

AS I WAS  
LOOKING  
ABOVE I COULD  
SEE MYSELF  
UNDERNEATH

PRESSKIT



## TECHSPECS

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Film Title	<b>As I Was Looking Above, I Could See Myself Underneath</b>
Original Film Title	<b>Kah kqyrsha përpjetë, e shihsha veten përfuni</b>
Genre	<b>Documentary</b>
Release	<b>2022</b>
Runtime	<b>62 MIN</b>
Color	<b>COLOUR</b>
Shooting Format	<b>2K</b>
Screening Formats	<b>DCP / QT Apple Prores 422 HQ / Bluray</b>
Aspect Ratio	<b>1:1.78</b>
Sound	<b>5.1 / Stereo</b>
Language	<b>Albanian, English</b>
Subtitles	<b>English</b>

## SYNOPSIS / STILLS

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### Synopsis

Home is a feeling, they say, but where is home, when you are not allowed to feel at home even within your own body and mind?

As I Was Looking Above, I Could See Myself Underneath unveils intimate stories of LGBTQ persons from Kosovo, going through their unceasing search for a safe place that allows them to be.

### Logline

As I Was Looking Above, I Could See Myself Underneath unveils intimate stories of LGBTQ persons from Kosovo, going through their unceasing search for a safe place that allows them to be.



## CAST / CREW

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Main Characters	<b>Linda Blendi Maki Semi Edoni Qerkica Mustafa</b>
Director	<b>Ilir Hasanaj</b>
Producer	<b>Dardan Hoti</b>
Executive Producer	<b>Aurela Kadriu</b>
Montage	<b>Enis Saraçi</b>
Camera	<b>Leart Rama Ilir Hasanaj</b>
Sound Design	<b>Tomor Kuçi Ilir Hasanaj</b>
Music	<b>Arbër Salihu</b>
Sound	<b>Pëllumb Ballata</b>
Title Design / Credits	<b>Arvan Berisha</b>
Research	<b>Dardan Hoti Aurela Kadriu</b>
Colorgrading	<b>Enis Saraçi</b>
Transcripts	<b>Aurela Kadriu</b>
Subtitles	<b>Eljesa Beka Jack Butcher</b>
Distribution	<b>Impronta Films</b>

## DIRECTOR'S BIO / FILMOGRAPHY / STATEMENT

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Ilir Hasanaj is a film director from Kosova – grown up in Switzerland. Before graduating in Film at the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) he worked several years as a computer scientist. His documentary film „me dasht' me dasht' me dasht“ had a successful run at international festivals between 2017 – 2020, including Toronto Hot Docs Film Festival, Solothurn Film Festival and Dokufest, where it won the audience award.

Ilir lives in Pristina (Kosovo) and Winterthur (Switzerland) and works on films with social importance. He co-founded in 2018 the alternative cinema Kino ARMATA to offer free access to alternative culture in a multifunctional space in the center of Prishtina. Furthermore, he leads the non formal NeoSchool Documentary School, which professionally guides new talents into the art of making their first short documentary.

Being Kosovar and Swiss makes it very natural for Ilir to connect the two cultures through film, consequently he joined the film festival Kino Kosova in Switzerland as a film programmer and moderator.

2023	Circle Of Bricks (WT)	documentary	director / producer
2022 62'	As I Was Looking Above, I Could See Myself Underneath	documentary	director
2017 90'	me dasht' me dasht' me dasht'	documentary	director / dop
2015 19'	LEONARDO	fiction	writer / director
2012 9'	Senjor!	fiction	writer / director

This film tells the story of seven LGBTQ persons living in Kosovo who come from different backgrounds and generations. In their own words, using their real names, voices and faces, Maki, Semi, Edon, Qerkica, Mustafa, Blendi and Linda tell stories of discovering their queerness and living as queer in an environment of unacceptance and exclusion. It explores hopes and dreams, loss and defeat and the meaning of home. The film is the first feature documentary in Kosovo to show the protagonists without blurring their faces and changing their real names.

It explores an isolated culture of resilience cultivated in intimate settings over many years and held together through mutual solidarity and compassion. The contrasts between the stories of the younger and older protagonists show the social changes Kosovo has endured, particularly from before the 90s war and after the first ever Pride Parade in 2017. These contrasts become even more significant considering the fact that Kosovo has a majority Muslim population and there are widespread false claims that being LGBTQ is an “ideology” imported from the West after the last Kosovo war. Through this film, I seek to expose broader audiences to the experiences, realities, and voices of LGBTQ persons, with the hope that such exposure will initiate more understanding and compassion towards the struggles LGBTQ persons face daily.

## PRODUCERS'S BIO / FILMOGRAPHY / CONTACT ---

Dardan Hoti has nine years of experience in journalism, covering mainly human rights, with a particular focus on LGBT+ rights. He has worked as an editor and producer in media such as RTV Dukagjini and Euronews Albania.

In 2013, he won the first Journalism Poverty Prize awarded by the United Nations Kosovo Team. Between 2014 and 2021, Dardan was a board member of the Kosovo Journalists Association.

He is the researcher and producer of the documentary "As I Was Looking Above, I Could See Myself Underneath", exploring the lives of LGBTQ persons in Kosovo.

His most recent works are the realization of "Dealing with the Forgotten," a photo exhibition on the issue of missing persons in Kosovo, and the coordination of the exhibition "The grave is better than not knowing," on the same topic, for the Humanitarian Law Center Kosovo.

Currently, he is producing the documentary "I have never been on an airplane," supported by the Kosovo Cinematography Center.

2023	I have never been on an airplane	documentary	producer
2022 62'	As I Was Looking Above, I Could See Myself Underneath	documentary	producer / researcher
2013	Kosovar Man of the 21st Century	documentary	author / producer



### CONTACT

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## EXEC. PRODUCERS'S BIO / FILMOGRAPHY / CONTACT ---

Aurela Kadriu is a sociologist, researcher and cultural manager.

She has worked on several research, documentation and cultural production projects on topics related to culture, arts, collective memory, gender, public space, socio-urbanism and the contemporary history of Kosovo and former Yugoslav countries, which have been presented through films, books, exhibitions, and other mediums.

Currently, she works for Qendra Multimedia, a cultural production organization from Kosovo focusing on contemporary literature and theatre.

2022	83'	What killed the architect	documentary	line-producer
2022	62'	As I Was Looking Above, I Could See Myself Underneath	documentary	exec. producer / researcher
2016	65'	Drums Of Resistance	documentary	researcher



### CONTACT

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## INTERNATIONAL SALES ---



Impronta Films  
Ana F. Saiz

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