

Berlinale  
73 Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
Generation

# She-Hero

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY MIRA FORNAY

# **She-Hero**

## **Mimi (Cesta Hrdinky)**



**GENRE**  
**adventure film**

### **LOG LINE / SHORT SYNOPSIS**

**While Romy - 7 years old - is looking for her lost budgie Mimi, she finds much more along her way - an adventure and new friends.**

### **SYNOPSIS**

**Romy is a brave little girl. She has a budgie called Mimi and Mimi got lost. Romy's determination to find her budgie brings her out into the ancient woods, where she meets all sorts of everyday characters, each with their own story. She'll not only make new friends along the way, but mainly she enjoys her adventure.**

# She-Hero

## Director's note

I dedicate this film to the children, forests and the river – for me this is the holy trinity of our human society. Without trees, water and children, we would no longer exist.

I'm not an environmental activist who demonstrates my desperation to save the planet by going to huge demonstrations or tie myself to trees (although I actually understand that). I prefer more non-invasive forms of activism. I'm an idealist and I believe film is here to change the world by telling a good story. The story of little Romy, is my tribute to the land of my childhood. I want to point out how nature is important in our lives. And how important it is especially for children, their development and creativity. And I wanted to show the incredible wealth that we have around us and we don't protect it enough.

I started writing She - Hero during the time of covid, when the forests around Bratislava became our only refuge. We all remember those crazy times of lockdowns. I should be in Bratislava only for a short visit, but covid blocked me here for half a year. We went to the woods and to the Danube, and to my surprise it was as full of people as the shopping malls. It was a fascinating time, full of forest adventures. Although I do not have and do not want to have my own children, I love children and spent a lot of time with them. I spent a lot of time with my nephews and friends children during this period. And so our new film was born. I wrote it directly for Romy and Cypko, even though it is a feature fiction film.

Again, as in my previous films, I chose to work with non-actors. The children and I played a lot of games before the shooting and we played a game I created for children using the Hero's Journey method (The Hero with a Thousand Faces by J. Campbell, 1949). Then came the more demanding part of the filming for the children, which took place in the summer 2021, so they had to give up holidays with their friends and families. They gave an adult performances, especially little Romy surprised us every day with her bravery and professionalism. She was my great support.

Since the project was spontaneous, we decided to go for it despite the incredibly small budget. The head of production (Zuzana Czaková) and I decided on a minimal crew and green filming. As a she - production manager, Zuzana was just magical. Simona Weisslechner (she - cinematographer) and I chose the dogma style: no lights or demanding camera equipment, and above all no equipment that would disturb the forest. We did all location scouting by bicycle, as we used to travel by bicycle for filming. Mimi is honest and pure eko green film and we are proud of it.

As well we are proud we are she - team as well as our protagonist is a little girl who beats the stereotype of fairytale princesses waiting to be rescued.

Post-production took more time because the war in Ukraine entered it and I asked my sound engineer for a "vacation". I became a volunteer for Ukrainian refugees for few months. This experience highlight the need for nature protection even more, because everything is interconnected (<https://www.cascades.eu/>). We finished the film the day before the Berlinale's film entry :)

I believe that our story of little girl Romy will lead children and their parents to enjoy more time in nature and feel there- in nature - again at home. It is a human strategy to protect our homes so if we feel in nature again at home - we will more protecte it.

She - Hero is not only family film. It is for all adults who still haven't stopped being curious children. And maybe those adults who are absorbed in the adult world - our film catapults those back into the world of their forgotten childhood.

Stories are an important part of our human world, just as nature is part of our homes. I hope that we will succeed in taking you to the land of childhood and you will dream and chill out with us a wee bit again.

Mira Fornay, 12. 1. 2023, Prague



# She-Hero Cast

Romy	ROZMARÍNA WILLEMS
Cypko	CYPRIÁN ŠULEJ
Mum of Romy	VERONIKA KOŘÍNKOVÁ
Mimi	DAGMAR KUSÁ
Soldier	ROMAN LIPKA
Gravel Emperor	BOHUSLAV ZÁRYCHTA
Old lady Boženka	MARGITA MRVOVÁ
She-Neighbor	MÁRIA FORNAYOVÁ
Neighbor	EMIL ŠTVRTECKÝ
Businessman	MIRO ČEVELA ML.
Pensioner	JOZEF RENÁČ
Homeless girl	JAZMÍNA CIGÁNKOVÁ
Dog Enzo	
Hippie Kids	KLÁRKA KOŘÍNKOVÁ NIKOLAS PÉTEŠ

