Euro Balkan Film Festival 2026

Eurobalkan Cinema between coproduction and integration



from 31th october to 07th november
9th edition

Casa del Cinema
Cinema Troisi
Cinema Farnese
Palazzo San Lorenzo
Roma

@eurobalkanfilmfestival

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CINECITTÀ NEWS

cineuropa

SALA GRANDE

TAXIDRIVERS

SIAE DALLA PARTE DI CHI CREA

Bosna u srcu

COMUNE DI CERVETERI

CSC Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia

REPUBBLICA DI SLOVENIA
AMBASCIATA ROMA

WRITERS GUILD ITALIA

OCCHIO BLU

PICCOLO AMERICA

CINEMA CASA DEL CINEMA A VILLA BORGHESE

PALAZZO SAN LORENZO

Cinema FARNESE Arthouse

rad uni associazione operatori radiofonici universitari

ANAC Associazione Nazionale Autori Cinematografici

FERA Federation of European Screen Directors
Fédération Européenne des Réalisateurs de l'Audiovisuel

ISTITUTO ELLENICO di CULTURA

ISTITUTO italiano di CULTURA

100autori ASSOCIAZIONE DELL'AUTORIALITÀ CINETELEVISIVA

forum austriaco di cultura rma

All films are subtitled in Italian

MEDAGLIA DEL PRESIDENTE DELLA REPUBBLICA

Riconoscimento conferito alla IX edizione dell'Euro Balkan Film Festival, Roma, 31 ottobre – 7 novembre 2026

INTRODUCTION BY THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

The **ninth edition of the EBFF** once again confirms the importance of Balkan cinema, which has undoubtedly become one of the most promising areas for co-production in European filmmaking. This is demonstrated by innovative cinematic languages, the richness of social analysis, the depth of historical memory, as well as the growing prominence of women filmmakers and the innovation brought by the region's young directors. This year, every Balkan country has submitted a film of considerable significance to our festival. There is a growing and increasingly conscious belief that networking in the region, which we have the honour of organising, is becoming a system-wide strategy: a prospect for valuable exchanges, an opportunity for growth and financial development, and a European path looking towards the future.

To support these increasingly established trends, the **ninth EBFF** expands opportunities for networking and discussion of co-production, new cinematic languages and European integration programmes. It also strengthens its industry events, devoting **three days to workshops** on European authors in the age of algorithms and artificial intelligence. For the first time this year, the festival will host an ambitious **pitching programme**, with the crucial aim of training young authors and producers from across Europe.

In addition to the **three international competitions** (feature films, short films and young filmmakers' pitching), audiences will be able to attend special events of major cultural importance exploring the historical and contemporary dimensions of Balkan cinema:

- a decade-long research project by film historian **Bruce Williams** on Albanian cinema and the Hoxha dictatorship, focusing on filmmakers and the threats to their creative independence;

- the presentation of the Ismail Kadare Award for Euro-Balkan Cultural Cooperation to Claudio Magris, with **Saverio La Ruina** providing a narrated contribution to the event;

- the commemoration, on 4 November, of the 70th anniversary of the Budapest uprising, with a screening of I sogni muoiono all'alba, co-directed by **Indro Montanelli**, preceded by a distinguished panel featuring **Steve Della Casa**, **Francesco Guida**, **Claudio Siniscalchi** and **Paolo Conti**.

31ST OCT - 2ND NOV

Before the festival begins, two preview events will offer a taste of the EBFF's high cultural standard:

1) At **Cinema Moderno** in Cerveteri on 17 October, **Ado Hasanović** will present I diari di mio padre and discuss the journey behind its creation in a masterclass: an outstanding example of cooperation between Balkan (Bosnian) and Italian (Lazio) cinema.

2) At **Palazzo San Lorenzo** on 23 October, the event Languages of War will present **Srđan Dragojević**'s Pretty Village, Pretty Flame, an anti-war film admired for its artistic achievement and fiercely debated for its historical and political interpretation.

As in previous editions, young people occupy a central position in the programme, through initiatives designed to encourage growth, training and integration within the Euro-Balkan context.

These include the international **pitching programme**, which has involved **60 young** participants in a process of training and production development; the short film competition, celebrating emerging talents already making their mark in the Euro-Balkan region; **open calls** to involve young juries and new administrative staff; a **film criticism workshop preparing young jury members** for their roles; and a **workshop on international co-productions** to take place in Cerveteri during one of the festival's preview events.

Across eight days, the festival will feature an **extensive selection of films alongside live Balkan music**. At Casa del Cinema, Cinema Farnese, Cinema Troisi and Palazzo San Lorenzo, we will present this expanding movement, reaffirming the EBFF as a platform for promoting and developing co-productions within Europe, and demonstrating our deep commitment to training the next generation of European filmmakers.

This program is subject to changes, variations and reductions, which can be verified on our website:

EBFF INDUSTRY DAYS

31 october - 2 november 2026

Casa del Cinema, Rome

EBFF INDUSTRY DAYS is a new professional section within the Euro Balkan Film Festival, dedicated to bringing together writers, producers, screenwriters, directors, cultural institutions, professional associations, collective management organisations, film commissions, national film centres and industry professionals from Italy, Europe and the Balkan region.

The programme runs over three days, from **31 October to 2 November 2026**, at Casa del Cinema in Rome, with the aim of creating a lasting space for dialogue, training and project development. Its focus is the transformation of the European audiovisual industry and opportunities for production cooperation between Italy and the Balkans.

EBFF INDUSTRY DAYS was conceived to broaden the role of the Euro Balkan Film Festival, making it not only a venue for film screenings and cultural reflection, but also a professional platform connecting the diverse participants in Europe's audiovisual ecosystem.

Participation by professional associations, collecting societies, national film centres, film commissions and archives from the countries involved is central to the initiative. These organisations will not merely attend as institutional representatives; they will be active partners in building a collaborative network between Italy, Europe and the Balkans.

The long-term goal is to consolidate a stable ecosystem of cooperation, year after year, supporting the growth of Balkan cinema within an increasingly European production system and improving access to co-productions, funding, professional networks and international opportunities.

