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Toronto International  
Film Festival 2021

A Film by EMRE KAYIŞ

# ANATOLIAN LEOPARD





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A film by Emre Kayış

2021- 91' – Color - Turkey, Germany, Poland, Denmark.

## Synopsis

At Turkey's oldest zoo, a lonely manager and a withdrawn female officer form an unlikely bond: as they hide the death of the zoo's oldest inhabitant, an Anatolian leopard, in order to stop the privatization process and fake its escape, they set in motion an absurd charade that spins out of control. In Turkey's grey and quiet capital, the ghost of the leopard persists.

ANATOLIAN LEOPARD

## CAST

Uğur Polat, İpek Türktan, Tansu Biçer, Ege Aydan, Nuri Gökaşan,  
Osman Alkaş, Seyithan Özdemir

## CREW

*Director* Emre Kayış

*Screenwriter* Emre Kayış

*Producer* Olena Yershova (TatoFilm, Turkey)

*Junior producer* Büke Akşehirli (TatoFilm, Turkey)

*Coproducers* Kanat Doğramaci (Asteros Film, Turkey)

Maria Blicharska (Donten & Lacroix Films, Poland)

Tanja Georgieva (Elemag Film, Germany)

Jon Hammer (Adomeit Film, Denmark)

*DOP* Nick Cooke

*Editor* Ricardo Saraiva

*Sound* Tobi Adam, Michael Kaczmarek

*Art direction* Billur Turan

*Costume designer* Öykü Ersoy



ANATOLIAN LEOPARD



## Director's Biography



Born in 1984 in Ankara, Emre has been committed to storytelling and visual arts since childhood. After a BA in Law and a yearlong experience as a legal intern, he quits. In 2012, he was accepted to the MA Filmmaking Department at the London Film School.

After directing two narrative short films and practicing photography, he graduated in 2014 with his thesis film 'The Translator', which was screened in more than 200 film festivals worldwide such as Sarajevo, Premier Plans, Palm Springs, Montreal, won 16 awards and was nominated in the Best Short Film category of the 28th European Film Awards.

He is an alumnus of Sarajevo Talents and a member of EFA.

ANATOLIAN LEOPARD

## Director's Statement

My country has been governed by conservatives for a decade now. This has changed the country's destiny to an utterly different direction, which created many broken souls. The reason behind my decision to choose the Anatolian Leopard as a metaphor is my intention to take on the emotional world of those people who were squished under the spirit of the time, who belong to another era, similar to the sad story of this nearly extinct animal, indigenous to Anatolia.

The film evolves around two characters. Fikret, a middle-aged zoo manager who shares a similar fate with the old Anatolian leopard of which bright and sunny days have turned into something everyone tries to get rid of, and Gamze, who has been working as an officer at the same zoo for years and who dreams of becoming an air hostess and transform her life.

Through Fikret and Gamze, who are isolated protagonists faced by surrealistic predicaments and incom-

prehensible social-bureaucratic powers, my purpose is to create a Kafkaesque atmosphere that will allow me to explore and interpret themes of existential anxiety, alienation and guilt.

Although 'Anatolian Leopard' is in many ways poignant and highly melancholic, it has a lot of humor as well. In the film, my intention is to depict governmental figures as oppressors of the naive souls through deadpan funny caricatures, but at the same time frighteningly close to reality, suggesting that what is going on in contemporary Turkish society is absurd.

This story is about the wounded, bleeding ground I live on. I made a film about people who are under threat of extinction. For me, Anatolian Leopard is another pretext to contemplate human and country's nature.



ANATOLIAN LEOPARD

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