

Blue Frenzy

SHORT FILM



GATTON
FILMS



LOGLINE

A second generation immigrant fights against a faceless bureaucratic system to prove her right to stay in the country of birth when her immigration status comes under question following a new law.

Genre: Magical Realism

Duration: 15 mins

Script: Anya Zraykat, Anna Ivannikova - Esther

Director: Ana Sarukhanova

Materials: Script

Producer: Guy Taylor

Cinematographer: Samira Oberberg



SYNOPSIS

Eva, a passionate and ambitious gardener, dreams of showcasing a rare, flower to advance her career and social standing but her world begins to unravel when the flower is nearly destroyed, triggering a severe panic attack.

Advised to rest and prescribed tranquillisers, Eva's fragile state is further strained when she discovers her insurance has lapsed. After hanging endlessly on the line to fix this she falls asleep in front of the TV as reports begin to come in about a new immigration law.

The next day, Eva starts her day as usual, only to discover upon arriving at her workplace that she is fired, her bank accounts are frozen, and she is no longer legal in the country. Friends turn away, and an unopened letter reveals she had unknowingly lost her immigration status. What follows is a Kafkaesque ordeal of bureaucratic mazes, endless queues, and futile attempts to prove her right to stay.

In the end, Eva is forced to leave, finding new hope and opportunities for herself and her flower in another land. As she leaves, a letter regarding the decision on her case arrives at her now-abandoned address.



PROTAGANIST

Eva is successful in her niche. She has dreams, aspirations and plans for her future.

She is comfortable in her life and her days are ordinary, she goes to work, watches the news, has arguments with the neighbour.

She is at the centre of her life and her foreignness is invisible until one day the rug is pulled from under her. Her bank card stops working as well as her health insurance, she gets fired from her work and suddenly has to prove that her presence in the country of her birth is legal. This points to the fragile status that immigrants have in society.



BACKGROUND

Over the past 20 years, the UK has significantly tightened its immigration laws, making it increasingly difficult to settle in the country. Following Brexit, the end of free movement for EU citizens further restricted access. These changes have not only impacted first-generation immigrants but have also created challenges for second-generation immigrants, particularly those born abroad or in limbo due to complex residency rules. Many fall through the cracks, facing difficulties with documentation, citizenship claims, and legal status, despite having lived most of their lives in the UK. This leaves them vulnerable to economic hardship, social exclusion, and even the threat of deportation.

These challenges draw troubling parallels to the Windrush generation cases. The Windrush scandal exposed how individuals who had lived and contributed to the UK for decades were wrongfully detained, denied services, or even deported due to missing documentation, despite their legal right to remain. Similarly, children born in the UK to unsettled EU citizens, who assumed their residency rights were automatic, may unknowingly leave their children without proper legal status. The inflexibility and rigidity of the immigration system means that those who fall through the cracks have to face lengthy and expensive legal battles to prove their right to remain without any guarantee of success.



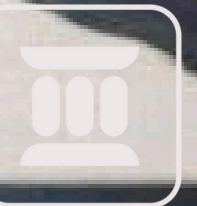
THE IDEA

As someone who have been through the British immigration system myself and having experiences its issues first hand I feel this is an important story to tell. I have been involved in a legal case for more than 2 years when I had to appeal against a mistake that was made in processing my immigration application spending thousands of pounds in legal fees on the appeal and having my civilian liberties severely limited. I wasn't able to travel and no one would employ me with a questionable status. I was in a grey area. I have often imagined myself in Kafka's Trial where the main character K has to exist and battle the impossible bureaucratic structures.

Since then I became very aware of similar cases like my own regularly coming across them in the news and hearing stories from friends. Some news like the Windrush Scandal broke out on massive scale, which proved that the issues are very much systemic rather than individual. Recent Brexit and new settlements laws, plans to move people to Rwanda and the ever continuing changes add to the complexity and surrealism of the situation. The Brexit vote has also showed the general attitude towards immigrants. Before my own experience I have been completely oblivious to the difficulties immigrants face as a lot of people often are who have not experienced the hardships.

