sejo introduced him to his circle at the *čaršija* as his genius nephew, the famous poet Z. Veritić. Taking a seat, Sejo bellowed, Now write or you will make me look a regular fool.

"SO I HAD TO WRITE."

Zulfikar Veritić's collection of short stories, *The Kaiser and the Three Unholy Pashas*, was written in the coffee shops of Vienna. The historian was desperate to taste history, to meander through the streets that had once invited the most diverse of minds—the same streets that Karl Kraus had described as "paved with culture," unlike the streets of other cities, "paved with asphalt." When I first encountered his depiction of the dejected electrician—terrified that his employer, the Sun, would dismiss him for missing the train to the sky—calling in sick and pleading with his neighbor, I knew I found a masterful artist.

"JOSIP BROZ'S ECHO, FLEEING ALONG THE COURTROOM WALLS, RETURNED SEPULCHRALLY—BACK AND BACK AND BACK—TO THE YOUNG JUDGE" was the first ZULFIKAR VERITIĆ sentence I ever read from the great polymath of our *fin de siècle*—partisan without a party, historian without a homeland, at once witness and footnote, everywhere inscribed yet never quite present. The sentence was buried deep in his notes for a planned biography of Tito; it was also the fire that ignited my desire to make this film.

Reportedly, Veritić penned it at the age of 16 outside El Faro de Cádiz, having only seconds earlier borne witness to another of those haunting images where life reaches its highest aesthetic form and lowest moral depth. Stumbling upon these CINE-MOMENTS would become habitual in Veritić's peripatetic odyssey: a rigid-hulled inflatable boat carrying precisely 67—Veritić was fastidious with numbers—North and Sub-Saharan African migrants, their faces drawn with salt and exile, running aground on a beach frightening the tourists in bikinis, who pull out their phone cameras, spraying the cold and wet with rays of life.

IT HAD THE SYMMETRY OF A WAR PHOTOGRAPH: ALL THESE YEARS AND STILL INVASION WAS BEING RESISTED.

- Z.V. Cádiz, Španija

There is no objective biography of any parent, but if anyone could write it, it would be their fiercest critic: their child. And not out of love, but out of that quiet, relentless anger that is as old as the world itself.

Is history a vast repository teeming with answers, a refuse heap of discarded dreams, or a bottomless pit that swallows all specificity—the individual, the singular, the unrepeatable? And what, then, is the role of the video archaeologist? Is she merely another naïve scrivener, condemned to transcribe blindly, too myopic to perceive that which hides in plain sight? Or is it still possible to unearth the forgotten, the buried, the unspoken—to extract meaning from the fissures and dust of what remains?

What, then, is the historian's duty in the face of history's inexorable devouring?

KO NE PLATI NA MOSTU, PLATI NA ĆUPRIJI.

Danilo Kiš provocatively said: "I have always been interested in the diversity of things. A long time ago I wrote a poem which was no more than a detailed list of a trash can: a summary of the entire world, the simplest of all resumes: under the remnants of every thing there lies a story.









The crooked timber of humanity

Eye and Ear of Memory

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE ARCHIVE IN CINEMA?

Cinema proclaims: "**He said this because.**"
The archive records: "**He said this.**"

Cinema belongs to reflection and explanation; life is where things, already lost, go missing. It should not come to a surprise that most seek refuge in the theaters...

Why did I opt for a Voice, for narration, to discuss archival images? Simply, the Voice stands against the Sound, and in between a space: noise.

The state line imposed one kind of order, its subjects another, and in between them a space—a space that demanded to be filled. In that moment, anyone who dared to speak within it, to summon action, could only be perceived as an agent provocateur—and perhaps truly was. Yet this marked the advent of a new kind of confrontation, one that began, first and foremost, among ourselves.



ON LANGUAGE AND ITS RECORDER

The idea behind ANATOMY OF A LOST SOUND was not merely to revisit historical fiction, but to summon it into the disquiet of the present moment—to force it to speak in the now. For what is the present, if not a fragile scaffolding built atop the wreckage of neglected and invisible yesterdays? This film rummages through the dustbins of history, gathering its bruised and disregarded remnants. In this grim archaeology, the fragment emerged not as a failure but as a principle. Between the doomed ambition to tell history whole and the sober knowledge of its irretrievable fractures, I chose to fabricate subjective archives—histories stitched from omission, from the broken syllables of what was never spoken, never recorded, never permitted to endure.

