

*Revue*  
 69<sup>th</sup> Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
Panorama

# STITCHES

A FILM BY MIROSLAV TERZIĆ



WEST END PRODUCTIONS in co-production with  
NORA PRODUCTION GROUP, SPIRITUS MOVENS and SCCA/PRO.BA

INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY

STARRING

Snežana  
Bogdanović

Marko  
Bačović

Jovana  
Stojiljković

Vesna  
Trivalić

Dragana  
Varagić

Pavle  
Čemerikić



## Synopsis

Inspired by true events, set in contemporary Belgrade, STITCHES tells the story of a woman who firmly believes that her newborn baby was stolen from her 18 years ago, while she was told that her baby died. With obsession and perseverance, she is fighting one last time against the police, the hospital bureaucracy and even her own family, in order to uncover the truth.



## The Seamstress Story

*"My dead baby is alive. He is 20 years old now."*

- Drinka Radonjic. "TV Potraga" TV B92, Special Case 4, December 2009.

*"Disappearing babies at the hospital: Serbia has to give answers about the children's fate and compensate the damages done to the parents"*

- European Court of Human Rights, Press Release 26.3.2013.

*"After pressure from the EU, Serbia has finally formed a committee to investigate and determine whether babies were systematically stolen from Belgrade hospitals over the course of many years. If these rumors are proven to be true, Serbia will be the third country exposed where such crimes occurred."*

- Neskovic, Mirjana. "The Fate of Stolen Babies" Politika Serbian National Daily, March 2015

*The script for "Stitches" is based on the testimonial of Drinka Radonjic, a seamstress from Belgrade who had been searching for her "dead son" for almost two decades. A few days after her delivery she had been told by her obstetrician that her infant son had died. But she never got his body or found out where the hospital buried him. She fought with hospital administration, doctors, police, courts, and municipality officials, in order to obtain the proper death certificate that would prove where her newborn son was buried. During the course of that long fight, she found more and more irregularities in the hospital documentation and official municipality papers that proved her doubts and belief that the baby never died. And after almost twenty years, she finally uncovered the truth.*





## Director's statement

### The story of motherhood, oppression and the search for truth

I became a father for the first time in 2001. That same year, a few months before the biggest event of my life, I heard the story about the abductions of the newborn babies in hospitals. The story about their selling; false death certificates; deceived mothers and ruined families. The birth that was about to happen, provoked fear in me, not only due to the natural question if everything would be all right, but rather whether we would fall into a similar turn of events. Decisive in fighting this battle, I started to dig, investigate archives and look for witness that wanted and had something to tell about this matter; a matter that rarely rises in the press and seems more as a fiction than reality. Was it true? Maybe it was.

I've found in Archives of "Politika" (the oldest and most popular newspaper in Serbia) dozens of articles about abductions of the newborns.

All cases had the same pattern. The child is delivered. Tired mother is sedated. When she wakes up she is told that her baby has died. She is advised not to see the baby's

body, as the body is treated as a pathological waste and it looks disturbing. The autopsies are incomplete and unsigned. The death certificates are fabricated. All documentation is either contradictory or incomplete. None of the cases have ever been solved. The majority of the cases had occurred during the late eighties and early nineties in the dawn of the war that tore Yugoslavia apart. I saw these events as the ultimate evidence of our human and moral deterioration that we still have not recovered from.

A few years ago I met Mrs. Drinka Radonjic. She was my aunt's seamstress. After twenty years she believed she had found her child and was proofing her case in court. I went to a tailor shop in the center of Belgrade to interview Mrs. Radonjic. She was a firm, brave and humble woman. Drinka found her son but he didn't want to meet her, as he was told that his mother abandoned him when he was born. She did not have a lawyer, she was representing herself in court.

There are over 500 families that are trying to find their children. There are over 500 different stories and many more unheard voices. I've decided to tell one of them.









## Miroslav Terzić DIRECTOR

Born on February 8th 1969 in Belgrade.

Miroslav graduated the International Law at the Belgrade University.

He attended post graduate studies at the Faculty Dramatic Arts, at University of Belgrade.

His first feature film "Redemption Street" (2012) premiered at Sarajevo Film Festival.

In the field of advertising, as a director, Miroslav has collaborated with some the biggest marketing agencies in the region, such as Leo Burnett, Oghilvy & Mather, McCann Ericson, Publicis, Saatchi & Saatchi, for their biggest ad campaigns.

