



MOVIE PITCH

NOTHING BUT ASHES

www.nothingbutashes.net

LEGENDA
FILM GROUP



NOTHING BUT ASHES

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BASED ON A TRUE STORY



produced and directed by

ANDREI NEGOIȚĂ ZAGORODNÂI

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THE PROJECT



Inspired by the ministry of Father Gheorghe Calciu Dumitreasa, his former teacher at the Theological Seminary in Bucharest, Father Nicolae Tănase gave life to a unique social phenomenon in Screzii Valley, Romania. He built 28 social facilities for the last three decades and gave Romania's „lost sheep” a new breath of life. We're talking about orphans, abandoned children or children whose parents are working abroad, afflicted elders, whom the Romanian State rejects as if they were lazars.

The social facilities in Screzii Valley burnt to the ground several times, yet over and over again hope emerged unscathed from the ashes. The biggest credit for this goes to a man touched by God: father Nicolae Tănase, a former student of the late Father Gheorghe Calciu Dumitreasa, the protagonist of 7 Words, a documentary by director Andrei Negoită Zagorodnâi. Father Calciu spent 21 years in Communist prisons for his true faith in God and the love of his country.

Director Andrei Negoită Zagorodnâi stumbled upon the story while filming the artistic documentary 7 Words, dedicated to Father Calciu. Now, he is working on Nothing but Ashes, a feature film based on a true story, about the Phoenixes of Romania, rising from their ashes daily, defying the odds with a smile on their face.

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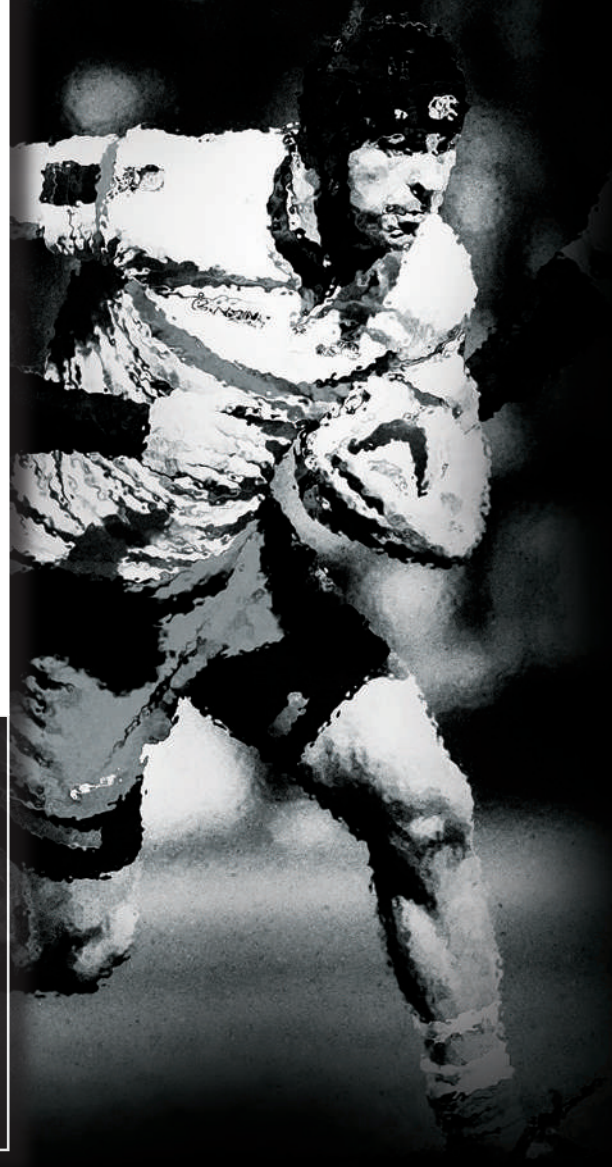


A movie about godforsaken children, who ended up abandoned or parentless, about teen mothers, broken families, Romania's social ills and two champions: a sportsman with a rags-to-riches story and the guardian angel who gave him a lifeline.

A film brimming with emotion, dealing with despair, suffering and redemption. A film honoring our unsung heroes.

