

INDEPENDENT FILM CENTER FILMART
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PRESENTS

RESTART

A DOCUMENTARY FILM BY DEJAN PETROVIC

*A story about a man
who put off the moment
of his own awakening*



PRESS KIT

ABOUT THE FILM

Film title

RESTART

Genre

Documentary film

Production Company

Independent Film Center FILMART

Country of Production

Serbia

Date of completion

October 2014

Technical info

HD | 16:9 | color | stereo
Serbian with English subtitles

Running Time

43 minutes

Contact

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RESTART

A story about a man who put off the moment of his own awakening

SYNOPSIS

Short synopsis

After 10 years of being in a passive and self-isolation state, a painter Darko Babic accepted an invitation to exhibit his works in an art gallery in his own town. It marked the beginning of a 10-month long period of preparing the exhibition, a period of self-struggle with his own passivity, established habits and personal boundaries. By accepting the invitation, the artist also ran the risk of leaving the gallery walls bare.



Long synopsis

Restart is a story about Darko Babic, a painter from Pozega who spent more than 10 years isolated from all social activities and passive about his own creativity. It is a story about a man who society expected nothing from, a man who stopped expecting anything from others and a man who seemed devoid of all personal expectations.

At the beginning of his career, 10 years ago, after his first solo exhibition he discovered he had multiple sclerosis – an autoimmune disease that affects the brain and spinal cord (central nervous system). There is no known cure for multiple sclerosis. The specific symptoms include loss of connection between the brain and extremities or this connection can be extremely damaged. Brain messages are received late or sent involuntarily. The brain signals usually

disappear along the way. This knowledge marked the beginning of a gradual self-isolation. Darko stopped being creative giving himself up to the habits which made him completely passive.

However, there were still some things expected from the artist. He got the invitation from his friend Sladjana Petrovic Varagic to prepare an exhibition at Pozega Art Gallery. Her intention was to wake up artistic spirit in Darko, and by doing it wake up a friend in him as well.

Darko accepted the challenge and so a ten-month long period of preparing the exhibition started. It also marked the beginning of an uncertain period of self-struggle with his own passivity, established habits and personal boundaries. By accepting the invitation, the artist also ran the risk of leaving the gallery walls bare.

Restart is not a story about a disease. The disease is perceptible as a metaphor for human passivity, inability to think, speak or work in accordance with one's needs. It is a metaphor for a conscious personal and collective self-isolation and marginalization.

Restart is a film about persistence, enormous physical efforts, but also about Darko Babic's decision to search for his inner self in a most sincere and honest way possible and start a new chapter both of his artistic creation and his life as well. *Restart* is a story about finding a new meaning in life and fresh motivation through communicating in the language of visual arts with the children and young people with different disorders. It is about their synergy and mutual exposure in public; about breaking down the barriers of prejudices and regaining dignity; about the force of pure emotions only children are capable of, being direct and open to experiment; about friendship and love, and importance of the goal we tend to achieve and each and every step we therefore need to take.

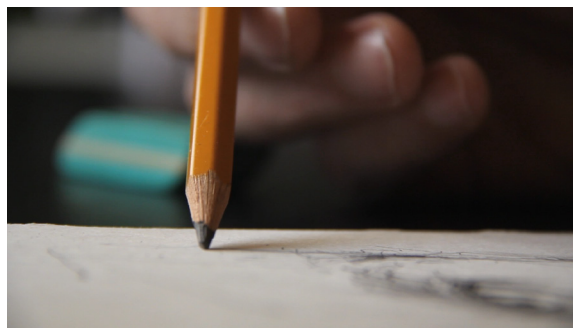
DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

It's getting more and more frequent, especially among young people in my surroundings, to see that they blame others for their wretched life and everything bad that is happening to them. They usually blame their parents, bad economic situation in the country, heredity or their own ill fate. Pondering this matter and questioning the situations when I reacted in a similar way, I was inspired to make this film about them, about all of us, about the people who spend most of their life inactively, chained by their own habits and lethargy, putting off the moment to take action again and rejecting responsibility.

I wished to make a film about all of us ready to criticize. About us who always know what our goal is, but sometimes don't have either strength or courage to even start the race leading us to the goal desired. Passivity is a problem both for an individual as well as the whole society. We keep asking ourselves where this need for putting off the moment of our own awakening, getting up and leaving the bedroom we live in comes from. What makes some people wake up and get moving? Is someone allowed and able to take such liberty of watching their own life from afar, doing nothing? Or they should take matters into their own hands and accept responsibility for the decisions they make? How can we make this first step and get moving again?

