

DECEMBER 5-7, 2008
TRIBECA CINEMAS



FFRE

THE ANNUAL
ROMANIAN
FILM FESTIVAL
IN NYC



The Annual Romanian Film Festival is initiated and produced by the Romanian Cultural Institute in New York: Corina Șuteu, Director, and Oana Radu, Deputy Director, in collaboration with TIFF – Transilvania International Film Festival, and Tribeca Film Festival, and programmed by Mihai Chirilov, TIFF Artistic Director.

Special thanks to Peter Scarlet, Tudor Giurgiu, Keith Weckstein, the Romanian National Film Center, and all the film producers and distributors that made it happen.



In the music industry, there is something called SAS – *second album syndrome*: where a band takes its time to release a successful first album, then gets pushed into having the next work completed in a rush to keep from losing fans or being quickly forgotten. Needless to say, the second album it's usually a dud. When it comes to the New Romanian Cinema, there is something to fear you could call TFS or *third film syndrome*: where two of the most famous Romanian filmmakers, Cristi Puiu and Cristian Mungiu, gain worldwide recognition with their second film and expectations are mounting now on what their third film will look like. Thankfully, they have taken their time, so there's no need to worry. To further prove TFS wrong, the Third Edition of our Romanian Film Festival will open with the already-acclaimed third film by Radu Muntean, *Boogie*, hence the title of our 2008 event: THREE. As a bonus, the strong line-up of fresh documentaries shown at this festival is complete with three classic docs to remember (includ-

ing *Goldfaden's Legacy* by veteran Radu Gabrea, who'll be also presenting his latest feature film). Also, one could only dream about getting an award for best short film in Venice, making for a glorious hat trick. Four years after the winning double bill in Berlin and Cannes (with *Coffee and Cigarettes* and *Traffic*), history has been repeating itself in 2008, with *A Good Day for a Swim* and *Megatron* winning golden awards in both major festivals. Ready? One, Two, Three, Go!

– **Mihai Chirilov**, Festival Curator

Boogie

(Romania, 2008, 102 min)

OPENING NIGHT: FRI, DEC 5, 7 PM

SAT, DEC 6, 4 PM

Both screenings followed by Q&A with leading actor Dragoș Bucur



Director: Radu Muntean

Screenplay: Alexandru Baciu,
Radu Muntean, Răzvan Rădulescu

Cinematography: Tudor Lucaciu

Cast: Dragoș Bucur, Anamaria Marinca,
Mimi Brănescu, Adrian Văncică,
Vlad Muntean

Production: Multimedia Est & Antena 1

Festivals & Awards: Official Selection
of the Directors Fortnight, Cannes 2008;
Award For Best Screenwriter at the
Hamptons IFF; Special Jury Award, Palic
IFF; Best Director, Anonimul Film Festival
2008, Romania

Life for Bogdan couldn't seem more blissful, vacationing by the sea with his gorgeous wife and adorable young son. His youthful days of glorious drinking trips and sexual adventures are long gone. But when he unexpectedly runs into his best friends from high school, vivid memories immediately flood back. Suddenly, he hears the wild call of bachelor life. Torn between his family obligations and the lure of a fun night out with his old friends, Bogdan – or Boogie, as he was known back then – comes to a realization. The gaps between his childhood pals have grown wider. Friendship, it seems, can no longer be based on common tastes in women, beer, or football teams.

“Boogie was a revelation to me in Cannes, and I was honored to present its North American premiere in the Hamptons this year. Its dissection of relationships, amongst both friends and lovers, was crafted

with such nuance and insight. I'm so thrilled that it won our screenwriting award this year. Insight and attention to emotional detail as seen in Boogie is rare in film these days.”

