

PRESS KIT

# *The* KISS *of the* GRASSHOPPER

Produced by  
 75<sup>th</sup> Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
Forum

a Film by ELMAR IMANOV



A COLOR OF MAY PRODUCTION IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH WADY FILMS, INCIPIT FILM, WDR CAST LENN KUDRJAWIZKI, MICHAEL HANEMANN, SOPHIE MOUSEL  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY BORRIS KEHL PRODUCTION DESIGNERS MARIAM IAKOBASHVILI, MARIE SCHÄDER, MIRA LACZKOWSKI, GIORGI KARALASHVILI  
COSTUME DESIGNER CARMEN DI PINTO MAKE UP ARTIST INA CHOCHOL SOUND RECORDIST ARNAUD MELLET SFX SUPERVISOR LEONARDO CRUCIANO VFX SUPERVISOR GIL PINHEIRO  
EDITOR BEPPE LEONETTI a.m.c. COMPOSER KYAN BAYANI SOUND DESIGNER JASCHA VIEHL RERECORDING MIXER MICHEL SCHILLINGS PRODUCTION MANAGER LINO RETTINGER  
SERVICE PRODUCERS SOPHIO BENDIASHVILI, TEKLA MACHAVARIANI, BACHO MEBURISHVILI ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS STEFAN MILOVIC, FABIANA BALSAMO WDR-COMMISSIONER ANDREA HANKE  
PRODUCER EVA BLONDIAU CO-PRODUCERS ADOLF EL ASSAL, MARTA ZACCARON  
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY ELMAR IMANOV

COLOR OF MAY

Body  
MEDIA

INCIPIT  
FILM

WDR

Ernst  
&  
Young

Film und Medien  
Stiftung NRW

Deutscher  
Filmförderfonds

FILM FUND  
EUROPE

Deutsches  
Fernsehzentrum

Crédit  
Européen

IOSOHO FILM MEDIA GUGIA

TRUSSARDI  
ALDOUSVO  
FVG

INTERNATIONAL  
CINEMA  
FESTIVAL

FFA



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# FILM DETAILS

## **RUNTIME**

128 min

## **COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION/YEAR**

Germany, Luxembourg, Italy 2025

## **ORIGINAL VERSION**

German

## **SUBTITLED VERSION**

English

## **ASPECT RATIO**

2.39:1

## **SOUND**

5.1

## **PRODUCTION COMPANY**

COLOR OF MAY (GER)

## **CO-PRODUCTION**

Wady Films (LUX), Incipit Film (IT), WDR

Funded by Creative Europe - MEDIA Programme of the European Union, Filmförderungsanstalt, Film - and Medienstiftung NRW, The Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media, Deutsche Filmförderfonds, Film Fund Luxembourg, Direzione generale Cinema e audiovisivo – Ministero della Cultura, Fondo per l'audiovisivo del Friuli Venezia Giulia, Film in Georgia Program

## LOGLINE

The writer Bernard lives in a magical-realistic world with a sheep and a turbulent relationship with his girlfriend Agata. A human-sized grasshopper appears. Bernard learns of his father's fatal diagnosis and has to come to terms with the fragility of life and the meaning of his own existence.

In the film "The Kiss of the Grasshopper", which he also wrote, director Elmar Imanov reflects on his own relationship with his father and the feelings of loss and surreality that his death has triggered in him, forcing him to redefine himself and his world.

## CAST

Lenn Kudrjawizki	Bernard
Michael Hanemann	Carlos
Sophie Mousel	Agata

## CREW

Writer/Director	Elmar Imanov
Producer	Eva Blondiau
Co-producers	Adolf El Assal Marta Zaccaron
WDR-commissioner	Andrea Hanke
Cinematography	Borris Kehl
Production Design	Mariam Iakobashvili
Costume Design	Marie Schäder Mira Laczkowski Giorgi Karalashvili
Costume Design	Carmen Di Pinto
Make-up	Ina Chochol
Sound	Arnaud Mellet
SFX Supervisor	Leonardo Cruciano
VFX Supervisor	Gil Pinheiro
Editing	Beppe Leonetti a.m.c
Music	Kyan Bayani
Sound Design	Jascha Viehl
Rerecording Mixing	Michel Schillings
Production Management	Lino Rettinger
Service Producers	Sophio Bendiashvili Tekla Machavariani Bacho Meburishvili

# SYNOPSIS

"The Kiss of the Grasshopper" unfolds in a world where magic and realism intertwine. At its heart is Bernard, a middle-aged freelance writer with an almost ritualistic love for order—he carefully wraps each of his beloved books in paper. Bernard also finds solace in crafting vehicles. His unusual roommate is a cozy sheep, a source of warmth and comfort that helps him fall asleep.

