

RUSUDAN GAPRINDASHVILI

SECOND HANDS

2026

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A FILM BY RUSUDAN GAPRINDASHVILI

LOGLINE

Keto, a Georgian immigrant in Germany, makes a living with her brothers clearing the homes of the dead and shipping what remains to their family's second-hand shop in Tbilisi, until Melinda, the woman she has cared for and loved for eight years, dies, and her brothers set out to profit from it like any other job.

SYNOPSIS

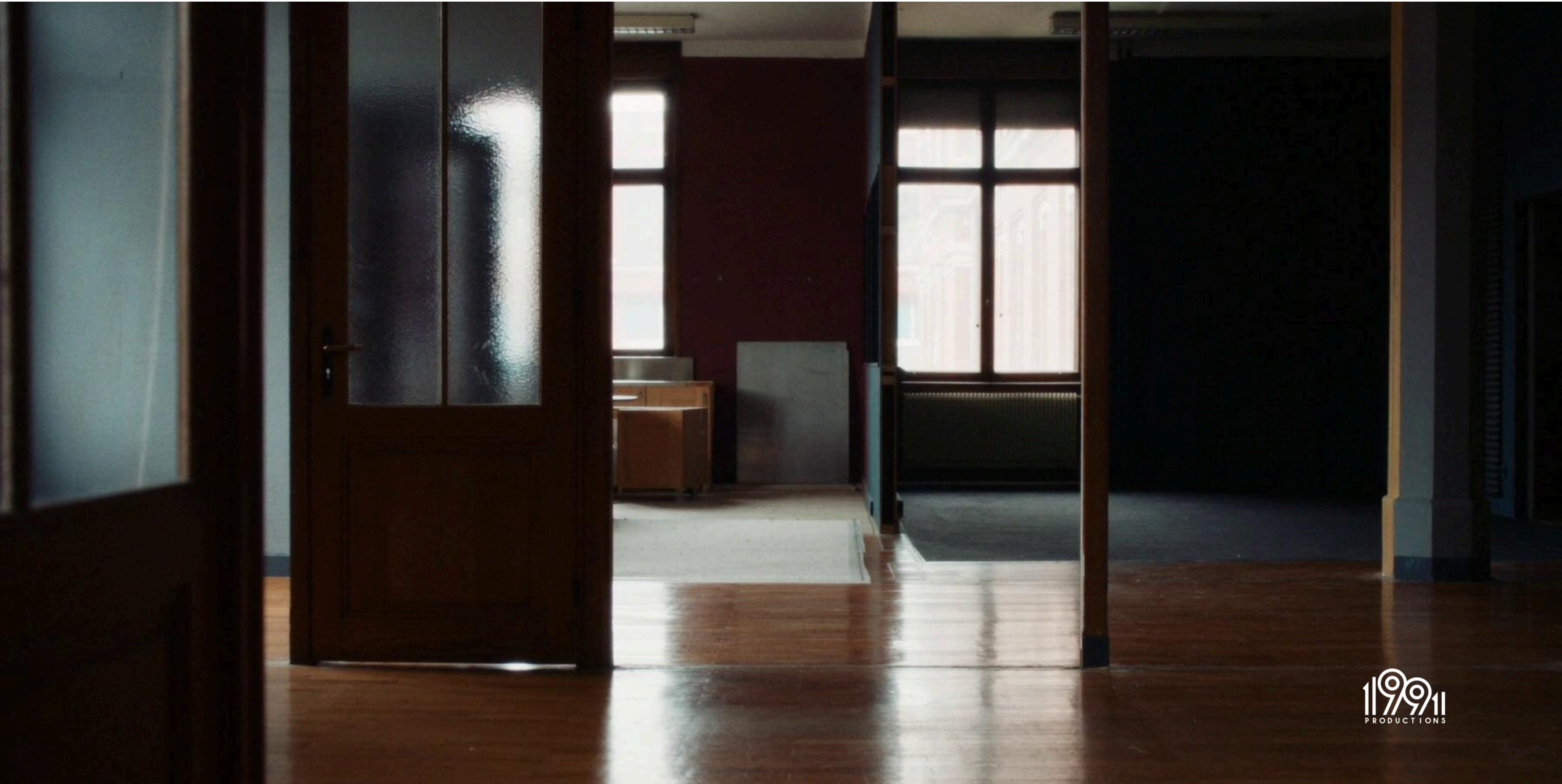
Keto, 27, is terrified of death. Yet for the past eight years, since leaving Georgia for Dortmund with her two brothers, she has earned a living clearing the apartments of the recently deceased. Her controlling older brother Jaba decides what will be kept and what will be discarded, while her dreamer twin Dato searches each apartment for the one valuable object that might finally change their fortunes. Keto is drawn instead to the traces people leave behind. Whatever the bereaved families consider worthless is shipped to their parents' shop in Tbilisi, where the discarded belongings are given a second life.

