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CINEMA OF TURKEY

International Academic Meetings

Departing from the fact that cinema, the most effective tool of communication in the world, also wields the power of bringing cultures together, **CINEMA OF TURKEY** International Academic Meetings aims to strengthen the artistic, professional and academic bonds between the Film Industry of Turkey and other country cinemas.

CINEMA OF TURKEY International Academic Meetings synthesizes the concepts of Industry Forum, National Cinema Outing and Academic Meetings and it intends to add to the visibility while encouraging research efforts focusing on contemporary Turkish cinema and it's bonds with the world cinema.

CINEMA OF TURKEY International Academic Meetings is realized by **EDGE CCF** in collaboration with Istanbul University Faculty of Communications and supported by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The meetings launch selections comprised of films from different genres and are attended by their directors, producers, screenwriters and performers during their tours across the globe, where global academics, students and industry professionals will be given the opportunity to view the films free of charge. After the screenings, the creators of the films, academics and students are invited to seminars and workshops where the academic aspects of the films are discussed. **Meanwhile, the infrastructure of a platform where film students and academics across the world will meet and be able to hatch collaborative projects will be established. One of the main goals of Cinema of Turkey is to establish a think tank based on cinema which will strengthen the bonds between cultures.**



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Yeşilçam: The Tradition
From the 70s to the 50s, the Cinema of Turkey was the fifth biggest film producer world wide...

Cinema of Turkey

Elif Dağdeviren, CEO, Founder, EDGE CCF ; Director, Cinema of Turkey IAM

Turkey offers you whatever season you yearn for, all colours of nature, all of her gifts, a diversity of liveliness, every beauty that's special to humanity... And naturally, the Cinema of Turkey is a reflection of this diversity, this beauty.

Having recently celebrated its centenary, the Cinema of Turkey, from SIVAS to THE ROADS full of THE LAMBS, from a WINTER SLEEP to a BUTTERFLY'S DREAM, warming hearts when it's COLD, refreshing them with ICE CREAM, I SCREAM; from DISTANT to ONCE UPON A TIME IN ANATOLIA its stories are imbued in joy in all CLIMATES and all TIMES AND WINDS and last but not least with MIRACLES as beautiful as THE GIRL WITH THE RED SCARF.

At times the Cinema of Turkey screams through silence. Sometimes it grants tranquillity when shouting; sometimes it mixes in black and white hues; and sometimes it leads us to melancholies full of colour...

Cinema of Turkey is strong, for it is the creation of the sincere and authentic people of Turkey. It is full of joy, for it is the labour of the colourful, joyful people of the country.

It is full of surprises, for it is born out of the meeting of peoples to whose East lies the genuine East and to whose West lies the authentic West.

It is profound, for it is the fruit of the people who inhabit lands that have witnessed countless civilisations through millennia.

In Turkey, film lovers claim the Cinema of Turkey: they follow it, applaud it, indulge in its offerings and want more of its essence. They desire new meetings every year and offer ovations to them, with pride.

Cinema of Turkey grows on them, those applauses, it opens up to the international waters through them. It garners awards and meets global audiences. It acquires strength with the applause it receives from not only Turkey's native film lovers, but from across the world.

Stronger than ever, the Cinema of Turkey at the moment harbours a self-confidence that is unique. It has started to establish more powerful ties with festivals across the world—to form more attentive links with them, to enter co-productions toward producing lasting films. It embraces not only film audiences around the world, but also garners significant awards, reaching out to academics, young people, students.

Cinema of Turkey departs from each meeting with joy because these meetings shape its future with joy, ties that constantly strengthen and a fresh power. As the cinema of the world grows, so does the Cinema of Turkey; as the Cinema of Turkey grows, it shares its colours with the global cinema.

Since you are reading these lines, you must be with us in one of our meetings. Thank you very much for coming over, for sharing all this joy and letting us to share it with us.

We wish to see you in countless future activities of cinema, the most powerful and effective means of communication in the world...



From the Tradition to Future

Of all branches of the arts, cinema boasts a unique impact, owing both to its opulent visual language, and its capacity to depict history, social realities and emotions—and to communicate these to new generations. Film festivals further facilitate this mission, with the contributions they make to the development of the cinematic art.

