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## One hundred and one years of the Croatian film (1896-1997)

### A Survey of the History of the Croatian Cinema

#### Moving Pictures

The development of the new medium of moving pictures in Croatia, as in all other countries, began with the first public showings of *living photographs*, the term which was used in the first grand announcements of the new attraction. The first moving picture was shown in Zagreb on 8 October 1896, barely ten months after the first showing in Paris. After this early beginning, however, Croatian film did not follow the leading world trends in the cinema. Its development was slow and discontinuous, which is characteristic of small and poor milieus. Our ancestors, however, did not have to wait long for travelling cinemas, which visited all large Croatian towns as early as 1897. The first movie theaters were opened in Zagreb and Pula (1906). These were followed by cinemas in Split, Zadar, and Rijeka (1907), and a year later in Dubrovnik (1908). The first Croatian film distribution company was established in Zagreb in 1907, and the first film journal was published in Bjelovar in 1913. The new attraction immediately found audiences in Croatia, and imported films were shown by a number of entrepreneurs.

The need for domestic film production was not felt at the time, since new films could be obtained relatively cheaply from distribution centers in Vienna and Trieste. Local cinemas, however, tried to offer their own attractions, so that local town scenes lasting several minutes were filmed by camera owners at home, or by traveling cameramen. Thus, Stanislaw Noworyta (1880-1960), a Polish globe-trotter, shot a few scenes in Opatija and Šibenik in 1903; Josip Karaman (1864-1921), a cinema owner from Split, filmed a few local events in 1910; while Josip Halla (1880-1960) embarked on a career as a professional cameraman with a few reports from Zagreb in 1911. In 1912 he became a Balkan War correspondent for the French company Éclair, which included his reports in its newsreels. After 1917, he shot the first Croatian feature films.

At the time of its first films, Croatia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; its coast (Dalmatia and Istria) belonged to the Austrian part of

the empire, while continental Croatia was in the Hungarian part of the Habsburg Monarchy. The country had limited political sovereignty, represented by the Croatian *ban* (i.e., viceroy) and the Croatian parliament. It had internal autonomy and the right to use the Croatian language not only in local administration, but also in common institutions. Since the time of Napoleon's defeat in 1814, however, there had been strong aspirations for a legal union of Dalmatia with Croatia, which later grew into a movement to unite all South Slavic nations. On the other hand, Austrian and Hungarian elements relied upon ethnic conflicts between the Croats and the Serbs, and on the struggle for political domination between the Italian minority and the Croatian majority in Dalmatia. Some of these developments were reflected also in the cinema, because even the movie theatres showed their political affiliations in their choice of the language used in the subtitles of silent films, which were either in Italian, German, or Croatian...

## World War I: the First Feature Films

The short-lived period of film production in Croatia began during the First World War. Because of the war, films from enemy countries, such as France, Italy, and the USA, with the world's strongest film industries, disappeared from Croatian movie theatres, which gave a strong impetus to film production in Germany and the Dual Monarchy countries. Croatia, however, lacked substantial industrial and financial support for the development of its own film industry, and there were only about 30 movie theatres in the country. This, however, did not discourage one group of motion picture enthusiasts from theatrical circles, who founded the first Croatian film company, Croatia Films, in order to produce entertainment films. Unfortunately, these early movies have not been preserved, so that we can judge the first Croatian film, *Brcko u Zagrebu* (Brcko in Zagreb, 1917) only from scarce newspaper reports and emphatic advertisements. This movie was an adaptation of a comedy which had been staged several years earlier at the theatre, with the most popular theatre actors. The following film, *Matija Gubec* (1917), was based on a popular historical novel about a sixteenth-century century peasants' revolt, written by August Šenoa, a Croatian Romantic writer who is often referred to as the "Croatian Walter Scott". Before the end of the war in 1918, five more films were made by Croatia Films; they were adaptations of lesser-known theatrical plays. The ambitions of the pioneers of Croatian film were to offer entertainment to their audiences and gain some profit. In all probability, these films, consisting of four, five, and even seven "acts" (i.e., film reels), were below the level of Austrian films in quality, although we do know that the film *Mokra pustolovina* (The Wet Adventure, 1918) was shown in Viennese movie theaters.

## In the First Yugoslavia

When the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was founded in 1918 (the name of Yugoslavia did not become official until 1929), the prospects of the film industry noticeably improved because of the larger network of movie theatres (probably about 150) in the larger state. Zagreb became the economic center of film life in the new state, with its Association of Film Companies and Association of Cinemas covering the whole country. The strongest importers and distributors were also based in Zagreb, so that in 1938 it could boast 16 out of a total of 23 distributors in all Yugoslavia.

Soon after the unification in 1919, a new film company, Jugoslavija Film (Yugoslavia Films), was established, which brought together mostly the people from the former Croatia Films. Several news reels were filmed and presented, and four or five entertainment films were made based on the well-established formula. *Kovač raspela* (The Crucifix Maker, 1919) was directed by Heinz Hanus, who is known as the maker of the first Austrian film in 1908. The film *U lavljem kavezu* (In the Lions' Cage, 1919) should be mentioned because of the bizarre circumstances in which it was made: it was filmed when a circus with seven lions came to Zagreb, and the audiences were asked to buy tickets in order to watch the filming! After a year, Yugoslavia Films faced a crisis from which it never recovered, although in 1922 it opened the School for Motion Picture Actors, with the permission of the education authorities. One of its products was the feature film *Strast za pustolovinama* (Passion for Adventure, 1922) directed by Alexander Vereshchagyn, an émigré from Russia. After this, film-making subsided, since domestic films were unprofitable on such a small market, and the state was unwilling to help. American films became highly popular in Europe at the expense of German films, and this had an important influence on the tastes of the audiences. After the attempt by Tito Strozzi (1892-1970), an actor who tried to devise a production model for a cooperative of theatre actors who worked on the film *Dvorovi u samoći* (Lonely Castles, 1925), no commercial feature films were produced in Croatia until World War II.

Oktavijan Miletić (1902-1987) was the most active film-maker between the two wars. His brilliant non-professional films on 9.5 mm film, which he directed and financed on his own between 1932 and 1937, represent the oldest artistic oeuvre in the history of the Croatian film which has been preserved. He won international recognition for his silent movies, and at the Paris Festival of Amateur Film he was awarded by the president of the jury, Louis Lumière, for his film *Poslovi konzula Dorgena* (The Affairs of Consul Dorgen, 1933). In 1936 he won first prize at the Venice Mostra for his *Nocturno*, an ironic paraphrase of horror films which were popular at the time. The first Croatian talkie, *Šešir* (The Hat, 1937, 16 min-

utes) was the last in a series of films such as *Na žalost samo san* (Unfortunately Just a Dream, 1932), *Strah* (Fear, 1933), *Zagreb u svjetlu velegrada* (Zagreb in the Lights of a Big City) and *Faustus* (both in 1934). A few years later, during the war, Oktavijan Miletić directed the first Croatian feature-length sound film, *Lisinski* (1944). After World War II, the well-known director, who worked mostly as a cameraman, became a generous teacher of younger generations of film enthusiasts.

Dr Andrija Štampar, a great visionary of social medicine, founded the School of Public Health in Zagreb (1927) with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation. From the start, films were included in the health education programs of this modern institution of preventive medicine. This was the beginning of several decades of film production which lasted until 1960. The School of Public Health produced 165 films which were seen by over 25 million viewers (by 1940). By this means, many people from remote villages had their first opportunity to see moving pictures, shown by mobile projectors. The first films were technological experiments, in which the shadow technique was sometimes used as a precursor of animation. The first animated film, *Martin u nebo* (Martin into the Sky) (300 m) was made in 1929. In an effort to find the best method to convey educational messages, several naive feature films were produced by the School of Public Health. With the arrival of Alexander Gerasimov (1894-1977), a film enthusiast who emigrated from Russia, the documentary became the best medium of teaching the basics of hygiene in everyday life. Along with educational films, so-called "culture" films were also made, such as *Život u turopoljskoj zadruzi* (Life in a Turopolje Cooperative), depicting life in large family communities. Although this film was made as early as 1933, it was awarded a prize at the festival of ethnographic films in Florence in 1960.

