

Third Serbian Movie Festival Makes a Difference



by Milos Rastovic

The third Serbian Movie Festival was held at the University of Pittsburgh's Cathedral of Learning on March 24th, 2018. The Serbian Movie Festival was sponsored by the Serb National Federation (SNF), the Center for Russian and East European Studies (CREES) at the University of Pittsburgh, and the Radio Television of Serbia (RTS). The Festival's main goal is to preserve and promote Serbian culture heritage in addition to furthering greater Pittsburgh's cultural diversity in general.

The Festival included three Serbian movies: "The Promise," "Serbs on Corfu," and "Santa Maria della Salute." The audience was able to experience Serbian culture, heritage, and history in a positive and entertaining way.

This year, the Festival was visited by many faculty, students, producers from other festivals, representatives of the Serbian-American Diaspora, and other guests. In the opening remarks by John Martich, President of the SNF, he stressed the importance of preserving Serbian cultural heritage and the long-running mission of the Serb National Federation. Dr. Nancy Condee, Chair of the Department of Slavic Studies and President of the CREES at the University of Pittsburgh, accentuated the importance of introducing other cultures, and she praised the selection of movies. She also explained the main mission of the Center, which she represents. Milos Rastovic, Cultural Outreach Coordinator of the SNF, expressed gratitude for the support from the Radio Television of Serbia and CREES at the University of Pittsburgh, and gave a brief synopsis of the movie as an introduction.

The documentary movie "The Promise" by Zeljko Mirkovic officially opened the Festival. The audience was excited to watch the movie about a French family who has moved to the village Rogljevo, southeast of Serbia. The family thought that they found the promised land for growing grapes and wine making. However, they found only old people with distrusting old habits in Rogljevo. The movie director, in an excellent way, describes the dilemmas which are facing both the French family and habitants of the village. Although the village has a long tradition of making wine, the region was unknown for making wine in the international market. The critical question for the French family is how to make superior wine in an unknown region. The

screening of the movie was followed by great applause. This marvelous documentary about wine making in Serbia has won nine international awards so far.

"Serbs on Corfu" by Sladjana Zaric, was produced by the Radio Television of Serbia. It is a historical documentary about the most tragic events faced by the Serbian people – the exile of the entire nation, army, and Government of Serbia to the island Corfu, Greece during World War I. In order to avoid a capitulation of their country to the Austro-Hungary Empire, the Serbian Government and army (including civilian population) decided to leave their own country and cross Albania during the dead of winter to reach the Allies at the Adriatic Sea. Dr. Milos Kovic, Professor of History at University of Belgrade and narrator of the movie, in an interesting way, leads the public through all battles and difficulties of the Serbian Government, army and nation. This is a unique story in world history which gives us a detailed description about the atrocities and suffering of the Serbian Government, army, and nation. The American public was horrified about the sacrifices of the Serbian people, and also amazed about their heroic deeds. The screening of the movie was so successful that we received more requests to show it in other movie festivals.

The Serbian Movie Festival closed with the marvelous movie "Santa Maria della Salute" by Zdravko Sotra. Before the screening of the movie, Milos Rastovic talked about Laza Kostic, one of the most educated Serbian and European poets. The movie describes a biographical story about the love between one of the most famous Serbian poets, Laza Kostic, and an attractive, charming, educated, and rich girl, Lenka Dundjerski. At the end of the Nineteenth Century, this tragic love story between Laza Kostic, who is played by Vojin Cetkovic in the movie, and Lenka Dundjerski, who is played by Tamara Aleksic, was an inspiration for Kostic to write one of the most beautiful poems "Santa Maria della Salute" in Serbian and European poetry.

The movie, in an exceptional way, describes emotions which Kostic could not hide from Lenka. The rhapsody of his emotions was expressed in the first song dedicated to Lenka: "To Miss L.D." Because Kostic could not control his emotions toward Lenka, nor could he find a better solution for their uneasy



John Martich, President of the SNF



Milos Rastovic, Cultural Outreach Coordinator of the SNF

relationship, after four years of struggling, he married his former fiancé and a woman who waited for him over two decades. They married in Sombor in 1895, and Sombor became Kostic's hometown for the rest of his life. After his wedding, Lenka died from typhus in Vienna. However, there were many speculative stories about her death. When Kostic heard about Lenka's death, he was so depressed and struck by this tragic death that Lenka began to appear in his

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Dear SNF Members,

My last day working for the SNF was Monday, April 30, 2018. I have accepted another position elsewhere. It is bittersweet – I'm excited about my new job but I'm sad that I'm leaving the SNF. The seven years I have worked here have been great – you're my family. I want to thank each of you for your support and friendship. I have loved reconnecting with old friends and making new ones.

I look forward to seeing you at the next Serbian event, so this is not goodbye but see you later!