From this perspective, the Industry section aims to become an Italian – and gradually European – window onto production, creative and cultural relations with the Balkan countries, celebrating a region with a vibrant film culture and considerable narrative, production, professional and cultural potential.

The programme comprises three main strands: **Workshop**, **Pitch** and **Link**.

31ST OCT - 2ND NOV

WORKSHOP

curated by Maurizio Sciarra

The first two days will be devoted to the Euro Balkan Film Festival's international workshops, continuing the discussions begun in previous editions on the future of European audiovisual production, the role of creators, European Union cultural policies, rights protection systems and the technological changes reshaping the industry.

Some of the most urgent issues facing today's audiovisual sector will be at the centre of the debate: the new European AgoràEU programme, which is set to redefine European cultural policies for 2028–2034; the role of the independent producer in European support schemes; the representation of authors in future EU policies; the impact of artificial intelligence on creative and production processes; and the protection of Europe's distinctive cultural identities and diversity.

The workshops will involve representatives of major European audiovisual organisations, including **Andrea Marzulli** from **SIAE**; **Hrvoje Hribar**, **Klemen Dvornik** and **Julie Belgrado** from **FERA – the Federation of European Screen Directors**; **producer Carlo Cresto-Dina**; and **journalist Marco Mele**, together with representatives of professional associations, European and Balkan collecting societies, cultural institutions and the audiovisual industry.
Continuing work begun at the previous edition, the workshops will also examine the development of collecting societies in the Balkan countries, comparing European systems with the Italian model, in which SIAE plays a key role in the protection and administration of authors' rights.

Speakers:

Giorgio Carlo Brugnoni	Director General for Cinema and Audiovisual — Ministry of Culture
Enrico Vannucci	Deputy Executive Director of Eurimages
Hrvoje Hribar	Director and producer — Croatia
Blerta Zeqiri	Director — Kosovo Cinematography Center (KCC) — Kosovo
Jonid Jorgji	President — Albanian National Center of Cinematography (QKK) — Albania
Carlotta Ca' Zorzi	Producer — European Producers Club — Fandango SpA
Carlo Cresto-Dina	Producer — Tempesta
Adele Budina	Producer — A.B. Film, Albania — Italy
Alberto Pasquale	Lecturer and consultant in audiovisual economics and management
Corrado Azzollini	Producer and distributor; President — Confartigianato Cinema e Audiovisivo
Julie Belgrado	Chief Executive Officer — FERA, Federation of European Screen Directors — Belgium
Klemen Dvornik	Director; FERA Board Member; President, Alliance of Slovenian Associations of Filmmakers — Slovenia
Chiara Sambuchi	Documentary filmmaker and journalist — FERA Board Member
Giacomo Durzi	Screenwriter and Senior Creative Producer — Gaumont Italia

Marco Mele	Journalist and media industry analyst
Christian Collovà	Lawyer specialising in intellectual property, copyright and entertainment — LegalInternational
Massimo Torre	Screenwriter and writer; Vice-President — Writers Guild Italia
Giorgio Glaviano	Screenwriter and writer; President — Writers Guild Italia
Mimmo Calopresti	Director and screenwriter — ANAC Board Member
Gregor Štibernik	Managing Director — AIPA; SAA Board Member — Slovenia
Evien Dako	Executive Director — FAAD; lawyer specialising in intellectual property and audiovisual rights — Albania
Kiril Gjozev	Secretary General — AZAS — North Macedonia
Andrea Marzulli	Head of Audiovisual — SIAE
Sergio Giorcelli	Lawyer specialising in copyright and audiovisual law; legal adviser to 100Autori
Ludovico Bossi	Lawyer and PhD candidate in Law and Business, Luiss Guido Carli
Anna Di Toma	Producer Agherose
Fabrizio Berruti	Journalist and director ANAC

PITCH

On 2 November, the festival will host the first edition of **Euro Balkan Short Pitch**, a programme for emerging filmmakers under 35 from Italy and the Balkan countries.
Eight fiction short film projects will be selected, addressing Euro-Balkan cultural dialogue and such themes as identity, memory, contemporary life, relationships and social change.

Chosen from 60 applications from across Europe, the selected projects will take part in mentoring and professional exchange activities before being publicly presented to an **international jury of producers, creators and audiovisual professionals from Italy and the Balkan region**.

The jury will assess projects for originality and artistic vision, their ability to foster cultural dialogue between Italy and the Balkans, their cultural and social relevance, and their exploration of cinematic language. The best projects will receive cash prizes to support their creative and production development.
Euro Balkan Short Pitch seeks to encourage new cinematic voices and provide a practical meeting point between young filmmakers and European industry professionals..

Pitch Jury:

Elma Tataragić	Screenwriter and programmer (jury coordinator)
Marco Borromei	Screenwriter
Ylljet Aliçka	Writer and screenwriter

LINK

Conceived by Steve Della Casa

LINK will also take place on 2 November. It is the strand most directly devoted to production cooperation between Italy and the Balkans. The event will focus on national film centres from the Balkan countries, which will present the opportunities offered by their respective territories to Italian producers, executive producers and location managers.

In dedicated presentations, the centres will explain production incentives, tax credits, national funds and grants, available services, local crews and professional expertise, and co-production support mechanisms, providing a practical overview of production conditions in each country.

A substantial portion of the presentations will focus on locations and landscapes, from sets already used by national and international productions to lesser-known places with considerable cinematic potential. The aim is to give Italian professionals practical insight into filming and production possibilities throughout the Balkan region.
Italian film commissions will encourage direct dialogue between Italian and Balkan territories, while the participation of national Balkan archives will extend the discussion to audiovisual heritage and access to footage, collections and archival materials that can inspire new projects.

LINK aims to become a genuine window onto opportunities for filming and co-producing in the Balkans, directly connecting organisations responsible for promoting and supporting production with Italian producers and audiovisual professionals.

Through Workshop, Pitch and Link, the Euro Balkan Film Festival reinforces its identity as an international platform bringing together creativity, industry, territories, audiovisual heritage, institutions and European policies, and helping forge new connections between Italy, Europe and the Balkans.

