

HONEYLAND

REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA 2019 // 87 MINS // TURKISH (EST)



The Most Awarded Film out of the 2019 Sundance Film Festival



"Contains worlds in one beautiful, seemingly simple story."
The New York Times

"Mesmerically beautiful"
IndieWire

Honeyland



CAST

Character	Actor
Hatidze Muratova	Herself
Nazife Muratova	Himself
Hussein Sam	Himself
Ljutvie Sam	Herself

CREW

DIRECTORS	Tamara Kotevska Ljubomir Stefanov
FILM EDITING	Atanas Georgiev
CINEMATOGRAPHY	Fejmi Daut Samir Ljuma

BOOKING INFORMATION

DISTRIBUTOR	Dogwoof
NON-THEATRICAL BOOKINGS	Dogwoof oli@dogwoof.com
AVAILABLE	Now

SYNOPSIS

The last female beekeeper in Europe must save the bees and return the natural balance when a family of nomadic beekeepers invade her land and threaten her livelihood. Filmed in Macedonia, *Honeyland* is an observational indigenous visual narrative that explores the impact of our behaviour on natural resources and the human condition.

WHAT THE CRITICS SAY

Set in an abandoned village in Macedonia, IndieWire reports how *Honeyland* was filmed over three years – combating the challenge of language barriers, ‘editing on mute just the visual narrative’ explains co-director Ljubomir Stefanov, whilst translators interpreted the dialogue. One must note the incredible presence of dynamic visuals within the film, the ‘majestic scenery of the surroundings... contrasting the beauty and ruggedness of the landscape with the dark and claustrophobic living conditions of the two families’ - InDaily. It is this exact attention to contrast – or balance – that sits at the heart of *Honeyland*, characterised by beekeeper Hatidze’s motto of ‘one half for me, one half for you’ in describing the honey needed by her and the bees.

Honeyland seems to resemble a moral story, the kind of guiding tale that has been told for centuries – although one must remember that those featuring in this documentary are real people. A O Scott for The New York Times writes ‘*Honeyland* reminded me of *The Lorax*, Dr. Seuss’s great, prescient tale of ecological folly. Like the title character in that story, Hatidze is a kind of prophet. She speaks for the bees’. The Film Society of Lincoln Center instead describes *Honeyland* as ‘an evocative, often outrageously funny modern-day parable of the Good Samaritan’.

The struggle within *Honeyland* seems to echo the delicate balance between humans and nature within a fragile ecosystem. Although the intentions of this documentary differ from the end result, it may seem as if this was a story waiting to be told. At the International Documentary Association co-director Tamara Kotevska said ‘we can probably say that the bees brought us to her’. Essentially, the impact and artistic prowess of *Honeyland* is undeniable, as summed up by The Times: ‘many directors of low-key rustic dramas would be happy to tell a story as engaging and picturesque as the one in this documentary’.

Adapted from the FilmBath Festival film notes written by Lily Wheeler