Keto's closest ally in the neighbourhood is Drina, a Roma woman from Soroca, Moldova, who lives with her relatives on one of the poorest streets in northern Dortmund. She works as a fish cleaner, street musician and circus dancer, and has spent two years sending audition videos to a small touring circus. Drina juggles for cars stopped at red lights and disappears before they turn green. From the outside, her life looks like freedom, something Keto has never known.

To help pay the family's debts, Keto also cares for Melinda, an elderly German woman living with dementia. She has looked after her for eight years, and Melinda's home is the only place where Keto can truly breathe. With Melinda there is no one left for Keto to perform for. Melinda does not judge her, does not need her to be useful, and on her more confused days does not even recognize who Keto is, which is exactly where the freedom lives for Keto.

When Melinda dies, Keto's brothers approach clearing her apartment like any other job. Among her belongings is a magical porcelain dinner set that is valuable only if complete. Overwhelmed by grief and disgusted by her brothers' indifference, Keto secretly steals a single plate, destroying the set's overall value. Her act sets off a ruthless search that reveals how far her brothers are willing to go for money and forces Keto to confront her family.

Rather than give the plate back, Keto disappears with Drina, driving east with the family van still full of Melinda's belongings, giving them away to strangers along the road. By the time she reaches Drina's home in Moldova and then a circus camp in the Romanian mountains, Keto has left her family's economy behind entirely, choosing, for the first time, a life that isn't decided for her.





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I know a family of Georgian immigrant siblings in Germany who clear the apartments of the dead for a living and ship whatever is left to a family shop back home. The family runs on two currencies at once, a stranger's memory and a market price, switching between them without ever seeming to notice the switch. That is what pulled me into making this film. Watching them, I realized I wasn't looking at one relationship to the objects they cleared, but three, and I built the siblings around that difference.

Keto keeps what carries memory. Dato searches every house for the one object that will change everything, because he still believes hard work should be enough to lift a family out of debt, and keeps looking for the exception that will finally prove it. Jaba decides what gets thrown away and what gets kept, controlling everything around him because he cannot control what happened to him as a child in Georgia in the nineties.

Keto carries a weight I recognize. Girls raised in Georgia inherit a duty to obey, care for everyone, and put their own lives last. Keto earns enough to be free, but obedience is a habit. She has spent her adult life being useful, to her brothers, to a business that was never her idea. For Keto, freedom was never a financial problem. It is a permission problem, and she has never known how to give it to herself.

Drina is what makes it possible. She is the catalyst who pulls Keto out of her own life and onto the road. Everything before Drina is contained. Everything after Drina opens up, into the road trip that carries the last half of the film. Drina does not talk Keto into anything. She simply lives in the moment, without asking permission from anyone, and Keto follows her.

Drina also expands the story beyond the Georgian family, connecting Keto's experience to a wider Eastern European cycle of labour, migration and unfinished homes. She is Roma, from Soroca, a town in Moldova I visited while filming my documentary *How to Talk to Lydia?*. There, money earned abroad has built elaborate houses that often remain unfinished and barely inhabited. For me, they embody a familiar contradiction: people leave in search of security, yet the homes built from that labour are never fully lived in. Unlike Keto, Drina refuses to postpone living until that promised security arrives.

