

THE USERS

a film by Ivan Ikić

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Ivan Ikić

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Technical Information

Working Title: The Users
Director: Ivan Ikić
Screenplay: Ivan Ikić
Nationality: Serbia
Genre: Drama
Format: 2K
Length: 90 min
Shooting location: Belgrade, Serbia

Production Company: Sense Production
www.senseproduction.rs
Producer: Milan Stojanovic
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Director's Biography and Filmography

Ivan Ikić (born in 1982, Belgrade, Yugoslavia) studied film and television direction at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts within the University of Arts in Belgrade. He attended both the Berlinale Talent Campus and the Berlinale Dox Clinic in 2008. He has made several short films and documentaries, including the documentary road movies **Tarot Serbia!** (*Tarot Srbija!* 2010), **Barbarians** (*Varvari*, 2014) his feature film debut won Special Jury Prize in East of the West program at Karlovy Vary Film Festival and was screened and awarded at numerous film festivals. He is currently developing his second feature **The Users**.

Festival de Cannes

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Since 2000, the Festival Residence has provided each year accommodation and support to twelve selected young directors in order to help them prepare their first or second feature film. A jury presided by a film director sits twice a year, selecting these young filmmakers on the basis of their short films, or

even first feature film, and the merits of their feature film project. During their 4-and-a-half-month stay in Paris, they work on the writing of their feature film project, have meetings with professionals and try, with the support of the Cannes Film Festival, to bring their project to co-production status.



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Synopsis

Robert is a melancholic teenager, a user of “Home for children and youth with special needs”, whose tendency to lock in more than once resulted in cut wrists. These infertile attempts for suicide were often accompanied by Dragana, his faithful friend and accomplice, very much in love with Robert. Their relationship is interrupted when Marija, a new user with aggressive behavior, comes to the Home. She also falls in love with Robert, hiding this from Dragana, her instant-new-best-friend.

The triangle is broken when Dragana, hurt, ends communication with both and Robert’s counselor separates Robert from Marija because of the bad influence she has on him. After Marija tries to stab him, the counselor transfers her to another home. After months of separation and psychological pressure he’s been under by his counselor, Robert meets Marija again, determined to complete their plan of cutting their wrists together.

Artistic Statement

The users are children who were born with mental handicaps, abandoned by their families and placed in specialized institutions where most of them live their whole lives. The institutions are located away from urban areas and represent modern reservations for these children, which have been condemned to isolation by society from the start. The users rarely come in contact with the outer world, they almost never have visitors, and they have nowhere to go. The story follows the relationship between Robert, Dragana and Marija, their mutual attraction and combined plans for suicide. Abandoned by everyone, with no life perspective, condemned to a lifetime of hiding from society because of their defects, in surroundings with strict rules of conduct and survival, emotions of the main characters explode and linger on a thin line between eros and thanatos, threatening to, at any moment, end in tragedy.



Synopsis

Robert est un adolescent mélancolique, usager de « Maisons d’accueil pour enfants et jeunes ayant des besoins particuliers », et dont la tendance à s’enfermer l’a conduit plus d’une fois à s’ouvrir les poignets. Ses tentatives stériles de suicide avaient souvent lieu en présence de Dragana, sa fidèle amie et complice, très amoureux de Robert. Leur relation est interrompue lorsque Marija, au comportement agressif, intègre la maison d’accueil. Elle tombe également amoureuse de Robert, le cachant à Dragana, son nouveau-meilleur-ami-du-moment. Le triangle est brisé lorsque Dragana, blessée, interrompt toute communication avec les deux , et que le conseiller de Robert le sépare de Marija à cause de la mauvaise influence qu’elle a sur lui. Marija tente de poignarder le conseiller qui la transfère dans une autre maison. Après plusieurs mois de séparation et une tension psychique que lui a fait subir son conseiller, Robert retrouve à nouveau Marija, résolu à achever leur plan de s’ouvrir les poignets ensemble.

Note d’intention

Les usagers sont des enfants nés avec des handicaps mentaux, abandonnés par leur famille et placés dans des institutions spécialisées où la plupart d’entre eux vivent toute leur vie. Les institutions sont situées loin des zones urbaines et représentent des réserves modernes pour ces enfants, condamnés à l’isolement par la société dès le début. Les usagers sont rarement en contact avec le monde extérieur, ils n’ont presque jamais de visiteurs, et ils n’ont nulle part où aller. L’histoire suit la relation entre Robert, Dragana et Marija, leur attraction mutuelle et leurs plans combinés de suicide. Abandonnés par tous, sans perspective de vie, condamnés à se cacher de la société en raison de leurs difficultés à vivre dans un environnement aux règles de conduite et de survie strictes. Les émotions des personnages principaux explosent et s’attardent sur une ligne mince entre Eros et Thanatos, menaçant, à tout moment, de se terminer en tragédie.