Participants:

Jonid Jorgji	President — Albanian National Center of Cinematography (QKK) — Albania
Ines Tanović	Director — Sarajevo Film Center — Bosnia and Herzegovina
Marko Eraković	Head of International Cooperation, Promotion and Distribution — Film Centre of Montenegro — Montenegro
Tanja Ladović Blažević	Filming in Croatia Department — Croatian Audiovisual Centre (HAVC) — Croatia
Blerta Zeqiri	Director — Kosovo Cinematography Center (KCC) — Kosovo
Cristina Piscitelli	Apulia Film Commission

FESTIVAL PREVIEW

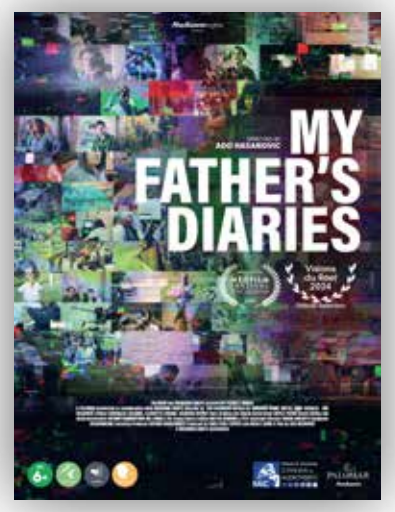
NUOVO MODERNO CERVETERI

Special Event: “How an Italy–Balkans co-production is made, Lazio and Bosnia: I diari di mio padre”.

Ado Hasanović, a Bosnian director who trained at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia, recently made his feature-length debut with the documentary I diari di mio padre. Beyond its personal importance and historical significance, the film is an exemplary co-production between a Balkan country and Italy.
The screening will be followed by a meeting with the director and producer, making the evening an opportunity for cinema, testimony and dialogue with the audience, and an exploration of the film’s development and significance. The event is promoted by the Municipality of Cerveteri.
Admission is free.

18.00 I diari di mio padre

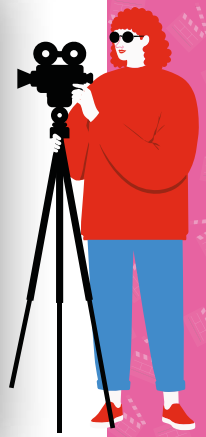
directed by **Ado Hasanović**, Italy-France, 97’, 2024.



Thirty years after the Srebrenica genocide, the director returns to his family history through his father Bekir’s diaries and the remarkable VHS footage he shot during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. An intimate story between father and son, beginning with personal memory and extending across Europe’s recent history, it reflects on the importance of preserving and passing on memory to new generations.

Following the screening:

Masterclass with director **Ado Hasanović**, producer **Antonio Badalamenti**, **Mariella Troccoli** (Roma Lazio Film Commission), and EBFF artistic director **Mario Bova**. Moderated by **Alessio Pascucci**.



YOUTH TRAINING PROGRAMME 2026

The **Euro Balkan Film Festival** places young filmmakers and audiences at the heart of its programme. Through **film competitions**, **pitching sessions**, **masterclasses**, **juries** and **volunteering**, the Festival brings young people from Italy and the Balkans into direct contact with filmmakers and industry professionals, offering opportunities to learn, develop projects and take an active part in the Festival.

INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM COMPETITION

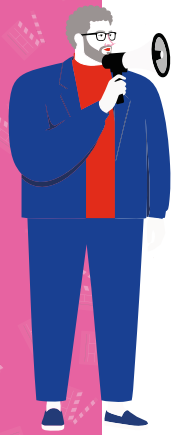
A selection of **12 short films** from across the Euro-Balkan region showcases emerging filmmakers and encourages dialogue between filmmakers and audiences. The screenings will take place on **1st November at Palazzo San Lorenzo**, across two programmes.

EURO BALKAN SHORT PITCH

Open to **filmmakers under 35**, the programme selected **8 short film** projects from **60 applications**. Participants take part in mentoring and project development sessions before presenting their work to an international jury on **2nd November**.

FILM CRITICISM MASTERCLASS

Organised in collaboration with the **Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia**, the **masterclass on 22nd October** introduces young jury members to the tools and methods of film analysis and criticism.



UNIVERSITY STUDENT JURY

Composed of **20 university students**, the jury watches the feature films in competition and selects the winner of the **University Student Jury Award for Best Film**.

YOUNG FILM CRITICS

Selected through an open call, **15 young film critics** watch and evaluate the short films in competition, awarding **Best Short Film** and **Best Director**.

UNIVERSITY RADIO JURY – RADUNI

In collaboration with **RadUni** and **Sapienza University of Rome**, a jury of university students presents two awards to feature films in competition: the **Youth Perspective Award** and the **Best Music Award**.

VOLUNTEERS

Young volunteers work alongside the Festival team, assisting with guest reception, screenings, communications and event organisation. They gain **first-hand experience** of how an international film festival operates.

Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia

Via Tuscolana 1524, 00173 Rome

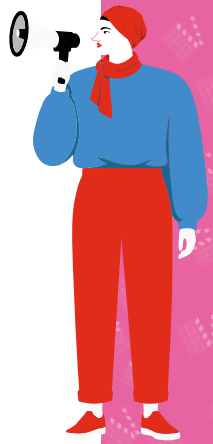
MASTERCLASS: How can we watch a film critically?

Members of the young juries will take part in a masterclass organised with the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia, led by **Flavio De Bernardinis** with the support of director **Ado Hasanović**, to acquire the skills and tools needed to evaluate films thoughtfully and develop an independent critical perspective.

9.00 - 13.00 Watching a film with a critical eye: a masterclass with Flavio De Bernardinis

How can we observe and assess a film thoughtfully? Flavio De Bernardinis, film critic and Vice-Principal of the CSC, will guide the young jury members through the tools of film criticism, with the support of director Ado Hasanović.

The event is organised by the **Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia** and the **Euro Balkan Film Festival** and is reserved for members of the festival's young juries.



FRI 23RD OCT

FESTIVAL PREVIEW
PALAZZO SAN LORENZO

Event: "Languages of War"

One of the Euro Balkan Film Festival's core missions is dialogue. With this in mind, this special preview features a screening of the serbian film *Pretty Village, Pretty Flame* (1996) by **Srđan Dragojević**, which sparked considerable controversy and debate upon release despite its clear anti-war stance.
Admission: € 3.

