



Conceived and produced by Patrick Sandrin

OPEN CLASS

the world on film

N.°14

“Sunny side of the doc” in Sofia

Meeting with Bulgarian documentary film-making

MARCH 14 2009.
from 14,30

Military club

Tsar Osvoboditel boul. N.° 7 - Sofia

Free entrance
Excerpts of films
with english subtitles
Simultaneous translation
Bulgarian/English



→ Hosts

Patrick SANDRIN

Director of OPEN CLASS
and producer

Nevena PRAMATAROVA

Journalist

→ Participants

Yves JEANNEAU

Director of “Sunny Side
of the Doc” and producer

Stefan KITANOV

Director of “Sofia International
Film Festival” and producer

Sevda SHISHMANOVA

Journalist, documentarist – official at
the Bulgarian National Television

Andrey PAOUNOV

Film director

Martichka BOJILOVA

Producer

Partners:



A SOCIETY CANNOT BE BASED ON SOME SYSTEM. ANY SOCIETY IS BUILT MAINLY UPON A COMBINATION OF IRRATIONAL FACTORS: ITS PAST, ITS MORALS AND ITS CUSTOMS, WHICH INDUCES A VIOLENT OPPOSITION OF THEORETICAL VIEWS.

CLAUDE LEVI STRAUSS

Patrick Sandrin

Producer and director of the **OPEN CLASS**

OPEN CLASS's purpose is to open the door to variety, to encourage vocation and originality. People attend its editions in order to share their professional passion, to watch films, to find new sources of knowledge, to hear and watch the ideas, genres, styles and practices which make cinema eclectic being put together. The topic of these editions is aesthetics, but also the need of a critical view, of policy and of ethics. By far, in Sofia, we have usually shown the cinema recorded "elsewhere", "elsewhere" in its broadest sense. The fourteenth edition of **OPEN CLASS**'s purpose, however, is to show Bulgarian documentary cinema and its "new wave" coming from all participants in **SUNNY- SIDE in Sofia** who are quite a few producers from Europe and other parts of the world. I am especially grateful to Yves Jeanneau for accepting our offer, and also to Stefan Kitanov for being our host us during "**SOFIA FILM FEST**". We will neither make a comprehensive review of local productions, nor a historical view of similar films. I asked the participants in this **OPEN CLASS**'S edition- producers, directors and disseminators- to choose a few films by some original authors, representative of a trend which stands out from the prevailing classical academic productions trend. This "new trend" is not a result only of the change of generations. In the past, some directors stood out as original, modern- minded, differently- thinking artists. Those I have in mind are **Vasil Zhivkov, Kostadin Boney, Ivan Mladenov**, and **Eldora Traykova** and **Adela Peveva** who are more- recent directors. Nowadays, some artists have revived the trend of original works: **Andrey Paunov, Stefan Komandarev,**

Boris Despodov were noticed and awarded at the most significant international festivals. Bulgaria's liberation in its broadest sense, no matter whether in the economic, political or cultural aspect, will undoubtedly accelerate the process of conception of new talents as the offspring of the national genius. This is because the process is already a fact both here and elsewhere. Although it is impossible for the Bulgarian artists I've just mentioned to find their own means for production, distribution and display of films at the local level, to make use of some educated critics' support which is necessary for vanguard artists to emerge and stay; although they suffer a shortage of politic will and an appropriate attitude towards culture on the part of institutions, they together with some artists- to- be find and undoubtedly will find allies, partners, critics, producers, disseminators, international audience "beyond the walls" that is- beyond Bulgaria's borders. And this process will be ever- growing. Revolutions in digital technologies and the easier and more available means for production that go along with it, transform the work and the scripts of the directors, as well as the sphere of art experiments. The tendency is more freedom and fewer restrictions. Thus it is easy to avoid the clumsiness of the too classical production procedures and to accelerate the process of enriching the artists' works. The Internet, the producers' creative charge, international cooperation and the variety of financial sources nowadays make it possible for people to produce, show and disseminate films without conforming to arbitrariness, tastes and national limitations.