Though it is certain that the first documented film in the history of Turkish cinema was “The Demolition of the Russian Monument at San Stefano”, it is widely believed that the Turks had already made films before that. According to Nijat Özön, Turkey’s introduction to cinema happened with the staging of special screenings organized for Sultan Abdulhamid II (an artist himself) and his court, as little as one year after the invention of the cinematographic process. The existence of a theatre as a part of Yıldız Palace—which was later used as a movie theatre—tends to support this thesis.

The Ottoman State has long been distinguished by the support and interest it extends to artists and the arts. This tradition has granted immense material and moral support over centuries to artists of all disciplines, first and foremost literature, architecture and music and



contributed to our civilisation creating its own climate of arts and culture. The seventh art’s becoming popular with such an intense momentum and Turkey’s rising to become one of the few top film industries of the world can only be explained with our civilisation’s and in specific, the Turkish people’s affinity with the arts. Moreover, thanks to the habit of “spectacle” that lays marked into the genetics of our people, cinema has found instant support and recognition in Turkey.

The existence of 3000 open-air theatres is proof of cinema’s eager embrace by Turkish society. In 2004, officials of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey, as well as film industry representatives, academics, professional unions, and representatives of foundations and associations, came together to investigate film industry support-models in existence abroad—especially in Europe; the result was

Turkey’s first ever Cinema Law, following a consultation and development process that lasted over a year.

Having come into effect in 2005, the positive effects of this legislation can be observed even today. Theatrical titles released since then have won more than 300 awards at prominent international film festivals, and in the course of the last five years, the audience for theatrically-released Turkish films has grown by 500%.

The continuation of this success, and the establishment of new methods and strategies which can take Turkish cinema to a still-higher level, are of crucial importance for the vitality of the industry. The first step is to devise arrangements necessary to foster new international co-productions; in this regard, countries such as Morocco, Bulgaria, Romania and the United Kingdom all offer valuable models to emulate.

An important advantage, and one which paves a path for Turkey to reinforce its brand in the global marketplace, is our deep cultural heritage. Turkey should emphasise natural settings that display, in parallel to the dynamics of the art of film, the living conditions of its people—its climate, environment, architecture, and the extraordinary physical and natural beauties of our locations. Cities such as Midyat, Harran, Cappadocia and Pamukkale constitute the best spots to erect such ‘film plateaus.’

Considering all these developments, it is crucial for the future of Turkish cinema, for its capacity to reach its targeted audiences, and to occupy the place it deserves in the global film industry, that private enterprises and the public sector work hand-in-hand, to give birth to a common creative mind.

I look forward to meeting global audiences at future events, where Turkish cinema will greet international audiences...

Dr. Ş. Abdurrahman Çelik
Advisor to the Minister, The Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey





“Turkey’s film scene is booming, varied and vibrant and it has been celebrating its 100th birthday in 2014.”

BBC Culture Online

Being an Independent Producer in Turkey

Zeynep Özbatur Atakan, Producer, Founder of ZEYNO FILM

In the 1980s, when I was a film student, being a producer was regarded as a vocation to be avoided at all costs. The producer was thought to be the person who inhibits the creative potential of the director. As I considered this outlook, one question continued to cling to my mind: was this the same abroad?

In Turkish cinema in those days, the image of the producer was strikingly different than it was today. For one thing, the differences between arthouse and mainstream cinema were unknown to many; worse, they were considered to be in opposition. In the course of the workshops I attended abroad, I understood such a perception was false, and these two production models together in fact complement the “industry” as a whole, supporting and sustaining each other.

Some years later, the digitalisation of cinema has changed everything.

My generation was urged to learn everything from the beginning. What we have bequeathed from the previous generation was simply the passion we pour into the work we do.

In 2005, the Cinema of Turkey gained fresh momentum with the legal incentives and funding support of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism. As a result, the number of films made per year has risen significantly. And eventually, there emerged a generation—a group of like-minded producers whom I can call “my comrades”.

