

*The happiest
girl in the world*

directed by **RADU JUDE**





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Synopsis

Delia Frățilă (18) comes from a poor family living in a small Romanian town. She is the winner of an advertising campaign: she sent three juice-bottles labels and won an expensive car.

Delia and her parents, has to come to Bucharest for the promotion testimonial – a video showing Delia to the whole country, as a proof that the refreshments company keeps its promises and grants the awards. After the long way to Bucharest, the family finally arrives to the shooting place - a big square in the middle of the city.

She spends the day doing the shooting. What she has to do seems quite easy: she has to sit in the car in front of the wheel, to drink juice and thank the organizing company. The shooting goes on with the ordinary problems: Delia keeps forgetting the text, the soda doesn't look good enough-for the client, they have to refresh her make-up all the time, the shooting angle needs to be changed, some spotlights break etc.



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During the shooting breaks, Delia has long talks with her parents - that eventually turn into ugly arguments. The discussion is about what they should do with the car: Delia wants to keep it for herself, while her parents would like to sell it and escape in this way from poverty.

The argument becomes more tensed, while the shooting becomes more stupid and absurd. What seemed to be at the beginning a lucky event becomes for Delia an extreme and emotionally painful situation, in which she has to rethink and question her family relationship.



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Director's statement

In 2005 I was preparing a short film with a friend of mine, Andrei Butică, a director of photography. At some point, I told him a story I witnessed at one of my first “professional” shootings. I was supposed to film a teenager girl coming from a poor background. She was supposed to look happily at the camera and tell us how she sent in three juice bottle labels and won a car. The girl was not happy at all, on the contrary, she was feeling miserable because her parents decided that she should sell the car, so that they could pay some debts. Andrei told me that this story could become a good film. Encouraged by him, I wrote together with Augustina Stanciu a 30 pages script. It wasn't really working, the story was too hurried, so, little by little, we transformed it into a longer script.



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Director's statement

Actually, I never knew for sure what's this story about, what's the meaning of it. I thought that it could be about many different things. About how the people think about what's good for them. About compromises and lies. About the language of film being used in order to cheat. About being a scared teenager and not having the guts to fight your parents to the end. About what it is to be a parent who must take profit of his/her own child in order to fulfill the future plans. About happiness, sadness and consume. About capitalism. About the way sun goes down in University Square during the summer.

Seeing the film completed, I don't know how many of the above mentioned remained. I don't know whether the film is good or bad. I don't have nor the skill, neither the distance to realize it. And, fortunately, it's not my business to do it. I only hope that whoever will see the film will find in it something meaningful and emotional.



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The team

Radu Jude Director

Radu was born in Bucharest, in 1977. In 2003 he graduated the Media University - Filmmaking Department. He worked as an assistant director for feature films shot in Romania, like "Amen" (by Costa-Gavras) and "Death of Mr. Lazarescu" (by Cristi Puiu). He directed the short films "Wrestling" (2003), "The Black Sea" (2004), "The Tube with a Hat" (2006) - the most awarded Romanian short of all times, winner of main prizes in Sundance, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Grimstad, Hamburg, Bilbao, Huesca, Trieste, Montpellier, Cottbus, Aspen, Indielisboa, Bruxelles, Mediawave, Cracow, Almeria, Valencia, Uppsala and selected in: Toronto, Telluride, New Directors/NewFilms, Tampere, Rotterdam, Huesca etc., "In the Morning" (TV film, 2007), "Alexandra" (2007) - selected in Clermont-Ferrand, awarded in Oberhausen and approx.100 advertising commercials. The Happiest Girl in the World represents Radu's debut in feature film. The project won the NHK/Filmmaker Award in Sundance 2008, being selected in the Berlinale-Forum 2009.



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Augustina Stanciu
Scriptwriter
& Art Director

Born in 1976, Augustina graduated the Media University - Filmmaking Department in 2002. She has collaborated with Radu before for the screenplay of Alexandra for Radu Jude's short film "Alexandra" and for a well-known Romanian TV series "In familie". Alexandra also works as an art director. "The Happiest Girl" in the World represents her debut in feature film both as a screenwriter and art director.

