

# Home Games

PRESS KIT



**A film written & directed by Alisa Kovalenko**  
**86 minutes. Ukraine. France. Poland. HD. 16:9.**  
**Russian & Ukrainian (with English subtitles)**

© East Roads Films (France), Studio Garmata Film (Ukraine),  
DocEdu Foundation & Telewizja Polska (Poland)

Production contact person:

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World premiere @ Sheffield Doc/Fest 2018

Friday 8 June, 16:30

PBS America Showroom Cinema 3

Saturday 9 June, 9:30

Yorkshire Building Society Showroom Cinema 2



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## GENERAL INFORMATION

Title:	Home Games
Original title:	Domashni Igri (Ukrainian)
Genre:	Documentary
Languages:	Russian & Ukrainian
Subtitles:	English (French available on demand)
Duration:	86 minutes
Production year:	2018
Format:	HD, 16:9
Sound:	Dolby 5.1
Director:	Alisa Kovalenko
Editing:	Olha Zhurba
Cinematography:	Stefan Serhiy Stetsenko & Alisa Kovalenko
Sound design:	Mariya Nesterenko
Original music:	Organe Marsilli aka Ladylike Lily (France)
Producers:	Stephane Siohan (France), Maxym & Valentyn Vasyanovych (Ukraine), Miroslaw Dembinski (Poland)
Support & partners:	Ukraine State Film Agency (Ukraine), IDFA Bertha Fund (Netherlands), Current Time TV (Czech Republic), Telewizja Polska (Poland), The Guardian (United Kingdom)

## LOGLINE & SYNOPSIS

### Logline

A season in the life of Alina, a 20-year-old girl from a poor family in Kyiv, who has a chance to be saved by football. She's about to join the Ukrainian national team, when life throws up a new challenge: her mother dies, leaving two young siblings. Now, Alina must choose: football or family.

### Synopsis

"Home Games" is a broken fairytale depicting a crucial moment in the life of Alina, a 20-year-old "million dollars baby" from Kyiv, whose passion for football has a chance of saving her from poverty. Alina grew up on the streets in a poor suburb of the Ukrainian capital. While her parents were in jail for petty crimes, she started playing football with boys until a women's football trainer noticed her talent and signed her to Atex Kyiv, the only women's club in the city. Alina is now a pro player and it looks likely that she will be called up to play for Ukraine's national team. But suddenly, Alina's mum dies at the age of 39, leaving behind Alina's beloved half-brother and sister, Renat and regina, 6 ans 7 years old. Barely out of adolescence herself, Alina becomes a substitute mother. The children's father disappears. There is no money, and life is a mess. Alina's mother is on hand and tries to help but she's losing her eyesight. The dysfunctional family lives in a cramped one-room apartment. For a while, Alina quits football. She soon returns, but will she find the strength to save her family ans find her personal redemption? Home Games is more than just a film about girls who play football: it's a film about lost innocence, about responsibilities: how to make your dreams come true when the odds are stacked against you.

## The director's note of intention

Today, in Ukraine, only 200 girls play football professionally. The conditions are basic, not to say harsh. I know this subculture well because my cousin played in the very last USSR women's national team. I was always fascinated by those women, so strong on the pitch, especially I found out what they've been through in their lives. I decided to follow a girl, Alina, one of the best Ukrainian football players, who could have been my cousin, 25 years ago... But, « Home Games » is not just a film about football, it's a film about offsides, when life starts to play tricks on you. It's a story about the identity construction of a young girl on the edge of adulthood, constructing her identity as she is forced to take her first adult decisions. The main conflict line of my hero, Alina, is universal: remain faithful to your family or emancipate yourself from an heritage of poverty. (Alisa Kovalenko)

