

# SENKA

- > Ne znam kolku e ushte aktuelro so tekstot (dijalekten) shto mi go prati, no vo
- > megjuvreme jas i bev niz Egejska Makedonija, a i pred nekolku dena beshe tuka eden
- > chovek od Grcija (Makedonec od Vinozhito) i probav i so nego malku okolu dijalogot. Go
- > snimiv na diktafon za da mozhe akcentot i izgovorot da se fatat shto poverno.
- > Inaku i spored nego, otkoga gi vide moite beleshki, ne mozhe da se najdat poarhaichni
- > zorovi, oti ako se poarhaichni ije bidat ili grchki ili turski.
- > Otrprika dijalogot na nekolku egejski govori bi izgledal vaka:

ЗАПИСНИК ОД СОСТАНОКОТ ОДРЖАН НА 19.05.2006.

Присутни: Милчо Манчевски, Иво Антоф, Часлав Ковачевиќ, Билјана Мирковиќ, Том Вудроу, Јагода Велковска, Огнен Антоф, Мануела Мирчевска, Љупчо Гиговски, Емил Костовски, Васил Трајковски, Зоран Младеновиќ, Марија Топузовска, Марија Атанасоска, Томи Велковски.

Повод за повикување на состанокот претставува истекувањето на пробатион период кој му беше поставен на продуцентот Иво Антоф.

Според режисерот Милчо Манчевски рокот кој беше одреден со цел да се исправат грешките и да се решат проблемите во сектор Продукција измина, а нештата сеуште не се како што би требало да бидат. Не се превземени никакви мерки.

Милчо Манчевски предложи дневен ред според кој се одвиваше состанокот.

Како прва точка го наметна прашањето околу Руси Љуцканов, кој според Иво Антоф, како што беше кажано на претходниот состанок, треба да биде дел од продукција. Истакна дека тој сепак не е ангажиран, а отсутен е и Љубомир Анев, во критичен момент за секторот.

> v'mesh. Majka ti shcho mi go ikrade. Kuskite da mi gi v'mesh.

На тоа Иво Антоф потврди дека е очигледно дека со ваков состав на Продукција работите не функционираат и дека се нужни некакви измени.

Понатаму режисерот постави прашање дали е кој-то Е сег да се v'mesh. Pu kuskite nashi.

Трпчевски, на што продуцентот одговори одречно.

> Miroslave, iako ne znam kolku ovoj problem ti e se ushte aktuelen, otrprika ti napishav kako bi bilo. Prostor za dorabotka ima.

Режисерот бараше да му се одговори зошто продукција страна на Град Скопје, па било неопходно тој самиот да се ангажира кај градоначалникот за да успее да создаде простор за соработка.

На тоа Огнен Антоф искоментира дека продукцијата има добиено помош од Градот Скопје, но со делумно спонзорство.

Се констатираше дека ко-продукциските договори се уште не се потпишани, како и договорот со Euroimages, а времето изминува.

Јагода Велковска истакна дека изготвувањето на Costs е направено навремено, во рамки на определените рок.

Милчо Манчевски праша дали постои потпишан договор со композиторот Preisner Zbigniew, на што доби негативен одговор. Според него е апсурдно да не се потпише договор, да нема партитури, а пак од друга страна однапред да се исплати хонорар.

Повторно беше нагласено дека во пре-продукцион план неопходно е да се запази бројот на деновите одредени за сите конкретни нешта, и дека почетокот на снимањето треба да биде на 10.06. а крајот на 23.08.2006.

Билјана Мирковиќ праша кога почнува да работи секторот Костим, како би можела да ги планира костимските проби со глумци. Доби одговор од продуцентот дека секторот ќе биде формиран на 23.05. што значи дека од 1.06. ќе биде целосно на располагање.

Милчо Манчевски изјави дека постои проблем во соработката со Fabio Chianchetti и дека не наишле на заеднички гледишта во креативниот дел, односно не добил од него соодветни предлози.

На крајот побара одговор зошто сеуште не е оформен секторот Шминка.

Vrati gc ona shcho ne e tvoe, sinko.

V'mi go to shcho ne je tvoje, sinko

Da gu v'rresh tos shcho ne jet na teb, sine bre majchin, gjavol da te ne zenii

Bre ti, vragu edno, da mi gu v'mesh .....

Stoj si na zborot.

Na lafo da si stoesh.

Na dumati da si stoesh.

Da ti bide lesen patot.

Pato sos les da ti spore. (Pato so lesnotija da ti odi)

Imaj pocit.

Puchitu'ajne/puchit da imesh

Majka ti...

Vrati gc ona sto ne e tvoe. Imaj

pocit. Vrati mi go spokojot.

Vrati mi go mirot. Majka ti sto

mi go ukrade. Vrati mi gi koskite.

Da gu v'mesh tos shcho ne jet na teb. Spukojo na dushata da mi gu

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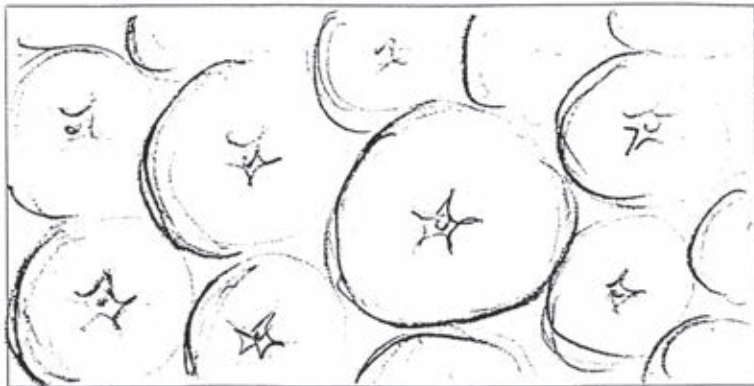
Da gu v'mesh tos shcho ne jet na teb. Spukojo na dushata da mi gu

1

1 INT. LAZAR'S APARTMENT - DAY

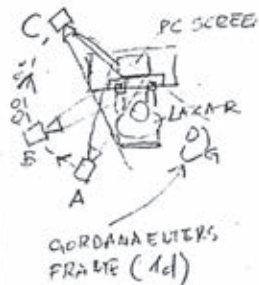
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1a

TOMATOES  
ON PC SCREEN

LAZAR PERKOV, 29 and sweet, nervously plays with his computer. His wife, GORDANA PERKOVA, also 29, but made up, watches TV absentmindedly and smokes hungrily. It's hot.

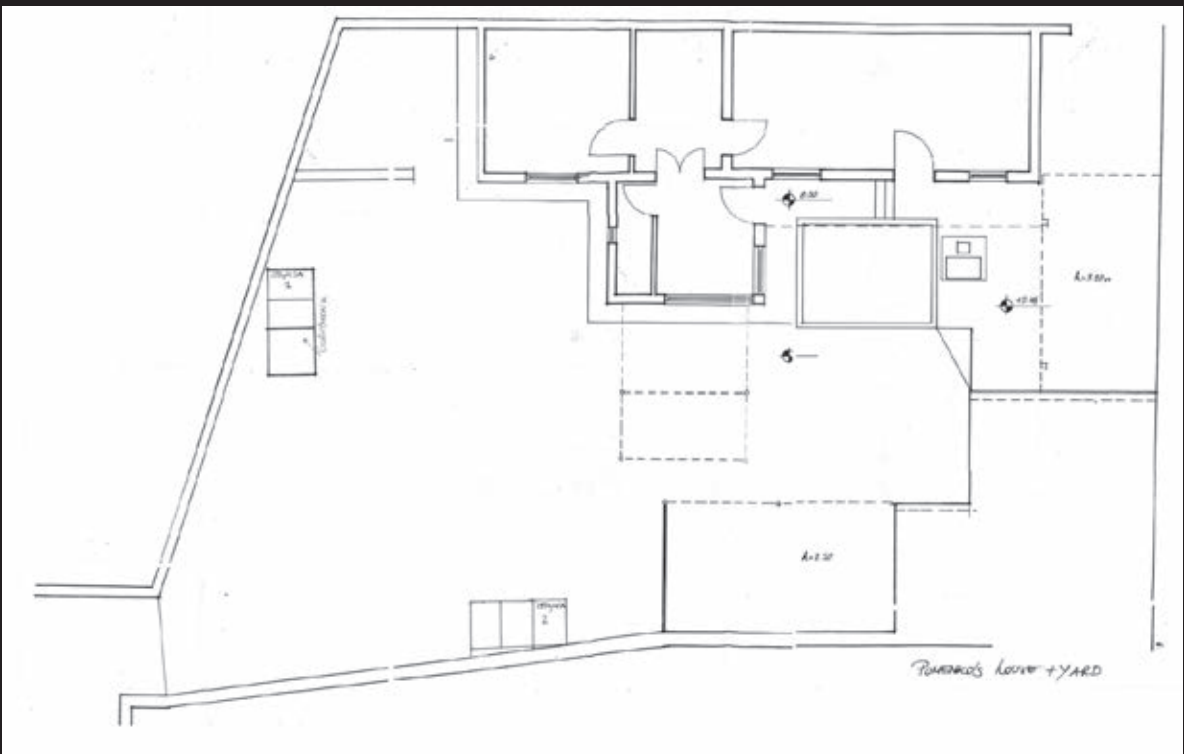
1b



1c

SMOKE FROM  
GORDANA'S  
CIGARETTE

MENKA'S HOUSE  
LOCATION: PASIN MOST  
ADAPTATION

A black and white sketch of a small, single-story house. The house has a gabled roof with a chimney on the left side. There is a window with shutters on the right side of the house and a door on the left side. The house is surrounded by trees and a fence. The drawing is done in a sketchy, artistic style.

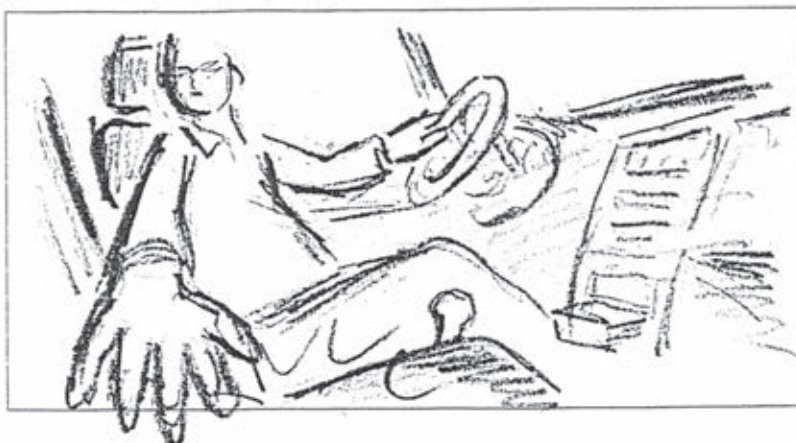




Lazar's  
POV  
ON THE  
MOBILE

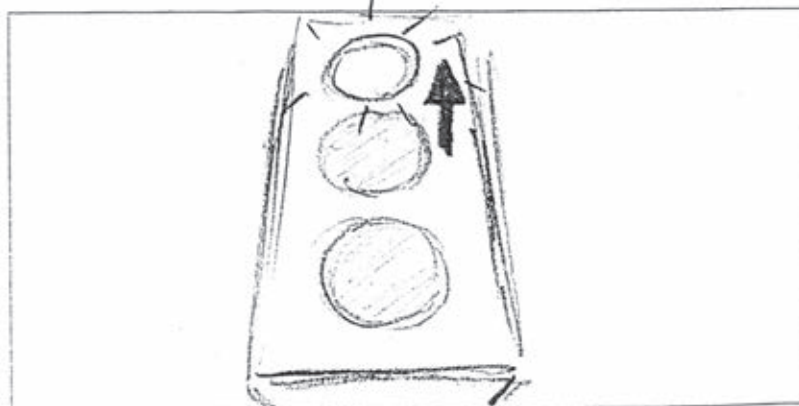
11  
2U

Lazar is searching for his cell as it rings, sees it on the passenger seat, reaches for it.  
And then - the phone moves a few inches.  
He reaches for it again - and the phone moves again.



12

Lazar's traffic light turns from yellow to red.



2U

13

Sto i da ti napisam mi zvuci besmisleno, po ova so go procitav! Fascinantno! Imam cuvstvo deka sum go doprela neboto, no i pretcuvstvo deka doprva ce mozam da trcam niz nego! Ti si navistina retkost! Te molam, so sakas prai, baraj carinja, kazi mi so mozam jas da storam za da ti pomognam, da ti olesnam,... posle seto ova i zaradi se sto doprva ti e podareno da go imas, da go napravis, da go zivees, ednostavno, nemas pravo da se menuvas! Covece, se edno kako ti zvuci, so seta pocit za tvojata skromnost i blagorodnost, no ti ne si ist kako site nas, nitu kako nas ovde nitu kako niv tamu,... ma kakov Bergman, Polanski, ili Shakespeare... do toa derezde se "izvadeni od konduri" so ne znaat ni so kogo ni so so da te sporedat,... svetskata filmska kritika i intelektualna javnost ti priznava deka si edinstven, vonseriski, bez konkurencija,...ti napisale i se potpisale! Edvaj cekam da razberam kakvi ce bidat reakciite do i po 30-ti.

Od dnoto na dusata ti blagodaram i ti cestitam!

Dear Milcho,  
Od srce,

I saw "shadows" a few days ago. I quite liked it, although supernatural stuff generally puts me off. But i liked the allegory, the past represented as ghosts, and the notion that you have to come to terms with the past in order to go on. Also some particular scenes were great: that of the accident, and the one with the fireflies. I also liked some dialogues, especially when Lazar meets the girl in the professors office.

I totally agree with you, of course, that it has nothing to do with greece. Nevertheless i think that there is no chance that seven is gonna screen a macedonian movie that "dares" to say "agean macedonians" in any context.

Did i ever tell you that i have visited macedonia? It was in 2002 when the ministry of health and welfare of greece decided to provide humanitarian aid to the mental hospital of Gevgelija. I spent three days there as the rpresentative of the ministry, i met some really nice people (mental health professionals) and i really liked the place, especially the countryside. I plan to go again with my wife and kid sometime in the near future. I hope you good provide me with some tips about nice places i could visit.

