

**Recension Nya filmer**

# Lucky one

## Lucky one är en magnifik filmupplevelse



Lorette Nyssen i "Lucky one".

**Det mjuka tonfallet i Mia Engbergs "Lucky one" står i bjärt kontrast till filmens hjärtskärande ämne om människohandel. Resultatet är helt unikt.**

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**Anna Hellsten**

Publicerad 2019-03-14

### **Lucky one**

Regi: Mia Engberg

Genre: Drama

Manus: Mia Engberg

Medverkande: Olivier Loustau, Lorette Nyssen, Diana Rudychenko, Bruno La Brasca

1 tim 29. Från 15 år.



När Mia Engbergs sällsamma "Belleville baby" fick en  
souldhase som bästa dokumentär för några år sedan var



gangbägge som bästa dokumentär för några år sedan var det en kategorisering som inte riktigt gjorde filmen rättvisa.

För visst fanns dokumentära inslag i berättelsen om Engberg, hennes före detta gangsterkille Vincent och deras kärlekshistoria i Paris, men filmen hade också en kraftfull konstnärlig grundton i såväl bildspråk som berättarstil, där all dialog utspelade sig via telefonsamtal och där ingen av huvudpersonerna syntes i bild. Så dokumentär, för all del, men i så fall är "Guernica" ett dokumentärfoto från spanska inbördeskriget.

**"Lucky one" kan beskrivas** som ett slags uppföljare, eller pendang. Händelseförloppet skissas återigen upp via telefonsamtal mellan Engberg och Vincent, men Engberg tonar ner sin egen plats och gör i stället Vincent till huvudperson. Hans vardag utspelar sig precis som sist på Paris skuggsida – han försörjer sig på att skjutsa runt prostituerade till deras torskar och att, om det behövs, slå folk på käften – men i en narrativ twist bjuder Engberg via suggestiva voiceovers in tittaren till att föreställa sig att hen själv är Vincent, och lägger dessutom till en tonårsdotter från ett tidigare förhållande i mixen. Adina heter hon, och eftersom hennes mamma är bortrest så faller det på Vincents lott att ta hand om henne, ett uppdrag som skär sig hårt mot det faktum att sexslavarna han transporterar runt stan bara är marginellt äldre än Adina.

Det må låta dramatiskt, men "Lucky one" är snarast elegant, en magnifikt klippt och fotograferad filmupplevelse vars mjuka tonfall står i bjärt kontrast till sitt hjärtskärande ämne om människohandel. Däremot har filmen inte en lika rik och välfungerande grundberättelse som föregångaren.

Storyn, med Adina å ena sidan och den ukrainska flickan som Vincent fattar en smula sympati för, är visserligen mycket uttryckligen konstruerad, men den leder till en del onödigt banala metaforer (som sidospåret om huruvida dotterns burhamster Lucky är lyckligare i sin bur än i friheten), och då och då kommer jag på mig med att längta efter det friare, mer vindlande handlaget från "Belleville baby".

Med det sagt: Mia Engberg är alltjämt helt unik bland svenska filmare. "Sevärd" må låta som ett fattigt omdöme, men "Lucky one" är just det, i ordets allra finaste bemärkelse.

**Anna Hellsten**

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## 0 kommentarer

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Filmrecensioner

# Filmrecension: "Lucky one" en svidande hård vuxensaga

PUBLICERAD 2019-03-14



**Bild 1 av 2** "Lucky one"  
Foto: Triart

**"Lucky one" följer upp Mia Engbergs poetiska minnesresa "Belleville baby". En lyrisk thriller om våld, svek och kärlek inifrån Europas mörka hjärta, skriver Helena Lindblad.**

Läs senare

4.

**DRAMA**

**"Lucky one"**

**Regi, manus: Mia Engberg**

I rollerna: Olivier Loustau, Lorette Nyssen, Diana Rudychenko, Bruno La Brasca. Längd: 1 timme, 16 minuter (från 11 år). Språk: svenska, franska.

"Ett barn. En bödel. En hora." Det är filmaren och forskaren Mia Engbergs nya verk "Lucky one" i ett koncentrat. I alla fall förklarar hennes berättarröst det. Rösten säger också förklarande: "En gång var du ung och älskad, obefläckad av det som skulle hända... Det var jag som älskade dig."

