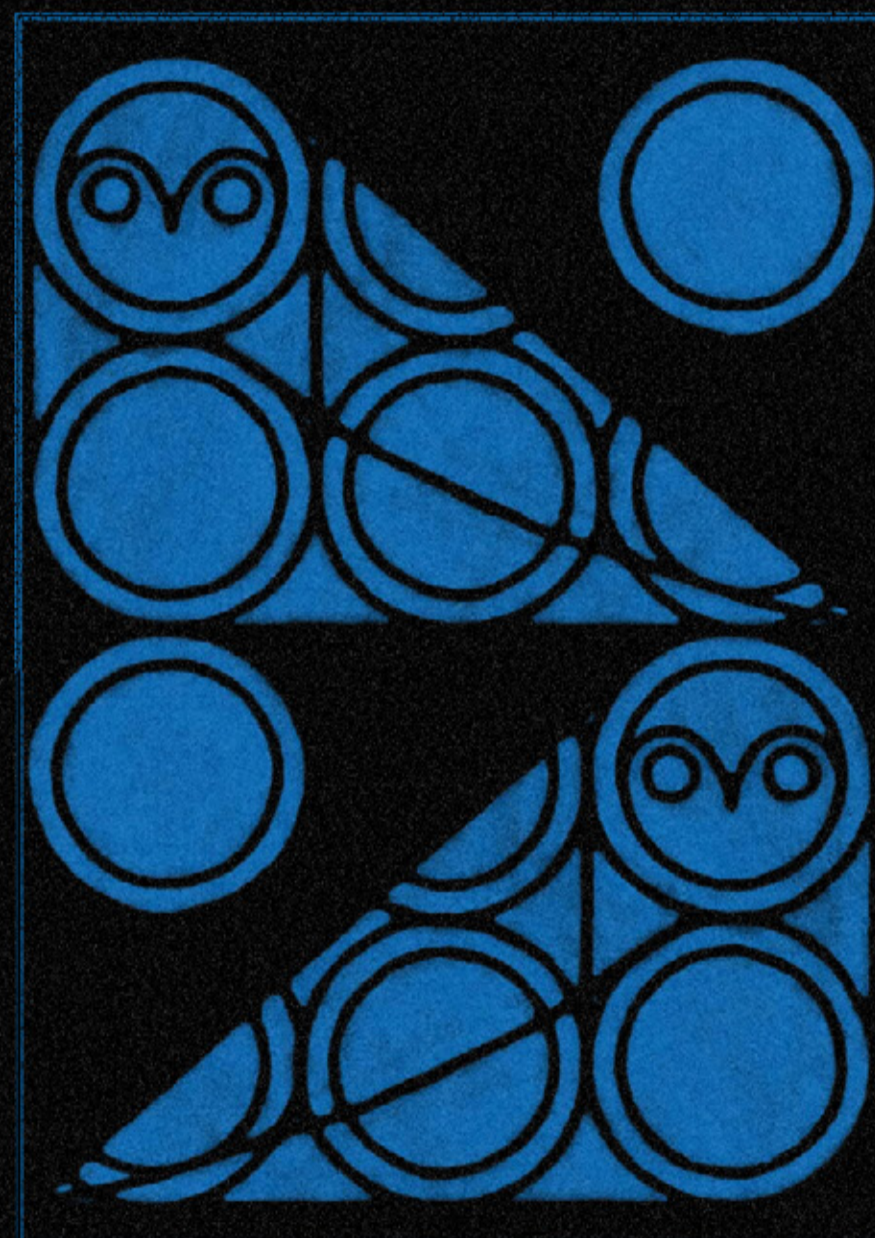


C I T Y O F O W L S



65^e SEMAINE
DE LA CRITIQUE
CANNES 2026



• P R E S S K I T •



moderato

eversince*

IL VARCO
CINEMA



ouders

C4I®



PROCIREP ANGOA

Rai Cinema
Channel



Countries of origin
FRANCE, GERMANY, ITALY

Sound
STEREO

Duration
13:51

Aspect Ratio
1.33:1

Year
2026

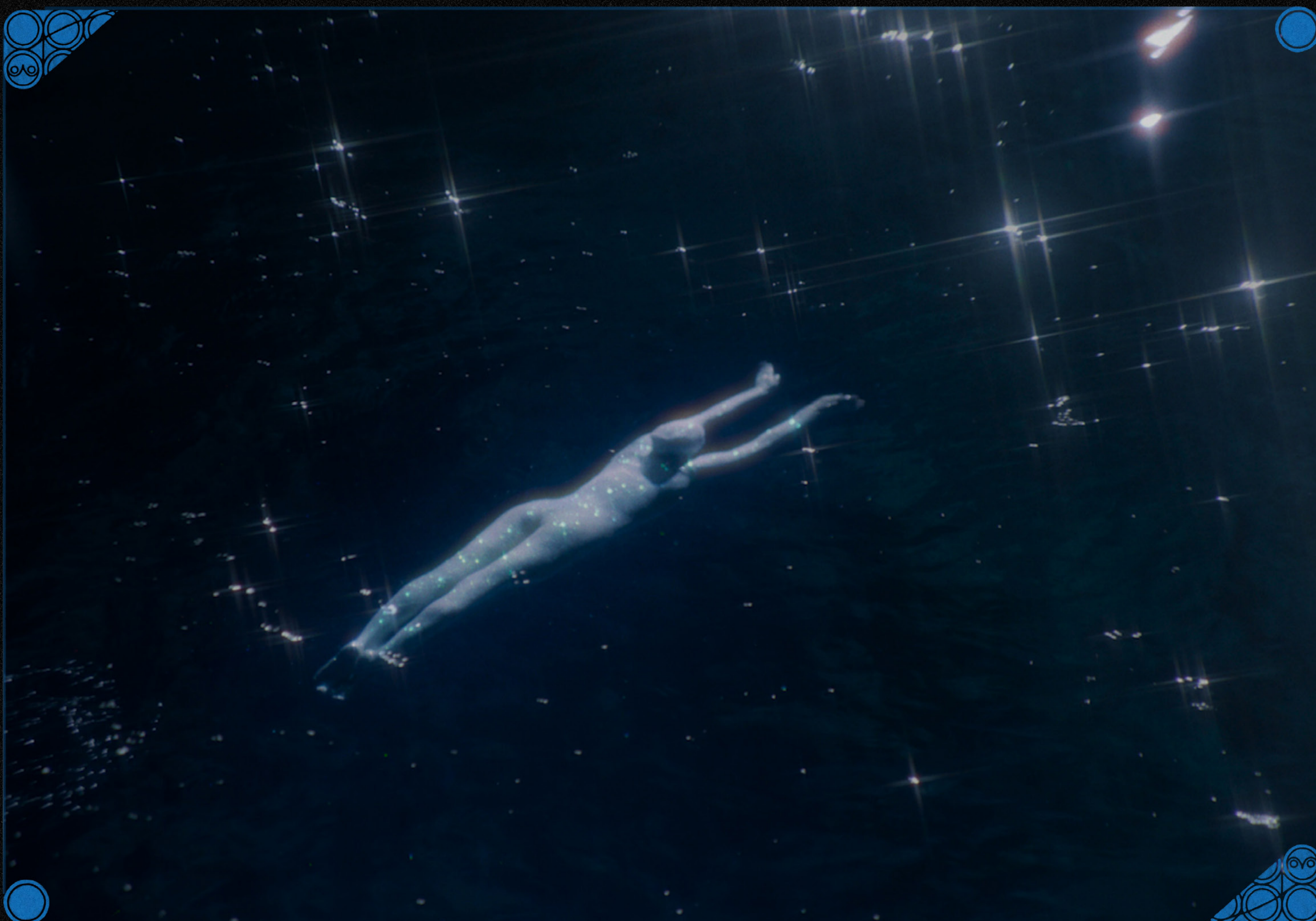
Language
RUSSIAN



• *S Y N O P S I S* •

On the last evening before her departure, Vera is putting her small sister to bed. To hide the real reason for her leaving, she tells her a bedtime fairy tale instead. It's the story of a city swallowed by an eternal night.





• DIRECTOR'S BIO •



ZHENIA KAZANKINA

Zhenia Kazankina (she/her) is a director, screenwriter, and editor, born in Moscow, Russia, in 1996. She graduated from the Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography (VGIK) and is currently based in Rome, Italy.

Her work explores themes of adaptation, attachment, and the search for belonging, often through the lens of feminine characters and perspectives. Unfolding in a collective dimension, her stories are rooted in metaphorical concepts and personal experience, and touched with elements of mystery and fable.

FILMOGRAPHY

<i>RIO</i>	<i>(22'; 2019; fiction)</i>
<i>CONTINUITY OF PARKS</i>	<i>(12'; 2022; experimental)</i>
<i>EMPTY ROOMS</i>	<i>(6'; 2023; experimental, documentary)</i>
<i>THREE SECRET CLUES OF LONGING</i>	<i>(5'; 2023; experimental, archival)</i>
<i>NEW</i>	<i>(20'; 2024; fiction)</i>
<i>CITY OF OWLS</i>	<i>(13'; 2026; fiction)</i>





DIRECTOR'S
STATEMENT

