

DARIA PETROZHYTSKA

RICCARDA RICHTER

OLEKSANDR MELNIKOV

A MILLION YARD STARE

A mother longs to see his smile when war robs him of his childhood.

A Million Yard Stare

A RAVI GAUTAM FILM

WEBFILMLAND PRODUCTIONS in association with TRÄUMER, TÄNZER & ARTISTEN E.V.

Starring: DARIA PETROZHYTSKA, RICCARDA RICHTER, OLEKSANDR MELNIKOV, REBECCA LARA MÜLLER, PAVLO KRUSHNOV STEVEN GÄNGE, IRYNA DAS. Screenplay - RAVI GAUTAM, PEPINO PUSHPANI & ANNIKA SCHIMETZEK. Directed by - RAVI GAUTAM. Music: VIKTORIA LELEKA & TABEA ZIMMERMANN, Sound Design: SURYA KARN GUPTA. Cinematographer: PEPINO PUSHPANI. Executive Producers - JENNIFER PENGEL & HOLGER LEISTER.

Director's statement

As a father, I've seen the light in a child's eyes—and I've also seen that light dim in the faces of Ukrainian refugee children. This film was born from that gaze. We talk a lot about war in terms of politics, but I wanted to focus on the invisible war: the emotional exile children carry within them.

"A Million Yard Stare" doesn't offer answers. It offers silence, sorrow, and sometimes music — because that's how trauma speaks. The film travels between the violence of a war-torn homeland and the quiet resilience of a child trying to smile again in a foreign place. Through art and movement, this story becomes one of fragile healing.

Germany and Ukraine share the frame, but this story could belong to any child forced from home. I made this film for those who look at refugees with judgment. I want them to see the cost—not in numbers, but in eyes.



Background to the film

"A Million Yard Stare" grew out of a close collaboration between our film team and a local circus club long active in integrating refugee children from war zones.

To keep the film truthful and rooted in real experience, we trained participating children — many of them refugees, including the film's lead actress — for three months both in front of and behind the camera.

More than 100 refugees contributed to the production, bringing their stories, gestures and resilience to the screen.

This is a film made with the people it portrays: intimate, community-driven and quietly political. Above all, it is a testament to how art and human connection can begin to mend the hidden wounds of war.

Logline

A mother longs to see his smile when war robs
him of his childhood

Synopsis

When war leaves young Roma numb with the “million yard stare,” his mother Oxana fights to heal him. Turning to circus training as a last hope, she embarks on a journey of resilience, love, and healing, striving to bring back Roma’s laughter while facing her own buried trauma.

Long Synopsis

After fleeing the war in Ukraine, young Roma and his mother, Oxana, arrive in a foreign country—safe but shattered. Once full of life, Roma has retreated into silence, his gaze fixed in a thousand-yard stare. The distance seems even greater for Roma as if he is a million yards away from the boy he used to be.

Oxana, holding tightly to the hope of seeing her son smile again, pushes aside her grief, focusing all her strength on helping him heal. She takes a leap of faith when a psychologist suggests that the circus—a world once shared with Roma's father— might reach the boy where words cannot.

Amid the swirling colours of the circus world, Roma meets Elias, a boy who carries his own story of loss. The two bond slowly, but the darkness behind Roma's eyes does not lift. When Oxana has a bitter argument with their host, Nicole, Oxana is forced to confront the grief she has long denied.

With the circus show approaching and emotions pushed to the breaking point, Oxana faces one final, desperate question: Can this fragile space of friendship, art, and truth be enough to reach her son, or has the war stolen his smile forever?

Technical Specifications

Title	A Million Yard Stare
Production Company	Webfilmland Productions Pengel & Kumar GbR
Year of Completion	2025
Country of Origin	Germany
Languages	English, Ukrainian, German, (Russian)
Subtitles	English, German
Genre	Drama, Anti-War
Running Time	93 Min.
Aspect Ration	2.35:1
Frame Rate	24 fps
Shot on	Panasonic EVA-1 & BGH-1
Delivery Formats	DCP, ProRes, H.264
Sound Format	Stereo, 5.1 Surround
Sound Mix	Theatrical
Premiere Status	World

An aerial photograph of a city at dusk or dawn, with a dark blue and purple color palette. The word "Production" is overlaid in the center in a white, serif font. The background shows a dense urban landscape with various buildings, including a prominent skyscraper on the left, and a body of water in the foreground with a few boats. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds.

Production

Film meets Circus



WEBFILMLAND
PRODUCTIONS



The collaboration between Träumer, Tänzer und Artisten and Webfilmland Productions on the production of “A Million Yard Stare” has proven to be a powerful partnership. The experienced circus performers brought their creativity and talent, while Webfilmland contributed its filmmaking expertise in direction and production. This fusion of circus artistry and cinematic technique allowed the film’s artistic vision to be realized at a high level, giving the project its unique energy and expressive power.

Financially supported by



An aerial photograph of a city at dusk or dawn. The sky is a deep blue with scattered clouds, including a large, dark, billowing cloud on the right side. The city below is illuminated with warm lights, and a river or body of water is visible in the foreground. The word "Cast" is overlaid in the center in a white serif font.

Cast



Ravi Gautam, a creative multi-talent in the roles of screenwriter and director, combines his academic background in physics with a passion for vivid storytelling. Preferring practical creativity over abstract theory, he has forged a unique path in cinema where structure meets imagination. From his early youth, Gautam captivated audiences on the stages of the Himalayas with engaging stories, before his journey carried him more than 6,000 kilometres into film production. His talent for gripping narratives and unforgettable characters first came to fruition in 2018 with the short film *Die Brücke*, which he directed.



