



# THE CONSTITUTION

*a love story about hate*

*film by Rajko Grlic*

[www.theconstitutionmovie.eu](http://www.theconstitutionmovie.eu)

# THE CONSTITUTION SYNOPSIS

**Vjeko** (60) is a high school teacher who has devoted his entire life to the study of the Croatian history and language. He lives in a messy, neglected apartment in the centre of Zagreb with his father Hrvoje (91). During the Second World War, his father was an Ustasa – an officer in the Croatian fascist army – and has now been bedridden for over six years. On top of everything, less than a year ago Vjeko tragically lost the love of his life, **Bobo** (54), a cellist.

Lacking any will to live, and seriously preoccupied with suicidal thoughts, the only thing Vjeko enjoys are late night walks during which he wanders through the empty city wearing makeup and female clothes. One night a group of young men stop him, beat him up, piss on him and leave him lying unconscious in the street.

In the hospital, **Maja** (48), a nurse living in the basement of the same building in which Vjeko lives, recognizes him and takes care of him.

After Maja helps him come home, she starts taking care not only of him but of his immobile father too. In return, Vjeko agrees to help Maja's husband, a police officer **Ante** (50), prepare the exam in Croatian Constitution. Ante, who has learning difficulties, lives filled with fear that he will fail the exam only because of the fact that he is a Serb and because they want to kick him out of the force. Thus begins a story about three very different people who live in the same building and who are unexpectedly and against their will brought together and made dependent on each other.





# Ustav Republike Hrvatske



**Ustav**  
Republike Hrvatske

**Ustav**  
Republike Hrvatske

1990. godine  
priprema i izdava  
IZDAVAČKI  
KOLEKTIV



# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

## BRIEF HISTORY

Croatia is one of the countries created through the breakup of Yugoslavia. During its transition from "socialism" to "capitalism", Croatia was badly robbed by many who used the war as an alibi. The process generated about two hundred respectable families who turned the country, which used to be relatively rich at the end of the eighties, into one of the most corrupted and most indebted European states with the lowest economic growth.

One of the most important roles in the process of its transition from public to private was played by nationalism. It was used to blur the reality, to stupefy the people. One part of that process was to introduce the "culture of hate" towards anything that differs in sex, in worldview, in religion or in nationality.

All the statistics indicate that the number of educated citizens who emigrate from Croatia is bigger than in any other European country. Asked for their reasons, these people always reply: "I don't want my children to grow up surrounded by hate".

# THE CROATS AND THE SERBS

The main thing nationalism thrives on is the construction of myths about the past. And this region on the border between southeast Europe and the Balkans, which has been ruled by numerous big and small empires in the last dozen centuries, has never lacked "the past".

Two most populous people among the south Slavs, the Croats and the Serbs, shared a common past for barely seventy years – from 1918 to 1991. And in that short period they let themselves be filled with hatred by the politics to that degree that Ustashi, Croatian fascists that operated under control of the German Third Reich, committed an unprecedented genocide in an attempt to cleanse Croatia from the Serbs, who at that point comprised 18% of its people.

After the Second World War, the wounds were covered but never properly treated, and carried over into a "better life". The most recent war in the region, which took place some twenty years ago, stemmed from those festering wounds which, this time in Serbia, generated a new wave of mutual hate and reduced the number of Serbs in Croatia from 12.2% to 4.5%.

In short, the nationalism in Croatia, as well as in Serbia but in the opposite direction, has always been above anything else the hatred towards the Serbs and only after that towards the usual enemies – homosexuals, the Gypsies and the Jews.

The Catholic Church in Croatia, and the Orthodox one in Serbia have played one of the most important roles in the process, if not the main one. Together with those who "owned Croatia" they make people believe that being a member of our "glorious nation" is much more important than any individual, everyday economic status. For the last twenty some years this has worked perfectly and that is why "the past" as a valuable weapon is simply not allowed to rest.







# WHY AM I MAKING A FILM ABOUT THAT?

My wish is to make a film about the present moment in Croatian history, about its prevailing atmosphere of hatred and intolerance. Ante Tomić and I, as co-screenwriters who have quite extensive personal experiences with these attitudes, wish to tell that story through the lives of people who will never end up in newspapers or web portals, but through whom we can determine what the hatred thrives on and how it shapes people's lives.

If there is something I have learned from the films I have made, it is that every story can be understood beyond one's own geographical area and one's own mental space if it is deeply rooted in its reality, in its space and, above anything else, in the mentality it comes from. Plus, if it is not trying to flatter the "world" by trying to simplify things in order to make them "more comprehensible" for someone out there. Only when audience faces the real people on the screen, even if they see them as complete strangers at first, can they compare their own lives with the lives of the protagonists, turn the lives of the protagonists into their own lives, into their own loves and hatreds.