Thanx again,

>> Date: Thu, 8 Nov 2007 08:11:56 +0000 (GMT)

>> Subject: TI BLAGODARAM

>>

>> So dolzna pocit - cestitki. B R A V O

>> Mozebi mnogu licno go doziveav filmot bidejki NOSECKATA replika vo tvojoj

> film bese POSLEDNATA replika na mojot soprug koj pocina na SAMO 33 godini.

>> Ti blagodaram sto i gi vrati emociite na edna zena...

> Drag Milco Mancevski,

> Tukusto sum dojdin od proekcijata na "Senki", sakam samo da ti

> kazam deka si napravil nesto sto, ako covek go gleda so otvorena dusa, nesto

> tamu dlaboko silno i bolno kje dopre. Sekoj zbor i sekoj kadar so svoja

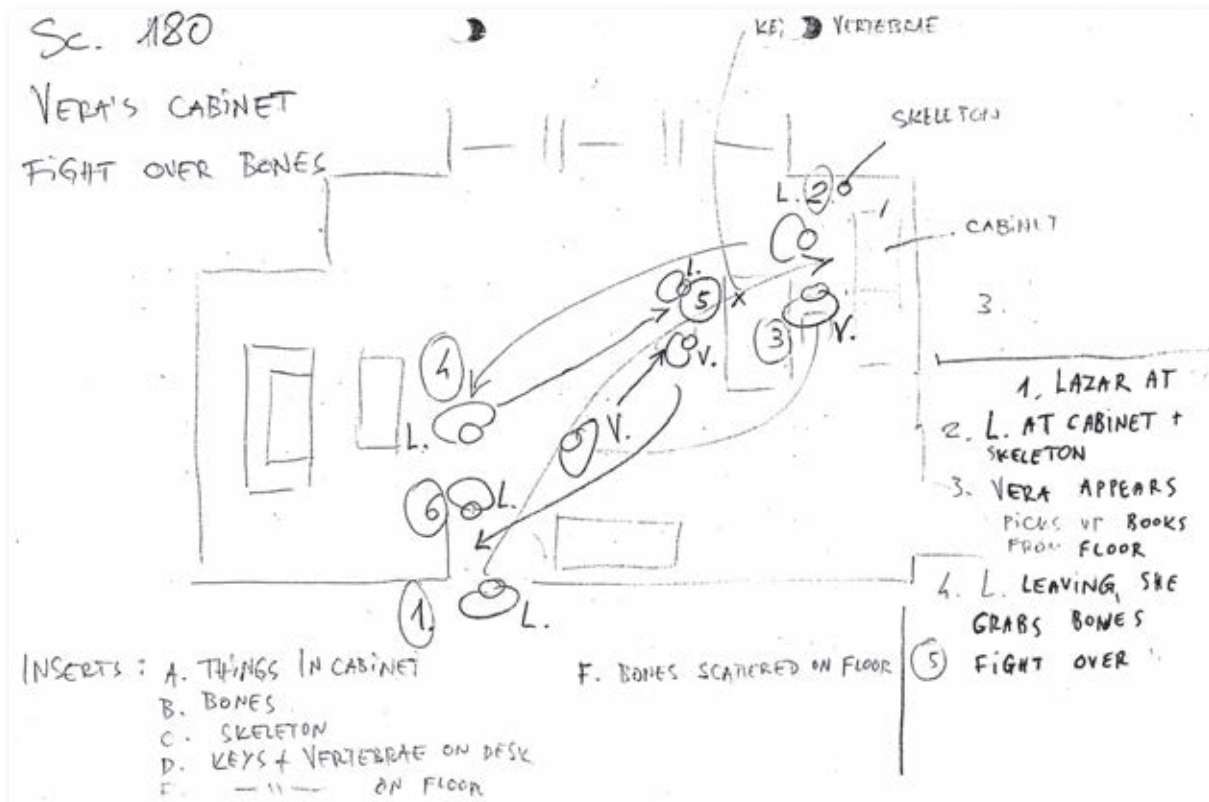
> tezina, iako mozebi ne sekogas merlivi vo migot na gledanjeto. I po

> katarzata, i natamu bolka. Kako po "Pred dozdnot"... Kako okolu vratov da me

> stega jamkata na Menka... Fala ti za filmot!

> Srdecen pozdrav i sekoe dobro,

> Goce



Milčo, I'm a discreet fan of your cinema. I've discovered you in a tiny little film shop in Istanbul. You inspired me a lot with your movie "Shadows" back then. Currently I'm studying cinema in Paris. I hope I can meet you some day and discuss cinema. Good luck for your future projects. Best wishes.



> Zdravo Milco,

>

> Otkako go izgledav ushte ednash tvojot film, ovoj pat od sosema poinakva perspektiva,

> kako nekoj koj zivee poveke od cetiri godini nadvor od Makedonija, sakam da ti se

> zablagodaram uste ednash za filmot koj na izvonreden nacin raskazuva za site ziteli na

> svetot. I se potsetiv na tvoite zborovi koga te intervjuirav (za BBC) posle premierata

> na "Senki" vo Toronto. "Sekoj dobar film e za lugeto, ne za mestata od kade shto

> doagaat." Goleminata na "Before the rain" e vo toa shto raskazuvajki ja prikaznata za

> lugeto, preku site detali koi gi imash sleano vo mirisot, boite i realno-nerealnite

> mesta od nashata tatkovina (kade i da e), govorish za mnogu mali golemi neshta koe se

> univerzalni, no i tolku mnogu licni, nameneti istovremeno za samo određen broj

> sonuvaci, no i za site ziteli na planetava. (I se razbira za ushte iljadnici neshta za

> koi ovoj email e premal, i koi ti se lepat za svesta i potsvesta i ne mozesh i nesakash

> da gi isterash so denovi, meseci, godini...)

>

> Golem pozdrav.

> Remek delo, bravo majstore!!!

>

> goran ,31 skopje

>

> ... nasmej se utre ke ne nema...



Филмот е амбициозен поглед во умот на потенцијален лудак. Иако сигурно надреален, ја држи публиката заинтересирана за чудните судбини на сите ликови. **Стилот на Сенки се движи од хипнотичен до френетичен, што секако ќе ви го забрза пулсот.** Филмот е **уникатен во способноста да се замеша во повеќе жанрови**, хорор, психолошки трилер, и на некој начин, љубовна приказна. Вистинско освежување е да се види нецензуриран, соголен европски филм што го прифаќа антихеројот, лажго и измамник, со таква брутална јаснотија на каква повеќето американски филмови не би се осмелиле".

(Мишел Фуги, „Холивуд Шугеј“)

„Патувањето на Лазар е и патувањето на уметникот и параболо за филмските дела. Тоа му станува работа бидејќи тој е тука да види [...] **Прекрасен и трогателен филм** [...] **Големо задоволство** е да се гледаат трите филма на Манчевски брзо едно по друго. Манчевски создава дела што ќе блеснат на ретроспективни програми [...] **Потсвесно познато**, во кое може лесно да се влезе.“

(Ненси Кифи Роугс, „Сџајлс“)

„По неговото многу славно деби **Пред дождот** (1994) и по вториот филм **Прашина** (2001), сценаристот и режисер Милчо Манчевски повторно ни дава совршен фестивалски филм: **визуелна приказна со драматична содржина, историска длабочина и современа критика, уметно раскажана со иновација и елан**.“

(Даен Сил, „Синема вишауи боргерс“)

„**Сенки е чудесен и бесконечно напнат еротски трилер.** Оваа **уметност што мора да се види** на режисерот Милчо Манчевски му остава магнетска трага на гледачот.“

(Омар П.Л. Мур, „Пошкорн рил филм ривју“) „Се чини дека со **Сенки** Манчевски се враќа на старата патека. **Мрачен и тмурен, но необично задоволувачки**, **Сенки** е филм за возрасни – поточно, за оние со возрасен сензибилитет.“

(Џ. Б. Сџинс)

„Двајцата многу атрактивни главни глумци во **Сенки** се толку возбудливи заедно, што е навистина вонземно.“

(Ендрју Сарис, „Обзервер“)

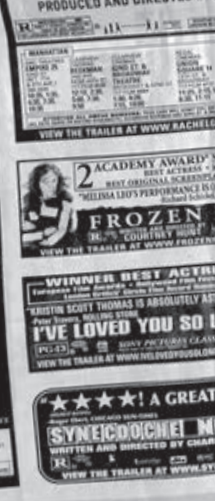
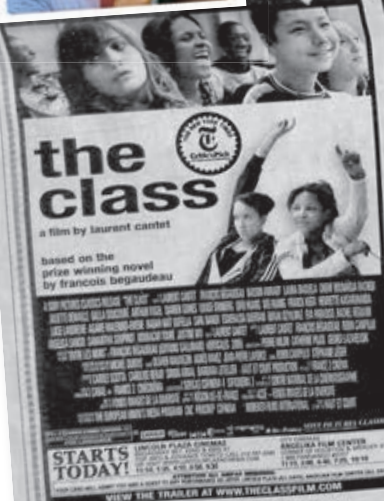


SATURDAY, JAN 31, 2009 01:33 PM CEST

## Weekend roundup: Movies not to miss

A tender porn-theater family saga, with boils; a sexy ghost story from Macedonia; Al Pacino's junkie breakthrough; and the story of World War II heroine Hannah Senesh.

ANDREW O'HEHIR





**DOMIN**  
**BE AWAY**  
**LM**  
**YEAR**  
**TICS**



Top, Ratka Radmanovic as an otherworldly manifestation who stalks a Macedonian doctor played by Borce Nacev, above.

## Haunted in Macedonia, With a Wolf at the Door

Milcho Manchevski's quasi-religious ghost story, "Shadows," is an unwieldy hybrid of historical allegory and supernatural mystery. The historical part deals

**STEPHEN HOLDEN**  
**FILM REVIEW**

The mystery is a supernatural romance and detective yarn indebted to "The Sixth Sense," "The Others" and "Ghost," embellished with abundant nudity and heavy-breathing sex. If the movies weren't already inundated with stories of the undead, this fusion of genres might not seem so unintentionally silly. But the history is too sketchy to resonate. We hear of atrocities that were committed, but not who committed them, why or when.

In his director's statement, Mr. Manchevski, who won international acclaim with his 1994 film, "Before the Rain," declares that "Shadows" imagines "what would happen if Lady Macbeth had lived today and survived to have a grown-up son, who might try to come to terms with her overbearing presence and her transgressions of the past."

But Vera Perkova (Sabina Ajrula-Tozija), a famous doctor and the imperious tante of Shakespeare's dragon lady, is only a minor character. And her crimes, when revealed, are no horrifying as you are led to expect.

"Shadows" begins with a car crash in which Vera's son, Lazar Perkov (Borce Nacev), a young Macedonian doctor who works in the same hospital as his mother, nearly dies. Lazar (note the deliberate echo of Lazarus) is nicknamed Lucky, not only for his privileged existence. His wealthy parents have a villa in Macedonia's lake region; he is handsome (Mr. Nacev resembles the young Al Pacino), with a beautiful wife and a young son.

A year after the accident, while his wife and son are on vacation, Lazar comes home from work to discover a wizened crone (Ratka Radmanovic) cleaning his kitchen floor. Speaking in a dialect he cannot understand, she reaches up to touch his face; he panics and ejects her from the house. Gazing anxiously out the window, he sees her on the street, intently peering up at his apartment, a wolf by her side.

## Shadows

**Opens on Friday in Manhattan.**

Written and directed by Milcho Manchevski; director of photography, John Cianciotti; edited by David Gray and Martin Chuzzle; revised by Ryan Moore; produced by Milcho Manchevski, Amadeo Paggioli, Corinna Muehle, Nerman Glavica, Martin Hurnman, Dusan Golevski; rerecorded by Horvath and Marinkovic; released by Miramax Films, At the New York City Film Festival, 22 East 12th Street, Greenwich Village, In Macedonia, with English subtitles. Running time: 2 hours 10 minutes. This film is not rated.

VITSA BORENACEV (Dr. Lazar Pavkov) / WENNA STROJANICA (Merkla), Solovka Agrelia-Troita (Elv. Vera Alenova), Salatek Ralat (Goran Panov), Rata Rada-Radomir (Goran Panov), Parva Alankara (Gorana Kirova), Dine Ilice (Ljupit Perakov), Petar Mitrevski (Blagovest).

The old woman is the first of several otherworldly manifestations who begin stalking Lazar, materializing suddenly, then disappearing, only to return. Another persistent stalker is a scowling, craggy-faced neighbor (Salaetin Bilal) who carries a little boy in his arms and leaves bloody tracks as he wearily ascends on the stairs.

The most mysterious is Menka (Vesna Stanojevska), a seductive young woman with severe bruises on her neck and arms, who shamelessly throws herself at Lazar when he examines her injuries. He resists her, but not for long. Menka, who falsely claims to be the wife of a noted linguist whom Lazar consults while seeking to translate the old woman's words, explains what they mean: "Return what's not yours — have respect." But he has no idea how that dictum might apply to him, since he has no recollection of having stolen anything.

As "Shadows" vacillates between the historical and the occult, you may snicker at the way hackneyed horror movie conventions are redeployed for more serious ends. But you won't be bored. The movie is well acted (especially by Ms. Stanojevska) and very sexy. Fabio Gianchetti's opulent cinematography skillfully uses reflections in mirrors and windowpanes to give "Shadows" a surreal dimension.

The story doesn't culminate in the kind of "gotcha" revelation that ended "The Sixth Sense" and "The Others." Instead it offers a sentimental dilution of the Orpheus-Eurydice myth. History is forgotten as "Shadows" is overrun by the ghosts of "Ghost," "Heaven Can Wait" and a hundred other movies in which passion beckons from beyond the grave.

**„Халуцинирачко тонее** во виорот на личната и историска одговорност“. (Ариел Дорфман)

„Сенки се раководи по нешто големо и непознато, што ме плаши до смрт и смирува ко допир на мајка“.