PATRICK SANDRIN

Biographical data

Multi-discipline education in arts, big interest in the cultural diversity, uncontainable passion for travelling and highly cultivated sense of difference are the factors that have predestined his vocation and the activities, in which he is involved. A photographer, later a director ("News from Santiago", 52 min., shot in Chile for ARTE), he started collaboration as a producer with different creative artists, and maintained their ideas, style and beliefs. He was a member of different commissions of the National Cinema Center in Paris : "Avance sur recettes", Subvention for distribution (cinema), EKO Fund (support of the cinema in the East-European countries), Villa Medicis (The "Prix de Rome" for cinema). In 1995 he founded "Sofilm" – one of the first independent producer houses in Bulgaria after the fall of the Berlin wall and in 2005 he founds OPEN CLASS. **As a delegated producer (Arion Production and Les Films du Cyclone)** he has participated in more than **25 productions and co-productions of directors from four continents**, among them: •Fina Torres (Venecuela), •Emilio Pacull (France), •Paul Leduc (Mexico), •Miguel Littin (Chile), •Paulo Rocha (Portugal), •Valeria Sarmiento (Chile), •Nikita Mikhalkov

(Russia), •Alain Fleisher (France), •Iamanol Uribe (Spain), •Werner Herzog (Germany), •Alain Tanner (Switzerland), •Francisco Norden (Colombia). Most of their movies have undergone selection and have been awarded at one of the biggest festivals: **Cannes, Venice, Berlin, New York, Toronto, and at the International festival of audio-visual programs FIPA**, and as for documentaries-at the "**Cinéma du reel**" Festival. He was also a co-producer together with Bulgarian producing companies (Post-scriptum 2, Gala Films, Borough Films, Asen Vladimirov) for movies of five Bulgarian directors (Peter Popzlatev, Liudmil Todorov, Ivan Cherkelov, Hristo Hristov and Eldora Traykova), and recently he took part as a co-producer in Ivan Stanev's movie "The Moon Lake", produced by Donka Angelova and in Stefan Ivanov's documentary "The road before us", together with Borough Films and Les Films de l'Île (Canada).

With his producing company **SOFILM** he participated as an executive producer in about thirty movies, shot on the territory of Bulgaria, among them the co-productions: Regis Wargnier's "East-West" nominated for **Oscar** and "Strange foreigner" (Julia Kristeva) – a co-production with INA and the cultural TV channel ARTE.



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From the 11th to the 14th of March 2009 : 6th annual coproduction conference « Rendezvous with Sofia »

This inevitable meeting of all documentary professionals this year celebrates its twentieth anniversary on June 23rd in La Rochelle (France) – a place chosen as for the role of the host after Marseille.

Yves JEANNEAU

Founder and Head of the
Sunny Side of the Doc

Producer – **Telfrance** since March 2006

Previously, he was Head of Documentaries at **france 2**. Prior to joining **france 2**, he was Head of Documentaries at **Pathé Television**.

From 1984-2000 he was General Manager for les **Films d'Ici** (literally “The Films from Here”), a production company he co-founded with Richard Copans.

Yves Jeanneau has produced more than **100 documentary films**, including : • **The Pinochet case** by Patricio Guzman, **Norman Mailer's America** by Richard Copans and Stan Neumann, **The Gospel According to the Papuans** by Thomas Balmes, **Chile memoria obstinada** by Patricio Guzman, **Music for the Movies** (a collection of six films), **Transantartica** by Laurent Chevalier, **That's Poker** by Hervé Martin-Delpierre, **Space Hackers** by Alessandro Bernard, Paolo Ceretto and Enrico Cerasuolo, **Secrets of Parthenon** by Gary Glassman.