## BIOGRAPHY & FILMOGRAPHY OF ALISA KOVALENKO

Alisa Kovalenko is an award-winning Ukrainian director, born in Zaporizhia, Ukraine, in 1987. She first studied journalism and then graduated the Karpenko-Kary theatre & cinema university of Kyiv, specializing in documentary cinema. Alisa also studied at the Andrzej-Wajda cinema school in Warsaw, under the guidance of Marcel Lozinsky, one of the master of the Polish documentary cinema. After her debut documentary "Sister Zo", shown in several festivals, Alisa was caught (like other Ukrainian directors) in the turmoil of the Ukrainian revolution in 2014 and the subsequent war in Eastern Ukraine. Those events brought her from the barricades of Maidan to the toughest battle of the war, the battle of Donetsk airport, in Donbass. A second full-length documentary resulted from this filmmaker's journey through the bloody events, taking place in her own country, where she was tormented by the tension between filming/observing and becoming a participant. "Alisa in Warland" was premiered in the First appearance competition at the IDFA in Amsterdam in 2015. So far, "Alisa in Warland" has been featured in over 60 festivals and won three awards in Paris, Agadir and Mexico. For more than two years, Alisa has been working on "Home Games". She is also the editorial director of a ten-part documentary series about women's football in Ukraine for the television Current Time TV, airing on Sunday evenings from 27 May 2018. She's also writing and developing a new documentary.

"Sister Zo", 2014, full-length (Ukraine)

"Alisa in Warland", 2015, full-length (Poland)

"Home Games", 2018, full-length (Ukraine. France. Poland)

"Sister Zo" was premiered @ Molodist festival 2014 (Ukraine)

"Alisa in Warland" was premiered @ IDFA First appearance 2015 (Netherlands)

"Home Games" will have its world premiere @ Sheffield Doc/Fest 2018 (United Kingdom)

## PRODUCERS

Stephane Siohan  
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Stephane Siohan is a French journalist and documentary producer, based in Kyiv since 2013. He has been working regularly in eastern Europe since 2003 as a foreign reporter. In 2012, he filmed his documentary debut in Ukraine, "Gol!", an interactive documentary that was selected at the IDFA DokLab 2012 in Amsterdam. A second mid-length doc, "Kinshasa FM" was awarded "best French interactive production" in 2014. Stephane created East Roads Films in 2016, he produces author-driven films and transmedia series for the web & the television.

Valentyn & Maxym Vasyanovych are producers at Studio Garmata Film, in Kyiv. Both of them are also directors, operators and editors. Maxym is considered to be one of the finest documentary editors in Ukraine. Valentyn has produced and was DOP of "The Tribe" (director: Myroslav Slaboshpytskiy), a fascinating Ukrainian indie movie which won the Semaine de la critique Prize in Cannes in 2014. His last fiction film "Black Level" (2017) received many prizes and was chosen to represent Ukraine at the Oscars in 2018.

"Home Games" is co-produced by the Polish public broadcaster TVP1. Anna Ferens is commissioning editor for documentaries at the Telewizja Polska. The production company DocEdu Foundation was also involved in the process of making "Home Games".





## PRODUCTION DETAILS & PARTNERS

"Home Games" has been supported and financed by the Ukrainian State Film Agency and the IDFA Bertha Fund (Netherlands). The film has been made in association with The Guardian Documentary and the British Council.

"Home Games" is also supported by the international channel Current Time TV and the Polish public broadcaster Telewizja Polska - TVP1.

During its development, "Home Games" has won the pitch "The Guardian Goes Ukraine" organized within the Docudays UA human rights film festival in Lviv (Ukraine) and the pitch of the Odesa International Film Festival (Ukraine).

"Home Games" was part of the IDFAcademy Summer School in Amsterdam, Netherlands (2017), to the East Doc Platform of Prague, Czech Republic (2017), to the Baltic Sea Forum for Docs, Riga, Latvia (2017) and to the Last Stop Trieste section to the Trieste Film Festival, Italy (2018).



## DISTRIBUTION

"Home Games" is distributed by the sales company Syndicado:

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