

PROJECT BROCHURE

THAW

A drama short film shot on the edge of the Russo-Ukrainian war

Directed by Nicolae Chistol · Produced by FCG Production

Thesis project — NABA Milano

In a war-torn Ukrainian village, Marjana and Ilja face the hardship of a premature birth, a desperate search for help, and the explosions tearing through their everyday life.

SYNOPSIS

Ukraine, at the end of winter. Marjana (23) and Ilja (24) are surviving in a nearly abandoned village. They've long planned to leave the country: their papers are ready, their bags packed, their money set aside.

During a bombardment, Marjana goes into labor early, and the plan falls apart. Ilja goes out into the night to find the nurse, Natalja, while the birth takes place under extreme conditions, as bombardments continue in the distance.

With a newborn now in the house, leaving is no longer possible. Marjana lets go of the idea of fleeing without ever saying so out loud; Ilja, instead, carries it inside him as a weight — a missed chance he can't let go of.

One morning, a nearby explosion shatters the house's windows. Gripped by panic, Marjana runs inside and clutches the newborn to her chest to protect him, ending up smothering him. Ilja comes home, discovers the tragedy, and, overwhelmed by helplessness, walks away in silence.



NOT THE WAR ON THE FRONT LINE, BUT THE FRAGILITY OF THOSE WHO CANNOT DEFEND THEMSELVES

THAW doesn't tell the story of war, but of the people who endure it. Marjana's labor in a hostile environment is not a heroic mission, but the desperate, natural instinct to fight against being erased by destruction. The focus tightens on small details, making the audience physically feel the same isolation as the characters.

The whole film plays on a strong visual contrast: on one side, the deep intimacy of a mother protecting her newborn; on the other, the cruelty and tension of a merciless environment.

VISUAL STYLE & DIRECTION

War is heard through a sonic deception. The mechanical hum of a military drone constantly blends with the mundane sounds of domestic life, such as Ilja's motorbike engine or a washing machine running. This confusion builds a steady tension until the final impact is revealed.

War never enters the scene directly: there are no soldiers, no front line, no combat is ever shown. It always stays off screen, present only through the effect it leaves on things and bodies — the sudden dark of a blackout, glass shattering, the shadows of a flock of birds crossing the sky, a nest built from fiber optic strands fallen from drones.



Look & feel references

MARJANA, 23

UKRAINIAN-SPEAKING

Marjana is very young and unprepared to become a mother. She loves Ilja deeply, but doesn't see him as mature enough, and some things she simply doesn't say; she keeps them inside. She's very emotional, reacts on impulse, and isn't someone who holds back.

This same nature carries her through a premature birth under extreme conditions, surviving on pure survival instinct alone. Pregnant with her first child, orphaned, she lives with Ilja in the house that was once her parents'.

ILJA, 24

RUSSIAN-SPEAKING

Ilja works on a farm in the village and knows how to handle himself with his hands. He earns little, and he knows it. Having fled home to avoid conscription, he found work and a new family with Marjana.

He had proposed to Marjana that they leave the country, but the baby's birth, arriving earlier than expected, blows the plan apart. Faced with the weight of this new responsibility, he feels weaker and more inadequate every day. After the birth, a silence falls between him and Marjana that leaves him feeling excluded and utterly powerless.

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

Natalja, 40

The village nurse. Ukrainian-speaking. Calm and practical, she reads Ilja's face in an instant and asks nothing. She assists the birth and refuses to be paid.

Zinaida, 70+

An elderly neighbor, one of the few people left in the village. Russian-speaking. Ilja splits wood for her in exchange for a few coins.



Visual reference — tone & intimacy

GENRE	Drama, contemporary
RUNTIME	15 minutes
LANGUAGE	Russian / Ukrainian
SHOOTING	January 2027 · 5 shooting days
LOCATION	Copăcenii, Sîngerei district, Moldova
CREW	16 people, traveling from Turin and Milan
CAST	International casting call, Russian- and Ukrainian-speaking leads
STATUS	Thesis project, NABA Milano · produced by FCG Production, Torino

THE URGENCY

Audiences have grown numb to the usual images of the front line. THAW sets aside the news cycle and geopolitics to show war directly on people's skin. It's a universal story about our extreme fragility, left defenseless against the cold indifference of technology.



Location reference — rural Moldova

WHY WE NEED YOUR HELP

THAW is entirely self-funded and volunteer-run: there is no profit margin for production or crew. Every contribution goes directly toward travel, accommodation and meals for the crew, technical equipment, and post-production (editing, color, sound) needed to bring THAW to festivals.

CROWDFUNDING REWARDS

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

€ 250,00

Titolo di "Associate Producer" nei crediti di coda. Opzione per l'inserimento del Logo Aziendale nei titoli di coda (ideale per attività commerciali o sponsor locali). Locandina fisica del corto. Link PRIVATO di visione in anteprima.

RINGRAZIAMENTO SPECIALE

€ 100,00

Ringraziamenti Speciali nei titoli di coda (sezione dedicata/carattere maggiorato). Locandina fisica del corto. Link PRIVATO di visione in anteprima del cortometraggio (prima dell'uscita nei festival).

Disponibilità: —

LOCANDINA

€ 50,00

Nome e Cognome nei titoli di coda (Crowdfunders). Locandina fisica del corto spedita direttamente a casa.

Disponibilità: —

SOSTENITORE

€ 25,00

Inserimento di nome e cognome nei titoli di coda sotto la categoria speciale "Crowdfunders".

THANK YOU

THAW is a story about two people building a life in the middle of something none of them chose. Thank you for taking the time to learn about it — and for considering being part of making it real.

CONTACT

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