

25.  
Sarajevo  
Film Festival  
OFFICIAL COMPETITION



26. ULUSLARARASI ADANA  
ALTIN KOZA FILM FESTIVALI 2019  
26TH INTERNATIONAL ADANA  
GOLDEN BOLL FILM FESTIVAL 2019

★  
YILMAZ GÜNEY  
ÖDÜLÜ



26. ULUSLARARASI ADANA  
ALTIN KOZA FILM FESTIVALI 2019  
26TH INTERNATIONAL ADANA  
GOLDEN BOLL FILM FESTIVAL 2019

★  
SİYAD  
CÜNEYT CEBENOYAN  
EN İYİ FILM ÖDÜLÜ



26. ULUSLARARASI ADANA  
ALTIN KOZA FILM FESTIVALI 2019  
26TH INTERNATIONAL ADANA  
GOLDEN BOLL FILM FESTIVAL 2019

★  
EN İYİ MÜZİK  
ÖDÜLÜ



FIPA  
DOC  
FESTIVAL  
INTERNATIONAL  
DOCUMENTAIRE



12th edition  
INTERNATIONAL  
HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL  
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world  
official selection  
2019



Göteborg  
Film Festival

DOK.  
fest  
MÜNCHEN  
06.-17. MAI  
2020



# QUEEN LEAR

directed by Pelin Esmer



# QUEEN LEAR

2019 | 84 minutes | feature documentary | color | 16:9 | 5.1 | Turkey





# QUEEN LEAR

Film Title **Kraliçe Lear / Queen Lear**

Written & Directed by **Pelin Esmer**

Producers **Pelin Esmer, Dilde Mahalli**

Co-producers

**Barış Bıçakçı, Eda Arıkan, Feride Çiçekoğlu**

Production Company **Sinefilm (TR)**

**Arslanköy Theatre Group**

**Behiye Yanık, Cennet Güneş,**

**Fatma Fatih, Ümmü Kurt,**

**Zeynep Fatih, Hüseyin Arslanköylü**

Editing **Pelin Esmer, Eren Aksu**

Camera **Morteza Atabaki, Pelin Esmer**

Sound Recording **Hüseyin Can Erol**

Sound Design&Mix **Kubilay Mustafa Tok**

Colorist **Murat Birken**

Music **Barış Diri**

## Participated in

San Sebastian Film Festival - **Glocal In Progress** (2018)

Istanbul Film Festival - **Meetings on the Bridge** (2019)

\* *Anadolu Efes Award* \* *Paz Digital Communication Award*

\* *Daire Creative Key Art Design Award*

## Festivals

25. Sarajevo Film Festival, Bosnia and Herzegovina

International Premiere

26. International Adana Golden Boll Film Festival, Turkey

\* *Yılmaz Güney Award* \* *Best Music Award*

\* *SİYAD "Cüneyt Cebenoyan" Best Film Award*

Başka Sinema Ayvalık Film Festival, Turkey

56. Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival, Turkey / Special Screening

8. International Zeugma Film Festival, Turkey

13. Sinemardin International Mardin Film Festival, Turkey

This Human World 12. Human Rights Film Festival, Austria

FIPADOC International Documentary Festival, France

43. Göteborg Film Festival, Sweden

DOKFEST München Film Festival, Germany

## Contact

**Dilde Mahalli**

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## World Sales

Sweet Spot Docs

Anna BERTHOLLET

anna@sweetspotdocs.com

## Official Sites





Shakespeare's *King Lear* travelling on the dusty and risky roads to the remotest forgotten villages in the mountains of Turkey where even drinking water can hardly reach, turns delicately into *Queen Lear* in the hands of a peasant-women theatre group.