Marius Panduru
Director of
Photography

Marius graduated the National University of Film and Theatre "I.L.Caragiale" – Cinematography Department, in 2001. During the last 7 years his work as a cinematographer includes many awarded films, both short and feature: "Traffic" (by Cătălin Mitulescu) – Palme d' Or, Cannes 2004, "12:08 East of Bucharest" (by Corneliu Porumboiu) – Camera d'Or, Cannes 2006, "The Way I Spent the End of the World" (by Cătălin Mitulescu) - presented in Un Certain Regard, Cannes 2006, "Ryna" (by Ruxandra Zenide) – Special Jury Prize, Cottbus IFF 2005, or "The Rest is Silent" (by Nae Caranfil) – official selection Locarno IFF 2007. This is Marius Panduru's second film with director Radu Jude, after the short "The Tube with a Hat" – the most awarded Romanian short film of all times.



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Cătălin Cristuțiu
Editor

Cătălin graduated the National University of Film and Theatre “I.L. Caragiale” – Editing & Sound Department, in 2002. Ever since he was a student, he started working with director Cristian Nemescu and their filmography, as a team, includes the student short films “C Block Story” (2003) and “Mihai & Cristina” (2001), the medium length film “Marilena from P7” (2006) – selected in Semaine de la Critique, Cannes 2006 and Nemescu’s feature debut “California Dreamin’” (endless) – Un Certain Regard Award, Cannes 2007. This is Cătălin’s fourth collaboration with Radu Jude, after editing three of his shorts: “The Tube with a Hat”, “In the Morning” and “Alexandra”.

Ada Solomon
Producer

Born in 1968, Ada is the co-owner of HiFilm Productions - an upcoming Romanian film company, whose filmography includes “Marilena from P7” – Romanian Medium Length film by Cristian Nemescu - Selected in Cannes Film Festival-Semaine de la Critique, awarded over 10 prizes, like Best Short Film in Molodist, Kiev IFF, Best Feature Award in Milan IFF, Audience Award for Foreign Film in Paris Tout Court IFF, Best Foreign Film in Syracuse/US; “Cold Waves” (Romanian-German-Luxembourg documentary directed by Alexandru Solomon) - selected in IDFA Amsterdam , DOK Leipzig , Goteborg IFF, Visions du Reel, Nyon, Alpe Adria Trieste,



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Ada Solomon Producer

Astra Sibiu, Best Documentary in B-EST IFF, Bucharest, GOPO Award for Best Documentary 2007; or “The Tube With A Hat” - short film directed by Radu Jude – selected in over 70 festivals and awarded over 30 prizes as Sundance Award for Best Short, AFI Los Angeles Best Narrative Short, Krakow Silver Dragon, Bilbao Grand Award, Hamburg Great Award, Uppsala Great Award, Montpellier Great Award, Golden Gate San Francisco, Great Award in Cinema Jove, Valencia, Huesca Great Award, Spain, selected in New Directors/New Films MoMA NY. In 2008, Ada and HiFilm Productions co-produced together with Film Kairos (Italy) & Manigolda Film (France) “Mar Nero”, feature film by Federico Bondi - awarded Best Actress, Ecumenical Prize & Youth Jury Prize in Locarno, selected in London BFI & Warsaw Int'l Film Festival.

Among Ada’ s work-in-progress projects is “First of All, Felicia” – feature film by Melissa de Raaf & Răzvan Rădulescu – supported by the Nipkow Program & Pre Media Program, selected in EAVE 2007, Paris Projects 2007 & awarded in CineLink Sarajevo & Balkan Film Fund Thessaloniki, selected in Atelier Cannes 2008.

Since 2006 Ada has been the executive director of Cultural Society Next & Next Short & Medium Length IFF - in memoriam Cristian Nemescu & Andrei Toncu.



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The team

**Stienette Bosklopper /
Circe Films**
Co-Producer

Circe Films BV is an Amsterdam-based company producing feature films for the national and international market. Since 1996, Managing Director Stienette Bosklopper has been establishing enduring relationships with unique and innovative filmmakers. Circe Films aims to serve as a bridge between artist and audience, creating a dynamic environment geared to individual filmmakers.

Circe's first internationally released feature was "One Man and his Dog" (1998) by Annette Apon. Nanouk Leopold's debut "Les Flottantes" (2000) was selected for the 2001 Tiger Award Competition. Her second feature "Guernsey" was selected for the Quinzaine des Réalisateurs at Cannes 2005. "Wolfsbergen", Leopold's third film, was selected for the Forum of New Cinema at the Berlinale 2007 and the Toronto International Film Festival. "Calimucho", by 2001 Tiger Award winner Eugenie Jansen, will be delivered spring 2008.

