



VERA

ESTONIA/ARMENIA/CZECHIA, FEATURE DRAMA

ESTONIAN-ARMENIAN FEATURE DRAMA

SYNOPSIS

During the **2023** blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh, **Vera (Hasmik Harutyunyan)**, a single mother, struggles to care for her three children as scarcity and heat strain daily life. When her two youngest vanish during a rare distribution of aid, the village is thrown into alarm.

Merike (Evelin Võigemast), an Estonian human rights worker, arrives to document the unfolding crisis, bearing witness to both suffering and resilience. In parallel, **Felix (Juhan Ulfsak)**, an **Estonian** who settled in **Armenia** in the 1990s, becomes her confidant, offering guidance and a bridge to a world beyond the siege.

As the search intensifies, **Vera** confronts suspicion, moral ambiguity, and the relentless pressure of a society under blockade. Explosions, heatwaves, and bureaucratic indifference escalate the tension, while personal bonds – between mother, witness, and outsider – reveal unexpected solidarity. **“Vera”** is a meditation on grief, courage, and the fragile threads that connect two small nations in a world fractured by conflict, exploring how private tragedy can illuminate collective histories.

THEMES

Post-Soviet history, tragedy, memory, conflict, displacement, solidarity, motherhood, survival

LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, ESTONIAN, ARMENIAN, RUSSIAN



DISTRIBUTION OF AID DURING THE
NAGORNO-KARABAKH BLOCKADE IN 2023,
VERA & HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER MERIKE
MEET FOR THE FIRST TIME

Key Scenes

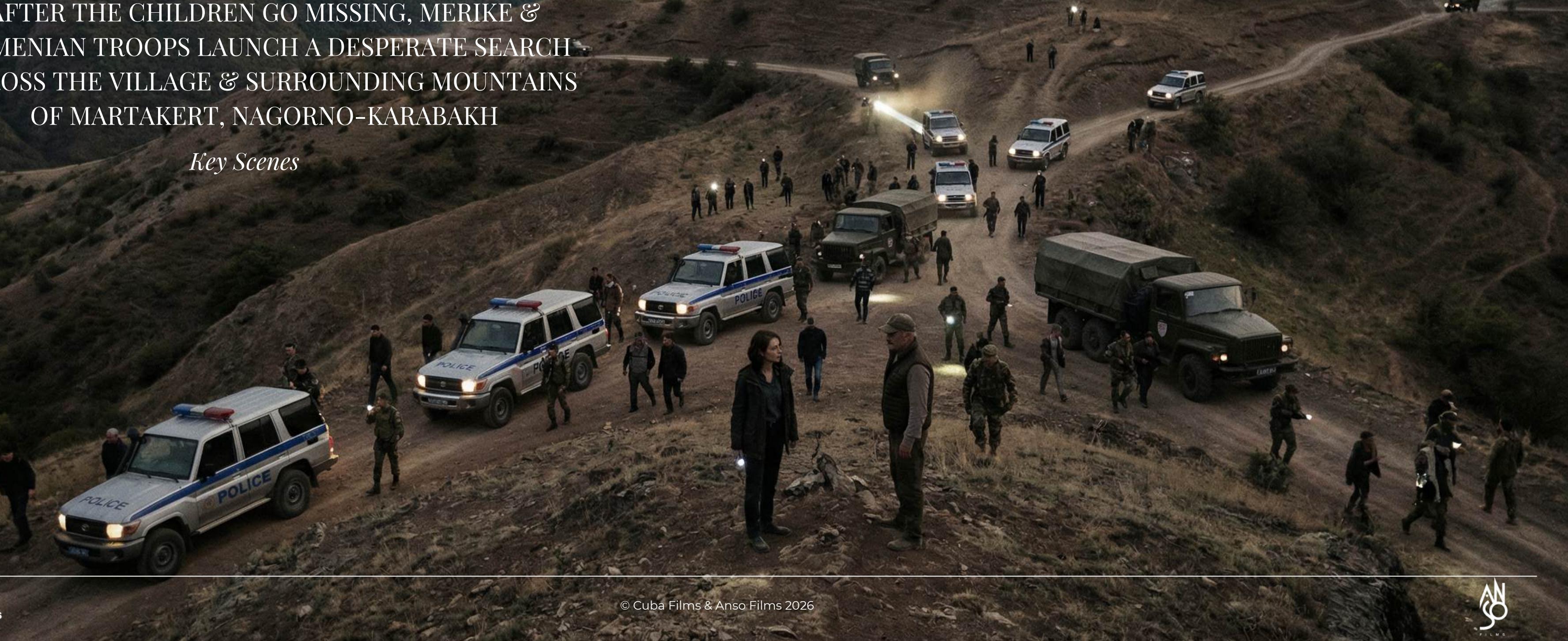


SINGLE MOTHER VERA & HER YOUNG CHILDREN
ENDURE RELENTLESS HEAT AND HUNGER,
SURVIVING ON ONE SIMPLE MEAL A DAY

Key Scenes

AFTER THE CHILDREN GO MISSING, MERIKE &
ARMENIAN TROOPS LAUNCH A DESPERATE SEARCH
ACROSS THE VILLAGE & SURROUNDING MOUNTAINS
OF MARTAKERT, NAGORNO-KARABAKH