The film, as a new medium of visual attraction, became widely popular. This can be seen from the large number of publications dedicated exclusively to the new art: as many as 52 titles appeared before 1941. Most of them were short-lived specialist newspapers and journals focusing on film in which Croatian film-making was described from time to time, in addition to information on the current repertory of foreign films.

## World War II: Film As Propaganda

In the Blitzkrieg of April, 1941 the army and the state structure of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia collapsed. The country was divided into nine provinces, each with a different administrative status. Croatia was formally proclaimed an independent state, governed by the *Ustasha* regime, which was of extreme fascist and Nazi orientation. The political and military support of the Third Reich and Mussolini's Italy had a protectorate char-

acter over the actually dependent totalitarian quasi-state. As far as the Croatian cinema was concerned, systematic film production began in 1942, with the establishment of the Croatian production company *Hrvatski slikopis* (Croatian Cinematography). Its main task was that of propaganda, so that a 15-day newsreel, *Hrvatska u rieči i slici* (Croatia in Words and Pictures) was started. Beginning in 1943, it was broadcast every Saturday under the title *Hrvatski slikopisni tjednik* (The Croatian Film Weekly). Several short "culture" films were made, one them being *Barok u Hrvatskoj* (The Baroque in Croatia, 1942), by Oktavijan Miletić. He also directed the first feature-length sound film, *Lisinski* (1944), about the composer of the first Croatian opera, who lived at the time of the Croatian National Revival in the mid-nineteenth century. In spite of its romantic ideas and patriotic emotions, *Lisinski* bore witness to the professional maturity of the Zagreb circle of film enthusiasts.

Paradoxically, during the *Ustasha* regime, financial and technological possibilities for film production were established which had not existed in Croatia before. Because of the importance of film for propaganda purposes, modern film equipment was imported from Germany. At the end of the war its planned return to Germany was prevented at the last moment, and the staff of "The Croatian News" secretly filmed the withdrawal of the Fascist armies and the arrival of the Partizans in Zagreb. Branko Marjanović (1909-1996) used these materials to make a documentary entitled *Oslobođenje Zagreba* (The Liberation of Zagreb, 1945) which both actually and symbolically marked the beginning of the Croatian cinema under new circumstances, when Croatia became part of the new, Communist Yugoslavia.

## The State Cinema in the Second Yugoslavia

Even before the end of the war, the State Film Company for all Yugoslavia was founded (1944). It had separate Film Directorates for each of the country's six federal units, which took possession of all film equipment and materials found in local film centers. Private movie theatres (about 180 in Croatia) gradually became state property. Like other spheres of life, the organization of the cinema followed Soviet models. Films focused on the recent war and the victory of the antifascist forces. The first films produced by the new Yugoslav cinematography were made in Croatia. Among them we should mention *Jasenovac* (1945), a documentary about the notorious concentration camp for Jews, Serbs, and Croatian antifascists, which was made soon after the liberation of Jasenovac in the spring of 1945. Thanks to the complete technological equipment which was taken over after the Partizan victory, Zagreb offered technological services to other Yugoslav film centers. Part of the existing equipment

was later transferred to Belgrade, while most of the film archives were taken to a shoe factory where they were used as raw material for rubber boots...

In spite of the strong centralist tendencies in all spheres of social life, film-making in the new Yugoslavia was organised on a federal basis from the beginning. Consequently, it did not develop in a single center, so that no "Yugoslav Hollywood" was ever established. This is why the ideological monism of the victorious Communist party was not absolute, at least as far as film-making was concerned. The life of cinema developed at different paces in the various national centers, which had different traditions, mentalities, and cultures. At the time, state protection was crucial for the survival and development of the Croatian film. In this way, the ideological and political needs of the communist state served as an impetus to the domestic cinema after a long period of stagnation in which it had not been stimulated either by the state authorities or by private capital, which saw profit as its only interest.

## The First Films: Socialist Realism

As a result of the reorganisation of the Yugoslav state cinema, Jadran Film, a production company for works ranging from educational cine films to feature films, was established in Zagreb in 1946. It took possession of all the existing equipment. At first the company was based in a school building. A new motion picture lot was constructed between 1953 and 1955, and was enlarged in the following three decades, so that in 1980 Zagreb could boast of probably the best and most modern technological basis in Yugoslavia and one of the more advanced in Europe. This is born witness to by the wide cooperation and services that it offered to great American coproductions. The first feature film produced by the new Croatian cinema was *Živjeće ovaj narod* (This Nation Will Live, 1947), a war film belonging to the Partizan genre, which was widely popular at the time in all Yugoslav film centers. Within the unimaginative framework of Socialist Realism, the film provided a formula which was applied in the Yugoslav film for many years to come, only on a higher professional level. The Partizan genre included several expensive film spectacles and other contributions to Tito's personality cult, such as *Bitka na Neretvi* (The Battle of the Neretva, 1969), by Veljko Bulajić, and *Sutjeska* (1973), by Stipe Delić. In the first years of young film production, *Zastava* (The Flag, 1949), by Branko Marjanović (1908-1996), was a more mature work than most other films of this type.

It is interesting to note that no films on Partizan themes were made in Croatia in the seven-year period between *Zastava* and *Opsada* (The Siege, 1956), as opposed to the other Yugoslav republics. With its modest

production of one or, exceptionally, two films a year, the Croatian cinema nevertheless managed to make films that were diverse in genre and theme. The interests of the audiences were explored and the craft of the new medium was studied. The film *Plavi 9* (Blue 9, 1950) by Krešo Golik (1922-1996), a didactic comedy about sport, which was supposed to affirm a new type of "socialist morality" in physical culture, was exceptionally well received by its viewers. *Bakonja fra-Brne* (1951), by Fedor Hažneković (1913-1997), was considered to be the most mature film of the initial period. At the time of the sharp conflict between the communist authorities and the Catholic church, it became an anti-clerical pamphlet presenting rough caricatures of monks in a Franciscan monastery.

The first Croatian film to be shelved was *Ciguli Miguli* (1952), by Branko Marjanović. Audiences had the opportunity to see this naive satirical presentation of the clumsiness of local bureaucracy only a quarter of a century later. Although the ban was lifted in 1977, the film was not shown in regular distribution until 1989!

Stalin's expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Communist Block in 1948 did not immediately bring about changes in cultural policy. Later, however, the party discipline was gradually relaxed, the Soviet model was no longer obligatory, and artists were allowed more freedom in their aesthetic selection, although it was still necessary to remain ideologically "correct". Consequently, film-makers could look for other models besides Soviet ones. This in itself did not ensure the highest artistic level, but the horizons of film were certainly extended. Vatroslav Mimica's (1923) first film *U oluji* (In the Storm, 1952) was an experiment in which methods of the American thriller were used for a story set on a Dalmatian island. In his comedy *Jubilej gospodina Ikla* (Mr Ikl's Jubilee, 1955), Mimica used slapstick as a model. The pre-war social story, *Kameni horizonti* (Stone horizons, 1953), by Šime Šimatović (1919) echoed Italian neo-realism, while the poetic parable *Djevojka i hrast* (The Girl and the Oak, 1955), by Krešo Golik, was made under the influence of the black-and-white cinematography of Mexican cameraman Gabriel Figueroa. The best film of the period, *Koncert* (The Concert, 1954), by Branko Belan (1912-1986), was influenced by the French pre-war *film noir*.

## The Fifties: the Producers' Cinema

The new film law of 1956 substantially changed the financial position of the cinema: film production was no longer financed directly from the state budget, nor was it left to the mercy of the market, which was still weak. An intermediate solution was found, in which a part of the profits from domestic and foreign films went into a special fund for domestic production. Individual films were financed from the fund in accordance

to the number of viewers in movie theatres at home and to the box-office success in other countries. The fund was centralised in Belgrade, but five or six years later the system was partly changed, so that the funds were decentralised in each republic. Production companies remained the most influential factor in the cinema because they made their decisions relatively independently of the state administration. The earlier state-controlled cinema was replaced by producer-run film industry.

