

## TREATMENT

### Dr. Jung´s Patient (Sabintschka)

#### Content:

Introduction .....	2
I. Story .....	5
II. Visual approach .....	9
III. Co-production and distribution .....	10
IV. Casting .....	11
Conclusion .....	12

## Introduction

HAPPY CELULOID Ltd. is an independent production company with a wide range of realized projects, mainly feature films and commercials. The company has been participating in the market since 1994. The main person responsible for project realization is the executive head and partner of HAPPY CELULOID Ltd. Milan Cieslar and the story's author, Ladislava Chateau.

The project's aim is to prepare the base material (script, list of locations) for filming the feature film, Dr. Jung's patient - Sabinotschka, on one side and on the other take out contracts with foreign co-producers.

The reason HAPPY CELULOID Ltd. is asking for support from the MEDIA programme is the fact that the story has high potential for international co-production and distribution. The project's importance for the European area and its potential for all-European distribution is emphasized by the story of two fundamental European thinkers of the 20th century and their romantic relationship with the same woman.

In the past, the world had been introduced to the word and life feeling, *neurosis*. This word also describes the contemporary world.

As time runs by, the human life is accompanied by forgetfulness. Through a deeply personal love story, our film would like to remind of a young woman from Rostov on Don who affected Carl Jung's and Sigmund Freud's lives, by whom our understanding of the world is influenced to this day. I understand this film in true sense as being European, timeless and multinational.

The tragic story of Sabina is told frequently, as this woman of Russian-Jewish descent became the femme fatale for the noted psychoanalyst Carl Jung and thanks to their relationship, Jung formed his revolutionary theories. Just as Oedipus could not escape his fate, Sabina did not escape her bitter end when she became the victim of antisemit madness. But actually it was her, the young enchanting Sabina who for the first time roused a ravenous emotion in Jung, an emotion which can be called love and which was miles away from the hypocrite

petty bourgeois environment in which Jung lived. Sabina was not capable of scheming, planning or defense. For Jung, next to physical attractiveness and beauty, she also had a gift of graceful spiritual creativity. The romantic relationship of Sabina and Jung developed during psychoanalysis, for the young woman was haunted by obsessive images based on her probably experienced incest. Jung as a physician was to be an understanding father, an element of freedom. However, Jung's position was replaced by a diametrically different one - Jung became a vulnerable human being which loves and hurts others. To him, the unhappy Sabina became an image of graceful femininity which he succumbed to completely. Her exotic looks, youth and directness consumed him. Meeting Sabina affected his whole carefully maintained system, disrupting his moral values which he clung to and bringing him life experience, which he had maybe never known about before. This way, Jung gained his Mefista and with his ambivalence touched the dark waters of the reversed side of his existence.

The more Jung drew from his passionate relationship into his work, the more he hypocritically forced Sabina out of his life and eventually drove her to seek Sigmund Freud's help, a friend who was jealous of their relationship. Sabina gradually felt more loneliness, unfulfilment of a great longing for love and a child. Even so, she at least tried to maintain friendship with the man of her life. All of this helped her to formulate an opinion that destruction is the meaning of being and is an essential part of sexuality and she could also describe phenomena accompanying gradual loss of being in schizophrenia. The instinct of love and death appeared in both lovers' works, each change of relationship meaning death of the preceding one, destruction, destroying the past, in love the Ego dies also. Sophocles himself assumed that fate is stronger than the gods, everyone goes forth to his own grim end and helps fulfill his fate. Hence Sabina hastily married another man, instead of the boy she dreamed of, gave birth to a baby girl and finally, on Freud's recommendation, moved to Russia where her psychoanalysis teachings were persecuted. Sabina concluded her thoughts and submitted that life is but a detour on the journey to death. Maybe this is the reason why she refused to evacuate her home town when the Wehrmacht invaded. She did not believe that Goethe's nation was worse than the soviet commissionaires, she did not believe the murders, transports, concentration camps. She was convinced that it was all Stalin's false propaganda. She believed that the Germans will restore

order and civilization. Sabina's conviction cost her her life. Her irrational decision was understandable, corresponded with her experience and the world she knew. On July 27, 1942, Sabina was seen for the last time with her two daughters in a crowd, driven by the SS units where at the synagogue all were shot.