19.00 Introduction by Artistic Director Mario Bova.

Followed by:

SCREENING:



Pretty Village, Pretty Flame

directed by **Srđan Dragojević**, Serbia, 130', 1996.

Milan, a Serb, and Halil, a Bosnian, grow up together in eastern Bosnia, then part of Yugoslavia. As ethnic tensions rise and war breaks out, their lives diverge: Milan joins a militia of Republika Srpska. Despite its strongly anti-militarist message, the film was rejected by several major European festivals in 1996. That same year, it premiered at the Thessaloniki and Stockholm film festivals, and in 1997, at Rotterdam, sparking considerable controversy.

Q&A: **Maurizio Sciarra** moderates a discussion with historian **Francesco Guida**, critic **Flavio De Bernardinis** and director **Srđan Dragojević**.

22.00 LIVE MUSIC

An evening of live music with **Federico Pascucci's Balkan Lab Orchestra**, one of Italy's leading Balkan music ensembles. Bringing the sounds of Eastern Europe to the stage, the project weaves tradition and contemporary reinterpretation into an energetic and engaging performance, uniting instruments, cultures and rhythms in a shared musical experience.



SAT 31ST OCT

CASA DEL CINEMA

SALA CINECITTÀ

9.30-13 EBFF INDUSTRY DAYS

DAY 1 - WORKSHOP

Opening remarks by **Festival Artistic Director Mario Bova**

Introduction by **Giorgio Carlo Brugnoni**, **Director General for Cinema and Audiovisual**: “Europe and the Balkans in cinema: Italy’s position”.

Workshop: “AgoràEU: how European audiovisual policies are changing. Independent creators and producers for European creativity. New common ground for Euro-Balkan co-productions”.
Moderated by **Maurizio Sciarra**.



14-16 EBFF INDUSTRY DAYS

DAY 1 - WORKSHOP

Workshop: “Generative AI has already entered audiovisual content production. How is it used? Opportunities, potential and limitations”.
Moderated by **Maurizio Sciarra**.

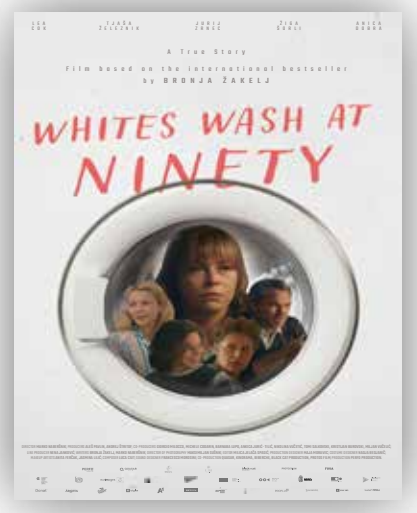
17.30 Festival opening.

Institutional greetings.
Emcee: **Giulia Chianese**

Following:

18.00 Whites Wash at Ninety

directed by **Marko Naberšnik**,
Slovenia-Italy-Croatia-Serbia-North Macedonia-Montenegro, 142', 2025 – In competition



Bronja Žakelj is a young girl growing up in 1980s Ljubljana, surrounded by affection, family habits and the comforting rhythms of everyday life. The film follows her from childhood to adulthood with an intimate, gently ironic perspective, as life gradually puts her to the test. Against the backdrop of Yugoslavia's dissolution and the social transformation of south-eastern Europe, her personal story reflects the region's historical tensions and cultural changes. Moving between tenderness and realism, the film offers a vivid portrait of growing up in a world where family, memory and collective change are intertwined.

Q&A: **Luca Rosini** interviews Italian producer **Barnaba Lupo** and Slovenian producer **Ales Pavlin**.
Admission is free.

21.00 Obraz

directed by **Nikola Vukčević**,
Montenegro-Serbia-Croatia-Germany, 97', 2024 – In competition



Set in occupied Yugoslavia during the Second World War, the film follows a Christian boy who flees after his family is killed and finds refuge in the home of an Albanian Muslim man, while fascist forces hunt him down. Faced with the threat outside, the older man must decide whether to uphold his community's ancient code of honour or risk everything to protect a stranger. Through this choice, the film explores the everyday tensions between religious and national identities amid violence and destruction. Its narrative considers the complexity of human relationships in Balkan history, in which identities deliberately and pragmatically intertwine under pressure. The result is a restrained portrait of morality, individual responsibility and coexistence in times of crisis.

Q&A: **Adriano Ercolani** interviews director **Nikola Vukčević**.
Admission is free.

CASA DEL CINEMA

SALA CINECITTÀ

10.00 - 13.00 EBFF INDUSTRY DAYS

DAY 2 - WORKSHOP

Workshop: "Euro-Balkan CMOs: the state of play and an analysis of how the Copyright Directive's fair remuneration provisions are being implemented"
Moderated by **Maurizio Sciarra**.

PALAZZO SAN LORENZO



17.00 SHORT FILMS IN COMPETITION - PROGRAMME 1

Curated by **Ado Hasanović**, , in conversation about the films with **Adele Budina**.

Victory, directed by **Zulfikar Filandra**, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 22', 2024
Velid has just lost his factory job. Wandering through the city, he encounters a documentary crew and, attracted by the prospect of easy money, agrees to an interview.

Slet 1988, directed by **Marta Popivoda**, Serbia-Germany-France, 22', 2025
An experimental work in which dancer Sonja Vukićević's movements and passages from a teenager's 1988 diary prompt a reflection on collectivism and individualism through the architectural spaces of former Yugoslavia.

The rabbit is dead, directed by **Hanis Bagashov**, North Macedonia-Bulgaria, 20', 2025
Filmmaker Eva tries to develop her film while balancing her personal life in a whirlwind of satire.

Gravity, directed by **Dalya Keleş**, Türkiye , 16', 2026
Thirteen-year-old Deniz must confront both puberty and her peers' lack of understanding of the "strangeness" of her style.

Il Ponte, directed by **Giacomo Bendotti**, Italy-Slovenia, 16', 2026
An elderly man who fled Istria seventy years earlier returns to the places of his childhood. A film reflecting on migration, past and present.