Duet är en medelålders fransman man vid namn Vincent. Jaget är Engberg. Orden är en brygga mellan två filmiska världar med sex års mellanrum.

**Vincent var huvudperson** redan i "Belleville baby" från 2013, en av mina stora, svenska favoritfilmer på senare år. Det är en autofiktiv hybridfilm, en dokumentär som sprängde sig ur genrens ramar på ett smått oförlömligt sätt. Ett poetiskt, experimentellt och personligt verk som formade sig till en resa som delvis utspelade sig per telefon, till minnet av en stor men komplicerad ungdomskärlek.

Engberg skildrade en passionerad relation som tog sin plats i Belleville innan gentrifieringen städade bort det mest ruffa och multikulturella i den parisiska stadsdelen. Men också parets skilda världar, och skarpa uppbrott.

I "Lucky one" dyker en nu sliten Vincent upp igen. Han är fortfarande bara en röst, men hans värld är hårdare och mer skoningslös än tidigare. Mia Engberg leker den här gången med dokumentärergenrens mest återkommande frågor (i alla fall hos publiken): "Vad hände sedan?" Hon iscensätter helt enkelt ett slags svar på "Belleville baby" fast denna gång ännu mer av ett rent fiktivt drama.

Den före detta fängelsekunden Vincent har passerat igenom den undre världens hierarkier. Han har gått från våldsam skuldindrivare hos den italienska maffian till utbränd och utrangerad chaufför åt sexslavar från öst som säljs till kunder på de stora lyxhotellen vid Jardin des Tuileries. En ung flicka från Ukraina vädjar om hans hjälp.



"Lucky one". Foto: Triart

**Men Vincent har också en dotter**, en övergiven 14-åring med en liten gulddamster som heter Lucky. Mitt i alltihop måste han plötsligt ta ansvar för någon annan. Har han kvar ett hjärta, ändå?



"Lucky one" vidareutvecklar och förädlar det filmiska förhållningssätt som Engberg kallar för "den visuella tystnaden" där människor och handlingar översätts till ett mörker eller symbolladdade bilder.

Vincent är framför allt sin blick. Han är insidan av en bil där regnet piskar en nattmörk vindruta. Han är väggarna i en anonym hotellkorridor med förgyllda dekorationer. Han är de tomma Parisgatorna i ett kallt gryningsljus. Han är offer och gärningsman, kärlek och svek, hopp och förtvivlan. Allt på samma gång.

"Lucky one" börjar som en tankelek, en svidande saga för vuxna från Europas mörka hjärta. Sedan utvecklas den efter hand och blir alltmer storydriven. Den formar sig till en lika driven som lyrisk thriller med basen i traffickingens helvete. Teman som socialt arv, personligt ansvar och moraliska ställningstaganden pulserar under ytan. Ett fritt, egensinnigt och väldigt vackert sätt att göra film som engagerar på alla plan.

Se mer. Tre andra genreöverskridande, personliga filmer: Anna Odells ["Återträffen"](#) (2013), Sara Broos ["Speglingar"](#) (2016), Sophie Vukovics ["Shapeshifters"](#) (2017).

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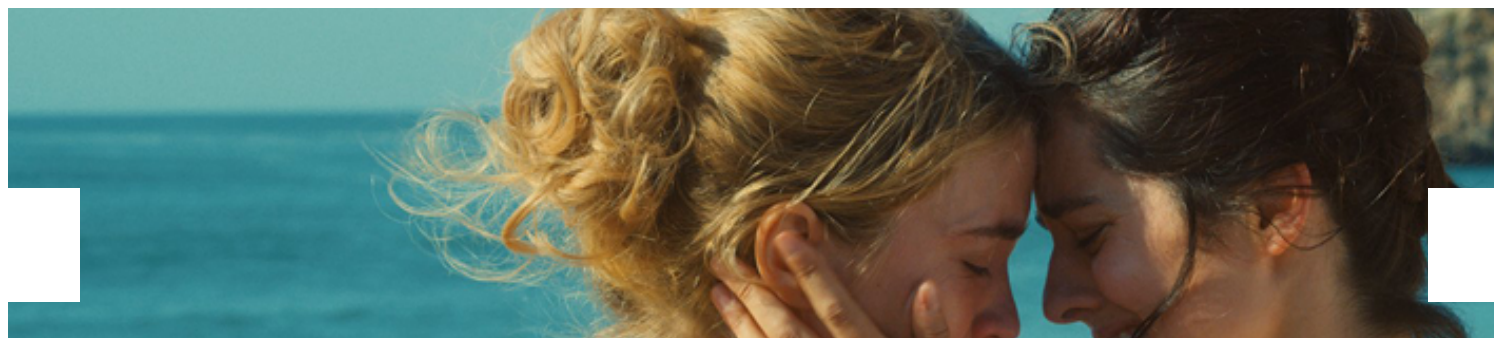


