



50. Chicago International Film Festival World Cinema

ROBERT FORSTER

THE PIANO ROOM

THE PIANO ROOM

A run-down hotel room, a piano, a maid and the guests who stay there.
Life begins, life ends and lives are changed forever in the piano room.

103 minutes / color / 1.85:1 / HD / 2013



THE PIANO ROOM

SYNOPSIS

Many years ago, during a visit to Macedonia, the Vienna Philharmonics stayed at this Hotel. The Hotel's biggest room was given to the pianist, because she needed to practice on a semi-concert piano several days before the concert. Leaving, the orchestra Director explained to the Hotel Manager that the transport vehicle was broken, and that another one would come for the piano in a couple of days. Many years have passed, and no one ever came.

Understandably, this story is not true, the same as all the other stories that the MANAGER of this hotel tells to the different investors coming to see the Hotel, which is for sale for years and years... The Hotel has been new and in full splendor at a time, and it probably had a name, like any other hotel. Today it is nameless, and the sign above the entrance says only "Hotel". The Piano Room is the place where the whole action of the film is happening. We see different lives and different destinies stopping by at this hotel room.

VIKTOR is a wealthy gentleman who often visits the Piano Room, secretly meeting with his mistress EVA. This impersonal Hotel is totally safe. Years pass by through the prism of the stereotypical lie that he would certainly leave his wife soon, and start a new life with young Eva. The conflict becomes unbearable; he has to kill his mistress...

NINA and GOGA are there for the first time as teenage girls on a school excursion. Nina is wearing pajamas with elephants, while Goga sleeps completely naked. Mutually discovering their sexuality, they fall in love with each other. Going through their lives, they secretly meet at the Piano Room occasionally...Goga, the initiator of the relationship, suppresses her lesbian nature under pressure, starts a family and rarely meets Nina there... Nina stays devoted to Goga, her only love, until the end...

A Gentleman in a suit regularly rents the Room in order to dress-up as a woman. Having the archaic urge to be invisible, or to put it differently, to be someone else, this man masks himself and turns into a completely different person, into IRA, only to return to his real life as a businessman, husband and father in a couple of hours.



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SYNOPSIS

ILMAZ and AZIZ are father and son, truck drivers. They often come to the Hotel for a sleep over, always in this Room. Ilmaz wanted his son to become a musician, projecting his ambitions on him. Aziz, an incredible talent, never wanted to be anything else than what his father was - a driver....Only in the rare moments spent in this room Aziz gives himself to the dusty piano... Those are the only moments when they truly live.

PETAR and MARTA come here to spend their first wedding night. The young and wild motorcyclist and his weird bride make love passionately. With no money in their pockets, a Yamaha motorcycle parked in front of the Hotel, two wedding rings and two helmets, life is beautiful. We see them again at their 10th wedding anniversary...Now noticeably fatter, Marta is more interested in recipes for Salzburg gnocchi and cakes, and PETAR is dead tired of the night shifts in the factory...

DIZE always comes alone. Mysterious and silent; he takes out from his small suitcase a winding doll that starts to ring out a lullaby; a clink-clunk music. DIZE, a typical vagrant, foolish and weird brings with him the secret about the piano room. Against all the false stories of the DIRECTOR, we find out that the famed pianist Dionis Vargas, who is missing for 35 years, lived in this room at one time. He is DIZE; once a pianist, and now an old and nasty tramp that comes to the Room to pick up the money hidden in the double-bottom of his piano for a long time...

These different stories, seen through fragments of the lives of these characters that are sufficient for us to see the complete meaningless of their lives, entwine around the central character of this scenario – the MAID. Young and silent, while cleaning the messy piano room in between the scenes of the before mentioned characters, she writes letters. Turning to her mother, the MAID discloses her aspect of view where her banal life has sense. Years are passing by in the room where nothing changes; years filled with monotony, humiliation and absurd; but, through the prism of this introvert and silent character, it is a normal and beautiful life, full with pleasant moments, career advancement and hope for better tomorrow.