But who is a producer, then?

In the realm of arthouse production, director and producer operate in full collaboration: the director is the person behind every decision, and the producer is the person who determines the goals and weaves the strategies around these decisions.

The producer is assigned with the duty of providing the director an environment in which she or he can deliver the highest performance possible. Budgeting is the foundation upon which the producer’s design

rests. Assembling a good crew, cementing good relationships, giving birth to a vision, internalizing the screenplay—these components, too, are all are related to budgeting.

It is true that in order to be a producer, one has to possess capital. But what kind of capital? It does not have to be monetary (and certainly, not everyone who has money can become a producer). But people with the knowledge, the experience and the network can definitely strive to be a producer.

This is the foundation the independent creative producer rests on. You can create, multiply alternatives and give

birth to new experiences that derive from your past experiences. But above all, a producer has to be fully knowledgeable about film. She or he has to know the screenplay, possess knowledge about acting, have understanding of editing and design and mise-en-scene. In addition to this, he or she should be closely related with literature, as well as an ardent follower of technological developments. What makes a producer is the ability to think strategically: detecting the most feasible path, picking solid, doable goals, and being able to advance toward those targets.

Ultimately, the producer is the person who can remain in a realistic

communication with the director. Their collaboration rests on common goals, honestly expressed.

The Cinema of Turkey selection as a part of the 37th Moscow International Film Festival boasts a great selection of Turkish arthouse films. In addition to promoting the Turkish cinema, this outing will also pave the way for the strengthening of bonds between two cultures and two national cinemas. As a producer, my hope is to see the cultivation and further development of co-productions between Russia and Turkey.

I wish all film lovers a pleasant festival.







A Dynamic Cinema of Turkey in The Beginning of a New Century...

Deniz Yavuz, Film Critic

Today the Cinema of Turkey, with its 100 years of history, is experiencing glorious days, and adding pages to its record of high-performances in every facet of the Seventh Art.

From international festival premieres to showcase screenings of Turkish films across the world, from Turkish performers appearing in foreign films to our craftsmen and technicians working on prestigious international productions...

Once powerful, owing to its unique style and pioneering experiences, the cinema of Turkey went through a twenty-year-period of collapse and reinvention. Though crushed by the Military coup d'état of September 12, Turkish cinema proved unusually resilient, and succeeded in revitalizing itself—thanks in part to the positive influence of various technological developments. The number of theatrically-released films (a figure which has a direct influence on the greater health of the industry)

soared visibly after 2010—and each year since has seen higher ticket sales than the previous one, with the result that, today, Turkey is the nation with the highest box office revenues in Europe.

From 2010 to the present day, box-offices across Turkey brought a revenue of 2.8 billion Turkish Liras. To better comprehend this achievement, it is worth noting that the total revenue from ticket sales of Turkish films in the twenty preceding years (that is, from 1990 to 2009) equalled just 2.7 billion Turkish Liras. Or, to put it another way: while 132 million tickets were sold in the period from 1990 to 2009, the number of admissions between 2010 and 2015 soared above 140 million.

What made these four years so much more fertile than the preceding twenty?

This question cannot be answered easily. Has it really become easier to make a feature film? Has theatrical release become genuinely attractive, not only for directors and producers, but for audiences? Generally, these seem to be a few of the questions that should be asked. But in order to arrive at proper evaluations about both the quality and the quantity of Turkish contemporary cinema, some close metrical analysis is required...

From 1990 to the final week of 2014, 819 feature films greeted audiences in Turkey's theatres. 260 million tickets were sold—an average of 320.000 tickets per film. 20% of those 819 films managed to exceed this number (with an average of 320,000 admissions), while a further 9% of

Turkish films that saw theatrical release sold more than one million tickets.

In contrast with most other countries in the world, cinema-attending Turks are undeniably more interested in watching domestic films. Since 2008, the percentage of ticket sales for domestic films has dipped only once—in 2012, to 46%. In 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2014, more than half of all tickets sold at theatres were for domestically-produced films. Indeed, in 2008 and 2014, domestic productions attracted as much as 60% of the total filmgoing audience.

