
ANDRIUS BLAŽEVIČIUS
HOW TO DIVORCE DURING THE WAR
OFFICIAL SELECTION 2026
sundance
film festival
IN THEATERS 2 DECEMBER



LOGLINE

VILNIUS 2022. HIGH-FLYING EXECUTIVE MARIJA CHOOSES THE WORST POSSIBLE MOMENT FOR AN HONEST CONVERSATION WITH HER HUSBAND VYTAS ABOUT DIVORCING - JUST ONE DAY BEFORE RUSSIA'S INVASION OF UKRAINE GOES INTO FULL SCALE. NOW THE COUPLE MUST NAVIGATE THE PROCESS OF SEPARATION AS IT COLLIDES WITH A REFUGEE AND MID-LIFE CRISIS.

HOW TO DIVORCE DURING THE WAR



SYNOPSIS

HOW TO DIVORCE DURING THE WAR



Vilnius 2022. High-flying executive Marija chooses the worst possible moment for an honest conversation with her husband Vytas about divorcing – just one day before Russia's invasion of Ukraine goes into full scale. Now the couple must navigate the process of separation as it collides with a refugee and mid-life crisis.

The struggling film director Vytas is initially put into a tight spot by having to move in with his Russophile parents, whose world view completely conflicts with his. With time, however, this new situation becomes an opportunity for a new opening for him as he volunteers in a food bank and finds new purpose and fame through anti-war performance art.

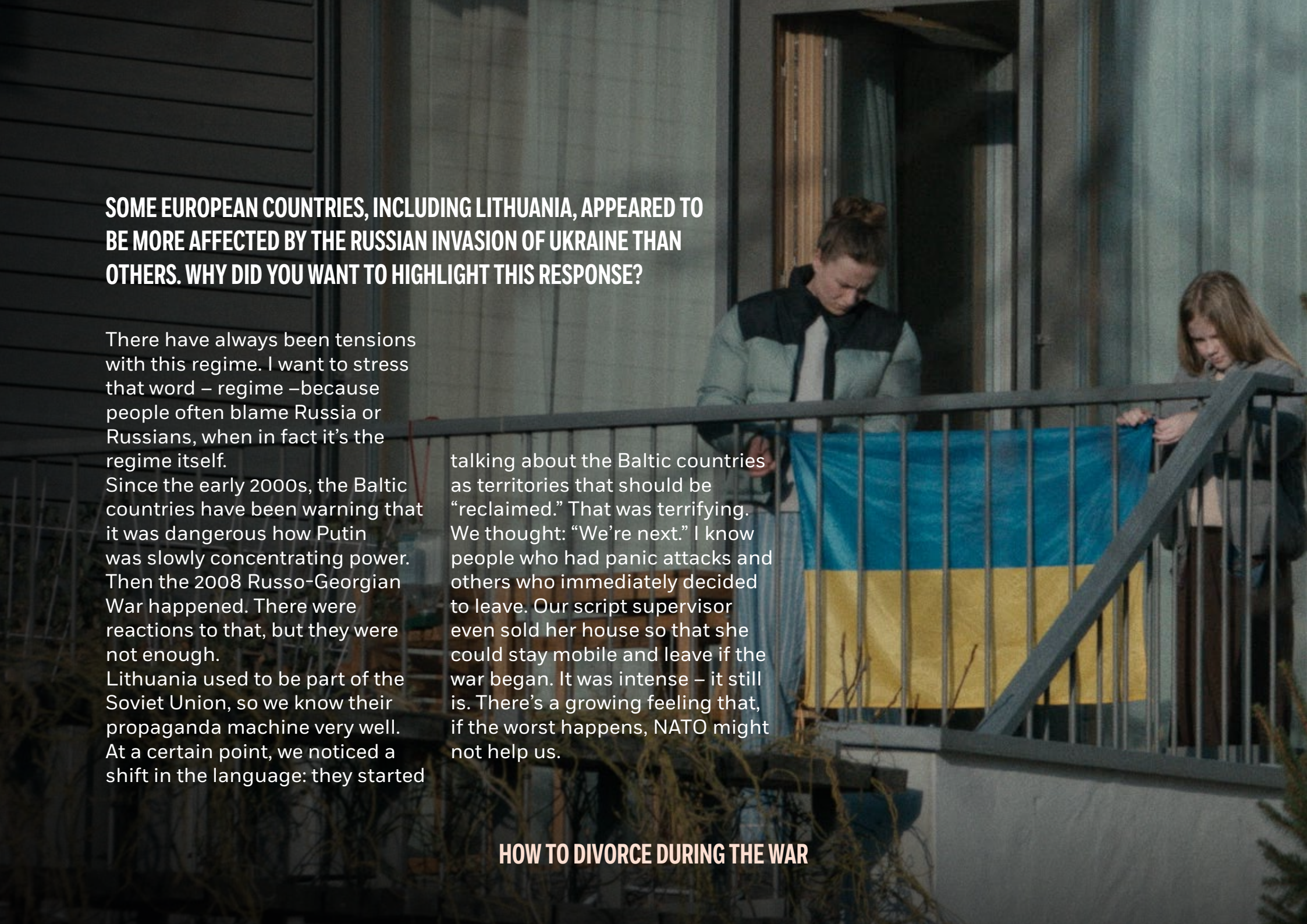
For Marija, the grass is not as green on the other side as she initially hoped and the conflict between her desires and her morality leave her frustrated and alone. When she tries to feel better by helping refugees, it also brings her little satisfaction when she experiences a culture clash with an Ukrainian family that she's hosting in her fancy apartment. Maybe her life with the boring but stable Vytas wasn't so bad after all?