In the 1950s, Croatian films were probably the most interesting part of all Yugoslav productions. Branko Bauer (1921), the most productive and one of the most competent directors, as well as an indisputable authority for his colleagues, began his career with two films for young people: *Sinji galeb* (The Seagull, 1953), and *Milioni na otoku* (Millions on the Island, 1955). He won full recognition with an excellent war film, *Ne okreći se sine* (Don't Turn Back, Son, 1956), which was highly innovative with respect to the stereotyped approach to the Partisan film. His film *Tri Ane* (The Three Anas, 1959), a Macedonian production, anticipated a critical approach which in the decade to follow became known as the black wave. This trend later became dominant, mostly in the Serbian cinema.

One of the most popular Croatian films of the 1950's was *Svoga tela gospodar* (Master of His Own Body, 1957), by Fedor Hanžeković, an adaptation of a popular play by Slavko Kolar that was written in the authentic dialect of northern Croatia. This sentimental story depicted the lasting misery of country life, with touches of humour. *H-8* (1958) was directed by Nikola Tanhofer (1926), a film-maker with a marked affinity for modern lapidary style whose artistic level was comparable to that of the European films of the time. As a result, he won the first prize at the Pula Film Festival. The festival was a typical Yugoslav invention, a hybrid between an annual production survey and a confrontation between the national cinemas within the Yugoslav Federation.

The first film of Veljko Bulajić (1928), *Vlak bez voznog reda* (The Train Without a Timetable, 1959), is an epic evocation of post-war colonisation, when village people were transferred from the Dinara Karst to the rich Pannonian plain. It became a turning point both in Croatian and Yugoslav cinema. The influence of the classical American epic western and recognisable resonances of Italian neo-realism were features which the author did not try to conceal.

The late 1950s and the early 1960s were characterised by several parallel processes. Film production, which was financed from a federal fund, became less dependent on direct state ideological control. Films were usually not targets of political interventions, which became less frequent in other spheres as well, because of growing atmosphere of liberalism and tolerance. On the other hand, the film as an integral part of culture gained more self-confidence. The period of initial wandering was over; critical



ideas were presented in a number of journals and newspapers in different centers. Yugoslav films, including those from Croatia, became appreciated and welcome guests at festivals (mainly those of short films). In this respect, we should point out the importance of the Oberhausen Festival, which promoted documentaries and helped Zagreb School of Animated Film gain world affirmation.

In those years, Croatian directors often visited other republics and made films outside their own cultural milieu. This, however, did not result in the integration of creative potential resulting in a united Yugoslav cinema, which remained multicultural as much as it was fundamentally multinational and multilingual. In addition to Skopje, Bauer worked in Belgrade (*Prekobrojna* 'Supernumerary' 1962), where other Croatian directors, such as Tanhofer (*Osmo vrata* 'The Eighth Door', 1959) and Bulajić (*Uzavreli grad* 'The Boiling City', 1961) worked for some time. Bulajić made his first Partizan film spectacle, *Kozara* (1962), in Sarajevo. Similarly, Zagreb as a film center was open to directors from other parts of the country, so that some of the best directors worked for Jadran Film, such as Žika Mitrović, one of the best action-film directors, who evoked a Partizan enterprise in his *Signali nad gradom* (Signals over the City, 1960). He also directed the historical spectacle *Nevesinjska puška* (The Gun of Nevesinje, 1963). An exciting film entitled *Deveti krug* (The Ninth Circle, 1960), by the leading Slovene author France Štiglic, a story about the ways in which ordinary people in Zagreb helped the persecuted Jews, was nominated for an Academy Award.

## The Sixties: the Authors' Cinema

The authors' cinema emerged at a time of artists and viewers' dissatisfaction with the spiritual sterility and creative stagnation in the system of the producers' domination of the cinema. The view that the crucial role in the complex procedure of film-making should belong to film-makers was logical and beneficial. The financial crisis of the federal fund, in which the resources became insufficient for the growing number of films, resulted in its decentralisation in 1962. After several years, the financing system was changed, so that subsidies were not given to production companies for their annual programmes, but to individual projects whose authors applied to public competitions, and thus became producers in their own right.

The Paris journal *Cahiers du Cinema*, which laid the theoretical foundations for the French New Wave, had a great impact on the affirmation of the concept of the author's cinema. (The term is a translation of Truffaut's *cinéma d'auteur*). Fellini and Bergman affirmed a new understanding of the film. After the reconciliation between Tito and Khrushchev, the impact of the post-Stalinist Soviet and Polish cinema began to be felt,

along with that of the young generation of Hungarian, Czech, and Slovak directors. Some Yugoslav films openly defied established conventions, such as the Slovene film *Ples v dežju* (The Dance in the Rain, 1961) by Boštjan Hladnik. The composite film *Kapi, vode, ratnici* (Drops, Waters, Warriors, 1962), by three Serbian debutants: Pavlović, Rakonjac and Babac, along with the films of Makavejev and other former Belgrade amateurs, gave a strong impetus to films with greater artistic ambitions and accomplishments.

The opposition to the conventional film in Croatia was strongest among Zagreb's film amateurs. Biennial film festivals which bridged the gap between amateur and professional film were held in Zagreb starting from 1963 under the name of the Genre Film Festival (GEFF). The main source of inspiration for the author's cinema was provided by the Zagreb School of Animated Film. It was immersed in a creative climate where political interventions were less strongly felt than in feature films. This freedom of experiment was confirmed between the 1950s and the 1960s by a number of respected world awards which secured international recognition for Croatian animated film. Of these, *Surogat* ('Ersatz'), by Dušan Vukotić, won the Academy Award for non-American animated film, and *Samac* (Alone), by Vatroslav Mimica, was awarded the Golden Lion in Venice.

The cycle of modernist feature films made by Vatroslav Mimica during the 1960s is representative of the whole intellectual complex which is referred to as the author's cinema. After a decade of work on animated film, where his hermetic works won world recognition, Mimica made the first widely recognized author's feature film in Croatia and one of the first in Yugoslavia, *Prometej s otoka Viševice* (Prometheus from the Island of Viševica, 1964). In his next film, *Ponedjeljak ili utorak* (Monday or Tuesday, 1966) he completely abandoned the plot, giving up "events" in order to create a mosaic picture of "states of mind". Mimica tried to make films in keeping with modern trends in European "festival cinema", as a good example of the tendency which was referred to as Socialist Aestheticism (a paraphrase of the former Socialist Realism: beauty of form was used to conceal sterility of content). The audiences did not show much understanding for this type of film, so that Mimica's probably most visually impressive and meditatively suggestive film, *Kaja, ubit ću te!* (Kaja, I'm going to kill you!, 1967) was whistled down by ten thousand people at the Roman amphitheatre in Pula.

The best Croatian films were made during the 1960s by aesthetically isolated authors in search of their own individual style. They were not united by any program, and they did not belong to the same generation. One of them was Ante Babaja (1927) who saw film as the expression of one's artistic vision of world, and looked for non-conventional expressive

devices. His first film, a stylised adaptation of Andersen's classical fairy tale *Carevo novo ruho* (The Emperor's New Clothes, 1961) contained political allusions to the personality cult. After this "interesting failure", Babaja had the opportunity to express his creative genius only six years later, in his film *Breza* (The Birch-tree, 1967). In his adaptation of Slavko Kolar's lyrical story about the fate of a tender and fragile country girl who is set apart from other country women as a "birch tree from the beeches", Babaja, in cooperation with cameraman Pinter, enriched the visual component of the film in the spirit of Croatian naive painters.

