

Beyond the Golden Globes: An Exclusive Interview¹ with Barbaros Tapan



Editor's Note

As a distinguished member of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association and a voting member of the Golden Globe Awards, Tapan offers a unique perspective on the global film industry. Beyond his role in awarding prestigious accolades, Tapan's insights into Hollywood's influence extend far beyond the red carpet. His sports and entertainment reporting has been featured in renowned media outlets such as CNN Türk, TRT, and Kanal D.

In 2000, Tapan became the U.S. representative of Türkiye's largest media company, Demiroren Media Group. Currently, he contributes to Hürriyet daily newspaper, produces TV shows for BeIN Media-Turkey, and serves as the U.S. editor of Turkish Airlines' Skylife magazine. Recognized for his exceptional film coverage, Tapan was honored annually from 2018 to 2020 by the Entertainment Journalists Association of Türkiye².

In this interview, we delve into Tapan's perspective on Hollywood's impact on global culture, exploring how American cinema has shaped perceptions, values, and narratives worldwide.

¹This interview with Mr. Barbaros Tapan was conducted remotely between Dr. Kenan Yerli in Türkiye and Mr. Tapan in the USA on November 30, 2024.

²For more information about Barbaros Tapan please visit <https://goldenglobes.com/board-of-directors/barbaros-tapan/>

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IBAS: As a member of the Golden Globes and the founder and president of the Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days, Mr. Tapan what led you to pursue a career in journalism and film criticism?

B.T.: I have always loved film and been passionate about storytelling. Stories have the remarkable ability to connect and inspire people around the world. My enthusiasm for sports and entertainment fuels my creativity, and it led me to pursue a career in journalism, where I could share these passions with others.

IBAS: How did you become interested in the film industry?

B.T.: My journey into the film industry began with my passion for storytelling and its remarkable ability to resonate with people's lives. I observed how movies can unite individuals and spark meaningful conversations, which deeply inspired me. The unique blend of creativity, emotion, and connection captivated and fueled my work. I love how powerful narratives can shape our experiences and influence our feelings.

IBAS: How did you become a Hollywood Foreign Press Association member and a voting member of the Golden Globe Awards?

B.T.: Back then, becoming a Hollywood Foreign Press Association member was no easy feat; it was a long and challenging process. I needed consistent hard work, dedication, and perseverance to become an HFPA member. I had already established myself as a sports and entertainment journalist, but being part of such a prestigious group meant I needed to prove myself continuously. This involved showcasing my expertise, building strong industry relationships, and demonstrating my passion for cinema. Looking back, I realize that the journey was tough but rewarding. Today, being a voting member of the Golden Globe Awards feels special, truly reflecting the years of commitment I've invested in my craft. I hope that people recognize every effort matters, and even with challenges, it can lead to rewarding outcomes.

IBAS: What are some of the most memorable moments of your career as a journalist?

B.T.: Three moments stand out as the most unforgettable in my journalism career! An unforgettable moment for me was when Kobe Bryant won his Oscar. Backstage, surrounded by media from around the world, I had the honor of asking the first question. I asked him, "You have five NBA championships, Olympic gold medals, All-Star MVPs, and now an Oscar—how do you feel?" His response, which went viral and made headlines for days, was that winning the Oscar felt better than winning a championship. That moment is now part of Los Angeles and Oscar history, his answer to my question immortalized on the wall at Hollywood Boulevard, where millions take pictures daily. Being part of that experience fills me with pride.

Second, I had the incredible opportunity to interview Al Pacino. Just being in the same room with him was amazing! I've been a huge fan of his work for as long as I can remember. I've collected his movies and books and watched his performances countless times. Meeting him felt like a dream, and I will always cherish that experience because he has inspired me.

Also, My first one-on-one interview with Kobe Bryant marked the third unforgettable moment in my career. As my favorite athlete, his talent, work ethic, and determination have always inspired me. After each game, a crowd of media eagerly awaits his insights, making it nearly impossible to have a one-on-one conversation with him.

IBAS: What impact do you think awards have on the film industry, both domestically and internationally? Are awards ceremonies still relevant in the era of streaming platforms and digital distribution?

B.T.: Award ceremonies are crucial in shaping the film industry, both in the U.S. and internationally. They provide essential recognition that can elevate careers, boost box office success, and highlight films and television shows that might otherwise go unnoticed.



In today's landscape, award ceremonies still remain relevant and impactful. These events offer much more than just three hours of live broadcast. For a week, pre-parties, luncheons, and after-parties create invaluable opportunities for industry professionals to network and celebrate each other's hard work. This collaborative spirit fosters connections and camaraderie that uplifts everyone involved.

Moreover, even in an era where streaming platforms and digital distribution have made content more accessible, award shows are among the few occasions that unite the entire industry. They showcase the full spectrum of show business, including fashion, makeup, jewelry, lavish parties, and media coverage from around the world. This represents Hollywood culture. Show business deserves a showcase, and these ceremonies are that showcase. They serve as a cultural cornerstone for the entertainment industry.