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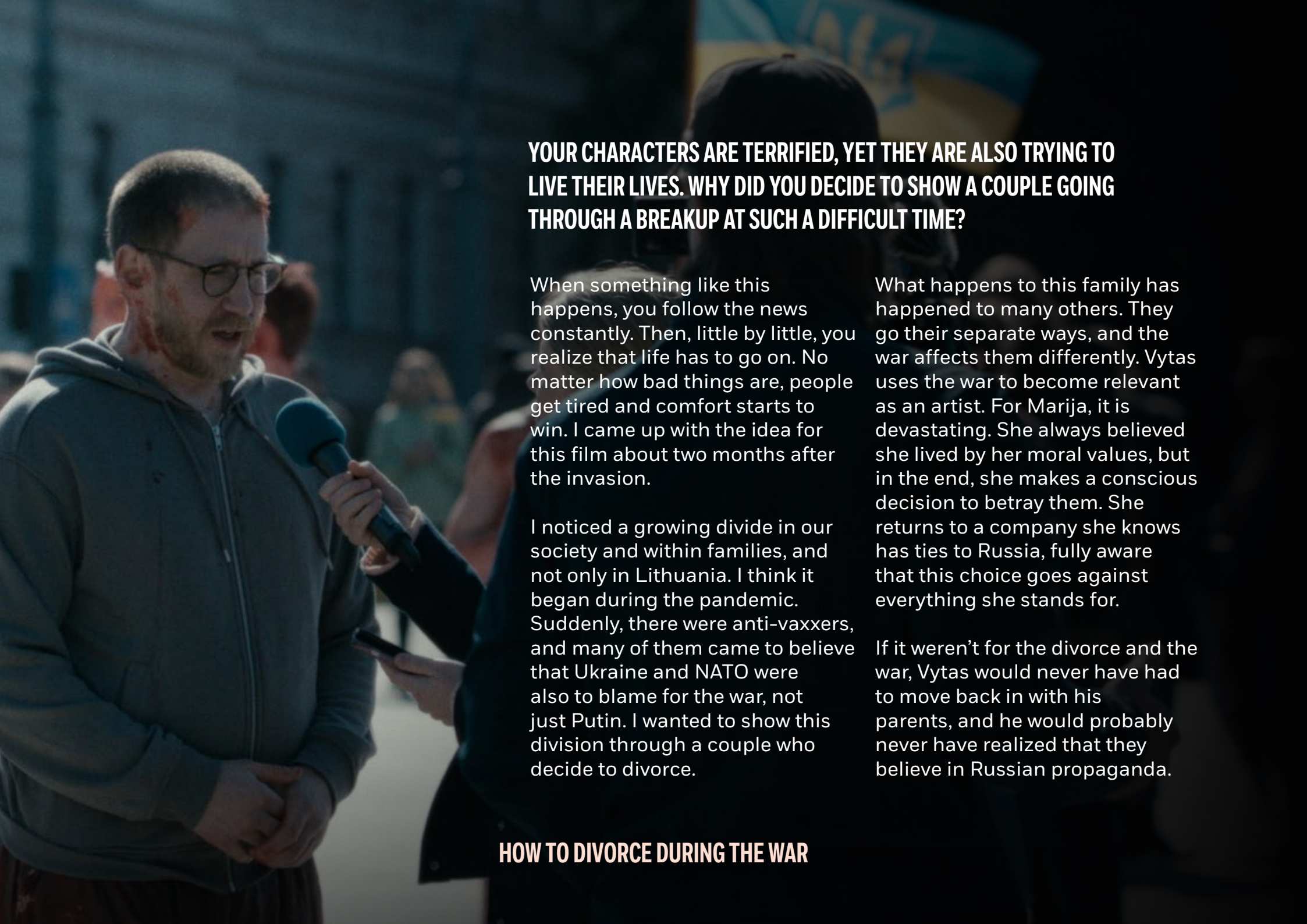
IN CONVERSATION WITH ANDRIUS BLAŽEVIČIUS

