



HEART OF SARAJEVO
BEST DOCUMENTARY FILM
SARAJEVO FILM FESTIVAL 2019



When The Persimmons Grew

A FILM BY
HILAL BAYDAROV

MARYAM NAGHIYEVA





Synopsis

Immobile in a home where the sands of time fall to the rhythm of rural Azerbaijani sounds, a mother waits for her son. When he arrives, their conversations circle around existential questions and news from afar, troubling and cryptic. Unrest cloaks the world outside.

Mother and son grow closer, silence melts into words, and life springs between them. The son leaves, and winter settles in to the forever-outdated house in which temporalities blurs and past and present beat to the rhythm of the same clock.





Director's statement

When the primroses were turning red, and the white cherries were in bloom"—that is when my grandmother says the war ended. She talks about time the way people did in olden days, before the calendar divided it up into days, months, and years.

When time had no name and was not measured in numbers, it was marked by the rhythms of nature. My father was born „when the rivers overflowed and the grass was harvested,“ says my grandmother, meaning my father was born in June.

Exact dates mattered less than durations which nature filled with meaning. Time was not a line. It ebbed and flowed with the seasons, was shaped by the lifecycles of the flora and fauna.

The title of my film, *When Persimmons Grew*, pays homage to this traditional way of denoting time. People were coming and going from my family back then. We gathered together, and we broke apart. We grew up, and set about living our own lives. Everything was changing and becoming more colorfull, for all except my mother, whom time left alone.

I left home then and returned eight years later—when the persimmons grew.



Biography Hilal Baydarov

Hilal Baydarov was born in 1987 in Baku, Azerbaijan. During his high school years, he won the national championships of mathematics twice in 2004 and 2005. In 2011 he leads the Azeri team at the informatics olympiad in Thailand.

After a master in computer sciences, he left for Sarajevo to study film directing with Bela Tarr. His debut feature film „Hills without Names“ was premiered at the Montreal World Film Festival in 2018, the same year he won the Docu Talent award at Sarajevo Film Festival for his film „Birthday“.

„When the Persimmons Grew“ is Baydarov’s fourth feature film. It received the Interreligious Award and a Special Jury Mention when it premiered in competition at the 2019 Visions du réel film festival in Nyon and won the Heart of Sarajevo for Best Documentary at the Sarajevo Film Festival.

Filmography:

- 2019 When the Persimmons Grew
- 2018 Hills Without Names
- 2018 Birthday
- 2018 One Day in Selimpasha



When the Persimmons Grew

(Azerbaijan / Austria, 2019)

Director, Cinematographer, Writer & Editor

Hilal Baydarov

Producers

Hilal Baydarov, Maéva Ranaivojaona, Georg Tiller

Production

Ucqr Film & Subobscura Films

Technical Details

Length: 119 min

Format: 16:9 Letterboxed

Language: Azeri

Subtitles: English

Sales & Contact:

Subobscura Films

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