

## CROSSING

**Sweden/ Denmark/France/Georgia/Turkey (2024) 106 mins**

**Director:** Levan Akin

**Cast:** Mzia Arabuli (Lia)  
Deniz Dumanli (Evrin)  
Lucas Kankava (Achi)



**Screening 18<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at Swindon Arts Centre**

### Synopsis

Lia, a retired teacher, has promised to find her long-lost niece, Tekla, to make amends for failing her in the past. She gets a tip about Tekla's address from Achi, the layabout brother of one of her former pupils. He persuades Lia to let him accompany her to Istanbul where she meets Evrim, a lawyer fighting for trans rights, and Tekla starts to feel closer than ever.

### Reviews



" ... Here, Georgian actor Mzia Arabuli plays Lia, a retired, unmarried history teacher and a person of dignity and high standards for herself and others. She is now on a mission to find her missing niece, a trans woman called Tekla who has crossed the border into Turkey and may now be in Istanbul; Lia promised Tekla's dying mother she would find Tekla and bring her home.

... There are of course many crossings here, although gender transition is unemphasised; the main crossing is the change of mind and the change of heart. There is a trio of excellent performances from Arabuli, Kankava and Dumanli: very good actors, very well directed, defining three personalities very different from each other in terms of age and attitude but bringing them together in a way that doesn't feel forced. ..."

*Peter Bradshaw, The Guardian*

" ... Much of Levan's acutely composed follow up to "And Then We Danced," eloquently cycles through the disparate trio, revealing how each feels unacceptable to society. Kankava plays this mope with a hangdog mien obscuring a heart of gold well; Arabuli is a tightly locked levee of emotion; light seems to bend around the ebullient Dumanli. These three nuanced performances, along with indelible images of Turkey's trans community, command the tenor of a film pitched around Tekla, a missing person we barely see. Though the final five minutes of "Crossing" is overwritten, nearly spoiling the visual language's quiet work, the powerfully empathetic work done previously still manages to leap from the screen."

*Robert Daniels, RogerEbert.com*

### Film Facts

- Levan Akin was born in Sweden to parents of Georgian origin. He returns annually to Georgia to reinforce his knowledge of its language and culture.

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