In 2019, Nothing but Ashes aims to tell the story of Screzii Valley to the world. In 2019, learn about the victors of Life coming out of Screzii Valley.

It's time to take a stand and help.



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SYNOPSIS



The film deals with the legend of two champions, one nicknamed the Carpathian Bus, and the other, Father Nicolae Tănase. The first champion, Ovidiu Tonița, left the streets of Bârlad and became a professional rugby player in France at age 19. Prior to his retirement at age 37 he participated in five Rugby World Cups, a feat attained only by two other professional rugby players. The second champion graduated from the Theological Seminary „Radu Vodă” in Bucharest. His head professor was the famous political dissident, Father Gheorghe Calciu Dumitreasa. In a remote village in Prahova named Valea Plopului, „Poplar Valley”, he built a campus that has taken care of thousands of children abandoned by Romanian society. Currently, the campus is taking care of 464 children that may never have been born.

At dawn, in a dusty town of early 2000s Romania, a Pepsi truck stops next to a market. On a bus bench, a young high schooler in a worn hoodie waits for the truck. By himself, he opens the cargo hold, and pulling a cart, moves 30 pallets of Pepsi to his stall in the market from which he and his family eke out a living.

While moving the third pallet, the ball bearing inside the cart wheel breaks. Young Ovidiu, shirtless, harnesses himself to nine pallets and pulls them to his stall. On the other side of the street, the national rugby team coach is mesmerized by the young man's herculean effort and stops him to talk. This is where Ovidiu's odyssey begins.



In two years his life changes dramatically. He signs his first professional rugby contract in Romania, and debuts at the national championship with an age waiver. On his first trip to France with the national team, the Grenoble rugby club makes him an offer to play for them.

Having made it into the world of professional sports, Ovidiu returns to his home in Bârlad to say goodbye to his mother, and to Valea Plopului, so he can say goodbye to his spiritual father, Father Tănase, the man who offered him a new direction in life. That is when he finds out for the first time, that due to another broken ball bearing and his priest, the gurney that was carrying his mother to an abortion room was stopped. That is how he went to Valea Plopului, where Father Tănase showed him another path in life, the path of truth. The other path would have been that of a street gladiator, condemned to a sordid life, like thousands of other Romanian youngsters these days.

The night before leaving for the airport, due to Father Tănase's connection, he arrives at a crematorium in Bucharest, where for one hundred dollars, the security guard opens the window through which Ovidiu sees, for the first time, the death of a nation.

Nightmares of the visor into the Bucharest crematorium haunt Ovidiu at night. He reaches a level of aggression on the playing field that turns him into a fierce competitor, respected by the tough world of professional rugby. From a rookie that was ridiculed by his teammates and opponents, he becomes, through many personal sacrifices, the Carpathian Bus.

Ovidiu realizes that his fate was decided by two broken ball bearings. He becomes a goodwill ambassador and the role model of the abandoned children of Romania.

THE DIRECTOR

The director of *Nothing but Ashes* aims to bring new life into the cinema of his native country, Romania. Andrei Negoită Zagorodnâi was born in Iași and, after graduating primary school and middle school - with a stint at the local Music School - in Bârlad (Vaslui county), he graduated from the Faculty of Medicine at the „Grigore T. Popa“ University in Iași in 1987.

He was a resident physician (1987-1990), then a family practice physician (1990-1993) in Bârlad. The middle of the decade saw him crossing the Atlantic and working (1997-2005) in Interventional Cardiology research at: Cardiology Research Foundation, George Washington Hospital (Washington, DC), Lenox Hill Hospital (Manhattan, New York) and Columbia University (Manhattan, New York).

In 2000, still under the spell of a powerful movie - *Peacetime in Paris (Sezona mira u Parizu)* -, Andrei Negoită Zagorodnâi took a life-changing decision: he enrolled as a full time student at the School of Visual Arts (SVA) in Manhattan, New York, where he studied film-making and cinematography, graduating in 2005. As a film student, he directed several shorts which were selected and won prizes at international movie festivals. His graduation movie, *Wrong Track*, was screened at two movie festivals in Romania: Anonimul (Sfântu Gheorghe) and DaKINO (Bucharest).

