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My Only Sunshine (Hayat Var)

15+

Pandora's Box (Pandora'nın Kutusu)

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Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece | 2008 | 121 mins
Turkish w/ English Subtitles | Color | 35 mm
Gulf Premiere

Turkey, France, Germany, Belgium | 2008 | 112 mins
Turkish w/ English Subtitles | Color | 35 mm
Gulf Premiere

Director / Screenwriter / Editor:
Reha Erdem
Cinematographer: Florent Herry
Music: Orhan Gencebay
Production Designer: Ömer Atay

Cast: Önder Açıkbaz, Levent Yılmaz,
Elit İçcan, Erdal Beşikçioğlu

Director: Yeşim Ustaoglu
Screenwriters: Yeşim Ustaoglu,
Sema Kaygusuz
Cinematographer: Jacques Besse
Editor: Franck Nakache
Music: Jean-Pierre Mas

Production Designer: Elif
Taşcıoğlu-Serdar Yılmaz
Cast: Tsilla Chelton, Derya
Alabora, Onur Ünsal, Osman
Sonant, Övül Avkıran, Tayfun
Bademsoy, Nazmi Kırık

Reha Erdem's 2008 film *My Only Sunshine* tells the story of young Yusuf's struggle to leave his home. Although centered on a woman's routine, and set in a rural area, the film, Yusuf also represents a move from the familiar, to face the unknown by heading to the mountains and back home again.

My Only Sunshine marks the fullest realization yet of Reha Erdem's unusual style. The seemingly familiar story of a 14-year-old girl turns uncanny through Erdem's expert manipulation of the soundtrack. As the teenage girl attempts to cope with the lack of love around her, an impossible mix of sounds guarantees the novelty of both the experience and the emotional response that this film provides.

—AB

Three adult siblings set out on a journey from İstanbul to Turkey's Black Sea Region, hoping to find their aging mother, who is reportedly lost in the mountains surrounding her village. Instead of the expected generational dramatics, the film shifts course to show the unusual bond that develops between the grandmother and her urban teenage grandson, a genuine and unbiased human connection. *Pandora's Box* won the Grand Prize at the San Sebastian Film Festival.

—ZD



Reha Erdem's Reha Erdem (born in 1960) studied film and writes on contemporary Turkish cinema. From 1995 to 2000 wrote a column on film for the national daily *Radikal*.

Reha Erdem, born in 1960, graduated from Paris 8 University with a degree in film studies, and then an M.A. in plastic arts. He shot his first feature-length film, the French-Turkish co-production *Oh Moon*, in 1989. His 2006 feature *Times and Winds* earned international acclaim.

After making several award-winning shorts in Turkey, Yeşim Ustaoglu made her feature film debut with *The Trace* (1994). She also received recognition for her 1999 film *Journey to the Sun*, which won many festival awards.

October 11, 6:30 pm

Preceded by the short *The Waiting* | 14 min.

October 12, 7:00 pm
Grand Abu Dhabi Mall [MY2]

Sunday, October 11, 9:15 pm
Cinestar 4 [MY1]

Monday, October 12, 7:00 pm
Grand Abu Dhabi Mall [MY2]

Wednesday, October 14, 9:45 pm
Cinestar 3 [PA1]

> Preceded by the short *Semolina Halva* | 11 min.

Thursday, October 15, 6:30 pm
Grand Abu Dhabi Mall [PA2]

New Cinema from Turkey

10 to 11

Pelin Esmer

This film also is part of the Narrative Feature Competition – see description on page 12.

Autumn

Özcan Alper

Dot

Derviş Zaim

Milk

Semih Kaplanoğlu

My Only Sunshine

Reha Erdem

On the Way to School

Orhan Eskiköy, Özgür Doğan

This film is also part of the Documentary Feature Competition – see description on page 18.

Pandora's Box

Yeşim Ustaoglu

Summer Book

Seyfi Teoman

Wrong Rosary

Mahmut Fazıl Coşkun

The initial screening of six of the features will be preceded by a short film from Turkey, as noted below.

Death of the Poet

Elif Ergezen [before *Autumn*]

Milk and Chocolate

Senem Tüzen [before *Summer Book*]

The Sacrifice

Ali Betil [before *Wrong Rosary*]

Semolina Halva

Ezgi Kaplan [before *Pandora's Box*]

Turnout

Firat Mançuhan [before *Dot*]

The Waiting

Emine Emel Balcı [before *Milk*]

Writers for New Cinema from Turkey synopses:
Gülengül Altıntaş, Abbas Bozkurt, Ayşe Ciftçi,
Zeynep Dadak, Berke Göl, Övgü Gökçe, Firat Yücel.



Autumn (Sonbahar)

G

Turkey, Germany | 2008 | 103 mins
Turkish, Georgian, Hemshin w/ English Subtitles | Color | 35 mm

Director / Screenwriter: Özcan Alper Raife Yenigül, Serkan Keskin, Nino
Producer: F. Serkan Acar Lejava, Arda Diraz
Cinematographer: Feza Çaldıran
Editor: Thomas Balkenhol
Music: Yuri Rydahenko, Ayşenur
Kolivar, Sumru Ağiryürüyen
Cast: Onur Saylak, Megi Kobaladze.