Love,

Cheryl Medich Leydig
SNF Home Office Manager

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Novakovich thriving for Telstar in a tight promotional race



BY BRIAN SCIARETTA

One of the most surprising stories this year in American soccer has been Andrija Novakovich's breakout while on loan from Reading with SC Telstar. The Wisconsin native is the second leading scorer in the Dutch second tier, has his club in an unexpected promotional race. Will a USMNT call-up follow?

FEW WOULD ARGUE that 2017 was the roughest year in the modern history of American soccer. With that year now over, 2018 is a year when attention will be shifted towards the emerging next generation of players.

Most of the focus is on well-known players like Christian Pulisic, Weston McKennie, Tyler Adams, Zack Steffen, and Matt Miazga. But one of the most surprising stories has been SC Telstar's Andrija Novakovich who is the second leading scorer in the Dutch second tier and had been the backbone of the club's race for promotion.

Novakovich, 21, joined SC Telstar prior to the season on loan from his parent club Reading. Prior to the season, Reading's manager Jaap Stam and Novakovich explored the idea of a loan to Holland. In the end, it was the right fit.

"With the Dutch being well known in their development, that is the first thing I thought about before coming here," Novakovich said. "Another thing is Jaap Stam, of course, at Reading. He is Dutch and his staff and the technical director all have a Dutch background in football. They know everybody over here. He is a legend and is very popular in Holland. I thought it would

be good to go to their country when the opportunity came up. I thought it would good to see how their football is and I thought if I could do well with their football, it'd be good for me that I could show them that."

And as the season enters into its home stretch, it is hard to argue that Novakovich's loan has been anything other than roaring success. Through 28 games, the Muskego, Wisconsin native has scored 17 goals and added four assists. More importantly, he has his team in fourth place and in the playoff positions for promotion. He has made numerous teams of the week for his league.

Reprinted from the Player Spotlight on American Soccer Now, www.americansoccernews.com. Visit the website and search Andrija's name to read the rest of this great article. Thanks to Mitzi Cemovich of Venice, Florida, for submitting.

For more on Andrija, search the Washington Post story in their 'Soccer Insider': "He has a Serbian accent, scores goals in the Netherlands and may help rebuild U.S. men's soccer"

Andrija Novakovich, 21, is the son of Mane and Zorica Novakovich, members of SNF Lodge 99 and St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church in Milwaukee. "He is a proud member since birth," said Mom Zorica. At St. Sava's, Andrija was an altar boy for many years and also danced in the folklore group for the St. Sava Junior dancers as well as Sumadija. Among many others of note, he is related to the "famous" Pero Prpa originally from Indiana and now of Pennsylvania, according to Zorica.



Basilica Santa Maria della Salute in Venice, Italy



Vojin Cetkovic as Laza Kostic, and Tamara Aleksic as Lenka Dundjerski in "Santa Maria della Salute"



"Serbs on Corfu" "Serbs on Corfu"



"The Promise"

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dreams. His longing for Lenka resulted in him writing a poem dedicated to her. Inspired by beauty of the church Santa Maria della Salute in Venice, he wrote what turned out to become the greatest love poem in the history of Serbian language, "Santa Maria della Salute." He finished this poem two months before his death. Kostic died on November 26, 1910 in Vienna, and was buried at the Great Serbian Orthodox Cemetery in Sombor. The audience was visibly touched by this tragic love story, showing both sympathy and admiration for Laza Kostic and his elegant poetry.

he Festival was a great success for the audience and sponsors. Thanks to all of the generous supporters of the Festival: the Serb National Federation, the oldest Serbian Fraternal Society in the North American Continent since 1901; the Center for Russian and East European Studies at the University of Pittsburgh; the Radio Television of Serbia, and particularly Zoran Zdrnja who helped us screening the movies this year. In the interim of the Festival, the audience had an opportunity to socialize and learn more about Serbian culture, heritage, and history as well as listened to Serbian language through the movies and conversation with others. At the end of the Festival, everybody took home something valuable, and that is the idea of the rich tradition of Serbian culture and history. Our heritage strengthens bonds among us and makes a difference to other nations and continents.

"See you next year to enjoy Serbian Culture and movies! Viva Serbian Movies!"

Laza Kostić:

Santa Maria della Salute

Forgive me, O Mother Holy, I pray
For mourning our mountains, stripped of pine,
Those woods that became, despite our dark day,
Part of Your Mansion, a Holy Shine,
And, Source of Mercy, forgive, as you may,
This, my earthly sin, this guilt of mine.
Repentant, I kiss the hem of your dress,
O, Maria della Salute, Blessed.

Is it not better to bear Beauty's weight,
Hold up your arches, solid as rock,
Than to feed the hearths of the world's hot hate,
Burning to ash the heart and its bark,
Than to sink like a ship, rot at a gate,
Like the devil's own fir tree or oak?
So much lovelier the eternal rest
O, Maria della Salute, Blessed.