“City of Owls” is a film in which my personal experiences of emigration intertwine with a metaphorical fairy tale about collective abandonment and adaptive escapism. This film grew out of my inner contradiction toward my home country, a feeling shaped both by love and nostalgia, and by bitterness and critical distance that came with emigration.

I wanted to fill the film with a naive visual language, where sweetness coexists with a piercing sense of doom, a tone I’ve known since childhood through Soviet animation and fairy-tale films. “City of Owls” naturally inherits this language, continuing a tradition of metaphor and symbolism that Soviet and Russian artists have long used to speak about their country across different eras.

It seems to me that the metaphorical darkness that falls over the city in the film now goes beyond one place and spreads across the whole world. How do we live within it?





• C R E D I T S •

C A S T

Older Sister VERA ENGALYCHEVA
Younger Sister LERA YACENKO

C R E W

Director ZHENIA KAZANKINA
Screenplay ZHENIA KAZANKINA, SOFIA BOTEVA, ANDREA GATOPOULOS
Cinematographer LUDA KUROPYATNIKOVA
Set designer ALEKSANDRA SMIRNOVA
Costume designer SASHA NGUYEN
Hair and makeup artist NASTYA TENDEROVA
Casting director JENYA SVELIEVA, ZHENIA KAZANKINA
Music composer 96 KBPS
Sound designer DMITRY KRUPENYA
VFX & CG artist ANDREI BULATCHIK

• CONTACTS •

INTERNATIONAL SALES

GARGANTUA DISTRIBUTION
administration@gargantuafilm.it

PRODUCTION COMPANIES

MODERATO

Clémence Crépin Néel
Igor Courtecuisse
igor@moderatofilms.com

*EVERSINCE GMBH

Pavel Karykhalin
pavel@eversince.tv

IL VARCO CINEMA

Andrea Gatopoulos
andrea.gatopoulos@gmail.com

SPRODUCTION

Silvio Giannini
Laura Catalano
laura.catalano@pr8duction.com

CATTIVE PRODUZIONI

Marco Mingolla
cattiveproduzioni@gmail.com

OUDEIS

Oudeis
stefano.schiavone@oudeispictures.it

C41

Leone Balduzzi
Barbara Guieu
Giorgia Pedini
giorgia@c41.eu