

PICTURE TREE INTERNATIONAL
PRESENTS



THE CAMPAIGN

~~A MAN FOR THE PEOPLE~~

A FILM BY MARIAN CRISAN

A ROVA FILM PRODUCTION. CO-PRODUCED BY MANOR AGORA. WITH THE SUPPORT OF ROMANIAN FILM CENTER, ZENITH MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIETATEA ROMANA DE TELEVIZIUNE.
WITH MARIA JUNGHIETU, GEORGE DOMETI, SORIN COCKS, ION RUSCUT, IOANA CHITU, PIETRE CHIMBASAN. COSTUME DESIGNER ANCA ANDRON, SONIA CONSTANTINESCU. SOUND MIHAI BOGDOS, ALEXANDRU QUMITRU.
PRODUCTION DESIGNER SIMONA PADURETU. CASTING FLORIELA GRAPINI. EDITOR TUODOR POJONI. DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ULEG MUTU (PSC). PRODUCED BY MARIAN CRISAN, ANCA PIU. WRITTEN BY MARIAN CRISAN AND GABRIEL ANDRONACHE. DIRECTED BY MARIAN CRISAN.

 PICTURE TREE
INTERNATIONAL

produced by **Rova Film (Ro)**

to be released **2019**

funded by **CNC Romania**
Zenith Media Communication
Societatea Romana de Televiziune

INTERNATIONAL SALES

Picture Tree International GmbH

Husemannstr. 7, 10435 Berlin

+49 (0) 30 4208 248 - 0

pti@picturetree-international.com

www.picturetree-international.com



93 minutes

Fiction Feature Film

Delivery format: DCP

copyright **Rova Film / 2019**

Synopsis

Viorel, a quiet, upright tractor driver from a small town in west Romania meets Mocanu, a high profile politician campaigning for a seat in the European Parliament. Mocanu's car has broken down nearby and Viorel and his wife welcome the politician into their humble home. Under investigation for corruption, Mocanu sees an opportunity and decides to stay with this modest family during the rest of the campaign, winning people's hearts by posing as a common man next to his "old friend", the honest, hard-working farmer. In return, Viorel will get a new tractor.



The Director Marian Crisan

Marian Crisan was born in 1976 in Salonta, West Romania. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Film and TV Directing at UNATC Bucharest in 1999. His short film MEGATRON won the Palme d'OR for Best Short Film at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival. In 2010, his first feature film MORGEN won the Special Jury Prize at the 63rd Edition of the Locarno Film Festival, and was also the Romanian entry for the 84th Academy Awards. THE CAMPAIGN is Marian's fourth feature film as a director.

2012 - "ROCKER" - fiction, 90 min
Premiere at San Sebastian Film Festival 60th Edition, New Directors Section

2015 - "ORIZONT" - fiction, 95 min
Premiere at 19th Tallin Black Nights IFF, in competition

2016 - "THE SILENT VALLEY" - HBO TV Mini-Series (4 Episodes)

2019 - "THE CAMPAIGN" - fiction, 91 min, Post Production

Director's note

THE CAMPAIGN is a **satire comedy** about politics and life telling a story about two totally different people, VIOREL a tractor driver from a small town and MOCANU a high-profile politician from the capital running for a place in the EU Parliament. They meet during a different kind of election campaign, a campaign designed to show the politician as a normal person, a common guy as the tractor driver really is. These opposite characters and the absurd election campaign will create the premises of a comedy which, as they say, will "first make people laugh, and then make them think".

The basis of the story is the relationship that develops between VIOREL and MOCANU, both men in their fifties. One dreams about a new tractor, the other wants to get into the EU Parliament, by using the other. I find these opposite characters intriguing. When they are put together on observed they tend to be misbehaving, to be funny and clumsy. The humor you get by only observing human behavior, the little details of life.

What also interests me is the mechanism of manipulation we are part of when the election comes. How does the manipulation grow from a single photo on Facebook, the power of one image in an era when everything runs so fast on the screens of our smartphone, the fact that we are bombarded by images and messages telling us what to do, how to think, how to eat, who to vote?



