

OFFICIAL SELECTION

Terribly Happy – a disturbing crime story from Jutland

Danish director Henrik Ruben Genz is no stranger to KVIFF. His offbeat love story *Chinaman* screened as part of the Official Selection in 2005 and picked up both the Ecumenical Jury and FIPRESCI prizes. This year Genz's latest film *Terribly Happy* is also competing in the Official Selection competition. Before coming to Karlovy Vary, he had a few words with the *Festival Daily* about this atmospheric tale involving a Copenhagen policeman trying to navigate his way around the intricacies of a tightknit rural community in southern Jutland.

■ **You grew up in southern Jutland where *Terribly Happy* is set. Do you think your film offers a realistic depiction of life in the Danish countryside?**

One might say that on a symbolic level the story is true in terms of the way outsiders are treated in southern Jutland. There are subtle ways of isolating people and the silent treatment can be a powerful weapon in this area as well.

■ **The movie is based on a novel by Erling Jepsen, whose work also inspired Peter Schonau Fog's *The Art of Crying*. What attracted you to doing a film adaptation of his book?**

Jepsen and I grew up not only in the same small town in southern Jutland but on the same street.



We have been friends since childhood. Since we are both storytellers in our own media, it has always been in the cards that we would work together at some point. Jepsen wrote for theater for 25 years before writing novels, and his writing reflects a keen understanding of drama. As such, his work is an obvious candidate for the screen.

■ **What approach did you take to filming the book?**

The main theme of the book is the relationship between a mother and her son. This relationship was not so deeply intertwined with the landscape, so I decided to focus on another aspect of the story – that of the outsider and his or her relationship to the social cohesion that exists in this part of Denmark.

■ **Are there any similarities**

between *Chinaman* and *Terribly Happy*?

There are some connections between the two films, which both deal with loneliness. Both films also ask similar questions. To what extent is one willing to compromise one's understanding of social, moral and cultural norms? How far is one willing to go in order to achieve one's goals? The main characters in both *Chinaman* and *Terribly Happy* share a common objective – to rid themselves of loneliness and to be accepted socially. In the process, both characters distance themselves from their past.

Terribly Happy screens today at 2pm in the Thermal's Grand Hall and tomorrow at 10pm in the Espace Dorleans Cinema

Zbyněk Vlasák

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The Early Bird Catches the Worm – a Tuscan tale of redemption

Italian director Francesco Patierno's second feature film *The Early Bird Catches the Worm* is based on *Il Giacotore* ("The Gambler") the autobiography of renowned Florentine DJ Marco Baldini, who nearly threw away his burgeoning career by becoming heavily addicted to gambling in the early 1980s. With large doses of humor, this Official Selection film convincingly recreates Italian society of that era and Elio Germano (*My Brother Is an Only Child*) gives a stunning performance as the embattled Baldini whose chaotic double life almost destroys him. The *Festival Daily* managed to email a few questions to Patierno before he came to KVIFF.

■ **How did you become involved with Baldini's life story?**

When I "saw" Marco Baldini for the first time, it was not on the radio but on television, about eight years ago on a primetime program. As a person, he really took my interest and I thought I could make a film about him.

■ **Was he reluctant to have his story told by someone else?**

Marco trusted me and was really very discreet. He was never afraid that his book and character would be transformed into something "new". I asked him to tell me everything that wasn't in the book. I taped almost twenty hours



worth of interviews and using that material I started writing the script. He also introduced me to his parents and friends from the time when he lived in Milan – gamblers from casinos all over Italy. Every one of these people told me something interesting about his character. When we finally organized a private screening of the film for Marco, it was very emotional for him. It was different to experience these things as a spectator.

■ **Do you think gambling and its effect on people's lives is often overlooked?**

The numbers of people betting are very high. A great number of people lose large sums every day at betting tables. In recent years there has been rising awareness of this problem. It is hard to tackle because the addiction to gam-

bling almost cannot be escaped (as is said at the end of the film). It is much more difficult than tackling a drug problem. The mechanisms that make a person gamble are simple and complex at the same time.

