



Sometimes standing behind a cause takes as much courage as dying for it.

WOMEN *of* MAIDAN

POWER. DIGNITY. STRENGTH. HOPE.

an OLHA ONYSHKO and PETRO DIDULA film



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WWW.WOMENOFMAIDAN.COM

Women of Maidan tells the story of the women's life-supporting force, unity, courage and sacrifice during the 2013-2014 Ukrainian Revolution.
Sometimes standing behind a cause takes as much courage as dying for it.

RUNNING TIME:

1:05:56

PRODUCED, WRITTEN, DIRECTED AND EDITED BY

Olha Onyshko

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Petro Didula

MUSIC SCORE

Yurko Duda

SOUND AND ON-LINE EDITOR

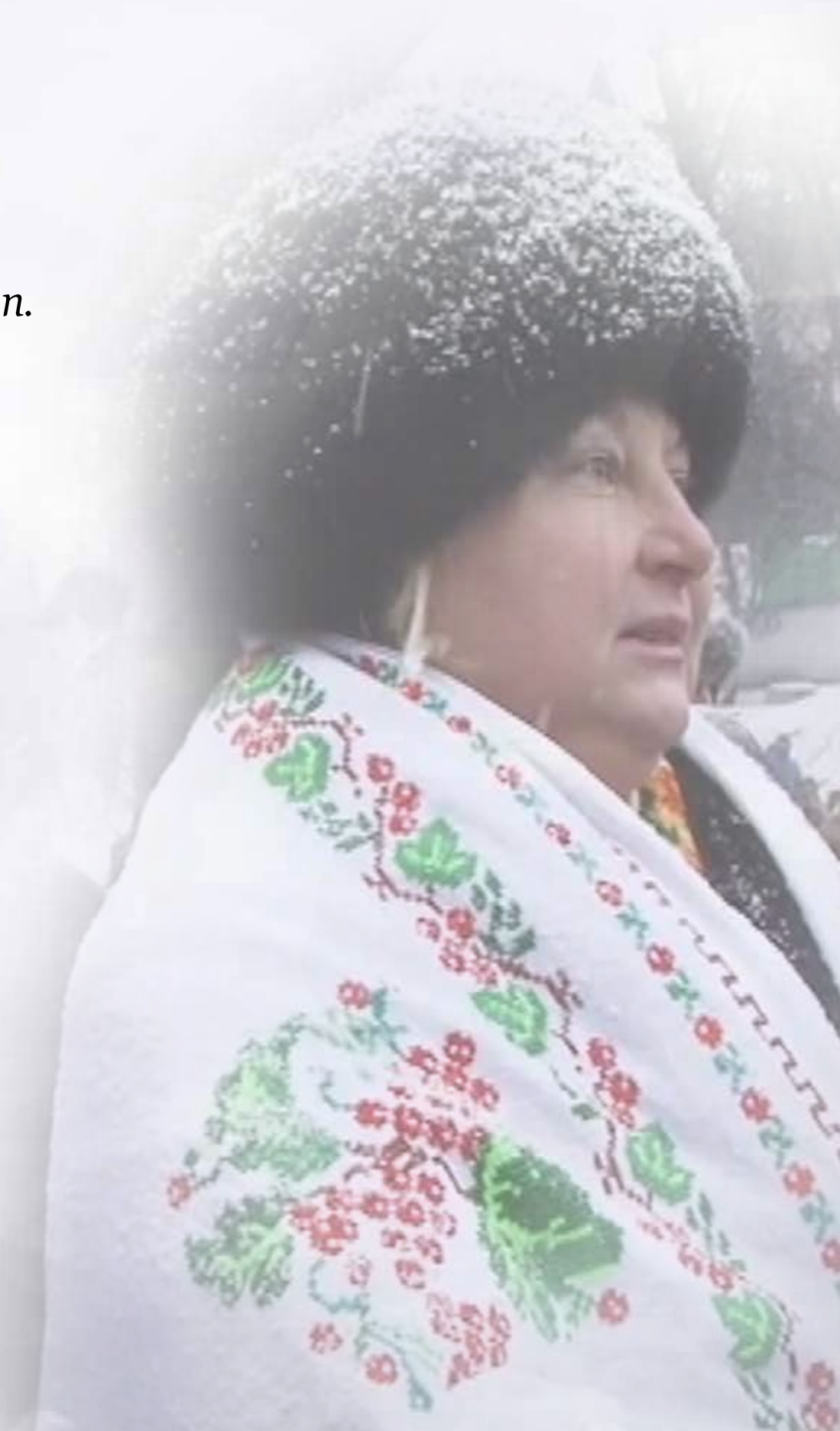
Bohdan Ilchyshyn

GRAPHICS AND ANIMATION

Cathy Wilson

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SHORT SYNOPSIS:

Women of Maidan tells the story of women in the 2013-2014 Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity. Called to action after witnessing students beaten by special police forces, women brought energy, courage and support to the front lines of the revolution. As they worked for the dignity of their nation, and a new future for their country, their combined power helped dislodge an entrenched political system.



LONG SYNOPSIS:

In November, 2013, students peacefully gathered on Maidan Square in Kyiv, Ukraine. Through joyful singing they celebrated their common goal of an economic treaty to bring Ukraine closer to the European Union. Peaceful demonstration came to an end when government special police forces broke into the square and beat the student demonstrators.

Women courageously filled the streets, energized the nation, and sustained the protestors for over two months. The women became the heart of this spontaneous revolution, now known as “The Revolution of Dignity.”

These Women of Maidan join history’s female revolutionaries who selflessly sustained political movements by providing love, nourishment, and care during desperate times. The Women’s March on Versailles, Soldaderas of the Mexican Revolution, Igbo women in Nigeria, the White Rose Movement against the Nazis, and Egyptian women during the Arab Spring, all brought unseen power that defeated oppressive political systems.

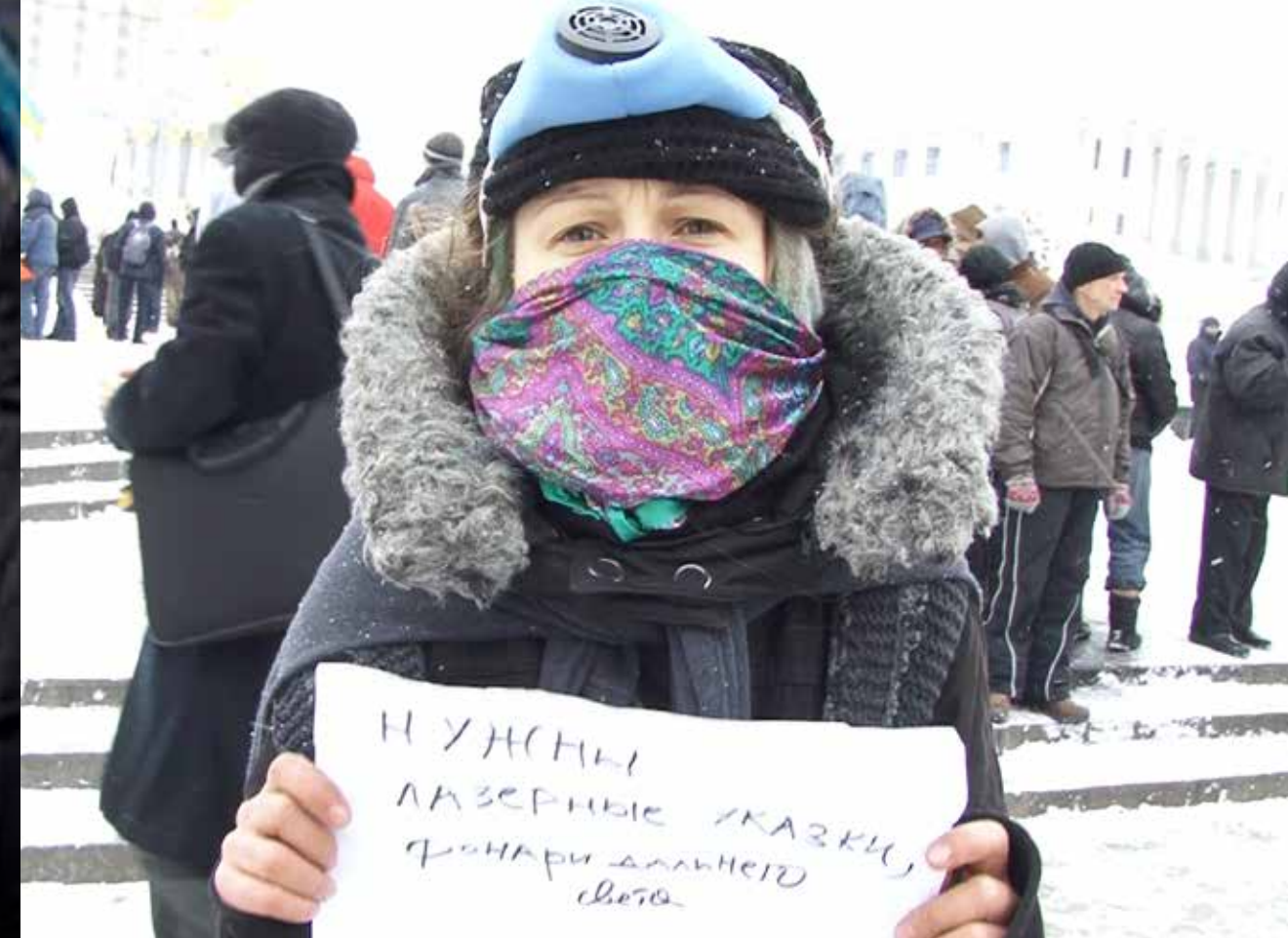
Maidan is a call for women to awaken, to see the power in their collective wisdom and strength: a power strong enough to overcome oppression from any ruthless regime. May the sacrifices and achievements of the Women of Maidan inspire us to build a new world providing dignity and prosperity for all.