„Оригинален и провокативен став кон приказна со духови“. (Џереми Томас)

„Сенки е прекрасен и мачен филм. Те трогнува, чиниш крвта те боли, та би плачел со денови“  
(Марина Косјова, „Весѝ“)

„Наречете го приказна со духови, но да знаете дека чувството е повеќе како филм на Бергман или Полански, па дури и Шекспир – Макбет и Хамлет ми паѓаат на ум. [...] Да се преживеат овие моменти во вакво опкружување овозможува **несекојдневна интимност** – соочување со личниот страв што, чудно, води кон прослава на животот. Директорот на фотографија Фабио Чанкети визуелно ја создава оваа претскажувачка траекторија со користење на дупли слики, честопати рефлексии, испрекршени простори, огледување на секој лик во друг, и ликови кои или мистериозно ги снемума од кадарот и исто толку неочекувано се појавуваат или ви исчезнуваат пред очи. [...] За режисерот, ако го гледаме Лазар како визионер сличен на самиот режисер, кој го следи патувањето на уметникот, тоа патување е и алегорично на филмот кога неговата задача е да нè води **да гледаме – по било која цена – и да сонуваме**“.

„Необично паметен филм од натприродниот жанр, македонскиот кандидат за Оскар евокативно ја обработува темата на сили што не се прифатливи, а одразите и сенките ја имаат главната улога во нарасцијата, заедно со еротската нишка.“ (Џозеф Вугарг, „Индејгененш“)

„Многу фасцинантен филм што ве тера на размислување“).

„Фасцинантна приказна. Потрага по идентитетот на еден човек, кој наоѓа помош помагајќи им на другите“.  
(Хосе Алберто Ермосиљо, „Синсераменше“)

## Little life in doc's ghost tale

SHANGHAI (Senki) ★★

**ESSENTIALLY** "Polshungist" with lovely Miconian locations and strident female melody, Michèle Mancelow's "Shadows" is visually striking but gets bogged down in supernatural cliché.

To make an overlong story short: An unhappily married young doctor (Dance MacRae) inherits a car crash and is haunted by a group of dead people who repeatedly give him the message "Return what is yours." The doctor's trail leads to a

100



...the young Marashonian film, Boris Nacev (left) is a doctor haunted by the memory of his mother's death.

bones procured by his overbearing mother Chulima Aydar (Tursai) and to a deceased lover (Vera Stankovska) who literally beheads out him in some posthumous sex.

— Lee Leonard



# MOVING PICTURES

## THE STORIES BEHIND THE MOVIES

### Living Within “Shadows”

By **Milcho Manchevski** (Special from the 2007 Toronto International Film Festival)

*Shadows* is a film about sex and death, and a few things in between, like personal responsibility. I believe in films (and art in general) that are about people and about ideas, not about places.

Some people make the mistake of reading a film from Macedonia as if it is a film about Macedonia. They can't shake off their need to put things in neat little folders. That stereotyping disguised as defense against stereotyping borders on intellectual racism. A good work of art is about people and ideas and emotions, not about geopolitical concepts. I don't see why Wong-Kar Wai couldn't make films about New York or Bergman about Taipei or Tarantino about Lagos. Those films would not be that different from the films these filmmakers have already made.

I believe what really matters in film is the tone, not the story. It is the tone that sends the message and communicates with the viewer much more than the story. I heard somebody describe my previous film *Dust* this way: He said if watching a good Hollywood film is riding a rollercoaster, watching *Dust* is like sitting in a car with a test-crash dummy.

*Shadows* is probably more personal than my other films. Not only because both I and the main character, Lazar, like watermelons, or because my mother was a doctor, just like his... My films *Before the Rain* and *Dust* were personal films, but they were also intentionally open enough so that they could be interpreted as a comment on society; *Shadows* has some of that, but it's really much more of a film about the inner life of one person. I feel personally connected to Lazar's hypnotic nightmarish journey. This film actually feels more personal, even though when I started making it, I didn't plan it that way.

A way to redemption is through assuming responsibility for our actions and even for the actions of people close to us, and exorcising this through love. Doing that is usually scary. And that's why this film is scary. It's an old-fashioned slow-simmering kind of a scary film. It has no sound bites. Fear is good. Facing our fears, and dealing with them through love, is a way to redemption.

I am talking about love, not necessarily about family. Family is overrated. Love is not. Love for your spouse, for your child, for your parents - that's beautiful and important. But family as an institution has often been abused and used as a way to oppress the individual. That's one of the themes of *Shadows* - how parents sometimes hide behind their professed love for the child, while being too suffocating, overwhelming, selfish. The power of the Macedonian mother in this matriarchal society is huge. The Jewish mother and the Italian *mammoni* have nothing on the Macedonian martyr-mother (“You are driving me to my grave! You are eating my liver!”). Lazar's mother is what Lady Macbeth would have been like, had she lived to have an adult child.

Lazar seems to struggle between four tough women: his mother, his wife, Menka and his neighbour. I am just trying to speak the truth in face of the propaganda about the “power” of masculinity.

I have been asked about the sexual tension in the film. Sex - good. Hypocrisy - bad. Sex contains in itself both life and death. Because of the way society treats it - turning it into a taboo, being hypocritical, having a low threshold of tolerance for things sexual - sex ends up holding strong attraction for a lot of artists.

We have been raised to believe that there is some balance, some justice in the world. I am not sure this is necessarily true, but I am willing to reinforce that illusion for now. It's good when you pay your debts, even if you only have inherited them. That is a positive way of cleansing. Of course, in *Shadows*, all this is told in a very, very simple, accessible way, which I believe is the way interesting art should be. Sometimes I like esoteric art as well, but I am very drawn to simple, deceptively simple, art that

actually can be quite deep, things like Kurt Vonnegut, for example.

I subscribe to what Bergman has said about violence, and I am paraphrasing here from memory: He says film is a perfectly legitimate way of ritualizing violence. Ritualizing, not glorifying. Society needs to deal with this extreme - yet integral - aspect of its existence. Ritualizing has been a central way of dealing with it since time immemorial. Film lends itself to ritualizing it for many reasons, its convincing “realism” not one of the least important. I believe that hiding violence from art or from social storytelling is not going to solve the issue. On the contrary, it is only going to make it worse. Not to mention that playing a shrinking violet about talking about violence is hypocritical, as those same people support many other kinds of violence.

What about, say, a loyal employee being laid off after twenty-five years. For some people that's perfectly ordinary, acceptable. It is legitimate to ask, is that violence? And what does the fact that we don't discuss it as violence tell us about ourselves?

In a war, when someone gets shot, they don't just fall back. Probably it hurts, maybe they stagger, then they look at themselves and they are shocked. Do they at some point start laughing, and say, “Is this really happening to me?” Or do they say, “Damn! I wish I'd had more sex when I could have?” Or do they whine? What happens to this person during those 20 seconds or 20 minutes while he's dying? So, fortunately, in a film it is all make-believe, so you can explore a little bit of that when making a film. But if you treat violence as something without real consequences, something fun and easy, then you are doing society a disservice.

*Milcho Manchevski was born in 1959 in Skopje, Macedonia, where he studied Art History and Archaeology before graduating from the Department of Cinema and Photography at the Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, USA, in 1982. He has directed numerous experimental and short narrative films and music videos. The most notable are the experimental 1.73, for which he won an award at Belgrade Alternative, and the video for the group “Arrested Development” for the song “Tennessee,” which won many awards, including Best MTV Video. His first feature film, Before The Rain (1994), won more than thirty international awards, including Golden Lion in Venice and Independent Spirit, and was nominated for Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.*

*He has authored a number of short stories, a conceptual book of fiction (The Ghost of My Mother), a book of photographs (Street), and numerous performance pieces by himself and with the group 1AM, which he co-founded. Manchevski teaches film directing and heads the Directing Department at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts' Graduate Education Department.*

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Milcho Manchevski and Lazar. Image copyright: Milcho Manchevski.

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# Boo! In *Shadows*, a Man Finds Life in the Dead

Apparently, purgatory can be kind of, um, stimulating! Plus, *Medicine for Melancholy*, a feature film about rent control, and *Depression* movies that aren't depressing!

## SHADOWS (SENKI)

RUNNING TIME: 120 minutes

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

Milcho Manchevski

STARRING Borce Nacev, Sabina

Ajrula-Torija, Vesna Stanojevska



**M**ilcho Manchevski's *Shadows* (Senki), from his own screenplay (in Macedonian with English subtitles), addresses the cinema's eternal obsession with death and ghosts with a more somber treatment than was applied to



ANDREW SARRIS

David Koepf's much underrated and lightly comic *Ghost Town* earlier this year. Still, the underlying narrative conceit is strikingly similar in both films in that the protagonist is eventually

urged by the ghosts that haunt him to perform an act of closure that will enable them to live in peace.

In the film's production notes, Mr. Manchevski's Director's Statement elaborates on the subject of his very morbid work: "*Shadows* is a film about sex and death, and a few important things in between. It is an old-fashioned slow-burn of a film. *Shadows* is in many ways my most personal film to date, a story of what happens if Lady Macbeth had lived today and survived to have a grown-up son. This man, Lazar Perkov (Borce Nacev), would try to come to terms with her overbearing presence and her transgressions of the past.

"It is scary, but it offers no cheap thrills, sound bites nor easy solutions. It is about a man trying to have

***Shadows'* two very attractive leads are so arresting together that it is truly unearthly.**

a dialogue with the dead, and becoming more alive for that experience."

The story begins with Lazar living the idyllic existence that goes with a seemingly successful career as a hospital doctor, with a beautiful wife and handsome little boy, and an imposing mansion. In fact, he's called "Lucky" by all his friends and acquaintances. Nonetheless, he remains perpetually insecure as the son of an iron-willed mother, Dr. Vera Perkova (Sabina Ajrula-Torija), a world-famous physician who has risen from obscurity to renown by removing all obstacles to her ascent, whether from the living or the dead.

One day while driving home from the hospital, Lazar is involved in a messy multi-car accident. He is removed from the massive wreckage miraculously alive. From that moment on, Lazar's life begins to change. He begins to encounter strange beings who seem to have known him all his life. These include a very old woman who cleans his apartment without being asked

or paid. When he confronts her for an explanation, she responds in an ancient Macedonian dialect last spoken in Lazar's childhood village. When he visits a noted doctor and linguist to seek a translation for the words the old crone has spoken and Lazar has written down, he is told by the "secretary" that the linguist has gone abroad to a conference, and that she has become, in turn, the linguist's mistress and then his wife. Yet she immediately begins flirting with Lazar in a knowing manner, as if she has known him before, and knows all his secrets. The young woman tells Lazar that her name is Menka (Vesna Stanojevska), but a day later, when Lazar visits the office and finds the linguist, he does not see Menka. Lazar is even more confused when the linguist tells him that his own wife in the picture on his desk died three years ago, and he has never heard of anyone called Menka.

Still, Menka keeps popping up everywhere Lazar goes, and they finally get around to making passionate love. By this time, we have been made aware that Lazar's wife is having an affair with another man, and Lazar's little boy is mysteriously hostile to Lazar. Gradually, Lazar comes to realize that the various individuals he keeps meeting in both public and private places are visitors from the land of the dead. Indeed, there is in Macedonia a Feast of the Dead holiday, at which villagers and townspeople and urban dwellers alike gather to honor the dead by leaving food and drink at the grave sites so that the dead won't go hungry and thirsty when they return to earth.

Finally, Lazar is placed in a position where he must choose between life and death. He chooses life, though his own life has become fuller and richer by his experiences with the dead.

Mr. Manchevski was born in 1959 in Skopje, Macedonia, but he has lived, studied and worked in the United States since leaving his homeland shortly after he graduated from high school. He now teaches film and directing and heads the film directing

department at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts graduate department. Still, he has returned to Macedonia to shoot his films, including *Shadows* in 2007, and his two previous features, *Dust* (2001) and *Before the Rain* (1994). His two very attractive leads, Mr. Nacev and Ms. Stanojevska, were picked out of a pool of aspirants in Macedonia and its neighboring countries. Actually, they are so arresting together that it is truly unearthly.

## Minority Report

### MEDICINE FOR MELANCHOLY

RUNNING TIME: 88 minutes

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

Barry Jenkins

STARRING Tracey Heggins,

Wyatt Cenac



**B**arry Jenkins' *Medicine for Melancholy*, from his own screenplay, is his first feature film, and his IFC Film Program Notes attest to the movie's limited budget and African-American working crew. The film is a one-night-stand romance set in San Francisco, where Micah (Wyatt Cenac) works as a supplier of aquariums for doctor's offices, and Jo (Tracey Heggins) is a T-shirt designer. Though both are gainfully employed, Micah rants and raves about how San Francisco's gentrification is driving out its African-American middle-class residents, who fear the demise of all rent controls. Matters have reached the point that San Francisco now has the smallest percentage of African-American residents of any major American city. To drive the point home, the director clumsily inserts a tenant spokesmen's roundup meeting right in the middle of the film, with Micah and Jo not even present. This sequence makes one recall Sam Goldwyn's famous aphorism, "If you want to send a message, send it by Western Union," except that almost no one sends telegrams anymore.

Field of Dreams: Borce Nacev and Vesna Stanojevska in *Shadows*.

The other subject Micah rants and raves about is the widespread tendency of African-American educated women to hook up with white men. Micah is motivated by his assumption that Jo's constant companion on her cell phone is a white person well-heeled enough to furnish Jo with a fancy apartment "rent-free."

Micah and Jo do manage to take time out for a rave session in a nightclub, and there is a great deal of hip-hop music on the soundtrack during their long evenings together on the town. James Laxton's cinematography captures many of San Francisco's mercurial moods both in the streets and in the many public places.

Of course, the big San Francisco movie noise is being made this season by Gus Van Sant's *Milk*, which focuses on the gay community (part of which is affably African-American). *Medicine for Melancholy* has little contact with this behavioral minority, which somehow seems more empowered in this city than its mostly straight African-American counterpart. It strikes me that in these currently troubled times, the question of where one minority group or another chooses to live is secondary to finding employment anywhere one can find it, and then making one's choice of a residential location accordingly. After all, America has always been and still is a country on the move, from sea to shining sea.