On the other hand, intolerance and hatred are not unknown concepts in Europe in general. In the last couple of years, it is as if a new wave of intolerance, ideological blindness and fanaticism is spreading. An almost aggressive hatred between different nations, different religions, between natives and immigrants, between those who have and those who don't have... it have been sweeping across Europe at a shocking speed.

If the saying "Hate is local!" is true, and I believe that it is, then every local hate, like the one this film is about, will be comprehensible to each person in Europe who has ever hated or been hated.

# HOW AM I GOING TO MAKE IT?

"The Constitution" is a very intimate love story of four people who live in the same building in the center of Zagreb. It is a story of three people very different in terms of social status, sexual orientation, political views and in terms of the religions to which they do or do not belong. In our story, what connects them is not only the space they live in, but also their, often mutually confronted, demons from the past; demons which force them to live in the past rather than in the present.

I am aware that telling this kind of story is neither simple nor easy. I also know that such a story must be told in a direct and sometimes, even, harsh manner. And yet, my intention is simple – I want to deal with living people and not with dead ideas. That is the reason why my intention is not to create a "tragedy" out of this story and its protagonists. On the contrary, I want to tell a story about those "difficult things" with a faint smile on our lips, with warm love one can feel even for the most negative among the characters. Only then can I reach the ones who think differently and see things differently, those who hate a priori and who do not doubt the hate they feel.





# DIRECTOR & SCRIPTWRITER RAJKO GRLIĆ

Rajko Grlić was born in 1947 in Zagreb, Croatia. He graduated from the FAMU in Prague, Czech Republic 1971.

As director and scriptwriter he worked on the following feature films:

- 2016 *Ustav Republike Hrvatske (The Constitution)*
- 2010 *Neka ostane među nama (Just Between Us)*
- 2006 *Karaula (Border Post)*
- 2002 *Josephine*
- 2001 *Novo novo vrijeme (Who Wants To Be A President)*  
(documentary, co-director)
- 1991 *Čaruga (Charuga)*
- 1989 *That Summer of White Roses*
- 1986 *Za sreću je potrebno troje (Three For Happiness)*
- 1984 *U raljama života (In the Jaws of Life)*
- 1981 *Samo jednom se ljubi (You Love Only Once)*
- 1978 *Bravo Maestro*
- 1974 *Kud puklo da puklo (If It Kills Me)*

These films were shown in cinemas across all five continents, they were included in competition programmes of leading world festivals, including Cannes, and they have received numerous international awards.

He has worked on five feature films as a scriptwriter and on television series *Grlom u jagode (Reckless Years)*. He has produced five feature films, wrote and directed 16 short films and 14 documentaries for television.

He wrote, directed and produced *How to Make Your Movie; An Interactive Film School*, which was proclaimed the Best World Multi-media in 1998.

More available at: [www.rajkogrlic.com](http://www.rajkogrlic.com)

# SCRIPTWRITER

# ANTE TOMIĆ

Ante Tomić was born in 1970. He graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, with major in philosophy and sociology. He is a columnist for dailies Jutarnji list and Slobodna Dalmacija.

In 1996, he received an award for the best story by the Croatian Journalists' Association, and in 2005 he received an award for the best column. In 2006, he was awarded the Kiklop Literary Award Hit of the Year for his book *Gradanin pokorni* (*An Obedient Citizen*). He is an author of fifteen books.

His novel *Što je muškarac bez brkova* (*What Is a Man Without a Moustache*) was adapted for stage at the Croatian National Theatre. His novels *Ništa nas ne smije iznenaditi* (*Nothing Can Surprise Us*), *Ljubav, struja voda & telefon* (*Love, Electricity, Water & Telephone*) and *Čudo u Poskokovoj Dragi* (*Miracle at Viper's Glen*) were adapted for stage in Theatre Kerempuh. Hrvoje Hribar filmed his novel *Što je muškarac bez brkova* (*What Is a Man Without a Moustache*).

Rajko Grlić's film *Karaula* (*Border Post*) is based on his novel *Ništa nas ne smije iznenaditi* (*Nothing Can Surprise Us*). Together with Grlić, Tomić wrote a screenplay for the film *Neka ostane među nama* (*Just Between Us*).

He co-wrote the screenplay for television series *Novo Doba* (*New Age*) with Ivica Ivanišević and Renato Baretić.







# BIOS

INTERFILM is an independent production company based in Zagreb, Croatia. Established in the mid-nineties, Interfilm has produced over 30 feature films so far including several European co-productions. Interfilm's filmography also includes more than a 100 documentary and television projects.

