

Left Coast Events Lower Mainland and Vancouver

(1) 11th Annual European Film Fest starts Friday at Pacific Cinematheque!

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From dave olsen <bike@resist.ca>

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It's one of my favourite events of the year: the European Union Film Fest at the Pacific Cinematheque! This year it runs from November 28 to December 11th. Unlike the big International festival, film only screen once, so plan ahead in order NOT to miss the ones you want. [Their revamped website](#) makes it easy to select by date, country or film...here's a few reviews to get you started...I'll add more to <http://reellife.wordpress.com/> as the festival continues, so check it as often as you'd like.

Most of the films are the best that each country has to offer, using popularity and polish as the primary criteria of what's best. I haven't had the pleasure of France 's [The Class](#) yet, but that screens early (Saturday, Nov 29th @ 7pm ) and should be one of the highlights.

Finland 's [Christmas Story](#) plays on Saturday, Dec 6th @ 4pm so the whole family can attend (\$8 for those under 18). And it may just rewrite the story of Santa Claus for the new generations. I'm thinkin' it will rouse the ire of some Canadians by setting the story in Lapland/Finland and others by taking a page from Hollywood North: high on production values and low on depth of story.

It is a lovely retake on our annual consumer frenzy, though; it certainly justified my desire for wooden toys! The best part for me was not one reference to any religious practice! The breathtaking (and breath making) scenes explain how it won the Finnish Oscar for Best Cinematography.

Germany 's [Vier Minuten](#) (Four Minutes; Fri, Dec 5th @ 9:05pm ) is an intense rollercoaster of a ride. The two women leads are solid in their portrayal of emotionally wounded characters and the film goes places I couldn't have even guessed...it certainly is worthy of the German Oscar (Lola) that it won last year.

Don't worry, it's not all intensity, despite being a German film. I love the scene where clothes are exchanged, which is followed by a series of similarly humorous scenes. But intense it is and as the characters' stories unfold, it does well to remain honest and true.

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**The music (the context is a piano teacher and her student) is also great and healing in so many ways. Oh yeah, the lesbian subplot: although it's all in flashbacks, there's nothing fluffy about it...and it helps us remember a history that cannot be forgotten.**

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