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The Constitution 0

APRIL 8, 2017 OTHER FESTIVALS

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A meeting place

Vejko is a high school teacher who has dedicated his entire life to the study of history and Croatian language. He lives in a scruffy apartment in the center of Zagreb in his father's resident company, Hrvoje, an Ustasha (Official fascist Croatian Army in World War II). The only Vjeko entertainment is to walk at night through the empty streets of the city with painted face and wearing women's clothing. One night, some young people attack him leaving him in the street unconscious. In the hospital she is recognized and edited by Maya, a nurse who lives in the basement of her building. After helping him get home, Maya takes care not only him but also his father, bedridden. In return, Vejko agrees to help Maya's husband, Ante, to prepare an analysis on the Croatian constitution. The reading of the synopsis of the last effort behind the camera Rajko Grlić entitled **The Constitution**, premiered Italian films in competition at the *18th edition of the Lecce European Film Festival*, is enough to understand around and what they are based dramaturgical foundations of the script signed by four hands by the Croatian director and Ante Tomic. Script that, as you will see in person with vision, is both choral interpretation, the strength of a film that makes use of light tones of comedy to tackle a universal theme that is always and will continue to be tight current affairs and on which the Seventh Art, with its famous and not representatives of different latitudes, has expressed countless times. This is the theme of acceptance and sharing with each other, the kind that can be ideologies, races, creeds and sexual identities, different (see for example the Oscar-winning **No Man's Land**). "Factors", these, that history teaches us, can create insurmountable distances. In the case of **The Constitution** is the racial hatred between Serbs and

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Croats that distances the two actors of the film (the female, on the contrary, has the task to clear the distances). The Grlić film tells the classic clash between opposite positions destined to meet and to approach. The "match" is consumed in words in a living room that becomes a sort of "ring". Between those four walls hatred is blown away like dust. Less effective and incisive, however, the question of sexual identity and its acceptance, treated through the figure of Vjeko, homosexual who has fought and continues to fight to be accepted by his father and those around him. It leads a double life, a bit 'as the co-star of **a new friend** of François Ozon. Like him, Vjeko likes to dress in women's clothes and finds in Maya complicity that will push him out of the cage. Again, the issue was heard, but it is not dealt with the same lightweight and participatory approach with which we live on screen ethnic confrontation. The latter is and will remain the dramatic center of gravity of the film, which rilegherà everything else in a secondary position.

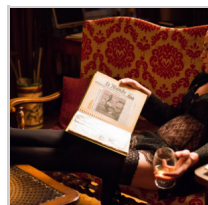
As a result, the original can not be a clear distinctive character and peculiarities on which to bet, but of this we are sure Grlić was well aware even at the time of writing. So, in a movie like **The Constitution** can not and you should not ask what he never wanted to offer, that is a point of view and a fresh approach. By virtue of this, **The Constitution** should not be seen as a variation on the theme because it is not and does not pretend to be. The Croatian filmmaker film is quite a pleasant new chapter on the subject, which, if anything, you can ask for anything else, ie to address the issue in question with special attention given to the story and the characters, and of course against theme. All this keeping a wide distance from the moral cheap that usually creeps sordid and then more and more arrogant in the narrative. Fortunately, the Balkan director and his writing partner have been able to work in the reverse direction, so as to keep away the work from those shifting sands where many experts continue to fall, swallowed with what they have brought to the big screen. Grlić made sure that this does not happen and the credit is probably his great experience in the audiovisual world (he wrote and directed several feature films, including **Border Post** and **Josephine**, twenty shorts and fifteen television documentaries), which allowed the to develop the antibodies needed to eradicate the various threats that lurk around the corner. To do so has focused on a simple story, without excessive layers, which aims straight at the target without losing the compass, made of three-dimensional characters against which you can try to empathize and sympathize. In just a few characters, but well designed, each with their own nuances, frailties, fears, ideas and peculiarities of character.

Ultimately, what won us of **The Constitution** is its ability to speak to people living and not of dead ideas. And this is not in the form of "tragedy" the story and the characters that animate it. On the contrary, he speaks of those "difficult things" with a hint of a smile, with a warmth and love that you can try to even the most negative character. In this way, the film manages to arrive without distinction both to those who think differently and see things differently, that those who hate a priori and are assured that such hatred is right. It is the demolition of the wall the great merit of the film.

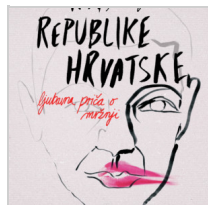
Francesco Del Grosso



An eloquent image from Rajko Grlić
*The Constitution (Ustav Republike
Hrvatske, Croatia 2016)*



Pause reading during Rajko Grlić
*The Constitution (Ustav Republike
Hrvatske, Croatia 2016)*



The poster of *The Constitution*
Rajko Grlić (*Ustav Republike
Hrvatske, Croatia 2016*)

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