Melinda is the German woman Keto has cared for for the past eight years, and theirs is the only relationship in the film that has nothing to do with objects, until Melinda dies. When Jaba and Dato enter her house, opening drawers and weighing possessions in their hands, a life is converted into inventory. Among the objects is a hand-painted porcelain plate that Melinda loved, worth twenty thousand euros. Its monetary value brings to the surface a conflict that has been present through every apartment the siblings have cleared.

Keto has always registered the sentimental weight of the objects, while her brothers have learned to treat them as merchandise. Until now, however, those belongings belonged to strangers. Melinda is not a stranger. This time, the distance Keto has watched her brothers maintain from the dead collides with her own grief. She refuses to let them sell the plate. That refusal is the whole film: the first decision Keto makes in her adult life that answers to no one.

The road trip is where the film changes register. Once Keto and Drina leave, the form itself loosens. The frame opens up, and the landscape stops being a backdrop and becomes the story. It is a structure I return to because it allows inner change to become visible through movement in space. The road does not simply take Keto away from her family; it also takes the film away from the logic of ownership and inventory that has shaped every preceding scene, towards something closer to drift and unclaimed time.

Leaving with Drina afterward is not rebellion in the usual sense. It is closer to surrender, to the moment, the way Drina already lives in it, and a kind of trust that something outside accounting, outside duty, might hold her anyway. I recognize that trust because I have had to reach for it myself, and I am not sure I would call it courage so much as exhaustion finally finding a door.

I want to stay close to every character in this film, even the ones who do the worst things. Nobody in *Second Hands* is a villain. They are all just afraid in different directions.

I am inspired by Otar Iosseliani's *April*, and by the way its restraint, absurdity and lightness reveal how possessions gradually begin to occupy the space of intimacy. In Dortmund, I want to remain close to bodies, hands and objects through static, observational frames, allowing humour and discomfort to coexist. Once Keto and Drina take to the road, the film's rhythm, movement and light will begin to loosen with them. I want to continue a tradition of Georgian cinema that is poetic, plainspoken, playful and disobedient.



CASTING PROPOSAL





KETO

Played by Anano Makharadze (Confirmed)

KETO, twenty-seven, clears out the apartments of the dead for a living. She came to Germany from Georgia at eighteen to work as an au pair. Instead of continuing her studies, she built the family business with her two brothers, who later followed her to Germany. She lives with them in northern Dortmund.

She has never known what she wants to be and has become good at not needing to know. She is most comfortable being told what to do, and there is a gruffness in her that conceals this—a flatness she wears in front of her brothers and the world. Underneath it, there is real warmth, but she doles it out carefully. She dresses in high heels, short skirts and big colourful earrings—a look that puts her in daily conflict with her controlling older brother, Jaba.

Within her own family, she is the one who truly understands the terrain: German bureaucracy, German homes, German death. Her brothers move through it half-blind, translating everything back into what it is worth. She takes in the cats left behind. She also cares for Melinda, an elderly German woman with dementia, and has done so for eight years. Melinda often does not remember who Keto is, and that is exactly where Keto feels most free. Her closest friend is Drina, a Roma woman who is also searching for her place in the world.



DATO Played by Zuka Papuashvili (Confirmed)

DATO, twenty-seven, is Keto’s twin. He lives half a step outside the room he is standing in, somewhere between the family’s actual apartment and the fortune he is certain is waiting inside the next house they clear. To him, it is not a fantasy but a fact that has simply not arrived yet. Somewhere among all these dead strangers’ belongings is the one object that will change everything, and he searches for it in every apartment.

He is largely uninterested in anything outside this logic. His focus can become so consuming that he gets lost in a system and stops noticing the room around him. He treats broken things as though they still carry their old magic, salvaging cracked disco balls and dead Beemer headlights and wiring them into light installations. It is the same faith that drives his treasure hunting.

He loves his family and wants to be the one who lifts them out of debt with a single find, a single discovery. He is also emotionally dependent on Keto. When she leaves, he does not have the language to express what her absence costs him.



