

Rozálie Levá Kohoutová, You Just Never Walk Away, Artistic research

Abstract

Although domestic violence in the Czech context is often perceived only as a description of the situation leading up to leaving an abusive partner, it is clear that nearly half of all analyzed cases involve violent situations affecting women and children after they have left the partner. In fact, the situation often escalates further. (Nyklová B., Moree D., 2021)

My artistic research project employs film as tool to examine the post-separation experiences of survivors residing in a shelter for victims of domestic violence. The film adopts a hybrid form between fiction and documentary and was collaboratively developed with women who are either survivors in stabilized situations or professionals in supportive roles (social worker, police officer), all of whom also perform in the film. The collective writing process draws on Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*(1979), emphasizing participatory and emancipatory methods.

Through cinematic language, the project seeks not objectivity, but emotional truth—inviting the audience to feel the lingering effects of trauma, survivors' guilt, fatigue,. By exploring why people return to abusive relationships, the film confronts the persistent taboo of domestic violence in Eastern Europe and aims to resonate with survivors beyond the Czech context.

Keywords: domestic violence, hybrid film, participatory methods.

Disciplinary field: Film

Format of presentation: Screening

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CV : Rozalie Kohoutová is a film director and Ph.D. candidate at FAMU in Prague. Active since 2014, she works across documentary and fiction, blending both forms to explore themes of identity, marginalization, and social justice. Her debut *Jenica and Perla* was nominated for Prix Europe, and her documentary comedy *FC Roma* won the main award at the Ji.hlava International Documentary Film Festival and received a Czech Lion nomination. Her doctoral research examines the use of documentary methods in cinematic narratives on domestic violence. She also collaborates with NGOs advocating for Roma minority rights, women's rights, and domestic violence prevention.