



# REEEC

Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center  
University of Illinois at Urbana - Champaign

## MULTIMEDIA LIBRARY FEATURE FILMS: BALKAN

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## **FILMS WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES**

### **BULGARIAN:**

**14 KISSES** 1997 98 min. (VHS)

Director: Plamen Maslarov

Cast: Krystjo Lafazanov, Vasa Gancheva, Aneta Sotirova

An old rich aunt offers to make a bet with her nephew, a 35 year old orphaned bachelor. If he succeeds in captivating the hearts of 14 women and the aunt sees with her own eyes the 14 kisses, she will leave him her huge estate. The nephew is forced to accept the aunt's offer and to play the role of "seducer" but this puts him in countless funny awkward situations.

**AND WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?** 1988 98 min. (DVD x2)

Director: Rangel Vulchanov

Cast: Albena Stavreva, Ani Vulchanova, Antoaneta Stancheva, Georgi Enchev, Georgi Staykov, Genadi Nikolov, Darina Georgieva, Dimitar Goranov, Elena Arsova, Krasimira Miteva, Konstantin Trendafilov, Iliana Kitanova, Mariana Milanova, Nikolai Urumow, Petar Popyordanov, Todor Elmazov, Tsvetana Mircheva

This film is about an imaginary actors exam. In order to choose the best one the exam jury uses even immoral ways of selecting - spying, making conflicts, humiliating the applicants, taking advantage of its power.

**CANARY SEASON** 1988 133 min. (VHS)

Director: Eugeny Mihaylov

Cast: Plamena Getova, Paraskeva Djukelova, Peter Popyordanov

Angry and defiant upon his release from prison, young Malin confronts his mother and forces her to reveal horrors of Bulgaria's "lost generation" (1960-1990) that she had hoped he would never know. Through a series of flashbacks we learn of the repression of the communist regime: rape, prostitution, torture, political murder, and psychiatric asylums.

**BORDER** 1993 85 min. (VHS)

Director: Ilian Simeonov and Christian Notchev

Cast: Petar Popyordanov, Elena Petrova, Marian Volev

The film takes place at a small military frontier post at the southern border of Bulgaria in the 1970's. Two soldiers are assigned to guard the wire fence that runs along the border and they gradually realize that the guarding is not so much for keeping people from coming into the country, but for not letting anyone out of the country

**THE GOAT HORN** 1994 89 min. (DVD)

Director: Nikolay Volev

Cast: Alexander Morfov, Elene Petrova, Peter Popyordanov, Alexander Doynov, Valentin Ganev

This movie is about a Christian shepherd and his small family during the Ottoman rule. He and his family are traumatized by the murder of his wife by Turks and he trains his young daughter to exact revenge on those who murdered his wife. He later struggles with his daughter as she becomes a woman and falls in love with a lonely Muslim shepherd.

**THE PEACH THIEF** 1964 103 min. (DVD)

Director: Valo Radev

Cast: Nevena Kokanova, Rade Markovich, Mikhail Mikhailov, Naum Shopov, Vasil Vatchev, Ivan Bratanov, Georgi Georgiev, Ludmila Cheshmedjieva

World War I is coming to its end. Prisoners of war are coming into the town with Serv Ivo among them. During one of his escapes from the camp, he finds himself in a private garden. There he meets Lisa, the wife of the town-major- a severe and heartless colonel. She is sad, lonely and meeting with Serv excites her. Gradually, her compassion for the Serb develops into a deep mutual love. Their meetings become more frequent. But the lovers are doomed.

**TIME OF VIOLENCE** 1987 158 min. (DVD)

Director: Ljudmil Staykov

Cast: Yosif Sartchadgiev, Roussy Chaney, Anya Pentcheva, Ivan Krastev, Vasil Michailov, Kalina Stefanova

A miller's son is a highly trusted janissary, with the task of converting his entire home valley to Islam. But the people will not submit. The janissary becomes more and more brutal in his attempts to convert the valley, for he must slaughter them all if they don't take the turban.

## ROMANIAN:

### **4 MONTHS, 3 WEEKS AND 2 DAYS** (DVD) - NEW

"Two college roommates have 24 hours to make the ultimate choice as they finalize arrangements for a black-market abortion. What follows is a gripping, heart-stopping dramam, set before the fal of Communism, about friendship, sacrifice and desperation." In Romanian, with English and Spanish subtitles. 2007.

### **BUCHAREST EXPRESS** (DVD)

This is a fictional docu-drama about trafficking of women in Eastern Europe. "An American journalist, a mysterious Gypsy woman and a bookkeeper with an inside angle try to stay one step ahead of a gang of ruthless killers as they uncover the horrors of the human trafficking of sex slaves in the Balkans..."

### **THE CRAZY STRANGER** In French and Romany: 1997 97 min. (VHS)

Director: Tony Gatlif

Cast: Romain Duris, Rona Hartner, Isidor Serban

A young man from Paris travels to Romania looking for his recently deceased father's favorite singer. He wants to put the singer's music on tape. He befriends an elderly Rom gentleman and spends six months living in the the old man's community.

### **THE DEATH OF MR. LAZARESCU** 2005 153 min. (DVD)

Director: Cristi Puiu

Cast: Ion Fiscuteanu, Luminița Gheorghiu

After suffering terrible headaches which he can no longer bear, Dante Lazarescu finally calls for an ambulance. Accompanied by paramedic Mioara, who becomes his lone ally, Lazarescu begins his night-long journey in search of proper medical care.

### **THE OAK** 1992 105 min. (VHS)

Director: Lucian Pintilie

Cast: Maia Morgenstern, Razvan Vasilescu

In this edgy, savagely funny depiction of Romania in the last stages of Ceausescu's dictatorship, Nela, whose secret police father has just died, sets off into the desolate countryside with his ashes in a coffee jar. When she lands in a run-down, overcrowded hospital, Nela begins a makshift love affair with a brilliant, rudely irreverent doctor.

### **STONE WEDDING** 1971 85 min. (VHS)

*Stone Wedding* is comprised of two short films based on stories by the classic Romanian writer Igor Agarciceanu, dealing with peasant life and traditions in the Carpathian mountains.

Includes *Fefelega*(directed by Mircea Veroiu) and *At a Wedding* (directed by Dan Pita).

### **AN UNFORGETTABLE SUMMER** In English, French, Romaian, and Bulgarian: 1995 82 min. (VHS)

Director: Lucian Pintilie

Cast: Kristin Scott-Thomas; Claudiu Bleont; Olga Tudorache; George Constantin; Ion Pavlescu

Kristin Scott-Thomas stars as Marie-Thérèse, a young woman sent to a remote military outpost with her army officer husband and their children. She tries in vain to establish a genteel, civilized presence in this backward region. Ultimately, she and her husband are thrown into conflict as he is ordered by his superiors to execute a local group of bandits that may or may not be guilty.

**THE WAY I SPENT THE END OF THE WORLD** 2006 110 min. (DVD)

Director: Cătălin Mitulescu

Cast: Dorotheea Petre, Timotei Duma, Carmen Ungureanu, Mircea Diaconu

The film is about 17 year old Eva and 7 year old Lilu, a sister and brother living in Bucharest during the final years of the communist regime of Nicolae Ceaușescu. After Eva is expelled from her high school for her uncooperative attitude, she is sent to a technical school where she meets Andrei, with whom she plans to escape communist Romania by swimming across the Danube into Yugoslavia and relocating to Italy. Lilu and his friends, meanwhile, volunteer for a children's choir scheduled to sing for Ceaușescu, hoping this will give them a chance to assassinate the dictator.

## **SERBIAN/CROATIAN/BOSNIAN:**

### **THE AMBULANCE** 2009 81 min. (DVD)

Director: Goran Radovanović

Cast: Vesna Trivalić, Nenad Jezdić, Natasa Ninković, Sonja Kolacarić

The stories settle in Serbia between the years 2000 and 2005, from the end of the regime Milosevic over the assassination of Djindjic, the film-scenes combined subtle with news from that time, so you always have a good and often oppressive idea of the political and social situation (war, loss of family, destruction of homes, poverty, unemployment, nationalism, exodus to name a few: poor words for the tragedy that has happened in former Yugoslavia), the characters have to deal with.

### **ATOMIC WAR BRIDE** 1966 (VHS)

Director: Veljko Bulajic

Cast: Anton Vrdoljak, Ewa Krzyzewska

Eternally optimistic John Johnson decides to get married just as war is declared. But immediately after his wedding, John is "moblized" by the military to fight. He soon ends up leading a protest against the war. A darkly satirical sci-fi film, which isn't afraid to be both silly and grim.

### **BEFORE THE RAIN** 1994 115 min. (VHS & DVD)

Director: Milcho Manchevski

Three intertwined stories are joined in this haunting feature about individuals facing hard choices. Set in the former Yugoslavia and London, it combines ethical and moral quandaries with compelling situations and jarringly striking settings. Academy Award nominee for Best Foreign Language Picture.