Balconada, directed by **Iva Tokmakchieva**, Bulgaria, 8', 2025
An animated film set entirely in an apartment building, where each balcony appears to be a world of its own until a violent storm forces the residents to interact.

20.00 SHORT FILMS IN COMPETITION - PROGRAMME 2

Curated by **Ado Hasanović**, in conversation about the films with **Stefano Gabrini**.

Last Tropics, directed by **Thanasis Troubouki**s, Greece , 20', 2025
Faced with a crisis in fish stocks, three fishermen choose a drastic solution in a surreal parable about the climate crisis.

Bittersuite,directed by **Iris Reșit**, Romania-Moldova, 20', 2025
During a wedding, young receptionist Bety notices an older guest, Vicky. Their encounter builds in tension towards a final twist.

The cow, directed by **Pavo Marinković**, Croatia-Montenegro, 18', 2025
During wartime, a military officer moves into an abandoned house, whose sole remaining occupant is a cow that becomes a silent witness to his actions.

Red Mud, directed by **Evi Gjoni**, Albania, 14', 2025
A young Roma man works in a brush-making workshop to earn the money for his studies. When his tormentor refuses to pay him, he is forced into a drastic decision.

I believe the portrait saved me, directed by **Alban Muja,** Kosovo-Netherlands , 10', 2025
Painter Skender Muja, the director's father, recalls an ordeal during the Kosovo War twenty years earlier, and how his artistic talents helped him survive.

The Girl who wasn't afraid of bears, directed by **Lea Vučko**, Slovenia-Croatia-Hungary, 20', 2025
An animated fairy tale rooted in Balkan folklore, following a young woman disguised as a man as she searches for her own path in a society governed by gender roles.

The combined ticket for the short film programme and the concert costs € 5.

22.00 Concert by rapper Doppelgänger

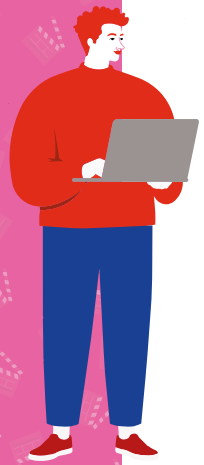
A live set blending urban sounds and Balkan influences, transforming the stage into a space for dialogue between cultural roots and contemporary musical languages.

CASA DEL CINEMA
SALA CINECITTÀ

10.00 - 13.00 EBFF INDUSTRY DAYS

DAY 3 - PITCH

Eight short film projects by filmmakers under 35 from Italy and the Balkan countries are presented to an international jury of audiovisual professionals. The event is dedicated to discovering new voices, professional exchange and the development of new collaborations between Italy and the Balkans.



14.00 - 17.00 EBFF INDUSTRY DAYS

DAY 3 - LINK

National film centres from Balkan countries present Italian producers, executive producers and location managers with opportunities in their territories: incentives, tax credits, funding, services, local professionals and locations, from sets already used by international productions to places yet to be discovered. The event seeks to encourage new productions and co-productions between Italy and the Balkans.

18.00 Electing Ms Santa

directed by **Raisa Răzmeriță**, Moldova-Romania, 96', 2025 – In competition



Elena is a pillar of her community, known for her various charitable activities and for playing Santa Claus every year. Now she has an even greater ambition to help her community: she is running for mayor. This deeply human documentary follows a woman facing the challenges of social stigma on her path forward, in Moldova, a country where traditional gender roles have not yet been entirely overcome. Electing Ms Santa has enjoyed a remarkable international festival run, beginning with its debut at Tallinn Black Nights and its Italian premiere at the Trieste Film Festival.

Q&A: **Emanuele Bucci** interviews producer **Ion Gnatiuc**.
Moldovan Ambassador **Oleg Nica** will attend.
Admission is free.

20.30 Gundi: Legend of Love

directed by **Dimitar Dimitrov**, Bulgaria, 159', 2024 – In competition



An epic biopic tracing the life of Georgi Asparuhov, the celebrated Bulgarian footballer of the 1960s and 1970s, from his childhood in Sofia's suburbs to his tragic death in 1971, intertwining his sporting achievements with his profound love story with his wife Lita. The film revisits the personal and social challenges of an era shaped by the socialist regime, showing how talent, passion and individual freedom can emerge in a rigid society. Through sequences of legendary matches and period detail, it explores football's role as a symbol of national identity in the Balkans and the resilience of a man who became a legend. Against the Bulgarian cultural backdrop, Asparuhov's story reflects historical contradictions, popular aspirations and the bonds between sport, love and collective memory.

Q&A: **Lorenzo d'Amico de Carvalho** interviews director **Dimitar Dimitrov**.
Admission is free.

TUE 3RD NOV

CASA DEL CINEMA

SALA CINECITTÀ

18.30 - 19.30 Panel: book presentation “In viaggio per l’Albania”

Presentation of “In viaggio per l’Albania” by **Paolo Rago**, **Bardhe Karra**, **Franc Shlaku**, with author **Paolo Rago** in attendance.
Participants: historian **Roberto Morozzo della Rocca**, **Fabio Capanni**, **Giorgio Albonetti**, **Paolo Verri**, **Markenc Lorenci**, **Brother Ruggero Valentini**.

19.30 PRESENTATION OF THE “ISMAIL KADARE” AWARD FOR EURO-BALKAN CULTURAL COOPERATION TO CLAUDIO MAGRIS



The **Euro Balkan Film Festival** presents **Claudio Magris** with the Ismail Kadare Award for Euro-Balkan Cultural Cooperation. **Francesco Magris** collects the award.

With **Paolo Di Stefano**, writer and reporter for Corriere della Sera; **Angelo Ferracuti**, writer and journalist; and **Luisa Chiodi**, Director of the OBCT Observatory, the Euro Balkan Film Festival will celebrate Claudio Magris at an event featuring a reading by **Saverio La Ruina**, an actor, playwright and theatre director who has won the Ubu Award five times.

