

 Bulgarian Creative Arts

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Press Release
4th BULGARIAN FILM FESTIVAL

RENOIR CINEMA / CURZON MAYFAIR
14th September – 27th September 2007

Programme

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Fri 14th Sept. | 6.30pm | Renoir | Lady Zee |
| Sat 15th Sept. | 6.30pm | Renoir | Night and Day |
| Sun 16th Sept. | 2.00pm | Renoir | Mrs Dinosaur |
| Mon 17th Sept. | 6.30pm | Renoir | Monkeys in Winter |
| Tue 18th Sept. | 9.00pm | Renoir | Christmas Tree Upside Down |
| Thu 27th Sept. | 6.30pm | Mayfair | Warden of the Dead |

In association with: Curzon Cinemas, Bulgarian City Club, Bulgarian Embassy National Film Centre.

Supported by: Balkan Holidays, Bulgaria Air, Maxxima Wines.

BULGARIAN CREATIVE ARTS proudly presents six new films of the new wave of Bulgarian cinema. Over the last two years some extremely interesting and original new films have been made showing a healthy development of the film industry.

The pessimistic character of the previous period is modelled into a more objective and critical view on social, ethnic and ethical issues. The stories as usual are varied without the stereotyped vision of the world common for many mainstream films.

Djulgerov (Lady Zee), Krumov (Night and Day) and Tcherkelov (Christmas Tree Upside Down) are three of the most representative Bulgarian filmmakers. Their art, although very different, expresses a unique fusion of elements of the Italian Neorealism, the Iranian Cinema, the Russian avant-garde with “the naturally vital,

slightly barbaric, but visually very powerful” elements of Bulgarian cinema. Yet despite the European/World cinema influences their style reveals the unmistakable marks of their personality.

Milena Andonova (her debut feature) is considered an interesting and serious new director. Her work is radically different from other East European directors, because she pursues the roots of her spiritual heritage and her visual sensitivity.

Ilian Simeonov is the director of the only “comedy” in this festival. His use of symbolism and hyperbolae are typical for the Balkan cinema and the thematic material of this film is a continuation of his previous work.

Henry Koulev is one of the leading figures of Bulgarian children and animation cinema. His *Mrs Dinosaur* from 2002 is an undiscovered gem, which is little by little recognised as a small masterpiece in its genre.

We hope you will enjoy viewing these films as much as we did and you will be moved by something, which avoids banality and stereotype.

OPENING NIGHT

RENOIR CINEMA

6.30pm, FRIDAY 14th September 2007

LADY ZEE

Лейди Зи

Bulgaria, 2005, 96 min, colour

Director: Georgi Djulgerov

Screenplay: Georgi Djulgerov, Marin Damyanov

Cinematography: Radoslav Spassov

Music: Mira Iskarova, Hristo Namliiev

Producer: Vladimir Andreev, Georgi Balkanski

Cast: Aneliya Garbova, Ivan Barnev, Pavel Paskalev, Roussi Chanev, Vanina Chervenkova, Isus Borislavov, Emil Stefanov

Zlatina is an orphan with a talent for sharp shooting. When she grows up and leaves the institution for abandoned children, her behaviour abides by the conviction that she has to struggle daily for her survival. Friendship, love, and positive events in life happen in soap operas only. She decides to pass the Greek border pretending to be a prostitute... and ends up in a brothel where her worst nightmare becomes reality. Djulgerov (a veteran iconoclast of Bulgarian cinema) and co-scripter Marin Damianov skilfully avoid sentimentality in depicting the tough, precocious lives of these unwanted kids marked by emotional scars.

Awards: 2005 – “Grand Prix” Sarajevo; New Montreal FilmFest – Audience Award; “Love Is Folly” – “Golden Aphrodite”.

RENOIR CINEMA

6.30pm, SATURDAY 15th September 2007

NIGHT AND DAY

Нощ и ден

Bulgaria, 2006, 115 min, colour

Director: Krassimir Krumov

Screenplay: Krassimir Krumov

Cinematography: Emil Hristov

Music: Gheorghii Arnaoudov

Producer: Metodi Petrikov

Cast: Kristian Simeonov, Radena Valkanova, Nikolay Urumov, Rumen Traykov, Petar Slabakov, Dimitar Martinov, Ivan Barnev, Yordan Bikov, Krasimir Dokov

This is the mountain story of a highly spirited boy, Marko, and of his mother. After a savage turn of fate, the skills and advice that Marko had ignored until today will come into use to help him save his mother. Krassimir Krumov, a novelist as well as a filmmaker (one of the cult figures in modern Bulgarian cinema), subtly comments on a range of socio-economical problems in contemporary Bulgaria. All of them form a backdrop to Marko's plight, creating an atmosphere reminiscent of Iranian cinema. Handsome and controlled lensing by d.p. Emil Hristov, creates a clean and poetic visual composition.

Awards: Bulgarian National Film Center 2006 – “Best Actress Award in a Supporting Role” to Radena Valkanova.

