



L J U B O M I R S T A N I Š I Ć

HEARTBEAT

An aerial, high-angle shot of a vast olive grove. The trees are arranged in neat, parallel rows, creating a strong sense of perspective. The foliage is a muted, silvery-green color. In the lower center of the frame, a small figure of a person wearing a dark jacket and pants is walking along one of the paths between the rows of trees. The overall atmosphere is quiet and contemplative.

Mónica Franco · Portugal · 2021 · 140 min.
Portuguese and Bosnian with English Subtitles · DCP · Color · 16:9.

**Once a Yugoslavian refugee, now a renowned chef, Ljubomir Stanišić:
a man who escaped from war and discovered success through hard work.**



SYNOPSIS

From a one-Michelin-star restaurant in Lisbon to a basketball court in Sarajevo, an emigrant that escaped from a recent war is portrayed in his many facets.

How cooking became his “American-dream” and led him to success, but also how he deals with his worst nightmares.

We enter inside the universe of his kitchen but specially inside an unstoppable mind and a passionate adventurer.

A young child with bangs is sitting on a brown leather couch, looking directly at the camera. The child is wearing a light blue button-down shirt. The background is a warm, slightly blurred indoor setting.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

After more than 20 years in newsrooms and four books edited, I felt the urge of telling stories without using my main tool. I needed to get out of my comfort area – the written story – and discover different ways to say the same things.

I strongly believe on people's ability to reinvent themselves. I believe in the power of dreams, the strength of hope and in the magic of hard-work. And that is what my first documentary-film, "Ljubomir Stanišić: Heartbeat", is about. It was the challenge of a lifetime: to document my partner for 12 years life story with truth and love, but always trying to look clearly, from the "outside". I wanted to look at him intimately but also from an observer point of view. Trying to be almost invisible and, at the same time, totally present. It was a struggle but also a privilege, having a personal relation with the man, the partner, the father. With everything he does, everything he thinks, his sorrows and his achievements.

We were shooting for ten years. We see him growing right in front of our eyes, we walk his paths, understand his evolution as a man, as a cook, as a public-figure. At some point, it seemed too long, but this became this film's greatest strength.



BIO

Mónica Franco (1974, Lisbon). With a degree in Art History, courses in Journalistic and Creative Writing, she post-graduated in Documentary Directing in 2005.

She was 20 years in newsrooms and wrote four books. In 2012 she won the International Academy of Gastronomy and the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards for her first book “Papa-Quilómetros”.

In 2021 she premiered her first documentary feature, “Ljubomir Stanišić: Heartbeat”, at Porto/Post/Doc.

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