This stimulating creative climate was favourable for authors who had had to wait for years to make films which departed from earlier conventions. One of these was *Rondo* (1966), by Zvonimir Berković (1928), which won several awards. Moreover, it was one of the rare Croatian films which were shown in several European countries. The dramaturgy of this chamber film was based on rondo music as the exciting aesthetic principle of its structure. Some critics found this to be a general characteristic of the Croatian film in which the plot always returned to its origin; this type of film was therefore referred to as "rondo dramaturgy".

## Films of Social Criticism

One of the first films which shyly opened the door to free exploration of current social and political themes was *Licem u lice* (Face to Face, 1963), by Branko Bauer, an acknowledged master of the traditional narrative structure. Although he was not an aesthetic innovator, he had an important role in the development of film literacy in this country. His highly committed film caused high feelings and had a considerable influence on the emergence and popularity of social criticism films throughout Yugoslavia. This trend was even more pronounced in the Serbian than in the Croatian cinema.

In spite of the dominant aesthetic model of the author's cinema, the most productive Croatian film-maker was Fadil Hadžić (1922). He was inclined to a conventional style, and he made as many as twelve films belonging to different genres in the eleven-year period between 1961 and 1971. Some of these films were made outside Croatia. His first film, *Abece da straha* (The Alphabet of Fear, 1961) was a good thriller set in Zagreb during the occupation, but most of his films focus on contemporary themes. In this way, Hadžić continued Bauer's line of the film of social criticism (*Druga strana medalje* 'The Reverse Side of the Medal', 1965; *Divlji anđeli* 'Wild Angels', 1969). *Protest* (1967), probably his best film, went even further than Bauer, since the suicide of Hadžić's rebellious hero was a serious accusation of the circumstances in which only this form of protest could have any effect.

New impetus to the tendency of the critical examination of reality was given by Krsto Papić (1933), a member of a new generation of film-makers who joined the Croatian cinema in the mid-1960s with his suggestive work entitled *Lisice* (Foxes, 1969), probably the most important Croatian film of the 1960s. It focuses on a delicate and barely mentioned theme of 1948, when the struggle against the supporters of Stalin was carried out by cruel Stalinist methods. His next film was an adaptation of the popular grotesque by Ivo Brešan *Predstava Hamleta u selu Mrduša Donja* (The Staging of Hamlet in the Village of Mrduša Donja, 1973), in which members of the local power structure impose their interpretation of Shakespeare in an amateur performance. The third part of Papić's trilogy, *Život sa stricem* (Life with My Uncle, 1988), was produced only after fifteen years. It dealt with the arrogant attitude of the powerful representatives of the totalitarian regime toward the individual. The film was realised after harsh political disputes.

## The Return to the Genre

Krešo Golik returned to the feature film after ten years in which, for political reasons, he was not allowed to work as a director. At a time of competition between different creative individualities and their artistic approaches to the film, he had the courage to make *Imam 2 mame i 2 tate* (I have 2 Moms and 2 Dads, 1968), a masterpiece telling a complex story in a simple way, casting a humane perspective on the problems of children of divorced parents. Golik later directed a musical comedy, *Tko pjeva zlo ne misli* (One song a day keeps mischief away, 1970), a populist film set in Zagreb between two world wars. Audiences raised it to the status of cult film, and the critics proclaimed it the best Croatian film of all times. With these two films, Golik established his reputation as one of the best Croatian directors. This was the beginning of the return to the genre, which had to come sooner or later after the period of the author's cinema.

Some film-makers, however, had not abandoned the genre even in that period. In the 1960s, for instance, Bulajić made expensive film spectacles on Partizan themes (*Kozara*, 1962). After the failure of his naive picture of a nuclear catastrophe for which the screenplay was written by Cesare Zavattini (*Rat*, 'The War', 1960) and an unsuccessful attempt at a chamber play about an isolated Partizan unit exposed to harsh winter conditions (*Pogled u zjenicu sunca* 'A View into the Eye of the Sun', 1966), Bulajić ventured on his most ambitious and most expensive enterprise. The shooting of this film lasted for four years, and it was made in co-production with leading companies from all the former Yugoslav republics. Its title was *Bitka na Neretvi* (The Battle of the Neretva, 1969), and it partially belongs to the Croatian cinema. It is remembered as the prototype

of a film project which was lavishly supported by the state, with sums surpassing by far the amounts which were usually assigned to film production. In addition, free assistance was given by the Yugoslav National Army, and the film was sponsored by President Tito himself. The crew consisted of 60 Croatian and foreign actors, including Orson Welles, Yul Brynner, Hardy Krüger, Sylva Koscina, Franco Nero, Sergei Bondarchuk, and others. The opening night in Sarajevo was a special event, where guests from all over the world came by special charter flights from Rome and Paris. The audiences were attracted by the grandiosity of the film. It was soon followed by other spectacles financed by special state subsidies for the genre, which is remembered today primarily for its megalomania and adulatory mythomania.

Novices had meager financial support at their disposal. The first feature film of Dušan Vukotić (1927-1998), *Sedmi kontinent* (The Seventh Continent, 1966) was not widely popular. Young directors who made their first films during the 1960s (Galić, Ivanda, Peterlić, Arhanić, Kljaković) were not great artists, but in the decades that followed they continued their creative work in film or on television. Ante Peterlić, the first Croat to receive a PhD in film, dedicated himself to filmology.

Most successful among the debutants of the period was Antun Vrdoljak (1931), who directed an atypical war film entitled *Kad čuješ zvona* (When You Hear the Bells, 1969) which was well accepted by the audiences and at festivals. It was soon followed by a sequel, *U gori raste zelen bor* (A Green Pine Grows on the Mountain, 1971), in which Vrdoljak enriched the Partizan film, as the most authentic film genre of Yugoslav cinema, with his own authorial stamp.

## The Seventies: Collective Self-Censorship

Croatian film production gradually reached the figure of four to six feature films a year, depending on the state's financial support. Thus 53 Croatian feature films were made during the 1960s and 51 during the 1970s; these figures were probably the only common feature of the two decades, which differed radically in many respects. After 1971 there was a radical change in the political and social climate in Yugoslavia. The leading Croatian political elite was removed from office after a meeting of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party in Karađorđevo in December 1971. The "Croatian Spring" was thus suppressed, putting an end to five years of relative liberalism within the Yugoslav communist order. Harsh ideological control was introduced in all spheres of culture and intellectual life. To be sure, the film was also affected. The names of many artists and intellectuals appeared on unpublished "blacklists", which meant the end of their public work in a field which was open to public censorship.

The increasing repression marked Croatian intellectual life in the 1970s. As a consequence, the film of the period was marked by creative sterility. As a result of ideological rigidity due to which several films were shelved, many authors were forced into voluntary or imposed silence. Most of those who continued to work resorted to collective self-censorship.

Many films that were made in those years belonged to the "harmless" genres, such as the children's film. Among successful works of some directors (Tadej, Relja, Arhanić), Obrad Gluščević (1913-1980) deserves a special place thanks to his *Vuk samotrnjak* (The Lone Wolf, 1972). This is the most mature film for young people ever made in Croatia, and it attracted the attention of audiences in Croatia and abroad. In addition to children's films, war films were a "safe" genre which caused no inconvenience to their authors, especially if they had no ambitions to extend the conventions. Most Croatian Partizan films of the period, which were directed by Mimica, Tadej, Vrdoljak and Vukotić, conformed to this type.

The Croatian cinema of the 1970s was marked by one particular war film, both owing to the prizes it won and the controversies it aroused. This was *Okupacija u 26 slika* (Occupation in 26 Pictures, 1978), by Lordan Zafranović (1944), a director who studied in Prague, thus becoming a member of the so-called "Prague school", together with some of his colleagues from Zagreb, Belgrade, and Sarajevo. "Occupation in 26 Pictures" is a pretentious film with an epic approach to the events in Dubrovnik in the first days of World War II. It will be remembered primarily for its seven-minute scene of an *Ustasha* massacre of prisoners on a bus, rendered with such merciless naturalism that it can be considered one of the cruellest scenes of political horror in Croatian and even world cinema. Since the film was well received at festivals, Zafranović became a favourite of the Yugoslav communist establishment. He created a paradigm for an ideologically acceptable content wrapped in an elitist aesthetic package. At a time of creative crisis, this work became an ideological and aesthetic model. Young critics who contested the value and denied the originality of this stylish and pretentious film were silenced and exposed to dangerous political disqualifications.

