WHEN SPRING CAME TO BUCHA

FILM BY MILA TESHAIEVA & MARCUS LENZ
The personal account of the war in Ukraine, filmed in the first weeks after liberation of Bucha district. Movie follows several protagonists closely as they deal with the aftermath, on practical and psychological level. Stories about destroyed lives but also about humanity and hope, as the war in Ukraine continues to rage.

*The documentary When spring came to Bucha reaches beyond common representations of war and one-dimensional victimhood… We, the audience, may not have seen Bucha, but with their explorations, the directors have done the rare thing that documentary can achieve.*  
-Sander Pleij - European review of Books

*The authors, in the best traditions of “direct cinema”, watch their confused characters with interest and great tenderness and encourage the viewer to do the hard work of understanding.*  
-Andriy Alferov, Film critic, curator, member of Fipresci.
SYNOPSIS

Russians bombarded Bucha, Borodyanka, Irpin and other cities in the region following their invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. By the time they retreated a month later, the damage was massive: destroyed houses, executed civilians, and ruined lives. Filmmakers Mila Teshaieva and Marcus Lenz went in immediately, in time to film local people emerging from their shelters, but never showing the actual atrocities. That wasn’t necessary, as the trauma of war is clear to see on everyone’s faces, including those of the volunteers who rushed in from far and wide to help.

Over the course of many weeks, the filmmakers follow various residents as they pick themselves up from the smoldering ruins. The dead are identified, debris is cleared, and prosecutors start talking about a war tribunal. At first, all is panic, despair and sadness—accompanied by sheer bafflement that they have been attacked by a country with so many ties to families and friends. But as the first blossoms of spring start appearing, these Ukrainians also reveal their resilience. Human spirit overcomes war and death.
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Germany, Ukraine 2022
66 min
Ukrainian original with English subtitles
Colour 16:9,

Director
Mila Teshaieva / Ukraine
Marcus Lenz / Germany

Cinematography
Marcus Lenz
Mila Teshaieva

Sound:
Vitalyi Garkavyi
Andriy Niedzelsky

Production
Wildfilms / Marcus Lenz
in cooperation with WDR

Editing
Yevgenia Danilenko
Julia Wiedwald

Music:
DakhaBrakha
Ganna Gryniva
Trailer
https://vimeo.com/769427007

Film stills
https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2y2f0e4s6vb8oq2/AABX9I2-d86hiPvxlF1TBdyga?dl=0

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Mila Teshaieva

Mila Teshaieva is a Ukrainian artist, photographer, and filmmaker. Her work is focused on the topics of national memories and collective identities on the territories of the former Eastern block. The retrospective of her work “Imagined Communities” was shown at the MIT Museum in Boston in 2018. From the very first days of the full-scale invasion of Russia to Ukraine Mila Teshaieva has been in Kyiv and the Kyiv region, photographing, filming, and writing on what she describes as “a defining moment of European history”.

Marcus Lenz

is a German director, screenwriter and cinematographer based in Berlin. He graduated from the Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFFB). His feature film Rival (2020) premiered at Busan IFF and won the Best Director award at Tokyo IFF, Best Global Film at Pristina IFF, among many other awards, also being shown worldwide at more than 50 festivals. In 2016 he founded a production company Wildfilms, and directed multiple mid-length documentaries for German television channels WDR and Arte.