

## THE LIVING ONES



Documentary | 77 minutes | Romania | 2025

Logline: What does peace look like to someone who has lived through war?

### Short synopsis

For soldiers, war means killing so you don't get killed. If you survive and return from war, can your soul find peace? If your comrade, a husband and father, was killed, can your mind find peace?

Twenty years later, how alive are the wounds of those who are still living?

### Synopsis

In the NATO war in Afghanistan, Costi was severely wounded, Dan held his comrade in his arms during his final moments, Matei suffered a severe head trauma, and Bianca was left a widow after losing her husband, Dragoș.

The film follows the journey of these individuals who, twenty years later, are trying to make sense of the past and find a way to live with what the war left behind.

A space for reflection and healing, where pain becomes a shared story.

### Team:

Writer and director: Anca Hirte

Cinematography: Andrei Oană, Ana Lefaux

Editing: Ligia Popescu, Delia Oniga

Cast: Bianca Alexandrescu, Irinel Matei, Dan Novac, Costinel Slăniceanu

Music: Matthieu Gasnier

Sound Designer: Marius Leftărache

Co-producer: Carmen Rizac

Producers: Monica Lăzurean-Gorgan, Elena Martin

Production Company: Manifest Film

*I've always wondered how war — the most absurd and destructive thing in human history — can give rise to 'heroic' films, to films held up as 'models.' Is it because killing, in war, is a legal and legitimate act, and therefore carries no moral consequences? Because those who are killed are reduced to mere numbers and abstract entities?*

*In The Living Ones, I wanted the four protagonists — survivors of a contemporary war — to have names, faces, and indelible emotions.*

Anca Hirte, director

### Anca Hirte | BIO

Trained as a chemical engineer, Anca Hirte initially worked in the research department of the Romanian Peasant Museum in Bucharest. In 1994, she attended the documentary filmmaking course organized by Ateliers Varan in Paris; immediately after completing it, she moved to France, where she began making films. Together with Jean Lefaux, she co-directed *The Steps of the Fall* in 1998 and

*Voyage into Immediate Irrerality* in 2004. After Jean's death, Anca directed *I Sleep but My Heart Keeps Watch* (2008); *The Sinner Teodora* (2011); *In the Name of the Mayor* (2013); *He Still Breathes* (2016); and *Stela, in the Name of the Father* (2021).

## Filmography

Stela, in the name of the father, 79', 2021  
Il respire encore / Still breathing, 93', 2016  
In the name of the mairi, 52', 2013  
Teodora the Sinner, 85', 2011  
Je dors mais mon coeur veille, 50', 2008  
Coup de pouce, 43', 2006  
Voyage dans l'Irréalité Immédiate, 80', 2004  
The Steps of the Fall, 59', 1998

## **Elena Martin | BIO**

Elena Martin is a film producer, holding a degree in screenwriting and a master's in film production from UNATC, Bucharest. Since 2019, she has been working at Manifest Film, and in 2021 she co-founded Filmways, a film production company dedicated to promoting emerging filmmakers in both fiction and documentary cinema.

She is an alumna of Emerging Producers 2025, CineLink Producers Lab, East-West Talent Lab, and Ex Oriente Film and Series.

She has worked on projects such as *Tata* (directors Lina Vdovîi and Radu Ciorniciuc), premiering at the 2025 Toronto International Film Festival; *Acasă, My Home* (directed by Radu Ciorniciuc), which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival; *Bright Future* (directed by Andra MacMasters, selected at IDFA 2024); *Tooth and Nail* (directors Mihai Gavril Dragolea and Radu Mocanu), selected at Krakow Film Festival 2025; and *Between Revolutions*, which premiered in the Berlinale Forum 2023.

She develops and produces feature films, series, and short films—both documentary and fiction—collaborating with both established and emerging directors.

## **Monica Lăzurean-Gorgan | BIO**

**Monica** is a producer, a documentary filmmaker and a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and also a member of European Film Academy. Monica is the producer of *Acasa, My Home* by Radu Ciorniciuc, winner of the Sundance Cinematography Award 2020 and other 40 international awards, also producer for the documentary *Tata* by Lina Vdovii and Radu Ciorniciuc, recently selected at Toronto IFF. Monica is the director for the film *Wood* premiered in HotDocs and CPH:Dox in 2020. She is the producer for the film *Between*

Revolutions by Vlad Petri, winner of FIPRESCI award at Berlinale 2023; delegate producer for Berlinale Golden Bear winner in 2018, Touch Me Not by Adina Pintilie and co-producer of 2015 Sundance selected Chuck Norris vs Communism by Ilinca Călugăreanu. Monica is the director for the film A Mere Breath, winner of Best Doc at Sarajevo IFF 2016 and 10 other international awards, screened on Mubi, Amazon, etc.