– **David Nugent**, Director of Programming,
Hamptons International Film Festival

Gruber's Journey

Călătoria lui Gruber

(Romania, 2008, 97 min)



Director: Radu Gabrea

Screenplay: Răzvan Rădulescu,
Alexandru Baciu

Cinematography: Dinu Tanase

Cast: Florin Piersic Jr., Claudiu Bleont,
Răzvan Vasilescu, Colin Buzoianu

Production: Orion Film Romania, Zenith
Film, Uj Budapest Film Studio

Festivals: Transilvania IFF 2008; Eastern
European Film Festival, Montreal
2008; Special Guest Radu Gabrea at
KLEZFIESTA, Buenos Aires, 2008

SAT, DEC 6, 8:15 PM | SUN, DEC 7, 6:00 PM

Both screenings followed by Q&A with director Radu Gabrea and producer Victoria Cociaş

US PREMIERE

“Directed by the veteran Radu Gabrea, [and co-written by Răzvan Rădulescu (The Death of Mr Lazarescu)], this film is an absorbing tragic-comedy which focuses on the attempts of the Italian author Malaparte to search for Josef Gruber, a Jewish doctor, whom he hopes will help cure his severe allergy. The red tape that he has to wade through to find the doctor makes Dickens’ Circumlocution Office seem straightforward,” writes **Ronald Bergan** in The Guardian. A friend of Mussolini’s and a war correspondent attached to the Wehrmacht troops, Malaparte arrives in the Romanian town of Iași in June 1941, soon after the Romanian Army, under the orders of Marshall Ion Antonescu, entered the “sacred war” as an ally to Hitler’s Germany against the Soviet Russia. His search for Gruber leads him to discover terrifying truths, which have been long hidden and twisted by the official history of Romania.

Elevator

(Romania, 2007, 85 min)



Directing and Cinematography:

George Dorobanțu

Screenplay: Gabriel Pintilei

Cast: Cristi Petrescu, Iulia Verdes

Production: Keep Movieneg

Festivals & Awards: Best Romanian Debut, Transilvania IFF 2008; Fresh Generation Award, Fresh Film Fest, Prague 2008; Audience Feature Choice Award, Auburn IFF, Australia 2008

SUN, DEC 7, 3:30 PM

US PREMIERE

One of the most surprising films in the festival is a guerilla-style miniDV low-budget production (made for just \$300) based on an award-winning stage play written by Gabriel Pintilei. Shot by an unknown director-cinematographer with two unknown actors, *Elevator* nevertheless enthralls audiences with a tense relationship between two teenagers trapped in the broken elevator of a deserted factory. There is no one around to hear them, and nobody knows their whereabouts. They have no food and no water and, as days go by, they lose hope of ever getting out alive. The premise is exciting and the film manages to keep you on high alert for a whole 85 minutes. *“What this beautiful dying couple goes through in 85 minutes would take most people 30 years (and several divorces) to live through. Elevator evokes Gus Van Sant’s Gerry (despite using the opposite device of confined space rather than open desert), and even his Last Days in its glorious final sequence.”* – **Fabien Baumann**, Positif

The Village Called Sands

Nisipuri

(Romania, 2008, 77 min)



Written and Directed by Claudiu Mitcu

Cinematography: Andrei Butică

Production: Wearebasca

Festivals: Transilvania IFF 2008

SAT, DEC 6, 2:00 PM

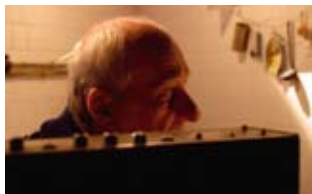
US PREMIERE

*"This utterly charming film looks at a scruffy little fair in an impoverished corner of southwestern Romania. The picture builds up with interviews with local children, inhabitants, and the sometimes jaundiced stall holders, as the area is prepared. Opinions vary as to how long the fair has been coming to town, but it's been here every 29th August for as long as anyone can remember. Basic, shoddy affair though it is, with its lucky wheel made of nails and its boxing booth with the most ancient and misshapen punchball you've ever seen, with dodgy meatballs (horse? donkey??) and tawdry prizes, it's the fair everyone remembers from their childhood, and it makes people happy... 'There is no fair without a merry-go-round', declares the merry-go-round man, and the most beautiful and joyous image of all is a slow take of the simple machine as it starts up and whirls its customers up and around against an afternoon sky. As the sun sets the punters turn homeward on their various vehicles ('I come on the tractor, but I've got an Opel at home'). A delight." – **Sheila Seacroft**, Neil Young's Film Lounge*

Cold Waves

Război pe calea undelor

(Romania/ Germany/ Luxembourg, 2007, 108 min)