### Awards

"Redemption Street" film

- 41st Film Festival in Sopot, Serbia his film won three awards, among which is for best film.
- Cottbus Film Festival - award for the best debut film
- 18th Sarajevo Film Festival, Heart of Sarajevo award for best actor





## Elma Tataragić SCRIPTWRITER

Elma Tataragić (1976) is a scriptwriter, professor and festival programmer. She graduated Dramaturgy at Sarajevo Academy of Performing Arts and obtained her Master of Science degree and PhD in Film and Literature. She has been with Sarajevo Film Festival since it was founded in 1995, where she now works as selector for Competition Programs and CineLink Industry Days.

She co-wrote short film First Death Experience (2001) and wrote and produced short North Went Mad (2003), both directed by Aida Begić. She has produced and co-written the feature film Snow (2008) also directed by A. Begić, shown in the Semaine de la critique at Cannes

Film Festival 2008, where the film won the Grand Prix. The film has been shown at over 80 festivals and won over 30 international awards. She is General Secretary and a member of Filmmakers Association of Bosnia and Herzegovina. She has been teaching screenwriting at Sarajevo Academy of Performing Arts since 2002, now as a professor.

She is member of European Film Academy and has published two books on screenwriting. The feature film When the Day had no Name (2017) directed by Teona Mitevska which she has co-written premiered in Panorama Special at Berlinale 2017.

## Snežana Bogdanović “ANA”

One of the most prominent actresses from former Yugoslavia, Snezana Bogdanovic's theatrical work has ranged from Sophocles' Elektra to Maggie in "Cat on the Hot Tin Roof" and Mrs. Robinson in "The Graduate". During her time in theater, she won multiple national awards, receiving critical praise throughout the entire Balkan region.

Through her work in film, Snezana became known for her leading roles in "Kuduz", "Original Forgery", and "My Brother Aleksa", for which she also received numerous national film awards. Her role in "Kuduz" garnered her a nomination for a European Film Award for Best Actress and also a win with their Special Spirit Award.

Her work has also included multiple leading roles in Serbian television, one which was a Serbian adaptation

of the HBO show "In Treatment".

At the peak of her career, due to political unrest and war in former Yugoslavia, Snezana left the country and moved to the United States. She currently lives in New York City.

Snezana's most recent work was a role in "The Son", a film by Bosnian director Ines Tanovic, currently in post-production.



## West End Productions PRODUCERS

The company, which produces in East Europe mainly from offices in the West was founded by Milena Trobozic Garfield and Uliks Fehmiu.

West End Productions produced "White White World" by Oleg Novkovic. "White White World" which premiered in 2010 in the Locarno Film Festival official selection. Additionally it was shown in more than 30 international film festivals all around the world and won numerous awards, among others Golden Leopard for the best actress in Locarno and Gran Prix in Cottbus Festival. The film has been selected among 40 best European movies of 2011. by the European Film Academy (EFA).

West End produced "Patria" by director Oleg Novkovic in 2014. The film had its world premiere at Warsaw International Film Festival in 2016.

### **Company Contact** **West End Productions** **(Milena Garfield, Uliks Fehmiu)**

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LINE PRODUCERS **Uroš Lazić, Ljiljana Đuričko** MAKE UP ARTIST **Dušica Vuksanović**  
 COSTUME DESIGNER **Zora Mojsilović** PRODUCTION DESIGNER **Ana Buljan**  
 SOUND DESIGNER **Julij Zornik** COMPOSER **Aleksandra Kovač** EDITOR **Milena Z. Petrović**  
 DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY **Damjan Radovanović SAS** SCREENWRITER **Elma Tataragić**  
 CO-PRODUCERS **Darko Vinkl, Alen Vitezić, Zdenka Gold, Amra Bakšić Čamo, Adis Đapo**  
 PRODUCERS **Uliks Fehmiu, Milena Trobozić Garfield** DIRECTOR **Miroslav Terzić**



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Screening Schedule for

**Savovi**

by Miroslav Terzić

Day	Time	Cinema
11.02.2019	20:00	International (Premiere)
12.02.2019	15:00	CineStar 3
13.02.2019	20:15	CineStar 3
15.02.2019	20:00	CinemaxX 7
<b>Press Screening</b>		
11.02.2019	09:15	Cinestar 3



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