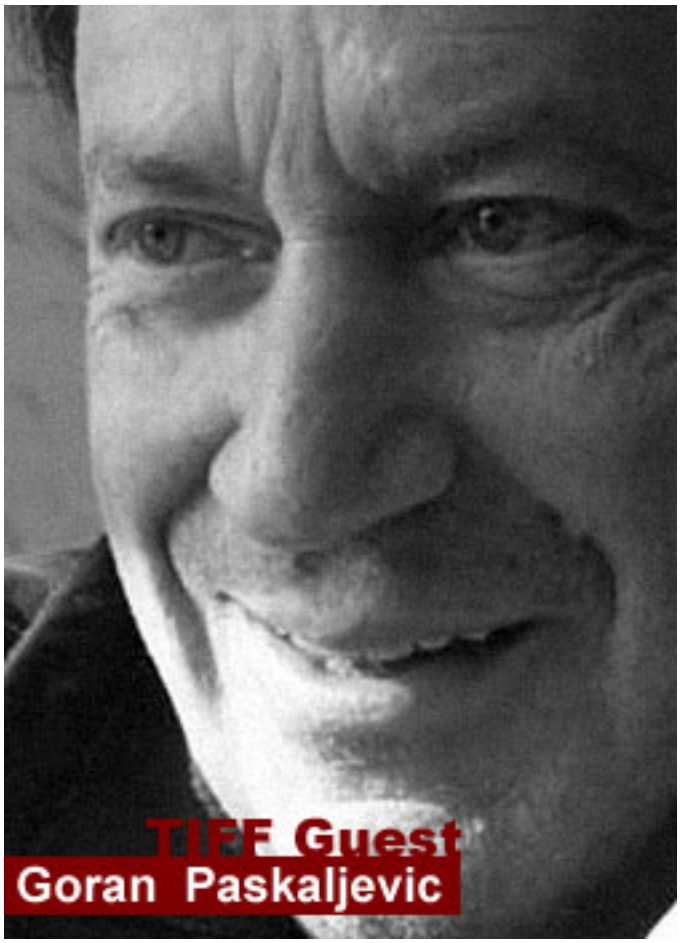



Goran Paskaljevic studied at the well-known Prague school of cinema (FAMU). He has made 30 documentaries and 14 feature films, shown and acclaimed at the most prestigious international film festivals (Cannes, Berlin, Venice, Toronto and San Sebastian…). The rise of nationalism in Yugoslavia forced him to leave his country in 1992. In 1998 he went back to make The Powder Keg (aka Cabaret Balkan in the USA) which won international critic's prizes at the Venice Film Festival and the European Film Awards. In 2001, the Variety International Film Guide marks him as one of the top five directors of the year. His latest film Midwinter Night's Dream (2004) exploring the post-war Serbia won the Grand Jury Prize at the San Sebastian Film Festival.

The Museum of Modern Art in New-York (MoMA) will present a full retrospective of his work at the end of next year.

THE OPTIMISTS

The five stories in THE OPTIMISTS are inspired by Voltaire’s famous satirical novel Candide and its motto: “Optimism is insisting everything is good, when everything is bad.” The setting is present day, post-Milosevic Serbia. Painted with black humour, these stories reflect a time filled with hope and despair, real optimism and false; a time when fiction and reality co-exist side by side, and when many people fish in the troubled waters of lost illusions.

The acclaimed actor Lazar Ristovski (“Underground”, “The Powder Keg” aka “Cabaret Balkan”

in the USA, “Midwinter Night’s Dream”) takes a role in each of the five stories.

Best Film Valladolid Film Festival
Best actor winner Lazar Ristovski
Audience Award for the best film
Geneva Film Festival - Best Director
FIPRESCI Award for the best film
Toronto – Masters – World Premiere