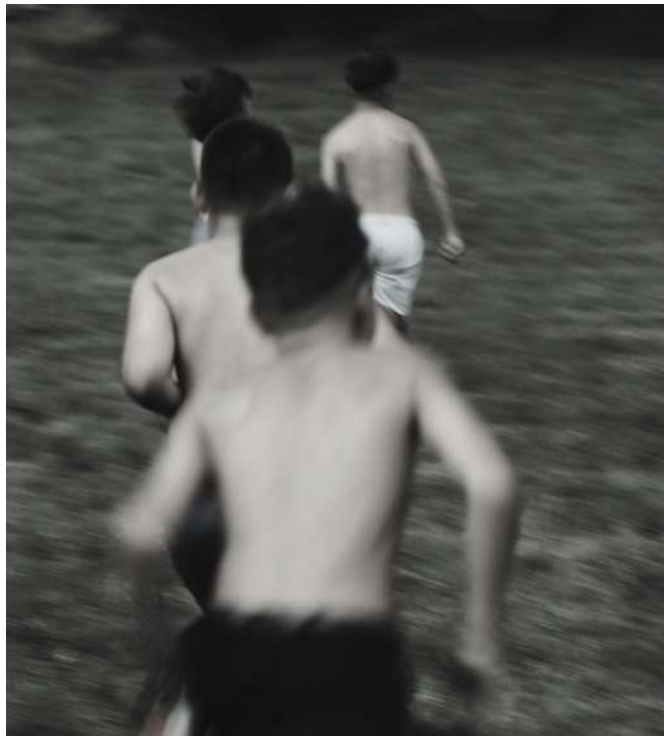
Giorgio Agamben's *Remnants of Auschwitz* quickly became an important guiding light, specifically Agamben's discussion on the paradox of the document and the witness. He argues that it is impossible for a witness to recount the “whole” truth ... the only witness capable of doing so—the “real” witness—is dead. As such, the testimony of the living witness is necessarily partial, incomplete. Yet, despite this, the act of witnessing remains essential. For Agamben, “witnessing” becomes the expression of this impossibility: the impossibility of recounting the “whole truth.” I have experienced this firsthand, of course. Quite simply, because my family has never wished to cease speaking.

In this film, the Sound has a long neck—so long, in fact, that it cranes it to fit any head. Yesterday, it was the howl of the wolf driving us from our home, a testament to our weakness. Today, it is the triumphant cry of our unity as we cast the wolf out. It is the resonance that forges a lineage of victimhood, a narrative so enduring that it will sanctify even the most unspeakable of future acts. The fragmentary approach, one of the many strategies in the film, is used to illuminate the destructiveness of a lineage of victimhood. Politicized memory becomes the very disease it claims to heal; it is a regime of justification for oppression or, alternatively, the aestheticization of victimhood.

Being a victim at a certain moment in history is transformed into a heritage of innocence—a symbolic inheritance that, in turn, justifies future atrocities. This self-image of victimhood allows any act of violence to be interpreted as self-defense. It renders acts of oppression, however unjustified or illegal, as morally permissible because they are legitimized by the lineage of victimhood perpetuated through memory-images.

Tzvetan Todorov refers to this phenomenon as the “abuse of memory.” He critiques the logic as follows: “I am a victim; therefore, everything I do is justified. I am a victim; therefore, I am closer to other victims.” This framework perpetuates cycles of violence and inhibits critical self-reflection.

How, then, can we resist or transcend this perilous politicization of memory? One possible path lies in the self-representation of the traumatic subject—specifically, through personal testimony. By giving primacy to individual narratives, personal testimony becomes a counterforce to the abstraction and manipulation of memory as a collective construct. It breaks free from the confines of universalized victimhood, anchoring the trauma in the singular, the intimate, the lived. In doing so, it challenges the homogenizing force of collective memory and opens space for a more nuanced, less politically charged engagement with the past. Through this act of personal narration, the trauma ceases to be merely an instrument of ideological leverage and instead becomes an authentic encounter with history, one that resists the patterns of distortion and exploitation.