Since 2008 Circe works together with Fortissimo Film Sales in the field of international coproduction.



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The actors

Andreea Boşneag Actress

Born in 1991, Andreea is a high school teenager, whose career in film started with her leading role in “The Happiest Girl in the World”. Her dream to act rose early in her mind and during her high school years she took some acting classes such as Sigma Art and Euro Art. Andreea was chosen for this part after a 4 month casting.

Vasile Muraru Actor

Born in 1956, Vasile Muraru is one of the most famous Romanian comedy actors. Together with another Romanian actor, Nae Lăzărescu, he has formed a well-known comedian couple, much loved by the Romanian audience. His career as a film actor includes more than 10 films, “The Happiest Girl in the World” being the climax of his filmography.



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The actors

Violeta Haret Popa Actress

Born in 1966, Violeta is an experienced Romanian theatre actress. Her career includes majos roles in comedy, transforming Violeta into an actress very-much-loved by the audience. Her talent in film has been discovered by Radu Jude as this this part from “The Happiest Girl in the World” is her debut in film.

Șerban Pavlu Actor

Born in 1975, Șerban is one of the young and successful Romanian actors, working both in theatre and film. During his career he collaborated with Romanian directors Lucian Pintilie - “Niki and Flo” and Cristi Puiu - “The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu”. He is at his second collaboration with Radu Jude, after the leading role in “Alexandra” (2008).

Andi Vasluianu Actor

Born in 1974, Andi is one of the highly acclaimed Romanian actors. His filmography includes more than 40 titles, both short and feature films. He worked with Cristian Nemescu, both in “California Dreamin’” (endless) (2007) and “Marilena from P7” (2006), Radu Muntean - “The Paper Will Be Blue” (2006) and “The Rage” (2002), Cătălin Mitulescu – short films “17 Minutes Late” and “8:15 - Bucharest-Wien”. Andi is credited in more than five of the Romanian features to be released in 2009.



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Andreea Boşneag on The Happiest Girl in the World

"My name is Frăţilă Delia Cristina and I am the happiest girl in the world". This is the line I've said most times and I will never forget it for sure.

The shooting was absolutely fascinating to me. And the rehearsal, the actors, the story, but I most enjoyed the atmosphere on the set. All of it. I felt like we were a real family.

I liked more than one scene, especially those in which we were "shooting" for the commercial. It was very funny – both the situation and some of the lines.

I remember I was supposed to drink a lot of juice. Serban Pavlu (playing the Director) kept telling me: "Drink, drink! Drink more! Drink, cause I'm watching you!". And I kept drinking, persistently and tenaciously. Unforgettable.



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Andreea Boşneag on The Happiest Girl in the World

As it was my first time on a set I had my eyes and ears wide open to everything I was told and everything that was going on. All the actors gave advice, helped me and made me feel wonderful. It was an incredible experience and an extraordinary team. I never felt tired and, in the evening, when I would get home, I couldn't wait to go back on the set. And, even though I hate waking up in the morning, I would love to wake up and go on set, where everybody was full of life and optimistic, and willing to start a new day of shooting.

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Credits

with **Vasile Muraru, Andreea Boşneag, Violeta Haret Popa**, Şerban Pavlu, Andi Vasluianu, Diana Gheorghian, Alexandru Georgescu, Petre "Bombardel" Constantin, Luminița Stoianovici, Doru Cătănescu, Bogdan Marhodin, Cristina Şerbu.

1st assistant director **Cristina Iliescu** line producer **Valentino Rudolf** production manager **Adrian Pavelescu** set & costumes designer **Augustina Stanciu** make up **Dana Roşeanu** sound designer **Titi Fleancu** editor **Cătălin F. Cristuțiu** director of photography **Marius Panduru rsc** screenplay by **Augustina Stanciu & Radu Jude** associate producer associate producer **Dragoş Vilcu** co-producer **Stienette Bosklopper** producer **Ada Solomon**

a **HiFilm productions** in co-production with **Circe Films** with the support of **Romanian CNC, TVR, Media Planning Group, Hubert Bals Fund of Rotterdam Film Festival, NHK / Sundance Award, Media Programme of the European Union** and with the participation of **HBO Romania**.

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Credits



circefilms



MPG
MEDIA PLANNING GROUP



SUNDANCE
INSTITUTE



FILMS *Boutique*