

Cine-concerts at Transilvania IFF.23: a lost film, D.W. Griffith's shorts, Dracula & jazz

Cluj-Napoca, April 24, 2024. **City Without Jews** (dir. Hans Karl Breslauer, Austria), a masterpiece of the silent era from 1924, continues the series of cine-concerts at the 23rd edition of the **Transilvania International Film Festival (June 14-24, 2024)**, [opened by **Metropolis** \(1927\) and **A Page of Madness** \(1926\)](https://tiff.eventbook.ro/music/bilete-tiff-2024-cine-concert-orasul-fara-evrei). The film will be accompanied live by world-renowned klezmer violinist **Alicia Svigals** and celebrated silent film pianist **Donald Sosin**, who composed the original music. The cine-concert will take place on **Thursday, June 20, at 9:30 PM, at the Art Museum**. Tickets are available online – <https://tiff.eventbook.ro/music/bilete-tiff-2024-cine-concert-orasul-fara-evrei>

Based on the novel by journalist and writer Hugo Bettauer, **City Without Jews** tells a story whose implications remain as relevant as they were at the time of its premiere a hundred years ago. In a fictional city in Austria, Utopia, the authorities decide to expel all Jews from the country. What follows is an economic and cultural decline that will make the supporters of the new law question their decisions. It is a satire that, unfortunately, proved to be prophetic and sparked outrage among anti-Semitic groups at the time. Moreover, the author of the book was killed by a member of the Nazi party shortly after the film's premiere, which was no longer publicly screened after 1933. Although the original copy of the film was considered lost, it was accidentally found in 2015, at an antique market in Paris, and restored by the Austrian Film Archive. In 2020, Alicia Svigals and Donald Sosin composed the original music from scratch.

Violinist and composer Alicia Svigals has an impressive list of collaborations, from violinist Itzhak Perlman to the Kronos Quartet or Led Zeppelin, and is the founder of the Klezmatics group, which won a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary World Music Album in 2007. Donald Sosin has been creating and performing music for silent films for over 50 years, touring the world's most important film festivals. The two have performed together hundreds of times so far. As Svigals says, "we offer the audience the opportunity to experience a lost art form."

A true event for any cinephile is the screening of restored copies of **four short films by D.W. Griffith**, one of the most influential film directors who decisively innovated this art form at the beginning of the 20th century. The films will be accompanied by live music performed by **Donald Sosin**, this time alongside his wife **Joanna Seaton**, who will sing and play percussion. The cine-concert will take place on **Friday, June 21, at 9:30 PM at the Art Museum**, and tickets can be purchased – <https://tiff.eventbook.ro/music/bilete-tiff-2024-cine-concert-bijuteriile-furate-si-alte-scurtmetraje-de-d-w-griffith>

Before becoming known for films like **The Birth of a Nation** or **Intolerance**, D.W. Griffith directed over 300 short films for Biograph Company between 1908 and 1912, the first company in the United States dedicated exclusively to film production and distribution. During this period, he experimented with various cinematic genres and

storytelling techniques. Griffith introduced parallel editing and techniques such as fade-in/fade-out or the flashback (which he called switchback). Four short films made in 1909 will be screened at TIFF: ***The Stolen Jewels***, ***The Cord of Life***, ***The Voice of the Violin***, and ***The Englishman and the Girl***.

The restoration of these films was undertaken by the **Film Preservation Society**, an organization dedicated to the rescue, preservation, and restoration of American art films. As Ruxandra Blaga, a member of FPS from Cluj, says, *"with each viewing and screening, these archival films 'live' a new life in the public's consciousness and form emotional, cultural, and social connections with them. We are pleased that through these restorations carried out by the Film Preservation Society, the TIFF audience can experience a unique film experience of D.W. Griffith's works."*

About ***Dracula's Death***, directed by Hungarian director **Károly Lajthay**, it is said to be the world's first film about the character created by Bram Stoker. It was produced in Budapest in 1921 and co-written by **Michael Curtiz**, who before moving to Hollywood and winning an Oscar for *Casablanca*, began his career in Cluj-Napoca. Since 2018, students from the media department of Sapientia University in Cluj have participated in a series of workshops on film shooting on celluloid, the final goal of which is to remake ***Dracula's Death***, which was entirely lost in the 1940s. The result, a work in progress, can be seen on **Wednesday, June 19, at 6:00 PM, at Cinema Arta**. Tickets are available online – <https://tiff.eventbook.ro/music/bilete-tiff-2024-cine-concert-moartea-lui-dracula>.

Director **Lakatos Róbert Árpád**, the project coordinator, says that the starting point for writing the script was a novel that is presumed to have served as the basis for the original film. The composer responsible for the cine-concert's music is French composer **Miquèu Montanaro**. It will be performed live by 12 instrumentalists: **Miquèu Montanaro, Baltazar Montanaro, Sebille Christian, Ádám Móser, Renáta Gyárfás, Sára Domahildi, Lilla Unger, Kamilla Kasabian, Andrea László, Nóra Krokovay, Attila Kis, Csaba Cserey**.

The cine-concert ***Dracula's Death*** is produced by the Hungarian Filmmakers Association in Transylvania and Sapientia University.

Another special event, combining film and music, will be the screening of the documentary ***Luis Villas Boas, the Last Trip*** (Portugal, 2023) directed by filmmaker and musician **Laurent Filipe**. Through his immense contribution to the development of jazz in Portugal, **Luis Villas Boas** is a fundamental figure in Portuguese culture. His activities include founding the "Hot Club de Portugal" in 1948 and the "Cascais International Jazz Festival," whose main editions in the 1970s brought all the jazz giants to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, putting Portugal on the map of international music. The documentary screening will be followed by a jazz mini-concert performed by **Laurent Filipe** (trumpet) and **Dima Belinski** (piano). The event will take place on **Wednesday, June 19, at 9:30 PM at the Art Museum** – <https://tiff.eventbook.ro/music/bilete-tiff-2024-cine-concert-the-last-trip>.

Subscriptions for TIFF.23 are on sale online - <https://tiff.eventbook.ro/>

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