## synopsis

In the early 2000s, a handful of peasant women from the mountains of southern Turkey formed a theater group, which later became the subject of the documentary, *The Play*. The women acted out their own life stories in the village, and the play changed their lives. Now, they take to the road with an adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, traveling the dusty, dangerous roads to the farthest-flung mountain villages where there isn't even running water. On the road, their lives merge with the world of *King Lear* and become bound up with "the good and the bad", "the young and the old", "the rich and the poor", "the honest and the dishonest" of the play.





## director's note

The very first instinctual temptation for making this film came from a very human need; **hope**. As a filmmaker to continue to tell stories despite all obstacles and to resist against unfair practices in my country and in the world by continuing to create, I need hope. Despite the actual social and political situation, hearing that there are some people over there insisting to take theatre and cinema to the highest mountains, to the remotest villages did bring me the hope I needed for a long time as an artist and a citizen.

All started when I heard about this exciting new project from Hüseyin Arslanköylü, the high school head master who wrote the play based on the women's lives years ago when I shot the film ***The Play*** and who is now the director of the Mersin City Theater. They picked around 30 small and remote villages with populations not bigger than 500. They marked on Google map remote mountain villages and plateaus with nomads' tents above 2.500 meters of altitude where even water, electricity or roads barely reach. They made up a troupe made of Behiye, Fatma, Zeynep, Cennet, Ümmü- 5 of the women from ***The Play*** - a few professional actors, a tea-maker and two drivers from the city theater. They would go to a village every day for a month and turn the village squares to a stage.

The schedule is a Karagöz-Hacivat shadow play for children, a theater play for the grown ups followed by the screening of my documentary ***The Play***. The play would be a traditional, local one from the region and I asked how about an adaptation from Sheakspeare as an addition? The artistic director of the group Ahmet said why not, let's do King Lear! This made me even more excited. He made such a fun adaptation that is reflecting on their own lives. I thought Sheakspeare would love that too! He would even be more excited to see the villagers participating in the play, villagers who barely have water or proper roads to their remote mountain villages. This is the magic of art I said and decided to follow this exciting tour of these peasant women theatre group and make a new film with them. To become aware of the existence of people who show the courage of saying to people *"you barely have water, we know you also need a decent road but today we brought you art, would you take it?"* and the excitement of realizing it, is the very hope that we crave for in this gloom.

The fact that I know these 5 women and Hüseyin very well since we worked together in ***The Play*** and our ongoing friendship since 14 years made it even more exciting for me to make this movie of course. They got aged, so did I. Life has left lots of traces on our faces, gestures, words, gazes, laughters, sighs, comments, beliefs... And these traces on our faces and souls always moved me to make cinema. So making a new film trying to understand life through these traces besides my wish to flourish the hope they gave me through this film are good reasons or better say impulsion to make this film.

Finally, having Shakespeare and his play King Lear on my side while trying to understand life on the basis of these great women, gives me additional energy and excitement. It's good to remember sometimes how universal, unifying and equalizing art can be and that something in life doesn't change for Shakespeare or for these women.

***Pelin Esmer***



# pelin esmer / biography

Pelin Esmer, writer & director of both fiction and documentary films, studied sociology and afterwards moved on to cinema. She established her film company Sinefilm and since 2001 she has made her independent films ***The Collector***, ***The Play***, ***10 to 11***, ***Watchtower***, ***Something Useful*** and ***Queen Lear***.

A feature documentary ***The Play*** made its international premier in San Sebastian Film Festival. It has been screened over 50 festivals around the world and received many awards including "The Best New Documentary Filmmaker Award" in Tribeca Film Festival. Her first fiction ***10 to 11*** was one of the six chosen projects by Cannes Film Festival's Résidence du Cinéfondation in Paris where she worked on her script.

