

November 22, 2008
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: Ryan Davis - (206) 329-2629, ryan@nwfilmforum.org

AT THE CROSSROADS: SLOVENIAN CINEMA
Six Films from Slovenian Film History
At Northwest Film Forum

Seattle, WA — Northwest Film Forum continues its practice of spotlighting Slovenian cinema with a series of six films mined from the country's history. **At a Crossroads: Slovenian Cinema** takes place December 5-14, 2008, and features classic films such as *Vesna* (1953) and *Dance in the Rain* (1961) as well as modern achievements like *Sweet Dreams* (2001). This series follows the evolution of Slovenia as a distinct producer of world cinema and it allows audiences to experience an abbreviated retrospective of Slovenian film.

Slovenian cinema has more than century-long tradition of exceptional accomplishments, coming from such notable historical film auteurs as Karol Grossmann, Janko Ravnik, Ferdo Delak, France Stiglic, Mirko Grobler, Igor Pretnar, France Kosmac, Joze Pogacnik, Matjaz Klopčič, Jane Kavcic, Joze Gale, Bostjan Hladnik and Karpo Godina. Since becoming a sovereign nation in 1991, a new generation of film artists has emerged, and after garnering attention outside their country critics have described the surge of filmmaking as a "renaissance of Slovenian cinema." This group includes such contemporary film directors as Janez Burger, Jan Cvitkovic, Damjan Kozole, Janez Lapajne and Maja Weiss.

In all, Slovenia has produced over 150 feature films as well as several hundred documentaries and short films. Currently, the country produces four to six feature films each year. Film genres have been a mix of domestic comedies, social realist dramas and poetic meditations. As with many films produced in Europe in the post World War II era, Slovenian films were often more warmly embraced outside the country than inside it. The same openness that characterized films from Czechoslovakia and Hungary in the 1960s was evidenced in Slovenia as well, with such international hits as *Dance in the Rain* and *Paper Planes*. The post-Communist period was rocky after 1991 (when Slovenia declared its independence from Yugoslavia), but the creation of the Slovenian Film Fund in 1994 has been essential in fostering new talents and promoting Slovenian cinema internationally at film festivals, film markets and other events.

Bringing the Slovenian sensibility to Seattle film audiences, At the Crossroads: Slovenian Cinema will showcase six classic and contemporary films that chart Slovenian cinema's continued development as an important member of the world film community.

Classic films to savor in the series include: *Dance In The Rain* (1961, Bostjan Hladnik), a modernist classic about a painter who looks back at his thwarted personal and artistic choices; *Vesna* (1953, Frantisek Cap), a gentle college comedy that remains one of the best loved of all Slovenian film; *Paper Planes* (1967, Matjaz Klopčič), one of the films that defined the 1960s aesthetic of quietly observed characters and modern sexual relationships between a photographer and a ballet dancer; and *Raft of the Medusa* (1980, Karpo Godina), a surrealistic-tinged debut by cinematographer Godina about two young school teachers who encounter an avant-garde troupe of artists.

More contemporary Slovenian cinema ripe for discovery include: *Idle Running* (1999, Janez Burger), a quirky low-budget tale of a slacker student and his friends and romances and *Sweet Dreams* (2001, Saso Podgoršek), an adaptation of a popular local bestseller about a young boy's cultural clash with modernity in 1970s Yugoslavia.

Screeners for all six films are available. Please send a request to ryan@nwfilmforum.org. Images are available at www.nwfilmforum.org/press.

Individual tickets are \$6 for NWFF members, \$6.50 children/seniors, and \$9/general. Northwest Film Forum is located on Capitol Hill at 1515 12th Ave (between Pike and Pine). Find out more online at <http://www.nwfilmforum.org>

###