Rajko Grlić (1947), another representative of the Prague School, made two films in this period: *Kud puklo da puklo* (Whatever Happens, Happens, 1974) and *Bravo, maestro* (1978). His distinctive style developed in his later films, such as *Samo jednom se ljubi* (You Only Love Once, 1981), *Đavolji raj* (That Summer of White Roses, 1989), and *Čaruga* (1991). The first feature film made by theatre and television director Tomislav Radić (1940), *Živa istina* (The Plain Truth, 1972), was met with interest. He ingeniously applied the method of *cinéma direct* to draw a stunningly convincing portrait of an authentic woman. He used a similar

method, though with less success, in his film *Timon*, 1973. He had no opportunity to make another film until the fall of communism.

Most of the new authors of this period had previously won recognition as documentarists, and they continued to develop their interest in themes from everyday life in their feature films. One of them was Bogdan Žižić (1934-), who presented his view of economic emigrants in the film *Ne nagingi se van* (Don't Lean Out, 1977). In the same year, Nikola Babić (1935-), a fine documentary film-maker with an interest in underdeveloped regions, made the film *Ludi dani* (Crazy Days, 1977) on the same subject. In his first feature film, *Godišnja doba* (The Seasons, 1979), the renowned documentarist Petar Krelja (1940) drew brilliant portraits of three children from an orphanage.

The Croatian cinema of the 1970's was dominated by routine sketches of marginal social phenomena, with feigned criticism that failed to impress. However, there were some producer enterprises worthy of respect, such as the historical spectacle *Seljačka buna* (The Peasants' Revolt, 1975) by Vatroslav Mimica, although its ideological representation failed to arouse the interest of the audiences. It was also a departure from the accepted legend about the struggle for justice, which is a part of the Croatian collective memory. Among the positive achievements of the period we should mention Golik's *Ljubica* (1978) and Babaja's two adaptations of the novel by Slobodan Novak: *Mirisi, zlato, tamjan* (Essences, Gold, Incense, 1971) and *Izguljeni zavičaj* (The Lost Homeland, 1980). Berković, who had made a brilliant debut in the previous decade, directed only one film, a complex psychological drama entitled *Putovanje na mjesto nesreće* (Journey to the Scene of the Accident, 1971).

## The Eighties: In a Dying State

During the last decade of the existence of Yugoslavia, there was a clear generation shift in Croatian film: some of the veterans made their last films, and new directors appeared on the scene. The Croatian section of the Prague School was affirmed (Zafranović and Grlić). It was a fruitful decade for the genre film as a new tendency, with Zoran Tadić as an important representative, who was joined by other authors of his generation (Ivanda, Tomić, Šorak).

After the success of his "Occupation in 26 Pictures", which was achieved for its political rather than artistic merits, Zafranović directed another two films about the fate of revolutionaries: *Pad Italije* (The Fall of Italy, 1982), and *Večernja zvona* (The Evening Bells, 1986), proclaiming them his trilogy which supposedly depicted the tempestuous and dramatic history of the revolution and its side-tracks through individual destinies. Although he was free of the influence of the primitive ideological

aesthetics of the first socialist period, Zafranović tried to unite his fashionable film procedures and indisputable visual expressiveness with "political correctness" of the period, which meant placing his heroes, their destinies, and their actions within an apologetic revolutionary mythology. In his films *Ujed anđela* (The Angels' Bite, 1984) and *Aloha-praznik kurvi* (Aloha - the Holiday of Whores, 1988), Zafranović tried to return to his original concerns with love and sexual passion in the Mediterranean, containing elements of surrealist iconography. Another Croatian member of the Prague school, Rajko Grlić, made his most important films in this decade: *Samo jednom se ljubi* (You Only Love Once, 1981), *U raljama života* (In the Jaws of Life, 1984), *Za sreću je potrebno troje* (It Takes Three To Be Happy, 1988), and *Đavolji raj* (That Summer of White Roses, 1989), which won first prize at the prestigious Tokyo Film Festival. Grlić's films contain elements of mild social criticism, a necessary ingredient for any film which aimed to be relevant at the "post-ideologic" stage of a cinema which was no longer under the rigid control to which it had been exposed during the Socialist Realism period, since the authorities could rely upon a reasonable degree of self-censorship of authors in their critical approach.

*Ritam zločina* (The Rhythm of Crime, 1981), by Zoran Tadić (1941), which is considered by the critics to be the best Croatian film of the 1980s, opened a new chapter in the history of the aesthetic orientations of the Croatian cinema. Tadić is the first Croatian genre film director, and this orientation was based on a new concept of film aesthetics which attributed special importance to genre characteristics. This was in keeping with principles and evaluation criteria of the "Hitchcock followers", who opposed ideologic conventions and the exclusiveness of the author's film. Instead, they resorted to traditional genres which had been cultivated by the Hollywood dream factory in the 1940s and 1950s, and which were rediscovered by the French New Wave in the 1960s, and by neo-Hollywood directors at the end of the 1970s. With modest financial means, but with a great support from the critics and film-makers of his generation, Tadić made all his six low budget films in ten years. They were received with more enthusiasm by his colleagues and filmophiles than by the audiences. Among them we should mention *Treći ključ* (The Third Key, 1983), *San o ruži* (Dream about a Rose, 1986), *Osuđeni* (The Condemned, 1987), *Čovjek koji je volio sprovode* (The Man Who Liked Funerals, 1989) and *Orao* (The Eagle, 1990). His approach, a combination of detective film, mystery, thriller, and social feuilleton, found followers among other genre film proponents, such as Živorad Tomić (*Kraljeva završnica* 'The King's Final', 1987; *Diploma za smrt* 'Diploma for Death, 1989), Branko Ivanda (*Zločin u školi* 'Crime at School, 1982) and Dejan Šorak, a slightly different author of films such as *Mala pljačka vlaka* (The Little Train Robbery', 1984),



*Oficir s ružom* (The Officer with a Rose, 1987), and *Krvopijci* (Bloodsuckers, 1989).

Following the tradition of feuilletons on modern social phenomena, Nikola Babić incited a fierce controversy with his film *Medeni mjesec* (Honeymoon, 1983), in which he introduced scenes of sexuality and eroticism without restraint. Otherwise, the film is a stock story about the corruption of the Zagreb nouveaux-riches. Afterwards, Babić did not receive financial support for any other film. He became a producer and founded Uraniafilm, creating impetus for the establishment and extension of film enterprises in Croatia in the form of small companies.

In those years the best Croatian directors gradually abandoned the film scene. Among the directors who made their last films in the eighties were Vukotić (*Gosti iz galaksije* 'Guests from the Galaxy, 1981), Mimica (*Banović Strahinja*, 1981), Hadžić (*Ambasador* 'The Ambassador, 1984), and Golik (*Vila orhideja* 'Villa Orchid', 1988). Veljko Bulajić was much more active, but the four films he made in this period were below the level of his earlier great productions. We should mention *Obećana zemlja* (The Promised Land, 1986), a sequel to his first great success, *Vlak bez voznog reda* (The Train Without a Schedule, 1969). His last work, *Donator* (The Donor, 1988), an action film about the Gestapo stubborn search for a valuable collection of paintings, was different from his earlier works. It was, however, too late for Bulajić to create a new authorial image, since he had already taken a clearly defined place in the Croatian and Yugoslav cinema.