The Struggle for Cultured Speech

What makes Babel so unreachable? What is Nimrod’s dream? Is it the possibility of unity through a single tongue, one all may speak, or, rather, is it fluency in the multiplicity, in the various dialects and languages that the tongue can utter? In his short story **THE KNIFE WITH THE ROSEWOOD HANDLE**, Danilo Kiš wished to write such a story: a narrative told through the whispers and gestures of the countless tongues the Earth holds, each carrying its own pulse of truth, and each coming in and out of story determined only by what was needed to be said. Certain languages for certain words.

"Abusive language and curses," writes Leon Trotsky in **THE STRUGGLE FOR CULTURED SPEECH**, "are the heritage of slavery, humiliation, and the disdain for human dignity—both one’s own and that of others."

And so we return to the fox and the sparrow upon the birch, speaking in Aesopian tongue.

This film, too, seeks to unsettle with the very content of language. Lest we forget that it is the "men who wield crude words" that "scorn women and disregard children," and yet, in the act of remembering, we overlook that "this applies not only to the uncultured masses, but to those more ‘advanced,’ to those so-called responsible figures of the present social order." If language indeed is the instrument of thought, then we must be vigilant in the tongues of those who instruct. The accuracy of speech must rise above mere formalities, becoming the marrow of thought itself—an inseparable condition for the formulation of truth, for it is only through such rigor that the mind may pierce through its own murk, reaching the clarity language, in its most sacred form, promises.

What is the fate of small nations in the digital age? And, perhaps more importantly, what of their language?

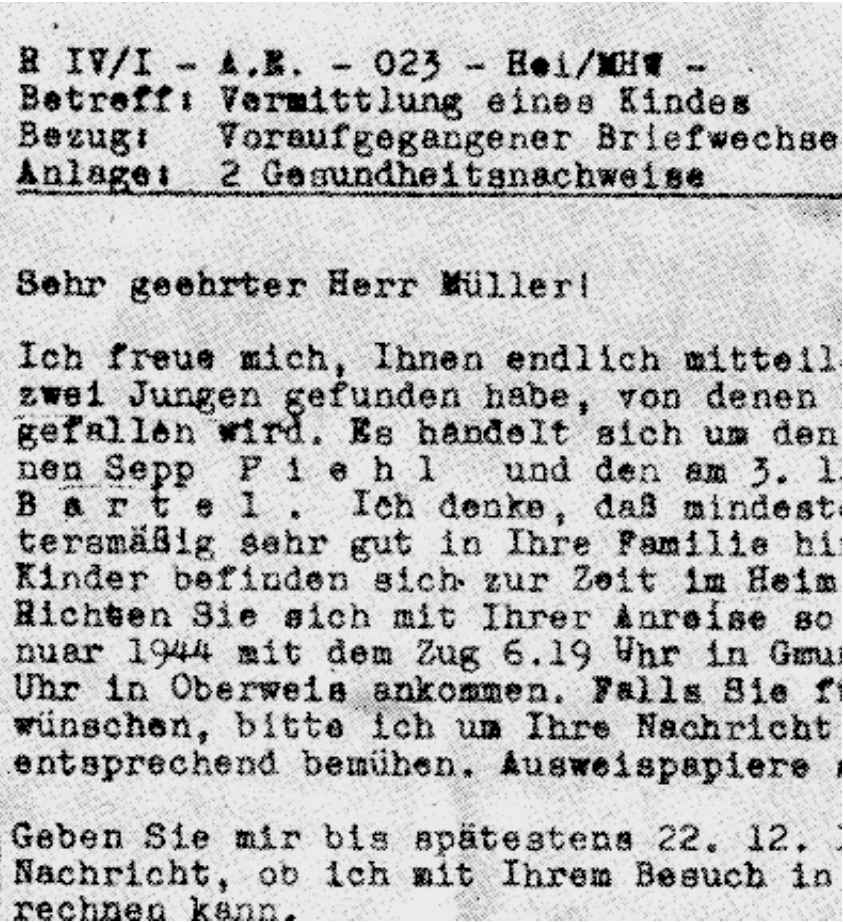
It would be naive to deny that societies today are undergoing profound transformations. Suddenly, we are aware of everything happening in the world. Yet, solidarity is selective—it is impossible to stand in solidarity with every conflict, no matter how much we might wish to believe in the illusion of the internet’s inclusivity.