Written and Directed by

Alexandru Solomon

Cinematography: Andrei Butică

Production: Hi Film Productions

Festivals & Awards: Gopo Award for Best Documentary, 2007; IDFA Amsterdam 2007; DOK Leipzig 2007; Astra Film Fest Sibiu 2007; Goeteborg Film Festival 2008; Visions du Reel, Nyon 2008; Los Angeles South East European FF 2008

SAT, DEC 6, 4:30 PM

“The post-modern narrative form seems almost tailor-made for Communist Romania, a murky land of suspicion and conspiracy theories: truth and lie, then and now, facts and assumptions, all merge to form a ghostly web. Solomon has used this to make a masterpiece of a film about the history of the Romanian section of Radio Free Europe.” –

Chris Keulemans, IDFA. During the 80’s, Radio Free Europe was the secret relief and confidant of its Romanian listeners. The Radio was Ceaușescu’s most important enemy; he even hired Carlos the Jackal to close it down. A strange alliance was thus forged, between a national-communist dictator and international terrorism. The world has changed, and there are different wars now. But if you listen to the voices, you may get a better picture...

Bar de zi and Other Stories

Bar de zi și alte povestiri

(Romania, 2007, 57 min)



Director: Corina Radu

Cinematography: Dragan S. Nikolic

Production: Aristoteles Workshop

Festivals & Awards: Romania Section Award, Astra Film Festival 2008; Best Documentary, L'Alternativa Independent Film Festival Barcelona 2008; Cork Film Festival 2008; Istanbul International 1001 Documentary FF 2008; Camerimage, Lodz, Poland 2008

SAT, DEC 6, 6:15 PM

Followed by *Don't Get Me Wrong*

US PREMIERE

Set in the medieval part of Sibiu, this documentary of intertwined tales discreetly discovers the intimate stories of the simple customers of a 'bar de zi' (day bar) – the last State-owned bar to survive the communist regime. Started as an experiment of what would happen if we look more closely at the people we come across in our everyday life, the film reveals unexpected, strange, and sometimes tragic life stories. Ordinary people prove to be strong, true and profoundly human characters. The modest entrance into a day bar becomes, in fact, a doorway to an intense, passionate and delightful world; and a deep reflection on human nature and destiny.

Don't Get Me Wrong

Nu te supăra, dar...

(Romania, 2007, 50 min)



Director: Adina Pintilie

Cinematography: Sorin Gociu

Production: Aristoteles Workshop

Festivals & Awards: Golden Dove, Dok Leipzig 2007; Official Selection Locarno IFF 2007; Selection in Best of Fests, IDFA Amsterdam 2007; Best Female Director, IFF of Contemporary Cinema, Mexico 2008; Sarajevo IFF 2008; Dokfest Munchen 2008; Moscow IFF 2008

SAT, DEC 6, 6:15 PM

Preceded by *Bar de Zi* and *Other Stories*

A powerful document of the insular world of compulsive and repetitive behavior, *Don't Get Me Wrong* takes the viewer to a Romanian psychiatric hospital, in an unadulterated take on the daily routine of its patients, which debate the weather, God, and other forces beyond their control. It is a self-sufficient universe, with rules that escape the common logic, yet end up perfectly valid. A controversial film that raises the question of how far a filmmaker can go as a responsible documentarist, Adina Pintilie's film is a poignant exploration of a community hemmed in by physical and psychic walls.

Testimony

Testimonial

(Romania/ Germany, 2008, 90 min)



Written and Directed by Răzvan Georgescu

Cinematography: Ștefan Grandinetti,
Hans Zimmermann, Torsten Lapp,
Enrico Wolf

Featuring: Jörg Immendorff, Bill Viola,
Katherine Sherwood, Helmut Dubiel, Peter
Jecza, Remus Georgescu, William Finn

Production: Starcrest Media, Pelegrin
Film, ZDF, ARTE, TVR

Festivals & Awards: Prix Europa 2008 for
Best European Documentary; Special Jury
Prize and Audience Award at DOCUMFEST
Timișoara 2008