HOW TO DIVORCE DURING THE WAR



SOME EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING LITHUANIA, APPEARED TO BE MORE AFFECTED BY THE RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE THAN OTHERS. WHY DID YOU WANT TO HIGHLIGHT THIS RESPONSE?

There have always been tensions with this regime. I want to stress that word – regime –because people often blame Russia or Russians, when in fact it's the regime itself.
Since the early 2000s, the Baltic countries have been warning that it was dangerous how Putin was slowly concentrating power. Then the 2008 Russo-Georgian War happened. There were reactions to that, but they were not enough.
Lithuania used to be part of the Soviet Union, so we know their propaganda machine very well. At a certain point, we noticed a shift in the language: they started talking about the Baltic countries as territories that should be "reclaimed." That was terrifying. We thought: "We're next." I know people who had panic attacks and others who immediately decided to leave. Our script supervisor even sold her house so that she could stay mobile and leave if the war began. It was intense – it still is. There's a growing feeling that, if the worst happens, NATO might not help us.



YOUR CHARACTERS ARE TERRIFIED, YET THEY ARE ALSO TRYING TO LIVE THEIR LIVES. WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO SHOW A COUPLE GOING THROUGH A BREAKUP AT SUCH A DIFFICULT TIME?

When something like this happens, you follow the news constantly. Then, little by little, you realize that life has to go on. No matter how bad things are, people get tired and comfort starts to win. I came up with the idea for this film about two months after the invasion.

I noticed a growing divide in our society and within families, and not only in Lithuania. I think it began during the pandemic. Suddenly, there were anti-vaxxers, and many of them came to believe that Ukraine and NATO were also to blame for the war, not just Putin. I wanted to show this division through a couple who decide to divorce.

What happens to this family has happened to many others. They go their separate ways, and the war affects them differently. Vytas uses the war to become relevant as an artist. For Marija, it is devastating. She always believed she lived by her moral values, but in the end, she makes a conscious decision to betray them. She returns to a company she knows has ties to Russia, fully aware that this choice goes against everything she stands for.

If it weren't for the divorce and the war, Vytas would never have had to move back in with his parents, and he would probably never have realized that they believe in Russian propaganda.

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Marija would never have considered leaving her job. Much of the film comes directly from real life. When you are in a situation like this, it becomes very difficult to know what is right and what is wrong.