Director's biography

As the founder and CEO of the production company Webfilmland, Gautam continues to shape original and socially resonant cinema. His feature *Soch: A Perception* (2024), which confronts misogyny and religious hatred, was honoured in 2025 with the Best Debut Director Award at the Ayodhya Film Festival and the Director's Vision Award at the 22nd Indian Film Festival Stuttgart, establishing him as a bold new voice in socially engaged cinema. In *A Million Yard Stare* (2025), Gautam fuses realism and surrealism to portray a child and mother scarred by war.



Director's filmography

2018

Die Brücke (39 Min.)

Writer & Director

2024

Soch: A perception (100 Min.)

Writer & Director

2025

Un Abrazo (17 Min)

Producer

A Million Yard Stare (93 Min.)

Writer & Director

CHRISTIAN
LEHMANN CARRASCO

JULIA
DORDEL

NATALIA
CHÁVEZ CARES

MORIN
GONZÁLEZ MENA

PAULINE
HEBEL

ANJALI
PATIL

MUKTI
RAVI DAS

MUZAMIL
BHAWANI

SILPI
DUTTA



SOCH

A PERCEPTION

EIN FILM VON
ASTRID ULLRICH HEBEL

A RAVI GAUTAM FILM

EBFILMLAND PRODUCTIONS in association with AARAMBH PRODUCTIONS & ANAHAT FILMS.
Starring: ANJALI PATIL, MUKTI DAS, SILPI DUTTA, BASHIR YASIR BHAWANI, MUZAMIL
HAWANI, RITIKA SHARMA, GAURI WEBSTER, DAYAL PRASAD Screenplay - RAVI GAUTAM &
PEPINO PUSHPANI. Background Music - DIPESH VARMA, Sound Design - SURYA KARN GUPTA.
Cinematographer - PEPINO PUSHPANI. Directed by - RAVI GAUTAM.
Executive Producers - JENNIFER PENGEL & RAHUL SHARMA.



Daria Petrozhytska

Known in Ukraine and among Ukrainian refugees in Germany for her lead role in the hit series “Papik”, Darya's talent extends beyond acting—she also earned second place on Ukrainian Idol, showcasing her versatility. This further solidifies her rising status as a talented actress in both film and television.

2018 Zaryazhennie

2019 Nichnyy Shvydkyy

2019 Papik

2020 Mysholovka dyla kota

2020 Date Vegas

2021 Burshtynovi

2021 Dzhek & London

2022 Spravzhnii Santa

2022 The Best Weekend

2022 The Wild

2024 Yashcho chesno

Oleksandr Melnikov

Oleksandr Melnikov arrived at “Träumer, Tänzer und Artisten” as a refugee from Ukraine, quickly impressing with his ability to shift seamlessly between serious and joyful emotions. This versatility made him an ideal fit for the role of Roma in “A Million Yard Stare”. Over the course of three months, Oleksandr was trained by director Ravi Gautam as part of the “Startklar für die Zukunft” funding program, which prepared him for his role. His natural talent, combined with this focused training, enabled him to bring depth and authenticity to his performance.





Riccarda Richter

Riccarda Richter, winner of the Best Actress Award at the Indie Short Fest in Los Angeles, brings her experience and star power to the role of "Nicole" in "A Million Yard Stare". With her extensive acting background, she transforms Nicole into a multi-layered, emotionally rich character. Her commanding presence and ability to portray complex roles elevate the film, showcasing her as a charismatic and seasoned actress.

2006 Professor T

2018 Die Läusemutter

2019 Die dreifache Schnur

2022 Baba Kush

2024 Tatort

Colonius (aka Der Turm)

Rebecca Lara Müller

Trained in film acting and musical theatre, she works across cinema, TV, and stage. Her leading roles in *Das Leuchten der Nacht* and *Kein Ausgang* earned multiple Best Actress awards at international festivals. Fluent in German, English, French, and Italian, with strong dance and musical skills, she brings versatility and presence to every role.

2016 Familie

2020 Unter Uns

2021 SOKO Stuttgart

2024 Serial Däter

2024 Ever After

2025 (Nicht) mehr wir





Pavlo Kruzhnov

Pavlo Kruzhnov first caught attention as Zbyshek in the indie standout *Shlyakhetni volotsyuh*—an ensemble that swept Best Costume Design at the 2019 IMDb Awards. He then demonstrated his versatility in the psychological thriller *Nelson* and the heartfelt family drama *Nashi Kotyky*. Now, as Vitalik Pavlenko in „A Million Yard Stare, Kruzhnov“ cements his reputation for filling complex roles with deep emotional nuance.

2018 *Shlyakhetni volotsyuh*
2019 *Nelson*

2020 *Sashi Kotyky*

Crew

Screenplay Ravi Gautam
Pepino Pushpani
Annika Schimetzek

Producers Jennifer Pengel
Holger Leister
Annika Schimetzek

DOP Pepino Pushpani

Editors Ravi Gautam
Pepino Pushpani

Sound Design Surya Karn Gupta

Dialogue Editor Soham Sanyal

Music Viktoria Lelèka
Tabea Zimmermann

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a city at dusk or dawn. The sky is a deep blue with scattered, light-colored clouds. The city below is densely packed with buildings, their lights beginning to glow. A large, dark ship is visible in the water in the lower right quadrant. The overall tone is moody and cinematic.

Film Stills