FESTIVAL CLOSING: SUN, DEC 7, 8:00 PM

Followed by Q&A with filmmaker Răzvan Georgescu

US PREMIERE

Diagnosed with a brain tumor and given three more years to live, filmmaker Răzvan Georgescu decides to overcome the solemnity of this prognosis to explore the realm between life and death by interviewing some of its prominent inhabitants: famous artists who have had a traumatic brush with mortality and were given a limited amount of time to live. Can death and illness be a motor for creativity? Can creativity armour us against oblivion? *"This documentary transforms in a surprising way a very hard and frightening private situation into a constructive and thoughtful journey about our life on this earth. The director succeeds in giving his own illness a philosophical approach to time, life and art and he reminds us of the simple message that we have to live when we are alive. This outstanding programme tells the never ending story about life and death and life again."*

– The Jury of Prix Europa

A Good Day for a Swim

O zi bună de plajă

(Romania, 2008, 10 min)



Director: Bogdan Mustață

Screenplay:

Cătălin Mitulescu

Cinematography:

Barbu Bălășoiu

Cast: Florin Sinescu, Okan

Kaya, George Hoffman,

Cerasela Iosifescu

Production: Axel Film

Awards: Golden Bear, Berlin
2008

Three teenage criminals escape from a juvenile detention facility and, before leaving the country, have their way with a prostitute and a truck driver.

Life's Hard

La drumul mare

(Romania, 2007, 20 min)



Written and Directed by

Gabriel Sârbu

Cinematography:

Marius Panduru

Cast: Andi Vasluianu,

Claudia Prec

Production: Foundation for
Visual Arts

Awards: Audience Award and
Jury Prize, Premiers Plans Film
Festival, Angers, France, 2008;
"The Ellen" Special Jury Award,
Aspen Shortsfest 2008

In one of Bucharest's endless traffic jams, a purse snatcher strikes up a strange relationship with his female victim.

Megatron

(Romania, 2008, 11 min)



Written and Directed by

Marian Crișan

Cinematography:

Tudor Mircea

Cast: Gabriela Crișu, Maxim

Strinu, Damian Oancea, Erwin

Simshenson

Production: Mandragora

Awards: Golden Palm for Best

Short Film, Cannes 2008

Mother and son, Maxim, live together in an isolated village 20 miles away from Bucharest. For Maxim's birthday, his mother promises to take him to a McDonald's restaurant in Bucharest. Maxim will do anything to make her keep that promise.

Alexandra

(Romania, 2008, 25 min)



Director: Radu Jude

Screenplay: Andrei Butică,

Radu Jude

Cinematography:

Andrei Butică

Cast: Serbian Pavlu,

Alexandra Pascu,

Gabriel Spahiu

Production: HiFilm

Festivals: Brussels Short Film

Festival 2008

Tavi, a man in his late thirties, discovers that Alexandra, his 4-year old daughter, is not calling him "Dad" anymore.

Immerse

(Romania, 2008, 2 min, animation)



Written and Directed by

We Are Om

Cinematography:

Mihai Sibianu

Production: Carter Films

A story about... inner space...

Inspiration

Plictis și Inspirație

(Moldova, 2007, 10 min)



Director: Igor Cobileanski

Cinematography:

Sergiu Barbara

Cast: Valeriu Turcanu, Mihai

Curagau, Sergiu Voloc

Production: Brio Stud

Awards: Best Romanian Short
Film, Transilvania IFF 2008

A bored mayor, his assistant and a community cop set out looking for inspiration.

The Yellow Smiley Face

Fața galbenă care râde

(Romania, 2008, 15 min)



Director:

Constantin Popescu

Screenplay: Doru Lupeanu

Cinematography:

Liviu Marghidan

Cast: Luminița Gheorghiu,

Teodor Corban

Production: Saga Film

Festivals: Opening film at

Transilvania IFF 2008;

Locarno 2008

A heart-warming film about two computer-illiterate parents trying to tame technology in order to get in touch with their son living abroad.

