

Go to the head of the Master Class

Five great film personalities share their expertise

Will Tizard

The Karlovy Vary festival has always had a significant educational aspect to it, dedicated as it is to bringing hundreds of films from around the globe to local audiences who would otherwise not be able to see most of them. But the new Master Class sessions, in which audiences can meet great directors firsthand and ask them in detail about their work for five days, is a film student's dream.

The series kicked off Sunday with legendary Mexican director and writer **Arturo Ripstein** talking about his career spanning 40 years in cinema, dating from his early days on the set of Luis Buñuel's *Exterminating Angel*, a film ranked by most scholars as among the top 1000 ever made.

Speaking as part of the tribute to his work, in which seven of Ripstein's most controversial and critically acclaimed films screen, the sharp-witted director entertained listeners Sunday with tales of the "history of crises" that comprise Mexican film in his view.

The series continues today with a talk by Danish documentary maker **Jørgen Leth**, who chairs this year's documentary Crystal Globe jury. Leth, a poet and film scholar, is former chair of the Danish Film Institute. Good topics to ask him about might be



Director Arturo Ripstein gave the first KVIFF Master Class.

food and music (he's been a professional critic of both) and *The Perfect Human*, his acclaimed 1967 short film.

The setting for the Master Classes, in the Captain Morgan tent, adjoining the south end of the Thermal hotel, can be a bit warm on sunny days, with crowds of festgoers filing past who may be unaware of the filmmaking greats in their presence (in fact, Ripstein chose to move his class to the quieter, cooler terrace of the hotel on Sunday, so it doesn't hurt to be prompt and make sure of the location).

Open to the public, sessions

like these provide valuable insights for would-be filmmakers, critics, fans and anyone else interested in some of the most interesting moviemakers around.

On July 9, director **Tom Schreiber**, along with the producers of the Official Competition film *Dr. Alemán*, speaks about shooting in Columbia, which should prove valuable for any European filmmaker considering such an exotic location. The film, which was shot in the Cali area, tells the tale of an idealistic young German physician who travels to the South American nation to help

provide medical care to the poor but soon finds himself ensnared in narco-mafia plots and dangers.

Schreiber's work evolved from shorts to the 2003 feature *Fools (Narren)*, produced by Road Movies, Wim Wenders' production company. He is currently working on the documentary *Vaterland* with Francisco Hervé, and a screenplay for the feature *The Pool*.

The British cinema legend **Christopher Lee**, who turned in a chilling performance as Saruman in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and has worked with everyone from Steven Spielberg to Tim Burton, will be leading the July 10 Master Class, speaking about the importance of music in

the training of an actor. The veteran actor with more than 250 films under his belt, including standout thrillers, horror and fantasy work, is also a lifelong opera lover, which moderator Phillip Bergson will be discussing with Lee when he chairs the session. Come early for a good seat at this one.

The final Master Class session, held July 11, will be led by American documentary maker **Les Blank**, who for over 30 years has chronicled everything from gap-toothed women to beer and the misadventures of Werner Herzog while filming *Fitzcarraldo* in the Amazon. He speaks as part of the Forum of Independents tribute to his work, which is screening five of his films.

Upcoming Master Classes

July 7, 1.30pm

Jørgen Leth, Danish documentary filmmaker and chairman of the KVIFF documentary section jury.

July 9, 3pm

Tom Schreiber, director of Official Competition film *Dr. Alemán*, along with producers of the film, speak on the challenge of shooting in Colombia.

July 10, 2pm

Christopher Lee, master British actor, veteran of suspense and horror films and operatic talent, speaks on the importance of music to an actor. Moderated by BBC contributor and critic Phillip Bergson.

July 11, 2pm

American documentary filmmaker Les Blank, whose films *The Blues According to Lightnin' Hopkins*, *Always for Pleasure* and *Garlic is as Good as Ten Mothers* are screening at KVIFF, speaks as part of the festival tribute to his work.

FACES

Today you may spot dir. **Thanos Anastopoulos** (*Correction*), prod.

Luis Minarro

(*In the City of Sylvia*), produc-

er **Judi Sydes** or

dir. **Ramón**

Costafreda

(*Dead Hand*

Knocking), actor

Dar Salim (*Go*

With Peace

Jamil), actress

Anjorka Strechel (*To Faro*), dir.

Mariana Rondón, prod. **Marite**

Ugás (*Postcards from Leningrad*),

and directors **Götz Spielmann**

(*Revanche*), **Umesh Vinayak**

Kulkarni (*The Wild Bull*) and

Barbara Caspar (*Who's Afraid of*

Kathy Acker?). Producer **Karl**

Baumgartner is here with *The*

World Is Big and Salvation Lurks

Around the Corner, co-produced

with **Stefan Kitanov**, and *Tulpan*,

directed by **Sergey Dvortsevov**.

Docu-makers in town include

Václav Reischl (*Back to the*

Fatherland), **Bettina Timm** and

DP **Alexander Riedel** (*Cosmic*

Station), **Filip Marczewski** and

DP **Szymon Lenkowski** (*Just Like*

Heaven), dir./prod. **Marko Škop**

and **Juraj Lehotský** (*Blind Loves*).

Dir. **Radu**

Muntean is

here with

screenwriter

Alexandru

Baciu and actor

Vlad Muntean

(*Boogie*). Prod.

Marian Urban

and dir. **Juraj**

Nvota (*Music*), and actors **Jiří**

Mádl and **Tomáš Matono** (*The*

Can) have also arrived.



Thanos Anastopoulos



Bettina Timm

7.7.2008 19:00 Espace Dorleans Official screening
9.7.2008 12:30 Kino Cas (Cas Cinema) Official screening

7 games of love, death and sex...

dead hand knocking
mà morta truca a la porta

Pablo Derqui Leticia Dolera Gonzalo Cunill Carol García
Written by Miquel Obiols based on the stories of Sergi Pàmies.
Directed by Ramon Costafreda

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REVIEWERS RECOMMEND

Nick Roddick

London Evening Standard



Il Divo

Director: Paolo Sorrentino, Italy, 2008
July 7, 9am, Grand Hall – Thermal

Sorrentino is probably the most interesting young director in Europe at the moment, and his stylised biopic about Italian political dinosaur Giulio Andreotti is both ravishing to look at and extraordinary in its subtle bending of reality to make a dramatic and political point. Whatever you do, don't miss the beginning.



Involuntary

Director: Ruben Östlund, Sweden, 2008
July 7, 11am, Karlovy Vary Theatre

The skill demonstrated in Östlund's award-winning short, *Scen Nr: 6882*, translates to feature-length with only a slight feel that the stories – there are five of them – need a little further development. But the framing and the confidence to let a scene play out suggest the emergence of a major new Swedish talent.



Vogelfrei

Director: Janis Kalejs, Gatis Smits, Janis Putnins, Anna Viduleja, Latvia, 2007
July 7, 10pm, Karlovy Vary Theatre

The ages of man, Latvian-style. A low-key but superbly filmed and wonderfully cumulative study of Teodors as child, teenager, pushy young businessman and grumpy old hermit go to prove what Janis Joplin knew all along: that freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose.



Boogie

Director Radu Muntean, Romania, 2008
July 7, 7.30pm, Lázně III Cinema

A Romanian film defiantly *not* set in December 1989, Radu Muntean's wry observation of 30-year-old Boogie (short for Bogdan) is a skilled and engaging riff on how hard it is to say goodbye to one's youth. The film goes off a bit at the end, but the first half adds another powerful surge to the Romanian New Wave.