

# Krushevo the Cinema City

By Nenad Georgievski



**K**rushevo Cinema City is a festival that will present the rich and varied world of music and music documentaries. Taking place for the first time in July 2015, it will host the world of music in its full glory. On 25 November 2014 Dobredoje Macedonia Welcome Centre held an event promoting the new festival that included a presentation by Nenad Georgievski, Artistic Director of the festival, and the screening of the award winning *Silver Song* documentary.

There is an old adage that says that life without music would be a mistake. Indeed, music, apart from entertaining people, has many other purposes and roles, which most of the time pass by unnoticed. As pure emotion, music is evasive when it has to be pinpointed and defined. By definition, it is a system of organized sounds, but it is more than that as in these modern times even an unorganized system of sounds can be called music. People have always been fascinated by the effects sounds and music have on them and other people, and have even tried to give it a scientific explanation. Any kind of music is bound by certain rules and is reliant on mathematics, science, technology and engineering. But science and engineering will never define or

determine the power music has over people's lives. Music is a powerful medium in which people's emotions and thoughts are tightly knit. The most perfect example of this is folk music, which is the foundation of any kind of modern music - it is music by the people, about the people and for the people. Music therefore is a form of communication.

Today music is part of any social occasion whether it's a celebration or a protest, and people have been using music and lyrics to express various emotions and to address injustice or wrongdoings in society. Music is the first medium to acknowledge and lead powerful changes within any society. In the last 100 years music has become a recorded medium, which we are able to listen to anytime and wherever we want to, unlike earlier, when music was inseparable from performance. With that change, music became a focus for social gatherings for people of different generations. Composers from the classical era, jazz musicians, rock stars, and DJs symbolize the achievements and changes within a society. Music of any kind is a subject of exploration for each generation. With the advance of technology we are able to access the history of music and the social circumstances that brought each kind of music to prominence in



any given society. The condition of any society is reflected directly in the music people listen to.

In the late 20th century video brought about changes in the way music is listened to. Videos are a very powerful medium. Documentaries are powerful investigative tools regardless of the subject. As a renowned Oscar winning director Roger Ross Williams stated, "the documentary is the new journalism." On one hand, documentaries are like biographical books, addressing the highs and the lows of musicians' lives and work. On the other, documentaries address the ways people deal with social injustice, crimes, changes, wars and loss. An example of that are documentaries such as *Finding Fela*, a film that reflects the life and fight of the late Nigerian musician Fela Kuti against the regime in Nigeria. Fela used his music as a fearsome weapon. Williams directed the film *Music by Prudence* about Prudence, a Zimbabwean singer born with severe disabilities and living in a society fraught with superstition and hatred in which journalism is forbidden by law; she used music to transcend those limitations and fate, and conquer the hearts of people worldwide with her music.

Many of today's film festivals include music documentaries which are usually extremely popular among viewers. In recent times, there has been a tide of documentaries only festivals, some of which, like the Starigrad Paklenica Film Festival and DORF in Croatia are dedicated strictly to music documentaries.

The Starigrad Paklenica Film Festival screens films at exotic and remote locations of the Mountain Velebit. The canyons act as a frame for the films and contribute enormously to how the films are experienced. Since the city Starigrad and the mountain Velebit are located near the Adriatic Sea, the festival has become a place where the mountain, the sea, the stars above and the wonderful nature meet music and films. And in that kind of wonderful and wild surroundings a selection of Macedonian documentaries was presented to enthusiastic audiences alongside the films

about the Beatles, Mariam Makeba (aka Mama Afrika), and Bjork. The selection of Macedonian musical documentaries represented our folk music with films such as *Kaval* and *Gajda* and a concert film about Ljubojna, as well as popular music, with films such as *String Forces*, *Bei the Fish*, and *Vlatko Stefanovski*. There were films about being inspired by music, such as *Silver Song*, in which a jewellery artist produces silver jewellery inspired by the music played by a band in her workshop and a film about Radio Channel 103, the legendary avant-garde radio station, which is constantly at the centre of musical happenings in the country. That was the first presentation of Macedonian music documentaries, and it was very successful.

Inspired by the success of that presentation we decided that a festival of this type with all the benefits it will provide was needed in Macedonia. Krushevo is one of the prettiest places in the country, and it was decided that the festival will take place at different locations in the city, thus turning it into a cinema city. Envisioned as a meeting place for music and film, Krushevo Cinema City will screen music documentaries from all over the world. The festival will also use its platforms for presentations of other regional film festivals and will provide ample opportunities for communication among films directors, enthusiasts and journalists. Many of the VIPs and guests will give master classes and workshops, thus helping domestic film workers to perfect their knowledge and skills. The festival programme will feature a documentary on a popular rock star, and an exhibition by a renowned photographer will be staged to coincide with the film. Participants and guests of the festival will enjoy the traditional Macedonian hospitality, and their experience will be boosted by performances of popular Macedonian bands. Krushevo Cinema City festival will encourage the production of domestic music documentaries which are becoming an integral part of the modern music industry and boost the quality of the music that will be imported into and exported from Macedonia.