ABOUT THE FILM/PRODUCTION:

On the night of November 30th, 2013, special police forces trained to go after terrorists, illegal arms dealers and violent gangs attacked a student rally, many of whom were young women. The next day thousands and thousands of people came to their capital in order to protect their youngsters and protest against the unnecessary violence against a rally that came out to support iconic European values of humanism and justice. Thus, the Revolution of Dignity had begun. Women became a core of the movement as well, as a huge support effort that allowed thousands of people to remain on Maidan through the brutal winter months, equip them for the cold and snow, and help them withstand police attacks, injury, and illness. Women's strength and courage made the regime to step down and flee to Moscow.







DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Word Origin: “Maidan” [my-DAWN] means “central square” in Ukrainian. The word originated during ancient times when critical issues like going to war or holding peace negotiations as a group were settled on the central square, or Maidan. Maidan also indicates a state of mind — to make a decision as part of a large group for the benefit of the entire group.

The idea for Women of Maidan began as something completely different. For most of 2012 I was bed-bound, recovering from an injury, and I spent my time reading news about my home country, Ukraine. I wondered why, with a highly educated female population, women were treated as sex objects in Ukraine — from mail order brides to human trafficking. And why, despite prostitution being illegal, Ukraine was becoming the leading European destination with a \$700 million sex industry and two million sex tourists a year. I also questioned why the official number of rapes reported in the Ukraine was so much lower than what was being detailed by national and local media in the country. I saw a correlation between the violence against women, women’s status in Ukrainian society and the worsening regime of President Yanukovich.

The year 2012 was a key year for corrupt President Victor Yanukovich’s regime. As his “family” built excessive palaces and spent the country’s wealth entertaining the world’s elite, Ukraine was dying economically. There were no jobs, and no efforts by the government to create jobs. Industries that had produced for the entire Soviet Union were stripped into pieces and sold for nothing, or simply grabbed by those with access. Land was stolen from the people

through corrupt privatization deals. A few at the top were getting everything while everyone else was left with nothing. Only those loyal to Yanukovich’s regime were able to conduct their business — they paid fees, or bribes, and in turn received privileged access and protection. The system operated similar to that of a street gang.