Despite a turbulent relationship marked by frequent breakups, Bernard deeply loves his girlfriend Agata. But his strongest bond is with his father, Carlos. Tragedy strikes when Carlos is violently attacked and sustains a severe concussion. Medical tests lead to the diagnosis: brain tumor.

Carlos is confronted with a challenging choice: undergoing surgery, which presents a 50% chance of survival. Without it, death is certain. Carlos refuses the surgery, leaving Bernard in shock. Reality seems to shift when the job center worker suddenly shows empathy, and Bernard encounters a grasshopper the size of a human. Like this creature, he is a lonely stranger in a world that may not be his.

# DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

I was born in the summer of 1985 in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, as the son of an architect and an artist. My childhood unfolded during one of the most challenging periods in my country's history. The Karabakh War raged at its peak, corruption ran rampant as police profited from protection money, and crime rates soared. Amid this turmoil, my father tirelessly worked as an architect day and night to support our family. Because of this, I spent a lot of time with my grandparents and roaming the streets. I clearly remember one time when my father picked me up from school. It was around 2:00 PM in the summer of 1993. I was happy to see him. He took my hand, and we left the school together. He told me we had to stop by the bakery next to the school to buy bread. By the time we returned, it was already dark. We had stood in the long line at the bakery all day, anxious about making it home before the evening curfew.. My father and I talked a lot during those moments together. As an architect, my father sharpened my sense of the space around me from a early age. The thought that the space we inhabit is often designed and imagined was something that stayed with me early on. He also showed me how to reshape reality, for example, by shifting walls or arranging and ordering trees and rooms.

In 1998, we moved to Germany. For my family, this marked a much more peaceful and fulfilling chapter in our lives. We traveled extensively, cherishing life-affirming years in our apartment in Cologne-Ehrenfeld, where I grew up. I graduated from high school but had to deal with bullying in German schools. We celebrated together when I was admitted to film school, won a student Oscar, I participated in Cannes. My films took me around the world, often pulling me far from home. On those occasions, my father would meet me at the train station, freshly ironed white shirt in hand. We'd share a quiet cigarette and a coffee before I embarked on my next journey. These small rituals, so ordinary yet deeply meaningful, stayed with me. But then, in the winter of 2014, the devastating diagnosis changed everything: SCLC – small cell lung cancer. Stage IV lung cancer. The prognosis was devastating - 12 months to live.. It was a very unfair and crushing feeling. I knew no one could understand him now; from then on, he would be lonely until death. A world collapsed for me. It manifested in different ways: sometimes in tears, sometimes hyperactively at a party. I fell into the abyss and felt like a ghost. When my father passed away after 10 months, I began a slow journey back to life. A year after he died, when I woke up from my numbness, I wrote the screenplay. Today, when I look back, I am a different person.



## **ELMAR IMANOV**

*Writer/Director*

Elmar Imanov was born in 1985 in Baku, Azerbaijan. Since 1998 he has lived in Cologne, Germany. Elmar studied film directing at the ifs international film school in Cologne. His graduation film "The Swing of the Coffin Maker" (2012) was shown at more than 120 film festivals and won 41 awards worldwide, including the Student Academy Award / Student Oscar® in the category "Best Foreign Film". His next short film TORN (2014) had its world premiere in Quinzaine des Réalisateurs / Directors' Fortnight in Cannes. Both films were produced by Eva Blondiau, with whom he founded the film production company COLOR OF MAY. His feature film debut "End of the Season" (2019) celebrated its world premiere at IFF Rotterdam and was awarded the FIPRESCI Prize for Best Film. "The Kiss of the Grasshopper" is his second feature film.

INTERVIEW WITH THE LEAD ACTOR

# LENN KUDRJAWIZKI



## **What do you like about your role? What do you see as the strengths of the script and the film?**

What I like about my role as Bernhard is the complex introspection of a successful character who is battling internally, constantly having to make decisions between his inner worlds. It was a great pleasure to experience his journey of life, love, and letting go. The strengths of the script and the film lie in the special, stylistic means that impressively reflect the emotional depth and inner conflict of Bernhard and his loved ones. Elmar Imanov's unique touch gives the work a one-of-a-kind atmosphere.

In the role of Bernhard, I especially enjoyed the scenes where he faces an emotional turning point. For example, the moments when he confronts his inner fears or builds genuine connections with others. These scenes are powerful because they highlight his inner struggle and the development of his character's depth.

Equally impressive were the quiet scenes, where his inner conflicts are conveyed without many words, which further emphasizes the acting challenge and the directorial work of Elmar Imanov. These moments create a strong emotional resonance and make his journey all the more understandable and touching.

## **Is there something special you can tell us about the production?**

One special aspect of the production was the European co-production involving Germany, Luxembourg and Italy and the collaboration with Georgia. This diversity was reflected not only in the team selection but also in the different cultures and languages that came together. As a passionate European, I love experiencing the various energies and perspectives that emerge in such a creative environment. It significantly contributes to creating something unique. I also particularly enjoyed shooting in Georgia. The warm people, passionate creatives, and delicious food not only enriched the atmosphere but also made the entire experience unforgettable.

## **If you had one wish for what the audience should take away from the film... what would it be?**

It would probably be the realization that life is full of challenges and inner battles, but at the same time, it offers the possibility for change and self-discovery. I hope they are inspired to confront their own fears and to recognize the beauty of life in all its facets. It's important to appreciate the connection with others and learn to both love and let go. This message of hope and transformation should remain in the hearts of the audience.



## **ELMAR IMANOV & EVA BLONDIAU**

*IN CONVERSATION WITH THE BERLINALE FORUM*

Barbara Wurm (BW): I'm delighted, Elmar, that your austere, poetic and extremely imaginative film, a film of other realities, if you want, will be celebrating its premiere at the Forum. 'The Grasshopper's Kiss' - what kind of title is that, where did it come from?

Elmar Imanov (EI): For a long time, the working title was 'Restless' because that was the feeling I started writing with. Whenever I write something new or when a film is created, different reasons, thoughts or inspirations come together with style, language, colour and so on. It develops like an organism. Like a child that already has a hair colour - you don't know yet whether it will be curly.

After my father died of lung cancer - for me it was the first time I had experienced such a loss - three months later I moved into a flat in Berlin for six weeks, which was pretty dark. I switched off all the lights there every evening and sat in front of my laptop, in front of a blank document. I didn't know where I was going. There was just a feeling that I'd probably had all my life, but which intensified during this time. A restlessness that I couldn't quench. And I thought that was the right title for this film. And then everything turned out differently.

A kiss is something that can change a person. Here it is a farewell - to oneself, to a former self, because you will never be the same again if you have lost a parent. The kiss welcomes the change, when you realize that you are about to shed your skin like a snake in order to grow a new one. For me, the title symbolizes this, because the film is not only dark, there is also slapstick, comedy and poetry. And beautiful things, like a kiss. It's more poetic than 'Restless'. Not so absolutist.



Eva Blondiau (EB): It was incredibly difficult for us to find a title that could capture or summarize the film. With this film, based on the feeling that Elmar described, we took a journey in which it was never clear: what exactly is this film? It's about grief. Dealing with grief. Then more about loneliness. Then it was about growing up, and that you only really grow up when you no longer have parents and you break away from the things your parents gave you, outgrow them and define your own world.

Christiane Büchner (CB): I found it fascinating that the film has so many different states. There are influences from Cologne, something Soviet, something German silent film, but also "Tatort", TV series. It's incredible what the film brings together and I'd like to know more about it.

EI: Normally I don't like to talk about the content, about the meaning of my films. Even when I'm at festivals: Then people always want to know why is this or that? But I think with this film I have to talk about it. Otherwise, there is no dialogue with the audience.

For example, we had this footage from Euronews with the falling birds. I saw that as a student and it totally fascinated me: 'Wow, that's real? Is there this inexplicable violence around you?'. Then we looked for material to depict the other reality, this altered 'dream past' of the father. We looked in the archives of WDR, which co-produced the film. There were various reports and I got stuck on one - a poetic report about disturbing the peace. A disturbance caused by birds that gather and nest near people. It was so poetically shot, so eerie and mystical. In the middle of this reportage there is the sentence: 'And now night falls.' And the speaker is silent for a minute. Nowadays you would say: 'Are you crazy, you can't broadcast it like that'. I thought that corresponded with the whole film.

CB: And the Soviet part? The childhood?

EI: Yes, the Soviet, the doll... My background and that of Lenn Kudrjawizki, who plays the protagonist Bernard, are similar. We were both born in the Soviet Union and he also lost his father at an early age, then his uncle, who was a close friend of my father. The doll reminded me of my childhood. We had no money in the early 1990s, so I played with what was left over. Every child in the Soviet Union had a doll just like that. Mine was missing the lower half of its body. Nevertheless, she stared so insistently happy. In the scene with the rubbish lorry, this doll dies in his hands.

We only have the opportunity to be a child if our parents are still alive. No one else can really give you that feeling. When parents die, childhood becomes a memory. And you can't live in that. That's what I wanted to show, that his childhood finally slips out of his hands when his father falls ill.

CB: And the "Tatort"?

EI: Yes, the "Tatort" - I think that if you make a film anywhere in Germany, the "Tatort" TV series always comes around the corner somehow, either through a police station or simply through the aesthetics of the architecture in Germany. You can't avoid that. When we spoke to Borris Kehl (camera), Marie Schäder and Mira Laczkowski (set design/Germany) about the set design, we asked ourselves: 'How do we design this police scene and the whole criminal line?' - First of all, the costumes have to fit well! Then we decided that we wanted to shoot it in the style of the 90s, as an homage to the films we grew up with .... And they did an excellent job.

BW: When did you start working on this project?

EI: I wrote the script in 2016.

BW: You started it and then put it aside in between?

EI: I work differently on every project. When I was sitting in front of this blank page in the Berlin flat, I had a feeling... The script had to come from this feeling, not from an idea, a plot or something. Then I started writing and wrote these 85 pages without looking up once. I worked on the script for six weeks and then took a long break before returning to the script. I thought: I'm sure it will take a long time to finance the project. And I wanted to keep the feeling from which it was born. I knew it would never get old because it's about something timeless. I also knew that my perspective on certain things would change over time, just as I would change. So I wanted to work on it at longer intervals, but then in a very focussed way.

BW: That's interesting, because what you describe is very similar to the temporality and extra-temporality of this film, which always spins the plot a little further and then finds wonderful branches that actually become the core of the film. These are visual worlds, somewhere between memory and dream.

EI: I'm glad you said that. It's a kind of more experimental dramaturgy, a double dramaturgy. There is the narrative level: the father is beaten, then he gets the diagnosis, will he die? That would be enough as a dramaturgy. But it's more about the underlying dramaturgy. It's similar to the film "La Dolce Vita", which I've always used as an example. Following someone and showing how they live in a certain phase of their life. Bernard has a girlfriend, then he has to go to his father, then he goes to a bar, then he has a problem with himself and so on. It's a ride through society, but at the same time through his emotions, through the past.

CB: Can you talk a bit about the cinematography? Because that's another area where the film is constantly changing. That it brings in this wavering through camera movements that are very clearly set and then disappear again and never repeat themselves.

EI: At some point at the beginning, I said to Borris Kehl, the unique cameraman and person: 'You have all the freedom'. Of course, we decided how bright or dark the light should be, the colour palette. But while working on the film, each trade had to constantly reinvent something. They couldn't repeat what they had done before. Neither the effects, nor the production design, nor the camera. Even the actors. I like that. For scenes where things need to be understood, there was a clear dramaturgical concept: when someone says something, when dialogue takes place, when the plot continues or relationships are explained, the camera must not be distracting, but must be as classic as it can be - shot, counter-shot, maybe a close-up. But as soon as we move on more freely in the film, anything is possible.

BW: "Tatort" beautifully presents the challenge of this film to viewers at a festival, who then see something that makes them think of television experiences, but don't get any. The film doesn't make it easy for itself aesthetically by looking for any level of abstraction, but goes right into the heart of the classic film core business. I found the work with the actors absolutely outstanding and central, especially because they are familiar from the TV and series context. How did you work with them specifically?

EI: I was lucky to have found them. Working with the actors is different for every film. I improvised my

earlier films with them. In "End of Season", for example, we didn't know how the film would end when we started shooting. Here, the language took on a central role, a certain melody emerged in what I wrote and how the actors interpreted it. I then heard that and knew that the film had to be like that. We usually give our films an English-language identity so that people know that they are intended for everyone and are not purely local. But here it was important to me that there are all the Ä's and Ü's of the German language in the credits. It was important for us to show that this is a German film.

BW: Nevertheless, it is a very international production. Have there ever been so many Georgians involved in a German film before?

EB: The film was a German-Luxembourgish-Italian co-production right from the start. We shot almost half of it in Georgia because we financed the film over the years, during which all prices have risen enormously. We started before the pandemic and ended up under a lot of time pressure, so we couldn't adjust the budget to what the film would have actually needed in terms of funding. And that was our creative solution, how we could still make the film with a budget that was actually too small for this kind of film without having to compromise on quality. That suited Elmar and me perfectly because we had already made many films in Georgia but none in Germany. In this respect, we were happy that we were able to work with people we already knew there. That had a decisive influence on the film because the Georgian team brought a completely different energy to it. There were really creative artists there who contributed all kinds of things.

EI: You have to realize that historically in Georgia, the best people are young. That's unusual in a film industry where people are usually between 45 and 60. These are people who have already gained a lot of experience and work on high-end projects. It's not like that in Georgia. Everyone there is between 20 and 35 and they rebuilt the film industry themselves after the collapse. And that's something completely different, of course. You meet people who can do incredible things ... for example, the scenes on the railway. I said: 'We need a train.' And they said: 'We'll find a train', and showed me a totally broken-down Soviet underground carriage. 'We'll make you this!', and then they completely remade the train and for the long shot at the end they simply sawed off one side of the train and invented a rope construction so that the camera could stay there without wobbling when it moved between the people. The scene is all grey, metallic and the people are wearing grey clothes. You always think it's a filter, but you can see from the colour of the actors' skin that it's not a filter. You're not used to that as a viewer, because normally when you see a picture like that, it's a filter. You would normally have to have another two million for an effect like that. But these people knew they could do all that.

CB: I have another question about 'The Face' - a figure that needs to be a trigger. But the man also appears earlier. He's unpleasant, somehow a danger. What kind of character is he?

EI: 'The Face' was a completely different character in the first versions. When we were working on the concept, the Georgian production designers Mariam Iakobashvili and Giorgi Karalashvili drew a face like this at some point, a bit Francis Bacon-like. 'Just as a suggestion,' they said. And I thought: 'Yes, that's exactly the character. That's The Face'. When the costume designer asked me: 'What does The Face wear?', we knew the answer straight away: he wears the most inconspicuous clothes there are, because he's already conspicuous. So on the one hand, it's a real person, the kind you find in every big city, in every neighbourhood. Someone who's a bit disfigured ... those guys who are everywhere, but you never no-

tice them. For example, when there's a group outside the kiosk, drinking beer and talking, there's always a guy somewhere next to them. He's standing there and somehow belongs to the group, but he never talks. He laughs along when everyone laughs and he's wearing a hoodie.

But at the same time, 'The Face' was always the cancer for me. 'The Face' is the trigger, the blow and also the tumour. When we were sitting at the editing table, I said to Beppe Leonetti (editor): 'There's "The Face" on the railway and he's driving the train. You can interpret that to mean that he's driving the train of life to death. But what is he doing there? He's like a metastasis, in a place where you don't expect him, where he doesn't belong. He must appear just as randomly and unexpectedly as metastases. Disrupting the flow of the film. He is, so to speak, the metastasis of the medium of film.

Who is this guy? You forget about him and move on. Rasim Jafarov played him, an outstanding actor. He asked me: 'What is it now? What kind of guy is he?' And I said: 'You have to be scared of him. Sometimes when he looks so funny. But he must also be scared himself'. And that's how he is: you want to accept him, but he's also a bit evil. You want to accept it, that's life, but it's also evil - an illness like that and death in general. It's not meant to be romanticized.

BW: On what level did you deal with masculinity? Are these broken masculinities for you or are they categories that didn't play a role for you at all?

EI: Yes, they did. We talked about it from time to time during the financing process. You write texts again and again, you have to explain yourself. It was important to me that you don't tell a simple character, but a character who lives in the film. He doesn't know who he is himself. That's why he's always different. It depends on where he is. For example, when he's around people, he's very strict and provocative because he knows that society won't accept him. At least that's how he acts. But then with his father (Michael Hanemann) there is a kind of physicality, a closeness, a silent love. At some point he even says so: caring distance, cool security. And with Agata (Sophie Mousel), she's like a magnet, he can't do without her. An on-off relationship. It was important to me to always show his vulnerability. He's very vulnerable, especially when he's alone. He can't cope with himself and tries to keep himself busy, working on this machine. It's like a suicidal thought that materializes. An alternate reality where he's trying to get his screws in order and at least fly with it - enjoy the sadness.

BW: One of my favorite scenes is the one with the 'other' Carlos, or perhaps the same Carlos, the father (only younger) - you don't really know, I don't know how important that is in this film, which oscillates between realism, symbolism and the magical.

EI: Yes, this Carlos is both a real neighbor, but also a path. When you walk through this corridor, you can see that the wallpaper is falling away more and more and at some point, there are children's things standing around. Bernard gradually goes back in time to the neighbor, so to speak, but also to his father's past. And you see the father with his mother. That's the theme of transgenerational traumatization. Then he arrives, but the father looks completely different, because in dreams there's always this censor that makes things look different - they actually stand for something specific, but so that you don't recognize it, it's changed.

There are different levels to this scene. It's also a dialogue between the animate and the inanimate. In this scene with Carlos' course - or the dance - it was important to me that it looks real, that you can feel that

it's furniture he's walking on... because there's this one moment when he's shimmying along the painting where you think: 'This isn't real, he must be falling. He can't do that. It can't be'. If you can feel all the things that are around you, the painting, the table, if you could just touch everything yourself, then you would immediately feel much more comfortable in a strange room. And that's what Carlos does for Bernard, so to speak, and it relaxes him. He says: 'Look, you're safe here, it's all yours'.

CB: Could you say something else about the music?

EI: The music.... That's one of my identities that shaped the film, the oriental one, influenced by Azerbaijan and Turkey. The music kind of came naturally. I think I heard it in a café in Istanbul and then saved it somewhere. The way it came together, I couldn't have built it now. It was kind of unconscious.

BW: The music in Carlos' dance scene is great and sits as well as the scene itself sits in the film. It's a redemptive embrace that suddenly brings this insecure person, Bernard, back into a sense of community. An incredibly touching scene, how many times did you shoot it?

EI: I don't think it was that complicated. The most complicated thing was screwing this painting down in the old flat, because the walls were so rotten. We put two metal planks behind the painting. But we rehearsed the scene. It was important to me that it was done by someone who could do parours, but who also had an aesthetic sense. And it was super difficult to find someone like that. Thank God we found Felix Schnabel, who is actually a dancer, very athletic and well-practiced. Then he came there, super professional and said: 'Will it hold?' - 'Holds'. And then: 'Okay, I need ten minutes.' I think we did two takes. He had choreographed everything in his head beforehand. That was important so that it radiates this physical security.

BW: Between formal certainty and human uncertainty, that's nice - that's where this film moves. Thank you very much for the insightful conversation, Elmar, that ...

CB: .... didn't steal the film's secrets. What's more, even more clues have now been laid down, new threads of content that are worth thinking about.

EI and EB: Thank you.



# ABOUT COLOR OF MAY

COLOR OF MAY produces internationally implemented documentaries and feature films, often in co-production. We are passionate about stories that offer a unique perspective: narratives that introduce us to the unfamiliar and shed new light on the familiar.