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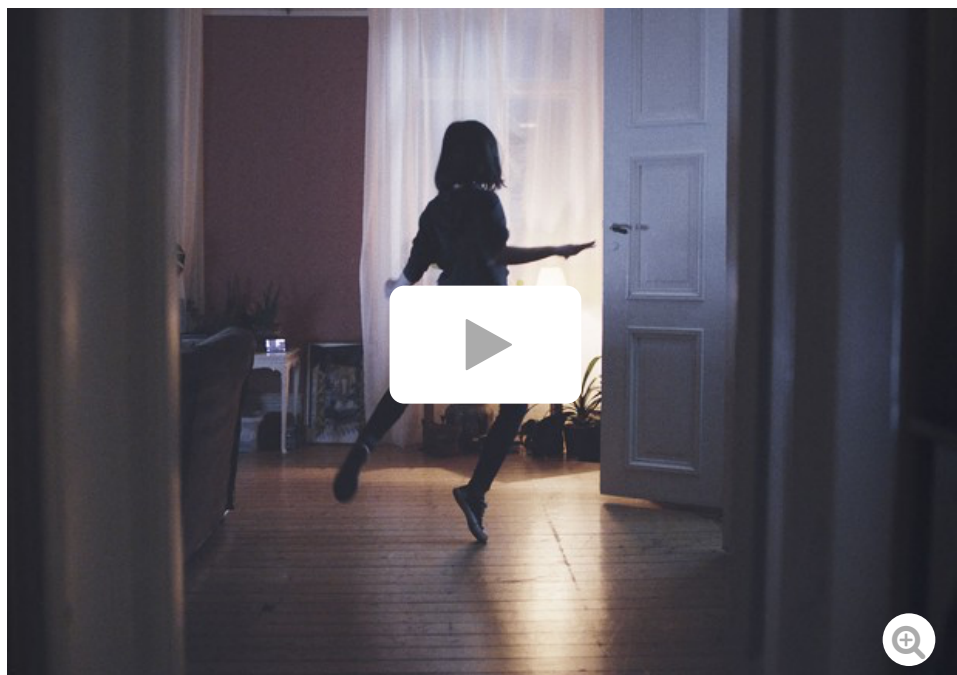
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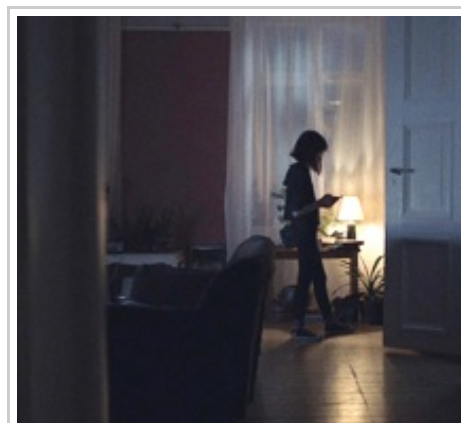
## GÖTEBORG 2019 Review: *Lucky One*

by JAN LUMHOLDT

30/01/2019 - Mia Engberg's intriguing new feature is an experiment in crime, darkness, light and love



"Imagine... You're in a dark, quiet room, alone... You hear your



2 of 2

### trailers & videos

|                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| international title: | Lucky One   |
| original title:      | Lucky One   |
| country:             | Sweden      |
| year:                | 2019        |
| directed by:         | Mia Engberg |
| screenplay:          | Mia Engberg |
| cast:                | Olivier     |

respiration. When I count to three, you will let go of all things outside. You are not afraid, not alone... You are loved... by me."