JABA

Played by Gaga Shishinashvili (TBC)

JABA, thirty-five, grew up in Georgia during the 1990s, in the years following independence, when the state itself seemed to disappear. The police were absent. Boys formed gangs simply to survive the walk home. His generation encountered violence early and often. That world hardened him in ways Keto and Dato were spared.

He is controlling, especially towards Keto. He treats her behaviour as something that reflects on him - on his name and his standing - as if her choices were his to answer for. He decides what she wears, who she sees and when she comes home. Sometimes his control becomes aggressive. But beneath it lies not hatred, but fear. Keto has a lightness he never had and never will - something that survived in her when it did not survive in him - and he is terrified of losing it.

Jaba is exacting, short-tempered and prone to outbursts that frighten Keto. But his bond with her is different from the one he has with Dato. She is the one who works hardest beside him, the one he leans on and also tries hardest to keep from the outside world, suspicious of anything that might pull her away. His love for her is strong but possessive, tangled up with his pride and his fears.



MELINDA

Proposed cast - Eveline Hall (TBD)

MELINDA, eighty-eight, was once an actress. There is a way she still holds a room when she is lucid - an old instinct for being looked at that has outlasted almost everything else in her mind. She is alone in the truest sense. Her husband is dead. Her daughter is dead.

Her dementia has unmoored her from time and place. She drifts between decades without warning. She sits at an empty table and sees her late husband and brother arrive for dinner as if they had only stepped out for a moment. She asks the room for a cigarette in the middle of conversations taking place in her head. She does not always know who Keto is. On her clearer days, there is love in her face when she looks at Keto.

She refuses to be dressed. In the final stretch of her life, she wants to be naked - at home, on the porch, wherever she is. She resists anything else with a stubbornness that seems to come from somewhere deeper than confusion, as if clothing itself belongs to a version of her life she has finished performing. She constantly asks for a cigarette, whether or not one is ever given to her.



DRINA

Proposed cast - Anamaria Vartolomei (TBD)

DRINA, twenty-eight, grew up on Roma Hill in Soroca, Moldova, the daughter of a Roma baron. Soroca's Roma community built its wealth and established its own order beyond the reach of the surrounding state, a separate kingdom that the Soviet Union never fully managed to absorb. Families built palaces on the hill above the town. Many remain unfinished. Their residents work abroad, in warehouses and strawberry and asparagus fields, sending money home. That is where Drina comes from.

She left for Germany to help her sister, who has three children. She lives with her family on one of the poorest streets in northern Dortmund, in the same building as Keto.

She is free but also lost within that freedom. There is no husband chosen for her, no children expected of her. She dreams of the circus, of joining one and never really stopping. For now, she practises juggling and sings in the street for coins, her voice sounding as though it comes from another dimension. She does not know how good she is. She seems to have wandered in from outside the ordinary rules. She is strong and breakable at once, and she is loving. She cannot stand to be around her parents for more than an hour. She runs again and again - not away from anything in particular, but towards whatever comes next.

By the end, almost by accident, she finds her way into the circus at last. Her luck has only ever arrived sideways, in the middle of doing something else.

Visual Language

The film will be shot on 16mm, whose grain and texture reflect the worn and handled objects within the story. In Dortmund, static, observational frames focus on bodies, hands and objects, shifting to handheld movement during Keto's moments of vulnerability.



Once Keto and Drina leave Dortmund for a road trip, the rhythm becomes faster and the light brighter and increasingly overexposed, reflecting Keto's growing sense of freedom. Georgia appears only once, in a single static view of the shop where discarded objects are given new lives.





When Drina stays in the circus, the camera pulls back. Keto continues alone, but the frame no longer follows her with the same intimacy. She becomes a small figure on the road, held within a blue twilight landscape, the van barely visible. This is the furthest the camera has ever been from Keto. For the first time, the landscape is larger than she is.

