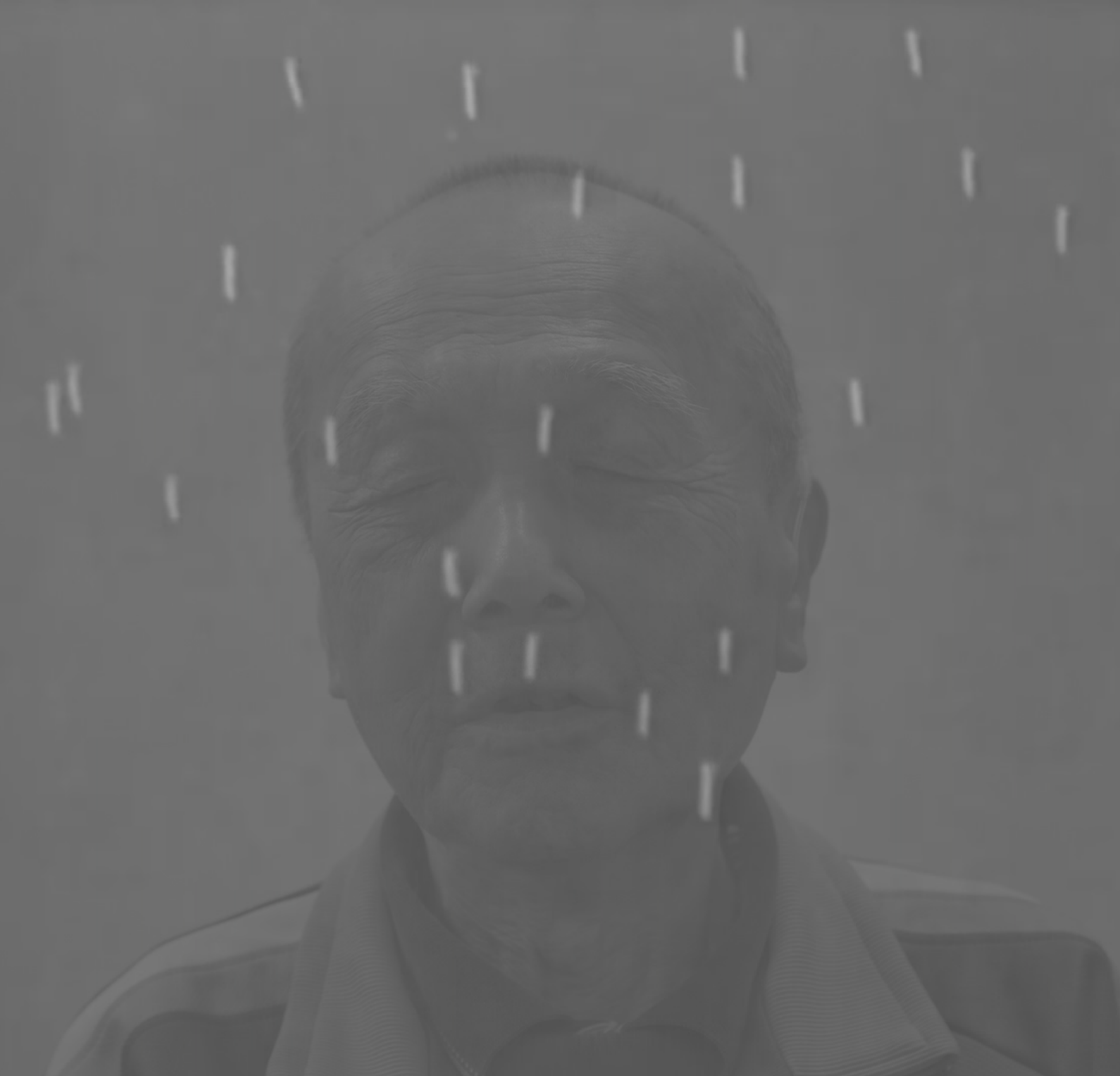


LES FILMS DE L'AUTRE
PRESENTS

The Eyes Don't See

A FEATURE DOCUMENTARY BY SIMON PLOUFFE



ORIGINAL TITLE

Les yeux ne font pas le regard

FILMING LOCATIONS

Germany · Ukraine · Serbia · Bosnia
Japan · Indian-Kashmir

APPROX. RUNTIME

90' + 52'

STAGE

In development

DELIVERY

December 2022

TEASER LINK

.