Set against the backdrop of fall in the mountains of the Black Sea region, *Autumn* is a meditation on the prolonged loss of a young life. The film follows Yusuf, who finally returns home after he is released from prison on medical grounds. An exceptionally modest and lyrical first feature by Özcan Alper, *Autumn* leaves a solid mark on contemporary cinema in Turkey.

—ÖG



Özcan Alper, born in 1975, made his first short, *Grandmother* (2001), entirely in Hemshin, an Armenian dialect spoken in northeast Turkey. It won several awards, which enabled him to make *Autumn*, his first feature film.

Friday, October 9, 4:15 pm

Cinestar 1 [AU1]

> Preceded by the short *Death of the Poet* | 18 min.

Saturday, October 10, 9:45 pm

Grand Abu Dhabi Mall [AU2]



Dot (Nokta)

G

Turkey | 2009 | 78 mins
Turkish w/ English Subtitles | Color | 35 mm
Gulf Premiere

Director / Screenwriter: Derviş Zaim
Producers: Baran Seyhan, Derviş Zaim
Cinematographer: Ercan Yılmaz
Music: Mazlum Çimen
Cast: Numan Acar, Cem Aksakal, Begüm Birgören, Bayazıt Gülercan, Nadi Güler, Hikmet Karagöz, Serhat Kılıç, Şener Kökkaya, Mehmet Ali Nuroğlu, Settar Tannıoğlu, Mustafa Uzuryılmaz

Dot is the absorbing fifth feature by Derviş Zaim. The narrative concerns a gifted young calligrapher who becomes involved in the theft of a valuable ancient Quran, but the film stands out as a visual experiment. Its stark imagery is set entirely against the white backdrop of a salt lake, and its strong style imitates *ihcam*, a calligraphy technique in Islamic arts.

—ÖG



Born in 1964, Derviş Zaim won several national and international awards for his first feature, *Somersault in a Coffin* (1996). He currently teaches film at İstanbul's Bilgi and Bosphorus Universities.

Tuesday, October 13, 9:15 pm

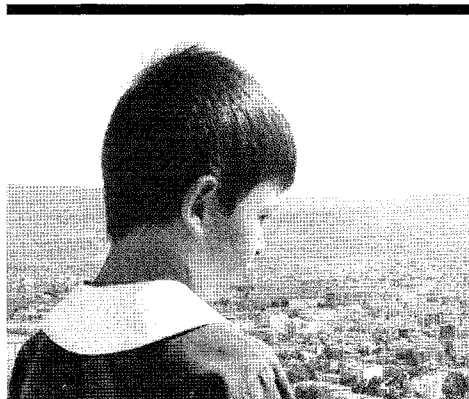
Cinestar 3 [DO1]

> Preceded by the short *Turnout* | 15 min.

Wednesday, October 14, 9:45 pm

Grand Abu Dhabi Mall [DO2]

New Cinema from Turkey



Summer Book (Tatil Kitabı)

G

Turkey | 2008 | 93 mins
 Turkish w/ English Subtitles | Color | 35 mm
 Gulf Premiere

Director / Screenwriter: Seyfi Teoman
 Cinematographer: Arnav Valls Colomer
 Editor: Çiçek Kahraman
 Sound: İsmail Karadağ

Cast: Taner Birsel, Tayfun Günay, Harun Özüağ, Ayten Tökün, Osman İnan

Bearing the autobiographical stamp of Seyfi Teoman, *Summer Book* looks at life in the provinces from the inside and tries to come to terms with it. After the patriarch dies, leaving questions about some missing money and a mysterious mistress, 10-year-old Ali, his brother Veysel, and their uncle Hasan will all have to spend a long, hot summer making some serious choices about their lives.

—GA



Seyfi Teoman, born in Kayseri, Turkey, in 1977, studied at the Polish National Film School in Lodz. He is working on his second feature, *Our Grand Despair*, which was selected to the 2009 Cannes Film Festival's L'Atelier.



Wrong Rosary (Uzak İhtimal)

G

Turkey | 2009 | 93 mins
 Turkish w/ English Subtitles | Color | 35 mm
 UAE Premiere

Director: Mahmut Fazıl Coşkun
 Screenwriters: Tarık Tufan, Görkem Yeltan, Bektaş Topaloğlu,
 Cinematographer: Refik Çakar
 Editor: Çiçek Kahraman
 Music: Rahman Altın

Cast: Nadir Sarıbacak, Görkem Yeltan, Ersan Uysal

Wrong Rosary tells a slow-paced, simple story of a young muezzin who gets appointed to İstanbul, where he falls in love with a Catholic woman. Unlike its predecessors, which typically discuss the complex and ever-changing role that religion plays in contemporary Turkey's problematic process of westernization, *Wrong Rosary* does not present faith as a source of constant battle, and therein lies its significance.

—BG



Mahmut Fazıl Coşkun was born in 1973, studied film at the University of California, Los Angeles, and received his M.A. degree from İstanbul's Bilgi University. He works professionally as a documentary and commercial director.

Saturday, October 10, 6:30 pm

Cinestar 1 [SU1]

> Preceded by the short *Milk and Chocolate* | 25 min.

Tuesday, October 13, 9:45 pm

Grand Abu Dhabi Mall [SU2]

Monday, October 12, 9:30 pm

Cinestar 1 [WR1]

> Preceded by the short *The Sacrifice* | 17 min.

Wednesday, October 14, 7:00 pm

Grand Abu Dhabi Mall [WR2]