Established in 2024 as part of the Cinema e Letteratura focus and dedicated to the memory of Ismail Kadare, the award recognises individuals who have made a significant contribution to cultural dialogue between Italy, Europe and the Balkans. Following Miljenko Jergović, the 2025 recipient, the 2026 edition turns towards the Central European and Adriatic borderlands through one of the most authoritative voices in contemporary Italian culture.

A writer, scholar of German literature, translator and columnist, Claudio Magris has made the notion of the border – particularly the borderland city of Trieste – a means of knowledge, exchange and exploration rather than merely a site of identity claims. Works such as Danubio, Microcosmi, Un altro mare, Alla cieca and Utopia e disincanto examine the relationships between language, geography and memory, recounting exile, vanished empires, European identities and border territories.

21.00 Più forte dei Ciclopi

directed by **Stefano Grossi**, Italy, 84', 2024 – In competition

Fatos Lubonja, an Albanian intellectual and writer who won the Moravia Prize in 2002, was arrested in 1974 and sentenced to forced labour for writing texts critical of the Hoxha regime. He remained imprisoned until the fall of the regime in 1991. Stefano Grossi's documentary explores Lubonja today, a man whose life has made him a direct witness to the regime's persecution, through an "encounter" built from previously unseen material

Q&A: **Dina Iordanova** moderates a discussion with writer **Dacia Maraini**, author **Fatos Lubonja**, **Claudio Bazzocchi** (essayist specialising in Balkan political philosophy) and director **Stefano Grossi**.
Admission is free.





CINEMA FARNESE

WED 4TH NOV

17.00 A Day in the Life of Jo: Chapter Phaedra

directed by **Jacqueline Lentzou**, Greece-Germany-France, 88', 2026
– In competition



Fifteen-year-old Jo leads a monotonous life in which nothing seems to satisfy her. Her parents and everyone around her seem distant. The only thing that moves her, during singing lessons, is hearing the voice of singer Phaedra, which finally seems to connect her with a potential friend. Winner of the Orizzonti Award for Best Director at the Venice Film Festival.

Introduction: **Ado Hasanović**
Admission: € 3.



19.00 Blum: Masters of Their Own Destiny

directed by **Jasmila Žbanić**
Bosnia and Herzegovina, 76', 2024 – In competition



This documentary by Oscar-nominated director Jasmila Žbanić tells the story of Emerik Blum, a Holocaust survivor and Bosnian entrepreneur who transformed a small workshop into Energoinvest, one of the world's largest engineering companies, thanks to a model of workers' self-management and democratic participation. Through interviews, testimonies and archival material, the film portrays vision, solidarity and social innovation challenging traditional paradigms of capitalism and socialism. Against the background of the Balkans' complex history, it reflects on the role of communities, collective work and cultural identity in shaping a shared destiny, capturing the energy and contradictions of a region marked by both trauma and hope.

Q&A: **Maurizio Sciarra** moderates **Caterina D'Amico**.
Admission: € 3.

Special Event: 70th Anniversary of the Budapest Uprising

Seventy years ago, Hungary sought to break away from Soviet hegemony and establish a more independent socialist government. Moscow responded with an armed invasion and repression that, according to the catalogue text, caused more than 2500 deaths. To mark the anniversary, the Euro Balkan Film Festival presents an event commemorating and examining a crucial moment in Cold War history.

Following:

21.00 I sogni muoiono all'alba

directed by **Indro Montanelli**, **Enrico Gras**, **Mario Craveri**
Italy, 92', 1961 – Special event

During the night of 3–4 November 1956, five Italian journalists wait in a Budapest hotel for the end of the Hungarian Revolution, soon to be crushed in bloodshed by approaching Soviet tanks. Adapted from Indro Montanelli's stage play, the film explores five worldviews and five political positions held by different intellectuals as they confront a major historical event unfolding before them. This is the celebrated journalist Indro Montanelli's only experience directing a feature film.

Q&A: **Steve Della Casa** moderates a discussion with film historian **Claudio Siniscalchi**, historian **Francesco Guida** and **Paolo Conti**, journalist at Corriere della Sera.
Admission is free.







THU 5TH NOV

CINEMA FARNESE

16.30 I Matter

directed by **Alina Şerban**, Romania-Germany-Belgium, 101', 2026 – In competition



Teenager Rebeca is waiting for her father to complete a prison sentence for a crime brought about by the family's poverty. Faced with the prospect of leaving the orphanage she now calls home, she must find her own way in a society that judges her Roma identity. Winner of the Audience Award in the Spotlight section of the Venice Film Festival, I Matter is the first film directed by a Roma woman within European cinema

Introduction: **Mihaela Gavrila**, professor Sapienza - Università di Roma
Admission: € 3.

18.30 Nina Roza

directed by **Geneviève Dulude-De Celles**,
Canada-Italy-Bulgaria-Belgium, 104', 2026 – In competition



Mihail, an art curator, emigrated to Canada decades ago. When asked to assess a work by a child prodigy, he is forced to return to Bulgaria, a country he has long regarded as hopelessly backward. The journey gives him an opportunity to rediscover his roots. A tender film about returning home, it critically examines the exploitation of the Balkan region by Western Europe, personal identity and the "exoticisation" of the region with commendable awareness. The film won the Silver Bear for Best Screenplay at the 2026 Berlinale and is Canada's submission to the Oscars.

Q&A: **Giulia Rosa** moderates **Lorenzo Fiuzzi** (produttore UMI Films) & la distribuzione LSPG Popcorn
Admission: € 3.

21.00 Gianni Versace: L'imperatore dei sogni

directed by **Mimmo Calopresti**, Italy-Slovenia, 70', 2023 – Special event

A fashion icon whose story is revisited through his roots. In this Slovenian co-produced documentary, Mimmo Calopresti not only explores Versace through the testimony of those who knew him, but also rediscovers the brand and its meaning, including the powerful aesthetic links with the cultural world of Magna Graecia, an ancestral cradle connecting the Mediterranean.

Q&A: featuring director **Mimmo Calopresti**, artist **Natino Chirico**, actor **Leonardo Maltese**, actress **Vera Dragone**

Admission: € 3.