## NEBOJŠA GLOGOVAC

Nebojša Glogovac is a Serbian actor born on August 30, 1969 in Trebinje, Bosnia and Herzegovina in a family of priests. As a young adult he took part in a popular Yugoslavian TV series, *Better Life* (1987), starring as a friend of one of the main characters. First he studied psychology and then transferred to the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade. His first role was in a war drama *Vukovar, a Story* directed by Bora Draskovic. He gained great popularity as an actor starring in a Serbian TV series *Family Treasure* from 1998 – 2001. His filmography includes a number of critically acclaimed films, that achieved success internationally and in the Balkan region.

## DEJAN AĆIMOVIĆ

Dejan Aćimović was born in 1963, Čapljina, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Graduated acting at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb in 1986. He acted in numerous theatre plays, movies and television series. Directed three long feature films: *Is It Clear My Friend, I Have To Sleep, My Angel* and *Anka*, and two documentaries, *Go For It!* and *The King*.

## KSENIJA MARINKOVIĆ

Ksenija Marinković was born in 1966 in Virovitica, where she finished high school. Ever since she was eight and until enrolling in the Academy of Dramatic Art in Zagreb, she was involved in the Virovitica Theatre as an amateur actress. As a student of the Academy, she started to collaborate with the Gavella Drama Theatre and the Histrion Theatre Troupe. After graduating from the Academy, she spent a year with the 'Teatar u gostima' and has been employed in the Zagreb Youth Theatre (ZKM Theatre) since 1989. Other than in the Zagreb Youth Theatre, she performed in the Histrion Theatre Troupe, the &TD Theatre, the Ulysses Theatre in Brijuni, the Gavella Drama Theatre, as well as numerous independent theatre troupes. She is currently a member of Croatian National Theatre ensemble in Zagreb. Her filmography includes a numerous films and respected awards for achievements in acting career.

# CAST & CREDITS

## CAST

Vjeko Kralj  
Ante Samardžić  
Maja Samardžić  
Hrvoje Kralj  
Ivan Stazić  
Bobanović  
Pater Tomislav  
Damir Pivac  
Miroslav Pleše  
Policajka  
Policajac 1  
Policajac 2  
Trovač pasa  
Jozo Sloković  
Socijalna radnica  
Barmen  
Bobo  
Konobarica

NEBOJŠA GLOGOVAC  
DEJAN AĆIMOVIĆ  
KSENIJA MARINKOVIĆ  
BOŽIDAR SMILJANIĆ  
MLADEN HREN  
MATIJA ČIGIR  
ZDENKO JELČIĆ  
ROBERT UGRINA  
ŽELJKO KÖNIGSKNECHT  
JELENA JOVANOVA  
BERISLAV TOMIČIĆ  
RUDI PAVLOVIĆ  
RADOMIR SARAĐEN  
LUKA DRAGIĆ  
DARIA LORENCI FLATZ  
ŽELJKO DUVNJAK  
STANISLAV KOVAČIĆ  
NINA RAKOVEC

and as a special guests

ZORAN PUSIĆ  
TOMISLAV KLIČKO  
ČEDO PRODANOVIĆ

## CREDITS

Director  
Producer  
Executive Producer  
Co-producers

RAJKO GRLIĆ  
IVAN MALOČA  
MAJA VUKIĆ  
RUDOLF BIERMANN  
DEJAN MILOŠEVSKI  
JANI SEVER  
MIKE DOWNEY  
SAM TAYLOR  
ANTE TOMIĆ & RAJKO GRLIĆ  
BRANKO LINTA h.f.s.  
DUKE BOJADZIEV  
ANDRIJA ZAFRANOVIĆ  
ŽELJKA BURIĆ  
LEO KULAŠ  
ANA BULAJIĆ ČRČEK  
NENAD VUKADINOVIĆ  
SRDJAN KURPJEL

Script  
Director of Photography  
Original Music Score  
Editor  
Art Director  
Costume Designer  
Make-up Artist  
Sound Engineer  
Sound Designer



blonde

# CONTACTS

PRODUCED BY

IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH



**INTERFILM**

Nova Ves 45/2  
10000 Zagreb  
Croatia

Tel. +38514667290  
interfilm@interfilm.hr  
www.interfilm.hr



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Czech Republic



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Calle Veneras 9  
28013 Madrid  
Spain

Tel: +34 915 488 877  
info@latidofilms.com  
www.latidofilms.com

**Duration:** 93 min  
**Format:** 2K / 1:1,85 / colour / 5.1  
**Language:** Croatian



Croatian  
Audiovisual  
Centre  
Hrvatski audiovizualni centar

