

A person in a dark jacket is walking away from the camera, seen from behind, on a sidewalk at night. They are walking along a chain-link fence that runs across the frame. In the background, there is a building with some lights and a car parked. The overall lighting is dim and moody, with some greenish-yellow tones.

I DISAGREE

DIRECTOR'S INTENTION NOTE | KRISTIЈAN RISTESKI

THEME



The obvious theme of the film is the inability of disabled people to lead a normal life in this country, without their family and friends making superhuman efforts.

Another equally important theme of this film is the moderation of reality, that is, the control over the narratives.

THEME



The information that reaches us creates the dominant narratives. Although it might look like we live in an era of abundant information, the information that reaches most people comes from a small number of outlets, moderated by strictly controlled algorithms of the dominant search engines and the dominant social media. Traditional media only transfer the dominant narratives in unison, rather uncritically, and often for profits only.

This pattern of information gives the financially powerful (states, political entities and large businesses) easy control over the narratives, whose goal, apart from satisfying their mostly lucrative and power-grabbing interests, is to establish unofficial norms and shape the world.

THEME



All major characters in *I Disagree* either moderate reality (by controlling a narrative) or are the victims of this moderated reality (controlled narrative).

Vasil moderates Marko's reality in the ghetto-like neighborhood where they live, that is, he succeeds in controlling the narrative about the wheel-stick-car.

Iskra and the pensioners' anarchist organization stage sabotages of political and business events and processes in an attempt to sabotage their political and business narratives, expose them and publicly ridicule them.

Even Marko is a victim of his own narrative that makes him see his wheel-stick as a car, which then makes his being different even more difficult to accept.

THEME

A dimly lit room with a wooden door, a window with curtains, and a desk with a laptop. The room is mostly in shadow, with light coming from the window. The door is a light-colored wood with a handle. The window has white curtains with a floral pattern. A desk with a laptop is visible on the right side of the frame.

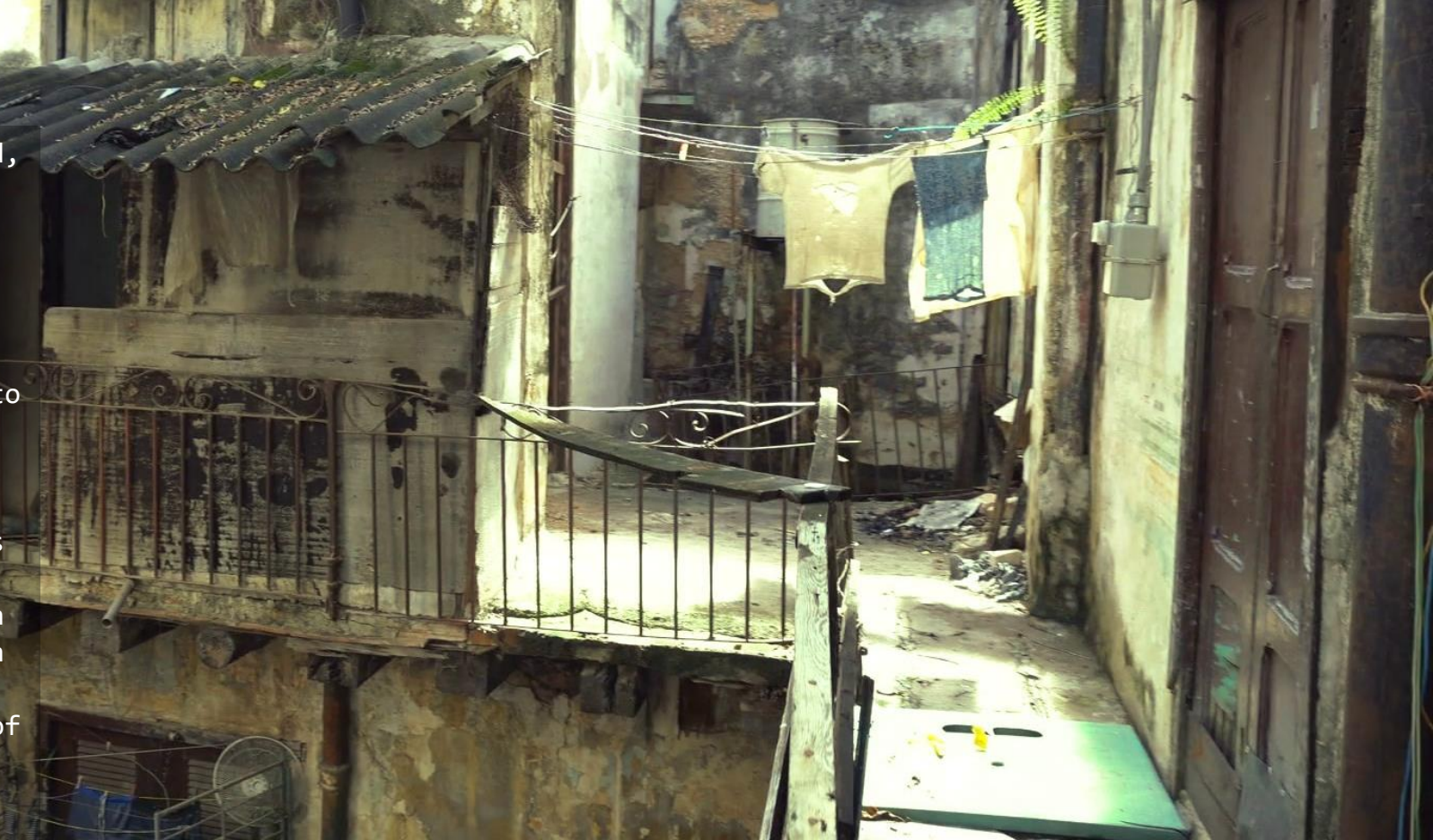
Stefan is a professional controller of narratives, moderator of reality – a PR expert.