The story we are telling in the film is surrealist yet with many parallels in the real world which I feel many people with similar experiences will recognise, whilst others will hopefully get a glimpse and understanding of what it may feel like to be in this position.

Anya Zraykat, writer/lead actor



MEET THE TEAM

We are a majority female led team of film professionals with lived immigration experience



Anya Zraykat

IDEA / WRITER
LEAD ACTOR

Experienced stage and screen actor, arts professional and producer based in London. She has worked in theatres across the UK as well as acted in films, produced international creative projects and works with the Female Film Club.

Ana Sarukhanova

DIRECTOR

Ana is a film director whose films have been shown at Locarno Film Festival, Sarajevo Film Festival and various TV channels. She took part in Berlinale Talents in 2018 and has directed shorts, feature films and documentaries.

Samira Oberberg

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Samira is an award winning cinematographer whose work has been BIFA nominated and screened at numerous international film festivals. She is a member of BAFTA Connect as well as Illuminatrix Rising, a collective of female cinematographers.

Guy Taylor

PRODUCER

Guy Taylor made the shift from engineer to filmmaker when he created Gatton Films in 2020, which has since become an internationally award winning production company with selections at both BAFTA and BIFA qualifying festivals

Anna Ivannikova-Esther

WRITER
CREATIVE PRODUCER

Anna is a writer and producer based in Berlin with an international career spanning over 10 years including experience in the complete production cycle.



SIMILAR FILMS

As part of our pitch, we've included a list of titles of individual's struggle and alienation in an impersonal bureaucratic world.



Problemista (2023)



On Falling (2024)



The Trial (1962)



The Terminal (2004)



Brazil (1985)



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

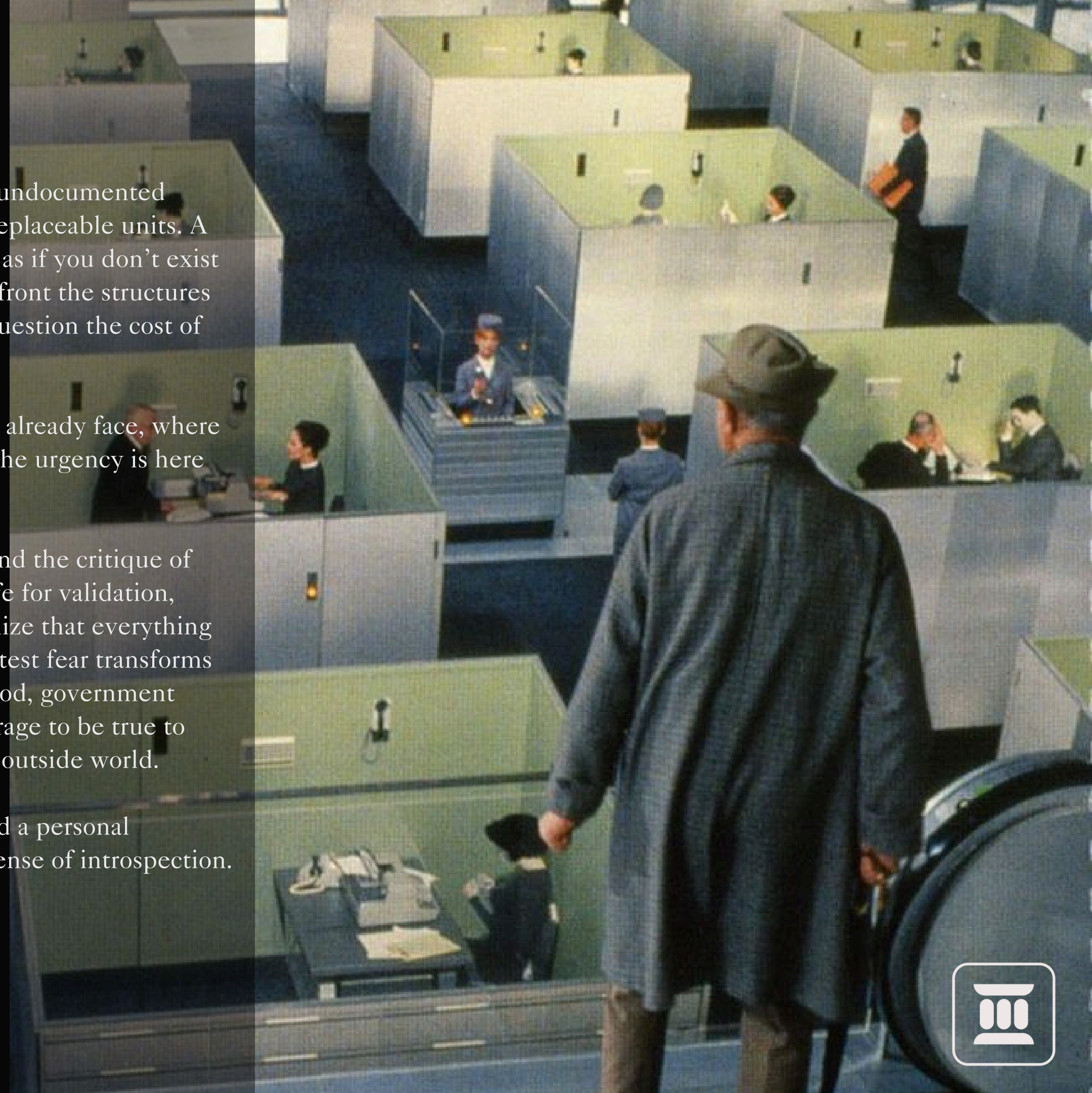
The film is not just a story of someone who suddenly becomes an undocumented migrant—it's about people trapped in a system that sees them as replaceable units. A single piece of paper, a passport, makes you visible; without it, it's as if you don't exist at all. Through this narrative, I want to challenge audiences to confront the structures that shape our lives, to feel their impact on our humanity, and to question the cost of losing oneself within them.