DIZE's secret – the large sum of money hidden in the piano, completely unexpectedly, ends in the hands of the MAID. They are only a logical consequence to her whole life described in the letters to her mother; the distortion of the image of life, the fantasy that seemed so naive and funny, became reality...

I have always been thrilled by the theory that the whole life is contained in its each and every single moment. Also, the longer I'm engaged with this art, I find the theory that every film is contained in its each and every single frame more and more exciting.

The Piano Room is a film free of the traditional film narration, and it doesn't need to carry an integral story within; instead, it is simply a presentation of different intertwined life stories brought to this single location, from the foreshortening of which the most essential aspects of our existence are seen. The fragments from the lives of these “existentialist” characters are sufficient for us to see all their lives.

This room, that hides them from the hypocrisy of the world outside, is the only place where they can find some kind of fulfilment. Although far from similar, as representatives of completely different social and cultural groups, all share emptiness in their life. As the years pass like revolving doors, motives become frustrations, ambition and fantasy lead to ruin. Only the Maid, oblivious to the thwarted dreams that check in and out, seems to move forward.

The Piano Room is a presentation of the meaninglessness of our life; or of the meaning of life against the meaningless reality.

Igor Ivanov

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE





THE PIANO ROOM

CAST CREW

MAIN ROLES

Maid	NATASHA PETROVIC
Manager	JOVICA MIHAJLOVSKI
Dize	SVETOZAR CVETKOVIC
Ira	VASIL ZAFIRCHEV
Petar	IGOR STOJCHEVSKI
Marta	SIMONA SPIROVSKA
Viktor	TORSTEN VOGES
Eva	IVA KRAJNC
Aziz	DENIZ ABDULA
Yilmaz	FIRDAUS NEBI
Goga	JAGODA KUMRIC
Nina	NEVENA RISTIC

SPECIAL APPEARANCE

German Buyer	TONY PALMER
Jewish Buyer	HANNES WEGENER
Russian Buyer	MIKE SARNE

AUTHORS

Directed by	IGOR IVANOV
Produced by	TOMI SALKOVSKI
Screenplay	ZANINA MIRCHEVSKA, IGOR IVANOV
Cinematography by	TOMI SALKOVSKI MSC
Production Designer	MILENKO JEREMIC
Original Music by	CHILLY GONZALES
Editor	VLADIMIR PAVLOVSKI
Make-Up Designer	ANA BULAJIC CRCEK
Costume Designer	ELENA DONCHEVA

Production Company	SKOPJE FILM STUDIO, Macedonia
Partners	RESTART PRODUCTION, Slovenia EYE TO EYE, Serbia
Distributor	SOUL FOOD, Serbia



IGOR IVANOV

“The Piano Room” is the second feature film by Igor Ivanov. His short “Bugs” (2004) was nominated for Golden Bear at the 54. Berlinale and won the Golden Leopard at 59. Locarno Film Festival; thus it secured invitations to many festivals around the world. Ivanov’s debut feature film “Upside Down” (2007) had its world premiere at 42. Karlovy Vary Film Festival and won the Best Director award at Mostra de Valencia in 2007.

SKOPJE FILM STUDIO

“The Piano Room” is produced by Skopje Film Studio, a young and dynamic production company based in the heart of the Macedonian capital that has already completed a variety of shorts, documentaries and feature films. Most important among its successfully completed projects until now are the feature “Kontakt” by Sergej Stanojkovski and the portmanteau film by five young women directors from Ex-Yugoslavia, “Some Other Stories” (2011), both screened at over 30 international film festivals. Besides the development and realization of own projects, Skopje Film Studio offers full production services to foreign companies interested to shoot in Macedonia. Such cooperation is the one with Konstantin Film Produktion from Germany on the feature film “Bliss” (2012).





CONTACT

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