We now live in a world stripped of informational sovereignty, a world in which control over information is illusory. Borders have lost their meaning—anyone can infiltrate a nation’s political space. For centuries, small countries were shielded by the barrier of their languages. Czech is not an easy language to learn. But today, in the era of the internet’s universal tongue, it has never been easier to manipulate the politics of small nations.

To his friend Edgar Degas, Stéphane Mallarmé once wrote: "But it is not at all with ideas that one makes poetry. It is with words." He also remarked that literature consists of nothing more, and nothing less, than twenty-six letters. But what becomes of the arts when we are losing most of our words? In an Orwellian sense, language is shrinking—dismantled, eroded—by way of the internet.

Not every war is waged over land and resources. Some wars are fought over people—the necessary people to speak your language.

THE TORN DIARIES OF Z. V.



THE EARLY WORKS

At my steps,
the rabbi turned, half-hunched,
propped against the railing, he looked
like history:

A fallen Hebrew letter, shaken loose
from the Torah.

Jerusalem, October 1989

... that the biographies of parents
should be written by their most relent-
less critics: their children.

Brno, Sept. 1992

And envy, my father added, is a vile
feeling. Uncle Sam agreed in theory,
but not in practice...

Algiers. 2011.

THE LATER YEARS

And they said unto Moses, Because there
were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken
us away to die in the wilderness?
(Ex. 14:11)

... dijetom još morao je u školi da mokri
poslije svih, jer je bio obrezan...
Prag. Duben. 2006.

Wir brauchen nicht nur das Stück Brot .
Wir brauchen den Brotlaib selbst
Frankfurt. Leden.





The Creative Team



Zuko Garagić is a filmmaker, writer, and scholar whose work explores the intersections of memory, history, and identity through a dynamic interweaving of fiction, documentary, and essayistic form.

Deeply process-driven, his films embrace disassembled narratives and disjointed forms— blurring the boundaries between the real and the imagined to create evocative, participatory works. Through collaborations with non-professional actors, Zuko invites public engagement, using the cinematic apparatus as both an investigative and democratizing tool.

His films, which have screened and won at international festivals, and exhibited at institutions and platforms across Paris, Beijing, Prague, Moscow, and New York, have been described as “provocative amalgamations that challenge narrative and institutional norms.”

He is a graduate of New York University (summa cum laude) and the MFA Film program at Columbia University, where he taught courses in fiction and nonfiction filmmaking. Zuko is developing an interdisciplinary project that examines the Yugoslav volunteers in the Spanish Civil War, using fragments from letters and diaries of the Dimitrov and Đuro Đaković battalions to narrate the biography of Koča Popović. Currently he is a PhD student at the Univeristy of Chicago, where his research examines the fragmentary and epistolary nature of the travelogues and films of Yugoslav artist Zuko Džumhur.

His works, epigrammatic and fragmentary in essence, resemble notes hastily inscribed in the margins of a traveler’s weathered journal. Yet within his work, we encounter a vibrant mélange—at times unfurling into an expressionist exuberance, at others contracting into surrealist silence—ultimately forging the most potent mode of expression, one that is, above all, vividly alive.



Edson Bichon is, at his core, a visualist—his sensibility governed by the tyranny of the image, by the silent grammar of framing and light. His aesthetic is an inheritance of dislocation: the rigid and tight geometries of Hong Kong, the languid illuminations of summer in Nantes—a dialectic of constraint and expanse that finds resolution only in the image itself. His contribution to this world in ANATOMY OF A LOST SOUND, a world fractured in language yet singular in ideology, lies precisely in his ability to distill the multiplicity of experience into a singular, immutable frame.

The objective: to juxtapose the vast, unyielding sprawl of the fields with claustrophobic compositions—suffocation as both isolation and indoctrination. Do these children exist as captives of an idea, ensnared in a choreography of subjugation? Or are they nurtured into demagogues, anti-heroes forged to become latter-day Cadmuses, Meleagers—figures of both destruction and creation, bound to an irreversible fate?

Mr. Bichon’s previous works have been lauded for their unwavering pursuit of intensity within the banal, his lens unearthing the humanity that is in plain view, in the unassuming.