PRODUCER

Les Films de l'Autre (Québec, Canada)

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LOGLINE

The Eyes Don't See follows the personal stories of people who have lost their eyesight in armed conflicts around the world. Carried by an immersive sound environment and visual research that immerse us in the reality and the perceptions of these resilient and inspiring men and women, this film questions our own blindness face to violence and suffering of our time, despite the overabundance of images that reach us.

SYNOPSIS

The common thread of this film follows the trajectory of men and women who survived the atrocities of war with their extraordinary qualities which can be seen in any human being leading an ordinary life suddenly confronted with immense challenges. These heroes and heroines are the best examples of resilience and openness to others that can exist. We are often told of war, but rarely of peace and these characters reflect that. They trust people and their ability to adapt because their experiences have transformed not only their body, but also their mind. In short, this film try to understand, how these inspiring people regain hope in humanity after a journey to the bottom of the abyss.

By avoiding over-dramatization and historical reconstruction, the film leaves it to the characters to tell us about their past, but mainly about their present. The challenge with this film is above all to discover how the absence of images influences the experience of war and how blindness changes the way these characters perceive and tell their stories. The film opts for an intimate and sometimes poetic angle that emanates from the words of Anja, Rodion, Nebojša, Aasha and Mr. Watanabe. The diversity of the situations influence the choice of regions and characters. They are all located in areas where important conflicts have been raging in the past or are still ongoing today. The approach of **The Eyes Don't See** proposes to revisit them with a new perspective, necessary for understanding our world today.



To get closer to the world of blindness, the stories presented are carried by an immersive sound environment, highlighting the sonic acuity of the characters. The voices of today, embodied and alive, allow us to question, through singular looks, on different themes related to the war, including the loss of identity, injustice, the impulse of life and death. The human being who is at the center of these conflicts must be able to tap into his inner resources in order to pass through this total darkness and find his way to a brighter destiny, which is freedom.



NEBOJŠA BOSNIA, SERBIA

In **Bosnia**, Nebojša (40), an Orthodox Serb Christian, lost his sight in 1992, at the start of the war in the former Yugoslavia, when his home was mined by an extremist. Today he is married to a woman of Bosnian Muslim origin. He returned several years after his accident, near Višegrad, to reconnect with his shepherdess mother who lives on the top of a mountain, a few meters from an old front line. His openness to others is like what he saw after his accident, a thick, dark haze that has dissipated over the years. Back then it was more of an opaque black he perceived, but today he sees more gradations of gray.

ANJA GERMANY

In 1982 in **Germany**, Anja (48), then 11, was returning from a horseback ride when she heard friends trying to open an old box, found in the woods, which turned out to be a mine anti-personal panzer that exploded. All the kids died instantly, except Anja who was behind them. Since her accident, Anja believes she has acquired a certain gift which allows her to feel things better. If she could see again today, she would like to contemplate a snow-capped mountain very close to Kleve, where she lost her sight.



**RODION UKRAINE**

In **Ukraine**, Rodion (25) lost the use of his right eye in 2015, during an exchange of fire between pro-Russian militants and the Ukrainian army. Now that he has accepted his condition, he has made it his duty to help volunteers like himself return from the front lines to make up for the lack of state support. He and several of his colleagues react to the sounds of flock of birds, since they sound eerily like the sounds of rockets before they reach their target. The first color Rodion saw after his accident was white — the absence of color.