CINEMA FARNESE

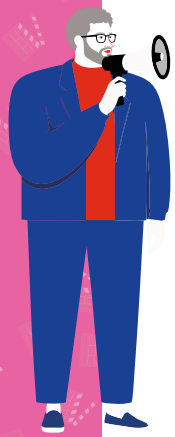
16.00 Yugo Florida

directed by **Vladimir Tagić**,
Serbia-Bulgaria-France-Croatia-Montenegro, 112', 2025 – In competition



Zoran leads a fragmented existence, caught between nights spent watching reality-TV monitors, an indifferent flatmate and unsettled relationships. Then news of his father's terminal illness forces him to embark on one final journey together, aboard a Yugo Florida, a vehicle emblematic of the Yugoslav era. Through everyday moments, unspoken conversations and silent reflections, the film explores emotional distance and difficult bonds between generations. Set against the background of contemporary Serbia and a Balkan region shaped by social change, themes of reconciliation and family responsibility emerge. With understated humour and realism, the story reveals how personal relationships collide with modern routines and cultural expectations. Zoran's journey exposes the fragility of bonds and the possibility of rediscovering empathy through the simplest gestures.

Q&A: **Adriano Ercolani** interviews director **Vladimir Tagić**.
Admission: € 3.



18.45 Beautiful Evening, Beautiful Day

directed by **Ivona Juka**, Croatia-Poland-Canada-Cyprus, 131', 2024 – In competition



In Yugoslavia in 1957, three artists, former partisans who fought against the Ustaša regime, defy censorship to voice their criticism, only to discover that their militant past cannot protect them from persecution, including persecution based on their sexual orientation. Shot in elegant monochrome, the film captures the oppression of Tito's regime through a brutal escalation of tension. It was selected as Croatia's submission to the 2025 Academy Awards.

Q&A: **Caterina Taricano** interviews director **Ivona Juka**.
Admission: € 3.

21.15 CLOSING AND AWARDS CEREMONY, 30’

Emcee: **Giulia Chianese**











CASA DEL CINEMA
SALA CINECITTÀ

SAT 7TH NOV

10.15 CINEMA AND CULTURE IN THE SHADOW OF DICTATORSHIPS

Bruce Williams explores film culture during the years of dictatorship. The programme focuses on Albanian dictator **Enver Hoxha**'s regime and the relationship between totalitarianism and artistic expression. Following the discussion, the screening of **Roland Sejko**'s documentary Film di Stato will be preceded by a short extract from **Kujtim Çashku**'s **Cold Blood**, inspired by a story by **Ismail Kadare**.

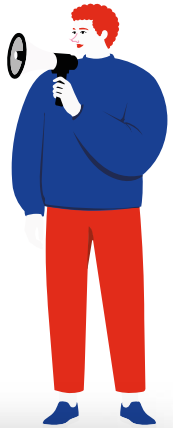


PANEL:

- **Bruce Williams** (Professor of Cinema and Cultural Studies at William Paterson University, New Jersey (USA), and author of studies on Eastern European cinema);
- **Dina Iordanova** moderator (film scholar and professor specialising in world cinema, Balkan cinema and Eastern European cinema);
- **Roland Sejko** (albanian director and screenwriter);
- **Claudio Siniscalchi** (film historian);
- **Fatos Lubonja** (albanian writer, essayist, journalist and intellectual);
- **Kujtim Çashku** (albanian film director and screenwriter).

Following:

11.15 SCREENINGS:



Cold Blood

directed by **Kujtim Çashku**, Albania, 2’ excerpt, 1981

Inspired by Ismail Kadare’s short story of the same name and co-written by Bashkim Shehu (son of minister Mehmet Shehu), the film, dealing with relations between Albania and China after the break with the USSR, was never completed.
Admission is free.

Film di Stato

directed by **Roland Sejko**, Italy-Albania, 78’, 2025 – Special event

The documentary explores more than forty years of dictatorship in Albania through official and private archive material, without commentary or external narration. Through propaganda films, public demonstrations and scenes of daily life, the contradictions and obsessions of Enver Hoxha’s regime emerge. The film shows how propaganda shaped collective memory and citizens’ experiences, offering a direct and powerful view of Albanian society under totalitarianism. The film was submitted by Albania for the Academy Award for Best International Feature Film.
Admission is free.





CINEMA TROISI

HUMOUR IN BALKAN CINEMA.

18.15 Gatto nero, gatto bianco

directed by **Emir Kusturica**, France-Germany-Jugoslavia, 135', 1998
– Special event



On the banks of the Danube, Matko and Zare, two crafty Roma swindlers, try to make ends meet through schemes and improvised deals. When a deal goes wrong, Zare is forced into an arranged marriage with a gangster's sister, despite being in love with another woman. Through madcap escapes, deception and comic situations, the film playfully and ironically portrays the contrasts and colours of Balkan society.

Steve Della Casa and **Mario Sesti** introduce the film

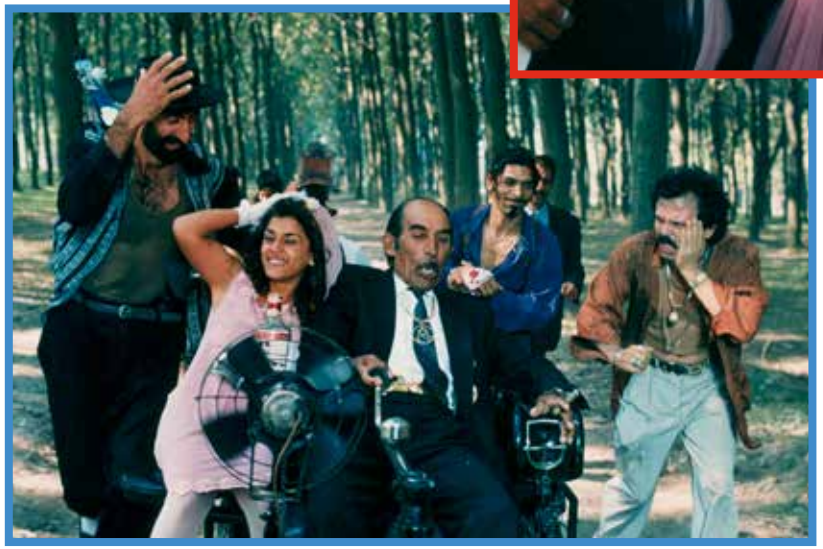
Admission: € 8, with possible concessions for eligible visitors.