THEY ARE A MODERN COUPLE. MARIJA IS THE BREADWINNER – VYTAS, AS SHE ANGRILY POINTS OUT AT ONE STAGE, IS A HOUSEWIFE.

I see many families like this today. In the past, it was very rare in Lithuania to see a woman in that position, but gender roles are changing and I wanted to reflect that in the film. Marija wants a partner who would be a “real man,” yet she is so busy carrying everything on her own that there is no space left for that. Vytas also wants to be a “real man,” but he fails at it – at the same time, the situation is comfortable enough for him to leave things as they are. I’m very interested in the dynamic between weak men and strong women. I’ve never understood why women were expected to take care of the household after working all day, while men just sat on the couch. That’s not how I live my life.

I’ve also been in relationships that ended in separation. Very often, when people face a crisis, instead of staying with the discomfort and dealing with it, they choose divorce. And it’s not just about them: they have a daughter. The way she reacts shows just how deeply broken things really are.

For me, their family crisis mirrors the larger crisis in Europe: the inability to remain in an uncomfortable situation, and the pursuit of personal comfort without fully grasping the scale of what is happening in the world.



THIS LITTLE GIRL, DOVILĖ, SLOWLY EMERGES AS THE PROTAGONIST OF THE FILM. WOULD YOU AGREE?

I almost never show Vytas and Marija in close-ups. Dovilė is different. She's the only character the camera follows closely, and I hope she's the one the audience will be able truly identify with. We share her position: we are watching this couple from the outside. She understands much more about her parents than they realize. She can see through their lies. I was the same as a child. She sees everything that is wrong in their relationship, and she is deeply affected by the aggression around her. It's clear that this will stay with her – it will traumatize her in some way.

IS THAT WHY THEIR WHOLE WORLD LOOKS SO GREY? THERE ISN'T MUCH HOPE, PARTLY BECAUSE HER FAMILY ISN'T HONEST WITH EACH OTHER.

My cinematographer and I felt we couldn't use more color. When we thought about that time, I remembered how heavy and depressing it felt. Everything felt very dark, and it became even darker when Lithuanian documentary filmmaker Mantas Kvedaravičius was killed in Mariupol. From a visual point of view, the decision was simple: it reflected the reality we were living in.

This family doesn't know how to communicate. They don't talk to each other. One of the themes of the film is exactly that: people not talking. They think they are protecting their child, but in fact they are making things worse. Throughout the film, Dovilė never cries. She remains very stoic. When her tears finally come at the end, it



feels like everything is released at once. But it's still ambiguous - are they tears of joy?

Their situation is complicated, just like people are complicated. What happens to them is deeply unsettling. The city appears calm, but it feels like the calm before the storm. They are still lying to each other. I wanted to leave some things open, but I find the ending frightening. In the end, they choose comfort above everything else.

YOU STILL MANAGED TO FIND SOME HUMOR IN THEIR STORY, HOWEVER. WAS IT IMPORTANT TO YOU?

It's important to find humor in difficult situations. This isn't about making fun of the war, but about people's choices and reactions. They try to do good, to help and support one another, but they don't always succeed. This kind of humor is bittersweet – it can be funny and sad at the same time. When you step back and look at certain situations from a distance, you can sometimes find humor in very unexpected and difficult places.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

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The 2022 war in Ukraine shook all of Europe, but for the Baltic countries the shock was existential. Having been occupied for nearly 50 years and sharing borders with Russia, we know how fragile our safety is. On February 24, 2022, Lithuania woke up in fear; many panicked, some even fled. I myself was paralysed for days, feeling that a decisive chapter of European history had closed and something frightening had begun.

Yet the same shock united the country. People donated millions to Ukraine, opened their homes to refugees, and created an extraordinary wave of solidarity. At the same time, tensions slowly surfaced: cultural clashes inside host families, debates about Lithuanian companies that continued working in Russia, and generational divides shaped by Russian propaganda. Some families stopped speaking to each other over opposing beliefs about the war. There were isolated cases of hostility toward Russian speakers - though overall Lithuania remained a safe and tolerant place.