Arta is a victim of a traditional narrative that proscribes female children from inheriting their parents' property. Her family forces her to live like a ritual man (sworn virgin). The entire community knows that she is a woman, but pretends otherwise, so that her family can circumvent the unjust social convention in order to keep their property, that is, to avoid having some distant relative's son inherit all they have. Eventually, this injustice will be righted, it is only the woman-victim that remains trapped in the opposite gender identity against her will, as though this is something insignificant.

THEME

Finally, our community, neighborhood, city and state are victims of the primitive narrative that disabled people are less valuable, that they should be institutionalized, isolated, made invisible.

I might summarize the film's theme to a single question: If reality has already been transformed into a battlefield of malevolent and controlled narratives, whose victims we all are as passive consumers, do we have any other non-violent option left but to start moderating our own micro-communities and control the narratives in them in the interest of the well-being of these micro-communities?



CREATIVE VISION



The genre of *I Disagree* is a contemporary social drama. The script and the director's approach will include elements of unyielding attitude, quirkiness, suspense and a touch of cerebral quality and dark comedy.

Humanity will permeate the emotional tone of the film, and the ending of this dark story will leave room for some hope. Hannes Holm's film *A Man Called Ove* can serve as a relevant reference for the emotional tone of the film.

CREATIVE VISION



My intention is to make the audience identify with the main characters, to empathize with them, cheer for them. The dominant feeling should be empathy, not pity.

Visually, the intended look of the film is not the usual look of social dramas, defined by naturalism, objectivity, absence of stylization, almost documentarist (the film will not look like Ken Loach's *I, Daniel Blake*). The film will be cinematic (a relevant reference is Alexandre Koberidze's *What Do We See When We Look at the Sky?*)

WHY?

The uniqueness of this story lies in the fact that it unites the two themes I discussed before. The first is *the inability of disabled people to lead a normal life in this country, without their family and friends making superhuman efforts*. The second is a portion of those superhuman efforts on which the film focuses - *the moderation of the reality of the people with disabilities, that is, the control over the narrative of inclusion in the micro-environment*.



WHY?

We live in a world with highly controlled narratives and this manipulation has started bothering an increasing number of people. Bearing in mind that film production is several years long process, I am convinced that, as the film's premiere draws nearer, this subject matter will be one of the dominant in most global and local societal debates.



WHY?

This story is deeply personal and is a product of a lifelong relationship between a parent and a child with a disability and of the struggle to prevent the environment from destroying the happiness of this child's life. Thank you.