Nonetheless, Mr. Jenkins and his co-leads, Mr. Cenac and Ms. Heggins, achieve stretches of buoyancy and brio in their search for a romantic epiphany that never comes. Mr. Jenkins reveals that he was recovering from a romantic breakup of his own when he made *Medicine for Melancholy*. Apparently, the best medicine is a realized film from the scraps of reality before one's eyes, and ultimately into the eyes of no fewer than six American film festivals and their audiences.

## Remer Roud

**I** happily for his Village to the late to 1987) dis Film Festiv died 20 year with Roud v the festival for a few ye that it was me to the v and the oth ticians of C Hoberman a Talbot of Ne distributed es, and I se casion is a homage to taken place related re pass by wit

## Great, Movie:

**B**ruce rum time Depression val of 50 Dep from Feb. 6 will include and newres NITE! As a special, open be 35 cents (members)—movie ticke be an all-19 in her scan baster, Wes gel, plus a p subjects, in a cartoon w bles of the d and Mahatm Metromcon highlights oration of Fr the repeal o being the re father voted bert Hoover The open (Feb. 6 covered Holl directly with presson; Fr the 1932), livetta Young, living in a 'Park shanty' has called "a and Frank C starring Wal bunk provide run on his b Disney's The nomenclat of "Who's Afra became a D details on the say it? I was c





**j.b. spins**

Jazz, film, and improvised culture.

**saturday, january 31, 2009**

## Manchevski's Shadows

When Milcho Manchevski started filming his breakthrough debut *Before the Rain*, Macedonia was not yet a fully recognized country. While the modern Macedonia is a relatively young country, the region carries the baggage of centuries of dramatic and often bloody history. After all, Alexander the Great began his conquest of the known world as king of ancient Macedon. The past figuratively haunts the work of Milcho Manchevski and literally haunts the protagonist of his latest film, *Shadows* (trailer[here](#)), opening tomorrow in New York.

Dr. Lazar Perkov is a good father, but as a man, he is a bit wishy-washy, avoiding conflict with his overbearing mother, Dr. Vera Perkova, at all costs. He is so programmed to respond to her, he causes a terrible traffic accident while reaching for his cell-phone to take her call. Nearly embraced by the light, he comes back to Earth—remember the name was Lazar.

Though fully recovered physically, something is still wrong. Returning home, Perkov finds a withered elderly woman in his apartment, speaking in a mysterious tongue. Recording her cryptic speech, Perkov looks for help from the local linguistic professor, but finds Menka, his research assistant wife in his place. According to her, Perkov's uninvited caller has been demanding in an ancient Aegean dialect: "Return what's not yours." Though she is initially contemptuous of Perkov, sparks quickly fly between Perkov and Menka. While at first, he precipitously retreats from her sexual advances, the seeds of obsession are firmly planted. The nature of reality becomes increasingly problematic for Perkov, as visions of the alluring Menka, the

old woman, and a hobbled old man with an infant increasingly intrude into his daily life.

*Shadows* is a ghost story in a very real sense, but not a horror story as such. However, Manchevski maintains an eerily effective mood throughout the film, in contrast to the rather inconsistent tone of *Dust*, Manchevski's sophomore slump following the masterful *Rain*. Ranking solidly between Manchevski's first two films, *Shadows* might in fact be his strongest work from a purely visual standpoint, thanks in large measure also to Fabio Cianchetti's brooding cinematography.



If not as visceral as *Rain*, Manchevski's screenplay is compelling and economical. It is also his most sexually explicit work, by far. As in his previous films, events from the past continue to exert a palpable influence on those in the present. In Manchevski's Skopje, antiquity is only concealed by a thin veneer of modernity. It can be heady stuff, but Manchevski pulls the audience through at a good clip, aided by a strong cast, particularly Vesna Stanojevska, whose performance brings surprising depth to the enigmatic Menka.

With *Shadows*, Manchevski seems to be back on track. Dark and moody, but oddly satisfying, *Shadows* is a film for adults—meaning those with adult sensibilities. It opens tomorrow in New York at the Cinema Village.

## Hollywood Today

News magazine, with Attitude



# Original Horror Twist Lurks in the Heart of “Shadows”

Wednesday, March 26th, 2008

**Horror film import *Shadows* (Senki) defines and defies horror genre**

*By Michelle Foody*

HOLLYWOOD, CA (Hollywood Today) 3/26/08 — Sure, Hollywood loves a good horror film import. But not as much as it loves the remake, with a pretty American girl as the lead. The trend was established with films like Japan's "Ringu," which became a Naomi Watts vehicle in 2002 and hasn't slowed since.

The graphic flick "Shutter" flashed onto the silver screen with a \$10.5 million opening this past weekend, by way of its Thai origins. So watch out for the thriller "Shadows," aka "Senki." It was the Macedonian submission for the Foreign Language Oscar, and it may well await a similar fate. It's a genre shattering movie, one part scary ghost story, one part mind-bending psychological drama. So make a point to see it before dark, anti-hero star Borce Nacev gets replaced by a blond babysitter.

The film shattered all box office records in its home market, and then went on to kill at the Toronto Film Festival. Hollywood Today chatted with the writer & director of "Shadows," Milcho Manchevski, via phone from his desk at the Tisch Film School at N.Y.U. where he is currently teaching.

Although the director is no stranger to the Hollywood system, having directed episodes of "The Wire," and even an award-winning rap video, this movie is refreshingly, and often times shockingly, not Americanized. The film was shot in Macedonia and on a limited budget, but that only emboldened its director even more.

"Macedonia is a small country, it's the size of Vermont and there is not much money to spend on the arts and film," explained Manchevski. "So, its more rewarding because the artist has more freedom, and it's

not about making money. It's about creating with freedom, without studios giving you rewrites."

The story certainly doesn't feel sanitized by the Hollywood PC machine. There's plenty of sex, a heaping of death, and a main character that we aren't sure we like, who may or may not be going crazy. Which is why it's so intriguing. But don't come looking for cheap thrills or a formulaic horror film.

"It's a psychological ghost story, it's not one genre or the other. The idea was to do both," insists Manchevski. "When you start playing with archetypes, then it gets interesting. Its like a traditional scary film but then refracted through a psychological drama."

Also mixed into this Mediterranean stew of a thriller is Macedonia's own dark history—a nation only since the crumbling of Yugoslavia in 1991, the country has suffered through oppression from the Greek government, genocide and ethic cleansing in its not-so-distant past. But *Shadows* is not a history lesson, however, nor is it looking to preach.

"That part of the recent history is a terrible tragedy, but it was by no means the central idea behind the film," Manchevski told Hollywood Today. "I try to make films about people, their loves, fears, and conflicts. I like the European way of making films, making something beautiful."

Let's hope that inevitable Hollywood remake keeps a piece of Manchevski's unique vision in mind.

"There is talk of doing a U.S. remake of 'Shadows,' which is a funny thought," laughs the writer/director. "Maybe I'd like to, but it all depends on who you are doing it with. I'm all for collaborating with creative people... It's the [studio] suits, them, not so much".

Having already made the move to New York City, perhaps it won't be long until Manchevski gets swept up by the Hollywood movie-making machine. But for now, those NYU kids are pretty darn lucky.



Full Review

01/06/09



Harvey S. Karten  
Compuserve

SHADOWS (Senki)

Mitropoulos Films

Reviewed for CompuServe by Harvey Karten

Grade: B

Directed by: Milcho Manchevsky

Written By: Milcho Manchevsky

Cast: Borce Nacev, Vesna Stanojevska, Sabina Ajrula-Tozija, Salaetin Bilal

Screened at: Review 2, NYC, 1/6/09

Opens: January 30, 2009

"Shadows," or "Senki" in its original, Macedonian language, could be subtitled "Love and Death," though there's a lot more Ingmar Bergman in the tale than Woody Allen. A lengthy, serious piece with comedic undercurrents, "Shadows" can be looked upon as an entertainment done in epic style; an absorbing history lesson; a ghost story; a tourist product placement; and one that does not stint on soft-core porn. Borce Nacev, who resembles a cross between a young Al Pacino and the current Adrien Brody, is in virtually every scene, graced with the role of Lazar Petrov, aka "Lucky," a handsome, youthful doctor who becomes privy to a number of strange occurrences as though he were wandering about in a dream. Death is a frequent visitor in his days of stunning surprises, but so is love in its myriad forms: love of his wife, his son, and ultimately of his vital presence on earth as well.

Milcho Manchevsky, a Macedonian who has taught courses at New York University, is known to fans of serious films especially for his multi-award-winning 1994 picture "Before the Rain," a look at intertwining lives in the strife-torn Republic of Macedonia—featuring a monk, a photojournalist, and a London woman at a key point in her life. The current film is laden with symbolism, one that not only will keep the audience guessing about its cryptic, central motif but may encourage us to think that such a tale could take place not only in the small, landlocked Macedonian nation of just two million citizens but in no small number of global areas that have been victimized by ethnic cleansing. (History buffs will be aware that Macedonia was liberated from the Turkish Empire after a war that found Greece, one of the victorious powers, proceeding to expel hundreds of thousands of ethnic Macedonians from their land, seizing their estates, and plundering towns while filling the newly-empty areas with ethnic Greeks not only from Greece but from various nations to the east.)

"Shadows" could be taken as a comment on the way nations throughout history have devastated conquered lands, but writer-director Manchevsky must have been aware that limiting his story to politics would cut into his audience while reducing the story to mere chronicle. What emerges is a look at injustice, taking aim specifically at people who throughout human history have violated the Eighth Commandment: "You shall not steal."

When Dr. Lazar Perkov (Borce Nacev) suffers a near-fatal car accident after an argument with his wife Gordana

(Filareta Atanasova), he envisions the mythic tunnel that many say they have seen at death's door. One year later, his wife having remained at a vacation spot with his son Ignjat (Dime Iliev), Lazar returns to his apartment in the capital city of Skopje to find an old woman (Ratka Radmanovic) sitting on his couch, speaking to him in an ancient dialect he cannot understand. Visiting a professor for a translation, he instead meets a young, attractive woman, Menka (Vesna Stanojevska), claiming to be the teacher's assistant, who explains that the old woman was warning, "Return what's not yours. Have respect." The message appears cryptic to Lazar since he is aware of stealing nothing. We in the audience are meant to see that innocence of wrongs is no excuse: the duty of an ethical person is to locate injustice in the form of theft and to do his best to set things right—a notion, by the ways, introduced by the ancient Greek tragedians who believed that all sorts of bad things happen when hubristic deeds go unpunished. Among the strangers, with accent on the "strange," that Lazar encounters is a man (Salaetin Bilal) who can use a podiatrist in the worst way. At this point in the over two-hours long film, some theatergoers will get an inkling of what's going on, and what the young physicians must do to set the heavens right.

Though "Shadows" is overlong, Manchevski fills the screen with enough love (in the form of heavy-breathing, full-nudity scenes without the sheets that somehow cover bedded American couples from the waist down) and violence (in the form of a hanging, a drowning, a fall down an elevator shaft, a stunningly photographed car crash) to satisfy even the groundlings in the audience who have wandered into a screening thinking that they were going to see "Hostel 2." Nicely acted by an ensemble of people whom Lazar—like Lazarus rising from the dead—meets on his quasi-religious journey, "Shadows" might just entice some Americans, particularly those who got out of the stock market in October 2007, to put Macedonia in their vacation plans, all thanks to Fabio Gianchetti's glorious photography of quaint villages and lakeside hot spots.

"Shadows" is Macedonia's entry into the Oscar competition for Best Foreign Film of 2008.

Not Rated. 130 minutes. © 2008 by Harvey Karten Member: NY Film Critics Online

## Movie Review

# Shadows (Senki)

2007

Director: Milcho Manchevski

Cast: Borce Nacev, Vesna Stanojevska, Sabina Ajrula-Tozija

A



In the 2003 introduction to the published screenplay of his first feature-length fiction film, *Before the Rain* (1994)—which appeared actually a few months after that of the screenplay for his second feature, *Dust* (2001)—Milcho Manchevski expressed his frustration with widespread assumptions about that film as literal historical account. "In almost all interviews I gave for newspapers and television in dozens of countries over the final years of the last century," he writes, "I kept repeating that *Before the Rain* is not a documentary about former Yugoslavia, nor about Macedonia, nor is it a documentary at all. I would say: 'You can see this from the aesthetic approach: it's shot like a fairytale; look at the camera work, or the editing, or the music. I am using actors. It's scripted, for Heaven's sake.' Who got it—got it."

Now we have Manchevski's third feature and again there should be no doubt about aesthetic approach. *Shadows* premiered in early September at the Toronto International Film Festival and was quickly tapped as Macedonia's official 2008 Oscar entry for Best Foreign Language Film. Already scheduled for theatrical release in ten European nations, this lovely and moving film is just now making the rounds of US distributors. The other two features, with their extended historical elements and fractured, multiple and overlapping narratives—what Manchevski calls "Cubist storytelling"—are widely rentable in the US. Watching the three features close together is extremely rewarding. Manchevski is building a body of work that will shine in retrospective programs—for shared, reverberating landscapes, elaborated images, and a cadre of supporting actors whose reappearance in successive film makes his work subliminally familiar and easy to enter—and now, for the clarity of his turn into newly personal territory and straightforward narrative.

"Return what's not yours. Have respect," says the old woman Kalina (Ratka Radmanovic), murmuring urgently in an ancient dialect that no one speaks anymore. She appears matter-of-factly, in her head scarf and heavy skirts and shawl, a small cross tattooed between her eyebrows in the old way, waiting in the dark on the living room couch of a young doctor. Lazar Perkov (Borce Nacev) has just returned to his apartment in the Macedonian capital of Skopje from his parents' villa in the lakes district after a year convalescing from a near-fatal car crash. Trying to return to work at the hospital, he misses his already straying wife and little son, who have remained at the lake. He has nightmares, forgets things, fears his recovery isn't stable, speaks in odd images that cause the unnerved family chauffeur to roll his eyes, and has now had his first visit from the unsettled souls of the dead.