While horror films and comedies tended to dominate the box-office, Turkey has also become distinguished by the films she presented at international film festivals over the last four years. Contrary to prevailing wisdom, the belief that there is an irreconcilable division between ‘entertainment’ movies and films with a more aesthetic or philosophical attitude, Turkish cinema is unusually noteworthy for its success in both these categories—and is happy, furthermore, being this way. Indeed, having proven that success in both realms is equally possible, the cinema of Turkey needs only to strike a balance between quality and box-office success, in order to take its place among the leading film-producing countries of the world.

The high quality of theatres as well as films typically added to the development of Turkish cinema. Unfortunately, in an age where ‘film’ (the pelicule) has become obsolete as both a substance and a currency, definitions that include the term fail to signify much. Today, when moving pictures



recorded in digital memories, there exists rules and conditions theatres should abide by, if they are to satisfy their viewers.

The percentage of digital-compatible theatres in the world has now gone beyond 85%; as recently as 2014 it was only 50% of the total number of theatres in Turkey. And Turkey’s exhibition sector, like the rest of the world’s, has undergone a profound transformation in a very short period of time. The next step might be the widespread adoption of projection/screening from satellites or central hubs—a development which was first forecast more than twenty years ago, and which we are now waiting to embrace...

In addition to these screening techniques, other new technologies such as wide screen, 3D, atmospheric perception and advanced sound, used to enhance and distinguish the quality of entertainment, are also being utilized in many of Turkey’s theatres today.

By 2015, films can be screened in approximately 2,700 screens, situated in some 450 locations across the country. Inevitably, the city that accommodates the largest number of screens is the capital, Istanbul: boasting a number of 230,000 seats, its theatres host around 48,000,000 admissions each year, according to the average number of viewers over the past half-decade.

Having proved itself on an international stage with auteur directors such as Kutluğ Ataman, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Zeki Demirkubuz, Reha Erdem, Semih Kaplanoğlu, Yeşim

Ustaoglu and Derviş Zaim, Turkey has also managed to become the highest grossing European box office with popular mainstream films such as Fetih 1453, Recep Ivedik, Eyyvah Eyvah, Düğün Dernek and stars like Hakan Algül, Yılmaz Erdoğan, Çağan Irmak, Mahsun Kırmızıgül and Cem Yılmaz.

This year, Turkey aims to mark another record: selling 70 million tickets. The total number of tickets sold so far, after twenty weeks, is about 32 million; so far, average figures for tickets sales per week stands at 1.5 million. If box-office figures can maintain this momentum, they can achieve this year’s goal.





Young Energy!

Driven by the spirit of youth, Cinema of Turkey rests on the creative passion of emerging directors as much as on that of established film virtuosos.



International Successes of The Cinema of Turkey

Melikşah Altuntaş, International Antalya Film Festival

Cinema of Turkey continues to add to its growing number of international successes, that soared especially in the 2000s. Now occupying a unique place in the international arena, the last great international triumph of Turkey was Winter Sleep (Kış Uykusu), which famously won the Palme d'Or at the 2014 Festival de Cannes.

Turkish cinema experienced its first international success half-a-century ago, with Metin Erkan's Dry Summer (Susuz Yaz). Narrating a story of obstinacy set in the East of Turkey, the film depicted the socio-economic conditions of the period in a realistic fashion, with characters who seemed vividly alive. Dry Summer won the Golden Berlin Bear, the major prize of the Berlinale, and later went to greet audiences as a part of the Venice Film Festival, where it won the Venice Biennale Award.

After this initial triumph, the cinema of Turkey continued to attract the attention of global audiences; during the 1970s, it seemed that virtually every type of story set in Turkey was stirring the interest of the world. Among the major works of that period were the films of the maestro Yılmaz Güney—both those he wrote and directed himself, and those he co-realized with Serif Gören.

The most renowned of these collaborations was 1982's Yol (The Road), which not only became the first film from Turkey to compete as a part of the Festival de Cannes, but the first to win the Palme d'Or for Best Film, further enhancing the reputation of Turkish cinema in the international arena. The film went on to screen in the US the same year, where it was evaluated by festivals and film committees, became a Golden Globe nominee, and even appeared in the list of "The 10 Best Films of the Year" compiled by the National Board of Review.