I was also disturbed by how some individuals and businesses used the war for self-promotion. These contradictions - fear, solidarity, opportunism, moral confusion - form the backdrop of the film. "Divorce" in the title refers both to the breakup of the protagonists and to a larger societal split: polarisation, radicalisation, and a growing unwillingness to give up

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comfort for collective responsibility. Vytas, once a respected director, is now broke, blocked, and living off his wife. After Marija leaves him, the war suddenly gives him purpose: he volunteers, protests, gives interviews, becomes a minor social-media figure. But his activism is not entirely pure - he enjoys the attention, and we know he has long been visiting a Ukrainian sex worker. Marija, meanwhile, quits her job because her company stayed in Russia, takes in a refugee family, and tries to live by her values. But she becomes overwhelmed, ends up alone, and eventually reverses her decisions. Her ideals collapse under real-life pressure.

Both characters are forced out of their comfort zones by war and divorce. Both try to act morally but fail in contradictory, human ways. Their daughter Dovilė represents a quieter, wounded generation absorbing the fractures around them. In the end, Vytas and Marija reunite not out of clarity, but out of denial - choosing comfort over truth. This is how I see Europe today: struggling with fear, contradictions, and moral fatigue, telling itself that everything is still fine. My film tries to capture this fragile moment - one where peace feels temporary, solidarity has limits, and the calm morning in Vilnius could one day be shattered.

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DIRECTOR'S BIO

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ANDRIUS BLAŽEVIČIUS

Born in Vilnius, June 26, 1985, studied Culture History and Anthropology at Vilnius University. After a while, Andrius switched to Film Directing studies at KIMO, Lithuanian National Film School, where he graduated with an MA in 2011. Blaževičius' debut feature film THE SAINT (2016) premiered at Warsaw IFF and Busan IFF, won six national awards and became one of the most appreciated Lithuanian independent films at the national box office with 47K admissions in total. His sophomore film RUNNER (2021) premiered at Karlovy Vary IFF with the main actress Žygimantė Elena Jakštaitė being awarded as a Shooting Star by European Film Promotion. RUNNER received two Lithuanian Film Academy awards - for the main and the supporting actresses. HOW TO DIVORCE DURING THE WAR (2026) - third feature film by Andrius Blaževičius will premiere at Sundance FF, World Dramatic Competition.

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

Ten Reasons (org. *Dešimt Priežasčių*)	2011	Short (fiction)
The Saint (org. *Šventasis*)	2016	Feature (fiction)
Runner (org. *Bėgikė*)	2021	Feature (fiction)
How To Divorce During The War (org. *Skyrybos Karo Metu*)	2026	Feature (fiction)

ABOUT THE PRODUCERS



HOW TO DIVORCE DURING THE WAR

M-FILMS, LITHUANIA

M-Films is a Lithuanian film production company, established by producer Marija Razgutė in 2008. M-Films has produced internationally acclaimed films such as HOW TO DIVORCE DURING THE WAR by Andrius Blaževičius (Sundance FF 2026), THE VISITOR by Vytautas Katkus (Best Director Award at KVIFF 2025, TFL FeatureLab 2023), HUNGER STRIKE BREAKFAST by Karolis Kaupinis (Warsaw FF, Tallinn FF 2025), SLOW by Marija Kavtaradze (Best Director award at Sundance FF, Lithuanian contender for Oscars, 2023).

RED LION, LUXEMBOURG

Red Lion was founded in 1996 by Jeanne Geiben and Pol Cruchten, who were joined by Vincent Quénault in 2013. Since the passing of Pol Cruchten, a pioneer of Luxembourg's cinema, Jeanne Geiben and Vincent Quénault have been acting as producers for the company.
Red Lion's primary focus lies in developing arthouse feature films and international co-productions for cinema, as well as working on establishing Luxembourgish directors on an international level. We seek out projects that cross borders and encourage us to think beyond boundaries, and we celebrate cinematic scripts and directors who cultivate their own unique signature styles. We strongly believe in building long-term relationships with both directors and production partners alike.
Since its creation, and stimulated by the influence of Pol Cruchten, Red Lion has been a platform for creative freedom for the young generation of Luxembourg filmmakers.

