

Zelimir Zilnik

Želimir Žilnik (born in 1942, based in Novi Sad, Serbia), film director, with extensive experience in the field of documentary and socio-political research. From the late 60s, his socially engaged films and documentaries in former Yugoslavia and his unique visual style earned him critical accolades (The Unemployed, 1968, Best Documentary at the Oberhausen festival, 1968; Early Works, 1969, Best Film at Berlin Film Festival), but also censorship in the 70s for his unflinching criticism of the government apparatus.

Low budget filmmaking and challenging political themes mark Zilnik's prolific career that includes over 40 feature and documentary films and shorts. Since the 1980s, he has been developing his unique docu-drama language, which he used throughout 1990s to reflect on political tensions, including EU sanctions, the NATO bombings, and Milosevic's regime. His power to observe and unleash compelling narratives out of the lives of ordinary people is the common thread throughout his documentary and docu-drama work, including 1994's Tito's Second Time Amongst the Serbs. More recently, his focus has shifted beyond the divided Balkans to question its relationship with the tightening controls of European borders, delving into the heart of issues of refugees and migrants in Fortress Europe (2000), Kenedi Goes Back Home (2003), Kenedi: Lost and Found (2005) and Europe Next Door (2005). Apart from filmmaking, Zilnik lectures documentary film (Academy of Arts in Novi Sad), and is a visiting lecturer at several European film schools (in 2006, lectures done at Goldsmiths College, London, UK and Leiden University, Holland). Since 1997, he runs master classes and international film workshops in Slovenia (Ljubljana and Krsko), for students from the region (Italy, Slovenia, Austria, Croatia and Serbia).

Recent international film workshops mentored by Želimir Žilnik:

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2005: "Petrovaradin Tribe" (produced by KUD Pozitiv, Ljubljana & Terra film, Novi Sad), 30 participants from Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, AustriaSerbia;

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2005: "Media Without Borders" (produced by DZMP Krsko, Slovenia), 25 participants from Slovenia, Croatia, Austria and Serbia;

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2006: "Soap in Danube Opera" (part of "Kuba: Journey Against the Current" international art project, produced by Thyssen Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna, Austria), 30 students from Serbia.

For more details, screenings&tour timeline info and full filmography, please visit www.zelimirzilnik.net