



Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival

Festival Daily

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Acting is about making smart choices

Robert De Niro's outstanding contribution to world cinema gets recognition at KVIFF

Veronika Bednářová

Legendary actor and director Robert De Niro hardly needs any introduction. The Academy Award winning star of classic films such as *Taxi Driver* and *Raging Bull* is at KVIFF today to receive the Crystal Globe for Outstanding Contribution to World Cinema. While he is here he will also present his new comedy *What Just Happened*, which will open this year's festival.

■ In *What Just Happened* you play an aging movie producer trying to save his career. Is Hollywood really as ruthless as it's portrayed in the film?

It's just like any other business. The rules are no different in that world. But it's more visible because it's Hollywood. People do what they have to do. And if you can't get something done because it boils down to economics, you have to do something else: Somebody falls by the way-side in that situation.

■ After becoming firmly established as an actor, why did you decide to get into directing films?

I like directing. With *The Good Shepherd* it took me years to get things going. I would have done it earlier. I started 9 or 10 years ago. It took that long to get it going. I'd like to do a couple of other films. A "next episode" of *The Good Shepherd*, which goes from 1961 with the Berlin Wall going up to 1989, with the wall coming down.

■ You said it took a long time to get financing for *The Good Shepherd*. So is it not true then that when Robert De Niro says



Oscar-winning actor Robert De Niro takes in Prague on his way to the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival.

he wants to make a movie, he's going to make a movie?

It was complicated because it was owned by certain people and it had to be reworked. Then I had to get the actors, and I was thinking of Leonardo DiCaprio, but when I started he was too young to approach. Then years later he was going off to do *The Departed* with Marty [Scorsese] and I couldn't stop the momentum at that point. So then I approached

Matt Damon. I had another actor who was wonderful but I couldn't get the movie made with just him in it, because it's an ambitious project. I needed someone like Leo or Matt just to get the financing.

■ When you directed Matt Damon did you think about your own acting work years ago?

Yes, I think when an actor

works with an actor they have a built-in understanding with each other about what it is. So an actor that is being directed by another actor will feel more comfortable. Just inherently knowing he's being spoken to by someone who knows what he does.

■ Do you plan to make another movie with Martin Scorsese sometime?

Yes, we have one project in

particular that we want to do. We've done eight movies together and I'd like to do another couple with Marty. We're going to do this project in a year or two. I'm superstitious about talking about it, but it's supposed to be happening.

■ *New York New York*, which was directed by Martin Scorsese, is the second film of yours being screened at the fes-

tival this year. What do you recall about making this musical, besides the fact that it prompted you to learn how to play the saxophone?

That was a movie we did in 1976-77. Marty wanted to do that kind of musical-type movie. I always knew that the song *New York, New York* would be famous because it was covered by Frank Sinatra. I always knew it would be popular. Then I remember I was sitting on an airplane and they were playing a "muzak" version. I wasn't surprised, but it was almost too catchy.

■ In terms of method acting, do you see any younger Hollywood stars following in your footsteps, like you followed the path of Marlon Brando or Montgomery Clift? Are you happy with the development of the American style of acting?

Ultimately, acting is what you make of it and how smart you are in your choices. An actor like Matt Damon is very conscientious and works very, very hard. I don't know what his formal training was. Whatever works for you... Everybody emanates something different.

■ Several films that are playing here also screened at the TriBeCa Film Festival, which you co-founded in 2002 not long after 9/11. Did the impact of that terrible event on New York's TriBeCa district inspire you to do this?

We were thinking about what it would be like to do a festival. Just as something entertaining at first. But then when 9/11 happened, we thought it was something we should do now, and try it, and start it. It wasn't easy to get going and I'm proud of it. It's a great thing.

SEE YOU THERE

Karel Och

KVIFF Programmer

I'd like to draw attention to a couple of movies from the retrospective, "New Hollywood II," specifically, *Night Moves*, by Arthur Penn, and *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*. I'd recommend *Night Moves* to anyone who likes Gene Hackman, Raymond Chandler or the 1970s. As for *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, I think this is a unique occasion to see wonderful performances by Warren Beatty and Julie Christie and amazing cinematography by Vilmos Zsigmond, all of this accompanied by splendid music by Leonard Cohen.

Night Moves screens today at 12.30pm in the Small Hall. *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* screens today at 7.30pm in the Karlovy Vary Theater.



THE KNOWLEDGE

Fear not the Czech tongue...

Though it can be intimidating at first, speaking a bit of Czech (or *čeština*, as the locals proudly know it) will help you make big points in these parts. What's more, the ancient Slavic language is something of a national cultural treasure in this country, in part because it has often been pushed aside as foreign tongues of oppressors were made the official lingua franca. Some good news, too: If you are arrested after a great KVIFF party, you are legally entitled to a Czech interpreter. The following will help in more common situations:

Basic phrases

Mluvíte anglicky?	mlooveetay anglitskee	Do you speak English?
dobry den	dobree den	Hello/Good day
Ahoj	ahoy	Hello (informal)
Dobry večer	dobree vecher	Good evening
Děkuji	jaykwee	Thank you
Promiňte	promintay	Excuse me
Prosím	proseem	Please
Jak se máte?	yak se mahte	How are you?
Mám se dobře.	mahm se dobzhe	I'm fine

Na shledanou	naskledanoh	Goodbye
Kde je...	gday yeh	Where is...
Restaurace	restowratsesh	Restaurant
Hospoda	hospada	Pub
Kino	keeno	Cinema
Toalety	towahletee	Bathroom

On the town

Kolik to stojí?	kohleek to stoyee	What's the price?
Pivo, prosím.	peevo proseem	Beer, please
Ještě jednou, prosím.	jeshtyeh jednoh proseem	One more, please
Máte...	mahtay	Do you have...
jídelní lístek v angličtině?	jeedelnee leestek v anglichtinyeh	a menu in English?

Film-going phrases

Lístek, prosím.	leestek proseem	Ticket please
V kolik hodin začíná promítání?	v koleek hodeen zacheenah	What time is the screening?
Má film anglické titulky?	ma film anglitskay titulkee	Are there subtitles in English?
Vyprodáno	veeprohdanoh	Sold out