I think that on this note it is clear that the film is not only a historical biography of one exceptional human fate but a timeless message about the power of love and also a breathtaking call for a necessity to make people come together, nations in all their variety, individuality and co-existence in one society.

## I. Story

Geneva 1997. Reconstruction of the former pedagogical center Palais Wilson. An old wicker basket with written material is found while moving. The first thing to fall out of the basket is Freud's letter to Sabina Spielrein dated February 9th, 1923. A young historian is captivated by the German written text. She decides not to throw the basket away. It is getting dark outside, the construction chaos ceases and thanks to the intimate nature of the letters, the historian is swept back in time to when the following story started. The forgotten fate of one exceptional woman is brought to life before the viewer's eyes.

Russia, Rostov 1898. Thirteen year old Sabina plays Judith in a school play about the Jewish biblical figures, Judith and Holopherne; Sabina in Judith's theatre costume excels in front of the audience of children and teachers, fully grasping her role. Slowly she approaches Holopherne and with all her might strikes alongside the head of the boy that plays Holopherne. Sabina raises a rag prop of Holopherne's head. Little does she know that she will treat her future love interests in the same inconsistent manner. A scream fills the room, applause. End of play. Sabina is standing on stage, the parents come; congratulating and praising her. Sabina takes no notice of them, staring blankly; takes no notice of her father or mother talking to her. The father puts his arm on her shoulder. Sabina shrugs it off with disgust. She takes a glass into her hands, crushes it and thrusts the shards into her palm. She stands with a bloody hand in the middle of the stage, the blood dripping onto her costume, mixing with the colour, the make-up. She stares at her father accusingly, without him understanding her actions. Sabina is not mentally stable.

Sabina is growing up. She refuses to eat, forces the food into her mouth with her hands, despises the look of her father's hands. The strange tension between her and her father culminates, she retains stool, laughs spastically, rips off her clothes, self-inflicts bloody scratches. The family discusses what to do with her: treatment in restless Russia? Perhaps in Switzerland.

Switzerland, Zurich 1904. Sabina arrives accompanied by her father, their relationship still inconsistent, pre-conceiving Sabina's relationships with men. The city's atmosphere; Théâtre Uranie, cafés, café Bürkli, Eugene Bleuler's clinic make a big impact on both of them. The successful businessman Spielrein takes Sabina for an examination. The 29 year old attending physician Carl Gustav Jung diagnoses the exotic, very elegantly dressed girl's illness as hysteric psychosis. The father leaves Zurich and sessions of psychoanalysis follow. During one of them Sabina says to Jung: "I never dream of your wife but I dream about you." Over numerous sessions Jung and Sabina become close and Sabina becomes his student. Sabina is very chic, attracts attention, meets up with her peers in cafés, mainly with Russian-Jewish students and falls deeply in love with Jung.

She sees him as her savior, idol, hero and finally her father and husband. She associates him with characters from German mythology. She longs to conceive a son with him, a Christian-Jewish fair-haired Siegfried. She wants to confirm their love with a child. She is haunted by images of the Jewish Judith, loving and slaughtering Holopherne. Jung and Sabina become intimately close and friendship quickly changes to a full blown love affair.

Mrs. Spielrein comes to Jung with an urgent plea to leave Sabina so as not to destroy her. Jung defends himself, he never accepted any royalties thus not being professionally bound. He also states a belief that nobody can prevent two adults from doing what they want.

Zurich 1909. Jung releases Sabina as cured. However, their relationship continues; evolving dramatically. Jung is passionately in love, falling for the seductive Sabrina, mainly for her exotic looks, youth, directness. Jung suffers like a split personality, on one side an orderly citizen, on the other the Devil itself. He realises that he cannot leave his family, ruin his career, his reputation. Jung himself seeks Freud's help. He writes letters to him, where he confides in him about his worries with his patient, who set her heart upon having a child with him. The renowned physician lies to himself and his family and does not state Sabina as the

coauthor, eventhough she worked with him on the persona erós and thanatos theories as a young psychoanalyst.