A year later, on a Saturday morning in November 2013, my mom called me from Ukraine crying and uttering, “the students, mostly girls, were brutally beaten in Kyiv,” I hung up in extreme distress. On the night of November 30th, 2013, special police forces trained to go after terrorists, illegal arms dealers and violent gangs had attacked a student rally, many of whom were young women. The students had assembled in the central square called “Maidan,” in the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv, to support the signing of a trade agreement between Ukraine and the European Union, an agreement that had been verbally supported by President Yanukovich himself. The students had hoped that an agreement between the EU and Ukraine might push the country toward that of a civilized European nation.

The next day I flew to Ukraine, and decided to follow the women. I believed that women as a group would show the true motives of the protest, without hidden political agendas for the sake of gaining more political power.

In my first days on Maidan, the atmosphere was tense, but what struck me was how well the protest was organized. There was order in everything, from how people took shifts to stand watch, how everyone was fed, where they slept, how they took showers and how

they received medical treatment. It was as if an invisible hand was coordinating a massive amount of people; the majority of whom came from the countryside with a one-way ticket because that was all they could afford. They came because they were fed up. They’d quit their jobs, or if they were unemployed they had been chosen by their towns and villages. Food was donated, buses hired by the communities, and they were sent to the main square in Kyiv to protest. Once they arrived on the central square, people and businesses opened their arms to the protestors, offering a warm place to stay or a hot meal. Women became a core of this huge support effort, “the invisible hand” that allowed thousands of people to remain on Maidan through the brutal winter months, equip them for the cold and snow, and help them withstand police attacks, injury, and illness. Women sustained the life of the protestors. And one thing became clear, if enough women stood side by side with the men, their unity could defeat any regime.

Ultimately, they did. Victory was had when President Yanukovich fled the country.

Three years later, in the midst of Russian aggression against Ukraine and Syria, a refugee crisis in Europe, and a presidential race in United States, Women of Maidan is a story that still resonates. It’s time for women around the world to recognize the power of the female force. The old ruling system based on protecting the interests of the “old boys club” is over. New ideas are on the rise. For the benefit of society as a whole, every woman and man who seeks freedom and prosperity for their country needs to stand up and speak out.