MR WATANABE JAPAN

In **Japan**, few remember it, but by the end of World War II on March 10, 1945, 51% of the city of Tokyo was reduced to ashes by American bombing raids. During wanderings in the megalopolis, Mr. Watanabe (85 years old) remembers the events of that time when his house and several bridges were destroyed down by air raids. The hospital where Mr. Watanabe was being treated for his vision problems was demolished by shelling. Due to lack of treatment, he lost his sight in October 1945.





AASHA INDIAN-KASHMIR

In **Kashmir**, the Indian government is literally blinding its educated youth. Young people are hit by police and paramilitary fire, sometimes in the face, with hundreds of tiny pellets which are often entrenched because they are found in the flesh and organs. While those affected do not die, many will lose their sight. This is the case of Aasha (22), a student who calls for the liberation of the Kashmiris.



NOTE ON TREATMENT

By adopting an exploratory form, the editing aims not only to model the mechanisms of memory, but to preserve an opening that allow the viewer to invest the story. It thus offers the possibility of identification with the images, of a consensual collective construction: the story of a departure, the desire for a renewal, real or dreamed, then the hope of another world to reinvent itself.

Successive back and forth between speech and silence, hope and disarray, light and darkness offer a story where dream and reality intermingle before unraveling. The archives and the various cameras come to question the multiplicity of visions and sounds that the blind people senses of the world. Fragments of memories, sound and visual memories tinged with veiled archives; this veil in front of the eyes which prevents the viewer from capturing the harsh reality. Parallel editing allows us to share some of the stories that resonate to each other, in different languages, by different people.



SIMON PLOUFFE

Simon Plouffe lives and works as a filmmaker-producer in Montreal. His experience in sound leads him to explore sonic universes in his films. *Others' Gold*, has been shown at RIDM, Dok.Fest Munich, Guadalajara, Big Sky. *Those Who Come, Will Hear*, has won the Jury Award in Ann Arbor, the best documentary in Ficwallmapu Chile and Best Sound at the Gala Quebec Cinema in 2019. He is currently developing a feature documentary on blindness caused by armed conflicts and also a short experimental doc on an underwater forest in a hydroelectric reservoir.





FILMOGRAPHY

2022	FORESTS EXPERIMENTAL DOCUMENTARY SHORT	Rough-cut screening link
2018	THOSE WHO COME, WILL HEAR 77 MIN DOCUMENTARY Distributor · Les Films du 3 Mars	Premiered at the 56 th Ann Arbor Film Festival, Jury Award at Ann Arbor, Iris for Best Sound, Best Documentary at Ficwallmapu Chile. Theatrical run in 11 theaters
2011	OTHERS' GOLD 60/52/45 MIN DOCUMENTARY Distributor · Vidéographe	Premiered at RIDM, Merit Award for Storytelling at MIWFF, Silver Lei Award at Honolulu Film Awards. Theatrical run in 4 theaters · Broadcasted on Radio-Canada and RDI

ABOUT LES FILMS DE L'AUTRE

Les Films de l'Autre is an artist-run center whose mission is to support formal research and the freedom of creation in independent cinema and to encourage the emergence of strong, original and diversified voices. The organization occupies a unique place in the Quebec film landscape by bringing together about 40 filmmakers who act both as producers and directors of their works. Les Films de l'Autre has a production infrastructure whose main objective is to support the production of auteur films through the services and training offered to filmmakers who are able to produce their films.

The last four productions:

- *Prière pour une mitaine perdue* (2020) · Jean-François Lesage · Best Canadian Feature at Hot Docs
- *Une femme, ma mère* (2019) · Claude Demers · Grand Prize for Best National Feature at RIDM
- *Jongué, Carnet nomade* (2019) · Carlos Ferrand · Lifetime Artistic Achievement Award GGArts
- *Nitrate* (2019) · Yousra Benziane · FIPRESCI International Critics' Prize