That Lazar doesn't know what's stolen or how to put it back doesn't get him a pass. Preoccupied with his young man's struggle to emerge from the shadow of his mother's overbearing ambition, herself a physician (the formidable Sabina Ajrula-Tozija)—impossible not to recall with the film's final shot of blinding light—Lazar encounters one woman after another who teaches him that ignorance and personal innocence are no excuses, and who invite his wary, steadily growing search. In a land overrun for centuries by intruders, these women are preoccupied with theft and its attendant glaring debt. Manchevski's images are earthy, specific, free of arid abstraction. For example, one day Lazar searches out the crowded ramshackle home of his mother's chauffeur, Blagojce (Petar Mircevski), wanting a ride to the country. With his trained scientist's eye he diagnoses a burn on the driver's wife's arm. She patiently explains the birthmark resulted from her mother eating stolen grapes while pregnant.

Manchevski tinkered for several years with the nuances of his film's title, beginning with the *Ghosts* and detouring to *Bones* before settling on the immensely resonant possibilities of *Shadows*. The word's added visual dimension encourages our attention toward DP Fabio Cianchetti's use of reflections, doubling, broken space, and Menka's propensity for suddenly dropping out of the frame mid-stride and then abruptly reappearing. Cities in Manchevski's films have always been claustrophobic and disorienting. There's a similar handling in that maze-like Paris apartment where Bertolucci's *The Dreamers* occurs, a film Cianchetti also shot.

Kalina is the first "shadow" who appears to Lazar, identified by her dialect as one of the displaced Aegean Macedonians. A linguist whom the young man seeks out to translate her message also remarks on Lazar's own name's Biblical reference to resurrection. Seeking that professor, Lazar meets the lovely Menka, a suicide

## Entre los muertos (Senki)



Dir: Milcho Manchevski.  
País: Macedonia-Alemania-Italia-Bulgaria-España  
Año: 2007.  
Guión: Milcho Manchevski.  
Fotografía en C: Fabio Cianchetti.  
Música: Ryan Shore y Kiri Dalajovski.  
Edición: David Ray y Martin Levenstein.  
Cen: Borce Nacev (Dr. Lazar Perkov), Vesna Stanojevska (Menka), Sabina Ajrula-Tozija (Dra. Vera Perkova), Salatin Bilal (Gerasim), Ratka Radmanovic (Kalina), Filareta Atanasova (Gordana), Dime Iljev (Ignjat Perkov)

Prod: Senka DOEL Film Production, Blue Eyes Fiction, Camera Ltd., Classic SRL, Tomasol Films, Mariela Beulevski, Martin Huzmann, Amedeo Pagnani, Corinna Mehner, Dimitar Gochev, Gerardo Herrero, Milcho Manchevski  
Duración: 120 mins.  
Dist: Alhambra Cinema.  
Clasificación: B-15.

Sinopsis

by hanging (luminously played by harpist Vesna Stanojevska). On a hospital gurney, then waiting for the elevator, Lazar meets the cross, craggy-faced Gerasim, a refugee whose brother nailed a spike into his heel at burial in hopes of magically halting his wandering in the afterlife (Salatin Bilal, the Turkish Major in *Dust*). There is an unbaptized infant whom Gerasim awkwardly but tenderly carries instead of abandoning, and Kalina's sometime companion wolf.

These walking dead may invite Lazar's curiosity and compassion—and in Menka's case his intimacy—but they cannot explain their repeated violent deaths or their connection with the cardboard box of old bones that his mother scavenged for her own 1973 anatomy class from beyond the consecrated ground of the cemetery—"not a real grave," she snorts indignantly—in her home village of Gluvovo. Or what he must do. In the pivotal showdown, slugging each other, sprawling on her office floor, Lazar forcibly takes the bones from his mother in this fight over laying the past to rest or making it "useful" to one's own ambitions.

That fight over a box of bones has room to contain a parable about the past these shadows more broadly represent, though one of the film's more courageous qualities is Manchevski's insistence that Lazar's own journey carry the film emotionally and dramatically rather than resort to expose. Kalina's dialect reveals she is from Aegean Macedonia—the eastern territory annexed by Greece in 1913—but the film says little else about her people except that their fate was "exodus." Manchevski says audiences outside that culture don't need the specific history to connect with these characters' pain and longing for relief as abandoned and forsaken peoples.

For those inside that culture, even that slightest reference to Kalina's extinct dialect evokes the following specifics. In 1912 Greece allied with Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro, declaring war on Turkey. While this ended the Ottoman Empire's occupation of Macedonia, it led directly to Macedonia's partition among its neighbors. In Aegean Macedonia, Greece embarked upon a decades-long campaign to change the population's ethnic composition, forcibly expelling hundreds of thousands, confiscating lands, forbidding languages, renaming places, plundering and destroying villages, and re-colonizing the area with ethnic Greeks from nations to the east. During the Greek Civil War of the late 1940s this campaign accelerated anew. 60,000 were expelled in 1948. Some interments from the mid-40s continued until 1974—the year of Lazar's mother's anatomy class—and as late as 1985 Greek laws governing that area excluded Aegean Macedonian descendants from reclaiming confiscated land. In 1991, the modern Republic of Macedonia emerged from the upheaval of Yugoslavia's disintegration by referendum.

Lazar's journey is also the artist's journey and a parable for the work of cinema. It becomes his job because he is the one who is there to see. Let us hope this film is available on US screens, and quickly.



KINOPREMIJERA Sjene

# Gusto tkanje onostranoga

Treći film Milča Mančevskog, makedonskog redatelja nastanjenog u SAD-u koji je svjetski glas stekao zagonetno uzbudljivim prvijencem "Prije kiše" (1994), "Sjene" prate dio života mladog skopskog liječnika kojemu se počne činiti da susreće preneobične ljude i doživljava preneobične događaje. Zbliva li se to uistinu ili je riječ o posljedicama ozljede glave zadobivene u prometnoj nesreći u kojoj je zamalo poginuo?

Gusto istkana drama s elementima onostranoga ona je vrst filma strave kojoj nije cilj gledatelja sokirati nego ga potmulo i u smislu "neprimjetne postupnosti", a ne nepoštenosti, gotovo podmuklo zastrašiti. No, namjera tog zastrašivanja nije izazivanje jednokratnog uzbuđenja te vrste nego je ono zamišljeno kao oblik komunikacije u kojem sugovornika treba izbaciti iz kolotečine kako bi, lišen sigurnosti poznatih mu oslonaca, mogao iznova promisliti o ponuđenim sadržajima, temama i pitanjima. U ovom slučaju riječ je ponajviše o donekle metaforičkim razmišljanjima o osobnoj odgovornosti i psihološko-moralnom naljepitu pri čemu je ponuđeno nekoliko dobro proučenih portreta, profila i modela ponašanja.

Režiran elegantnom sigurnošću, filigranski



EROTSKI NABOJ Na visokoj razini

razrađen u slikovnim, sadržajnim i značenjskim pojedinostima, film spretno hvata realistične okuse, boje i mirise vreće gradskoga života te ih bešavno natapa u neku vrst orijentalne mističnosti pripadajućem mjestu, vedutama i krajolicima radnje, a u sve to uspljeva skladno uklopiti nekoliko prizora jakog erotskog naboja.

No, unatoč visokoj izvedbenoj razini u svakom odsječku, "Sjene" se nakon nekog vremena počnu činiti pomalo repetitivnima, odnosno djelom koje središnji motiv nastavlja obrađivati i nakon što je iscrpilo "dovoljan" niz načina da to učini. (J. H.)

SENKI drama fant., 120 min., Mak./Njem./Ita./Bug./Španj., 2007.; R: Milčo Mančevski; G: Borče Nacev, Vesna Stanojevska

## "SJENE" MILČA MANČEVSKOG NOR MALNOST BALKANA



"Sjene": onostrani i onirički triler

na kojem ima status filmskog besmrtnika, i gdje mu nije preveliki problem pokrenuti široku međunarodnu koprodukciju (makedonsko-njemačko-talijansko-bugaro-španjolsku).

Ta trenutačna ovisnost o Makedoniji ima pozitivnih implikacija. Mančevski nije osuđen niti na korporacijske hol-

lywoodske projekte, niti na sudjelovanje u nekoj formi neokolonijalne laži. Znamo kako to ide, Balkanci moraju biti žrtve rata ili mediji folklorne egzotike. Oni nemaju prava na modernost čak i kada je žive. Sa "Sjenama", pričom iz suvremenog Skoplja na razmeđu između živih i mrtvih, seksa i smrti, Mančevski izbjegava tu zamku.

I ovdje na rubovima imamo balkanski folklor i balkansku povijest (pogrom cigejskih Makedonaca). No film s Borče Nacevom i Vesnom Stanojevskom, promovira i ono što nam Zapad negira: našu modernost, našu "normalnost" - premda to može zazvučati pomalo čudno u kontekstu jednog onostranog i oniričkog trilera.

Dragan JURAK

## 影子 Senki (2007)



导演 米尔科·曼切夫斯基  
编剧 米尔科·曼切夫斯基  
主演 Sabina Ayula / Saladin Bilar / Petar Mircovski / Borče Nacev / Vesna Stanojevska  
类型 剧情 / 悬疑 / 惊悚 / 恐怖  
制片国家/地区 马其顿  
语言 马其顿语  
上映日期 2007-09-09  
片长 Canada: 120分钟/Toronto International Film Festival / USA: 130分钟  
又名 阴影 / Shadows  
IMDb链接: 10834102



Is trećim filmom Milčo Mančevski se ne odvajao od Makedonije. Nakon uspjeha u Veneciji s "Prije kiše", prvim filmom koji je artistički i politički artikulirao ratove na Balkanu, Mančevskom su virala hollywoodskog mainstreama bila širom otvorena. Za svoj sljedeći film on je tada izabrao "Prašinu", poprilično skupi eurowestern po uzoru na "Butch Cassidy i Sundance Kid" i "Divlju hordu", u kojem se umjesto Meksikanaca pojavljuju Turci. Film je otvorio Veneciju, na makedonski western je teško bilo komercijalizirati, a slabo je prošao i kod kritike: vrata Hollywooda ponovo su se zatvorila.

Htio ne htio, Mančevski je i svoj treći film morao smjestiti u Makedoniju, domaći teren



THE POPCORN REEL FILM REVIEW/"Shadows" ("Senki")

## In A Mysterious Macedonia, The Carnal Meets The Surreal, With Erotic Appeal

By Omar P. L. Moore/January 30, 2009

"Shadows" is a stunning and endlessly suspenseful erotic thriller. This must-see artistry by director Milcho Manchevski leaves a magnetic imprint on the moviegoer. The film chronicles the travails of Dr. Lazar Perkov, a man who escapes death in a fantastic car accident in the heat of the night. He is thankful for life, and his colleagues dub Lazar, a man who has a beautiful wife and child, "Lucky". But Lazar (played by Borce Nacev, pronounced Borché) appears anything but, plagued by visitations from people and things he either imagines, actually sees, fears or are objectively real. An elderly woman turns up in his apartment. She says something he cannot understand. Lazar enlists help from Menka, a translator (Vesna Stanojevska). He's convinced that he's onto something. Or is he?

Mr. Manchevski crafts "Shadows" as a series of episodes of mystery and discovery which are nothing short of compelling. Each avenue leads to something astounding or intriguing, and Hitchcockian themes of identity and duplicity are a powerful chorus line throughout this absorbing drama. Mr. Nacev fuels his character with purpose and persuasion, combining innocence and curiosity with impulsiveness and edgy paranoia. The performance is all the more impressive for the fact that Mr. Nacev has never acted before on the big screen. "Shadows", a 2007 film which finally has its U.S. theatrical release premiere with an exclusive opening today at the Cinema Village in New York City, is set and shot in the small southeastern European country of Macedonia and cinematographer Fabio Cianchetti photographs the film in mainly bluish-greenish hues, further illuminating the depth of the landscape as well as removal from it. On many occasions Mr. Cianchetti's camera frames scenes in a naturalistic atmosphere, making some of what the audience witnesses within the scenes all the more vivid.

"Shadows" is also written by Mr. Manchevski (director of the multiple award-winning debut film "Before The Rain" and "Dust") and he never plays games with his audience. He takes his viewers as seriously as he does the genre of his film, which veers toward the substantially less graphic edges of horror, accompanied by discreet glimpses of the odd and ribald. Miss Stanojevska illuminates the big screen as Vesna, a complex but alluring figure who strongly resembles the legendary Isabella Rossellini throughout the film. Miss Stanojevska projects a convergence of sweetness, smarts and sex appeal, making her character incredibly resonant. While watching Mr. Manchevski's film it's hard to believe that like her male counterpart in "Shadows" Miss Stanojevska never had any prior big screen acting experience. By day, she is a harpist for Macedonia's National Opera and in "Shadows" Miss Stanojevska plays all the right notes.

The director never resorts to the kind of visual clichés typically found in the horror-thriller realm. He directs "Shadows" at a smooth and pedestrian pace and in his hands the film is always an alive and interesting entertainment. You are riveted both in thought and in awe of its pace and rich visuals. Mr. Manchevski directs this film meticulously, with an strong eye for creating images conveyed in moments both languid and kinetic. "Shadows" takes a thoughtful look at issues of life, love and death in a refreshingly honest and adult way. There are several sexually explicit moments which while erotic and beautiful, are neither gratuitous nor without symbolic or substantive meaning. These scenes are directed with a tenderness, passion and affection that clearly shows. There's never a minute where we feel that we are surrendering time to just watch a sex scene as a departure from the narrative. There's never a feeling that we are intruders in a discussion of sensitive subjects -- the film's devices and scenarios, spiritual, religious or otherwise -- are all devised in the most authentic way.

