



THE BUS TO AMERIKA

(AMERİKA OTOBÜSÜ)

Turkey

PAS Nantes 2016

PRODUIRE AU SUD
FESTIVAL DES 3 CONTINENTS
nantes

Category : Comedy drama

Length : 90'

Language : Kurdish and Turkish

Shooting format : HD 4K

Shooting location : Batman, Turkey

Shooting dates : September 2017

Expected date of completion : February 2018

Stage of production : Late development/production stage

Budget : 760 000 €

Financing in place : 100 000 €

Financing supports : M3 Film, Mars Production, Deferrals, Turkish-German coproduction development fund

Workshops and platforms attended : Paris Co-production Village, First Films First Goethe Institut Young Directors Academy 1st Film Development Program, Talents Sarajevo Pack&Pitch, Antalya Film Forum

Current situation : Closing financial strategy



Nefes POLAT - PRODUCER (Mars Production)



Nefes produced an MA project at London Film School. She was Zeynep Atakans' personal assistant during the shooting of WINTER SLEEP. She was one of the project managers in Zeynofilm and YAPIMLAB from 2012 to 2015 and also she was the assistant director of 1st Antalya Film Forum Co-production and Project Development Market. She is currently the head of production for Mars Production which is both a production and distribution production company. She is associate producer of Something Useful by Pelin Esmer which is the latest feature film project of Mars Production. She was selected to the 10th Talents Sarajevo and THE BUS TO AMERIKA was one of 6 projects in Pack & Pitch selection.

Derya DURMAZ – DIRECTOR & WRITER



Durmaz studied Economy, Human Rights Law & Acting and received *Armenia Turkey Cinema Platform* Best Project Award & Turkish Ministry of Culture's Production Support with her 1st short film ZIAZAN. Ziazan participated in over 40 festivals, won 11 awards and received coverage in Washington Post and Monocle. Her 2nd short *Mother Virgin No More / Gri Bölge* was selected to 65th Berlinale *Generation 14plus Short Film Competition*. The film participated in over 20 festivals and won 2 awards. Both films' world sales-distribution were acquired by Kurz Film Agentur Hamburg. Durmaz is one of 20 filmmakers selected to Toronto Film Festival TALENT LAB 2015. She was selected to the BERLINALE TALENTS 2016 and was one of 4 Talents selected to be portrayed at Deutsche Welle Arts .21 speciale Close-up 2016 - How young filmmakers see the world. With her debut feature film project in development THE BUS TO AMERIKA, she is one of 8 filmmakers selected to First Films First Goethe Institute Young Directors Academy South East Europe 2016.

SYNOPSIS

10 year-old Yazidi boy Sefran lives in a refugee camp in Turkey. His family fled there when news broke that ISIS was approaching their town. Imaginative Sefran's favorite thing is watching the suburban bus he calls "The Bus to Amerika" pass by the camp. He dreams about taking off on it to Amerika with his family and becoming a pop star. But one day Sefran's daydreams will turn into nightmares, as he gets accused of eating the forbidden vegetable of their religion, the lettuce. Through the plot of a manipulative boy who has eyes on his girlfriend, Sefran's little mistake turns into a big issue where all the kids of the camp start talking about how he sinned and how his family will be banished because of his sin. Soon Sefran decides he has no choice but to leave the camp to protect his family. Will the journey take him to his dreamland, Amerika or to a place familiar yet unexpected?

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

«The bus to Amerika is a fictional story inspired by my experience of working with Yazidi children in a refugee camp. During my work I learned that eating lettuce was a sin for Yazidis. I was deeply moved by one boy, Kazim's effort of trying to assure me that it was OK for me to eat it; it was about his belief, not mine...

There's an endless religion based war at the other side of Turkey's border. While we also became party to it, my constant feeling for a while has been that 'I cannot breath'. At such a time, Kazim's attitude felt like a breath of fresh air. We live at a time where we are bombarded with instant news and images of tragedy. Consequently, people don't react to human tragedy any more. Therefore I believe we need to change the narrative and create optimistic counterpoints where positive and personal side is present, without ignoring the negative. Through this story which will be told from a boy's perspective, I would like to reach anyone who has their own version of the American dream, who ever cheated a little for something too tasty to give up, who ever had to make a sacrifice for their loved ones and had the courage to face the consequences of their mistakes. When I do so, I hope that the audiences will be able to put themselves in my hero's shoes and realize that 'the refugee' could be anyone, even themselves.» [...]

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