Key Scenes





WHEN A FIRE ERUPTS AT THE LOCAL WAREHOUSE
STORING INTERNATIONAL AID, THE KEEPER, AMIR,
ACCUSES VERA OF SETTING IT

Key Scenes



DURING THE DESPERATE SEARCH, THE CHILDREN LIE
UNNOTICED IN A VILLAGER'S CAR, DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO
SUCCUMBING TO HEAT AND EXHAUSTION

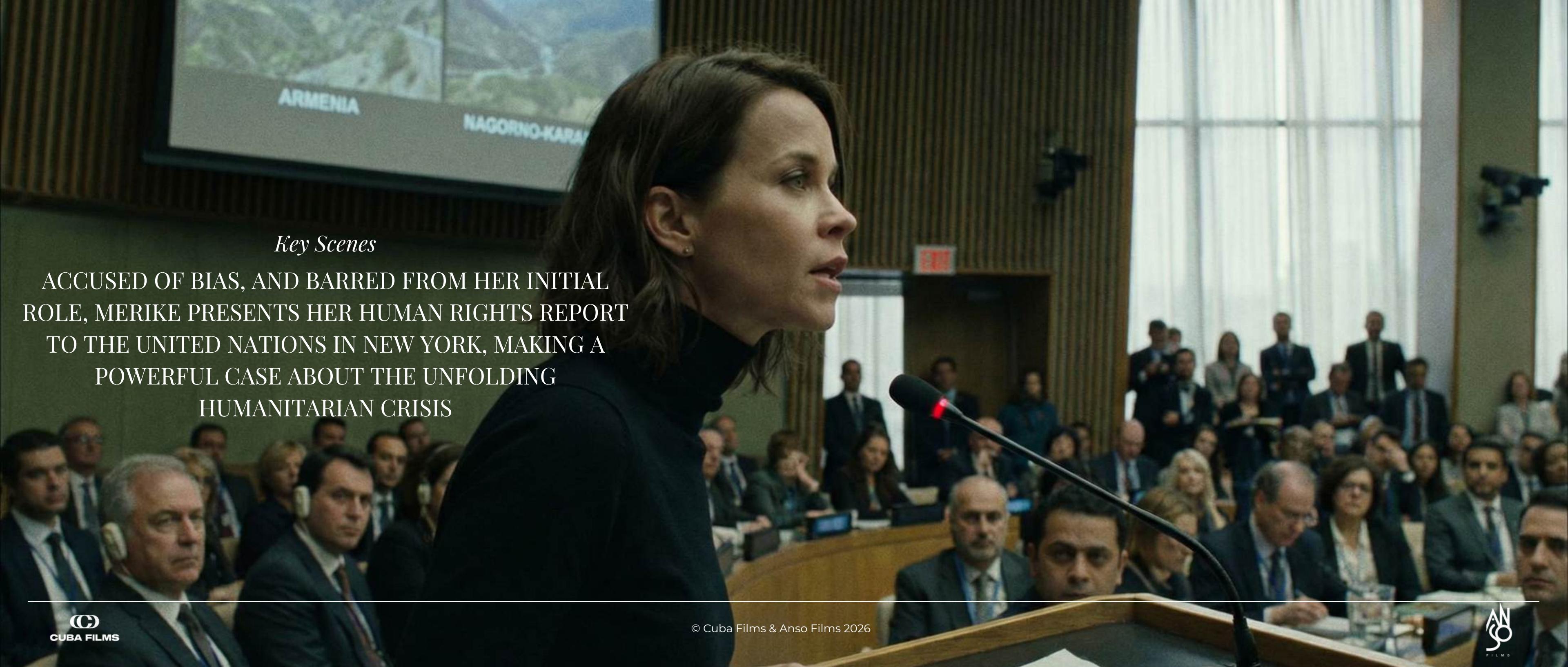
Key Scenes



WHILE THE VILLAGE TURNS AGAINST VERA,
ESTONIANS FELIX & MERIKE REMAIN SYMPATHETIC.
FELIX INVITES VERA FOR A MEAL, A SMALL ACT OF
DEFIANCE AGAINST PUBLIC HUMILIATION



MERIKE CLASHES WITH LOCAL WAR VETERAN GRISHA OVER RUSSIA. AS AN ESTONIAN, SHE CALLS PUTIN A WAR CRIMINAL, WHILE GRISHA DEFENDS HIS SUPPORT FOR ARMENIA



Key Scenes

ACCUSED OF BIAS, AND BARRED FROM HER INITIAL
ROLE, MERIKE PRESENTS HER HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT
TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK, MAKING A
POWERFUL CASE ABOUT THE UNFOLDING
HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Hasmik Harutyunyan as VERA

A young single mother of three, living in a modest wooden house outside a small district town. Originally from **Agdam**, she fled after the 44-day war claimed her husband. **Vera** works as a cleaner at the mayor's office and struggles to provide for her family under **blockade**. Though undereducated and at times naïve, she is fiercely resilient. Having grown up without affection as the sixth daughter in her family, she longed to build a loving home of her own. Her name — meaning “faith” — reflects the quiet strength that carries her forward.