Sabina becomes confrontational and importunate; she experiences obsessive delusions with frequent reoccurring conflicts. During one occasion, Sabina acts out Jung a scene about Siegfried from Richard Wagner's famous opera The Ring of the Nibelung. The meeting ends with a hysterical querulous scene. Jung is helpless, he sees how much Sabina needs deeper affection, to experience love in its true form. It is as if she lives a number of lives all at once. Jung is desperate, he visits Freud, who gives him advice on what to do and Sabina starts to interest him. He finds out that the reason for Sabina's psychoses could be experienced incest with her father.

Sabina graduates from medical school. Her relationship with Jung falls apart. Suspense between Jung and Freud escalates, without doubt also because of Sabina; Jung and Freud are jealous of each other. Jung rids Sabina of illusions and tells her that she must find another father for her unborn child. Sabina is desperate, thinks about suicide, finally leaves Zurich and heads for Vienna, to Freud.

Vienna 1911. Sabina enters the Vienna psychoanalytic society. She gives lectures on Destruction - the cause of Being, an essay about schizophrenia and suicide inclination which brings her substantial success. Nobody knows what she has lived through. Sabina proves that death and destruction are contained even in the sexual instinct alone. She points out that Wagner's heroes display love accordingly to Freud's salutary type, because they sacrifice themselves and die. Destruction for Sabina is the cause of being. It is as if Sabina is trying to prove to herself that death is indeed terrifying, however in service of the sexual instinct is a redemptive gift of mercy. She expresses a bold statement that fear of love is fear of death. Tension between Jung and Freud escalates; Freud sharply criticizes Jung, the „Zurich Siegfried“, as Sabina and Freud call him. Freud accuses Jung for drawing from Sabina's work. It is clear that Freud is protecting Sabina and admires her. Her relationship with Freud is a surrogate for her personal dispute with Jung.

Finally Sabina returns to Switzerland where she hastily marries a Russian-Jewish physician, who is to replace Jung, and later gives birth to a daughter, whom she names Renata, „Born-again“, for Siegfried is still not forgotten.

Switzerland, Chateau-d'Oex, 1917-1920. While Europe is experiencing the First World War, Freud's daughter dies from the flu epidemic. Sabina is a practising physician and dreams of a possibility to understand Jung.

Antisemit manifestations grow stronger in Europe and Sabina considers returning home, to Soviet Russia. Freud supports her in her intention, as if opting for an elegant solution to a strange relationship with her. Sabina takes his advice.

Moscow 1924. Sabina gave birth to her second daughter, Eva. Her brother Isaac is arrested and imprisoned in a forced labor camp. Psychoanalysis as a bourgeoisie science is banned. Sabina moves with her family to Rostov on Don, where she practises medicine as a pediatrician, eventhough she was head of the department of psychology at Moscow's University and Institute for mentally unstable children. Her husband Pawel Scheftel dies in 1938. Her daughter Renata is studying piano in Moscow.

July 1942, Rostov on Don. A beautiful sunny day, Sabina is preparing lunch wearing a linen dress. Her daughter Renata is playing the piano. The Wehrmacht approaches Rostov; the announcer urges the citizens to evacuate. Sabina's younger daughter Eva is thinking about her beloved Igor who is at the front and about whom she knows nothing. Everyone gathers to consult if they should obey the announcement and leave. Sabina finally decides to stay with her daughters: „Can you trust Stalin and his propaganda? I surely know Germans very well, I studied with them. They are Goethe's nation.“

The Wehrmacht and SS units are occupying Rostov. Sabina with her two daughters is driven in a herd towards the synagoge, from which shooting is heard.

Just as Oidipus could not avoid his own fate, so Sabina and her daughters became victims of racial madness; Sabina refused

evacuation, without doubt guided by her own destructive instinct and unreal perception of danger that her daughters were faced with. It is as if during the turning-points of her life she applied to her fate that life is but a detour on the journey to death, just as was mentioned many times in her work.

## **II. Visual approach**

In best sense, despite its difficult topic, Sabinotschka, a grand spectacle with a historical story, should be a film set in the Art Nouveau, the last original art style as it is sometimes referred to. Art of the 1930s is similarly unique, and it is when Sabina a Jung's romance in Zurich and later Vienna, culminates. This means that the film's art aspect built by the cameraman, scene and costume designer must create a world that disappeared, and reflect a story in its impression, literally with light on the decorations' background, capturing the changing feelings, deepness of emotions, passion and doubts - without question everything that makes this story.