He returned to Romania to make „movies that tell a story“. In 2015, the director came to national attention with *7 Words*, a movie telling the story of one of the most famous Romanian dissidents, Father Gheorghe Calciu Dumitreasa, who spent 21 years in Communist prisons for loving his country.

He is a Romanian - American citizen and resides in Santa Rosa, California.



I didn't go to the States in search of a better life, although the salary in Romania was a joke. Two tanks of fuel, that was the worth of a doctor's paycheck. Yet, that was not the reason. It was film-making. (...) As a doctor, I can tell you that film-making is psychiatry at a national level.



FILMOGRAPHY

Nothing but Ashes (2019 - pre-production)
7 Words (2015)
Wrong Track (2004)
Die Hard Kitsch Rhapsody (2003)
Victoria's Secret (2003)
Die Hard Kitsch (2002)
Vision (2001)
Tight Rope Dancer (2000)



WHO WE WORK WITH

abis

s t u d i o

Our trusted production company is Abis Studio, whom we worked with in 2015 for 7 Words. Abis Studio has a great experience in producing highly successful feature films and TV productions.

Selected filmography:

- 4 months, 3 weeks and 2 days (2007, directed by Cristian Mungiu)
- City of Life (2009, directed by Ali F. Mostafa)
- All of our family (2012, directed by Radu Jude)
- Miss Christina (2013, directed by Alexandru Maftel)
- Anathema (2017, short, directed by Andreea Cristina Borțun)
- Queen Marie of Romania (2019, post-production, directed by Alexis Cahill and Alexis Sweet Cahill)
- Dark Prince: The true story of Dracula (2000, TV, directed by Joe Chapelle)
- Sherlock (2002, TV, directed by Graham Theakston)

Abis Studio first started in the film industry in 1996, producing acclaimed feature films by renowned film directors.

More info on abisstudio.ro/en/

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THE CAMPAIGN

Nothing but Ashes can make a huge difference in the everyday life of people in Screzii Valley. Which is why your support is paramount.

We make a pledge to donate a quarter of the profits from the movie to the orphans and the abandoned elderly people in the area.

Nothing but Ashes is a feature film about the people who changed lives and - most importantly - a movie that will change lives. It is a film about role models, paying homage to their never-say-die attitude. A social movie, dealing with a distressing reality in Romania - unknown, ignored or swept under the rug.

We will tour our movie in cinemas across the USA, Canada and Europe. We want to change perceptions not only at home, but also abroad.

We started *Nothing but Ashes* with a small team of dreamers. We want it to be the first film produced by a minimum of 10.000 investors.

Any donation surpassing 1000 dollars gives you producer status for *Nothing but Ashes*. You will be granted, by contract, the right to dividends from the movie's profits proportional to the amount invested.

We believe we can change the lives of children and elders in Screzii Valley for the better, and that telling their story through film is the best way to do it, while also raising overall awareness of the issues at stake. However, in order for this to occur, we need all the resources necessary for a top notch production.

Donate now for *Nothing but Ashes*. Be a voice for the voiceless.

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A WORD FROM FATHER NICOLAE TĂNASE TO YOU...

I would like to express my gratitude for your help in financing *Nothing but Ashes* and our work in Plopului Valley parish and the community of Screzii Valley.

I also thank those who have already contributed with donations to this movie project. Your belief in it is truly heart-warming.

A quarter of the movie's proceeds will be a big boost to our mission to protect people in need, such as new mothers, pregnant women that are not accepted by their families, abandoned children and even those children kicked out of orphanages.

We are grateful for your support, we thank you, and we pray to God that He will repay your efforts and your compassion.

The Pro-Vita Center for Born and Unborn Children of the Plopului Valley parish promotes the rights of born and unborn children and protects mothers that have been disowned by their family. The center protects homeless pregnant women, orphans, abandoned street children, orphaned girls that are not integrated in society and elderly homeless people, all through the goodwill of donors with a big heart.

Nothing but Ashes will be a movie about them.





NOTHING BUT ASHES

INCLUDES 2 TEASERS ABOUT
SCREZII VALLEY AND
NOTHING BUT ASHES, THE MOVIE

DONATE NOW
25% OF BOX OFFICE
WILL REACH THE CHILDREN



S C R U M

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