After his first Partizan films, the interests of Antun Vrdoljak gradually shifted towards Croatian literature. He made adaptations of masterpieces of modern Croatian literature - *Kiklop* (Cyclops, 1982), based on the novel by Ranko Marinković and *Glembajevi* (The Glembay Family, 1988), based on the play and prose series of the same name by Miroslav Krleža. These adaptations were accepted exceptionally well by the audiences: the films were seen by more than 100.000 viewers in Zagreb. At the time, such records were broken only by pornographic films, the importation of which was gradually and tacitly tolerated. Vrdoljak was among the first directors who worked both on television and in film. He directed a five-episode TV serial and a feature film at the same time, pooling the rich financial and technological resources of Zagreb Television and Jadran Film, which was still highly profitable. In the decade after Tito's death, Krsto Papić directed *Život sa stricem* (Life with My Uncle, 1988), based on a novel by Ivan Aralica. This harsh realistic picture of provincial forms of Stalinist persecutions after the official breach with Stalin stirred up feeling, and became the target of clamorous, but powerless, attacks of the most dogmatic Party circles. In spite of all his problems, Papić gained due satisfaction when his politically persecuted film was nominated for a Golden Globe Award.

Some critics believe that *Sokol ga nije volio* (The Falcon Did Not Like Him, 1988), by Branko Schmidt (1957), was one of the best Croatian films of the 1980s. In any case, it was the first Croatian film which dared to depict the column of worn-out soldiers and civilians who had to march for more than a thousand kilometers, followed by cruel Partizan pursuers on the so-called "Way of the Cross", after the surrender of the Independent State of Croatia to the Allies in southern Austria, where prisoners were placed at the mercy of Tito's officers. The hero of this war drama is a country man who played his own game between the *Ustasas* and the Partizans in a Slavonian village, convinced that in war it is most important to save his property and lives of those nearest to him, which is only possible by smartly avoiding commitment to either side. Due to its poetic realism and brutal truthfulness, the film managed to escape potential political persecution on account of its heretical ideas.

Berković did not manage to make another film until 14 years later. This was *Ljubavna pisma s predumišljajem* (Premeditated Love Letters, 1985), one of the best Croatian films of the decade, a highly personal work which can hardly be placed within the worn-out concept of the authorial film. In this film, some critics even discovered elements of postmodernism. Krešo Golik's last feature film, *Vila Orhideja* (1988), is a love story with elements of crime, horror and fantasy. Balancing between the real and the unreal, it is completely different from his other films. The film was the conclusion of a rich and influential oeuvre of the only Croatian film-maker who managed to retain his integrity in all the periods of the post-war Croatian cinema, from its beginnings in the service of the propaganda of the victorious communist system to the last years of its existence.

Film censorship in the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia was never formally abolished; like the state itself, it was dying out gradually. Until 1965, the censorship of imported films was centralised in Belgrade. Later on, it came under the competence of "film review committees" in the individual republics. The competence was then passed on to councils of production and distribution companies, which meant that censorship was actually abolished. The situation, however, was far from idyllic, because informal censorship always threatened in the form of pressure from party bodies or organised protests of the privileged watchdogs of the "accomplishments of the revolution". This situation resulted in a growing state of self-censorship. In the 1980s several political interventions had serious consequences for film. In some cases the aim was achieved, so that, for instance, the American-Italian biography project *Papa Wojtyła* (Pope Wojtyła) was halted. The greatest uproar was caused by the failed attempt to prevent the TV series *Diktator* (The Dictator, 1984/85), a biography of Benito Mussolini, a profitable co-production of Jadran Film and Triun Productions of Los Angeles for the American NBC network.

With time, the danger of ideological attacks diminished, and the awareness of the need to oppose the state control of culture grew.

The 1980s were a period of considerable achievement both in film production and publishing: the appearance of the *Film Encyclopaedia* in two volumes, edited by Dr. Ante Peterlić and published by the Zagreb Lexicographical Institute, was an exceptional event. We should mention also the gradual disappearance of former federal institutions, such as Jugoslavija Film, an association of Yugoslav film companies which acted as a mediator in making import contracts for individual distributors, which prohibited the exploitation of foreign films from the percentage of box-office income (which is the usual practice in other countries). Starting from 1988/89, these agreements were no longer observed, so that large American companies made their film distribution contracts for Yugoslavia with partners they chose directly. This was one of the developments which characterised the last decade of the common state which was gradually dying out, although its citizens were not fully aware of this at the time.

## The Nineties: In the Independent State

Yugoslavia disintegrated within the breakup of the communist system in Central and Eastern Europe, and Croatia became an independent state on 8 October 1991, after the separation had been confirmed by democratic decisions based on the free will of its citizens (94% voted for independence in the referendum of 19 May 1991). However, a brutal war was launched from Belgrade with the help of the federal army, which supplied arms to rebel units of Croatian Serbs. The first visible symptom of the breakup of Yugoslavia in film occurred on 26 July 1991, when the Film Festival in Pula was cancelled after its first projections for journalists were held. The first armed incidents had occurred throughout Croatia, in which Croatian policemen were killed, so that the safety of more than a thousand viewers in the ancient Roman amphitheatre could not be secured. Besides, it was pointless to insist on the continuation of a film festival affirming the Yugoslav cinema, which had ceased to exist, since film production in each republic had a distinct national identity. This was the end of the last common film institution in the dying Yugoslavia.

During the war, the financial means for film production were insufficient, so that it came to a temporary halt. The projects which had begun before the constitution of the independent Republic of Croatia were completed, and some directors made their last films (Babaja's *Kamenita vrata* 'The Stone Gate', 1992 and Berković's *Kontesa Dora* 'Countess Dora', 1993). The same is true of Grlić, a considerably younger director, who became a professor at an American university after his film *Čaruga*

(1991). After Krsto Papić completed his *Priča iz Hrvatske* (A Story from Croatia, 1991), whose filming had started before the breakup of Yugoslavia, he did not get the opportunity to make another film. After their graduation in Croatia, a number of young directors, cameramen and film editors have looked for jobs in other countries, especially in Hollywood. After the establishment of the independent Croatian state, a stable financing system for domestic film production and its promotion abroad has not been established, which has resulted in random production and a sharp generational shift.

Older authors made their last films, and former young directors entered the mid-generation. Zrinko Ogresta (1958), author of the films *Krhotine* (Fragments, 1991) and *Isprani* (The Washed-Out, 1995) and Davor Žmegač (1955), director of *Zlatne godine* (The Golden Years, 1993) and *Putovanje tamnom polutkom* (A Voyage Round the Dark Hemisphere, 1995) belong to this generation. During the communist system, Jakov Sedlar (1952) directed his film *U sredini mojih dana* (In the Middle of My Days, 1988), in which the intimate drama of an incurably ill actress looking for a miracle takes place in Međugorje. Under the changed political circumstances, Sedlar directed his controversial film *Gospa* (Our Lady, 1994), returning to the phenomenon of the new shrine where the Virgin Mary appeared to a group of young people in 1981 (the event was followed by repressive measures by the communist authorities). The film was an American co-production, featuring American actors and financed by American capital, but it failed to achieve the expected success abroad.

It could be expected that Croatian film production during the war would be dominated by war themes. The first films of the genre, however, were either replicas of former Partizan films (Oja Kodar's *Vrijeme za... 'Time for...'*, 1993) or patriotic melodramas reminiscent of Socialist Realism models (Bogdan Žižić's *Cijena života* 'The Price of Life', 1994; Tomislav Radić's *Anđele moj dragi* 'My Sweet Angel', 1995, and Branko Schmidt's *Vukovar se vraća kući* 'Vukovar Returns Home', 1994 and *Božić u Beču* 'Christmas in Vienna', 1997). It was only with the emergence of the youngest generation of film-makers, who had direct experience of the war, that a new perspective on the Croatian war for independence was given. The most popular Croatian film of the period, *Kako je počeo rat na mome otoku* (How the War Started on My Island, 1996), by Vinko Brešan (1964), a humorous approach to an unexpected conflict between the local population and the Yugoslav Army garrison in their village, won considerable acclaim abroad. A new spirit can also be felt in the films *Svaki put kad se rastajemo* (Each Time We Part, 1994), by Lukas Nola (1964) and *Prepoznavanje* (Recognition, 1997), by Snježana Tribuson (1967). *Rusko meso* (Russian Flesh, 1997), by Lukas Nola, and *Puška za uspavljivanje* (A Gun to Put You to Sleep, 1997), by Hrvoje Hribar (1962), provide an interesting view of social relations in the transition period.