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FELINE FILMS, IRELAND

Established in 2018 and run by producer Jessie Fisk, Feline Films is a female-led Irish production company dedicated to bold, emotionally resonant storytelling with international impact. The company focuses on European co-productions, with a strong emphasis on director-driven cinema that challenges and connects. Recent titles include The Wolf, the Fox, and the Leopard, directed by David Verbeek and co-produced with Lemming Film (Tribeca, 2025), I Was Here by Nathalie Biancheri and Ola Jankowska (CPH:DOX 2019), Shadows by Carlo Lavagna (Rome IFF 2020), and Wolf by Nathalie Biancheri (TIFF 2021), which was released internationally by Universal in 2023. Upcoming projects include Divorce During the War by Andrius Blazevicius with M-Films (Lithuania), as well as The Last Days of Rabbit Hayes, directed by Jim O'Hanlon and based on the best-selling novel by Anna McPartlin. Feline's television division, Wildcat Pictures, launched in 2020, focuses on distinctive, creator-led episodic content. The company was selected for Screen International's Euro 75 (Cannes 2022) and awarded Creative Europe Slate funding in 2023.

BIONAUT, CZECHIA

BIONAUT is a Prague-based, award-winning Czech film and television production company founded in 1999. The company is known for high-quality, original and genre- diverse content with a strong presence in Czech and European markets. In 2015, Bionaut expanded its portfolio to include five specialized labels: Bionaut Animation (animated films), Bionaut Docs (documentaries), Bionaut Dark (genre films like horror and thriller), Audionaut (audio series and podcasts), and Zero Gravity (marketing, backend, and distribution). Bionaut Works provides production services and co-production support in Czechia and abroad. To develop and distribute international projects, Bionaut established joint ventures in Poland (Kosmonaut, with director Jan Komasa) and Slovakia (Raketa, with producer and director Lukáš Hanulák). The company is led by Vratislav Šlajer, a producer with more than 25 years of experience, an ACE member, and a former Producer on the Move (2004). Among Bionaut's 2025 titles are the Canal+ thriller series Moloch Files and animated film 9 Million Colors, selected for Annecy.
www.bionaut.cz

