



fish

Quo Vadis, Aida?
(Bosnia-Herzegovina 2021)

Spoiler alert: You may prefer to read this review after the screening

DIRECTOR : Jasmila Zbanic

RUNNING TIME : 101 mins

RATING :

Synopsis:

A drama set in Srebrenica in 1995. Aida, a translator working at a UN base, sees first-hand the failure of peace-makers to prevent unfolding catastrophe. Individual stories are balanced against the enormity of dreadful historical events.

Review: Mark Kermode

The submission by Bosnia-Herzegovina for 2021 international feature Oscar is a slow-burn drama with a palpable sense of growing dread, set during the Srebrenica massacre of 1995. More than 8,000 Bosnian Muslims were murdered by units under the command of General Ratko Mladić, now facing a life sentence having been convicted of crimes against humanity. Yet if that makes *Quo Vadis, Aida?* sound like an unbearably tough prospect, be reassured that in the hands of writer-director Jasmila Žbanić, who won a Berlin Golden Bear for her 2006 debut feature, *Grbavica*, this horrifying tale is lent a profoundly human heart, ensuring that we keep on watching, a notable achievement for a movie that is centrally concerned with the spectre of looking away.

Jasna Đuričić, feted for her role in 2010's *White, White World*, is utterly convincing as Aida, a translator working at a UN base near Srebrenica, who sees first-hand the failure of peacemakers to prevent an unfolding catastrophe. "Will anyone in the world witness this tragedy, this unprecedented crime?" pleads a voice on a radio. Yet it's clear that, despite being an alleged "safe zone", nobody is ready or willing to protect this area. Instead, thousands are forced to flee to the UN encampment, where the Dutch authorities promptly close the gates on thousands more.

Cont.

FILMS IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS INC

10.00 am Sunday 20th August 2023

8.15 pm Tuesday 22nd August 2023

Review: Cont.

Having struggled to get her husband and sons in under the wire – an early indication of future conflicts of interest – Aida is forced to maintain an outward appearance of calm as Mladić (played with an air of reptilian contempt by Boris Isaković) engages in a grotesque pantomime of “negotiations”, commanding a camera crew to record his actions as he promises “the safety of all innocent people”. Meanwhile, his forces enter the camp, handing out bread and chocolate in a chilling scene to which Žbanić lends quietly apocalyptic undertones.

From the biblical allusions of the title to a scene in which Aida climbs up to survey the lost tide of humanity before her, our anguished heroine is cast in a role that evokes both the wilderness of exile and the burden of tortured responsibility. Time and again, cinematographer Christine A. Maier’s cameras capture her rushing through the labyrinth of the camp, frantically attempting to save her own family (the tension is amplified by Jarosław Kamiński’s taut editing) while simultaneously dealing with the wider disaster that she cannot prevent. Meanwhile, flashbacks to a party in happier times sit alongside present encounters with former neighbours turned tormentors, lending pointed emotional weight to unfathomable horrors.

There’s a hint of Terry George’s *Hotel Rwanda* in the understated evocation of an approaching atrocity, the sense of something terrible playing out in full view of a world that does nothing. Both films manage to balance the enormity of dreadful historical events with the emotional specificity of individual stories, allowing the audience to engage even as they are appalled and outraged. Inspired by the book *Under the UN Flag: The International Community and the Srebrenica Genocide* by Hasan Nuhanović, Žbanić crucially describes her film as portraying the “courage, love and resilience” of “a woman caught in a male game of war”, and dedicates it to “the women of Srebrenica and their 8,372 killed sons, fathers, husbands, brothers, cousins, neighbours...”

“Now you will see the *real* film,” says a soldier just before one discreetly devastating sequence from which the camera slowly withdraws. Yet like the unblinking closeup that concludes the deeply moving (and ultimately redemptive?) epilogue to *Quo Vadis, Aida?*, Žbanić’s powerful and personal film keeps its eyes wide open.