This isn't a distant dystopia—it's a reflection of the absurdities we already face, where modern laws increasingly resemble the pages of Kafka or Gogol. The urgency is here and now.

Yet, at the heart of this story lies something deeply personal. Beyond the critique of systems, there is an inner journey. It's about striving your entire life for validation, working tirelessly to bring your creations into the light, only to realize that everything you sought has always been within you. In that moment, your greatest fear transforms into your greatest strength. This isn't a simple tale of "migrants good, government bad." It's an existential exploration of self-acceptance and the courage to be true to yourself, no matter the constraints or expectations imposed by the outside world.

Through this film, I hope to evoke both a collective awakening and a personal resonance, leaving viewers with questions, emotions, and a deep sense of introspection.

Ana Sarukhanova, director



VISUAL APPROACH

The film operates at the intersection of social critique, satire, and personal drama, making a clear point-of-view essential to its storytelling. The camera becomes an extension of the protagonist, moving with her and immersing the audience in her emotions and experiences. This dynamic perspective is balanced by moments of stillness, creating a synergy between fluid, handheld shots and carefully composed, static frames that ground the narrative in moments of introspection.

A key element of the visual approach is the seamless transition between reality and unreality. The protagonist's dreams and moments of magical realism are interwoven into the narrative so subtly that the boundaries between truth and illusion blur. These transitions feel like entering a dream—fluid, ambiguous, and disorienting. The intention is to evoke a world where reality and imagination coexist, leaving the viewer questioning what is real, much like the protagonist herself. These moments of magical realism reflect her internal struggles, allowing the film to delve deeper into her psyche.

The third layer of the visual approach focuses on portraying the system as a hyperbolic, almost surreal entity. Production design and locations play a critical role in amplifying this. Endless corridors and towering staircases emphasize the system's overwhelming and impersonal nature, while excessively narrow, claustrophobic spaces convey its suffocating control. This exaggerated environment mirrors the absurdity of the system, creating a visual metaphor for its dehumanizing impact on individuals.

