

Music Documentary is Highlight of Bosnian-Herzegovinian Film Festival

Documentary Review: 'Sevdah'

By JOE BENDEL

When they get the blues in Bosnia, they call them Sevdah or Sevdalinka when expressed in song. For many younger Bosnians in exile during the war, the Sevdalinka of the older generations came to poignantly represent their homeland and all its sorrows. United by their affection for Sevdalinka and stoked by a dearly departed mutual friend, a musician and a filmmaker explore the music as a means of grieving and healing, in Marina Andree's reflective documentary "Sevdah." It was the winner of the Audience Award at the 2009 Sarajevo Film Festival, which also won this weekend as part of this year's Bosnian-Herzegovinian Film Festival—which took place at the Tribeca Cinemas.

'Sevdah' effectively illustrates how aptly music can represent certain individuals as well as entire cultures, without overselling the point.

The late Farah Tahirbegovic's love of Sevdalinka inspired her stories and essays, stimulating a similar ardor amongst her friends and colleagues. Musician Damir Imamovic was no stranger to Sevdalinka as the grandson of Zaim Imamovic, one of the music's most beloved vocalists. However, he is a relatively recent Sevdalinka convert, adapting his Hot Club-style jazz trio to Sevdalinka, partly as a result of Tahirbegovic's influence. While the music heard throughout "Sevdah" is all quite stirring, the clear highpoints involve his Sevdah fusions, like a Sevdalinka rendition of Gershwin's "Summertime" and a traditional delta blues take on a Sevdalinka standard.

More meditative than narrative-driven, "Sevdah" ultimately culminates in the Imamovic Trio's concert at a cultural center for Bosnian youth, right on the line bisecting the divided city of Mostar. While Andree explains a bit of the music's recent history,



PLAYING FOR SMILES: A coffee house performance in the award winning Bosnian documentary "Sevdah." STUDIO DIM

she avoids extended ethno-musicologic inquiry into Sevdalinka's Turkish and Roma roots. She is more concerned with its recent cultural currency, especially as a symbol of Bosnia's primarily urban culture, at a time when it was literally under siege. For Andree and Imamovic, it serves as both anthem and requiem, providing the appropriate soundtrack to mourn those killed during war, as well as their friend, Tahirbegovic.

Imamovic's Trio and Andree's selected archival recordings (mostly featuring more traditional instrumentation, including violin, accordion, and clarinet) always sound great, conveying a keen sense of the music's dramatic yearning and its rhythmic drive. "Sevdah" also looks quite handsome, with Sandi Novak's lens soaking up the scarred beauty of the Bosnian locales, while filming the performances with an elegant sensitivity.

Though relatively short (approximately 66 minutes), "Sevdah" effectively illustrates how aptly music can represent certain individuals as well as entire cultures, without overselling the point. Often elegiac, but frequently swinging, the music is the thing in "Sevdah," and it

is very definitely worth hearing. Jazz listeners in particular should find it easily accessible. A great introduction to a beautiful musical form, "Sevdah" was a highlight of this year's BHFF, which also included Hans-Christian Schmid's "Storm," a scathing depiction of corruption and incompetence at the International Criminal Court, and Geoffrey Alan Rhodes and Steven Eastwood's "Buried Land,"

a strange hybrid of fictionalized documentary, mockumentary, and performance art that premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival last month.

Joe Bendel blogs on jazz and cultural issues at jbspins.blogspot.com and coordinated the Jazz Foundation of America's instrument donation campaign for musicians displaced by Hurricane Katrina.



BOSNIAN MUSIC: A singer performs in the film "Sevdah." STUDIO DIM

YOUR WEEKLY TV PICKS

By DEE CARLISI

MONDAY, MAY 17

After 20 years, NBC is canceling "Law & Order." Enjoy back-to-back episodes tonight.

'House'

FOX 8 p.m. - 9 p.m.
The season ends with House trying to save a woman crushed under a construction crane. The network promises a shocking last scene.

'Law & Order'

NBC 9 p.m. - 11 p.m.
In the first episode, the detectives investigate the death of a man leading two lives. In the second, they try to crack the case of a man found dead on a reality show.

'Castle'

ABC 10 p.m. - 11 p.m.
In the season finale, Castle and Beckett finally acknowledge their feelings for each other, as Beckett's romance with Demming heats up.

TUESDAY, MAY 18

The final four contestants train for their last challenge—a marathon ("The Biggest Loser," NBC, 8 p.m.).

'American Idol'

FOX 8 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Crystal, Lee, and Casey perform songs picked for them by the judges.