Goldfaden's Legacy: The Origins of Yiddish Theater

Moștenirea lui Goldfaden

(Romania, 2004, 58 min)



Director: Radu Gabrea

Special Guest: Zalmen Mlotek. With the participation of: Eleanor Reissa, Itztk Gottesman, Nahma Sandrow, Alyssa Pia Quint, Yale Strom, Harry Eliad, Iacov Bodo, Elisabeth Schwartz, Ioan Holban, Carol Markovitch, Golan Ofer, Sandler Gera

With the support of Moshe Yassur

Production: Total TV Bucharest

SAT, DEC 6, 6:45 PM | SUN, DEC 7, 8:30 PM

Screenings followed by Q&A with director Radu Gabrea

The Romanian Film Festival celebrates the Goldfaden Centennial 2008 with a documentary about Avram Goldfaden, founder of the Jewish Theatre and original playwright and pioneer of the Broadway musical (in whose honor the Goldies awards for excellence of the Hebrew Actors Union are named). This richly evocative film chronicles the 19th-century life of Abraham Goldfaden, who abandoned his rabbinical studies and went on to almost single-handedly create the modern Yiddish theater. Beginning with the first professional Yiddish theater performance – a two-act play in the city of Iași in Northern Romania – the documentary travels across Europe to Paris and London, and finally to New York. At his death in 1908 in New York, some 70,000 New Yorkers participated at the funeral procession, blocking all traffic in Manhattan in order to pay their last respect to the “Shakespeare of the Jewish people.”

Europolis

Asta e

(Romania/ Germany, 2001, 92 min)



Written and Directed by Thomas Ciulei

Cinematography: Thomas Ciulei,
Antonio Pintus

Production: Ciulei Films, Europolis Film, ZDF

Festivals & Awards: Panorama, Berlinale 2001; Documentary Grand Prize, Belfort 2001; Golden Olive, Kalamata Intl Documentary Festival 2001; Grand Jury Prize for Widescreen & Silver Rembrandt for Documentary, IBC Amsterdam 2001; Special Mention, Les écrans documentaires, Paris 2002

SAT, DEC 6, 8:30 PM

The Romanian town of Sulina lies right in the no-man's-land of the Danube Delta, cut off from the rest of the world. It used to be a wealthy trade town, but with the decline of communism the economic connections petered out. The film portrays three different generations by following four of the region's inhabitants, striving everyday to make ends meet. 25-year-old Nicu tries to make a living as a fisherman. Ionuț, 15, sets out to steal whatever he can find on the deserted ships of the Danube-fleet to sell it afterwards. The old married couple Varvara and Toni live from hand to mouth as peasants. Regular arguments arise as Toni drinks too much, while Varvara is left to do all the work, and secretly carries out rituals in the hope of changing her husband.

Timișoara, December 1989

Timișoara, decembrie 1989

(Romania, 1991-1993, 81 min)



Written and Directed by

Ovidiu Bose Paștină

Cinematography: Doru Segall

Production: Sahia Film Studio

SUN, DEC 7, 5:30 PM

Set in the title Romanian city during the tumultuous fall of Communist dictator Ceaușescu, this stark black-and-white documentary chronicles the attempts of government soldiers to quell a citizens' revolt. But during the few days of the uprising, which preceded and stirred the Bucharest events of December 21–22, a surprising thing happens – the soldiers join the citizens. The filmmakers use interviews, video footage of the events and archival photographs to recreate the revolt. Translucently beautiful, the film looks as if it were shot with an X-ray machine, a simile which is echoed in the grueling testimonies of people betrayed and exposed by their own revolution.

Andrei Șerban Traveling Academy (ASTA) presents Staged Reading of “FASTFORWARDREWIND” by Gianina Cărbunariu

SUN, DEC 7, 12:30 pm

Romanian Cultural Institute (Note the different venue!)



A new wave of experimentation has been sweeping Romania not only in cinema, but also in the field of theatre, with many young playwrights prompting a new writing in which “reality takes the stage” (Gwen Orel, *The New York Times*). Among them: Gianina Cărbunariu, is one of the most celebrated young Romanian playwrights. After its series of workshops and presentations in 2007 with *Deadly Confession*, ASTA presents this Decem-

ber an exceptional reading of Gianina Cărbunariu's most recent play: *FASTFORWARDREWIND*. Launched in 2007 as a pilot-project, the Traveling Academy (ASTA) is an artistic lab developed under the innovative guidance of prominent director and inspiring teacher Andrei Șerban. For this presentation, Andrei Șerban will work with a group of students from Columbia University's acting department.

FREE ADMISSION

RSVP at icrny@icrny.org, 212-687-0180

Cărturești Bookstore at RCINY and Tribeca Cinemas



Join us also for another experiment: a preview of what a Romanian bookstore in New York could look like, organized in col-

laboration with Carturesti Bookstore.