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FILM INFORMATION

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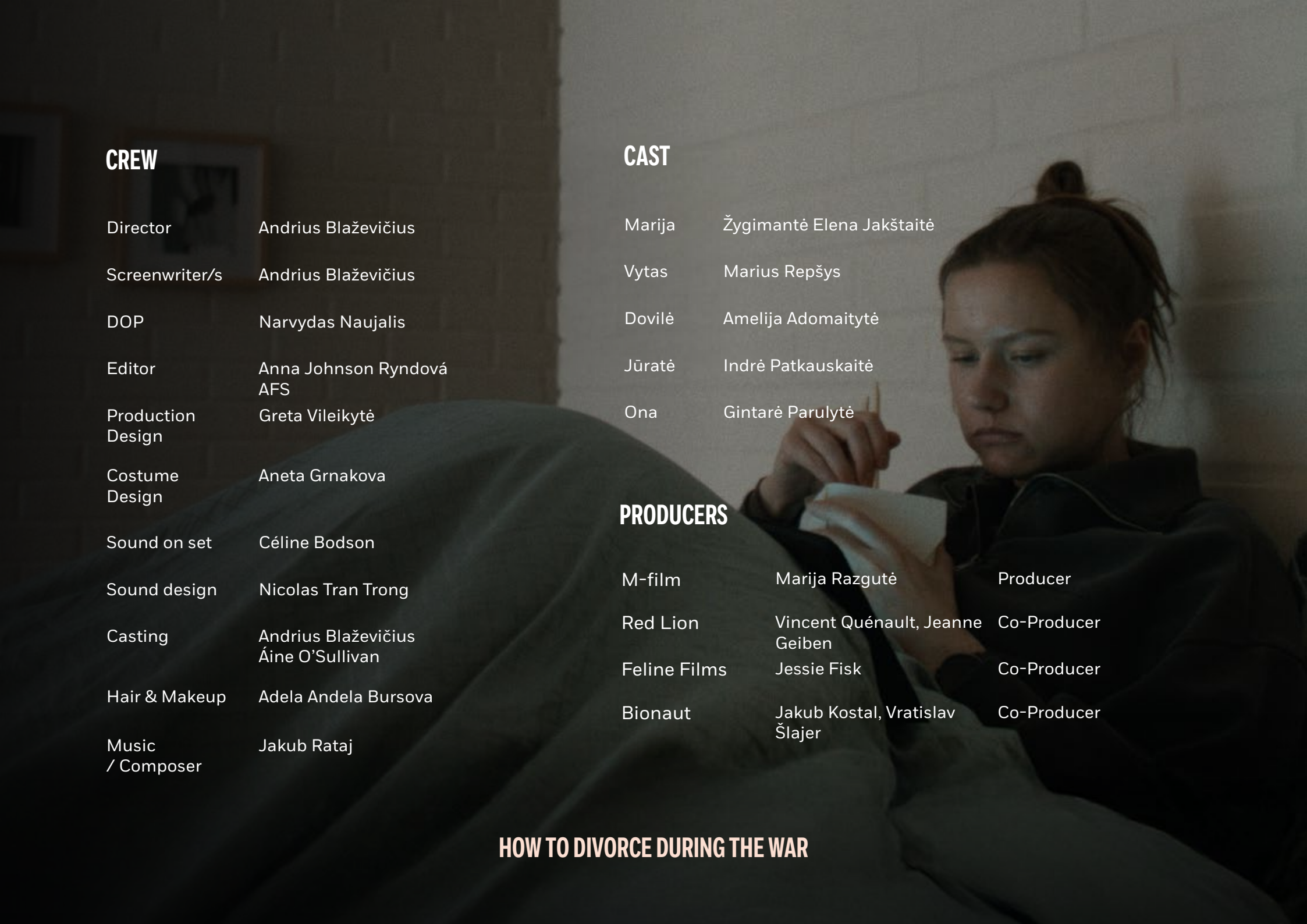


FILM INFORMATION

Original Title: Skyrybos karo metu
International Title: How To Divorce During the War
Genre: Drama
Duration: 108 min
Production Year: 2026
Year of Copyright: 2026
Countries of Production: Lithuania, Luxembourg, Ireland, Czech Republic
Languages: Lithuanian, English, Ukrainian, Russian
Color: Color
Shooting Format: Digital
Original Aspect Ratio: 1.85 / flat
Sound: 5.1.

WORLD PREMIERE

WINNER
DIRECTING AWARD: WORLD CINEMA DRAMATIC
sundance
film festival
2026



CREW

Director	Andrius Blaževičius
Screenwriter/s	Andrius Blaževičius
DOP	Narvydas Naujalis
Editor	Anna Johnson Ryndová AFS
Production Design	Greta Vileikytė
Costume Design	Aneta Grnakova
Sound on set	Céline Bodson
Sound design	Nicolas Tran Trong
Casting	Andrius Blaževičius Áine O'Sullivan
Hair & Makeup	Adela Andela Bursova
Music / Composer	Jakub Rataj

CAST

Marija	Žygimantė Elena Jakštaitė
Vytas	Marius Repšys
Dovilė	Amelija Adomaitytė
Jūratė	Indrė Patkauskaitė
Ona	Gintarė Parulytė

PRODUCERS

M-film	Marija Razgutė	Producer
Red Lion	Vincent Quénault, Jeanne Geiben	Co-Producer
Feline Films	Jessie Fisk	Co-Producer
Bionaut	Jakub Kostal, Vratislav Šlajer	Co-Producer