The following year, A Season in Hakkari, bearing the signature of one of the true auteurs of Turkish cinema, Erden



Kiral, competed at the Berlinale; it won the Silver Bear. Soon after, to the growing international success of Turkish cinema was added another victory—this time at Venice: Motherland Hotel, by Ömer Kavur, competed for the Golden Lion at the 1987 Venice film Festival, and was crowned with a FIPRESCI Award.

During the 1990s the international success of Turkish films continued, even as films achieved significant box office success in their domestic market; a fine balance between commercial and critical success was struck. Thus, even as the national film industry began producing films that engaged the masses, auteur filmmakers such as Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Zeki Demirkubuz, Semih Kaplanoğlu, Reha Erdem, Yeşim Ustaoglu and Derviş Zaim also became known to audiences for the first time.

Having competed in 1995 at Festival de Cannes with his short film *Cocoon*, Nuri Bilge Ceylan won the Berlinale Caligari Prize with his debut feature *The Town* in 1997; later he competed as a Golden Bear nominee for *Clouds of May*, which he shot in 1998. A year before, *Journey to the Sun* by Yesim Ustaoglu, one of the most successful woman directors in Turkish cinema, was also a Golden Bear nominee.

In the 2000s, Turkey saw a rise both in the number of productions, and in the international success of its films. Nuri Bilge Ceylan's *Distant (Uzak)*, which was selected for the Main Competition at Festival de Cannes, won both the Grand Prix and the Best Actor prizes; after this, all of Ceylan's subsequent films made their world premieres at Cannes, and he became one of the top award-winners of the festival—winning the Best Director award for 2008's *Three Monkeys*, another Grand Prix for 2011's *Once Upon a Time in Anatolia* (this, in addition to its Best Film in a foreign language nomination in Independent Spirit Awards), and finally receiving the Palme d'Or for Best Film with his 2014 drama *Winter Sleep*. This remarkable win made a powerful contribution to the development of the Turkish cinema.

Meanwhile, in 2006, *Takva (A Man's Fear of God)* won the Innovation Award at Toronto Film Festival; while in 2008, Hüseyin Karabey's debut *My Marlon and Brando* won the Best New Narrative Filmmaker prize at Tribeca. In 2010, Semih Kaplanoglu's *Honey* won the Golden Bear prize and Seren Yüce's *Majority* left Venice with the Luigi de Laurentiis award. In 2011, Seyfi Teoman vied for the Golden Bear with his film *Our Gran Despair*, a year later, Emin Alper's

Beyond the Hill garnered the Caligari prize at Berlin, Ali Aydın's *Küf* won the Luigi de Laurentiis in Venice, Erdem Tepegöz's *Particle* won the Best Film award at Moscow International Film Festival. Kaan Müjdeci, who competed with his debut *Sivas* at the Venice Film Festival won the Special Jury Prize.

As we move through the second decade of this century, we see that films of Turkish origin have begun to dominate the both main competitions and the side sections of major film festivals, winning a number of awards and gaining strong reviews. This momentum has fostered a healthy and diverse industry—one which now produces more than 100 films per year, accommodates countless talented directors and producers, and is supported by a network of domestic and international funds. Turkish cinema appears likely to continue its quest for international success.





ARTHOUSE AND POPULAR CINEMA GO HAND-IN-HAND

The success of Popular Cinema and Award-Winning arthouse titles go hand in hand in Turkey. Two strains cross-pollinate and give birth to unique hybrids.

A Comparison of Domestic and International Films That Entered Theatrical Release in Turkey in The Last 10 Years

Having experienced remarkable success in the 2000s, the Turkish film industry has managed to distinguish itself in the international arena both in terms of quality and quantity.

While in the beginning of the 2000s only 50 domestic films were seeing the light of the day—representing more than half of total box-office revenues—a revitalised Turkish film industry has reached a successful stage where it can produce more than 100 films per year and attract more than 25 million viewers to theatres.