RCINY has been frequently asked, by Romanians and Americans alike, where to find new releases by Romanian authors, musicians and filmmakers, or books related to the Romanian presence in the world. Started in 2000 as a little bookshop in the center of Bucharest, Carturesti has rapidly grown from one of the most celebrated Romanian enterprises into a cultural brand all its own – thus being

the natural partner for this endeavour.

Review and purchase a sample of books and DVDs of Romanian films old and new, and let us know what you'd like a future bookstore to be like, by joining the Carturesti Info Point at Tribeca Cinemas during the festival, and visiting its temporary setup in the Romanian Gallery on December 3 & 7.

More details at www.icrny.org

PROGRAM

FRI, Dec 5	7:00 pm	Boogie , d. Radu Muntean TC 2	
SAT, Dec 6	2:00 pm	The Village Called Sands , d. Claudiu Mitcu TC 1	
	2:30 pm	SHORTS TC 2 A Good Day for a Swim , d. Bogdan Mustață Life's Hard , d. Gabriel Sârbu Megatron , d. Marian Crișan Alexandra , d. Radu Jude Immerse , d. We Are Om Inspiration , d. Igor Cobileanski The Yellow Smiley Face , d. Constantin Popescu	
	4:00 pm	Boogie , d. Radu Muntean TC 1	
	4:30 pm	Cold Waves , d. Alexandru Solomon TC 2	
	6:15 pm	Bar de zi and Other Stories , d. Corina Radu TC 1 Don't Get Me Wrong , d. Adina Pintilie	
	6:45 pm	Goldfaden's Legacy , d. Radu Gabrea TC 2	
	8:15 pm	Gruber's Journey , d. Radu Gabrea TC 2	
	8:30 pm	Europolis , d. Thomas Ciulei TC 1	
	SUN, Dec 7	12:30 pm	SPECIAL EVENT: Andrei Șerban Traveling Academy RCINY
		3:30 pm	Elevator , d. George Dorobanțu TC 2
4:00 pm		SHORTS TC 1	
5:30 pm		Timișoara, December 1989 , d. Ovidiu Bose Paștină TC 2	
6:00 pm		Gruber's Journey , d. Radu Gabrea TC 1	
8:00 pm		Testimony , d. Răzvan Georgescu TC 2	
8:30 pm	Goldfaden's Legacy , d. Radu Gabrea TC 1		

★ All screenings in the original version with English subtitles, introduced by Romanian film critics, and followed by Q&A with the film directors and cast.

ALL SCREENINGS TAKE PLACE AT:

* **Tribeca Cinemas**

54 Varick Street (at Laight Street)
New York, NY 10013
(SUBWAY: 1, 6, A, C, E trains to Canal St)

www.tribecacinemas.com

* **Admission**

Regular Adult: \$10.00
Student/Senior: \$7.00
Purchase tickets online at

www.tribecacinemas.com


SPECIAL EVENT ON SUN, DECEMBER 7, 12:30 PM AT:

* **Romanian Cultural Institute in New York**

200 East 38th Street (at 3rd Avenue)
New York, NY 10016
(SUBWAY: 4, 5, 6, 7, S to Grand Central – 42nd St.)

www.icrny.org

Festival Production Team (Romanian Cultural Institute New York): Ștefania Ferchedău, Silvia Rogozea, Mihai Frunză, Nicoleta Frunză
Program editor: Oana Radu | English editing: Ruth Margraff | Design: Carmen Gociu & Raymond Bobar

The background features a complex abstract design. On the left, there are several overlapping, semi-transparent shapes in bright colors: a large blue circle, a yellow shape, a green shape, a dark blue shape, and a pink shape. These shapes are layered, creating a sense of depth. To the right and extending towards the bottom right corner, there is a prominent pink wireframe structure. This structure consists of many thin, parallel lines that curve and twist together, forming a three-dimensional, helical or spiral-like shape. The overall composition is dynamic and modern.

The Romanian Cultural Institute in New York (RCINY) aims to promote Romanian culture to the public in both the U.S. and internationally, and to build sustainable connections and collaborations between American and Romanian cultural artists and organizations. The RCINY portfolio of projects includes, among others, the first US retrospective of Romanian cinema organized in partnership with the Film Society of Lincoln Center (April 2008).