Though the third act contains a few visual effects that it can live without, "Shadows" is a wonderfully literate and eloquent human drama. It's definitely a film that Mr. Manchevski, who heads the Directing Department at New York University's Tisch School Of The Arts Graduate Department, should instruct his students to take a five-minute trip down the block to see -- on a day that he's not teaching class, of course.



# Sex, Death, Eroticism And Psychological Horror Amidst "Shadows" From Director Milcho Manchevski

By Omar P.L. Moore/The Popcorn Reel

January 27, 2009

Initially, "Shadows" filmmaker Milcho Manchevski said he wanted to make "just a scary film -- very visceral -- a scary film that was not political or complex."

The Macedonian director, born in the town of Skopje in 1959, said he loved scary movies but the kind that were innovative. It became clear to him however, that "Shadows", written and directed by Mr. Manchevski and shot in the small southeastern European country of Macedonia, wasn't going to be your average scary movie. "It became sort of a dialogue with the dead. And that's what made it personal for myself. And that, in itself at the same time it's quite universal, because it's one of the main concerns of most cultures, most civilizations. It's very archetypal."

Mr. Manchevski, who for 20 years has been living in New York City where he heads the Film Directing Department at New York University's Tisch School Of The Arts' Graduate Department, spoke via telephone yesterday to The Popcorn Reel about "Shadows", which was released in numerous countries back in 2007 and will finally make its North American theatrical release debut on Friday, opening exclusively at the Cinema Village in New York City. Mr. Manchevski put Macedonia on Oscar's cinematic map when in 1995 his debut feature "Before The Rain" (1994) became the first film from the country to be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. "Before The Rain", a highly-acclaimed film, won top awards at the Venice Film Festival, the David di Donatello Awards (aka the "Italian Oscars") and the Independent Spirit Awards, among more than 30 awards.

The idea for "Shadows" literally came from a moment of great levity one night in New York City. "I was sitting with a friend of mine who was a diplomat in New York at the time. We're sitting at the Brooklyn Promenade and looking at the Manhattan skyline and we're laughing, 'would you imagine ghosts in this park?' And that's where it started."

While the director did say that "Shadows", an erotic drama about death, sex and psychological states of perception, was "a scary film seen through the eyes of European glasses", the film is also an absorbing and thought-provoking look at the willingness or lack thereof, to confront death and deal with concerns surrounding the departed, something that Mr. Manchevski said was reflective of contemporary society. "Shadows" stars first-time feature film actors Borce Nacev (pronounced "Bor-che") and Vesna Stanojevska, who is also a harpist in the Macedonia National Opera. Miss Stanojevska, said the director, only had the experience of appearing in one television commercial prior to being on the big screen in "Shadows". Miss Stanojevska plays Menska, a doctor's assistant who translates messages. In "Shadows" the actress bears a strong resemblance to Isabella Rossellini, a likeness that grows as the film moves along. Mr. Nacev, whom in a "making of" documentary for the film confessed that he was bothered by the fact that "Shadows" was shot out of sequence, revealed that he had to watch previous filmed scenes to get a sense of the emotion he had to bring to the present scene he was filming. Mr. Nacev plays the film's protagonist Lazar, a medical doctor at a hospital who survives a nasty car crash.

"Borce emerged as just really the best for this part," Mr. Manchevski said, citing that he had scoured the entire country of Macedonia, which is the size of the American state of Vermont, to find his actor and actress. He added that acting neophytes were "both a blessing and a drawback." There was also a naturalness to Miss Stanojevska that worked well for "Shadows".

Not surprisingly, Milcho Manchevski is a meticulous planner. He storyboarded "Shadows" with between 1,000 and 2,000 of his own drawings.

"I believe in doing my homework. I was a straight-A student."

Obviously the director was careful about the objectives and impact of "Shadows". "The key was not to make a film that's going to jolt you, but a film that's gonna creep with you and stay with you for a long time, like something you see from the corner of your eye," said Mr. Manchevski, who prior to the discussion was told that his phone was playing tricks on him. "I'll have to see about getting that fixed," he said. Not short of a sense of humor, he gave a wise piece of advice about not buying a particular brand of cellular phone. The director, who also directed the MTV Best Video of 1992 "Tennessee", by hip-hop artists Arrested Development, also likened "Shadows" to a nightmare you wake up from that lingers and won't leave you alone. "And to achieve that there's a lot of repetition. In a way, the idea was to make it feel a little bit like Ravel's Bolero. You take a theme or a few themes and then you keep repeating them and they grow bigger and bigger."

Mr. Manchevski shared an observation that reflected the type of effect he was aiming for in his latest film. "Bergman's films were scary films for me. Even though you wouldn't find them on the horror shelf." Films like "Autumn Sonata", "Persona" and "Cries And Whispers" were cited by the director and his interviewer for their scare factor. "So creating that visceral dialogue, that visceral reaction, in a way is sort of the basic but also the most difficult task an artist can have. If you're doing a comedy people are laughing or they're not. If you're making a scary film people are scared or not. There's no middle ground."



Today's horror films and psychological thrillers are a long way from the imagination and power of past classics like "Psycho", "Rosemary's Baby" or "The Exorcist", with what is termed "torture porn". That type of filmmaking is "not lazy but it's easy", according to Mr. Manchevski. "It depends on what kind of film you're making. Even in doing a gore film . . . there [are] various degrees of how well you do that. I remember seeing the first "Halloween" in film school (at the Department of Cinema and Photography at Southern Illinois University, where he graduated in 1982.) And I was working at the theater [in Illinois] at the time. I saw the film and everybody was screaming. Virtually hanging from the ceiling. So I was like, 'I better see the next screening to see why it's so effective and why is it that it worked so well.' And then I realized that . . . the craft was definitely there. There was something very direct about it. If you recall, the first "Halloween" (directed by John Carpenter) had almost no blood at all in it."

Though he has made just three feature films (including "Dust" in 2001), with an interval of roughly seven years between films Milcho Manchevski has a very good reason as to why more features aren't on his resume. "I handcraft the films," he said. "And I don't know if it's good or bad. It has its plusses and its minuses," said the director, who mentioned that just the physical work on a film takes a year to two years of his life. "I don't like doing industrial films. I don't like just rushing them through the assembly line and then into the theater and then out. I believe that by investing a piece of yourself in the work in general that will somehow resonate from the screen and stay with the viewer." The director finances all of his films in Europe even though he lives in the Big Apple. He mentioned that "Europe is a funny place for financing films", citing the balance between "half-distributor, half refugee", although in Europe "there is much more of a respect for the author." Still, he noted that "Europe is slowly becoming a little more Hollywood-ized." Mr. Manchevski lamented the Hollywood way, saying that "granted there are films that you need this kind of industrial approach but there are also films that are created by one or two or several filmmakers expressing a particular point of view that get ruined by the money, the suits, the studios or the producers changing, tinkering with the films too much."

Mr. Manchevski joked about having his films remade, hinting that he would disengage himself from the remaking process. He said that at one point there were discussions about remaking "Shadows". Earlier in the conversation he had observed that "in development, scriptwriting, script doctoring in Hollywood in general there's so much emphasis put on [explaining] things and, 'do people get it?', and I think it's just overrated. The relevant consideration, he said, is "'do I *like* the film' -- not 'do I understand the film.'" There are a number of wonderful films where I'm not quite sure what happened one hundred percent but I'm really glad I saw the film. And vice versa, there are like some films where everything is clear but I couldn't care less. So I think that understanding has been overrated at the expense of feeling and liking the film."

Another reason for the sizable interval between films is that Mr. Manchevski has his hands full with many other more interesting projects which he prefers working on, such as his direction of short films, long-form works, art and experimental cinema pieces. He has directed numerous television commercials, the most recent of which can be seen [here](#). He is currently working on a photo exhibition art project entitled "Five Drops Of Dream", five photos in a film strip. The photo exhibition has some one hundred film strips, or a total of five hundred frames. The artwork exhibition will be completed for display later this year.

The director is asked about the sex scenes in "Shadows", each of which is distinct and not without meaning in the film's context. If comedy is difficult to film and convey so too are love or sex scenes. "It's difficult because it's such a personal moment and here you are doing it first, in front a lot of people and second, in front of a lot of people who are going to see you in the future. And you need to make it look very intimate, like only two people together. I just put everything on the table, discuss it. First of all, everything was described in the script in detail so the actors knew what they needed to do, so they spent a lot of time preparing for it. And they had their own little dynamic going on as we were shooting," the director said.

Mr. Manchevski then remembered something that happened during filming. After rehearsals with a partially-clothed Vesna Stanojevska, the director recalled that "we were filming the scene where [Miss Stanojevska] is showing her breasts . . . and then as we were preparing to roll again, the microphones were on but we weren't rolling yet and you hear Vesna saying, 'Well, why are you being that way? Just *look* at them before I show them to everybody.' Which I thought was really sweet and very funny."

One of the sex scenes, Mr. Manchevski revealed, "that is particularly important and dear to me . . . is where they're having sex and laughing. Which is something that you know, you very seldom see in films. And I think it's, it's a great way to deal with it, a great way to approach . . . love and sex."



## Manchevski's SHADOWS at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival

By Dinane Sippel

Red carpets ribboned through the week at the 23rd Santa Barbara International Film Festival, spanning ooohs and ahhs, yelps and squeals for Julie Christie, Cate Blanchett, Javier Bardem, Ryan Gosling, Tommy Lee Jones, and Angelina Jolie, in that order. And stars shone brightly as well on the faux blacksky ceiling of the 2,000-seat Arlington Theater, walled with real gold and amber lanterns and façades of the old Spanish mission town that the city once was. This site for the endless tributes was nearly as packed for a new film from Kazakhstan by Sergei Bodrov, *Mongol*. A glorious oldstyle action film devoid of character development and heartfelt conflict (even with narration delivered in firstperson voiceover), it offered plenty of blood and bodies and landandskyscapes, a roughhewn exotica when compared to, for instance, a glittering Zhang Yimou palace epic.

Yet in smaller theaters and some uniquely pleasant midsize venues (the city offers several, patchworked through its downtown), very astute and committed cineastes streamed into half a dozen new films designated as "Eastern Bloc" in the catalog and filled the houses. I never saw so little popcorn (nor food or drink of any kind) consumed in movie theaters (though it was generally available) or heard so much conversation in the lobbies afterward. At this midwest writing moment, I haven't seen all of these films (Fatih Akin's *The Edge of Heaven* is yet to come and gaspingly anticipated), but so far Alexander Sokurov's eloquently enigmatic *Alexandra*, Andrei Zvyagintsev's striking and engrossing *The Banishment*, and Milcho Manchevski's singularly compelling *Shadows* are enough to call any festival a success. Together they bring an aesthetic and socially conscious edge to this eleven-day event that is perhaps not so pronounced in any other particular segment of the program. And a crime it shall be if they don't soon make it into local arthouse theaters across our country. If only because it takes so long to encounter a new work by him, even though he now lives and works in the U.S. (heading the Directing Department at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts' Graduate Program), this review will focus on the latest by Milcho Manchevski.

Following his much fêted debut, *Before the Rain* (1994), and his second feature, *Dust* (2001), writer-director Milcho Manchevski has once again provided us with the perfect festival film: a visual tale of dramatic substance, with historical depth and contemporary thrust, adroitly told with innovation and élan. And once again Manchevski returns to that place he cannot leave behind, his beloved Macedonia.

It all begins, at least the film itself, with a crash. It looks like a fatal car accident. But Lazar Perkov — his friends call him "Lucky" — miraculously survives it, or so he thinks. After a year of convalescing, he returns from his parents' villa in the lakes region to his apartment in Skopje, the capital, and his position at the hospital where he is a physician. Sad that his wife has remained behind with their little boy, and she is flirting with someone, at that, he feels even more uneasy because his forgetfulness, nightmares, and absentmindedness tell him his recovery is not yet complete. And there are those strange faces: an old man taking care of a baby, a perhaps even older lady tattooed with a cross between her eyebrows and muttering an ancient dialect, and then a mesmerizing young woman who holds a secret.

Lazar manages to find someone to decipher the words of the old woman, Kalina, who is there waiting for him on his couch when he arrives home at night, sometimes with an eerie wolf. "Return what's not yours. Have respect," is what she presses urgently. But what has he stolen? Without knowing this, how could he possibly return it? The linguist who translated the words notes the Biblical connection of Lazar's name to the story of Lazarus, and by coincidence, the young woman he meets in that office, Menka, is the survivor of a suicide by hanging — or is she? Perhaps it's not by chance that the old man, Gerasim, a refugee, turns up on a gurney in the hospital. His brother nailed a spike into his

heel before he placed him in the coffin, to keep him from wandering after death. Yet there he is, dying once again, leaving behind the unbaptized baby in a limbo not unnoticed by Kalina, herself a longago displaced Aegean Macedonian.

The repetition of their violent deaths in the story haunts Lazar all the while these people draw his compassion and even compel his attraction, in the case of Menka. But Lazar is consumed with the overbearing presence of his mother, a highly successful doctor and ambitious woman who once scavenged a box of old bones from the sacred cemetery when she needed them for her anatomy class. "It's not a real grave," she rationalized in her home town of Gluvovo. Yet an early scene in the film feels like part urban legend and part folk tale as local Macedonians pull up, turning off their car stereos and cell phones to celebrate the Night of the Dead. In a sprawling cemetery under a black sky, myriad candles light the graves where visitors lay plates of food or pour drinks for their deceased and spend the night.

To live through these moments in this setting allows for an uncanny intimacy — a faceoff with personal fear that leads, strangely enough, to a celebration of life. But Lazar has yet to make that journey, for his "shadows" are walking among the living, indeed, through every step of his life. Cinematographer Fabio Cianchetti generates this foreboding trajectory visually through the use of double images, often reflections, broken spaces, the mirroring of each persona in another, and characters who either drop out of the frame mysteriously and just as suddenly reappear or, surprisingly, vanish before our very eyes. The rope marks on Menka's neck appear, disappear, and reappear, just as "superstitions" are visualized (a woman explains a birthmark on her arm as the consequence of her mother eating stolen grapes while she was pregnant). Much as Lazar resists the matriarchal rope of his own mother, his curiosity and conscience allow him to fathom the waves of intruders in Macedonia over centuries, their theft of the land and its people, and the unpaid debt at stake for Lazar regardless of the degree of his personal complicity.

