



# CIRKUS COLUMBIA

Een film van Danis Tanović

Bosnië en Herzegovina · 2010 · Color · 113 min · Drama · 1:2.35 · Dolby Digital

**Mira Furlan**  
**Miki Manojlovic**  
**Boris Ler**  
**Jelena Stupiljanin**

*De Bosnische regisseur en Oscarwinnaar Danis Tanović (No Man's Land) keert terug naar de tijd toen Joegoslavië nog bestond (begin jaren negentig) maar de spanning van de aanstaande oorlog al voelbaar was. 'Ik wilde een film maken over dat moment, het moment waarop vrede oorlog wordt. Voor de meeste mensen komt het als een donderslag bij heldere hemel', aldus Tanović.*

*Na de val van het communisme keert Divko Buntic terug naar zijn geboortedorp dat hij twintig jaar eerder gedwongen moest verlaten. In Bosnië-Herzegovina is een nieuwe democratische regering gekozen en aan alle sympathisanten van het oude regime wordt vergiffenis geschonken. Divko arriveert triomfantelijk in een nieuwe Mercedes, met zijn jonge vriendin Azra, zijn zwarte kat Bonny en veel geld. Hij eist zijn oude huis op en zet zijn ex-vrouw Lucija en hun zoon Martin op straat. Hij heeft de indruk dat hij alles kan maken en dat geld gelukkig maakt. Echter het lot keert zich tegen hem. Op een nacht verdwijnt zijn kat, worden zijn zoon en zijn jonge vriendin verliefd op elkaar en lopen de spanningen op in het land.*



Release datum: zomer 2011

Distributie: Cinéart

**Meer informatie:**

Publiciteit & Marketing: Cinéart

Janneke De Jong

Herengracht 328 III

1016 CE Amsterdam

Tel: +31 (0)20 5308840

Email: [janneke@cinéart.nl](mailto:janneke@cinéart.nl)

Persmap en foto's: [www.cinéart.nl](http://www.cinéart.nl)

Persgedeelte website: gebruiker: cinéart / wachtwoord: film

---

## CAST AND CREW

---

### CAST

Miki Manojlović	Divko Buntic
Mira Furlan	Lucija
Boris Ler	Martin
Jelena Stupljanin	Azra
Milan Štrljić	Ivanda (mayor)
Mario Knezović	Pivac (Martin's friend)
Svetislav Gončić	Savo (army captain)
Almir Mehić	Bili (guy who finds cats for Divko)
Mirza Tanović	Antisa (cafe owner)
Miralem Zubčević	Leon (former mayor)



### CREW

Director	Danis Tanović
Screenplay	Danis Tanović, Ivica Đikić
Based on the novel "Cirkus Columbia " by Ivica Đikić	
Director of Photography	Walther Vanden Ende
Production Design	Dušan Milavec, Sanda Popovac
Editor	Petar Marković
Sound	Dirk Bombay, Samir Fočo, Martin Steyer
Costume Design	Jasna Hadžiahmetović Bekrić
Make-Up	Tina Šubic Dodočić
Continuity	Petra Trampuž Bocevska
Producers	Čedomir Kolar, Amra Bakšić Čamo, Marc Bachet, Mirsad Purivatra
Co-Producers	Cat Villiers, Dunja Klemenc, Gerhard Meixner, Roman Paul, Marion Hänsel, Miroslav Mogorovi

---

## LONG SYNOPSIS

---

Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1991. The communists have fallen from power and Divko Buntic returns to the small town where he grew up to reclaim his family home. After a 20-year exile in Germany, Divko arrives in his flashy red Mercedes with sexy young girlfriend Azra, lucky black cat Bonny and a pocketful of Deutschmarks.

Cash and cousin Ivanda, the recently inducted “democratic” mayor, help Divko forcefully evict estranged wife Lucija and 20-year-old son Martin. Lucky to not have been jailed after their eviction skirmish with the police, Martin and Lucija are moved into a small dilapidated municipal apartment.

Once settled in the comfort of his old house, Divko tries to reach out to Martin, the son he never knew. He offers Martin an invitation to live with him and his soon-to-be new wife Azra. When Lucija finds out, she is furious and fearful that she’ll lose her son to his father. Martin reassures his mother, but the young CB radio enthusiast continues to secretly visit his father’s home to use the equipment he left behind.

When Divko’s beloved cat Bonny disappears, the whole town joins in a frantic search to get the cash reward. The daily hunt for the missing cat strains Divko’s fragile relationship with Azra. It also opens up an unexpected but strong attraction between Azra and Martin. Busy fretting over everyday concerns, most of the townsfolk seem to disregard the rumbling political unrest: Croatia has seceded, all Yugoslavs are being forced to take sides, and the Serbs begin bombing Dubrovnik. Although the area is on high alert, many still can’t imagine anyone or anything could divide Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Martin and his mother have life-long friends in both former communist mayor Leon and Yugoslav Army captain Savo. But Martin is soon shocked to discover how quickly friends can become enemies when his childhood buddy Pivac joins a pro-Croatian paramilitary group. As clouds of war gather, deep feelings and loyalty will be tested by the hardest decision of all: to stay or to leave...