**Mia Engberg's** voiceover, whether in mellow-toned Swedish or endearingly accented French, is comfortingly familiar in *Lucky One* [+], which has just world-premiered at the Göteborg Film Festival, where it is competing for the Dragon Award for Best Nordic Film. Her voice was last heard six years ago in *Belleville Baby* [+], a poetic account of a reunion between two former lovers, occurring entirely over the telephone or via diary readings, and visualised through footage shot on 8 and 16 mm, and a mobile-phone camera. "*Baby*" (named after a cat) travelled various festivals and picked up awards – often, somewhat curiously, for Best Documentary. This experimental mood piece shared its stylistic DNA with French "Left Bank" New Wave cinema, and names like Chris Marker and Marguerite Duras. The flexible label of "essay film" might have fitted it better, or – why not – Duras' oft-preferred genre, the "autofiction".

*(The article continues below - Commercial information)*

This time around, director-writer-narrator-protagonist Engberg presents her first fiction feature, again with a hint of a "perhaps". *Lucky One* (named after a hamster!) reunites the couple, Swedish woman Mia and Frenchman Vincent, again over the phone. She's preparing a story, and he, unable to escape his criminal life, works as a driver and stooge for a Paris gangster. She outlines her scenario ("Is the story about me?" he asks and is told, "Yes, maybe."), and suggests that he helps her out. He is "allotted" two young female characters of similar age but finding themselves in vastly different circumstances: a teenage daughter to look after while the mother is abroad; and a freshly arrived, actually trafficked, Ukrainian woman, bound for the gangster's stable of prostitutes. Assorted dilemmas soon emerge, including some deeply moral ones, as the phone-conversation story plays out in front of our eyes.

Engberg the Francophile lovingly explores the cultural and local environment with Engberg the Progressive Formalist close in tow. Her Paris is not so much that of the picture postcards as that of the ruggedness of Mathieu Kassovitz's *La haine* or a moody 1950s French crime film. **Daniel Takács'** dreamy images and **Michel Wenzer's** delicate, jazzy score sensuously underscore the vibe, as does the fact that more or less the whole film takes place after sunset.

The stylistic choices also affect the framing: the camera closes in on a building from which dialogue is heard, but rather than cutting to the characters conversing, the setting remains on the outside façade. The actors get few long shots, a medium shot or two, and no close-ups. There are quite a few shots of empty rooms, of windows and of the sky. Sometimes, the screen is dark.

Engberg's experimentalism is neither obscure nor demanding to sit through – quite the exact opposite, in fact. Gently guided by her affirmative voiceover, we, like Vincent, are soon captivated for the rest of the ride. Plus, it features **Gabriel Fauré's** "Pie Jesu", gloriously and literally illuminating the screen with impressionistic tones. In such sublime

Loustau,  
Lorette  
Nyssen,  
Diana  
Rudychenko,  
Bruno La  
Brasca

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## INTERVIEW WITH MIA ENGBERG



WINNER OF THE 2019 AUDENTIA  
AWARD FOR “LUCKY ONE”

AUGUST 2019

BY KARIN SCHIEFER

LET'S IMAGINE A SCREENING OF “LUCKY ONE” IN A THEATRE: THE SPECTATOR IS SITTING IN A DARK ROOM AND IS INTRODUCED TO YOUR STORY BY MEANS OF A BLACK SCREEN. “LUCKY ONE” BEGINS WITH A TEXT AS VOICE-OVER, AND THE STORY ITSELF ONLY BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE IN OUR MINDS AND IMAGINATION. I'D SAY IT'S A SORT OF LITERARY ACCESS TO A CINEMATIC STORY. WHAT WERE THE THOUGHTS THAT PROMPTED YOU TO ADOPT THIS MULTILAYERED FORM OF STORYTELLING?

I am interested in cinema as an art form. However these days most cinema is made within the entertainment industry. The spectator is supposed to be fed with stereotypes of characters and a flow of images. I started to make films 25 years ago. At that time film was considered something big, something that could definitely change your life. Now we are overstimulated by such a huge quantity of moving images that the audience sometimes almost becomes numb. I notice increasing violence and also an increasing volume level for the soundtrack. In my filmmaking I wish to create a different relationship between my work and the spectator. I want the dark room of the cinema to liberate the audience from this passive position, allowing people to create their own images inside them-

selves, as we're used to doing with literature or music. In my films there is enough space for you to insert your own images. A film of mine can become a hundred different films, depending on who is watching it.