TEAM





WRITER/DIRECTOR

Rusudan Gaprindashvili

Rusudan Gaprindashvili is a Georgian filmmaker based in Germany. With a background in visual and performing arts, media management, and film production, she studied at the State Film and Theatre University in Tbilisi, the University of Georgia's Institute for Media Studies, the International Center of Photography in New York, TU Dortmund, and SAE Institute Bochum.

Her short film SHARDS received the Promotional Award at the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen. Most recently, she completed the creative documentary **HOW TO TALK TO LYDIA?** (2025), a German-Georgian co-production that had its world premiere as the opening film of Job Film Days, where it won the Grand Jury Prize. The film was nominated for the Giuseppe Šebesta Prize for Anthropological Cinema and won Best Documentary Feature at the 15th China Academy Awards of Documentary Film.

Supported by the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, the project was developed and presented at major international platforms and festivals, including DOK Leipzig, Beldocs, the East-West Talent Lab, the B2B Doc Pitch at Krakow Film Festival, and the Close Up programme (2023-2024). It received the Pitch the Doc Award (Belgrade, 2022), The Whickers Close Up Bursary Award, and the MEDIMED Award (Tbilisi, 2024).

Rusudan's new fiction feature project, SECOND HANDS, was selected for LIM | Less Is More, a development programme created by Le Groupe Ouest and supported by Creative Europe MEDIA.



PRODUCER

Anna Khazaradze

Anna Khazaradze is a Georgian director and producer who co-founded 1991 Productions with Nino Chichua. Through the company, she develops and finances director-driven films as international co-productions.

Her work focuses on socially engaged, politically attentive storytelling that explores intimate narratives within broader geopolitical contexts. She has secured support from major film funds, broadcasters, and equity partners across a diverse slate of projects.

Anna’s producing credits include Uta Beria’s fiction feature **TEAR GAS** (ZDF/ARTE, Hubert Bals Fund, CNC), which had its world premiere in Concorso Cineasti del Presente at the Locarno Film Festival and won the Cinema&Gioventù Special Prize; Shaden Safieddine Tazi’s short documentary **A FEW MOMENTS OF HAPPINESS**, which will have its world premiere in the Orizzonti Short Films section at the 83rd Venice International Film Festival; **9-MONTH CONTRACT**, which received the Human Rights Award at CPH:DOX and a Special Jury Mention at DOC NYC; and **CROSSING**, which opened Berlinale Panorama in 2024. She is also developing new projects with filmmakers including Anne-Sofie Lindgaard and Shaden Safieddine Tazi.

As a director, Anna is currently directing and producing her feature documentary **BERLINER** (MDR/ARTE, InMaat Foundation, Docs Up Fund) through AK Films.

Anna holds a degree in Film and Television from the London College of Communication (UAL) and is a Berlinale Talents alumna (2025). She is a co-founder and executive board member of DOCA – Documentary Association Georgia.





DOP Goga Devdariani

Born in 1969 in Tbilisi, Georgia, Goga Devdariani is a cinematographer with extensive experience in both fiction and documentary filmmaking. He has worked on numerous award-winning films that have screened at major international festivals, including the Berlinale and Sundance. He graduated from the Shota Rustaveli Theatre and Film State University in 2003.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

Tear Gas (2026) – fiction feature, dir. Uta Beria
How to Talk to Lydia? (2025) – documentary feature, dir. Rusudan Gaprindashvili
Life and Death of a Christmas Tree (2023) – documentary feature, dir. Artūras Jevdokimovas
Gondola (2023) – fiction feature, dir. Veit Helmer
Jonah and Peter (2023) – short film, dir. Gia Karchkhadze
Taming the Garden (2021) – documentary feature, dir. Salomé Jashi
Golden Thread (2019) – fiction feature, dir. Lana Gogoberidze
Inhale-Exhale (2019) – fiction feature, dir. Dito Tsintsadze

THANK YOU

Rusudan Gaprindashvili | Writer-Director
lydiafilmproject@gmail.com

Anna Khazaradze | Producer
anna@1991productions.com

1991 Productions | Production company
1991productions.com

**All film stills included in this visual dossier are used
strictly as visual references for mood and atmosphere.*