The film will take you to Salonta, a quiet little town from West Romania, my hometown. Here, time seems to stay still and nothing really seems to happen... cars pass by every half hour, people slowly ride their bicycles going nowhere exactly and even dogs seem to bark more calmly than in the rest of Romania.

This is not only geography but is more about telling a story about people that I know, that I understand and feel about. It's a process of capturing their spirit on screen, so to say. I am revisiting the people in my hometown as I did in my previous film MORGEN, as for me this place is the "center of the universe" so to say.

In the same time, the story I imagined is a kind of metaphor of elections as they happen everywhere in the world. Politicians are quite the same and their strategies of getting under voters skin are similar. The election campaign will be seen from a different perspective. The campaign will be run in the county of Salonta, a place far from the capital and far from Brussels. But elections in a small town can sometimes be as passionate as elections in London, Paris or Berlin. Actually, I find elections everywhere funny and tragic at the same time. I like to observe the cycles of election psychology of politicians and common people during campaigns. There's a universal and timeless thing about politics and elections and about the false empathy the politician get every four years... In the last two decades Romania and elsewhere, we have seen candidates crying live on TV, candidates moving from villas to small apartments to show how normal they are, candidates jumping from airplanes to show how brave they are and candidates who won elections whilst still in jail.

But I wonder: do all these high ranking politicians and ministers really have a life? How are they at home? How are they dealing with their families? How do they look in their pajamas?

Many of the situations and characters in the script are based on local stories and people I know or researched over the years. One of the most extreme situations in the past elections in Romania was when IDs were taken from people for illegal voting. This went as far as dead people's IDs being used for voting. So people "voted" even though they had been dead for years... I found this intriguing and symbolic...Reality is sometimes stronger than fiction. Black humor is in our daily life, you just need to step back and observe the world around with a "light eye".



The backbone of the film will be the relation between VIOREL and MOCANU. Two characters from a totally different world, their relationship developing into a strange friendship talking about human nature, family, manipulation and moral values.

VIOREL is the regular guy you will meet in small towns in Transylvania, Western part of Romania. He talks just now and then. You don't know what he thinks and feels because he doesn't show too much. He minds his own business working in the fields in a kind of natural cycle of life, where earth should be ploughed at the right moment and the fruits should not be mixed when you make palinka. He and the farmers around town have a certain connection with the fields, with the earth. They work and live in these fields, on flat geography connecting man and earth at the horizon.

Also, you can feel that VIOREL is the common guy everywhere in the world, he is the citizen, the John Doe. And he is, like all of us, used by the politicians, but he still goes on.

The everyday guy facing an important social issue is the kind of character I want to tell stories about. I feel compassion for the common people and I want to talk about them. I think the history of politics doesn't record their lives enough but talks only about the lives of heroes, kings, and presidents.

On the opposite side, the stranger coming in town, MOCANU is the high-profile politician, former Minister of agriculture, who tries to dodge justice by running for a seat in the EU Parliament. He has a secret plan. During his electoral campaign, he will live together with a common family in town, showing he's as normal as every citizen, that he shares the same problems. Also, if he wins he will get immunity and be free. If not, he will be most probably taken by law. So Mocanu's clock is ticking.

Mocanu is the politician everywhere. But even if it seems incredible, the politicians are human too, they have sentiments, flaws, and emotions... they also have families, kids, problems... You just need to look closer and figure out if they fake it...

But meeting Viorel, he will experience a real journey, waking up to the real world, wanting to show that he can live and share the common people's life.

Will Mocanu win the elections and thus Viorel get the new tractor? The slow progression of MOCANU corrupting Viorel will at first seem innocent and funny but it will evolve to an extreme point showing the citizen falling for the politician's promises.



