FULL EXPOSURE
MoMA and the Global Film Initiative build new cross-country screening series

EVER FEEL LIKE YOU SOMETIMES LEARN MORE watching a two-hour movie than you did during your entire sophomore year at college? Film has a way of doing that—of taking us from the comfort and familiarity of our own sometimes mundane existence and allowing us to explore other lands and cultures, where we absorb a deeper appreciation of the world.

The Global Film Initiative is taking advantage of this: right now its “Global Lens” film series is traveling to major U.S. cities with the mission of transporting cineastes to places they’d only dreamed of.

In partnership with New York City’s Museum of Modern Art, Global Lens selects up to 10 films for viewing at cultural institutions in cities like New York, Boston, Seattle, Miami, and Chicago. This year’s festival provides films from such far-flung places as Vietnam, Algeria, Bosnia, Angola, Mali, Argentina, China, Turkey, and Uruguay. These films invariably portray the human side of a region’s cultures, traditions, values, and hardships.

Viewers can choose from films like Maria João Ganga’s Hollow City, the story of an on-the-run Angolan orphan exploring his war-stricken surroundings, and Mariano Galperin’s Lili’s Apron, about a man forced to masquerade as a woman to get a job in the midst of an economic crisis.

“Most teachers are not experts with using film as a teaching tool,” says Global Film Initiative chairperson Susan Coulter. “So Global Lens supplements programming with educational resources, including maps, local vocabulary and discussion topics.”

In addition, selected moviemakers have the opportunity to join students in these discussions. “It ends up being a wonderful two-way street,” Coulter says. “It creates a dialogue that might not otherwise happen.”

But distribution doesn’t end with a film’s cross-country venture. Last year the Initiative announced an agreement with First Run Features for North American theatrical, television and home video rights. The effect of this is that all films in the series have a shot at continuing their journey.

Coulter advises: “We look for strong narratives, authentic cultural voices and innovative and exceptional cinema. Think your film has what it takes to entertain and educate? Log onto www.globalfilm.org for an application and film submission requirements. —Esther Lam

East Coast Represents

and data storage, recently set up new digs in West Chelsea, amidst boho artists, club-hopping students and upscale salons that charge $500 for a haircut. According to CEO Steve Klein, the company’s decision “demonstrates that there is a strong, healthy multimedia marketplace in New York.” It also reflects a much-needed up-tick in the health of the Big Apple’s film industry. “New York offers filmmakers the richest talent, finest crews and best locations in the world,” says Katherine Oliver of the Mayor’s Office of Film, Theatre and Broadcasting. (The city’s “Made in New York” campaign helped it regain the top spot on our annual list of best cities to be a moviemaker—see MM #67.) “We see the New York media industry coming back in a big way,” says Media Distributors president Richard Myerson.

Do you think he’s already made an appointment for a celebratory coif?

For more information, visit www.mediadistributors.com. —Michelle Devereaux

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