Evelin Võigemast as MERIKE

Estonian employee of an international human rights organization. Pragmatic and outspoken, **Merike** distrusts religion but is deeply committed to the ideals of **democracy and law**. Unlike many colleagues who prefer the comforts of Washington or Brussels, she has spent her career in **conflict zones**, convinced of her mission to lead by example. Openly bisexual, stylish and self-assured, she embodies the values she defends, often insisting that her own success proves their merit.

Juhan Ulfsak as FELIX

A former Soviet soldier in **Afghanistan**, from **Estonia**, **Felix** never recovered from the trauma of war. In 1991, seeking adrenaline more than money, he arrived in **Nagorno-Karabakh** as a mercenary and has lived there ever since. Blunt, masculine, and incorruptible, **Felix** rejects pragmatism in favour of unyielding ideals of **honour and justice**. He adopted the son of a fallen comrade and remains a solitary figure — a battle-hardened outsider who believes that small nations exist to speak truth to the world. As a fellow **Estonian**, **Felix** becomes a gateway for **Merike** to understand Armenians.



Armen Greyg as ARSHO

Chief of police in **Martakert**, a war veteran and lieutenant colonel. Exhausted by months of **blockade**, with scarce food, medicine, or fuel, he juggles impossible responsibilities: securing the city, managing evacuations, tackling crime, and even searching for **Vera**'s missing children. Meanwhile, his wife in **Yerevan** reproaches him for neglecting their daughter's needs. Arsho belongs to the generation that sacrificed everything for Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh), now watching their life's work slip away.

Samvel Baghinyan as GRISHA

A legendary general of the first **Nagorno-Karabakh** war, **Grisha** rose from village militia to commander and remains one of Artsakh's founding figures. He and his peers built state institutions and secured de facto independence in the 1990s, considering themselves above the very laws they created. Now an **influential oligarch** and staunch supporter of Russia, Grisha celebrates the birth of a grandson with a lavish feast, even on the 206th day of the blockade — convinced that his family line ensures continuity on this land. Grisha clashes with **Merike** over his views on Russia.



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DIRECTOR & WRITER



Hovhannes Galstyan

Born in Yerevan, Armenia, Galstyan graduated in Film Directing from ASPU and founded Parallels Filmproduction in 2005.

His debut feature *Bonded Parallels* (2009, Armenia–France–Norway) premiered at the Moscow IFF and the EU at Rotterdam's Bright Future (2010), later screening at 30+ international festivals including Locarno (Open Doors), Houston, São Paulo, and Tromsø.

In 2016, he established CINEMA – The Center of Industry, Education & Motion Arts. He directed the TV series *Remission* (2019) and completed his second feature, *Stage* (2025), a Germany–Luxembourg–Armenia co-production. In 2024, he was elected Chairman of the Panarmenian Federation of Film Producers (PFFP).

His awards include Armenia's Gold Medal of the Ministry of Culture (2011) and two Hayak National Film Awards: Best Debut Director (2012, *Bonded Parallels*) and Best Short Film Producer (2013, *The Pheasant Hunter*).

PRODUCERS



Ani Galstyan graduated in Art Management from YSITC, Yerevan (2017), complementing her education with international programs such as the **FILM TEEP Script Development Workshop** (Bucharest, 2015) and major co-production markets including Galway (2021), Sofia Meetings (2023), Thessaloniki AGORA (2023), Cottbus (2024), and Cannes (2025). She worked at **Parallels Filmproduction** as Project Manager & International Relations (2018–2021) before founding **ANSO Film** in 2021, where she serves as CEO. Since 2024, she has also led International Relations at the **Panarmenian Federation of Film Producers (PFFP)**.

Marian Vosumets is a film and commercial producer working between Tallinn and London. Her debut feature **The Body Fights Back** received international acclaim at the **Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival** in 2020, premiering as the opening film at the PÖFF Trending programme. She has since partnered with distributors in the UK, Australia, Canada and the US, most notably with Gravitas Ventures in North America. Holding a Master's Degree in Filmmaking from the **London Film Academy**, Marian now works as Producer & Head of Development and Partnerships at **Cuba Films, Estonia**.



MEDIA COVERAGE



Fleeing from Nagorno-Karabakh on the mountain



'I will never go back': death stalks the exodus from Nagorno-Karabakh





FINANCING AND PARTNERSHIPS

TOTAL BUDGET
€1,693,000

FINANCING SECURED
€250,000

PRODUCTION
2026/2027

DURATION
110 MIN

Currently in discussion with partners and seeking:
Co-producer, sales agent, festivals, and broadcasters



Cuba Films and Anso Films present
Estonian-Armenian Feature Drama

VERA

Marian Vosumets ✉ marian@cuba.ee

Annie Galstyan ✉ annie.galstian@gmail.com