The film is dealt with in a realistic style and will be true to the specific characters and geography. It observes the situations in a light-hearted and intimate way. The shoot took place in my hometown, on the streets where I grew up and on the fields creating a specific feel. What is really important for me is that I tell a story about a community, about people I really care and want to talk about.

The rhythm of the film will be given by the rhythm of Viorel and his tractor. In the town, time seems to stay still and everything moves slowly. Mocanu arrives in this landscape like a real "stranger in town" character.

I worked with professional actors, but also amateurs trying to give the impression of real people from real places. What interests me is the sensation you can get when you watch a film and feel that the characters on screen are not actors playing a part, but real people that you can meet if you go in that town. Building characters is always a challenge for me and the actors. It's funny, but sometimes when you remember a film you first remember the characters and then the story.

The camera will observe Mocanu and Viorel from a certain distance, not trying to point out emotions or intentions. It will move only to observe their movement, not pointing. We didn't edit the dialogues and the tension conventionally but observe the scenes as they unfold naturally in front of our eyes. The little accidents and gestures that were set up are also part of this treatment of a slice of life that it's not perfect. It has flaws, it has moments that are not controllable.

We didn't use music keeping to the realistic treatment of image and sound, true to real life. There are many scenes with making videos and photos for the campaign, especially for the facebook page. We are now living in a world where we are manipulated through images every day. All the images we watch online or TV, even the private ones are produced by somebody. This is the era of images posted every minute and of political campaigns fought on Facebook and Twitter. So, what interests me is this mechanism of making up images for manipulating people through emotions. Where is the limit between fake or true emotions? How is a fake photo "full of emotion" influencing our opinion, our choices?

Filming off stage, behind the scenes of a campaign will also be a mirror for what does it mean to act? How do we, so to say, act our own life? How people try to show they are different, for example showing they are happy in a photo posted on Facebook? Are we true in front of the camera?

Marian Crişan
April 17th, 2019

Cast and crew



Cast:

ION SAPDARU
OVIDIU CRISAN
MARIA JUNGHIEU
GEORGE DOMETI
SORIN COCIS
ION RUSCUT
IOANA CHITU

Crew:

Costume designer : ANCA MIRON, SONIA CONSTANTINESCU
Sound : MIHAI BOGOS, ALEXANDRU DUMITRU
Production designer : SIMONA PADURETU
Casting : FLORIELA GRAPINI,
Editor : TUDOR POJONI
Director of photography : OLEG MUTU (RSC)
Produced by : MARIAN CRISAN, ANCA PUIU
Written by : MARIAN CRISAN and GABRIEL ANDRONACHE
Directed by : MARIAN CRISAN

The Production Company

ROVA FILM is an independent film production company based in Bucharest, Romania, started by film director Marian Crisan in 2005. Since then, we produced lots of music videos, short films, a few documentaries and two feature films. We are a dynamic company looking to produce original daring scripts and great cinema.

Some of its most important work include **"FAMILY PORTRAIT"** (2006) a 22 min short directed by Marian Crisan which was awarded with Best Short Film, UCIN (Uniunea Cineastilor din Romania) 2007 and Best Director, ISSF 6TH edition In The Palace, Balchik, 2008; **"THE AMATEUR"** (2007) short film which won Best Screenplay at the 17TH Dakino International Short Film Festival, Bucharest, 2007 and Best Short at the Festival de Cinema Independent de Barcelona 2008; **"THE GIFT"** (2014) short directed by Dumitru Grosei, screened at the Open Film Festival KINOSHOK in 2015 (Anapa, Russia) as official selection and VI Festival-Workshop of Young Filmmakers CIS countries 2016 (Tbilisi, Georgia); **"ORIZONT"** (2015) feature directed by Marian Crisan which premiered at the 19th Tallin Black Nights IFF, in competition and was for which composer Cristian Lolea was awarded with the Best Music at UCIN 2017; **"THE SOVIET GARDEN"** (2019), feature length documentary directed by Dragos Turea and **"THE CAMPAIGN"** (2019) directed by Marian Crisan are currently in post-production.