---

## DIRECTOR DANIC TANOVIĆ

---

'Cirkus Columbia' is Danis Tanović's most recent film about war and its consequences. While 'Cirkus Columbia' is set in the period before the conflict reaches his native Bosnia & Herzegovina, Tanović's 'Triage' dealt with post-war trauma. The English-language feature starred Colin Farrell as the troubled photojournalist returning home from war-torn Iraq. Tanović dealt directly with war in his 2001 debut feature 'No Man's Land'.

Set in the midst of the Bosnian war in 1993, 'No Man's Land' won the Oscar and Golden Globe for Best Foreign Language Film, as well as Best Script prizes at the Cannes Film Festival and European Film Awards. The widely acclaimed film received over 40 international awards, making it one of the most awarded first feature films in history.



Tanović was born in 1969 in Zenica (former Yugoslavia), now Bosnia & Herzegovina, and raised in Sarajevo. After a diploma in civil engineering, he studied piano at the Academy of Theatre Arts and film at the Sarajevo Film Academy. When Sarajevo fell under siege, he spent two years on the frontline filming for the army. The material that Tanović and his colleagues produced on these dangerous missions has been seen in many films and news reports about the Bosnian war. In 1994, Tanović emigrated to Belgium to continue his film studies at INSAS film school and he began making shorts and documentaries.

In 2005, Tanović made the French-language feature 'Hell' ('L'Enfer'), from a script co-written by the late Krzysztof Kieslowski. The film starred many of France's finest actors, including Emmanuelle Beart, Karin Viard, Marie Gillain, Guillaume Canet, Jacques Gamblin, Jacques Perrin, Carole Bouquet and Jean Rochefort.

### FEATURE FILMS

2010 'Cirkus Columbia'

2009 'Triage'

2005 'L'Enfer' ('Hell')

2001 'No Man's Land'

---

## MIKI MANOJLOVIC as DIVKO

---

Miki Manojlovic's filmography includes over 50 films. He has not only acted in his native Serbian, but also in English, French and Rom. Recent films include Jerome Salle's 'Largo Winch' (and soon 'The Burma Conspiracy – Largo Winch Tome 2'), Srdjan Karanovic's 'Besta' and Stephan Komandarev's 'The World Is Big'. He played Dostoevsky in Giuliano Montaldo's 'The Demons of St. Petersburg' and starred opposite Marianne Faithful in Sam Garbarski's 'Irina Palm' for which he received a Best Actor nomination at the European Film Awards.

Miki was born in 1950 in Belgrade into a family of actors. He graduated from the Belgrade School of Dramatic Arts and was acting on stage and in television and film as early as 1970.

His role as the Father in Emir Kusturica's 'When Father Was Away On Business' brought Miki international attention. Miki has also acted in Kusturica's 'Promise Me This', 'Black Cat White Cat' and 'Underground'. In 2004, Miki received the "Pavle Vuisic" Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution to Yugoslav cinema.

Miki's other regional film credits include Rajko Grlic's 'The Melody Haunts My Reveries', Goran Markovic's 'Tito and I' and Srdjan Dragojevic's 'The Wound, We Are Not Angels' and 'We Are Not Angels 2'. He played in several films by Goran Paskaljevic – 'The Powder Keg', 'Cabaret Balkan', 'Someone Else's America', 'Tango Argentino' and 'Time of Miracles'.

In addition to 'Cirkus Columbia', Miki appeared in Danis Tanovic's 'Hell' ('L'Enfer'). Miki's other film credits include 'Mortal Transfer' (dir. Jean-Jacques Beineix), 'The Whore's Son' (dir. Michael Sturminger), 'Criminal Lovers' (dir. François Ozon) and 'Artemisia' (dir. Agnes Merlet).



---

## MIRA FURLAN as LUCIJA

---



Mira Furlan is perhaps best known for her roles in the TV series 'Lost' and 'Babylon 5'. In 'Lost', Mira played the mysterious French scientist Danielle Rousseau, and from 1992–98, she starred as passionate alien Ambassador Delenn of Minbar.

Before her US career began in the early 90s, Zagreb-born Mira had become one of her native country's leading actresses of stage, film, and television. Mira's early film credits include Emir Kusturica's award-winning film 'When father was away on business', Antun Vrdoljak's 'Cylops', Zivko Nikolic's 'The Beauty of Vice', Srdan Karanovic's 'A Film With No Name'. Mira emigrated to the US with her husband Goran Gajic in 1991 due to the intolerable political circumstances in her homeland.

