



**To: All Friends**

**From: The Romanian Cultural Centre**

**Re: HOME & AWAY: The Romanian Film Festival 2008**

**10 - 13 April, Curzon Mayfair, London**

**[www.curzoncinemas.com](http://www.curzoncinemas.com)**

**[www.romanianculturalcentre.org.uk](http://www.romanianculturalcentre.org.uk)**

Dear Friends,

The countdown to this year's Romanian Film Festival has started: this April we will be meeting again at Curzon Mayfair for a celebration of Romanian cinema.

You might be already in the know, but please allow us a brief recap: Romanian cinema has been doing marvellously lately: in less than five years, it switched from being one of the less glamorous cinemas of the former Eastern Bloc to the most exciting discovery on the international film scene. If we are to set the record straight, over the past five years or so, Romanian film generated more international press than during its entire century of existence! Just a few weeks ago, The New York Times ran yet another enthusiastic piece about the 'New Wave on the Black Sea' (Right. Romanian film-makers still resist the idea of a 'wave', but hey, wave or no wave, critics, festivals and audiences love their films).

As faithful friends of Romanian cinema, you might remember that our last year's festival focused on Romania's PAST IMPERFECT and on all those things that make the stuff or, as some would say, the 'stuffing', of history. Well, this year we went for a change: it's going to be Geography rather than History.

Our Gala Screening and opening event will be on Thursday 10 April, with CALIFORNIA DREAMIN' (Endless) - a cinematic *tour de force* from late film-maker Cristian Nemescu, the 'Un Certain Regard' winner in Cannes 2007. California Dreamin' touches on the remains of some twisted version of the American Dream: Nemescu brings together a train of US marines and a tiny Romanian village to make his point about Romania's long-term fascination with the 'elsewhere', and ultimately with America.

It was in praise of Nemescu's hilarious dramatisation of parochialism and intercultural clashes that we decided to develop our festival around the concept of HOME & AWAY. Dislocation, longing and belonging provide the connective tissue of this year's programme - we will bring you film-makers, documentary subjects and fictional characters who are caught between home and elsewhere, or who navigate between the realities, dreams and expectations of 'here' and 'there'. So get ready for an exciting line-up which will give you a unique view on homelands and border-crossings ... from a trip on the Danube, to work migration to Italy, and to space travel.

Now, speaking about borders... there used to be quite an obsession with them, but now we are finally starting to feel relaxed about crossing them. And as we discovered just how much we loved soft borders, we've been a bit naughty, so, for this year's programme we indulged ourselves in a more fluid sense of geography when it came to mapping 'Romanianness': i.e. we included several films which, although not being 'technically Romanian', were completed by a group of exciting Romanian film-makers who found their homes away from Romania.

So we invite you to join us on 10 - 13 April, to celebrate Romanian cinema's home-coming into World Cinema and to mark five years of Romanian Film Festival in London! With no intention of sounding too arrogant, we cannot help but take pride in having initiated our festival right at the time when the new voices of Romanian cinema started to be heard at an international level. What an exciting time to grow as a national festival! And what a sensational five years of great Romanian cinema brought to London from home!

Did we say FIVE? (Oh yes, we do love numbers, and Romanian cinema has recently had its lucky ones... think 432 or 12:08). But FIVE is different. FIVE sounds like a CINCINAL to us, Romanians (that's a socialist five year plan to you, non-Romanians. Yes, we promised no History this year but hey, you can't stop the past from seeping into the present: *Ou sont les CINCINALs d'antan?*). Nostalgia aside, we should admit that success just happened: we didn't work on a five year plan... and we doubt that Romanian film-makers did it either. And still, what a great job they did! We've been delighted to share and follow their triumph throughout this time.

Good bye for now, and see you in April at HOME & AWAY. And don't forget to check your mail box regularly - more news already on the way!

Yours faithfully,  
The Festival Team 2008

Ramona Mitrica - Director, Romanian Cultural Centre  
Adina Bradeanu - Programme Curator  
Mihai Risnoveanu & Tudor Prisacariu - Design

*P.S. True fans of New Romanian Cinema are already familiar with a certain habit of recycling old communist anthems on the films' end credits. To celebrate our first CINCINAL as the home of Romanian cinema in London, here is our own suggested anthem up for recycling:  
The Five Year Plan Fulfilled in Four Years and a Half (Cincinalu-n patru ani si jumătate), from the Romanian user-generated website, Trilulilu.ro:*

<http://www.trilulilu.ro/1109unique/31897af0945534>

*To all non-Romanian speakers: this is a fine example of musical propaganda which surely rings a bell to all Romanians over 30. Do not worry if you can't get the words - trust us, you're missing nothing.*

The Romanian Film Festival is organised by: [The Ratiu Foundation](#) / [Romanian Cultural Centre in London](#), in collaboration with [The National Centre of Cinematography in Bucharest](#) and [Curzon Cinemas](#). Supported by: [Artificial Eye](#) and [The Embassy of Romania in the UK](#).

