

THIS WEEK IN NEW YORK

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Exhibits of the Week

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Hacer and Eyüp see no evil, hear no evil, and speak no evil in remarkable Turkish film

THREE MONKEYS (Nuri Bilge Ceylan, 2008)


Opens Friday, May 1

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, 1866 Broadway at 63rd St., 212-757-2280

Cinema Village, 22 East 12th St. between University Pl. & Fifth Ave., 212-924-3363

<http://cinemavillage.com>

<http://www.lincolnplazacinema.com>

 (out of four) Nuri Bilge Ceylan was named Best Director at Cannes for **THREE MONKEYS**, a harrowing examination of the disintegration of a Turkish family. When a politician named Servet (Ercan Kesal) kills a pedestrian on a deserted mountain road in the middle of the night, he calls his loyal driver, Eyüp (Yavuz Bingöl), who is at home asleep, asking him to take the fall, promising him a large sum of money in exchange for spending less than a year in jail. With the understanding of his wife, Hacer (Hatice Aslan), and university-age son, Ismail (Ahmet Rifat Sungar), Eyüp agrees to the deal. But when Servet and his party are surprisingly ousted from power, the situation changes drastically, complicating already tense relationships, resulting in lies, brutality, betrayal, and murder. Ceylan (**DISTANT, CLIMATES**), who wrote the screenplay with his wife, Ebru, and Kesal, who plays Servet, focuses on the psyche of the characters, choosing to show the wrought emotions on their faces while opting to have the vast majority of the action – including the car accident, a vicious beating, and the murder itself – occur off-camera. Ceylan displays his mastery of the Shakespearean plot with Bergman-esque aplomb, setting the mood with Gokhan Tiryaki's dark, claustrophobic cinematography and by eschewing musical accompaniment in favor of more naturalistic sounds. He also used an unusual method to get the best out of his cast by sometimes having the camera running before the actors realized it and using those moments in the final, fascinating, flawless film.