At the beginning of 2013 my wife Sladjana Petrovic Varagic who is the director of Pozega Art Gallery told me she intended to invite her friend Darko Babic to exhibit his works in the gallery. I wouldn't have found it strange whatsoever, if we hadn't known that Darko hadn't even drawn a line, let alone painted something for more than 10 years. We were also aware of the fact that his physical condition was extremely damaged by multiple sclerosis. However, Sladjana believed that if he accepted her pure and friendly intention, this responsibility to the public and his friends would inspire him not only to start painting and drawing again, but also to make other changes in his life.

Knowing the whole situation, I thought this idea had a very uncertain outcome. But at the same time, Sladjana's idea seemed rather appealing to me to make a film about Darko Babic and tell a universal and omnipresent story about people being in a passive state and get moving again. Darko accepted the invitation and for the first time after 10 years, he soon took a pencil and a piece of paper in his hands and started making his self-portrait. These were the first shots we filmed. Making a lot of effort, Darko persistently kept drawing lines in spite of his involuntary arm and hand tremors. After two hours of drawing, Darko tossed his pencil in the air and said exhaustedly: "It's enough for today!" He only managed to do the right side of his portrait. He wasn't able to finish his left side. We stopped the shooting and agreed to continue the next day. But the next day Darko wasn't feeling well and he put off the shooting for the following day. But then he kept putting off the shooting from one day to the next. So after three months we managed to shoot only a half of his self-portrait and we had just a few minutes of footage.



In the meantime, Darko was invited by the Association of people with disabilities in Pozega to run art workshops on the association premises twice a week to the children who are members of the association. We went on with the shooting. Working with these children brought Darko back to work. They somehow reminded him who he was and offered him an opportunity to enjoy this process of creating, purely and freely, like a child. We could all notice a change in him. Work with the children had an influence over him as well as our film dramaturgy. The children became a great motivation in Darko's life, his creativity and our film as well.

During the whole process, we witnessed Darko's struggle with his firmly established habits and disease. We recorded every single time he got himself moving and gave up again. And there was this constant air of uncertainty above Darko, Sladjana, people from the gallery as well as us, the film crew. Would we have a film with an affirmative idea? Would the exhibition come to life? To us, this exhibition wasn't going to be the same as all other exhibitons. It signified a triumph of life, it was more than just art.

CHARACTERS

Darko Babic



Darko Babic was born in 1969 in Uzice. He graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts in 2000, Painting department, in the class of Professor Momcilo Antonovic. He took part in many group exhibitions and had two solo ones. After the basic studies, he enrolled in master studies at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade.

At the very beginning of his career he found out he suffered from multiple sclerosis. He returned from Belgrade to Pozega, the place where he had grown up. At first, he didn't want to accept the diagnosis about his disease and rejected to take medicine or even doctor's advice. With the course of time, his body gradually refused to listen, getting weaker and weaker each day. He began feeling tired more easily than he used to and the distance he could walk without a rest was getting shorter day by day. This moment marked the beginning of a gradual self-isolation. Darko stopped being creative, giving himself up to the habits which made him completely passive.

After 10 years of isolation, Darko received an invitation from his friend employed by Pozega Art Gallery to exhibit his works which made him be creative again and step out into the light. When the artist accepted the invitation, a 10-month long period of preparing the exhibition started as well as a period of self-struggle with his own passivity, established habits and personal boundaries.

Children from the Polio, Cerebral Palsy and Plegia Association in Pozega (Association of people with disabilities)



Andrijana Lucic, Borko Pavlovic, Ivan Stefanovic, Marko Mihajlovic, Sara Milcanovic, Stefan Micovic, Uros Matijevic and Zoran Petrovic are the children who daily meet on the association premises spending time together, socializing or completing school assignments.

Every now and then some creative workshops are organized for these children. Within art workshops and in cooperation with Darko, they were given an opportunity to learn drawing and painting, but in the first place how to express themselves and how to communicate by means of art. The relationship between Darko and the children changed throughout this months-long period.

At the beginning, Darko was mainly their teacher. Gradually, a warm air of friendship started dominating their interaction. And in the end, a partnership between Darko and the children was established with both sides equal in this creative process of preparing the exhibition.

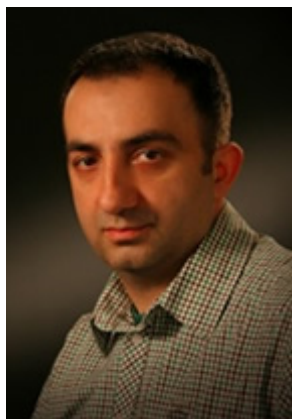
Sladjana Petrović Varagić



Sladjana Petrovic Varagic is an art historian who was previously employed as an art gallery manager and today she is the director of the Cultural Centre of

Pozega, within which the art gallery presents the works of contemporary visual arts. With her work, Sladjana persistently tend to decentralize Serbian art scene and also establish the local scene of visual arts in Pozega. She met the artist Darko Babic through her work and later became friends with him. Their friendship grew stronger as time went by.

CREW BIOS



Dejan Petrovic
producer / screenwriter
/ director

Dejan Petrovic was born in 1974 in Uzice. He graduated from the Academy of Arts in Belgrade, department of TV Directing, where he is currently employed as an Assistant Professor in the department of Film and TV Directing and Editing.

He has done screenwriting and directing of several short feature and documentary films (*The dream of a chisel*, *Breath*, *Feeling your way through life*, *Twelfth Night*, *Line*, *Last stop*, *Restart*), promotional videos (*Self-propelled*, *Cross spa*, etc.), commercial and music videos, as well as TV shows. He was an assistant director in the feature film *The colours of time*, done in Italian-Russian-Serbian co-production. He was a producer in about 40 short documentaries. He has been a producer, screenwriter and director of three documentary TV series done with the support of the Ministry of Culture and Information (*Affirmation*, *Look beyond* and *Breakthrough*).

He is the founder and director of the Independent Film Centre *Filmart*, within which several projects have been realized: International Student Film Camp *Interaction*, International Masterclass of Documentary Film *Interdoc*, Educational Film Centre *Interaction*, Film Culture for the Students of the Faculty of Education, *Photo Documents*, *Idea-(non)realization*.

He lectured and moderated several workshops within the projects that were carried out both in the country and abroad (*Film workshops at the Children's Rights Centre*, *Children's Centre Uzice* –

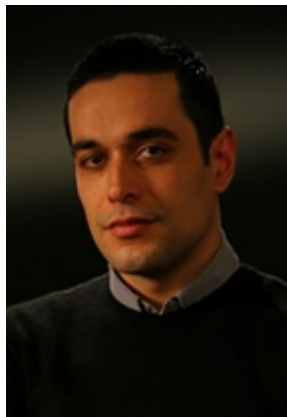
Uzice, 2001; *Patch TV* – Zagreb / Sarajevo / Belgrade, 2007; *ISFC Interaction presentation at VGIK* – Moscow, 2010; *Masterclass Interdoc presentation* – Saratov State University – Saratov / Russia, 2013). As a member of the Programme Council, he participated in the project *Open Highway E-761* supported by the Swiss Cultural Programme *Prohelvetia*.

As a jury member, he also took part in several film festivals (*Seize this day with me* – Novi Sad; *Short and Mini Film Festival "Short Form"* – Gornji Milanovac, etc.) or as a film selector (*Serbian Film Week* – Iran; *Thess Fest* – Greece; *Short Film Festival "Silver Ribbon"* – Bosnia and Herzegovina). As a member of the pitching commission, he participated in the camp *Free Zone Junior*. He has won several awards for the films he directed (*Golden Knight Award* for *Breath* – Russia, 2001; *Bronze Knight Award* for *The dream of a chisel* – Russia, 2000, etc.)



Sreten Vukovic
director of photography
/ editor

Sreten Vukovic was born in 1973 in Pozega. He's been employed as an editor by Pozega Television since its foundation in 1994. Apart from editing, he also does animation, shooting, photography and design. He has worked for many television and production companies both in the country and abroad. Since the foundation of the International Student Film Camp *Interaction*, he has been a member of its team and also a lecturer in the field of editing within Educational Film Centre *Interaction*.



Nikola Cvijanovic
sound recordist and
designer

Nikola Cvijanovic was born in 1980 in Belgrade. He got a degree in sound recording and sound design at the Academy of Arts in Belgrade where he started working on the study program Music production and sound design in 2008. He has done sound in several feature films (*Black horses*, *Stripping*, *No one's child*, *Absurd experiment and heavenly trick*) as well as a few short feature films (*Second-hand*, *Predisposed*, *Doll's tool box* and *Don't break my torbo-folk heart*).

