



Carmen Meets Borat

Director: Mercedes Stalenhoef, The Netherlands, 2008, 85 minutes

In *Carmen Meets Borat*, director Mercedes Stalenhoef follows the life of 17 year-old Carmen. She lives in a gypsy village in the mountains of Romania, where the men spend their days tying one on and exchanging coarse words in her father's bar. Carmen works daily in her father's business. At home, she watches a Spanish soap opera and dreams of a better life in Spain, where the men are romantic and decent.

Her plan to emigrate falls to pieces when an American film crew descends on her village to shoot *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan*. The villagers cooperate on what they believe is a documentary, however, the film depicts the villagers as primitive caricatures supposedly from Kazakhstan. Carmen's grandfather unknowingly plays the part of a backstreet abortionist and poses for the camera with a welding apparatus. Borat embraces a woman he introduces as his sister and brags about her status as the fourth best whore in Kazakhstan. The villagers don't understand a single word of English and laugh in good faith into the camera.

As soon as they find out that the English director has made fools of them, they are outraged. When the film is released, the world press throws itself on the village. The chaos is made complete when an American lawyer holds out the prospect of a \$30 million insurance claim to the villagers.

He persuades Carmen's father, grandfather, and the mayor to sue Twentieth Century Fox for money that could be used to improve the impoverished village. The film culminates with the three men traveling to meet with the executives at Twentieth Century Fox. Will the village win their case or is this just another westerner exploiting them? Will Borat himself apologize?

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Netherlands filmmaker Mercedes Stalenhoef made films for Amnesty International from 1992 to 1995, when she started making independent films. Her credits include: *Clean Clothes*, *I Just Take My Toys With Me*, *I Never Want To Be Famous* and *Carmen Meets Borat*.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

Happy Bats Cinema
DVD RENTALS AND SALES