

EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS

VIVE LA ROMANIA

Cristian Mungiu's "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 days" takes the Palme d'Or

Cannes, France, May 27, 2007

The international critics corps can be a tough crowd (if they don't like a film here, they boo), but they mostly agreed that the 60th anniversary of the Cannes Film Festival presented an especially strong slate of movies. At the awards ceremony at the Palais on Sunday evening, the head of the jury, British director Stephen Frears ("The Queen"), praised the selections. "I am told by people who come every year that this was a terrific festival. Thank you. The films were a pleasure to watch." They were also tough to watch, with meditations and stories about evil, sickness and death — but filled, too, with the triumph, or sometimes just the mere survival, of the human spirit.

And so it was no surprise that the top prize, the Palme d'Or, went to one of the darlings of the festival, "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days," from Romanian director Cristian Mungiu. The film is set in 1987 Bucharest, during the waning years of the Soviet bloc. It tells the story of a college student who has an illegal abortion, her friend and the abortionist, who is also a rapist. Whew, no?

From the review by Variety: "Mungiu's goal is to visualize the overwhelming weight of the soul-destroying compromises of life during the Ceausescu years through clear-eyed, deeply humane stories. If '4 Months' is anything to go by, what Mungiu calls 'urban legends' are more urban tragedies, chosen from the thousands of tales illustrating the small nicks and cuts not to the flesh but to the spirit."

Taking the stage at the Palais, Mungiu said that because of the attention his film received at Cannes, "this story will now reach other people." He noted that "it is good news for small films from small countries that you don't need a big budget and big stars." The film was purchased for an undisclosed sum by IFC Entertainment, which plans to simultaneously release it theatrically in the United States and through its on-demand cable offerings. No date has been set.

The awards ceremony for the biggest and most important film festival on the planet is like the American Academy Awards, but not. The mood is much more mellow. In fact, Cannes today had that last-day-of-summer-vacation vibe, as all the party palaces on the beach began to fold their tents, and the bay emptied of mega-yachts. The pretty people and playboys headed east — perhaps for the auto races at Monaco — and the Hollywood money got on planes back to LAX.

There are police working security at the awards show, but the public can get close to the red stairs to watch the directors and stars climb the carpet to the Palais. There are babies in strollers. A few thousand people, max, they hold up their digital cameras or just watch. No pushing. Little shoving. The sound system plays . . . opera? The Oscars, by comparison, feel as locked down as Gitmo: very fearful, with lots of bomb squads. Here, a guest or media person walks up, flashes a ticket, gets a quick, careless wand and is in.

Also, the awards show is over in a flash. No film clips, no musical numbers, no Billy Crystal. There are lots of double-cheek kisses. Some of the winners bring their handbags with them to the stage. The acceptance speeches can be just as hammy, weepy and giddy as those in Los Angeles, though. One winner confessed he has not worn a tuxedo since his bar mitzvah.

The American painter and director Julian Schnabel won a best director prize for "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly," the French-language adaptation of the best-selling memoir by Jean-Dominique Bauby, the French Elle magazine editor afflicted with "locked-in syndrome" — mentally aware but unable to physically respond — after a stroke. Before he took his award, Schnabel (wearing sunglasses) shook hands with each of the jurors, who were sitting on the stage on little chair/thrones.

"I thought I was making a movie about a paralyzed guy," he said, "but it's really a movie about these amazing women" — Bauby's wives, lovers and caretakers. Then he said, "They say



Jane Fonda and Cristian Mungiu

the problem with France is the French — and that's a lie." That was kind of weird.

Jane Fonda presented. She spoke entirely in French, which our French colleagues pronounced as pretty good. There were no prizes for Michael Moore's health-care documentary "Sicko" or Leonardo DiCaprio's "11th Hour," because those films were not in competition. Of the 20 American films in competition, only Gus Van Sant's "Paranoid Park" took a prize, the 60th Anniversary Prize. Skunked were David Fincher's "Zodiac," the Coen brothers' "No Country for Old Men," James Gray's "We Own the Night" and Tarantino's "Death Proof."

William Booth published this article in WASHINGTON POST on Monday, May 28, 2007



Romanian Beneficial and Cultural Society "Graiul Romanesc"

1735 LaBelle St., Windsor, ON Canada, N9E 1B3

The Most Recent Honorary Members of Graiul Romanesc

June 10, 2007



From left to right: Mary Ivanoff, Mitch Oncea, Gisele Opincariu, and Dorothy Nicholson. President George Plantus is standing behind the group

America nu are un prieten mai bun decat Romania

"Am mai spus acest lucru si il repet: America nu are un prieten mai bun decat Romania", a afirmat ambasadorul american in Romania, Nicholas Taubman intr-un discurs rostit cu ocazia Zilei Independentei Statelor Unite.

In aceasta zi sunt celebrate si "stransa prietenie si parteneriatul" cu Romania, a continuat diplomatul american in timpul receptiei organizate in aer liber la resedinta sa, la care au fost prezenti membri ai corpului diplomatic, numerosi invitati, printre care presedintele Traian Basescu si premierul Calin Popescu Tariceanu. Pornind de la redactarea Constitutiei SUA in 1787 la Philadelphia, Taubman a vorbit si despre faptul ca "o Constitutie este expresia suprema a vointei poporului" si nu ar trebui sa fie supusa schimbarii exclusiv de catre clasa politica sau de interese inradacinate, ci doar cu acordul tuturor cetatenilor cu drept de vot".

Romania to promote production of clean energy

Romania will encourage the promotion of environment technology for the production of clean energy, the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development Attila Korodi said in Essen, Germany.

Attending the informal meeting on environment ministers of EU member and candidate states, Attila Korodi had two speeches during the session on the role of ecological innovations in an industrialized society and on the ways to cope with the climatic changes and the loss of biodiversity and natural resources.

Referring to the EU goals established during the Spring European Council to reduce the greenhouse effect emissions with 20 percent by 2020 and 30 percent at national level, the Romanian official stressed the importance of the research activity in finding efficient solutions.

"Each country obtains the necessary energy either by burning fuels, using water force, nuclear reactors or unconventional means such as wind and sun energy in different percentages. We must encourage the promotion of environment technologies able to produce a clean energy," said Korodi.

Romanian Festival in Washington DC

On May 20th, 2007 Romanian Charge D'Affaires a.i. Daniela Gitman attended the Romanian Festival organized by the Holly Cross Romanian Orthodox Church and the Romanian community in the DC area.

The event took place at the Carderock Park and featured Romanian folk music concerts with artists Ducu Bertzi and Florian Pittis who especially traveled from Bucharest for this performance, as well as local artists Mioara Pitulice, and dancing performances with ensembles Ardeleana and Ciprian Porumbescu.

Over 500 guests enjoyed the Romanian traditional food: mititei, sarmale and other hors d'oeuvres while sports fans had the opportunity to meet and get autographs from Romanian former basketball player Ghita Muresan and gymnast Aurelia Dobre.



EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS EVENTS