

SCREENDAILY

Dragojevic's The Parade becomes a hit in Serbia, ready for regional rollout

14 December, 2011 | By Vladan Petkovic

The Parade by Serbian director Srdjan Dragojevic, best known internationally for 1995's *Pretty Village Pretty Flame*, has sold 248,934 admissions in Serbia and rolls out in Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia this week and the next.

The film tells the story of former war hero and petty criminal Limun (Nikola Kojo) who is hired by a group of Belgrade LGBT activists to protect their planned gay pride in the Serbian capital after threats from neo-Nazi groups. As the police (nor any Serbs, for that matter) do not want to be associated with the parade, he drafts his old enemies from Yugoslav wars of the 90s to help him- Croatian Roko (Goran Navojec), Bosnian Halil (Dejan Acimovic) and Kosovo Albanian Azem (Toni Mihajlovski).

Serbian release through distributor Cinefest six weeks ago perfectly coincided with the cancellation of Belgrade gay pride in October due to the authorities' claim that they could not secure the manifestation.

"I was shooting the ending of *The Parade* during last year's gay pride in Belgrade, the first 'successful' pride in the history of Serbia," says Dragojevic. "The only success was that participants stayed alive. 6,500 policemen were protecting less than 1,000 gay activists and their friends against 7,000 hooligans and neo-nazis. The result of the pride was 300 wounded policeman and hooligans and demolition of Belgrade downtown. This year, the event didn't take place. I strongly believe that *The Parade* will help so we can enjoy happy and joyful Pride in Belgrade in following years. Sometimes, hopefully art can work in that way..."

In Serbia, the film which is the third highest local opener ever earned gross box-office of \$930,298 (Serbian dinars 72,192,776) as number of prints on release rose week on week from the initial nine to current 21. In addition to free screenings for teachers of civil education in Serbian schools and their students, *The Parade* is the first Serbian film since the breakdown of former Yugoslavia with a print with subtitles for hearing impaired persons, and one print with English subtitles for foreigners living in Belgrade.

The Parade was co-produced by Serbia's Delirium and Prva Srpska Televizija, Slovenia's Forum, Croatia's Mainframe and Macedonia's Sektor Film, in association with UK's Film and Music Entertainment, and was supported by Film Centre Serbia, Slovenian Film Centre, Croatian Audiovisual Centre, Montenegrin Ministry of Culture, Macedonian Film Fund, and Eurimages.

It already plays in Podgorica, Montenegro (7,645 admissions, distributed by Cinefest) and Republic of Srpska (21,736 tickets, distributor Oskar Film), and it premiered in Zagreb on Dec 12, with distribution in other Croatian cities starting this week through Blitz. The release in Macedonia by Filmstar starts on Dec 17 and in Slovenia by Cinemania Group on Dec 20. At that point the film will be playing on 30 prints throughout the former Yugoslavia.

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