

A View Of Eastern Europe: The Sixth Annual Bosnia Film Festival Plays At Tribeca Cinemas This Weekend

by Krys Longan

Although the country of Bosnia-Herzegovina covers less land mass than West Virginia, and their entire population is smaller than that of New York City, this emerging cultural superpower is poised to change the face of Eastern European filmmaking. Over the last several years, filmmakers from this small country have made important contributions to the international film industry—including creating Oscar-winning movies—and their influence continues to grow.

Perhaps it is the country's dramatic and turbulent history that inspires so many of its citizens to turn their skills towards this creative endeavor. Or maybe it is the geographical region itself, supported by the fascinating capital city of Sarajevo, and bordering the gorgeous Adriatic Sea. It is a landscape that would motivate even the most jaded cinematographer.

The tri-state area—and Queens in particular—is comprised of a diaspora of Bosnians, who continue to celebrate their rich European heritage in their adopted homeland. This Friday and Saturday, for example, The Sixth Annual Bosnian-Herzegovinian Film Festival will be held at the Tribeca Cinemas, one of Manhattan's premiere moviehouses. This highly anticipated showcase will feature eight U.S. movie premieres: The full-length films *Tractor*, *Love and Rock 'n' Roll*, *Nightguards*, and the animated *Man Still Goes to the Moon*. Also playing are the shorts *Razor*, *Agape*, and *1/2*, and the documentaries *Believers* and *If You Are Watching This Mum*. Also screened will be the 2008 Academy Award submission *It's Hard To Be Nice*, as well as *Tolerantia*, the first Bosnian independent short film made using 3D animation.

Since its inception in 2003, this festival has provided a unique platform for both up-and-coming and internationally-renowned Eastern European filmmakers, and is sponsored by non-profit organizations. Whether or not you have familial ties to this area, these films offer an interesting and often educational look into a culture that has faced amazing political and historical challenges. For more information on the film festival, which runs May 15th and 16th, surf to www.bhffnyc.org.

Bosnian film director Jasmila Zbanic



And if you are looking for something different to do tonight, Wednesday, May 13th, head over to Union Bar at 204 Park Avenue South (between 17th and 18th streets, 212/674-2105). The festival is kicking off at this fun downtown bar with a screening of *Totally Personal* at 7:45pm, followed by DJ Tomo spinning Bosnian music until midnight. So whether you are a film enthusiast, Bosnian buff, or just looking to have a good time, check out this fun evening of movies and music. Go to www.union-bar.com for more information.

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