



© BOSNIAN-HERZEGOVINIAN FILM FESTIVAL™
NEW YORK CITY

BOSNIAN-HERZEGOVINIAN FILM FESTIVAL (BHFF™)

Although Bosnia and Herzegovina, a country in Southeastern Europe slightly smaller than West Virginia, generates only several feature films per year, its filmmakers have gained worldwide recognition, producing award-winning movies on very low budgets. The Bosnian-Herzegovinian Film Festival (BHFF) is an annual event, which features contemporary Bosnian-Herzegovinian cinematography and films with Bosnia and Herzegovina as their theme. Since its founding in 2003, BHFF has gained a reputation as an important showcase that provides a platform for the exposure of up-and-coming and internationally-renowned filmmakers, thus contributing to a greater understanding of this country, its diverse culture and complex history.

This vibrant cultural event, taking place in New York City, brings together a wide spectrum of audiences. To date, BHFF has screened more than 80 feature length, short, documentary and animated films viewed by several thousand people. The ninth annual BHFF will take place May 3-5, 2012 at Tribeca Cinemas in New York City.

History

The idea for organizing the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Film Festival was first conceived in 2002 among film enthusiasts from the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora in San Francisco and New York City. Benjamin Filipović, the recently-deceased award-winning film director, professor at the Academy of Performing Arts in Sarajevo and President of the Association of Filmmakers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, provided the inspiration for the first film festival.

In 2003, Dr. Džemaludin Harba invited representatives of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian community in New York to a brainstorming meeting regarding a potential festival of Bosnian and Herzegovinian film. This group of volunteers and the Radio Voice of Bosnia and Herzegovina together produced the first annual Bosnian-Herzegovinian Film Festival (BHFF) that same year. Following its debut, in 2005 the BHFF became a co-production between Radio Voice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Academy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which incorporated some of the initial organizers of the first annual BHFF.

Location

In 2003, BHFF was held at the Two Boots Pioneer Theatre. The following year, BHFF moved to larger premises at the Anthology Film Archives, known as an international center for the preservation, study, and exhibition of film and video. In 2007, BHFF relocated to and remained in a more visible venue - Tribeca Cinemas, one of New York City's highly regarded film institutions.

Organizers

The festival is organized by two not-for-profit organizations: Voice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Inc. and the Academy of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Voice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to preserving and raising awareness of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian culture in the Tri-State area and beyond. The Voice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Inc. broadcasts a weekly radio program in Bosnian language and organizes events for the Bosnian-Herzegovinian community. For more information, visit <http://www.voiceofbh.org/>.

The Academy of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a not-for-profit cultural and advocacy organization, which serves as a platform for various cultural, arts, and professional exchange programs led by its members that are intended to benefit the Bosnians and Herzegovinians in New York City and United States. For more information, visit <http://www.academybh.org/>.



BHFF Team

Since its founding, the organization of BHFF has been supported solely by the tireless efforts of its volunteers, many of whom are young professionals and entrepreneurs with full-time jobs.

Audience and Constituency

The Bosnian-Herzegovinian community has had a presence in the United States for more than hundred years. Although official figures do not exist, there are an estimated 250,000 people of Bosnian-Herzegovinian origin living in the United States. The community finds itself in need of artistic and cultural content, as well as activities that will provide links to its native and adopted country. The Bosnian-Herzegovinian Film Festival fulfills this unmet need and is praised for the quality of films and cultural exposure it provides. BHFF helps bring together not only the Bosnian-American and other Balkan communities, but also film and Balkan culture enthusiasts from around the world.

Notable Guests

Honorary guests have included acclaimed members of the U.S. and Bosnian-Herzegovinian cultural community, such as Sarajevo Film Festival representatives Emina Ganić and Mirsad Purivatra; actors Snežana Bogdanović, Senad Bašić, Daniela Dakich and Uliks Fehmiu; filmmakers Igor Borovac, Gates Gooding, Chris Ernst, Alison Hanson, Refik Hodžić, Amir Husak, Namik Kabil, Rešad Kulenović, Ozren Milharčić, Nino Raspudić, Geoffrey Alan

Rhodes, Steve Nemsick, Džemal Šabić, Sabina Vajrača, Claire Wasserman and late Benjamin Filipović.

Among notable guests were also H.E. Mirsada Čolaković, Deputy Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations and Ivan Barbalić, Permanent Ambassador of the Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations and representatives from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Croatia to the United Nations.

Others have included artists Aida Šehović, Nebojša Šerić Shoba and Sara Terry; author of the international bestseller *Zlata's Diary* Zlata Filipović; poet Sasha Skenderija; singer-songwriter Jess King and DJ Tomo.

Audience Awards

Each year, BHFF audience members vote for films they consider outstanding. There are two "Golden Apple" awards presented at the closing of each annual festival: Audience Award for the Best Short or Feature Film and Audience Award for the Best Documentary Film. Films eligible for the audience awards are those screened at BHFF produced in the past two years. 2012 BHFF will also feature a special jury award.

For More Information

For more information about BHFF, please visit <http://www.bhffnyc.org/>.