AT THE START OF “LUCKY ONE” THE VIEWER IS CONFRONTED BY SWEDISH, FRENCH, UKRAINIAN AND ITALIAN. IT IS PRETTY DESTABILISING TO BE SENT IN SO MANY DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. BUT AS THE FILM MOVES AHEAD, THE LANGUAGE, WHICH SEEMED TO BE A CONFUSING ELEMENT AT THE BEGINNING, BECOMES THE GUIDING FORCE. THERE'S ONE LANGUAGE LINKED TO MEMORIES, ANOTHER TO THE PRESENT. IS LANGUAGE IN GENERAL THE DETERMINING FACTOR IN YOUR FILMMAKING?

No, I wouldn't say that. My previous film, “Belleville Baby”, is only in French and Swedish, and as far as I remember the previous films only featured one language depending whether I made them in the USA, France or Sweden. In “Lucky One” I wanted to challenge not only the spectator but also the conventions of cinematic language to find out how far I could go and still maintain momentum in a story that can be followed. I didn't want to use very many images; I wanted it to be rich in another way – so that every



"Lucky One"

language has its own colour – and I wanted to apply this pattern with different languages. As a Swede I'm very accustomed to watching films with subtitles. For someone who doesn't know any of the languages used in my film, it's certainly more challenging.

**WE CAN HEAR YOUR OWN VOICE SPEAKING SWEDISH AND FRENCH ON THE PHONE WITH VINCENT, YOUR MALE PROTAGONIST IN THE ROLE OF YOUR FORMER BOYFRIEND. ARE THERE CERTAIN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS IN THE STORY?**

I'm working on a trilogy. The first film, "Belleville Baby", is about me and Vincent, who actually used to be my boyfriend when we were young. I'd say that first part is more of a poetic documentary. You don't have to know that to watch "Lucky One". "Belleville Baby" is somehow based on reality, while "Lucky One" is much more of a fiction.

**YOU'RE PLAYING A DOUBLE ROLE: ON THE ONE HAND YOU'RE MIA THE PRIVATE PERSON AND VINCENT'S FORMER GIRLFRIEND, WHILE ON THE OTHER HAND YOU ACT THE PART OF A FILMMAKER WHO STILL WANTS TO FIND AN APPROPRIATE RESOLUTION TO THE STORY. THIS MEANS THERE'S ALSO A FILM WITHIN THE FILM ABOUT FILMMAKING?**

Exactly. At certain moments in the film Vincent also questions me: he thinks I was using clichés, trying to turn him into a good guy by giving him a daughter. He tells me that wouldn't work. In a way Vincent represents me questioning myself as a filmmaker. Vincent is played by an actor and all the dialogues are written and rehearsed, but they are still taken from real life. I'm sure every story captures something from real life, even though it's not exactly real life.

**IN "LUCKY ONE" YOU ALTERNATE FILMED SEQUENCES AND BLACK IMAGES, CONSEQUENTLY PLAYING WITH THE VISIBLE AND THE INVISIBLE. THE SPECTATOR CAN SEE THE DAUGHTER AND THE PROSTITUTE BUT CAN'T SEE VINCENT OR YOU/THE NARRATOR. WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO SHOW THE SECONDARY CHARACTERS BUT NOT THE PROTAGONISTS?**

I wanted to maintain tension for the spectator, who keeps wondering whether the protagonists will become visible at some moment in the film. We actually did shoot the sequences with Vincent and his daughter but, in the course of the editing process, I gradually removed all those images. Sometimes I think my mission in life is to make films that no one else does. I wanted my film to be this space where you can fill in your own images but where you also can be Vincent. You never see him, but you see the city through his eyes as he drives the car through Paris. We have his gaze on the world. I didn't want to break this perspective by showing him on the screen. I also think it would be too simple for the spectator to judge him, since he is a gangster and doing things that are illegal. I wanted the spectator to be him too, just as we are all victims and perpetrators at the same time. I didn't want it to be too easy to separate ourselves from him and from the story. Since I was writing, directing and also editing the film, I was interested in myself as the narrative voice talking directly to the audience: you listen to my voice, imagine something. That was an interesting thing to play with.