SPECIAL EVENT

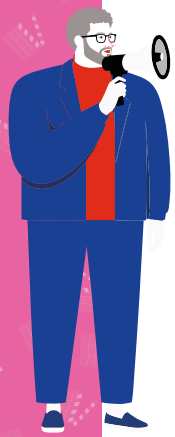
SHORT FILMS

FEATURE FILMS



Gregor Božič
(Jury president)

Director, screenwriter and cinematographer. Trained in Ljubljana, Rome, Berlin and at Le Fresnoy, he has developed an artistic practice combining auteur cinema, visual research and a special sensitivity to stories and places. His debut feature, Stories from the *Chestnut Woods* (2019), screened at the Toronto International Film Festival and received numerous international awards. As cinematographer, he worked on *The Man Who Could Not Remain Silen*t, winner of the Palme d'Or for Best Short Film at Cannes in 2024, and *Fiume o Morte!* (2025), an award-winning film at the 2025 Rotterdam Film Festival and the 2026 European Film Awards.



Edmond Budina

Albanian actor, director, screenwriter, playwright, writer and lecturer, born in Tirana. At the National Theatre of Albania, he performed in and directed more than forty productions, creating several major theatrical successes. He also taught at the University of Arts. In Italy, he has played several leading roles, including Ulysses in Marco Baliani's *Migranti*. His filmography as both actor and director includes *Guardando al ritorno* (1995), *La domenica delle Palme* (2002), *Lettere al vento* (2003), *Balkan Bazar* (2011) and *Broken* (2017). As a journalist, he has contributed to Variety, The New York Times, Le Monde and other leading publications.





Marina Kostova

An award-winning journalist, Marina Kostova is one of North Macedonia's leading film critics and reporters. She is a founding member and Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the digital newsroom SDK.MK. She is Vice-President of the International Federation of Film Critics (FIPRESCI) and President of its Macedonian section. She edited the books Monograph on Manchevski and Rain – The World of Milcho Manchevski's Before the Rain. She was part of the team that created North Macedonia's first online media literacy dictionary

Massimiliano Battistella



Born in Rome, he graduated in literary criticism and pursued further studies in the humanities and visual arts. He began working in the audiovisual sector at a young age, gaining experience as an assistant director and in casting, collaborating with major Italian and international directors. His debut feature is the documentary DOM (2025), which premiered at the Venice Film Festival's 82nd edition in the Giornate degli Autori section. It is an Italian-Bosnian co-production in collaboration with the Netherlands.



Enzo Monteleone

An award-winning screenwriter and director (Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film for Mediterraneo; Golden Leopard at Locarno for Alla rivoluzione sulla 2CV). As a screenwriter, he has worked with some of the most interesting directors of his generation: Mazzacurati, Salvatores, Piccioni, D'Alatri, Sciarra and Cristina Comencini, as well as Spanish director Carlos Saura. Across film and television, his directing career has focused on socially engaged stories, including *Ormai è fatta!* (1999), *El Alamein* (2002), *Il tunnel della libertà* (2004), *Il capo dei capi* (2007), *L'angelo di Sarajevo* (2015), *Io non mi arrendo* (2016) and *Duisburg* (2019).

FESTIVAL ORGANIZATION

Artistic Director: **Mario Bova**
Programmer & Head of Youth Programme: **Ado Hasanović**
Producer / Industry Manager: **Andrea Damiano**
Treasurer / Administration: **Paolo Lanari**
Organisational Coordinator: **Krystyna Biernawska**

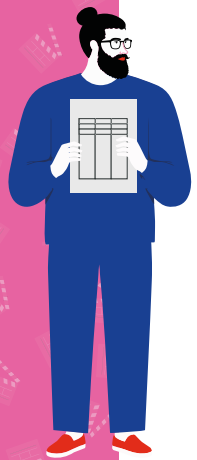
Adviser / Selector: **Steve Della Casa**
Consultant / Workshop Curator: **Maurizio Sciarra**
Consultants / Selectors: **Dina Iordanova**, **Elma Tataragić**, **Mimmo Calopresti**, **Ylljet Aliçka**

Pitch Coordination/
Project Manager and Administration: **Marco Agosto**
Project Manager: **Gloria Ibisco**

Press Office: **Studio Morabito** (**Mimmo Morabito** with the collaboration of **Virginia Eronico**)
Social Media: **Giulia Stefani**
Website / Technical Support: **Flavio Zancla**
Poster Illustration: **Maddalena Pignatiello**
Graphic Design: **Luca Toscano**
Copywriter: **Viktor Toth**
Photograpy and Video: **Roberto Mazzarelli**
Organisational Support: **Chiara Cruciatti**
Audience Development Manager: **Gaia Antonini**
Volunteer Coordinator: **Andrea Fei**

Jury President: **Gregor Božič**
Jury Members: **Marina Kostova**, **Enzo Monteleone**, **Edmond Budina**, **Massimiliano Battistella**

Pitch Jury : **Elma Tataragić**, **Marco Borromei**, **Ylljet Aliçka**
Tutor Euro Balkan Short Pitch: **Giulia Grandinetti**



FESTIVAL VENUES

How to get there by public transport

Casa del Cinema

Largo Marcello Mastroianni (Villa Borghese)
Pedestrian entrance: Piazzale del Brasile
Metro Line A: Spagna | Barberini | Flaminio
Buses: 490 – 495 – 61 – 590 – 89 – 160 – C3 – 120F (public holidays) – 150F (public holidays) – N1 (night) – N25 (night)

Cinema Troisi

Via Girolamo Induno 1, (Trastevere)
Metro Line B: Piramide
Buses: 44 – 8 – H – 3 – 75 – 115 – N3 (night)

Cinema Farnese

Piazza Campo de' Fiori
Metro Lines A and B: Termini
Buses: 40 – 62 – 64 – N46 (night)

Palazzo San Lorenzo

Piazza dei Sanniti, 9a
Metro Line B: Policlinico
Buses: 19BUS – 3BUS – 71 – 492 – 8BUS
Trams: 3 – 19

Euro Balkan Film Festival 2026