Maxen Garagić was the binding force that held the film together. Having spent much of his childhood on sets, immersed in the machinery of major productions as an actor, he has long been driven by an impulse to interrogate, deconstruct, and ultimately transcend the lessons of his youth. His ethos is one of practice and experimentation—an instinctive resistance to dogma, an understanding that true creation lies not in rigid adherence but in perpetual revision. It is precisely this disposition that makes him the natural antithesis of the nationalist mentality, which, by its very nature, seeks not to produce but to dismantle, to undermine, to act only insofar as it negates, as it seeks to surpass the Other in a hollow contest of supremacy.

In that sense, Maxen is the ideal ally in any creative battle: equal parts courage and prudence, a rare mix of vision and adaptability. His charisma is not merely infectious but productive—an ability to transform obstacles into opportunities, to absorb every challenge into the very fabric of the project, turning adversity itself into an advantage.



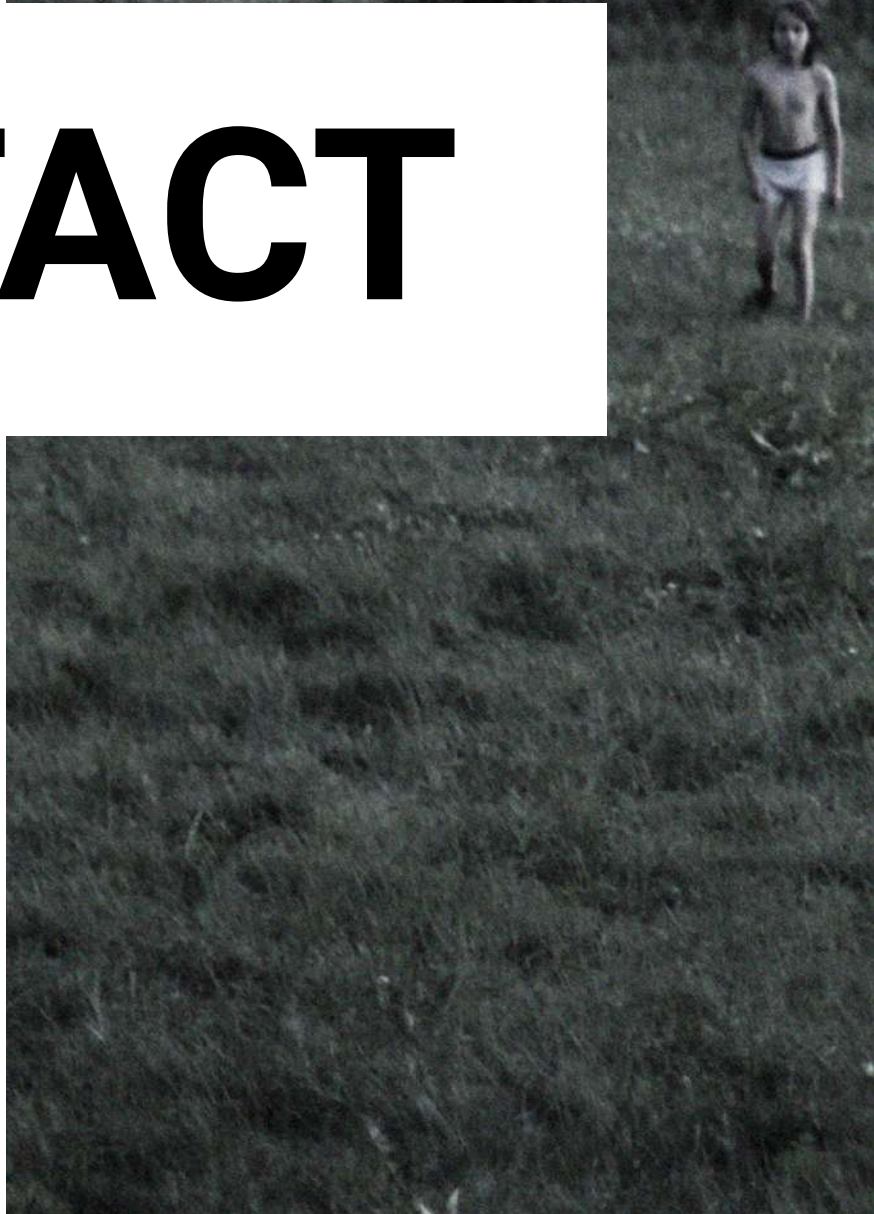




Produced in partial fulfillment of the MFA degree in Film
at Columbia University School of the Arts



a Fragile Hands production



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