### **CABARET BALKAN** 1998 102 min. (VHS)

Director: Goran Paskaljevic

Cast: Nikolas Ristanoski, Lazar, Ristovski, Mirjana Jokovic, Sergej Trifunovic

Driven by both rage and humor, this visually exciting film presents a dark portrait of life in the war-torn Balkans. The black comedy and rising tension of the plot combine to create a powerful though despairing emotional tone. The story shifts among several characters confronted by, or committing, acts of violence, betrayal or total madness, culminating in one explosive night.

### **CASTING** 2003 52 min (DVD)

Director: Goran Radovanović

After the fall of Slobodan Milosevic, the transition period in Belgrade led to severe unemployment. To make a decent living, many people turned to unusual sources of income--work of a rather provocative nature. Many applied for roles in a television commercial selling pantyhose. Some became escorts and took a further step into prostitution. Some posed for sex magazines and a few even acted in pornographic films. Casting is a documentary about people forced to take desperate measures-even compromise their moral standards-to make money in the economically deprived climate of Eastern Europe.

**CHARUGA** 1991 108 min. (VHS)

Director: Rajko Grlic

Cast: Ivo Gregurevic, Davor Janjic, Petar Bozovic

A sophisticated and spectacular action-adventure film with political themes, *Charuga* is the story of a Croatian Robin Hood. Charuga was a 1920's fanatic ex-soldier and Bolshevik who tried to bring the Soviet Revolution to Yugoslavia. He began by robbing from the rich and giving to the poor. But as with many self-styled revolutionaries, he soon began robbing from everyone and keeping it all for himself.

**CHICKEN ELECTIONS** 2005 48 min. (DVD)

Director: Goran Radovanovic

A film about 'contemporary social life in the rural Balkans...an old Serbian peasant is trying to learn how to operate a used mobile phone which she got from her grandchild, a local traffic policeman...Finally, when she somehow learns how to use it she dies...'

**FREE RADICAL ECLIPSE SERIES 18** 1965-68 (DVD)

Director: Dušan Makavejev

Cast: Milena Dravic, Branko Cvejic, Boris Komnenic, Gorica Popovic, Matija Prskalo

There's never been another filmmaker quite like Dušan Makavejev. Even in the 1960s, when all of cinema's rules seemed to be breaking down and artists such as Godard, Cassavetes, and Marker were dissolving the boundary between fiction and documentary, Yugoslavia's Makavejev stood alone. His films about political and sexual liberation were revolutionary, raucous, and ribald. Across these, his wild, collagelike first three films, Makavejev investigates—with a tonic mix of earnestness and whimsy—love, death, and work; the legacy of war and the absurdity of daily life in a Communist state; criminology and hypnosis; strudels and strongmen.

**HEY BABU RIBA** 1986 109 min. (VHS)

Director: Jovan Acin

Cast: Gala Videnovic, Relja Basic

Pop, Glenn, Sacha, and Kicha are four vivacious and impetuous teenagers coming of age in 1950's Belgrade. All four are mad about Glenn Miller, the sport of rowing, American blue jeans, and Marina - their comely, ethereal rowing captain. But suddenly, the powerful bond that links the five friends grows even stronger as together they endure their families' suffering and sacrifices in the wake of communism.

**GRBAVICA** 2006 90 min. (DVD)

Director: Jasmila Žbanić

Cast: Mirjana Karanović, Luna Mijović, Leon Lucev

A woman and her daughter struggle to make their way through the aftermath of the Balkan war.

**LOVING GLANCES** 2003 97 min. (DVD)

Director: Srđan Karanović

Cast: Senad Alihodzic, Ivana Bolanca

It is 1995 post war Croatia and handsome, lonely Labud misses his girlfriend Vida, when the lovers were separated during the Yugoslav War. He hopes to reunite with her, but knows the chances are they never will. After a series of disastrous dates, from a computer dating service, he finally meets and falls in love with the beautiful Romana. This lovely and funny romantic film shows refugees trying to eke out a normal life against the strange and scary landscape of a post-war country.

**THE MELODY HAUNTS MY REVERIE** 1981 103min. (VHS)

Director: Rajko Grlic

Cast: Predrag Manojlovic, Vladica Milosavljevic, Maden Budiscak, Zijah Sokolovic, Erland Josephson

This is the story of an idealistic young partisan war hero who becomes a leader in the emerging socialist society of a small Croat village, and finds adjustment of the "new Yugoslavia" extremely difficult. He meets and falls in love with a middle-class ballerina, becomes involved with her bourgeois family and is eventually imprisoned.