New values of Croatian film can be observed in the first attempts of the youngest generation, in which the early deceased Jelena Rajković (1969-1997) had a special place due to her medium length film on the psychological consequences of the war, *Noć za slušanje* (A Night for Listening, 1995). Many promising former students of the Zagreb Academy, members of the same generation, are preparing for their first feature films: Stipan Filaković (1960), Zoran Margetić (1965), Neven Hitrec (1967), Branko Ištvančić (1967), Ivan Salaj (1969), Dražen Žarković (1970), and others. Goran Rušinović (1968), a filmophile who does not belong to the above circle, made an unexpected appearance at the film festival in Pula with his rebellious film *Mondo Bobo* (1997), which was shown at several international festivals.

Because of the war and its consequences, the situation in the Croatian cinema after the independence has not been stimulating: the number of movie theatres was reduced either because some of them were destroyed in the war or closed down for lack of audiences, and international co-productions have stopped. Jadran Film faced serious difficulties, and the process of its privatization has not been efficient. Many other film companies found themselves on the brink of financial collapse. In addition, the film market has disintegrated, film distribution being largely replaced by the video market, and the new authorities have had neither time nor the willingness to establish a central body to promote all the branches of the Croatian cinema. The only encouragement was provided by the audiences who have showed their enthusiasm for Croatian films, and by the creative potential of new talents, who are often referred to as "the young Croatian film".

## The Zagreb School of Animated Film

Animated film is the one branch of the Croatian cinema which has given more to other countries than it has received from them. Its exceptional vitality has been threatened only because its creative development was not followed by a corresponding production and financial policy which could ensure the necessary marketing security. In the early days of the Croatian cinema, there were several attempts at animation. The Russian emigrant Sergei Tagatz made animated advertisements in 1922, while Papp and Šefer made animated drawings as part of the health education production in 1928 and 1929. These efforts, however, cannot be considered the beginnings of the art of animation which eventually came to be known as the "Zagreb School of Animated Film" in 1958 (the term was launched by French film aestheticists George Sadoul and André Martin). The true sources of the future explosion of talent in the Croatian animation can be found in the original comics which appeared in Zagreb news-

papers on the eve of World War II. The drawings of Croatian authors could be compared to the best products of the genre in the world. The most well-known authors of this popular but artistically underestimated medium were the brothers Walter and Norbert Neugebauer, who launched Croatian animation immediately after the end of World War II. To be sure, their first products were political messages which preceded the mock elections organised by the communist authorities. Later, they made propaganda films in the service of the media war against the USSR after Tito's breach with Stalin. Caricature fans who looked upon Walt Disney as their great model were brought together in a satirical paper whose editor-in-chief was Fadil Hadžić, who later became a film director himself. He enabled the authors to make animated films, and even persuaded the authorities to establish a special company for animated film production. In only one year of the existence of Duga Film, five films were made using Disney-style methods of classical animation; the company, however, was soon abolished. After several years, drawers and animators were brought together in the new Animated Film Studio at the Zagreb Film Company, and work on the animated films was resumed with renewed enthusiasm. Since financial resources were scarce, reduced animation was introduced in order to save money, and this produced surprising effects. Together with modern geometrical graphics it resembled the modern art tendencies which had become known in the world through the illustrations of Saul Steinberg.

In May 1958, seven animated films produced by the Zagreb Film Company were presented to the international film audiences at the Cannes Festival with a success which was beyond all expectations. Zagreb thus became an important world center of animation. The originality of the films was stressed by the critics, and the Zagreb animators discovered that they were not alone in their drift away from Disney's classical style, since Stephen Bosustow was doing something similar in the United States. The most pronounced instance of the original anti-Disneyan concept was provided by *Premijera* (The Opening Night, 1957) by Nikola Kostelac. The talent of future Academy Award winner Dušan Vukotić became apparent in his films *Cowboy Jimmy* (1957), *Čarobni zvuci* (The Magic Sounds, 1957), and *Abra Kadabra* (Abracadabra, 1958). Another proponent of the modern animated film concept, Vatroslav Mimica, also made an appearance with *Strašilo* (The Scarecrow, 1957) and *Happy End* (1958). He gained fame as the first Croatian winner of an important international award (at the Mostra in Venice) for his film *Samac* (Alone, 1958), in which not only an individual figure was animated, but the entire graphical structure of the frame was set in motion.

Although the new artistic style of Croatian animation was often scowled at and misunderstood in this country, the Zagreb School of Animated

Film won international recognition. Its "golden period" (1958-1962) was marked by creative competition between two great individualists: Vukotić and Mimica, and by some astonishing accomplishments by Vladimir Kristl (*Don Kihot* 'Don Quixote', 1961) which he made in spite of the mistrust which followed his efforts. A number of first place awards at prestigious international festivals were won by Croatian animated films. Some festivals gained and established their fame by launching films of the Zagreb School (Oberhausen). However, the award which definitely secured the highest world reputation of the Zagreb School in animation was the first Academy Award which had ever been given to a non-American animated film: Vukotić's *Surogat* (Ersatz, 1961). Croatia became a true world power in animation, and its best authors became true Croatian stars.

Mimica soon gave up his work on animated films, while Vukotić created a number of acknowledged works: *Koncert za mašinsku pušku* (Concert for Machine Gun, 1959), *Piccolo* (1960), *Igra* (The Game, 1962), *Mrlja na savjesti* (A Spot on One's Conscience, 1967), *Opera cordis* (1969). Aleksandar Marks and Vladimir Jutriša, who had begun as art collaborators on the early films of Vukotić and Mimica, made films together and created the genre of animated horror (*Metamorfoza* 'Metamorphosis', 1964; *Muha* 'The Fly', 1966; *Pauk* 'The Spider', 1969; *Crna ptica* 'The Black Bird', 1980). They also made several charming children's films (*Moderna basna* 'A Modern Fable', 1964; *Mrav dobra srca* 'The Kind-Hearted Ant', 1965; *Pčelica je rođena* 'A Little Bee is Born, 1970). Boris Kolar revealed his affinity for experimentation in several films belonging to different genres, such as the children's film *Dječak i lopta* (The Boy and the Ball, 1960), the educational film *Neman i vi* (The Monster and You, 1964), and *Utopia* (1973), which won several awards. He also made an important contribution to the serial *Inspektor Maska* (Inspector Mask, 1962-1963) and the first series of *Profesor Baltazar* (Professor Baltassar, 1968-1969), a cult serial which became the most profitable product of the Zagreb School of all times. Zlatko Bourek found inspiration for his lyrical films in folk art: *Kovčev šegrt* (The Blacksmith's Apprentice, 1961), *I videl sem daljine meglene i kalne* (And I Saw Distances, Hazy and Thick, 1964), *Bećarac* (A Slavonian humorous-ribald folk song, 1966), and *Kapetan Arbanas Marko* (Captain Marko Arbanas, 1968). Borivoj Dovniković-Bordo, one of the most productive and persistent of the Zagreb animation masters, also established his reputation in that period. We should mention some of his numerous works: *Lutkica* (The Dolly, 1961), *Ceremonija* (The Ceremony, 1965), *Krek* (1967), *Ljubitelj cvijeća* (The Flower Lover, 1970), *Škola hodanja* (The School of Walking, 1978), and *Jedan dan života* (One Day of Life, 1982). Zlatko Grgić (1931-1988) became an independent author only at the time when drawers became directors out of neces-

