



'Trans X Istanbul' = humour + hope

Wolfgang Spindler – Euronews

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A new [documentary 'Trans X Istanbul'](#) documents the lives of transgender people in Turkey, where attitudes are very conservative. Trans-gender people find it almost impossible to find a job in Turkey, and attacks on them, even fatal ones, are not generally investigated by police.



[Maria Binder](#), who wrote and directed 'Trans X Istanbul', got a special mention from the Human Rights in Cinema jury, at the Istanbul [Film festival](#). Binder outlined the thinking behind the movie: "We wanted to film a sort of study, a cinematic analysis of how hate speech can turn into criminal acts which can go as far as murder. Over nine months we followed events which led, in the end to a murder of a transgender woman. That was horrible for us. Theoretically we knew this type of thing happens, but it was beyond our imagination and we didn't expect it to happen."

In Turkey being LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender) is widely considered to be an illness, and the judicial system does not protect these people from attacks, let alone discrimination.

Maria Binder told our cultural correspondent Wolfgang Spindler that did not want to portray LGBT people as victims however. "I wanted the film to be about people who take the reins of their own lives. The theme of my film is insane, tough and evil but I wanted to tell the story with humour, and I hope that you can see that all through the film. It was amazing, when the film was shown here at the Istanbul Film Festival, there was a lot of laughter, although the theme is so difficult."

Maria Binder has already made documentaries about the issue of human rights, racism, and gender equality. For her, making a film is a way of giving people a voice: "Making this film was a huge project involving Turkish LGBT organisations, and a whole programme of workshops. It's about exploring how minority groups can work with the media so as to tell their own stories and give an inside view of the problem. We are also taking the movie on tour through 8 cities across Turkey. So in a way all this is human rights work. It's not only about showing a film, is a very complex project." 'Trans X Istanbul' was well as being shown at the Istanbul Film Festival is available to watch online as VOD.

Trans X Istanbul - www.transxistanbul.com - info@transxistanbul.com