■ **Do you think your film can help spark a change in how gambling is perceived, and even have some therapeutic value for gamblers who watch it?**

That's a very tough question. I believe that if nothing else, film can provide food for thought, without condemning the person in question.

The Early Bird Catches the Worm screens today at 8pm in the Thermal's Grand Hall and tomorrow at 10am in the Espace Dorleans Cinema

Zbyněk Vlasák

Uslyšíte i to, co jste neviděli!

Filmžurnál 008 102,6 FM

Denně 9–11.30 a 12.30–17.30 hodin

- aktuální informace o dění na 43. MFF KV
- reportáže ze zákulisí, rozhovory s filmovými hvězdami
- „Filmový kurýr“ – stručný přehled festivalových událostí – 4x denně
- filmová hudba
- „Host Radiožurnálu“ a další pořady pro celostátní vysílání ČRo1 – Radiožurnálu vysíláme také z proskleného studia v hotelu Thermal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► Karlovarské spektrum úvodní přehled očekávaného festivalového dění ► Filmtip co si nenechají ujít V.I.P. hosté ► Portrét rozhovory se zajímavými osobnostmi filmového světa ► Červený koberec rozhovory s hvězdami stříbrného plátna 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► Kino bez bariér informace pro handicapované návštěvníky a posluchače ► Festivalové epizody kuriozity z festivalového dění ► Kinoautomat rady posluchačů, co si nenechat ujít a varování před propadáký ► Odcloněno názory filmových publicistů a tvůrců
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Podrobné zprávy z festivalového dění najdete a Filmžurnál můžete poslouchat na adrese:
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REVIEWERS RECOMMEND

Alissa Simon
Film Critic for *Variety*

**Amal**

Director: Richie Mehta, Canada, 2007
July 5, 4pm, Congress Hall – Thermal

The color and chaos of contemporary India come alive in this tightly plotted humanistic drama that sports a surprising O. Henry-style twist. Already voted an audience favorite at many US fests, it follows the unexpected reverberations from a small act of kindness. For his first feature, charismatic Canadian Richie Mehta expanded his prize-winning short and talked some of India's top actors into participating.

**Moscow, Belgium**

Director: Christophe van Rompaey, Belgium, 2008
July 5, 7pm, Congress Hall – Thermal

A top-notch cast delivers sharp (and frequently comic) dialogue in this endearing drama set in working-class Ghent. Sexy Barbara Sarafian leads the way as a tart-tongued 40-ish heroine (a role that would suit Frances McDormand if a US remake is ever in the cards). Christophe Van Rompaey's accomplished feature debut about a working mother unexpectedly caught in a love triangle won multiple prizes in Cannes Critics' Week.

**My Winnipeg**

Director: Guy Maddin, Canada, 2007
July 5, 4.30pm, Lazně III Cinema

The surreal hallmarks of Manitoba auteur Guy Maddin's distinctive oeuvre mark this delirious tribute to his hometown. A "docu-fantasia," it employs what my colleague Eddie Cockrell calls "a fusion of silent film technique with pre-moistened melodrama." The later strain is epitomized by his casting of American "B" movie star Ann Savage (the femme fatale of "Detour") as his mother in re-enacted family scenes brilliantly portrayed in film noir style. Enjoy Maddin's grandiloquent narration ("Snowy, sleepwalking Winnipeg... I must leave it..."), the dream-like, black-and-white cinematography and playful animated segments.

**Bad Timing**

Director: Nicolas Roeg, United Kingdom, 1980
July 5, 10pm, GH Pupp Cinema

Originally released in the U.S. as "Bad Timing: A Sexual Obsession" the titillating title provided a certain truth in advertising, although Nicolas Roeg's fifth feature is far from lurid. His trademark editing style, which fractures the time-space continuum, adds compelling mystery to the passionate relationship of a disturbed young woman (Theresa Russell) and her psychiatrist (Art Garfunkel) that's being investigated by Harvey Keitel. Shot in widescreen amid the decaying elegance of cold-war Vienna, with a rousing soundtrack including Billie Holiday, Tom Waits and The Who, this shouldn't be missed.