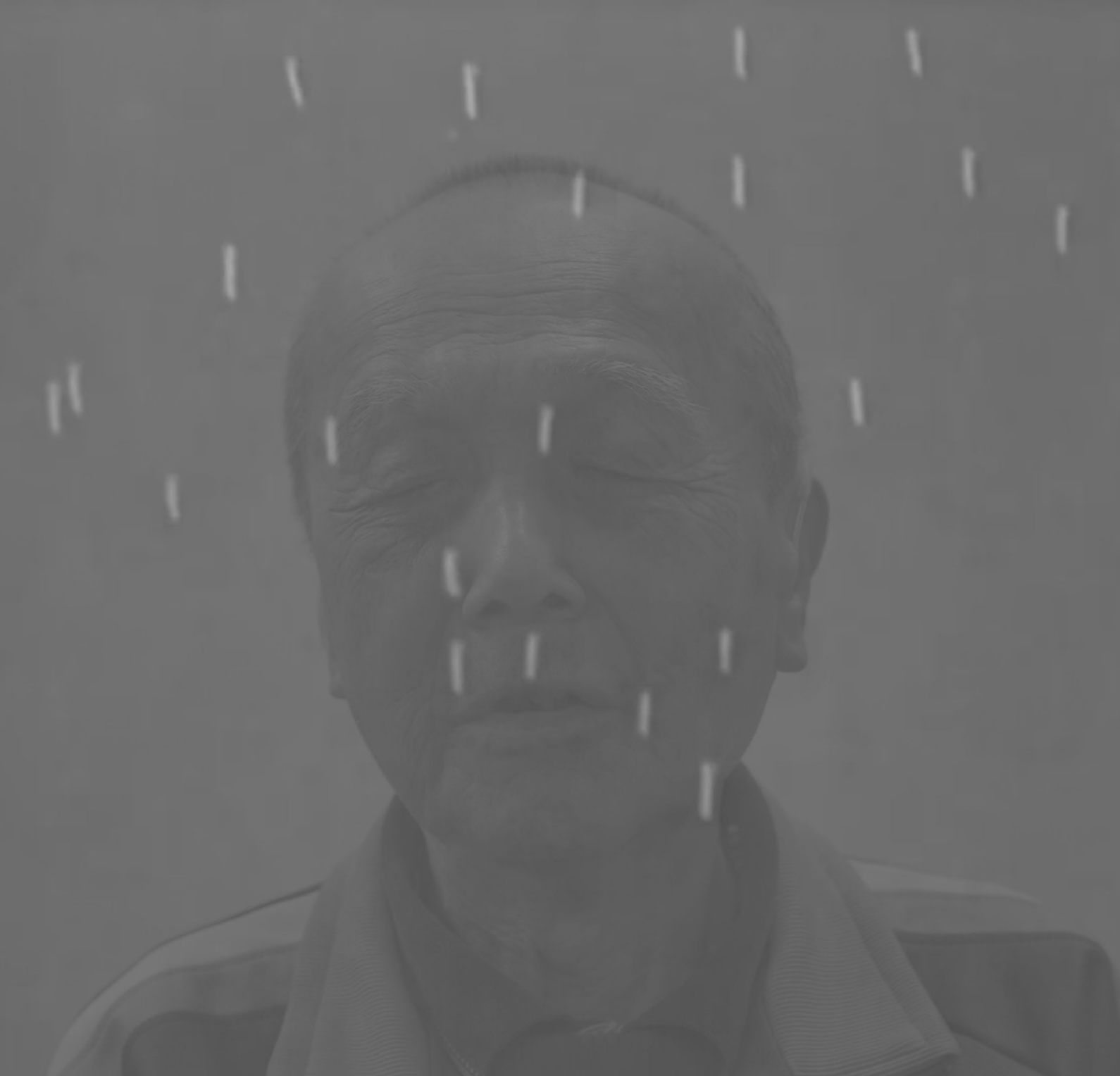


LES FILMS DE L'AUTRE
PRESENTS

Les yeux ne font pas le regard

A FEATURE DOCUMENTARY BY SIMON PLOUFFE



ORIGINAL TITLE

Les yeux ne font pas le regard

FILMING LOCATIONS

Germany · Ukraine · Serbia
Bosnia · Japan · Colombia

APPROX. RUNTIME

90' + (52')

STAGE

Post-production

MOVIE GENRE

Documentary

DELIVERY

November 2023

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PRODUCER

Les Films de l'Autre (QC, Canada)

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LOGLINE

An anti-war polyphonic story, **Les yeux ne font pas le regard** follows the personal story of people who have lost their sight during armed conflicts. Carried by an immersive sound environment that plunges us in the reality and the perceptions of these resilient and inspiring people, this film questions our own blindness face to violence and suffering of our time — despite the overabundance of images that reach us — and highlights the urgency of lending an ear to hear these stories.

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, Steven 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 **Les yeux ne font pas le regard** 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 (44), 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 (52), 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. Each character has a color of its own, and the first color Anja saw after she lost her eyesight, was red.



**RODION UKRAINE**

In **Ukraine**, Rodion (32) 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 (84) 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.





STEVEN COLOMBIA

In **Colombia**, war has been raging for more than 50 years following the assassination of a president. The repression degenerates into a veritable civil war between rebels, paramilitaries and drug traffickers. More than 450,000 people have lost their lives, millions have been displaced and children have been abducted. A ceasefire was agreed on January 1, 2023 as part of Gustavo Petro's government's "total peace" initiative to end the conflict that persists despite the dissolution of the FARC in 2017. Steven (21) was part of a criminal organization when he lost his sight during a clash caused by a territorial dispute between two rival gangs. Today he is interested in locating the songs of birds by ear with his friends Juan and Lucia, in the cloudy mountains of the Cauca Valley.

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*Il faut courageusement partir de l'idée que d'une guerre, on ne voit rien.
Si on ne voit rien, il faut penser sans voir, ce qui autorise, de temps à autre,
à voir quelque chose, par surprise, ou au défaut de ce qui est montré.*

Alain Badiou, *Guerre et temps*



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.

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Images have been reproached for being a way of watching suffering at a distance, as if there were some other way of watching.

Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*

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 / Tiohtià:ke / Mooniyang. 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. In May 2022, he released *Forests*, a short exploratory documentary, premiering it at various esteemed events including the Cannes Film Market (Short Film Corner), the 62nd Krakow FF, and the 75th edition of the Edinburgh FF.



FILMOGRAPHY

2022

FORESTS

16 MIN DOCUMENTARY SHORT

Distributor · Vidéographe

[Trailer link](#)

Jury Award at Trento, Italy

Best art and experimentation film at RVQC, Canada

Premiered at the 62nd Krakow FF, Poland

2018

THOSE WHO COME, WILL HEAR

77 MIN DOCUMENTARY

Distributor · Les Films du 3 Mars

[Trailer link](#)

Jury Award at Ann Arbor, USA

Iris for Best Sound at Gala Québec Cinéma, Canada

Best Documentary at Ficwallmapu, Chile

Premiered at the 56th Ann Arbor FF, USA

Theatrical run in 11 theaters

2011

OTHERS' GOLD

60/52/45 MIN DOCUMENTARY

Distributor · Vidéographe

Merit Award for Storytelling at WIFF, USA

Silver Lei Award at Honolulu Film Awards, USA

Premiered at RIDM, Canada

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:

- *Zo Reken* (2021) · Emanuel Licha · Best Canadian Feature at Hot Docs
- *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
- *Nitrate* (2019) · Yousra Benziane · FIPRESCI International Critics' Prize