'The Good Wife'

CBS 10 p.m. - 11 p.m.
The competition between Alicia and Cary comes to an end when the firm chooses a junior associate.

'NCIS'

CBS 8 p.m. - 9 p.m.
The team investigates the death of a colleague, and Gibbs uncovers a surprising link to the case. Also, Rena Sofer ("24") returns as Attorney Margaret Allison Hart.

'V'

ABC 10 p.m. - 11 p.m.
In the season finale, Val goes into labor, Erica visits the Mother ship, and Chad figures out that Anna has been using him.

'Frontline'

PBS 9 p.m. - 10 p.m.
Frontline follows the story of three men who fought in Iraq and the lasting effects the war has had on their lives.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19

FOX offers a sneak peak of its new show, "The Good Guys," which will run during the summer.

'The Good Guys'

FOX 8 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Bradley Whitford and Colin Hanks star as a mismatched pair of cops in this new action-comedy. In the first episode, a routine investigation leads the pair into a much larger case.

'Cougar Town'

NBC 9:30 p.m. - 10 p.m.
In the season finale, Jules and Grayson go public with their relationship.

'Law & Order: Special Victims Unit'

NBC 10 p.m. - 11 p.m.
Benson and Stabler's search for a kidnapped boy ends with a standoff that threatens the lives of the teams.

Thursday, May 20

Other season finales tonight include: "The Office," "30 Rock," "The Mentalist," and "CSI."

'Bones'

FOX 8 p.m. - 9 p.m.
In the finale, the team tries to determine the cause of death of a hoarder who is found buried under his possessions. Billy Gibbons from ZZ Top guest stars.

'Fringe'

FOX 9 p.m. - 10 p.m.
In part two of the season finale, Olivia and Walter visit the other side. Leonard Nimoy guest stars.

'Grey's Anatomy'

ABC 9 p.m. - 11 p.m.
The sixth season wraps up with a crisis, putting Meredith and Cristina's surgical skills to the test. Mandy Moore ("A Walk to Remember") guest stars.

FRIDAY, MAY 21

"Medium" (CBS, 9 p.m.) and "The Ricky Gervais Show" (HBO, 9 p.m.) also conclude tonight.

'Ghost Whisperer'

CBS 8 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Melinda fights the supernatural forces that have been threatening her and her son.

'Kitchen Nightmares'

FOX 9 p.m. - 10 p.m.
Chef Ramsey visits past kitchens, including Handlebar, Casa Roma, and Black Pearl, on the season finale.

Weekend, May 22 - 23

"Lost" signs off for good on Sunday night. Catch the cast on "Jimmy Kimmel Live" (ABC, 12 a.m.) after the show.

Saturday, May 22

'Witchville'

SYFY 9 p.m. - 11 p.m.
SYFY premieres another original film—this one was produced in China. In the fantasy, a King must save his people from witches destroying the land.

Sunday, May 23

'ACM Presents: Brooks & Dunn - The Last Rodeo'

CBS 8 p.m. - 10 p.m.
Country music stars pay tribute to the duo in this taped concert. Among others, Keith Urban, Carrie Underwood, and George Strait perform.

'Lost'

ABC 9 p.m. - 11:30 p.m.
With so many questions left and so little time, how will "Lost" end?

Dee Carlisi writes on pop culture, and lives and works in New York.



GIVING BACK: Bo Bice, former "American Idol" finalist, announced that he will donate the proceeds of his new single, "Long Road Back," from his upcoming album, "3," to Tennessee flood victims. Here, he is pictured in Nashville last month, participating in the Idol Gives Back Charity. SAM GREENWOOD/GETTY IMAGES

Bo Bice Donates To Nashville Flood Victims and Child Cancer

By IAN RITZ
Epoch Times Staff

Bo Bice, American Idol Season 4 finalist, recently announced that he will donate the proceeds of his new single, "Long Road Back," from his upcoming album, "3," to Tennessee flood victims. "3" is scheduled for release Tuesday, with track "Long Road Back"

already available on iTunes.

His announcement closely follows a performance to generate money for children with cancer. Last week, Bice participated in a performance for the children's charity, Country Cares. The charity's mission is to raise funds for children cancer patients connected with the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis,

Tennessee. Country Cares has raised \$365 million to date, to help children with cancer.

In a statement about his current album, Bice said: "I feel like '3' is my strongest record to date. It's a plethora of sounds that show who I really am. There's something for everyone, country, soul, rock 'n roll ... it's like your favorite pair of jeans; it just feels right."

'3' is scheduled for release Tuesday, with track "Long Road Back" already available on iTunes.



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