BIOs

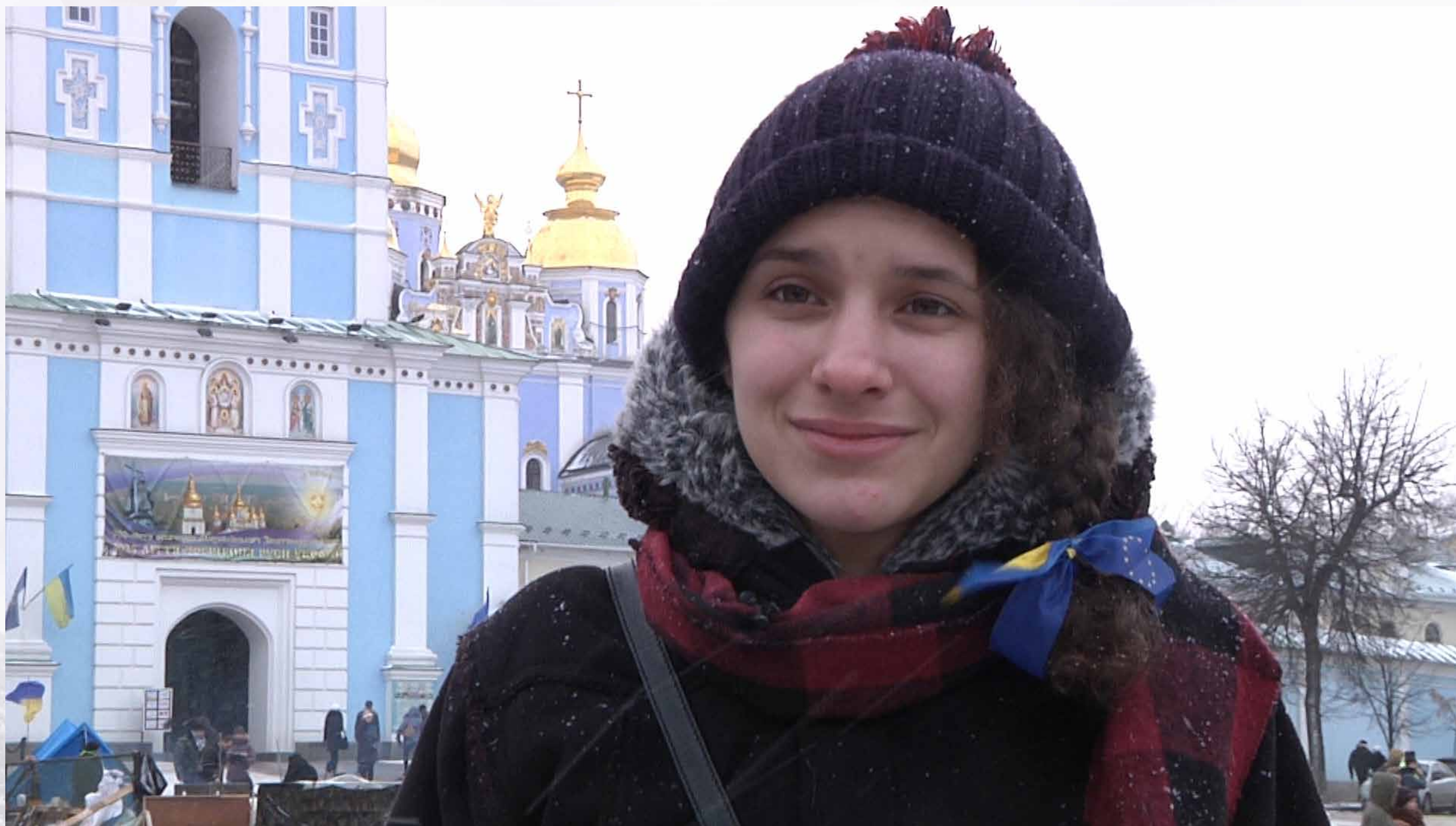


OLHA ONYSHKO PRODUCER/DIRECTOR/EDITOR:

Documentary filmmaker and multimedia producer, Olha Onyshko's first film, *Three Stories of Galicia*, a story of humanism in the midst of atrocities during and after World War II, premiered in 2010. Screened in 12 countries and translated into four languages, the film sparked a debate over historic memory and its role in current events. Onyshko's short films include *The Wheat Job*, about the 2015 Washington, DC, construction of the Holodomor Memorial (in honor of victims of the 1932-1933 Ukrainian artificial famine orchestrated by the Soviet regime), *Where Do The Children Play?* (Telly Award), and videos for organizations including the National Park Service, The World Bank, United Nations, U.S. Department of Education, Global Health and Johns Hopkins University.

Women of Maidan is her second feature documentary, and while editing the film she began to coordinate efforts between physicians and volunteers to bring wounded Ukrainian soldiers to the U.S. for life-saving medical treatment. In 2014 she received recognition by the U.S. House of Representatives and the Embassy of Ukraine to the U.S. for her extraordinary work.

Prior to filmmaking, Onyshko began her career as a broadcast journalist in her hometown of Lviv, Ukraine. She later became active in political campaigns, supported free and fair elections in her newly independent country, and advocated through nationwide educational campaigns for democracy and human rights. When Onyshko moved to the U.S. in 2002, she sought a way to continue to broadcast her voice back home, so worked as an anchor, writer and producer for Voice of America. While working toward an MFA at American University 2006-2009, she transitioned into documentary film. She hoped that filmmaking would become her vehicle to speak out, but she never imagined that it would send her on a joyful journey to discover the artist inside herself. She currently lives with her husband and two children in Bethesda, Maryland.



BIOs



PETRO DIDULA PRODUCER/DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:

Producer / Director of Photography Petro Didula has background in photography, print journalism and as an editor of the Ukrainian magazine Patriarchat. In 2005 Didula created the photography project “Revolution of Spirit” about the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine. He was the director of photography for Olha Onyshko’s feature documentary Three Stories of Galicia. During their second collaboration on Women of Maidan, Didula created the Ms. Maidan project, a video collection of 40 stories of women short who were part of Maidan <http://ms-maidan.org.ua/>, and the Ms.ATO (Miss Anti-Terrorism Operation) project of 10 stories about women in the current Russia-Ukraine war. Didula holds an MA in Journalism and MA in Philosophy and Theology, and is a journalist for the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv, Ukraine. Currently he lives in Lviv, Ukraine, where he resides with his wife and 5 children.