The overall style is designed to draw the audience into the protagonist's emotional and psychological journey while also offering a critique of the broader systems that shape and constrain her world.

Ana Sarukhanova, director





Some of the main metaphors and themes in the film include:

Gardening / Growing / Establishing roots

Natural versus the systemic & bureaucratic

“Blues”, anxiety and mental health

Immigration and belonging in a streamlined & interconnected yet extremely impersonal contemporary world



THEMES



PRODUCTION & AUDIENCE

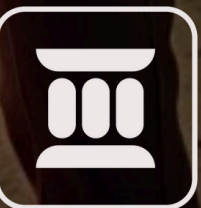
The projected budget for this short film is £30 000 and we aim to shoot in Spring 2026. The film will be produced by Gatton Films Ltd who have already guaranteed £6000 towards the funding. We have applied to a number of funds and are open to having discussions with interested organisations and investors who wish to support the film.

Anya and Guy have previously worked together on the short film *Greensleeves Inc.* which won VMI's Sustainable Film Competition. For *Blue Frenzy* we are aiming to implement green practices including non-use of non-reusable plastic, maximisation of renting of costumes and equipment, vegetarian chef and no plastic containers as well as using minimal amount of locations to reduce travel as well as encouraging the team to use public transport.

Once the shoot is complete we have identified a short list of distributors who work with short films who we are planning to contact as well as a PR company.

We aim to share the *Blue Frenzy* story with audiences in the UK and abroad. We believe the story will resonate universally, reflecting the relevance of its themes in today's increasingly interconnected world, yet divided due to political upheavals which force people to migrate and face various unfamiliar immigration structures and laws with many structures devoid of human touch operated by systems and machines.

We are aiming to show the film at leading international film festivals including Berlinale, Talinn Black Nights, Sundance as well as UK festivals like Aesthetica and Leeds International Film Festival as well as events organised by female led organisations such as Shorties or Female Film Club.



BUDGET OVERVIEW

The overview of the budget is allocated as follows:

ABOVE THE LINE

Story and Script	£800
Director	£800
Producer	£800

BELOW THE LINE

Cast	£ 3,490	Hair and make up	£ 560
Production	£ 1,680	Locations	£ 2,900
Assistant Directors	£ 2,240	Travel and transport	£ 350
Camera	£ 5,130	Post picture (incl. VFX)	£ 1,500
Lighting	£ 3,400	Post sound	£ 300
Sound	£ 1,060	Music	£ 250
Production Design	£ 1,120	Publicity	£ 1,600
Costume	£ 1,060		

OTHER

Insurance	£600
Contingency (5%)*	£1,482

TOTAL £29,640



*Any left over budget from the contingency will put into further festival submissions and publicity.



FUTURE PLANS: FEATURE FILM

We believe the *Blue Frenzy* story deserves to be developed into a feature film and seen by a larger audience. Whilst developing the short film script we came up with a number of story lines and ways to develop and portray the psychology of the main character based on personal immigration experience and experiences of people we know.

Through our research we discovered that such cases are not rare and it seems that the short film is only a beginning to get a glimpse into the reality of Eva. A feature film would allow us to unravel a much larger story about modern realities, relationship between politics and man, and the position of an individual within a larger system. Our plan for the feature film focuses on portraying in further detail how Eva's situation reflects on her relationships with those around her.

Status is an important part of an individual's standing in society and we are interested to explore how the society reacts when our main character loses it.

Will it remain indifferent or become compassionate? We are hoping to find an answer through the development of the feature film script.

Following the examples of similar films we presented earlier in this deck we have confidence there is an interest and potential in this type of story as a full length feature film. We have already started developing the script further with the potential to turn it into a feature film.



THANK YOU
FOR YOUR INTEREST

PLEASE
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