An accomplished theater actress, Mira received the Dramalogue Theatre Award in 1995 for her performance in the title roles of Sophocles' "Antigone" at L.A.'s Hudson Guild Theatre and of Lorca's "Yerma" at The Indiana Repertory Theatre.

Before moving to the US, Mira was a member of the Croatian National Theatre and a frequent guest star at major theatres in the whole country. Her roles ranged from Moliere and Shakespeare to Chekhov and Brecht. After a decade-long exile, Mira returned to the stage in Croatia in 2002 to perform the title role in Euripides "Medea" with Rade Sebedzija's Ulysses Theatre Company. In 2004, she made her return to Belgrade to star in Dragan Marinkovic's film 'Take a Deep Breath' (Disi Duboko). Other recent film credits include Adis Bakrac's 'The Abandoned' Goran Markovic's 'The Tour'.

---

## COMMENTS FROM DIRECTOR DANIC TANOVIĆ

---

### BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER

Much of my career in filmmaking has been about war and its consequences. While in the army, I filmed it for real, then I made documentaries about war, and those experiences culminated with 'No Man's Land', my first feature film. Recently, I made 'Triage', a feature that deals with the aftermath of war. The story of 'Cirkus Columbia' actually stops when the war starts. In some way for me, these films make a sort of personal trilogy – before, during and post war. 'No Man's Land' takes place during the conflict. 'Triage', after, and 'Cirkus Columbia', before.

### TRYING TO REMEMBER

For a long time, the period before the war belonged to a life I couldn't remember. There was this gap in my mind when I tried to think of the time in my life before the war. It was as if the war overshadowed everything that existed previous to it. I felt as if that time was a lost part of my life. Then, suddenly, a few years ago, for no particular reason I began to remember. Sometimes it would be a smell, sometimes the face of a person I used to know, sometimes a scene of no particular importance. I tried to recapture those moments, connect them to some other memory, but they went away as quickly as they came, leaving me with a feeling of loneliness and frustration.

### HELPING WAR CHILDREN TO REMEMBER

Reading the book 'Cirkus Columbia' gave me a fast ride back to that period before the war. It's in no way similar to my own experience, but there is something about that book that touches every Bosnian and Herzegovinian. The book tells stories of people who naively believed that war was not possible here, of neighbors who help each other in spite of mortal danger, of lost youth and new beginnings, of hate that for a while seemed to cover everything and, of course, of love that knows no borders. I hope that adapting these stories to the screen will help other war children to remember.



### DENIAL IS HUMAN

I was attracted to making a film set in this pre-war period because I was interested in the lives of these everyday people in the advent of big historic shifts, the storms of history. I wanted to show how oblivious they were in that narrow space between peace and war. It was, I think, a widespread belief at the time that war would not touch us – despite the fact that people with flags and guns were marching down every street. I think it's a very human reaction to deny reason and not accept impending trouble. I was also interested in how the ordinary man next door can become a war camp warden, a torturer, a murderer. Somehow during that time, in that shadowy space, something happens and people change profoundly. Common good people can quickly turn into someone else entirely.



### **SOMEBODY ELSE'S SHOES**

Working in Bosnia & Herzegovina again, recreating that particular past brought up so many feelings of nostalgia, melancholy and thousands of why, why, whys. I lived in Bosnia during the time period of 'Cirkus Columbia', so I have first-hand knowledge. I was already familiar with the events and the psychology. But making the movie gave me a chance to see those things through the eyes of other people, and that process helped me gain the most valuable insight. This is only possible by putting yourself into somebody else's shoes. Deconstructing all the abstract reasons for war – ideology, religion, etc. – and analyzing it in a logical and coherent manner, you'll usually find that the roots of such conflicts are jealousy, greed and fear.

### **DEPARTURE POINT FOR DISCUSSION**

My movies tend to be anti-war, anti-violence, anti-nationalist, but I don't know if they have any specific single message. It's more complex than that. But it does please me when the ideas and emotions of my movies stick with the audience and they continue to think about them long after seeing them. I believe that movies should be a departure point for discussion. But I don't try to send out set messages. I just show the world in the way that I see it.

### **THE OTHER SIDE**

I was happy to work in my language again. 'Hell' was in French and 'Triage', in English I guess I could probably make a movie in any language, but it was great to go back to my own... The area of Herzegovina where we shot is very beautiful. I was very happy to re-discover the landscape, the forests, the cold rivers. It was a pleasure to be there again, not only for the look of the film, but also to be with the people. This part of the world has a very out-of-time feeling... Unfortunately, so much has changed – irreversibly. I sometimes feel that in 1992, when communism fell, we stood on the edge of a wide abyss. The rest of the world watched silently on the other side. We were forced to jump, but we did not make it to the other side. And we are still falling.