# She-Hero Crew

she-writer, director, editor, producer MIRA FORNAY  
she-executive producer ZUZANA CZAKOVÁ  
she-cinematographer SIMONA WEISSLECHNER  
she-costume designer NATAŠA ŠTEFUNKOVÁ  
she-editing supervisor URŠULA LESIAK  
she-graphic designer TERÉZIA DENKOVÁ  
sound designer JAN ČENĚK  
music MICHAL KINDERNAY  
color gradist MATEJ ŠALKO  
asistent of she-director ADAM BERAN

## RTVS co-producers:

RTVS producer ROMAN GENSKY  
RTVS production coordinator JOZEF FULOP  
RTVS postproduction manager ŠTEFAN ŠVEC  
RTVS dramaturgy VERONIKA GREGUŠOVÁ

## Used music from bands:

Živé Kvety  
Brajgel

[www.mirafox.sk/shehero](http://www.mirafox.sk/shehero)



# She-Hero

## About the filmmakers



**MIRA FORNAY**

**film author (writer, director, producer).**

Mira Fornay is mainly film author who made 4 feature films, 14 shorts. She studied film directing at FAMU, Prague and NFTS, United Kingdom. Her second film, *My Dog Killer* (2013) won the main Tiger Hivos Award of the main competition at Rotterdam IFF in 2013 with Aiweiwei the head of the jury. The film was selected over 80 international film festivals and among other international prizes won the CineVision Award at Munich IFF, best director IFF Vilnius, IFF Zerkalo etc. It was nominated for EFA awards and was slovak national entry for foreigner Oscars. It won national film awards "Slnko v Sieti" for the best script, best director, best film. *Foxes* (2009) - her feature debut, premiered at International Critic's Week, Venice Film Festival 2009 and it went to top world festivals tour as well as her 3<sup>rd</sup> feature film *Cook, F\*\*k, Kill* which premiered at Rebel with a Cause at Tallin BlackNights IFF and IFF Rotterdam 2020. The film won CineRebel prize at Filmfest Munich. *She-Hero* is her 4<sup>th</sup> feature film dedicated to childhood and nature. Mira is writing a new feature 2052 - *Rabbit Privelege* - about forced parenthood and the anti-abortion wave across Europe and USA.

Mira Fornay artistic background is the side specific performing art (performer - light designer) and visual art (photography, comic books). She works on her author films by using the anthropological approach always undertaking a few years research for chosen subject. She prefers to work with non-professional actors and using organic and green approach in cinema. She had successful residencies: residence at DAAD artist-in-residence, 2017 Berlin as well as in 2016 the 3 months residence at International Cite des Arts, Paris.

## DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY AND MAIN AWARDS

### **SHE-HERO, 2023**

A journey of 7-years old girl through the last ancient city forest in Central Europe.  
The film is about childhood and about our need of nature in our lives.

### **COOK FUCK KILL, 2019**

absurd drama / experimental, 35 mm, colour, 118min, Czech-Slovak coproduction.  
A day of a male predator and his family in a form of video game. The "game" about domestic violence.

Premiered at Tallinne BlackNights International Film Festival, section: Rebel with a cause.

Awards> IFF Sofia Best script pitch, FilmFest Munich 2022 Cinerebel prize  
Festivals> over 40 international film festival including IFF Rotterdam, IFF  
Goteborg, IFF San Paolo, IFF Tarkovsky Film Festival Zrkadlo, IFF Vilnius etc.

### **MÔJ PES KILLER / MY DOG KILLER**

Drama, 87min, color, 35 mm, 2013, Slovak-Czech coproduction

Awards: Tiger Award 2013, IFF Rotterdam; CineVision award Munich Film Fest, Best director IFF Vilnius, IFF Zerkalo etc. Best Film, Best Script, Best Director Slovak National Film Awards. EFA nominations as well as Slovak national nominations for foreigner Oscar.

Main topic: neo-Nazism and racism. The film tells a story of Marek - young skinhead who finds out the fact that he has a step brother - little half-gypsy boy. Its story of shame and hate.