As a boom operator and sound designer he participated in the production of TV series *Goose feather* and *Jagodici (The Jagodic family)*. He's also done sound recording and sound design for some documentaries (*Schizophrenia*, *Asomania*, *Exit 05*, *Jeremy McClintock Show*, *Partisan film*, *White button and Restart*) and two documentary TV series (*Football and something more* and *Department store*).

He worked as a sound designer for documentary TV film *Funeral*, as well as some other television projects (*Eurovision Song Contest – Belgrade, 2008*; reality show *House of dreams*, music and entertainment programme *Show of all time*, music show *Hitorama* and music and entertainment quiz *I love Serbia*). He has also done sound for several theatre shows (*Florentine Tragedy*, *Fedra's love*, *Who cares for Ana Karenjina?*, *Fringe* and *Who the fuck started first?*) as well as a classical music album (*The sound of light*).

He was a sound supervisor at **ZELIG** – School for Documentary Film, Television and New Media (Bolzano / Italy, 2005) and at the University Dokuz

Eylul Güzel Sanatlar (Izmir / Turkey, 2011). In 2006, he participated in the ISFC Interaction as a sound supervisor.



Vojin Ristivojevic
composer

Vojin Ristivojevic was born in 1976 in Belgrade. He studied at the Faculty of Drama Arts in Belgrade, department of Sound recording and sound design. Extensive experience he gained in studio and concert work with the bands *Sunshine* and *Zemlja Gruva*, proved itself valuable in the field of applied music and was a great help to him in composing, sound designing and practising teamwork in many films (*One on one*, *Serbian film*, *Stripping and Equal*), theatre shows (*Pavilion*, *Circus history*, *Relatives and Behind the scenes*), theatrical spectacles (the opening ceremony of *the Universiade in Belgrade* and a ceremony in celebration of *150 years of industrialization*) as well as numerous TV formats.

CREDITS

characters

DARKO BABIC
ZORAN PETROVIC
STEFAN MICOVIC
SARA MILCANOVIC
UROS MATIJEVIC
ANDRIJANA LUCIC
MARKO MIHAJLOVIC
BORKO PAVLOVIC
IVAN STEFANOVIC
SLADJANA PETROVIC VARAGIC

producer, writer and director

DEJAN PETROVIC

director of photography and editor

SRETEN VUKOVIC

sound designer

NIKOLA CVIJANOVIC

composer

VOJIN RISTIVOJEVIC

production manager

PREDRAG ZIVKOVIC

cinematographers

SRETEN VUKOVIC
IGOR MARKOVIC

gaffer

ZORAN DJORDJEVIC

sound recordist

NIKOLA CVIJANOVIC

color correction

JOVAN MARJANOV

graphic designer

UROS PAVLOVIC

archive material

“Art promenade” video clips

Author: Rada Novakovic

Production: Pozega Television

the photos used in the film belong to the Babic family

thanks to

Petko Ocokoljic, Bojan Petrovic, Saveta Petrovic, Milica Djordjevic, Danica and Nebojsa Babic, Milijanka Vukovic, Nedeljko Jesic, Marina Petrovic, Aleksandar Obradovic, Svetlana Mihajlovic, Zoran Djokic, Dragan Zivanovic, Nadja Lapcevic, Jovana, Jelena, Svetlana and Goran Avramovic, Ognjen Stanisavljevic, Mirjana Lazovic, Nikola Dzafo, Miroslav Karic, Una Popovic, Predrag Terzic, Mira, Miljko and Djordje Ristic, Matija Gluscevic, Marko Kovacevic, Dragan Gavrilovic, Cveta Milovanovic, Dragomir Nikitovic, Biljana Filipovic, Snezana Lekic Ostojic, Svetlana Danicic, Dragica Lekic, Dragana Radojevic, Draga Petkovic, Duka Ilic, Aleksandar Polic, Jasminka Djuric, Boban Brkic, Dragan Elcic, Vladimir Perovic, Danilo Paskvan, Ivica Vidanovic, Milovan Vujovic, Stefan Krasic, Mihailo Vulovic, Aleksandar Savic, Jovan Zarkovic, Milan Spasovic, the parents of the children appearing in the film, Srecko the dog and Dule the cat

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Pozega Television

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