Audiences familiar with the history of the region recall that Greece together with Serbia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro declared war on Turkey in 1912. No sooner did this act liberate Macedonia from occupation under the Ottoman Empire than it precipitated Macedonia's being parceled out to its neighbors. Greece seized upon Aegean Macedonia for ethnic cleansing, sending hundreds of thousands into exodus, appropriating their land, banning the use of their languages and the renaming of places, plundering villages and destroying homes. Ethnic Greeks from countries further east were brought in to repopulate the region. The Greek Civil War of the 1940s only exacerbated the problem, allowing internments to continue as late as 1974 (the year Lazar's mother excavated the bones for her anatomy class in the film). "Covering up past genocide is only expanding it," Manchevski has commented, "and I felt that this story should find a place in *Shadows*, which talks about the responsibility of the individual in the face of family and history."

In 1991 Macedonia emerged from the "ashes" of the former Yugoslavia. Milcho Manchevski then began to approach filmmaking through fractured, overlapping, and circular narratives, interspersed with historical passages and ellipses, to tell the tales of his homeland. *Shadows* departs from this approach, opting for a more straightforward development of the story, but adds to it a dreamscape of personal torment. Call it a "ghost story" but know that it feels more like Bergman or Polanski, or even Shakespeare — *Macbeth* and *Hamlet* come to mind. Retaining an ensemble of actors from one film to the next, Manchevski used two firsttime film actors in *Shadows* for the lead roles, Borce Nacev as Lazar and Vesna Stanojevska as Menka, who both deliver remarkable performances. As for the director, if we view Lazar as a visionary not unlike the filmmaker himself, pursuing the artist's journey, that journey is also an allegory of cinema when its task is to lead us to see — at whatever price — and to dream.





## FEAR EATS THE SOUL

By Marina Kostova

Milcho Manchevski's *Shadows* is a beautiful and tormenting film. It moves you, as if your blood is aching, and it seems you could cry for days. It has the emotional power of *Before the Rain* (with the effect of a hard blow to the stomach) and the complexity of *Dust*. With his third film, Manchevski establishes himself as a mature auteur who has a superior control over form and a masterful skill in dosage of emotion.

*Shadows* is about the fear of intimacy with the other (but actually fear of death) which permeates human existence to such a degree that it makes any complete intimacy impossible. Neither the mother with the child, nor the child with the mother, nor the husband with the wife. You cannot defeat the fear. The only thing left is to summon up the courage and try to get closer to the other, even if you lose him. Because that is the only way to have a smile along with fear at the end of the day. Life is, says Manchevski, what happens between "How are you going to live without me" and "Smile, one day you'll be gone."

And it is not a coincidence that Manchevski has picked the horror genre as a template to tell the story. Immanent human fear is most clearly articulated through this form.

*Shadows* is a story of Lazar Perkov (Borce Nacev), a young doctor with a seemingly happy life, an attractive wife (Filareta Atanasova) and a sweet boy, with a strong mother (Sabina Ajrula-Tozija) and a gentle father (Dime Iliev). He survives a car crash and begins to encounter strange characters: Kalina, an old woman with a wolf (Ratka Radmanovic), Gerasim, a middle-aged grumpy neighbor with a baby (Salaetin Bilal) and the beautiful Menka (Vesna Stanojevska). They all want him to return that which is not his, even though he does not know what that is. His nightmarish search for himself takes him to his ancestors' debts, which he will have to repay himself - to redeem them, but also himself. The shadows of forgotten ancestors will pull Lazar out of the sterile world where Lazar's mother keeps him; he will start to live for real.

It is almost impossible to watch *Lazar* and Menka separately in the film. Borce Nacev and Vesna Stanojevska are an exciting couple; they establish a connection that is both warm and sexy, funny and touching, and you cannot help loving them. They are our two new stars, new heroes.

Sabina Ajrula-Tozija has a monumental role as Dr. Vera Perkova, a rock of a mother who overshadows everything in front of herself, most of all her own child. She is the ghost mother who freezes the child in all of us in fear. At the same time, she projects the biggest fear of any woman - the fear of her own child. One of the cathartic moments is when Vera curses at her own son and throws him out. Sabina plays it as an eruption of suppressed energy - all the ambivalence of motherhood comes out, all the love and fear, possessiveness and anger, and after all that - tremendous relief. A counterpoint to Sabina-Vera, as if a

masculine principle, is Dime Iliev as the husband Ignyat Perkov. He is gentle and pragmatic, a man who has understood the wisdom that his son has yet to understand - take from your dearest only what they can give you and be content with it.

Salaetin Bilal as Gerasim and Ratka Radmanovic as Kalina are iconic presences, archetypes for all our grandfathers and grandmothers, they are the pillars upon which the film rests.

Sex is connecting tissue in *Shadows*. And it is not a coincidence - it is only through sex that one gets an immediate (even though short-lived) confirmation that intimacy with the other is possible.

Skopje is portrayed in *Shadows* as a metropolis with all the virtues and vices of urban living anywhere in the world. The pictures of our daily life, the habits, the conditions we live in have all been conveyed as in an anthropological study - Manchevski does not judge (the way a Westerner would, or even the way one of our own living abroad would), he only states the facts. This metropolis is part of us, it is part of our family. We are ambivalent towards it, the way we are ambivalent towards our family - we both love it and are suffocated by it, we want to run away, and we always come back.

In a masterly way Fabio Gianchetti expresses the suffocating quality of the big city with his camera, a suffocating quality which at the same time is a reflection of the inner turmoil smothering Lazar. The pro-

duction designer David Munns, who knows Macedonia better than most Macedonians do, should be credited with giving the images in *Shadows* a cosmopolitan spirit. He has worked with Manchevski on all three of his films, and is capable of perfectly transforming Manchevski's story into a multi-layered image. Elisabetta Montaldo's authentically realistic costumes are an inseparable part of the image; Montaldo captures every character with her clothes, including the extras.

Ryan Shore's music and the soundscape are so rich that they become another character in the film.

*Shadows* is told the old-fashioned way, unrolling slowly as the tension grows through small details. This is precisely what makes the film rich and complex - and at the end it leaves you with the feeling of being completely wrapped within it. Manchevski has a rare gift of articulating his emotion in his work and sharing it with the viewer. This matters to the viewer, he trusts Manchevski. As in any true art.

After the Skopje and world theatrical premiere of the film last Friday, there was a long applause that went on and on. With *Shadows*, Manchevski finally and truly returned home.









## “Shadows” of Macedonia on Aamir Khan’s “Talaash”?

By Farhana Ahmed

Tuesday, December 11th, 2012

### Reema Kagti’s *Talaash* bears certain similarities with 2007 Macedonian film *Shadows*

The recently released *Talaash* directed by Reema Kagti, starring Aamir Kahan, Rani Mukerji and Kareena Kapoor will long be remembered as a good movie where glamorous superstars of our time are seen playing convincing character roles. Apart from its refreshing theme of presenting crime from an unorthodox angle, *Talaash* is a movie that explores a fresh treatment of the supernatural genre. Though both the writers—Reema Kagti and Zoya Akhtar—have said that *Talaash* was based on a real-life incident that took place near Haji Ali Road in Mumbai; it is interesting to note that the film bears certain similarities with a 2007 Macedonian film *Shadows* (Macedonian: *Сенки*, Transliteration: *Senki*) directed, produced and written by Milčo Mančevski.

Like *Talaash*, *Shadows* is about a crime, committed in the past and lost in collective consciousness, resurfacing with the involvement of the supernatural. While the crime in *Talaash* is committed against an individual; *Shadows* deals with genocide.

The victim, Rosie or Simran (Kareena Kapoor) in *Talaash* laments before inspector Surjan Singh Shekhawat (Aamir Khan) about the public indifference towards a prostitute who went missing three years ago. In *Shadows*, an old woman with a tattooed cross on forehead, Kalina (Ratka Radmanovic) tells Dr. Lazar Perkov (Borce Nacev) “Return what’s not yours. Have respect” in an ancient Aegean dialect not in use in modern day Macedonia.

*Talaash* is about the tragic death of Rosie or Simran at the hands of some ruthless rich people, whereas *Shadows* deals with a series of historical genocides committed by the Greeks against the Aegean Macedonians between 1913 to 1973—both long forgotten waiting to be unearthed by supernatural intervention.

Inspector Surjan Singh Shekhawat has an almost broken marriage with his wife Roshni (Rani Mukerji) after accidental death of their son. Unable to cope with the personal loss and guilt, Surjan loses sleep and regularly meets a hooker named Rosie in order to investigate a car crash. Rosie provides him valuable information about the car accident which killed a film star. It is revealed in the end that Rosie was indeed Simran, a prostitute picked up by the film star and his two friends from a hotel three years ago. She died that very night after falling from their speeding car. She was buried by a pimp named Shashi near the sea under a white plumeria tree.

Surjan has a neighbour Frenny (Shernaz Patel), a psychic who speaks with spirits. His wife visits her to communicate with their dead son. Surjan refuses to believe in the supernatural until he realizes that Rosie whom he meets every night had died three years ago.

In *Shadows*, Dr. Lazar Perkov, an orthopedic surgeon, brought up under the heavy influence of his successful orthopedic professor mother, has also an estranged relationship with his wife. He often stays with another woman who has a young son. After recovering from an almost fatal car accident, Lazar returns to their city

apartment only to find an old lady Kalina, in black headscarf with a dog. She tries to tell him something but the language seems hard to decipher. To translate the message, recorded in his cell phone, Lazar looks for a linguist but finds Menka (Vesna Stanojevska), his research assistant’s wife in his place. The enigmatic and sensuous Menka, with bruise marks on her necks, seduces Lazar and takes him to a small house outside the city by a railway track. There Lazar finds a framed photograph with two ladies of the olden time—one of which is Menka. Menka talks about her childhood and her child plays with glow-worms in a wooden two-storied house in the countryside, down south Macedonia off the Aegean Sea.

Lazar is also visited by a man Gerasim (Salaetin Bilal), called a refugee with an anabaptist baby in his arms. Gerasim has spikes on his heels and blood oozes out from it. Both Kalina and Gerasim try to convey to Lazar to perform the religious rites for their bodies that remained dumped outside the cemetery until dug out for anatomy classes by his mother in 1973. Lazar fights with his mother to take possession of the bones and skeletons kept in a cardboard box and heads off to his mother’s home village of Gluvovo. He digs a grave and puts the bones inside where Kalina and Gerasim with the infant appear. To his surprise, Menka also appears. It is then only Lazar realises that Menka, with whom he had had so many intimate moments, is a dead person. A dramatic turn takes place as Menka, under her obsession for the love of Lazar, tries to drag him inside the grave but Lazar manages to save himself. Lazar recovers with a huge scream and finds himself afresh on a sunny mountainous highway with his mother’s SUV after crossing a long and dark tunnel.

In *Shadows*, where Dr. Lazar is first hinted by an old Aegean woman Kalina about the unsettled spirits of the dead; it is Frenny, the Parsi lady who does this in *Talaash*. Surjan’s nocturnal dates with Rosie/Simran are like those between Dr. Lazar and Menka. In one scene, very much like Lazar-succumbing to a provocative Menka, Surjan too follows Rosie/Simran to a hotel room for a night but only to be lulled into deep slumber.

In the final scene of *Shadows*, Lazar digs a grave and puts the skeletal remains of the bodies belonging to Menka, Kalina, Gerasim and the infant and ritually buries them, Surjan too exhumes the skeletal remains of Rosie/Simran and performs the last rites according to Hindu tradition.

In the case of imagery and cinematography, *Shadows* uses reflections on glass—on door panels, bus windows etc throughout the movie to create a shadowy impression of the stated theme. *Talaash* draws upon aquatic imagery—drowning, seashore and showers that adds to the theme.

Creative arts represent a universalism and it is an interesting coincidence that Reema Kagti’s *Talaash* rides on similar metaphors as seen in the Macedonian film.

- 1) **Some scenes of "Shadows"; concerning what you call "a genocide" with napalms etc, provoked extremely negative comments by a large proportion of greeks-even the most progressive ones. I mean, genocide, napalms, and ghosts -victims of bad greeks coming out of the grave?**

I am not sure which scenes you are talking about. SHADOWS never mentions Greece, nor a genocide. This is a film about many issues, including getting over the past, personal vs. social responsibility, corruption, family ties (and especially Mediterranean mothers and their sons), doomed love, fear of death, social taboos..., but it is certainly not about Greece. It is curious how some people can recognise themselves in anything.

- 2) **Many people in the past thought that your films, like "Before the rain" constitute a bridge of friendship between the two countries but all they see now (besides the undoubted artistic virtues of the film) is a dangerous provocative statement which comes out in a very tensed period for the two countries.**

This film is as much about building bridges of friendship as is any of my other films. It is a heart-felt film about grief and love offering a mirror to people (regardless of whether they are greedy for money, power or land). SHADOWS played on four continents, and no one saw anti-Greek provocation in it. It is a little disappointing to hear this kind of paranoid thinking coming from the country that calls itself the cradle of democracy.

- 3) **Art can be a dangerous weapon at difficult moments. All countries have experienced terrible moments in their history. For example Greeks during Turkish invasion or more recently in Cyprus. It could be very easy for us to make a film showing the atrocities of Turks in Cyprus or 200 years ago. But doing it now, that there is an effort to overpass the negativity constitutes a political statement. Why do you focus on such a controversial matter in such a moment? This could be conceived as a nationalistic approach...**

I would remind you once again that SHADOWS does not focus on Greece. The film does mention in passing (two lines out of a thousand) the enormous suffering of the Aegean Macedonians, but it is more concerned with other human issues, such as responsibility, family relations, fear and desire.... Even when mentioning Aegeans, the film is concerned with their suffering, and Greece is never mentioned. But, if you insist on talking about politics in such a self-righteous way, then let me challenge your readers to think about the damage that this kind of nationalistic hysteria, self-centeredness and manipulative politicians can cause. First of all, people should study independent sources and learn a bit more about their own history. Denial, propaganda and hysterical reactions from a position of power will not change the historical truth.