FESTIVALS: IFF Vilnius, IFF Titanic Budapest, Finale Plzen Film Festival, La Rochelle IFF, France, Filmfest Munich IFF, Germany, Karlove Vary IFF, Czech Republic, The Mostra Internazionale

del Nuovo Cinema, Pesaro, Italy, Art Film Festival, Trencianske Teplice, Slovakia, Cinema Jove IFF, Valencia, Spain, Edinburgh IFF, United Kingdom, Zerkalo IFF, Ivanovo, Russia, Seattle IFF, USA (North American Premier), Transilvania IFF, Cluj, Romania, Jerusalem IFF, Israel, GOLDEN APRICOT Yerevan IFF, Armenia, European Film Festival - Palic 2013, Serbia, BUSAN IFF - Asian Premiere, Warsaw IFF - PL Premiere, Chicago IFF, Sao Paulo IFF - South American Premiere, Viennale - Austrian Premiere, Molodist IFF Kiev, Mumbai FF, AFI Fest Los Angeles, Minks IFF, Cottbus IFF, Antalya Golden Orange FF, Seville European FF., Cairo IFF, Festival du Cinema Europeen en Essonne Cinesonne, FR, Tallinn Black Nights IFF, Cinedays Festival of European Film, Exground filmfest Wiesbaden, Thessaloniki IFF, Segovia IFF, Malataya IFF, Festival Ars Caneralis in Katowice, Around the World in 14 day, Berlin, festivarec Tarragona, ES, AFI Silver Theatre, Washington DC, Kerala IFF, Les Arcs FF, Göteborg IFF, Jaipur IFF, Dhaka IFF, Bangladesh, International Film Festival ZOOM - ZBLIZENIA, Belgrade IFF etc.

### **LIŠTIČKY / FOXES**

Drama, 84 min, color, 35 mm, 2009 Irish-Czech-Slovak coproduction

Premiered at Critic's Week, Venice Film Festival 2009

Main topic: immigration of young girls from central Europe to UK and Ireland. A story of Alzbeta who tries to start her new life far away from her home, but she cannot escape her past with her sister. Its story about jealousy and love in relationship of two sisters from East Europe.

Awards: Dialogue Award, IFF Cottbus Film festival; Tatra Banka Award for best talent artist under 35 years, 2010, Slovak Critics Award 2010 FESTIVALS 2009: IFF Venice, IFF Pusan, IFF Stockholm, IFF Goa, IFF Rotterdam, IFF Cottbus ect. (around 50 International film festivals)

# She-Hero

## About the filmmakers



**SIMONA WEISSLECHNER**  
she-cinematographer

Born in 1987, Simona studied photography at the School of Applied Arts and cinematography at the Film and Television Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Slovakia. She has collaborated as a cinematographer on a number of short films, most notably *Green Wav* (2015) by Martina Buchelová, which was screened at the Future Frames section at the Karlovy Vary IFF, an initiative to present new European talents organized by the European Film Promotion. Simona also has extensive experience as a first camera assistant on several Slovak, Czech and international productions - features, series, and commercials (*The Wheel of Time*, *Whiskey Cavalier*, *Dracula*). She has worked on projects by acclaimed directors such as Michel Gondry, Guy Ritchie or Darius Khondji. She is a member of the Association of Slovak Cinematographers. Currently, she's a part of the camera team of the upcoming puppet stop-motion film *Living Large* by the Czech director Kristýna Dufková. *She Hero* (2023) by the Slovak director Mira Fornay is her feature debut as a cinematographer.

# She-Hero

## About the filmmakers



**ZUZANA CZAKOVÁ**  
she-executive producer

**She worked as a project manager already during her university studies.  
She was an event manager and started working for TV shows.  
Recently, she has been working as a production and assistant director for films and TV series.  
She - Hero is her first as a production manager and executive producer.**

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## About the filmmakers

### JAN ČENEK sound designer

Jan Čeněk (1969, Prague). After graduating from the Jan Neruda High School (1987), he worked until 1999 in Czechoslovak, later Czech Radio as a technician, from 1990 then as a master of sound, especially in the music studio for chamber and symphonic music. He participated in recordings and broadcasts of SOČR concerts and others orchestras and ensembles as well as on the production of various radio programs. At the same time, he studied sound production at FAMU (1989-97). He graduated sound for the feature film "Indian Summer" (directed by Saša Gedeon) Since 1991 he has created soundtrack for a number of feature, documentary and animated films for cinema and television. In 1996, he was at the founder of the company "Bystrouška, studio sounds", which focuses on sound service for czech and foreign films and television production. It still operates under the brand today. Between 2008-2020 was a regular member of the teaching staff of the Department of Sound Production at FAMU, where he devoted himself to teaching specialized subjects and leading practical exercises.