RENOIR CINEMA

2pm, SUNDAY 16th September 2007

MRS. DINOSAUR

Госпожа динозавър

Bulgaria, 2002, 75 min, colour

Director: Henry Kulev

Screenplay: Rada Moskova

Cinematography: Svetla Ganeva

Music: Lyubomir Denev

Producer: Henry Koulev

Cast: Sofia Kamenarova, Maria Kavardjikova, Stephka Janorova, Ivan Radoev, Ljuben Chatalov, Maya Novosselska, Madlen Zourbeck

On the eve of Christmas, even grown-ups are excited at the prospect of miracles. In a family similar to many others, 5-year old Nusha feels more at home in her imaginary world. The child's beloved father is an unsuccessful actor, while her mother does her best to make ends meet with a small cosmetics business.

Indisputably the best film in the bright, optimistic gamma of new Bulgarian cinema. This is a child's viewpoint of the world that avoids infantilism.

RENOIR CINEMA

6.30pm, MONDAY 17th 2007

MONKEYS IN WINTER

Маймуни през зимата

Bulgaria-Germany, 2006, 111 min, color

Director: Milena Andonova

Screenplay: Milena Andonova, Maria Stankova

Cinematography: Rali Ralchev

Music: Konstantin Tzekov

Producer: Nevena Andonova, Christine Ruppert

Cast: Bonka Ilieva-Bony, Diana Dobрева, Angelina Slavova, Sava Lolov, Valentin Tanev, Philip Trifonov, Stefan Mavrodiev, Asen Blatechki, Ivan Savov

This compassionate and sensitive drama explores the lives of three mothers belonging to different generations, who must face bleak decisions. The story of the attractive and lively Dona, a gypsy woman with three children from different fathers, is set in the 1960s. Twenty years later, Lucrecia becomes pregnant and dreams of a life abroad with her new boyfriend. Tana, the wife of a prosperous businessman, dreams of having a child at the turn of the century. The use of 40-year time span lightly underlines how women's lives in Bulgarian society have both changed and not changed before and after the fall of Communism.

***Awards:** Karlovy Vary 2006 – "Best Film Award" in the program "East of West"; 6 awards in Varna Film Festival 2006 – "Golden Rose" for best film, "Best Actress Award" to Diana Dobрева (also for her role in "Warden of the Dead"), "Kodak Award for Cinematography" to Rali Ralchev (also for "Interrogation" and "Christmas Tree Upside Down"), special mention to Bonka Ilieva-Bony, "Nevena Kokanova Award" for promising newcomer to Angelina Slavova and "Vulo Radev Award" for debut film.*

RENOIR CINEMA

9pm, TUESDAY 18th September 2007

CHRISTMAS TREE UPSIDE DOWN

Обърната елха

Bulgaria-Germany, 2006, 129 min, colour

Director: Ivan Cherkelov, Vassil Zhivkov

Screenplay: Ivan Cherkelov, Vassil Zhivkov

Cinematography: Rali Ralchev

Music: Alexander Bachvarov

Producer: Rositsa Valkanova, Jens Koerner

Cast: Alexandra Vassileva, Anton Radichev, Slava Doycheva, Georgi Cherkelov, Dragomir Sholev, Krasimir Dokov

Six wise but contrasting stories, linked together by a massive Christmas tree that is hauled through the gorgeous landscapes of Bulgaria. From a massive hillside dance, to a devout Deep Purple fan looking for family happiness, to the last days of Socrates, this is a mesmerizing journey through time and place in post-Socialist Bulgaria. One of the most original, visually refined and thought-provoking films coming from Eastern Europe.

Awards: Karlovy Vary 2006 – “Jury Prize” and a nomination for the Crystal Globe.

CLOSING GALA

MAYFAIR CURZON CINEMA

6.30pm, THURSDAY 27th September 2007

WARDEN OF THE DEAD

Пазачът на мъртвите

Bulgaria, 2006, 105 min, colour

Director: Ilian Simeonov

Screenplay: Ilian Simeonov

Cinematography: Dimitar Gotchev

Music: Theodosii Spassov

Producer: Dimitar Gotchev, Zachari Paunov

Cast: Vladko Georgiev, Samuel Fintzi, Itzhak Finzi, Diana Dobрева, Nikolay Urumov, Valentin Tanev, Plamen Sirakov

A thirteen year old boy lives and works in a cemetery. The cemetery is his whole life, and growing up with the dead instils in him both obsession and respect for death. His friends depend on him: an unhappy old man – a former political prisoner yearning for death, and a makeup artist for deceased – and a painter who, no longer painting, still dreams of painting his masterpiece. The film could be seen as a metaphor for Balkan society.

Awards: Varna Film Festival 2006 – “Best Director Award”, “Best Actress Award” to Diana Dobрева (also for her role in “Monkeys in Winter”), and “Kodak Award for Cinematography” to Dimitar Gotchev (tied); 2 awards of the Bulgarian National Film Center Awards 2006 – for best actor and music.