Elmar Imanov and Eva Blondiau graduated in 2012 with the highly successful short film "The Swing of the Coffin Maker", which won the **Student Oscar®, the German Critics' Award** and 41 other awards, and was screened at over 120 festivals.

In 2013, Eva Blondiau and Elmar Imanov founded COLOR OF MAY together and produced the short film "TORN" (director: Elmar Imanov), which premiered at the **Directors' Fortnight** in Cannes in 2014.

The next short film "Three Steps" by Ioseb "Soso" Bliadze premiered at the **Rotterdam Film Festival** and won 12 awards. "Tradition" by the same director premiered in the international competition of the **Clermont Ferrand** short film festival.

Alexandra Brodski's "Walja" was shown at the most renowned festival for young German talent, at **Max Ophüls**, and was nominated for the German Camera Prize.

COLOR OF MAY is also the co-producer of the feature film "Arrhythmia" by Russian director Boris Khlebnikov which premiered in competition at the **Karlovy Vary Film Festival**, where it won the **"Best Actor" award** among numerous other international awards (Haifa, Kinotavr, etc). The film was also screened at the **Toronto Film Festival** and **IFF Rotterdam (TIFF)** (among 50 other festivals) and had its German premiere at **Film Fest Hamburg**, where Eva Blondiau won the **co-producer award**. The film was released in German theatres and sold to Amazon and the WDR.

The documentary "Long Echo" by Veronika Glasunova and Lukas Lakomy was shot in Ukraine and premiered in the official selection of the **Visions du Réel Festival** in Nyon. The German premiere also took place in Hamburg. Both films were released in German cinemas.

The documentary "Kabul, City in the Wind" (Netherlands/Japan/Germany/Afghanistan), which COM co-produced from the German side, premiered as the opening film at the **IDFA** and won the **jury award** in its category here. The film also won the Next Wave Award at the **CPH:DOX Festival**.

The feature film "End of Season" by Elmar Imanov won the **main prize** of the **work-in-progress market in Cologne**. The film premiered in the Bright Future section of the **IFF Rotterdam** and won the **FIPRESCI Award**. Both films have a distributor.

"Otar's Death" by Ioseb "Soso" Bliadze celebrates its premiere in the East of the West Competition in **Karlovy Vary** and wins the **FEDEORA Award** of the European Film Critics. "Five Dreamers and a Horse" by Vahagn Khachatryan was in the competition of the renowned **Visions Du Réel Festival** screened, celebrated its American premiere in the competition at the **HotDocs Festival** in Canada and its German premiere at the GoEast Film Festival and **DOKLeipzig**. Ioseb "Soso" Bliadze's second feature film, "A Room of My Own", won the **Best Acting award** at the Crystal Globe Competition in **Karlovy Vary** and had its Asian premiere at the **Busan Film Festival**. The film won the **NRW Film Prize** at the **Cologne Film Festival** and the main prize of the festival in Tbilisi. It was listed in the **50 Best Films** of the year by **BFI London**. Both Georgian fiction films were sold to HBO. The feature documentary "Smiling Georgia" by Georgian director Luka Beradze premiered at **Karlovy Vary Film Festival** and its American premiere at the **HotDocs Festival in Toronto** and its German premiere at the **GoEast Festival in Wiesbaden**.

COLOR OF MAY received a grant from the North Rhine-Westphalia region for up-and-coming companies.

"The Kiss of the Grasshopper" will celebrate its world premiere at the **Berlinale Forum 2025**.

Eva Blondiau was nominated for the award for young talent as "Best Producer". She was included in Screen International's Cannes edition as a so-called "**Future Leader**", as one of the 40 best up-and-coming producers worldwide.

She is also a Berlinale Talent, an Emerging Producer of the Jihlava Film Festival for documentaries, was a participant in the Rotterdam Lab and the International Producing Program at the ifs international film school cologne and is part of the EAVE network after attending the renowned **EAVE** Producer Workshop with the feature film "The Kiss of the Grasshopper" by Elmar Imanov. The project was also selected for EKРАН+ and WEMW in Trieste. Eva Blondiau was selected by EFP as **Producer on the Move** at Cannes in 2019. She is a member of the **European Film Academy**.



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