The number of domestic films produced has risen substantially in the last 10 years, from 27 to 108—a 300% increase from 2005; this, of course, also had a substantial impact on audience-figures.

Below is a compact comparison of do-

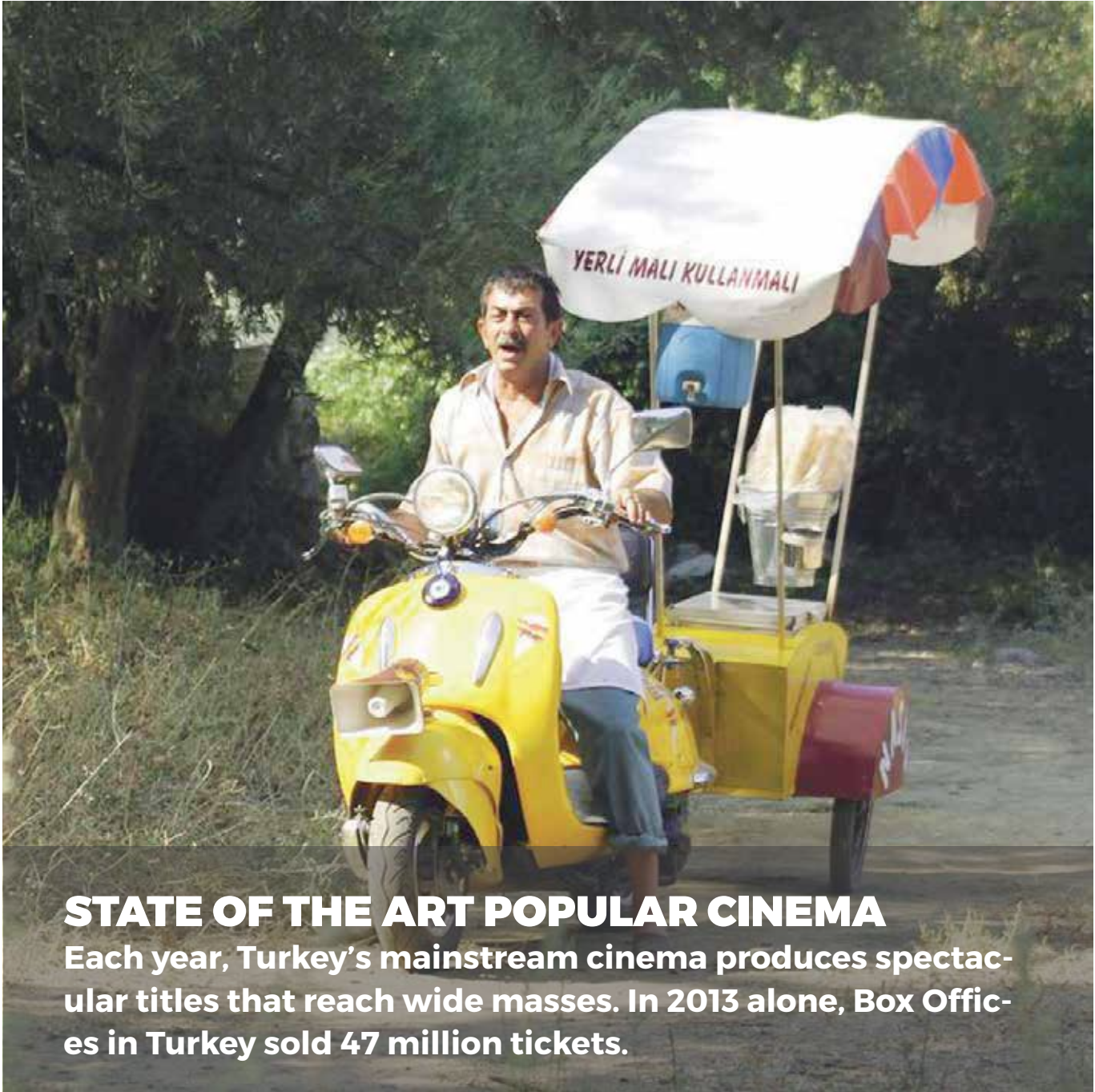
mestic and international productions which saw theatrical release in Turkey over the past 10 years:

