

Srdan, Eve, Marko & Janko

Something In Between
directed by Srdan Karanovic
at the Fine Arts cinema
opens tomorrow

By W.E. OVERTON

Few films are as appropriately titled as *Something in Between*. It is set in Yugoslavia, a country that is a mixture of diverse religion, politics, spirit, and language. The dialogue is in English and Serbian. And although it is often comic in its depiction of the collision of diversities, the ending is tragic.

The plot follows two Yugoslavs, Janko (Predrag Manojlovic) and Marko (Dragan Nikolic), who are close friends, yet who are very different. Janko is a surgeon who has to work within the socialist bureaucracy and get by in the face of shortages. Marko is a materialist whose apartment is filled with the latest consumer goods—he's better at acquiring luxuries than Janko is at getting necessities. Marko speaks a bizarre form of English which he learned from "Pop Culture" and his sentences are peppered with movie titles.

Into their lives comes Eve (Caris Corfman), an American journalist who knew Janko when he was studying to be a doctor in New York. She becomes "something in between" them when her presence forces them to become aware of their differences.

Something In Between raises some important political questions that are specific to Yugoslavia. Dealing with these problems in a film would be of interest to Yugoslavs but it is hard to understand why the director, Srdan Karanovic, chose them for this intentionally international film. The issues are presented with the assumption of an understanding of Yugoslavia's unusual political system which allows for privately owned businesses in a communist country, an open border for its citizens, and is led by a council which appoints presidents on a rotating basis. In addition Yugoslavs are probably alienated somewhat because of the amount of English in the film.

The film has a skillfully wrought resolution. The characters, after having been forced to analyze themselves, make decisions based upon their new understanding of the others. They make the wrong decisions and the drama is played out at night against a backdrop of streets being used to reconstruct World War II battles for a film crew. The device is very effective cinematically and it also ties in the war, an important element of modern Yugoslavia that had not yet been dealt with in film.

Each of the characters is devastated by a backlash from their overriding characteristics; Janko by his trying to follow the mores of society, Marko by trying to live outside of them, and Eve by her dependence on American comforts and freedoms. Marko's demise is very poignantly constructed and portrayed.

Something In Between was shot in New York, Istanbul, Belgrade, and Dubrovnik. The director, Srdan Karanovic, is coming in from Yugoslavia, and will be in attendance at the opening.

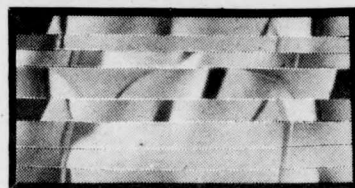
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—part II

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