Therefore, harmony of all the narrative components and visual effects are a necessity, for we are aware of the difficulty and maybe impossibility of access to historically well-preserved current locations. That is why it will be crucial to utilize all technological conveniences in re-creating something that irretrievably disappeared in history and present it as if through Sabina's eyes we have just appeared in Zurich of the 20s, enthralled by the Interwar period avantgarde, prosperity and life enthusiasm. I want to rely on well-established artists with whom I filmed the historical Spring of Life honored by many festival awards, on the artistry of a cameraman of European format, whom I want to find while the project develops. The format should be widescreen and should not exceed 120 minutes.

### **III. Co-production and distribution**

We would like to find and offer a multinational distribution for the completed film which will secure access to the whole European territory and unify all participating co-producers creating the film.

The considered French or German multinational companies are Pathé, Gaumont, Bavaria Distribution, Constantin film, Kinowelt Medien, Fortissimo Films, DWB, Icon Films, SPI and others.

This means that simultaneously, during the development phase while handling the co-producers by directly addressing them or also by project presentation at prestigious film festivals and markets, to build the distribution strategy from the start so as to preferably gain one strong distribution partner for the broadest usage of the product in the European territory such as film, pay TV, DVD, television and the Internet. Upon first development of the screenplay we would like to monitor the project via our own Website which will be a knowledge portal to information about the great thinkers C.G.Jung and Z.Freud, the forgotten Sabina Spielrein, Lou Andreas - Salomé, Maria Bonaparte, Fanie Chalevska, Max Eitingon, Ester Aptekman and other representatives of psychoanalysis, artists and other historical figures from that era. The film's web pages would thus be a communication channel for the whole process of filming and long after the premiere. A sophisticated introduction to the history of the story, crossing over to the present, including all the essential blogs, a discussion board for the audience, specialists with current news, previews of the project currently in progress. We think that this way, the historical film's theme will go beyond its time of creation and will launch a wider and professional communication in the society, mainly if we take in account that neurosis is still an alarming symptom of the modern era.

#### **IV. Casting**

The project is conceived as a narrative co-production project between presumed partners such as: Czech - Switzerland - France - Russia.

In respect to the topic, we presume that each character in the film speaks the language of the place where he/she lived, published and handled correspondence.

Sabina, a Russian Jew who speaks German with an accent and corresponds in French and sometimes Yiddish, returns to her homeland speaking Russian. I would like to maintain this language diversity in the film, and as a result, capable, theatrically talented and language gifted actors of an exceptional appearance and unique character are a necessity. In cooperation with casting directors in Berlin, Prague and Moscow, I would like to find the film's main protagonist - Sabina - and other actors for the last episodes, for it is the small roles which demand the best actors to support their colleagues in the main parts with the same convincing and outstanding performance even if not directly basking in the limelight. We would also like to land European stars for the role of C.G. Jung. Reference for the role of C.G. Jung may be the UK actor of star quality, Robert Carlyle.

## Conclusion

Sabina Spielrein was one of the first European female protagonists of the new paradigm in psychology - psychoanalysis, which opened an absolutely new and to this day provocative perspective on the human mind, human limits and manner of understanding man. At the same time, the film would become a timeless story of love, friendship, life energy and courage of a virtually handicapped being suffering a strong, persistent, lifelong neurosis. Sabina Spielrein was a person who pushed the limits of knowledge even though slowly being forgotten and finally forgotten about completely. With our film based on the confidential knowledge of the affected persons, biographies of everyone involved, we would like to show the meaning and tragic fate of an exceptional woman and the role she played in the lives of two famous men and knowledge about the human mind in general.

The artist's/cameraman's task is to search for and find such stories that resonate with the feelings of the coevals and help them understand themselves and the world around them. Fascination with stories told around the „primeval fire“ that help us find our way and give us strength to live another day, still holds even though today it may seem exaggerated. The story and future film about Sabina Spielrein comes from the clan of such timeless stories and films that do not blandish the comfortable viewer but should be filmed in such a way as to push his horizons and raise awareness about context.

---

Milan Cieslar

Director/Producer/ Head of development