An official selection of San Sebastian Film Festival, ***10 to 11*** received many awards in various festivals around the world and was released in cinemas in Turkey, France and Germany. Her second fiction ***Watchtower*** which premiered in Toronto and

[www.pelinesmer.com](http://www.pelinesmer.com)

## filmography

### 2019 "Kraliçe Lear" (Queen Lear)

documentary feature, 84' / writer, director, producer, co-editor

### 2017 "İşe Yarar Bir Şey" (Something Useful)

fiction feature, 104' / co-writer, director, producer, co-editor

### 2012 "Gözetleme Kulesi" (Watchtower)

fiction feature, 100' / writer, director, producer, co-editor

### 2009 "11e 10 Kala" (10 to 11)

fiction feature, 110' / writer, director, producer, editor

### 2005 "Oyun" (The Play)

feature documentary, 70' / writer, director, producer, camera, editor

### 2001 "Koleksiyoncu" (The Collector)

short documentary, 46' / writer, director, producer, camera

Rotterdam Film Festival has been screened in many countries and five different states of USA as part of the Caravanserai Program.

***Something Useful*** received the best screenplay award in Tallinn International Film Festival besides several FIPRESCI awards in Turkey: best director, best screenplay and best actress.

In 2018, Pelin Esmer was invited to Berlin by DAAD Artists-in-Residence Program where she developed her last documentary film ***Queen Lear***. Having premiered in Sarajevo Film Festival, *Queen Lear* received Yılmaz Güney Award and SİYAD Cüneyt Cebenoyan Award at Adana Golden Boll Film Festival in Turkey while being screened in oversea festivals.

Pelin Esmer was a guest artist in the residence of Camargo Foundation in Cassis-France between september-november 2019, working on her new project.





# dilde mahalli / biography

Born in 1984 in Istanbul, Dilde Mahalli graduated from Bahçeşehir University, Visual Communication Design Department in 2008. In 2011 she completed her master's degree at the Yıldız Technical University, Department of Art and Design. During her education she participated several group exhibitions and has made plenty of poster design for both theatre plays and films.

In 2012 she worked as an associate producer in Giyotin Film's second fiction feature **The Impeccables** which is directed by Ramin Matin. The film premiered at the Busan Film Festival and moved on to receive the prestigious Best Film and Best Director Awards at the Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival. In 2014, she worked as an associate producer and international sales representative for the feature film **Something Useful** which is directed by Pelin Esmer. The film received the best screenplay award in Tallinn International Film Festival besides FIPRESCI, best director, best screenplay, best actress awards in Turkey.

In 2018 Dilde Mahalli worked with Ali Aydın in **Chronology** who had won the "Lion of the Future Award" in Venice Film Festival with his debut film The Mold. She worked as an executive producer and also as the post-production supervisor. The film made it's World premiere in Busan FF (2019) and European Premiere in Warsaw FF this year.

In last years she worked as a producer in Pelin Esmer's new feature documentary **Queen Lear** which made it's world premiere in 25th Sarajevo Film Festival (2019). Currently she works in the development of Emine Yıldırım's debut feature **Apollon by Day Athena by Night**. Dilde Mahalli also works as a freelance graphic designer and a film programmer in "Yeni Sinema Hareketi" organisation where she works as the film coordinator.

## filmography

**2019 "Kraliçe Lear" (Queen Lear) dir: Pelin Esmer**  
documentary feature, 84' / producer

**2018 "Kronoloji" (Chronology) dir: Ali Aydın**  
fiction feature, 120' / executive producer

**2017 "İşe Yarar Bir Şey" (Something Useful) dir: Pelin Esmer**  
fiction feature, 104' / associate producer, international sales

**2013 "Kusursuzlar" (The Impeccables) dir: Ramin Matin**  
fiction feature, 95' / associate producer

**2013 "İçindeki Kimse" (Nobody) dir: Eren Gülbey**  
short documentary, 19' / production consultant

**2000 "Şile'de bir Fener" (A Lighthouse in Şile)**  
short documentary, 22' / writer, director, camera





Film stills and the poster  
can be downloaded from this link:

[shorturl.at/qEFO4](https://shorturl.at/qEFO4)