**NO MAN'S LAND** 2001 97 min. (DVD)

Director: Danis Tanovic

Cast: Branko Djuric, Rene Bitorajac, Filip Sovagovic

Set in the unforgiving trenches of the Bosnian-Serb conflict, this film follows the story of three soldiers caught between two fighting lines.

**PRETTY VILLAGE, PRETTY FLAME** 1996 125 min. (VHS)

Director: Srdjan Dragojevic

Cast: Dragan Bjelogrljic; Nikola Kojo; Zoran Cvijanovic

Based on an incident that happened in the first winter of the war in Bosnia in 1992, Dragojevic's provocative and disturbing movie "unleashes a powerful assault on the insanity of the war" (New York Times). Two young boys, Halil, a Muslim, and Milan, a Serb, watch the inauguration of the new Brotherhood and Unity Tunnel in their neighborhood in 1980. Twelve years later, Halil and Milan are now on opposing sides, and Milan lies badly injured alongside wounded Serbs and Muslims in the same hospital as he recalls the events that brought him there.

**SAN ZIMSKE NOĆI (MIDNIGHTER'S DREAM)** 2004 95 min. (DVD)

Director: Goran Paskaljević

Cast: Lazar Ristovski, Jasna Zalica and Jovana Mitić

The movie is an allegory of the Yugoslav Wars, starring an autistic child as the main character. When first released in Serbia, it caused some public outrage because of the sharp criticism of Serbia's role in the war.

**TIME OF THE GYPSIES** 1990 136 min. (DVD)

Director: Emir Kusturica

Winner of the Best Director Award at Cannes. The story of a young gypsy boy with telekinetic gifts pursuing wealth in Eastern Europe.

**TITO AND ME** 1992 104 min. (VHS)

Director: Goran Markovic

Cast: Dimitrie Vojnov; Lazar Ristovski; Anika Dobra

Set in Belgrade in 1954, a comical story of 10-year old Zoran, who to his parents' dismay, adores Yugoslavia's leader Tito more than he does his own family.

**UNDERGROUND** In German and Serbian: 1995 167 min. (VHS)

Director: Emir Kusturica

Cast: Miki Manojlovic; Lazar Ristovski; Mirjana Jokovic; Slavko Stimac

Considered Kusturica's masterpiece, this film portrays the downfall of Yugoslavia. The story follows two friends who reinvent their personal and political existences to the point of absurdity as they witness the massive changes that their country goes through from WWII to present. Winner of Palme d'Or at 1995 Cannes.

**WARD SIX** 1976 93 min. (VHS)

Director: Lucien Pintilie

Based on Chekhov's story of a doctor who oversees a grotesque mental ward and is judged mad and locked up with one of his patients.

**WHEN FATHER WAS AWAY ON BUSINESS** 1985 144 min. (DVD)

Director: Emir Kusturica

A portrait of a boy's coming of age in 50's Yugoslavia. As little Malik takes up sleepwalking and experiences his first love, the family knows the real "business" Father is conducting--in a labor camp for his unrepentant Stalinist leanings and his philandering.

**WITNESSES** 2003 90 min. (DVD)

Director: Vinko Brešan

Cast: Leon Lučev, Alma Prica, Mirjana Karanović, Dražen Kühn

The plot of the movie is centered in the city of Karlovac in 1992, during the Croatian War of Independence. The front lines, where Croatian and Serbian forces fight each other, lie near the city. Meanwhile, in the city of Karlovac, a Serbian civilian Vasić is murdered. The story follows the local police officer Barbir, who tries to solve the murder in spite of ethnic hatred and war revolving nearby.

**THE WOUNDS** 1998 103 min. (DVD)

Director: Srdjan Dragojevic

Cast: Dusan Pekic, Milan Maric, Dragan Bjelogrljic

Two teenage criminals, Pinki and Krout, use violence to achieve the power and fame they crave in war-torn Bosnia. Based on actual events, this is a portrait of a wounded country and its people.

**ZEMLJA ISTINE, LJUBAVI I SLOBODE** 2000 72 min. (DVD)

Director: Milutin Petrović

Cast: Djordje Andjelic, Dalibor Andonov and Predrag Bambic

In 1999, during the NATO bombing in Serbia, a young television editor (Boris Milivojevic) in an underground shelter - turned mental institution is having a psychiatric exploration through which he reflects his story...

## TURKISH

**ALONE** 2008 113 min. (DVD)

Director: Çagan Irmak

Suitable for courses on gender, consumerism, post-modernity. Alper is in his mid 30s and a good chef at his own restaurant. He loves luxury and spends his life with one-night stands and paid love. One day, his life changes utterly as he walks into a second-hand shop where he first encounters Ada who is in her late 20s and has a shop where she designs costumes for kids. She leads a modest life and one day while looking for a book, her and Alper's paths cross. Alper is fascinated by Ada's beauty and starts following her with the book she has been looking for.