Stefan KITANOV

Producer and director of the International Sofia Film Festival

"Bulgarian documentary cinema has long traditions. In the last 20 years it kept the Bulgarian's cinematography authority in a period, when feature films were looking for their identity. The international cinema festivals traditionally comply with the Bulgarian documentarists. In the last 10 years the leading names of our documentary are **Andrey Paunov, Adela Peeva, Kostadin Bonev, Boris Despodov, Eldora Traykova, Stefan Komandarev.**

My experience in producing documentaries is short, but I had an opportunity to work in the creation of different kind of documentary cinema: Nikolay Yotov's full-length **•Passion for Lea** and middle-length Stefan Komandarev's **•Bread above the fence** and Zlatina Ruseva's **•Against the stream** (Bulgaria-Belgium). In the contemporary development condition of our documentary cinema the most curious is the approach of **Agitprop** company and the producer **Martichka Bozilova** in the creation of full-length (creative) documentaries, intended for TV broadcasting, as well as for distribution to the cinema hall. Martichka, and Adela Peeva, have become approved producers of documentaries with trustworthy reputation in the international professional circles and partnership with the leading TV channels, producers and festival of documentary cinema in the world."

Biographical data

Stefan Kitanov is festival director, producer, distributor and musician. From 1992 until 1999 he was director and programmer of the **Cinema House**, Sofia. In 1997 he founded "**Sofia International Film Festival**".

Since 2000 Kitanov have produced and co-produced films which received national and international recognition. Features: **•The World Is Big and Salvation Lurks around the Corner** (2008) by **Stephan Komandarev**; **•Which Way Today** (2007) by Rangel Valchanov; **•Gucha – Distant Trumpet** (2006) by Dusan Milic, **•Lost and Found** (2005) by Nadejda Koseva, Cristian Mungiu, Jasmila Zbanic, Kornel Mundruczo, Stefan Arsenijevic, Mait Laas, **•Rhapsody in White** (2002) by Teddy Moskov. Documentaries: **•Against the Stream** (2008) by Zlatina Ruseva, **•Bread over the fence** (2002) by Stephan Komandarev. **•Passions for Lea** (2000) by Nikolay Yotov.

Over the last 5 years Kitanov has released almost 30 European films by directors as **Wim Wenders, Francois Ozon, Fatih Akin, Lars von Trier, Aki Kaurismaki, Terry Gilliam, Dardenne Brothers, Kornel Mundruczo, Radivoje Andric.**

Kitanov was member of juries in **Venice, Cannes, Karlovy Vary, Wiesbaden, Frankfurt, Thessaloniki, and European Parliament.** He is a member of the **European Film Academy** and of the internationally acclaimed **The Festival Band.**



Sevda SHISHMANOVA

Journalist and documentarist

"There was a huge poster at the latest IDFA 2008 Amsterdam event, representing the biggest forum for documentary cinema in Europe. Actually it was made up of two posters that stick together. One for Werner Herzog's •**The white diamond**. The other for Andrey Paunov's •**Georgi and the butterflies**. If something important is happening in the Bulgarian documentary cinema, this is the strong individual breakthrough. It does not depend on some national strategy for creating, priority funding, making a reputation or promotion of the Bulgarian documentary. These are people, who work according to the rules and the criteria of the international market cinema and their talent is turning them into a part of it."

Biographical data

A journalist specialising in international affairs and reporter and foreign correspondent for **Bulgarian National Television (BNT)**, particularly in Iraq, Turkey, Macedonia, Pakistan, the United States, countries of the European Community and during the conflicts in Kosovo and Afghanistan. Sevda Shishmanova has directed more than 10 documentaries in these countries. In 2002, she was awarded the **SAIS-Novartis prize for international journalism** of the John Hopkins University in Washington. She is also a **member of the board of directors of the BNT**.

Andrey PAOUNOV

Film Director

"It is a well kept secret that nowadays the documentary film has completely overtaken the front lines of cinematic aesthetics and purpose. It's healthy relationship with television and internet only proves its adaptivity and future potential in a new media world yet to be defined. The non fiction platform has become the last remaining island for free, experimental and independent expression. From the ashes of the supermarket culture the spirits of **Flaherty** and **Dziga Vertov** have risen and film making has once again become exciting."

