

# GLORY

(Slava)

A film by Kristina Grozeva and Petar Valchanov



Bulgaria/Greece 2016, 101 mins, Bulgarian with English subtitles, Cert tbc

**Winner Best International Feature Film Edinburgh Film Festival 2017**

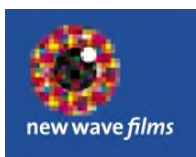
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## SYNOPSIS

Kristina Grozeva and Petar Valchanov's follow-up to [The Lesson](#) (also a New Wave Films release) is a social parable about a humble man who gets unwillingly promoted, and ends up sacrificed.

Railway linesman Tsanko Petrov (Stefan Denolyubov) discovers millions of lev on the train tracks. When he reports the money rather than pocketing it, his co-workers label him the "fool of the nation," but the Ministry of Transport—currently embroiled in a scandal—takes the opportunity to parade their new hero. Little do they know that Tsanko suffers from a debilitating stutter and might not be a PR person's dream of an example of Bulgarian honesty and responsibility to parade on TV.

But compared to the intense and driven Julia Staikov (Margita Gosheva from *The Lesson*), he's an angel. When Julia removes his watch—a Russian-made Slava (Glory), inscribed and presented to him by his father—for the ceremony to present him with an improved digital model, it sets off a chain of events that threatens to bring down the Ministry thanks to a combination of corruption, irresponsibility and arrogance..

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Download set of photos [here](#)



## CAST

Julia STAYKOVA  
Tsanko PETROV  
Valeri  
Kiril KOLEV  
Minister KANCHEV  
Porter  
Galya

Margita GOSHEVA  
Stefan DENOLYUBOV  
Kitodar TODOROV  
Milko LAZAROV  
Ivan SAVOV  
Hristofor NEDKOV  
Mira ISKAROVA

## CREW

Directors **Kristina GROZEVA and Petar VALCHANOV,**  
Screenplay **Kristina GROZEVA, Petar VALCHANOV,**  
**and Decho TARALEZHKOV**  
Cinematographer **Krum RODRIGUEZ**  
Art Director **Vanina GELEVA**  
Costumes **Kristina TOMOVA**  
Sound **Ivan ANDREEV**  
Produced by **Kristina GROZEVA, Petar VALCHANOV,**  
**Konstantina STAVRIANOU,**  
**and Irimi VOUGIOUKALOU**  
Production **Abraxas Film**  
in co-production with **Graal Films, Screening Emotions**  
**Aporia Filmworks, Red Carpet**  
with the support of **Bulgarian National Television**  
**Central Cooperative Union**  
**Greek Film Centre**

Bulgaria/Greece 2016  
101 minutes  
1:85, 5.1



## KRISTINA GROZEVA AND PETAR VOLCHANOV



Kristina Grozeva, born in Bulgaria in 1976, graduated in Journalism at the University of Sofia in 2000 and in Film and TV Directing at the National Academy for Theatre and Film Art in 2005. She has received several awards for her short films, *Birds of Heaven* (Best Fiction Debut, Bulgarian Film Academy Awards 2008), and *Gap* (Special mention, Media School International Film Festival, Łódź 2009).

In 2008, Petar Valchanov (born in 1982) also graduated in Film and TV directing at NATFA. *Shock*, his first short film, was selected in the student programme at the Karlovy Vary Film Festival (2001), and *Resurrection* won the Best Film award at the International Student Film Festival in Velingrad (2003). Petar Valchanov and Kristina Grozeva directed the documentary *Parable of Life* (2009) together, followed by the award-winning TV feature *Forced Landing*. They wrote and directed the short film *Jump*, which received numerous prestigious awards. [The Lesson](#) was the directors' feature-film debut and won numerous festival awards. *Glory* is the 2<sup>nd</sup> in a loose trilogy from the husband and wife team.

### Kristina Grozeva

#### Shorts

2008 Birds of Heaven  
2009 Gap

### Petar Valchanov

#### Shorts

2001 Shock  
2003 Resurrection

### Kristina Grozeva & Petar Valchanov

2009 Parable of Life (Documentary)  
2013 Jump (short)  
2014 The Lesson  
2016 Glory

## INTERVIEW WITH KRISTINA GROZEVA AND PETAR VOLCHANOV

### **Where did the idea come from? Was it inspired by a true story?**

Glory is the 2<sup>nd</sup> in a trilogy inspired by items in the press. The Lesson was the first, and the third is being developed. None of the films pretend to be true to the events, we are just inspired by various things, and our films take off from where the press cuttings finish. Glory is inspired by an event that took place in 2001. A railway worker found a pile of banknotes on the rails, took them to the police and received as a reward a watch that only worked for a few days. In an interview that he gave several years later he said that if he found another pile of notes on the ground, he would just walk on. Why did he say this? That intrigued us, and our imagination got to work.

### **The film deals with corruption in the highest realms of power, and in those with no job security. Is that a reflection of Bulgarian society?**

Absolutely. But beyond that we think that *Glory* which shows the fragility of goodness, of good will, and how easy it is to corrupt it and destroy it.

### **Tsanko stutters in the film – is that to highlight the fact that people at the bottom of the scale are not understood by those in power?**

Stuttering is a key element in Tsanko's character. It acts like a protective wall, which isolates him from the world in which he lives, but also allows him to keep his integrity. Evidently there's also a metaphorical aspect in not being understood by people with power, but it's a happy coincidence.

### **The film is a black comedy which constantly moves between comic moments and more tragic events. Why that choice?**

The mixture of comedy and drama has always inspired us. In real life the two things make a pair, and we constantly pass from happy moments to sadder ones. So for us, tragicomedy is the genre which seems the most realistic.

### **Margita Gosheva and Stefan Denolyubov are also in *The Lesson*, but in opposite roles. Did you write *Glory* thinking of them, and did they accept the parts straight away?**

In the first version of the script, the person in charge of PR was a man, and Stefan was going to play him. But once we started to find an actor to play the railway worker, we decided to give that part to Stefan. Thinking again about the role of the PR person, we realised that could equally as well be a woman, and that Margita would be perfect for the part. That then gave us the opportunity to have an interesting counterpoint to their respective roles in *The Lesson*, and that gave them a little challenge. They were a little doubtful at the start of shooting, but in the end, we think they gave two remarkable performances.



**Did you also use the same technical crew as with *The Lesson*?**

Yes, nearly all the crew members of *Glory* were there on *The Lesson*. It's always a pleasure to work with Krum Rodriguez (the cinematographer). After many collaborations we have begun to understand each other, and communication is now more intuitive. For *Glory*, we did have a new person, the script writer Decho Taralezhkov, who had a very important role in the conception of the screenplay, and he also has a small role in front of the camera. We are now just starting to work together again on new projects.

**Bulgarian cinema is not that well known internationally - could you say something about the state of the film industry in your country?**

The situation is very complex. The system of state support is stagnant, and we don't have alternative sources of finance. Very few films are produced each year, and the budget allocated to cinema is often directed to unsuccessful projects which find no audience, neither here nor abroad. The distribution of films in Bulgaria, and particularly arthouse ones, is an almost insurmountable challenge. More and more, directors find a way of making their films with a greatly reduced budget, or even without any budget in place. That was the case for our first feature, *The Lesson*. But we remain optimistic despite the difficulties, we know there is a number of very talented artists and technicians who have a great love for the cinema. Amongst them there are Ralitzia Petrova, Nikolay Todorov, Dimitar Sardjev, Milko Lazarov, Ilian Metev, Dragomir Sholev and Konstantin Bojanov, to name a few. And five of these directors appear as actors in *Glory*.

