East European Film Bulletin

EDITORIAL

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Editorial

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This month, our 2012 focus on Balkan cinema concludes. After our journal launched in 2011 with a focus on Romania, the Balkans were a difficult region to handle. While Yugoslav cinema from the 1950s onwards offers valuable cinematic works from different genres, styles and approaches – this year, we looked at works by Serbian directors Dušan Makavejev, Goran Marković, Živojin Pavlović and Slobodan Šijan -, finding good productions from the 1990s and the 2000s proved to be more elusive. This, then, led to a critically dominated discourse of Balkan cinema, especially regarding the treatment of the West (e.g. *Cirkus Columbia*), the emergence of an identity-lacking "international style" (*Cirkus Columbia*, *Ordinary People*) and the use of violence as a pseudo-semantic vector (*A Serbian Film*, *Before the Rain*, *Tilva Ros*). On a lighter side, it seems that the relative Serbian predominance within Yugoslav post-war cinema has been replaced by a greater national variety. In most "new" and old states of the Balkan region, multi-national co-productions have allowed regional cinemas to emerge. This has led to some succesful productions, also, and thoughtful discussions of social topics such as health-care (e.g. *Sofia's Last Ambulance*), the economic crisis (*Out of Frame*), sexuality (*Clip*), minorities (*The Parade*, *When Day Breaks*) and post-war traumas (*Children of Sarajevo*, *A Letter to Dad*, *Sorry for the Kung Fu*).

This year, our journal featured reviews of recent productions from Bosnia (*Children of Sarajevo*, *Cirkus Columbia*), Bulgaria (*The Color of the Chameleon*, *Sofia's Last Ambulance*), Croatia (*Sorry for the Kung Fu*), Greece (*Out of Frame*, *Travelling Players*), Former Yugoslav Republic Macedonia (*The Woman Who Brushed Off Her Tears*, *Before the Rain*), Serbia (*A Letter to Dad*, *A Practical Guide to Belgrade with Singing and Crying*, *Clip*, *The Parade*, *Tilva Ros*, *When Day Breaks*) and Slovenia (*Silent Sonata*). Of course, the sheer versatility of the region makes an exhaustive treatment of Balkan cinema almost impossible. This list, then, should be taken as an insight rather than a index, with many films that deserve treatment having remained untouched by our discussion…

For this month's issue, Moritz Pfeifer saw the 2004 film *Sorry for the Kung Fu*, a low-budget production by Ognjen Sviličić. The film revolves around Mira, a young woman who returns home pregnant after the war. Pfeifer met Sviličić during the *Croatie, la voici* festival in Paris to talk to him about his films, Croatia's upcoming EU entry, and parallels between Croatian and Romanian cinema.

Anastasia Eleftheriou discusses Emil Christov's *The Color of the Chameleon*, a spy film from 2012 that follows a Bulgarian secret agent. In our Interviews section, you will find an interview with Christov on the film. For our Retrospectives section we also discuss *A Bomb Was Stolen*, a Romanian spy film from the 1960s, in which two rival gangs try to get hold of a nuclear bomb. The film was selected for the Cannes Film Festival in 1962.

Finally, Colette de Castro saw *The Offsiders*, a 2008 film by Polish helmer Kasia Adamik that illustrates the life of homeless people in Poland's former National Stadium.

EEFB editors
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