Biographical data

Andrey Paounov qualified in Bulgaria and his documentary film • **Georgi and the Butterflies** has been shown at over 50 festivals throughout the world and won the **Silver Wolf prize at the 2004 AIDF** (Amsterdam International Documentary Film Festival). His second documentary • **The mosquito problem and other stories**, shown in Cannes in 2007, won **14 international prizes**, including **prize for the best full-length documentary** (Grierson Award) at the 2007 **London Film Festival** and the 2008 **Documenta Madrid festival**, as well as the **Sunny Side of the Doc grand prix**. Both films are produced by **AGITPROP**.



Martichka BOJILOVA

Producer Agitprop

New Bulgarian Docu Cinema

"This is an opinion of a self-made documentary producer trying to bring the **Bulgarian talent** to the rest of the world. In spite of the difficulties of transition Bulgaria has strong traditions in documentary cinema and certain periods have even been associated with "a Bulgarian wave" in telling local human stories. In the last 5 years films of the Bulgarian non-fiction wave can be regularly spotted in Amsterdam, Leipzig, Sarajevo. **Andrey Paounov** and **Boris Despodov** were the first Bulgarian docu filmmakers in **Cannes, Berlin and Toronto**. Adela Peeva was twice nominated for the **European Film Awards**. Bulgarian documentaries made a breakthrough on **ARTE, ARD, Channel 4, PBS, YLE and HBO**. The Bulgarian filmmakers have dared to accept the challenge of the international market showing unique way of expression and style. And now the "**BulDoc**" has got its teeth into the world's attention more than ever."

Biographical data

A producer for AGITPROP, a Bulgarian documentary film production company, she has produced **•Georgi and the Butterflies**, **•The mosquito problem and other stories** and **•Corridor#8**, all of which won international acclaim. She is also one of the producers of « Omnibus 15 », and collection of short films directed by 15 directors which looks at the 15 years of transition in Bulgaria. One of these shorts **•Omelette** has just won the prize «**Hon-**

orable Mention of the Jury» at the most famous festival for independent cinema in the world, the **Sundance Festival**.

She won the **International Trailblazer prize at MIPDOC**, which recognises the best documentary makers.

HOST

Nevena PRAMATAROVA

Journalist

Biographical Data

Nevena is a journalist and has worked for 9 years at « **Christo Botev** », **Bulgarian National Radio's culture channel**, where she coordinates the **art and culture magazine Artefir**. She coordinates the art and culture section of Bulgaria's only specialist online culture and education magazine.

She is the manager of the foundation for the **European Ecological Festival** which organizes the only festival of films and TV programs dedicated to ecological topics and to cultural heritage in Bulgaria.

OPEN CLASS

Let's be enquiring,

Thanks to the cinema, **OPEN CLASS** invites us to go on big journeys around the world, so that we can get to know its cinematographic, cultural, geographical, social and political diversity.

We make five or six film- devoted meetings a year, where we invite members of professional spheres. These are directors, actors, critics, writers, philosophers, essayists, producers or people with important positions in television channels or audio- visual corporations. Members of other spheres also take part in the colloquiums. Thanks to their approach and position complement they each other. These are university lecturers, exhibitions curators or directors of higher education institutions; also directors of institutions and publications, related to culture.

The choice of participants in our colloquium is taken on the basis of their professional competence and reputation, but also on their ability to participate in discussions pedagogically and in a friendly atmosphere, in order to share their experience and strong preferences. They discuss and explain the relations which cinema establishes with the written word and the various art disciplines; with social and humanitarian sciences.

These meetings being open, they are not lectures, but rather a pretext for a number of films to be seen.

OPEN CLASS provides us with the possibility to get to know cultures, works and authors which are hardly known in Bulgaria. Aesthetics, politics and ethics are the center of our discussions.

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Sofia International Film Festival is the leading film festival in Bulgaria and one of the key film events in Central and Eastern Europe. It was recognised by Variety as 'one of the Top 50 unmissable film events in the world'. The festival introduces to Bulgarian audience the great variety of contemporary world cinema and presents regional films to international audiences. There is international competition for first and second feature films and national competition for shorts. Basic part of the festival is the industry event **Sofia Meetings** which aims to promote new projects of young European filmmakers and new films from Bulgaria and the Balkan region to European film professionals and festival representatives.

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