### MICHAL KINDERNAY music

Michal Kindernay is an intermedia & sound artist, experimental filmmaker, curator and performer. His audio-visual installations interconnect art, film, technology and science. He reflects ecological issues through various technological approaches in relation to nature environment. His works include video performances, interactive installations or experimental documentary projects or sound compositions. He is one of the founders or yo-yo non profit culture organization and initiator or RurArtMap project. He teaches in Prague College - MA Fine Art and in Centre of Audiovisual Studies in Film and TV School of Academy of Performing Arts (creative modules). As an organizer or artist he was involved in many international projects. He works and lives in Prague

# She-Hero

## About the cast



**CYPRÍAN ŠULEJ**  
Cypko

Cyprían Šulej (11). At the moment, he enjoys playing various games the most - from Pokemon to Dungeons and dragons to Magic the gathering. He loves swimming, diving, he would spend the whole day in the sea or lake. In addition, he plays the cello and swordplay. He likes to play ping-pong and chess, sometimes he goes skating or just in the yard with a bunch of friends. He likes history and biology at school. When you offer him shrimp gyoza with sweet chili, it is possible that you will become his favorite.



**ROZMARÍNA WILLEMS**  
Romy

Romy Willems (8) is a joyful energetic kid, she likes to climb trees with her friends at the Waldorf school, she builds bunkers. She is a lover of stories, she likes to watch them, listen to them, experience them and also read them. She likes to move, swim, dive, practice karate, gymnastics and her creativity on drama.



**KLÁRKA KOŘÍNKOVÁ**  
Hippie Kid

Klárka Kořínková attends the first year of high school. She enjoys theater and writing. She likes movies and is preparing for an conservatory under the guidance of female dancer now refugee Natália from Ukraine. Klárka's family provided accommodation and support for Natália and her entire family. Klárka likes to dance, has a dog Fredy and loves to read books. And she act - acting is fulfilling for her and helps her fight with anxiety since covid.

# She-Hero

## Interview with main cast

MIRA: What you think... What is our film about?

ROMY: It's about cooperation and friendship.

CYPKO: and trust, but also about nature.

MIRA: Why do you think nature is so important?

CYPKO: We won't be without nature... We cannot breathe without trees... We are nature!

ROMY: Nature is like my half.

CYPKO: And the other half of you?

ROMY: Is my mum and dad!

CYPKO: Romyyy! really?

ROMY: What?

ROMY: I love trees. Adults should plant more of them.

CYPKO: ...and recycle more, not using so many cars!

ROMY: ...too many one man-car! Everywhere!

CYPKO: We shouldn't fly planes so much.

ROMY: But it is obvious... what we are saying. Everyone knows this!

CYPKO: We have a subject at school, but they always add this kind of sweet blablabla that it won't be so terrible in the future and that we - kids have a future.

ROMY: They have to, otherwise they would be kicked out of school!

CYPKO: But I think there is hope.

ROMY: You are older and wiser, so you are probably right.

MIRA: How would you invite your friends to our movie?

ROMY: Come to our movie! It's fun.

CYPKO: There are always actions and twists, but not like in American movies. Well, it's not boring.

ROMY: We can't be boring! Or Mira?

MIRA: You two are definitely not boring. 🐦



# She-Hero Co-production

## RADIO AND TELEVISION SLOVAKIA

Radio and Television Slovakia (RTVS) is the largest film co-producer in Slovakia. Only in the last year 2022, 14 films were co-produced by RTVS and many are currently in the realization stage. Works co-produced by RTVS are recognized both in Slovakia and abroad. For example, THE WEBSTERS MOVIE scored last year at the International TV Festival HEART OF EUROPE in Warsaw, winning first place in the category Children & Youth. RTVS also scored in the category Feature Film with the movie JOZEF MAK, which was placed second. Another second prize was awarded to the documentary feature LINES in the Documentary category. Animated films TVOJAZEM and THE WEBSTERS MOVIE from the co-production of RTVS shined at the 39<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Chicago International Children's Film Festival (CICFF39), which is the largest children's film festival in the world. TVOJAZEM won first place and THE WEBSTERS MOVIE second place in the category The best feature-length animated film.

# She-Hero

## THANK YOU

Director Mira Fornay wants to thank  
Štefan Jurča, Nadácia mesta Bratislavy  
Antonín Šulík, former programming director of RTVS  
Viktor Schwarcz  
Marta Nováková  
Parents and Grandparents of Rozmarína Willems and Cyprián Šulej  
Rastislav Steranka, Slovak Film Institute  
Lea Pagáčová, Slovak Film Institute

PRODUCTION

**MIRAFOX**

CO-PRODUCER



WITH SUPPORT OF



SLOVAK PRODUCTION

2023

83 MIN.

COLOR

5.1

LANGUAGE: SLOVAK, GERMAN, ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES  
ADVENTURE FAMILY FILM