Source: www.guardian.com : Mark Kermode 26/1/2021 ~ Edited extracts accessed 10/5/2022

~~

COMING UP

September	A Hero [Iran]	Sunday 17 th & Tuesday 19 th
October	The Blue Caftan [Morocco]	Sunday 15 th & Tuesday 17 th

~~

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT ~ FISH 2022/2023

After the difficulties of the Covid lockdown years it was a relief to be able to have regular monthly screenings of our films.

As always, we have tried to present a variety of genres from a wide range of countries, despite restrictions due to limited distributors and the impact of streaming services. We recognise that it is not possible to satisfy every member every screening but hope there is sufficient worth in each film to promote discussion amongst members.

I would like to thank Brian Barnaby for continuing to act as Membership Secretary for a time after his resignation from the committee and also Des Ryan for assisting with the transition to a new Membership Secretary. We have been fortunate to recruit Helen Jones to that position.

In the new FISH year we are planning to introduce some significant changes to our administrative processes. You will be kept informed of these throughout the year. We are indebted to Steve Jones for his valuable advice on this.

Once again, I would like to acknowledge our gratitude to our sponsors, Ace Internet Services, Highland Creative and the Empire Cinema.

After his many years as Treasurer James Saville is retiring from the committee. On behalf of all members I thank him for his valuable contributions to FISH.

I am very grateful to the FISH committee members - Roz Garwen, Liz Stevenson, Virginia Romney, Deborah Blay, Helen Jones and James Saville - for the time and effort they have given to our organisation, particularly during my enforced absence last year.

Throughout my time as President, a position from which I am stepping down, it has been a privilege to work with such a wonderful group.

Sandra Gillespie

FILMS IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30 2023

INCOME

	2023	2022
Subscriptions	26864	11010
Interest earned	370	123
	27234	11133

EXPENSES

Film hire/screenings	18534	10800
Printing	809	513
Postage	1650	727
Computer/Internet costs	1306	172
Admin/C'tee exp	292	0
PO Box	153	144
Fair Trade	139	0
Donation	0	5000
Miscellaneous	0	65
Total expenses	22883	17421

Surplus/shortfall	4351	-6293
-------------------	------	-------

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Cash opening	28467	34755
Surplus/shortfall	4351	-6293
Closing balance	32818	28467

Treasurer's note

1. Est surplus June 30 2024 is \$6000.
2. Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable total zero.
3. All funds are held in Bendigo Bank/ BDCU Community Bank.

James Saville

Treasurer

Notice of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of FISH

[Films In The Southern Highlands Inc.]

to be held on **Sunday 17th September 2023 at 9:30am** (before film screening)

AGENDA

1. Attendance and Apologies
2. Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting
3. Business Arising
4. Treasurer's Report
5. President's Report
6. Election of Office Bearers and Committee Members for **2023-2024**
7. General Business

**Nominations from any member wishing to join the committee must be received by:
31st August 2023.**

The Committee meet monthly on a Wednesday morning, 10.15am – 12 noon

FILMS IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS INC – NOMINATION FORM

I,, accept nomination for the position of
(Print Name)

President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Committee Member (circle position).

Signed Date

Nominated by

Seconded by

Message from the President

As this is our first newsletter for the 2023 - 24 season, on behalf of the committee I would like to extend a warm welcome to all members, both old and new. We hope you will enjoy the films we offer.

Returning in our September newsletter will be our members' reviews most of which in recent times have been provided by Ross Armfield to whom we are indebted for his insightful comments. We would be delighted to receive reviews from other FISH members.

Sandra Gillespie



FILMS IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS INC

President: Sandra Gillespie 4868 2396 & 0424303620
Guest Enquiries: **Deborah Blay : 0400411004**
TEXT ONLY minimum 24hours notice
Website: www.fish.org.au
Email: fishfilmsadmin@gmail.com
Mail: P.O. Box 1330 Bowral NSW 2576
Membership: Fishfilmsadmin@gmail.com
Membership closed
Enquiries: fishfilmsadmin@gmail.com

**We are grateful to our sponsors : EMPIRE CINEMA
ACE INTERNET SERVICES HIGHLAND CREATIVE**