WORLD SALES

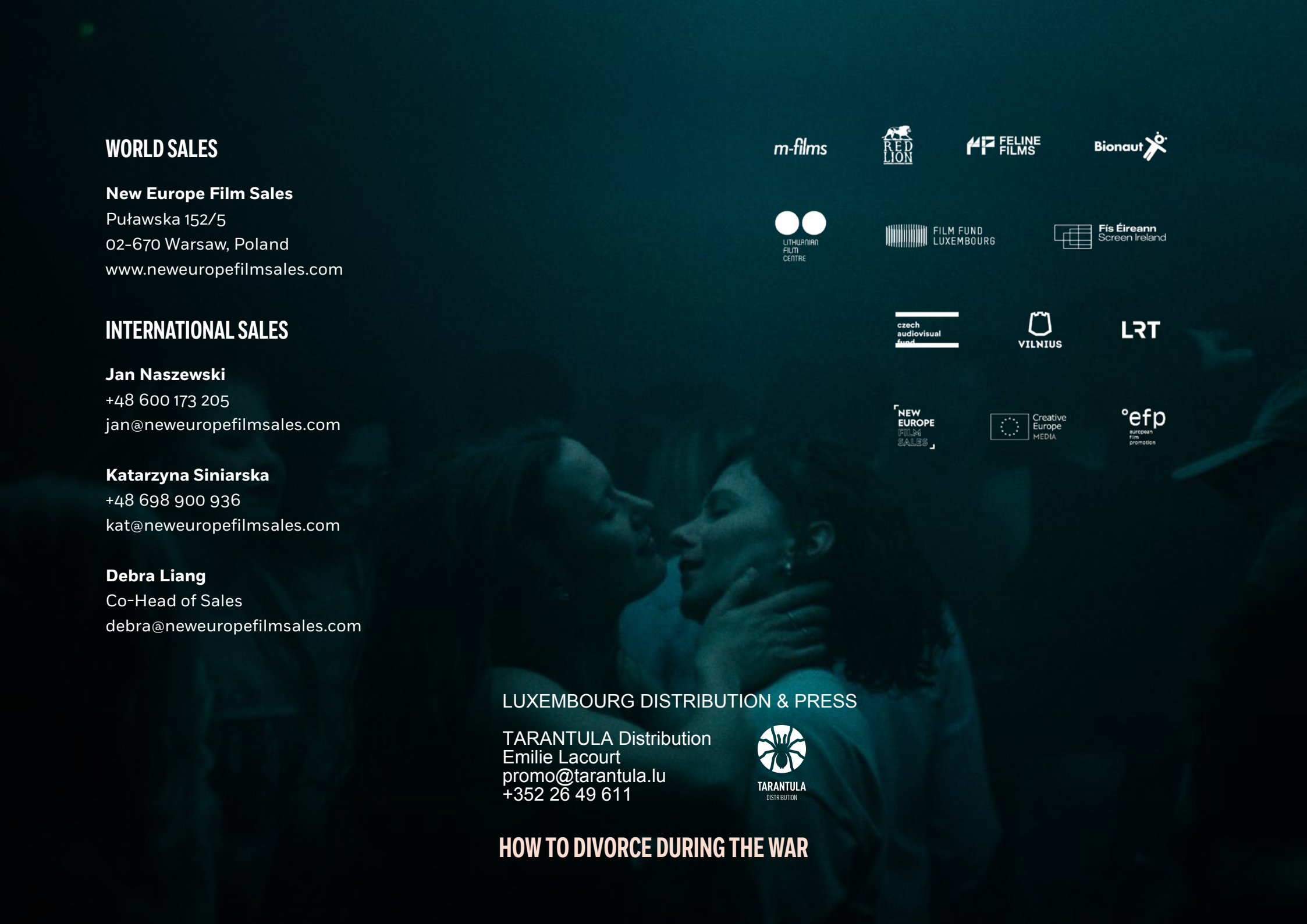
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