- In 2005, of 221 theatrically released films, 27 were domestic and 194 were international;
- In 2006, of 238 theatrically released films, 34 were domestic and 204 were international;
- In 2007, of 247 theatrically released films, 40 were domestic and 207 were international;
- In 2008, of 265 theatrically released films, 50 were domestic and 205 were international;
- In 2009, of 255 theatrically released films, 70 were domestic and 185 were

international;

- In 2010, of 252 theatrically released films, 65 were domestic and 187 were international;
- In 2011, of 288 theatrically released films, 70 were domestic and 218 were international;
- In 2012, of 282 theatrically released films, 61 were domestic and 221 were international;
- In 2013, of 321 theatrically released films, 85 were domestic and 236 were international;
- In 2014, of 357 theatrically released films, 108 were domestic and 249 were international.

Source: General Directorate of Cinema:
<http://www.sinema.gov.tr/>



STATE OF THE ART POPULAR CINEMA
Each year, Turkey's mainstream cinema produces spectacular titles that reach wide masses. In 2013 alone, Box Offices in Turkey sold 47 million tickets.

Auteur Filmmaking in Turkey

Yüksel Aksu, Author-Director

*Author-directors, and their trademark “auteur cinema” has come to the fore with the French New Wave, especially with **Jean Luc Godard’s “Un Film de Godard” and came to signify a distinct filmmaking practice.***

While its literal meaning is “author”, in Turkey, auteur directors are misunderstood as directors who write their own screenplays and shoot them. A director writing her/his own screenplay constitutes a part of the auteur practice but this is not the exact meaning of the term. In its broadest and strongest implication, being an “auteur” means the manifestation of a director’s soul on the screen.

For example, Stanley Kubrick hasn’t written any of the screenplays he filmed. But in this regard, being an auteur doesn’t mean interpreting and filming screenplays written by oth-

ers, either. Being an auteur is about a director being able to manifest his soul, rather than about options concerning the writing of the screenplay.

For this reason, the French New Wave, Italian Neo-Realism and certain movements and great names such as Andrei Tarkovsky or Alexander Sokurov in the Soviet/Russian Cinema have exemplified the heights of auteur cinema.

In Turkey, on the other hand, we can’t speak about an auteur cinema before the 1950s. It has been Lutfi Omer Akad who demonstrated the first examples of auteur cinema in Turkey, especially

with his films The Bride (Gelin), Diyet (Blood Money) and Düğün (The Wedding).

Nevertheless, the auteur cinema in Turkey has found its real meaning with Metin Erksan’s films such as “Dry Summer” and “Time to Love” and peaked in its influence with Yılmaz Güney’s films.

Yol (The Road), which won the Palme d’Or in 1982 is an interesting example in this regard. Its screenplay is the manifestation of the spirit of Yılmaz Güney and the film itself is the manifestation of Şerif Gören’s talents. Yol is a blend of two auteur cinemas, just like

Auteur Film-

the collaboration of Quentin Tarantino and Oliver Stone in “Natural Born Killers”, but one that happened years ago.

When the Cinema of Turkey fell under the influence of the commercial video epidemic in the 1980s, auteur directors started dominating it. Yavuz Özkan, Ali Özgentürk, Erden Kıral, Ömer Kavur, Yusuf Kurçenli, Zeki Ökten, Şerif Gören and Yavuz Turgul were the most significant auteur-directors who made films in this period. In the 2000s, auteurs such as Semih Kaplanoğlu, Zeki Demirkubuz and Nuri Bilge Ceylan determined the direction of the Cinema of Turkey.

We can summarize the signs of auteur cinema in a succinct way. If a viewer can identify the director of a film without taking a look at the credits of the film, we can consider the director of the film an auteur.

I regard the Cinema of Turkey selection of the 37th Moscow International Film Festival an opportunity to establish a bridge of interaction between two cultures who cemented powerful auteur traditions in the course of decades. I hope Cinema of Turkey selection will open the path for new co-productions and wish all film lovers a pleasing festival.





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