

WIP G The Platform



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Georgia

GENRE | FORMAT | LANGUAGE | RUNNING TIME: Documentary | Digital Format | Georgian, Mandarin | 90 mins

DIRECTOR:

Nino ORJONIKIDZE

Vano ARSENISHVILI

PRODUCER:

Nino ORJONIKIDZE

HAF GOALS:

Funds, Sales agents, Pre-sales, Festival Screening

BUDGET:

US\$ 117,780

SECURED BUDGET:

US\$ 57,188

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

First Feature Director

ONE-SENTENCE SYNOPSIS

An old railway platform in a remote valley of Georgia, situated on the “New Silk Road” linking China with Europe, suddenly becomes a site for immense change.

SYNOPSIS

The scarcely populated village, languishing in poverty and solitude, suddenly becomes a battlefield for big changes. Hundreds of Chinese settle in the area to build a fast railway, which most probably will lead to abolition of an old village platform and drastic reshape of their landscape. Villagers living around the site await changes with hope and fear. The ambiguous nature of construction process and their inability to communicate with Chinese due to language and cultural barriers makes the reality even more obscure for villagers. The film follows the characters and situations that developed around the railway station for five years – till the demolition process reaches the platform itself – the only steady point in the whole area full of unpredictable changes. It all starts as a comedy but slowly turns into a drama. The situation becomes so tense that workers go on strike with no hope of efficient settlement, since parties, including high officials, cannot manage to communicate properly due to the language barrier. Miscommunication leads to subsequent tension and Chinese and villagers attack each other. Villagers start to revolt. So does nature – in the most critical moment landslides start endangering the whole project and the village itself.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

A 5-year long observation of this remote valley in Georgia shows the drastic changes it has undergone due to the New Silk Road railway route construction. At the crossroads of Europe and Asia, in the shadow of a giant neighbour, Russia, Georgia still struggles to find its own importance and place on the world map. Therefore, the train from China to Europe is seen as something vital for the country. Beyond this global agenda, locally people are unaware of what is happening to them next. They are stuck between construction and deconstruction. For villagers, all this is an aggressive intrusion into their lives and a harmful reshaping of their landscape; for the country it means a route from China to Europe with the total absence of the Russians. The time we committed to observing one particular community gave us the unique opportunity and material to experience real changes and what they really mean to people – lives and deaths, joys and sorrows of ordinary, unnoticed but charismatic characters. To zoom in on things that are blurred from the fast trains, that fade away from a global perspective. This is what interests us.

DIRECTOR

Nino ORJONIKIDZE (Same as Producer)

Vano ARSENISHVILI

Vano Arsenishvili – (co-director and cinematographer) studied at the Vienna Film Academy and Tbilisi Theatre and Film University. He is co-director, cinematographer and editor of an award winning *English Teacher* (2013) *Alzaney* (2009) and *The Bridge* (2015). Apart from filmmaking, Vano also teaches documentary at the Caucasus Media School, GIPA and Black Sea University. He works as a consultant and editor on numerous film projects in Georgia and the South Caucasus. He is the director of Artefact Production. Vano was a jury member of a short and animation film at Dok Leipzig 2017.

PRODUCER

Nino ORJONIKIDZE

Nino Orjonikidze (Director and Producer) is a documentary filmmaker, who graduated from Goldsmiths, University of London. She is the author of *English Teacher* (Best Documentary Focus Caucasus – Cinedoc 2013); *Alzaney* (2009), nominated for prizes at a number of international festivals including DOK Leipzig, Krakow Film Festival and others; and *The Bridge*, screened at Vision Du Reel 2015. Nino teaches documentary filmmaking at the Caucasus School of Journalism and Media Management (GIPA) and works as a mentor/editor of the international media platform 'Chai-Khana', supervising short documentary film production in the South Caucasus.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Artefact Production

Artefact Production, established 10 years ago in Tbilisi, Georgia by documentary filmmakers Nino Orjonikidze and Vano Arsenishvili, focuses on artistic documentary and experimental film production and transmedia projects. It co-produces and co-develops projects with many regional partners, including Sakdoc Film, Chai-Khana and others. Selected projects include *10 minutes of Democracy*, *Plastic*, *Speechless* by Salome Jashi, *Alzaney*, *English Teacher*, *A Journey to Leuville*, *Madonna Revisited*, and *The Platform* (in production). Artefact Production also serves as a mentoring and consultancy partner for numerous organisations and educational institutions in the South Caucasus.