Forgive me, O Mother, I've born such hurt,

Much sin I've repented and renounced.
All my young heart had dreamed is but naught,
Ripped up by the walking world, denounced.
All that I yearned for, all hope my youth bought,
Crumbled to ashes, dusty accounts,
All in fulfillment of some malign jest,
O, Maria della Salute, Blessed.

Poisons, corruptions have hurt me within,
Yet I'll injure no man with my curse.
Whate'er I've suffered, from lash or snake's sting,
I'll have no man bear the blame or worse.
The power that broke this spirit's bright wing,
Choking its breath as it flew on course,
Sprang from this mad head, this mind of unrest,
O, Maria della Salute, Blessed.

Then my secret nymph stood there at my side.
Oh, such a sight had my eyes ne'er seen!
From the black darkness, a poem in her pride,
Broke dawn's glory in a dazzling sheen,
Healed in an instant all my wounds beside,
Yet left deeper wound, sharper pain.
Now how could I bear this joy in my breast,
Dear, Maria della Salute, so Blessed?

She looked on my face, and none has yet seen
Such a shine that sparkled from her eyes.
On a frozen landscape the light of that mien
Could warm mountain tops, melt snow and ice.
Now my heart's every wish was there to glean
Sorrows and sweetness, gall and fresh spice,
Hunger and thirst and the wants of my breast
Eternity be yours for this bequest,
You, Maria della Salute, O Blessed.

Was all of this splendor for such as me?
This gift like a miracle mine?
All these golden fruits, now ripe on the tree,
Indeed all for me, in life's decline?
O rarest fruit, you, so sweet to see,
Why were you not ripe at the harvest time?
Forgive me, for I'm a sinner confessed,
O, Maria della Salute, Blessed.

Two forces struggled for mastery in me,
Mind against heart, against flesh's yoke,
How long did they fight in this awful way,
Like the tempest against the old oak?
Finally passion grew weak in the fray,
And the grooved brain made its last attack.
You're the hinge of the mind; you hold it fast,

You, Maria della Salute, Blessed.
My mind constricted, compressed my own heart;
I fled its pleasures, mad in my flight.
Oh, how I fled, so hurt at the start.
Cold rose round my sun and quenched its light.
Stars darkened, and tears burst from heaven's part;
'Twas the world's end, Judgment's awful night,
The crack of doom, the world's trial at the last,
O, Maria della Salute, Blessed.

All broken hearted, my mind scored with fears,
I hold her memory a holy shrine.
Now in years later, when'er she appears,
It's as though God's face were here, Divine.
Within me the ice of agony thaws;
Through her I see; all knowledge is mine.
Why are our wise minds perplexed and distressed,
O, Maria della Salute, Blessed?

In sleep she comes, all silent, refusing
The loud rabble-cry of my desire.
When she will speak, the time of her choosing.
At her command she holds strange power,
And all around her, in clouds suffusing,
A heavenly pattern of charming hours.
And my path to her is thus paved and pressed,
By Maria della Salute, Blessed.

We hold one another as man and wife,
Without unhappiness, without care,
Halcyon days, with no fever of life,
Our passions cooled by heavenly air.
She's older now, and there is no strife;
The past is as mute as unsaid prayers.
For here my own age is blessed by the best,
By Maria della Salute, Blessed.

For us our children are poems I have made,
Timeless traces of our elation,
A written text, neither sung, nor e'en said,
Only the soul's ray's penetration.
Only two know where the secret is laid,
Rare is heavenly revelation.
It's what rapturous prophets have expressed,
O Maria della Salute, Blessed.

When the time of my doom comes round at last,
When I break my head 'gainst life's jagged stone,
My dream will be born with Death's rattling brass;
Then I'll hear ringing cry, "Come home!"
From nothingness into glorious grace,
From limbo to the heaven's full bloom,
To heaven and into her arms so warm.
Then that yearning will rise within my breast,

And my heart-strings will quiver without rest,
And the moving stars in the skies above,
Both the men there and gods will gaze aghast,
We'll alter the path on which the stars move;
We'll melt in our warming sun all the frost,
Till the dawn's red glow lightens every cove,
And all the ghosts are by love obsessed,
Dear Maria della Salute, Blessed!

Translation by Dorian Cooke and Milne Holton; modified by P. Cicovacki.

Ed. Note: National Television of Serbia (Radio Television of Serbia – RTS) published this article about the Movie Festival <http://www.rts.rs/page/rts/ci/Dijaspora/story/1516/vesti/3095055/festival-srpskog-filma-na-pitsbur-skom-univerzitetu.html>



Dr. Nancy Condee, Chair of the Slavic Department and President of CREES at the University of Pittsburgh



Audience during the interim of the Festival