YURKO DUDA MUSIC COMPOSER:

Composer Yurko Duda creates music for numerous radio, television and advertising companies in Ukraine. He first collaborated with director Olha Onyshko as the composer for her feature documentary Three Stories of Galicia. In 2011 he created a jazz project called “UniverseRadio.” He is also a performing musician who plays for one of the most popular rock bands in Ukraine called Jeremy Cry. Yurko holds a MA in Music from Lviv State Conservatory and studied at Hochschule fur Music Hanns Eisler, Berlin. He lives in Lviv, Ukraine with his wife and daughter.



CREDITS

PRODUCED, WRITTEN, DIRECTED AND EDITED BY

Olha Onyshko

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Petro Didula

SOUND AND ON-LINE EDITOR

Bohdan Ilchyshyn

MUSIC SCORE

Yurko Duda

Interpretation of the folk song “Oj u Luzi”

Interpretation of Olexandr Bilash song “Dva kolory”

Interpretation of the folk song “Plyve Kacha”

GRAPHIC DESIGN/ANIMATION

Cathy Wilson

STORY CONSULTANTS

Karin Hayes

Orysia Pylyshenko

Camelia Fawzy

Bonnie Landego

Olena Shevchenko

Penny Lee

ADDITIONAL FOOTAGE

Oleksiy Stepura

U-Stream cameras of Yurko Ivanyshyn and Kostyantyn Ignatchuk

Hromadske TV

Radio Liberty

Jérôme Sessini

Roman Khorkavyy



CREDITS

FIELD PRODUCERS

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Iryna Shust
Valentina Podgornaya

CAMERA ASSISTANTS

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Olexandra Hryn
Pavlo Didula
Ihor Minyajlo
Khrystyna Hryshchuk
Lyubov Mykhajluk
Roman Holimbijevskyj

MUSIC PLAYED ON MAIDAN

Ukrainian Anthem by people of Maidan
THMK
Houra Hoyra folk dance performed by group Bozhychi
Shopen Etude number 12 performed by Antuaneta Mischenko
O.E.
Iryna Bilyk
Ot Vinta
Maria Pohorilko
DakhaBrakha
WWII song performed by a group of students
Ruslana



CREDITS

FILM SUPPORTED

St. Ignatius Foundation
Ukrainian Catholic University
Ukrainian Federation of America
St. Olga Sisterhood of St. Andrew Orthodox Church
Darrin Hartzler
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Ivan Vasiunyk
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Jerry and Lesia Lorentz
Marta Pryjma
Oleh and Halya Voloshyn
Sehiy Fomenko (Foma)
Yuri Deychakiwsky
Dawn Doeblor
Joan Ishimoto

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP

Docs in Progress



ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Yura Sosnovtsev
Marichka Zhahajlo
Sasha Chernyakhivska

Romanna Pavliuk
the Hutsul Women

Raisa Shymko
Lyudmila from Kyiv
Ulyana Prokopovych

Iryna from Lviv
Tetyana from Kyiv
Asya Lytvynyuk

Iryna Vereschuk
Halyna Morchkova
Antuaneta Mishchenko

Yulia Votcher
Architect from Zakarpattya
Activist to Free the Protestors

Anna Zaychkivska
Ruslana Lyzhychko

Anyia from Dnipropetrovsk and Masha from Kyiv

Yulia Kuchugurnaya
Khrystyna, Kateryna and Mom Natalia
Yaroslava and Mykola
Olexandra Kuzhil

Oksana from Ivano-Frankivsk

Natalia from Poltava Region

Woman from Cherkasy

Svitlana Boyko

Valentina Bilan and Women on Hrushevskoho

Yuriy from Crimea

Yulia from Kerch

Oksana from Crimea

Woman with Tea from Lviv Olblast

Woman in the Tent

Larysa Andrusenko

Natasha and Friend with Chicken Soup

Maria Diordiychuk

Adele and Maria from Crimea

Liza Shaposhnyk

Olha Bohomolec

Natalia Skornyakova

Maria Makarova

Vika Lyka

and many many other women and girls
who may or may not be captured in this film
but who were part of Maidan

THANK YOU!