sity, but he soon found full affirmation as the person who most radically broke away from the dogmatism of the Zagreb School, bringing back some of the most important elements of classical American animated film (gags, chases, nonsense) into his works, which were distinguished by their excellent rhythm. He is remembered for his film about forest fires, *Hot Stuff* (1970), which was made in cooperation with the National Film Board of Canada, and also for his series of mini-films *Maxi Cat* (1972-76) and the film *Lutka snova* (The Dream Doll, 1979), which he made together with Bob Godfrey, and which was nominated for the Academy Award. His *Izumitelj cipela* (The Shoe Inventor, 1967) became the pilot film for the *Professor Baltazar* series. New ideas and forms were introduced in animation by several other authors as well. Nedeljko Dragić (1936-) made the first mini-films lasting up to 60 seconds (*Per aspera ad astra*, 1969), which were an innovation in world animation. One of his films was nominated for the Academy Award (*Tup, tup*, 'Knock, knock' 1972). Other authors who contributed to the great international acclaim of the Zagreb School of Animated Film were Štalter, Lončarić and Zaninović. A special place belongs to Zdenko Gašparović, who masterly revived fin de siècle painting in his *Satiemanija* (1976), one of Zagreb's best animated films. Fresh ideas were introduced in the Zagreb School by caricaturist Joško Marušić (*Neboder* 'The Skyscraper', 1980). Milan Blažeković took great pains to create the first Croatian feature-length animated film, *Čudesna šuma* (The Miraculous Forest, 1986), which was a Croatia Film production. He made two more popular feature-length children's films, *Čarobnjakov šegrt* (The Magician's Apprentice, 1990), and *Čudnovate zgone šegrta Hlapića* (The Strange Adventures of Apprentice Hlapić, 1996), which were warmly accepted by young audiences.

Starting from the 1970s, the production of animated films came to a standstill, foreshadowing the crisis of Croatian animation. The brilliant emergence of the Zagreb School of Animated Film on the world scene had never been consolidated in the form of planned production for the growing animated film market due to the global expansion of television. In Croatia planned efforts to bring together economy, talent, money, and marketing were completely lacking. Croatian film companies were content with their old glory and innovative contributions to the development of the post-Disney animation in the world, but no lasting source of income for present and future development has been established.

## Educational Films and Documentaries

The documentary film is the genre with the longest tradition in the Croatian cinema, and it can boast of a large number of important works which have won international acclaim. After positive experience with the



films of the School of Public Health, which focused primarily on health education, film production continued during World War II and later, in the socialist system. At first, documentaries were used exclusively for propaganda purposes, and it was only later that they gained the dignity of a film genre which depicts the immediate reality of social events and human destinies. War journals were the main task of *Hrvatski slikopis* (Croatian Cinematography), and after the restoration of Yugoslavia as a communist federation, ideological propaganda required the developed production of documentary films in order to present the desired "success" of the communist system. However, since the Croatian cinema was in its initial stage, in which film-makers had yet to learn their trade, non-fiction was a field where the propaganda gradually weakened, and authors could satisfy their creative curiosity by discovering the less known and bizarre aspects of everyday life.

The best among the first documentaries was probably *Tunolovci* (Tuna Fishermen, 1948), by Branko Belan. Characteristically, many of the best Croatian feature film directors began their careers with short films. Their documentaries, or even entire film cycles, were important works whose value outlived their time. Ante Babaja appeared for the first time with his short, poetic documentary *Jedan dan u Rijeci* (A Day in Rijeka, 1955). In addition to his feature films, he first made a short cycle of political satires entitled *Nesporazum* (The Misunderstanding, 1958), *Lakat (kao takav)* 'The Elbow (as such)', 1959) and *Pravda* (Justice, 1962). Later, he made a series of documentary film-essays, among which we should point out *Tijelo* (The Body, 1965) and *Čuješ li me?* (Can You Hear Me?, 1965). Some films which were made in the 1960s by authors who later won fame with their feature films belong to the anthology of the Croatian documentary. They are: *Ljudi s Neretve* (The People from the River Neretva, 1966), by Obrad Gluščević; *Od 3 do 22* (From 3 to 22, 1966), by Krešo Golik, probably the best Croatian documentary ever made; and *Moj stan* (My Flat, 1962), by Zvonimir Berković. Krsto Papić also made important documentaries such as *Kad te moja čakija ubode* (When My Knife Stabs You, 1969), *Nek se čuje i naš glas* (Let Our Voice Be Heard, 1971), *Specijalni vlakovi* (Special Trains, 1972) and *Mala seoska priredba* (A Little Country Show, 1972).

Branko Marjanović (1909-1996) is the author of about 50 excellent nature documentaries which can be compared to the best Disney Studio productions, and certainly one of the most important on the list of Croatian film-makers, who made together more than a thousand documentaries. Only a few of the titles can be mentioned here: *Ljudi na obali* (The People on the Coast, 1958; *Bjeloglavi sup* (The Griffon Vulture, 1959), *Izgubljeni svjetovi* (Lost Worlds, 1962), *Lasica* (The Weasel, 1972), *Lepeza Svetog Jakova* (St. Jacob's Fan, 1975). He also made several serials, such

as *Mala čuda velike prirode* (Small Miracles of the Great Nature, 1971, 1973 and 1974). His last film was *Nema milosti* (There is no Mercy, 1986). We should also mention Rudolf Sremec, an excellent documentary maker who made a number of films about country life, and Zlatko Sudović, the author of *Grad ptica u gradu ljudi* (The City of Birds in the City of People, 1973), and *Pod asfaltom zemlja* (The Earth Under the Asphalt, 1975). Among the directors who made both feature films and documentaries, Bogdan Žižić drew attention with *Pohvala ruci* (In Praise of the Hand, 1968), *S onu stranu mora* (From the Other Shore of the Sea, 1968), *Gastarbajter Trumbetaš* (The Guest-Worker Trumbetaš, 1977), and *Ivana*, (1981). Nikola Babić directed *Šije*, 1970, *Bino-oko galebovo* (The Seagull's Eye, 1973), and *Gaziovac*, 1974; while Zoran Tadić is the director of *Zadnja pošta Dolac* (The Last Post Office at Dolac, 1971), *Pletenice* (The Plaits, 1974), *Dernek* (The Fair, 1975). At least some titles should be mentioned from the rich oeuvre of Petar Krelja: *Coprnice* (The Witches, 1971) *Budnica* (The Patriotic Song, 1971), *Recital* (1972) (which was shelved), *Njegovateljice* (The Nurses, 1976), *Mariška band* (1986), *Viktorov let* (Victor's Flight, 1989), *Na sporednom kolosijeku* (On the Sidetrack, 1992), *Suzanin osmijeh* (Susanna's Smile, 1993). He remained faithful to the documentary even in the 1980s and the 1990s when the classical documentary was completely superseded by television.

We should also mention the large number of films focusing on the lives and work of famous Croatian artists, as films were made about almost every important Croatian painter or sculptor. In the past decades, several feature-length documentaries have been made, such as *Zemlja s pet kontinenata* (The World with Five Continents, 1961), by Fadil Hadžić, *Krv i pepeo Jasenovca* (The Blood and Ashes of Jasenovac, 1983), by Lordan Zafranović, and *Jeste li bili u Zagrebu gospodine Lumière* (Have you been to Zagreb, Mr Lumière?, 1985) and *Lijepa naša* (Our Lovely Homeland, 1987) both by Jakov Sedlar.

Unfortunately, there are almost no documentaries bearing witness to the war in Croatia (1991-1995), when this country fought for its independence against the Yugoslav Army and the rebels from a part of Serb population whose uprising was incited from Belgrade. Simple and easily transferrable electronic equipment was far more suitable for filming current events. There was neither time, money, nor true authorial ambition to present the war in an artistic way. A number of impressive war reports, however, were made by Croatian Television. Most of them were directed by young authors who had graduated from the Zagreb Academy. Five cameramen, students of the Academy, were killed while filming at dangerous positions where the most fierce fighting was going on: Gordan Lederer (1958-1991), Žarko Kaić (1949-1991), Pavo Urban (1968-1991), Živko Krstičević (1954-1991), and Tihomir Tunuković (1967-1992).