**"LUCKY ONE" REFERS TO THE GIRL'S HAMSTER THAT IS LIVING IN A CAGE – IT MIGHT BE FREED, IT MIGHT BE KILLED. VINCENT WAS IN JAIL BEFORE AND HE'S STILL A PRISONER OF HIMSELF, OF HIS WAY TO MAKE MONEY BY WORKING FOR THE MAFIA. WE NEVER SEE THEM BUT VERY OBVIOUSLY HE IS DEALING WITH**



"Lucky One"



**WOMEN SEX WORKERS – A FORM OF MODERN SLAVERY. THE HAMSTER SEEMS TO BE A SYMBOL OF WHAT THE FILM IS ABOUT – LIFE IN PRISON OR AT LIBERTY.**

Definitely. On a deeper level this film is about liberation. Are we free? Is freedom just an illusion or does the possibility of liberation exist? Vincent is imprisoned in his own life, in his car, in his job. The film is a tentative attempt to liberate him. And I think there's something strange about all those pets we keep. My daughter had two little mice in a cage and I felt so sorry for them. Even though their names are Happy and Lucky, I'd say they were pretty unlucky. In our civilised world I think we all long for liberation. We are working and working, consuming and consuming, running in a wheel. The little hamster was a symbol not only of Vincent but also of ourselves. The only one who is free in the film is the child. In the end, the daughter walks away into some kind of future even though her father tried to keep her under control. He is from Sicily and has very traditional values. As for manhood and masculinity, I think nowadays many men are imprisoned in an old-fashioned patriarchal trap. They should escape. Toxic masculinity is also a prison and the mafia Vincent is working for is a good example.



Mia Engberg © Carla Orrego Veliz

**SINCE YOUR NARRATIVE FORM HAS SOMETHING OF A COMPOSITIONAL APPROACH, I SUPPOSE THE EDITING PROCESS IS A VERY CRUCIAL PHASE, IF NOT EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE SHOOTING ITSELF. WHAT WERE THE QUESTIONS YOU WERE ASKING YOURSELF DURING EDITING?**

For me the editing process is a kind of writing process. We did the shooting in several steps so I could collect a certain amount of material, edit it, get back to shooting and then edit again. I think this method is closely

linked to my background as a documentary filmmaker. I don't feel comfortable with a shooting period of ten weeks during which everything has to be done. I prefer a long process of writing, shooting, editing, writing, shooting, editing. Sometimes I experience the editing room as a prison, especially when you are in the middle of the process and you still don't see the way out. And I'm inventing a genre, which means I don't have any rules to follow: I have to invent what I'm doing. It was very long. The first period alternating shooting and editing took a year, and then we edited for another year. In the end I had an editor to help me finish, since I'd become so tired. My working method doesn't conform to the standards of the film industry. I'd rather describe my way of working as one of an author or an artist. I feel very close to the work of Chantal Akerman.

**EDITING "LUCKY ONE" CERTAINLY MEANT INTENSE WORK ON THE SOUND AS WELL. HOW DID YOU DEAL WITH THIS ACOUSTIC LAYER?**

That was very much the case. I worked with the composer Michel Wenzer, who created the music at a very early stage of the film, since the rhythm is so important. I had music very early on to colour the scenes in a way.

The song the daughter is singing at the end is from a requiem by Gabriel Fauré, a very beautiful piece for a choir. I asked the composer to make music that had the same harmony and conveyed the same feeling. Old and new music walk hand in hand.

**YOU RECENTLY WON THE AUDENTIA AWARD FOR "LUCKY ONE". CONGRATULATIONS! WHEN I TALK TO FILMMAKERS WHO HAVE BEEN AWARDED THIS DISTINCTION BY EURIMAGES, I ALWAYS WONDER WHAT SORT OF AUDACITY THE FILMMAKERS FEEL THEY HAVE SHOWN. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO THAT QUESTION?**

In my view "audentia" has something to do with being brave. And to be honest, "Lucky One" was a very brave achievement. It's a film that doesn't look like anything else. Many people I had to deal with on my journey – financiers, distributors, etc. – found it too strange. I'm happy I was brave enough to stick to my idea and to finish it. It is not a film for everyone, but I think it will be remembered as unique. The prize meant a lot to me. There's the money of course, but also the honour and the recognition that I have created a challenging piece of work – and so soon after the film was released.