It is sad that for Greece the ethnic cleansing of Macedonians is not a matter of public record. I would direct you to a number of independent historical data, including the Carnegie Commission Report of 1914, but more importantly I would ask you to talk to the tens of thousands of Macedonian refugees and children of refugees living in Toronto, Melbourne, Tashkent, Poland, Romania, Czech Republic... I am not talking about movie characters, I am talking about real people of flesh and blood who have suffered the pain of real ethnic cleansing. They lost family and were chased away from their own homes in Greece. Yes, some of them under threat of napalm (for the first time used on Gramos, as per



Φίλιππος Καραγιάννης  
13 - 04 - 2008

ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΤΥΠΙΑ  
Ελλάδα Πολιτική Οικονομία Τέχνες Αθλητισμός Κόσμος HOME

ΜΙΛΤΟΣ ΜΑΝΤΣΕΦΣΚΙ

**«Καιρός να μάθετε την ιστορία σας»**

Της ΕΥΑΝΝΑΣ ΒΕΝΑΡΔΟΥ (venardou@enet.gr)

Το είδαμε κι αυτό: Μια ταινία να δημιουργεί οδόν στο ημερησίως παρόμοιο, πριν καν προβληθεί στην Ελλάδα! Πρόκειται για τη νέα, βραβευμένη δημιουργία του ακριβοπληρωμένου Μίλτο Μαντζαφάρη με τίτλο «Σκιάς», που έχει μόνον βρει διανομή στην Ελλάδα, αλλά παραμένει άγνωστο αν και πότε θα βγει στις αίθουσες καθώς συνεχίζεται το στήριμα με το όνομα των Σκοπιανών.

Πρόκειται για ένα καλοστημένο κερματικό θρίλερ φαντασμάτων. Αλλά όχι... αποκαλύπτει φαντασμάτων. Σύμφωνα με το σενάριο, αποτελούν θύματα των μαζικών εκκαθαρίσεων των Ελλήνων σε βάρος των «Μακεδόνων του Αγρίου». Η ταινία απευθύνεται στην ψυχολογία του ήρωα, ο οποίος μόλις στο τέλος συνειδητοποιεί πως καλείται να δώσει λύση στο δράμα των βασανισμένων αυτών ψυχών. Λόγω της φανταστικής αυτής, που στοιχειάζονται την καθημερινότητά του ύστερα από ένα αυτοκινητιστικό δυστύχημα, δεν βρίσκουν λύτρωση. Οι τούροι τους έχουν σπληθεί και τα καλά τους έχουν κλαπεί... Το μόνο, άλλωστε, που συνοδεύει το τρέιλερ είναι «Μερικές φορές οι πεθαμένοι μιλούν πιο δυνατά από τους ζωντανούς».

Η ταινία αν και υποβλήθηκε στο τελευταίο Φεστιβάλ Θεσσαλονίκης, δεν εντάχθηκε στο πρόγραμμά του.

Ο 49χρονος Μίλτος Μαντζαφάρη έχει εξελιχθεί σε ένα είδος εθνικού σκηνοθέτη των Σκοπιανών. Οι ταινίες του έχουν κέρσει εκατομμύρια εισιτήρια, και έχουν βγει εκτός συνόρων, χαρίζοντας στο σημαντικό διεθνές βραβείο. Σήμερα διδάσκει κινηματογράφο σε πανεπιστήμιο της Νέας Υόρκης. Εκεί του στέλματε τις ερωτήσεις μας και μας απάντησε γραπτά. Ανάμεσα στις απαντήσεις του επισημαίνουμε κραυγαλέες ιστορικές ανακρίβειες, όπως π.χ. ότι στην Ελλάδα ακριβώς να χρησιμοποιούσε το όνομα Μακεδονία μόλις τη δεκαετία του '90. Έχει, ωστόσο, σημασία να διανεμάς πώς σκέψασαν οι άνθρωποι ότι αυτή τη γραμμή, αλλά αποτελεί έναν ιστορικά σημαντικότερο διαχωρισμό της χώρας με επιρροή στο

«Εάν μιλά για την Ελλάδα, αλλά...»

- Κάποιες σκηνές από τις «Σκιάς» προκάλεσαν εξαιρετικά μια μεγάλη μερίδα Ελλήνων -ακόμα και από τους πιο προσηλυτισμένους- να μιλάτε για γενοκτονία, ναζί, και φασισμός

ΤΕΧΝΕΣ  
με μια ματιά...

**ΣΙΝΕΜΑ**  
Ανέμεσα σε δύο σκηνοθέτες

**ΜΙΛΤΟΣ ΜΑΝΤΣΕΦΣΚΙ**  
«Καιρός να μάθετε την ιστορία σας»

**ΜΟΥΣΙΚΗ**  
Τα παιδιά από την Κύβηνο

**ΘΕΜΑ**  
Οι Πάρτινγκεν επιστρέφουν

**ΜΑΝΟΥ ΤΣΑΟΣ**  
«Είμαστε εκατομμύρια αργισμένοι»

**ΡΕΠΟΡΤΑΖ**  
Οι Ζαές των άλλων

Νέα Φίλας με νονό τον Πρωταγόλαου

**ΘΕΜΑ**



eyewitness accounts) or bayonets.

I would direct you to look into the fact that in 1923 official Greece published a textbook in Macedonia, in Cyrillic, for first grade Macedonian pupils in Greece, then later withdrew it, destroyed it and denied it. I would direct you to the fact that the Macedonian (what you would call Slavic) toponyms in what was then called by official Greece "the newly conquered territories" have been erased by legal decrees and the language was banned. Even the very

— Istor the Macedonian wrote:

- > How can you, a wise man, adopt Skopian propaganda even in its details?
- > Mercy, damn it!
- > Macedonians had always Greek names, toponyms, ways, heroes, gods,
- > dialect and spread Greek Language and Civilization to the World. If you
- > do what they did we will call you Macedonians.
- > <http://www.starkrealities.com/fortune.html> (page 5).
- > [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pella\\_curse\\_tablet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pella_curse_tablet)
- > After liberation of Macedonia, Greece restored all known ancient
- > Macedonian toponyms: Thessaloniki, Argos, Pella, Aigai, Armissa,
- > Evropros, ..., Axios, Aliakmon, ..., instead of Solun, Hrupishta,
- > Postol, Ostrovo, Fustani, ..., Vardar, Bistritsa, .... In contrary you
- > have restored no Macedonian toponyms: You are not related to Macedonians.
- > What is Macedonian on you? Names, toponyms, ways, heroes, language, ...
- > WHAT?
- > Blood? Give me a break! Don't you know that blood and dna are not
- > related to ethnicity? Allow us Greeks controlling your education system
- > as Tito did and we will not change your "Macedonian" blood and we will
- > call you Macedonians.
- > All your heroes clearly stated that they were Bulgarians:
- > <http://www.network54.com/Forum/415923/message/1126215175>
- > Slavs (including you) have attempted many times to slavize Macedonia
- > and Macedonians. 1878, 1903, 1912, 1916, 1944, ... We have defeated you
- > all those times. We have defended successfully our Greekness. And after
- > each defeat, you massively left Macedonia for slavic paradise, because
- > you wanted to avoid punishment. Well done! But, enough! How many times
- > would you attempt slavizing Macedonia?
- > <http://www.network54.com/Forum/415923/>
- > <http://www.macedoniaonlineweb.com>
- >
- > Istor,
- > Macedonian, therefore Greek.

word that is seemingly at the center of the current ridiculous argument, "Macedonia" was not in use in Greece until about 20 years ago. Your own Ministry for Macedonia and Thrace was Ministry for North Greece and Thrace until the late 1980s. Both suppressing the use of the word "Macedonia" and then reversing the course by 180 degrees and claiming the exclusive right to use it are two aspects of the same strategy - that of trying to assimilate the land, the culture and the heritage of Macedonia into those of Greece. Yet, Macedonia was never part of Greece until 1912. No amount of political hysteria, denial, nor bullying today will change the fact that the Greek province of Macedonia has been part of Greece for only a blink in historical terms - 95 years.

- 4) **Slavic speaking populations of Macedonia region suffered by Othomans and Bulgarians as well. However you chose to focus only on the Greeks. Would Bulgaria ever be a co-producer of the film if you showed this aspect too?**



- Have you not seen my last film, DUST? In it, among other things, I speak of atrocities committed by the Ottoman army in Macedonia. The Turkish ambassador came to the set of the film, wanting to express his concern about "how Turkey would be portrayed in the film." I told him that all men with guns (whether Turkish, Macedonian, Greek, Albanian or American) are bad guys in my film, and the life-giving women are the good guys. Again, let me state for the record that SHADOWS is not about the Greeks, let alone focusing on them. I have to wonder where this sensitivity comes from. In addition to Bulgaria, our partners were Germany, Italy and Spain, as well as the film body of the Council of Europe, Eurimages. Are you suggesting they were all a part of some vast international anti-Greek conspiracy?

> Date: Thu, 17 Apr 2008 14:23:30 +0300

>

Subject: greetings from athens

>

> i just read your interview in a greek paper. Man, you were great! I'd hope

> people over here could see the truth and stop telling lies to themselves.

> And i also hope that the stupid veto of the greek government will not spark

> more nationalism in both sides of the border. Anyway, i just wanted to say

> hello to a great film director.

>

> keep up and take care,

>

> Panos

- 5) **At the end of the film, the hero finally buries the bones of the ghosts. He is now at peace. Is this scene symbolic in terms of how young people should move on in your country? I mean in relation to the past?**

- Absolutely. And in your country, too. But, first of all, they should acknowledge the sins of their fathers. There is no moving ahead and forgiveness without acknowledgment of past sins. Australia recently apologized to the Aborigines. Willy Brandt got on his knees and asked forgiveness. Germany acknowledged what it did, accepted responsibility, and is now moving into a better day. As a matter of fact, the people in my country are desperate to move away from the past and towards the future, believing that NATO and EU and global integration are the way to the future, and they struggle very hard to achieve that. It is the Greek politicians whipping up nationalistic hysteria for their own political gain at home while trying to cover up the crimes of the past who are blocking our integration. Let's face it, the issue with the name is ridiculous. It is like something out of Becket or Ionesco. It's an excuse to impose a blockade on this dirt-poor country (crushing its economy) and to destabilize it by vetoing its ascent into the international community. This selfish behavior is dangerous. The claim that tiny Macedonia with its 8,000 soldiers can be an irredentist threat to mighty NATO-member Greece with its 240,000 soldiers, planes and equipment is hilarious. The Macho elephant afraid of the mouse? The more important question is of pure decency. What gives you the right to come up to me and tell me what I can and cannot call myself? Don't you think that is terribly rude?

> Milco,

>

> Me trogna intervjueto. Si puka argumentirano so podatoci mudro, intelektualno, a se pak

> so obicni zborovi, narodski, si go pokakal novinarot, cii prasanja se ko da sakal

> komshiski da se zakanue na koklica sednat pred kuka na sred selo, si go otrul, so da

> bekne posle sekoi tvoj izdrzan odgovor... bravo drugar!!! mi go stopli srcevo... blaze

> si ni sto te imame

> i,

>

>

> Ti si ogroman chovek Milcho Manchevski. Ne mozam da si dozvolam a da ne izrazam

> pochit za nekolikute gestovi sto gi napravi vo posledno vreme. Samo sto go procitav

> intervjueto vo Elefterotipija i zakluciv deka imeto, identitetot, kulturata i se ostanato sto e

> povrzano so Makedonija e najdobro pretstavuvano i braneto od intelektualcite i

> umetnicite. Nie sme tie sto odrzuvame nekakov balans pomegu dvete sprotivni strani sto

> moze da gi ima nacionalizmot.

> pozdrav

>

> Martin

>

- I have Macedonian friends born in Uzbekistan and Czechoslovakia because their parents had to flee for their lives across the border as children. Their parents grew up in orphanages. I have a friend in Cologne (Germany) whose grandmother died in the snow while they were crossing the Greek border. I know people who are heart-broken that they cannot go back and see their parents' graves or the house they were born in, as it has been confiscated, and they are not given a visa to re-enter. As a student, trying to get a Greek visa, I had to show my parents' birth certificates at the Greek Consulate in Skopje, just to prove that my parents were not born in Greece; otherwise I would not be able to obtain a tourist visa. I know a friend from America who was not allowed to enter Greece because he had spoken about the ethnic cleansing issue in the past. I have a friend whose grandfather was executed in Greece.

- 7) **If you fight for your right to be called Macedonians, what about our Macedonians?**

- The ones who showed your film in the capital of greek region Macedonia, Thessaloniki, and embraced it with enthusiasm?

I am glad they liked my film. I wish those same viewers and intellectuals were in touch with those Greek officials who tried to suppress BEFORE THE RAIN at the Festival in Venice and at the Academy Awards in 1995 on their behalf, even though the film had nothing to do with Greece. As far as the issue of Macedonians, I'm afraid you are confusing two different things. The people in Greece you call Macedonians are Greeks who live in Macedonia. Their ethnicity is Greek. The way a Greek in Thrace would call himself a Greek Thracian. On the other hand, most of the people who live in the Republic of Macedonia are of Macedonian ethnicity. That's how I feel, that's how my father felt, and that is how my grandfather felt. At the turn of the 20th century there were immigrants coming to America from the Ottoman Empire, declaring themselves of Macedonian ethnicity. Those are facts that will not go away, no matter how many childish tantrums Greek politicians

throw nor how many embargoes or vetoes Greece imposes. This might be a difficult concept to explain to the citizens of Greece, as it is perhaps the last country in Europe that does not recognize the concept of ethnic minorities (nor their rights), and has been reprimanded for that by numerous international institutions. But this is a matter of identity and dignity, essential to any human being, and it is deeply offensive when someone tries to play with it.

- 6) **Did you have personal experience with the ones you call "Macedonians of Aegean"?**