**ARAF: SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN** 2012 124 min. (DVD)

Director: Yeşim Ustaoglu

Suitable for courses on rural economy, modernization, youth, gender, sexuality, social conditions, Turkey. Araf – 'Somewhere in Between', relays the tale of two youngsters, Zehra and Olgun, who are stuck in kind of limbo in their lives. This life passes by in a service station where everything seems transient and vacuous, the only thing that keeps them going in their banal monotonous 24 hr work shifts is their naive youthful expectation of excitement and change on the horizon. When they are off they escape by watching the trashy daytime TV shows which tantalizingly promise an easy quick passage to a glamorous life.

**BLISS** 2007 105 min. (DVD)

Director: Abdullah Oguz

Suitable for courses on gender, the body, patriarchy, religion, Turkey. When a young woman named Meryem (Özgü Namal) is raped, her village custom requires that she be killed in order for the dishonour to be expunged from her family. A young man named Cemal (Murat Han), the son of the village leader, is given the task but at the last moment he has doubts. The pair go on the run, followed close behind by local thugs intent on killing the girl. Luckily enough, Cemal and Meryem meet up with a charismatic man named Irfan, an ex-university professor who is embarking on a sailing trip, and needs a crew.

**CONQUEST 1453** 2012 162 min (DVD)

Director: Farouk Aksoy

Suitable for courses on the Ottoman empire, nation, memory, popular culture, neo-Ottomanism, Turkey. The film is opened in Medina during the time of the prophet Muhammad (627). Abu Ayyub al-Ansari tells other sahabas that Constantinople will be conquered by a blessed commander and army.

**THE GOVERNOR** 2009 93 min. (DVD)

Director: Çagatay Tosun

Suitable for courses on politics, economy, corruption, government, Turkey. Faruk Yazici is the idealist governor of the Aegean city of Denizli, where a team of engineers from the Turkish Mining Exploration Institute (MTA) have recently discovered reserves of uranium. The governor joins forces with childhood friend and head of MTA engineers Omer Ucar, in a fight against the beautiful and scheming bureaucrat Ceyda Aydin, who actually works to get mines in Turkey under the control of foreign companies. Interestingly, a number of unexplained murders are uncovered only a short while after the governor and the MTA engineers focus on the reserves in Denizli.

**I SAW THE SUN** 2009 120 min. (DVD)

Director: Mahsun Kırmızıgül

Suitable for courses on forced migration, emigration, nation, minority, gender, sexuality, civil war, 1980s, Kurds, Turkey. With the introduction of forced migration policies, a Kurdish family finds itself wrenched from the village. This is the story of their relocation from east to west. Haydar and İsa Altun arrive with their respective families in Istanbul, where they decide to stay. But Davut Altun, his wife and children set their sights further afield and travel on to Norway. Spanning a period of 25 years, the film recounts the experiences of the three families as they struggle to find their feet in alien surroundings.

**THE ROAD** 1982 114 min. (DVD)

Director: Yılmaz Güney

Suitable for courses on everyday life, 1980 military coup. *Yol* tells the story of several Kurdish prisoners on furlough in Turkey. Seyit Ali (Tarık Akan) travels to his house and finds that his wife (Şerif Sezer) has betrayed him and works as a prostitute. She was caught by her family and held captive for Seyit Ali to end her life in an honor killing. Though apparently determined at first, he changes his mind when his wife starts to freeze while travelling in the snow. Despite his efforts to keep her alive, he eventually fails. His wife's death relieves Seyit Ali from family pressure and he is saved from justice since she freezes but he has an internal struggle and must return to jail.

**TIMES AND WINDS** 2006 112 min. (DVD)

Director: Reha Erdem

Suitable for courses on youth, social conditions, Turkey. A small, poor village leaning over high rocky mountains, facing the immense sea, flanked by olive yards. Villagers are simple and diligent people who struggle to cope with a harsh nature. They earn their living, on a daily survival basis, out of the earth and of a few animals they feed. Just like the animals and trees around them, they have the knowledge of their temporary existence, hence a sober resignation prevails.

## **FILMS IN ENGLISH**

**BALKAN EXPRESS** 1983 102 min. (VHS)

Director: Branko

An offbeat comedy about a band of roving musicians who are con men, when the Nazis invade. Their madcap adventures contrast with the horrors of war. Dubbed in English.