IBAS: What is your perspective on Hollywood's role as a soft power tool in promoting American culture and values? Do you believe Hollywood's influence has grown or decreased in recent years?

B.T.: Hollywood plays a significant role as a soft power tool in promoting American culture and values. Its influence shapes perceptions and ideologies through film, television, and other media. Through its storytelling, Hollywood has established America as a leader in cultural diplomacy. Despite changes in the global landscape, Hollywood's influence remains unmatched. No other country comes close to America's reach and impact in soft power. While emerging markets like South Korea and Bollywood have gained popularity, Hollywood continues to set the standard for storytelling, production quality, and cultural influence.

IBAS: You are the founder and president of the Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days. Can you please tell us about this initiative?

B.T.: My wife, Elif Zorlu Tapan, and I founded the Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days because we have lived in Los Angeles for over 20 years. During this time, we observed how other countries promote their stories and culture through similar events. Our goal was to showcase the richness of Turkish storytelling and introduce our culture to a global audience.

This event is not just about screening films and TV series; it's a celebration of our community. It provides an opportunity to connect with Americans and individuals from all backgrounds.

Every member of the Turkish-American community acts as a cultural ambassador, promoting our vibrant culture and country. Many guests leave amazed at discovering Turkey's rich community and compelling stories.

This initiative has had a tremendous impact, and our dream is to expand it annually. In our first year, we welcomed incredible guests, including U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and actress Jacqueline Bisset. This year, the Hadid family and the president of the Golden Globes were with us. Hosting such prominent figures demonstrates that our event transcends borders and fosters meaningful cultural exchange and mutual understanding. This initiative is truly a labor of love for my wife and me.

IBAS: How has the Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days initiative contributed to the international recognition of Turkish cinema? Do you believe this event will significantly increase the likelihood of Turkish films receiving awards, such as the Golden Globe, in the coming years?

B.T.: The Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days initiative plays a vital role in promoting Turkish cinema internationally. By showcasing Turkish stories in Hollywood and fostering connections among filmmakers, actors, and industry leaders, we effectively break down barriers and highlight Turkey's wealth of talent and creativity. Attendees of our events often leave with a renewed appreciation for the depth and richness of Turkish narratives, further enhancing the global reputation of our cinema.

Initiatives like this can significantly improve the chances of Turkish films receiving prestigious awards in the future. However, we must remain committed to this effort in the long term. South Korea serves as a prime example; their sustained commitment to promoting their stories in Hollywood has led to significant global recognition and numerous awards. In Hollywood's competitive landscape hinges on telling remarkable stories and effective campaigning. To make a lasting impact, we must actively promote our films.

We need to engage with the international film community and consistently build relationships with key industry players to elevate our stories and create a meaningful impact in the film world.

IBAS: What are your future aspirations and goals for your career? Do you see yourself continuing to be involved in the film industry, and if so, in what capacity?

B.T.: Absolutely! Our vision is to elevate the Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days into a transformative event, positioning it as a vital platform for cultural exchange and showcasing the incredible stories of Türkiye to the world. My wife and I are passionate advocates for our homeland, and we love promoting and acting as cultural ambassadors who connect Türkiye with a broader audience.

Looking ahead, we also aim to deepen our involvement in the industry by producing films that highlight untold stories from Türkiye. These narratives deserve recognition, and we are committed to bringing them to life.

IBAS: What advice would you give to young filmmakers who aspire to make a global impact? What qualities do you believe are essential for success in the film industry?

B.T.: My advice to young filmmakers is to work hard, stay persistent, and not get discouraged by setbacks. This industry is full of challenges, but every obstacle is an opportunity to learn and grow. Don't stress too much or be too hard on yourself. Filmmaking is a creative journey, and enjoying the process is just as important as the outcome.

Be authentic. Audiences connect with genuine stories, so don't lose your unique voice in the pursuit of trends or commercial success. Think globally, and consider how your story can resonate with a worldwide audience while staying true to your roots.

Lastly, remember that patience and consistency are key. Success doesn't come overnight. Believe in your vision; your work will ultimately find its audience.

IBAS: What is your message to the readers of the *Interdisciplinary British and American Studies Journal*?

B.T.: Thank you for inviting me. It has been a pleasure sharing my thoughts and experiences with you, and I look forward to meeting you in person soon. I sincerely hope the *Interdisciplinary British and American Studies Journal* will contribute significantly to the field of Anglo-American Studies. Until then, stay creative, trust the process, and believe in the transformative power of stories.

IBAS: Thank you very much, Mr. Tapan, for your insightful responses and valuable perspectives. Your work is truly inspiring, and we are honored to have had this opportunity to engage with you. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors.