



Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival

Festival Daily

THE OFFICIAL ENGLISH DAILY OF THE 46TH KARLOVY VARY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

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PRÁVO



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Vote for the best film of the 46th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival!
(Czech section: page 2)

Artists must expose their souls

Kim Ki-duk plans more weapons and killing

Tereza Šimůnková

Kim Ki-duk is hiding in Karlovy Vary – not from the audiences, of course, but from Korean journalists. After three years of relative seclusion, the world-renowned director has returned to filmmaking with his semi-autobiographical *Arirang*, which he presented this week at KVIFF. The notoriously private director spoke with *The Festival Daily* about his latest film, the relationship between art and truth, and the difficulty of confronting himself.

■ *Arirang* is an autobiographical monologue set in a snow-covered mountain cottage. Did this present challenges for you as a filmmaker?

I don't perceive it as a monologue. Kim Ki-duk Number One speaks to Kim Ki-duk Number Two, with Kim Ki-duk Number Three interfering... All are different; all are me. My primary goal in making *Arirang* was not to make a film to travel around festivals. In fact I made it for myself. I admit that in certain ways I feel a bit ashamed. I am naked in it, using the bathroom, overeating – there are many scenes that people usually don't show. I shot it last winter, then I shot a bit more until I had gathered plenty of material. During the editing I suddenly felt, *I want to reveal this about myself*, even though what I found out about myself was painful at times. It made me angry. I was swearing. Yes, I surprised myself quite a bit in *Arirang*.

■ Why do artists bare their souls?

If an artist wants to be truthful, they haven't got much choice. It's simply their job. I don't want to expose my soul but I have to. But I don't think of myself as an artist. I am a film worker.

■ Don't artists primarily wish



Photo: Jan Handrejch

Korean director Kim Ki-duk answers the call of nature in his semi-autobiographical *Arirang*.

to make a unique and distinctive impression?

It's true but it's not the main thing. If you look at *Arirang* only as a depiction of how Kim Ki-duk is living now, it makes no sense... It's a film about what people feel, not about what somebody is like. It is meant to be a mirror in which we can find ourselves. I really don't want to show off in *Arirang*. I don't think it's me. I am we. I am not speaking for myself but on behalf of everything I perceive. On behalf of a bigger whole that is humanity or nature. I am a man who wants to become nature.

■ You withdrew into seclusion after an actress nearly died during shooting. In the future,

will you be making more peaceful films?

I am still planning weapons and killing. Don't get me wrong – I take no delight in violence. Only, in my opinion, it exists in nature just like water, air, trees, mountains and all living things. It's just there. It belongs to a whole. It completes it. Sometimes it becomes part of a human fate without any reason.

■ Can Asian films speak to Europeans and vice versa? Or does one need common experience to fully appreciate films from another culture?

I don't think it makes a difference whether you eat with a fork or with chopsticks. Look (*draws a picture*): this is a western house

and this is an eastern one. The western one has a lot of decorations on the walls; the eastern one has inclined roofs. But what is more important: what it looks like or that both have roofs and someone living inside? With people it's similar. You can look solely at the face and figure, but I try to take in everything. Where they live, how they feel, what they experience. Above all you need to know that a person is nature, too. Nature is honest: it does not distort anything, it does not corrupt anything. The only real healer is nature. But man has turned away from nature too much.

■ Where are your priorities in life right now?

Because you are asking me at

a film festival, I will answer that self-confidence is the most important thing in the life of a filmmaker. Without it I would never shoot anything.

■ And in the life of Kim Ki-duk?

I must admit that only recently have I started thinking about whether there is any difference at all. Even as Kim Ki-duk the man, I say that self-confidence is the most important thing. I realized it when I looked back: in the past, what I feared the most was myself. And what I always had the least of was confidence in myself. That has now completely changed.

Arirang screens tomorrow at 4pm in the Drahomíra Cinema.

THE LOWDOWN

Introductions are always the most awkward part of film festivals the world 'round, but once gotten over, conversations usually run swimmingly – unless the person you've just met happens to have publicly stated in some way that they hated your film, which happens more often than you'd think.

But no risk of this for hot new director Cary Joji Fukunaga, who screened his feature *Jane Eyre* at KVIFF to kick off the fest last Friday. In fact, as a little story making its rounds of the back corridors has it, the silver-haired gent who came up to him after the screening made a point of publicly praising the film. Fukunaga, accepting the praise graciously, then inquired who the spiffy older might be.

"I'm the president of the Czech Republic," came the equally gracious reply. No outcry, no fuss. Well, perhaps a slight pause... Dame Judi Dench, who is rumored to have been standing next to Fukunaga the whole time, is said to have kept a remarkable poker face throughout. After all, the film and political world don't intersect too often other than at moments like this – fortunately for all of us. No one knows whether Mr. President asked the director to borrow a pen for an autograph...

Sometimes, when one of these tribes gets a chance to peer into a crowd of the other, matching faces to public personas is – let's face it – a bit of a challenge. One pre-eminent *Variety* critic, for example, was overheard this week speculating on which famous actress a svelte brunette in a pink ballgown spotted in the Grandhotel Pupp's Mirror Hall must be.

"Karel Och's wife," turned out to be the quiz-winning answer. More proof, if any were needed, that KVIFF's new artistic director does rather well for himself. ■

SEE YOU THERE

Mathieu Denis

Co-director, *Laurentia*

I think the first film I'll see is *Romeo Eleven* by Ivan Grbovic. He's my compatriot so I'm already interested in seeing what kind of film he makes. From what I hear, it's a very poignant family drama, dealing with notions of identity in a world of rapidly changing values. I'm eager to see that. It was also shot by one of our very best cinematographers in Quebec, Sara Mishara. I'm sure the film will be worth seeing even for its images. Another film I'd like to see is *Michael*, the debut film by Austrian director Markus Schleinzner, who is not exactly a newcomer. I've heard he's a very famous casting director, who cast some of Michael Haneke's films, including *The White Ribbon*. This seems to be a very tense, subtle drama about a man who kidnapped a young boy, maybe loosely based on the Natascha Kampusch story.

Romeo Eleven screens today at 5pm in the Grand Hall and at 1pm tomorrow in the Espace Dorleans Cinema.

Michael screens today at 10pm in the Congress Hall

Mathieu's film *Laurentia* is screening today at 12:30pm in the Čas Cinema.

(COC)



EXPLAINER

Put a spring in your step with KV's healing waters

Although you might be forgiven for thinking the thousands of annual visitors are more interested in retail therapy than balneology (treatments involving bathing), doctors are still prescribing the healing waters of Karlovy Vary for all manner of serious conditions. Whether it's gout, gastrointestinal diseases, or diabetes that brought you to this ancient spa town, you're probably already well aware that the cliché of sitting in something warm and bubbly while drinking something cold and bubbly isn't quite what the spas here are about.

Seventy-nine sources of hot mineral water have been discovered in the area, and 13 are used for drinking cures. Each of these is named, and they range from the 30 degree Snake Spring – which has bubbled out of a snake's head spout right there in the Colonnade since 2001 – to the 72 degree Hot Spring, which is the only one currently used for



bathing. The "skin eater" treatments of ages past are long gone; hours of sitting in scalding, sulfurous water until your skin is chapped and stained just isn't as popular these days. Also gone are the extreme drinking cures of 50 cups a day, guaranteed to seriously erode your tooth enamel unless you used the famous ceramic cups with the drinking spout in the handle.

A local treatment which hasn't lost popularity is in nearby Jáchymov, the town where Marie Curie discovered radium. The site of the world's first "radon spa" is still doing a brisk trade, treating various joint disorders and skin diseases for some 20,000 visitors a year. A stay in the Curie Suite at the prestigious Radium Palace hotel will set you back 147 euro a night including full treatment. Be aware that you need a minimum of 10 baths "in order for the effects of radon therapy to begin"...

(PLC)

Rumors fly as industry reps and filmmakers negotiate

Laura McGinnis

By day seven of the festival, the streets of Karlovy Vary are full of rumors. Everybody's got a story about some director who was approached by a big shot producer with a contract in his back pocket – but the truth is frequently more complicated.

"A lot of people are talking," says KVIFF Film Industry Office head, Andrea Szczuková. "There are negotiations, but I haven't heard anything official."

The Film Industry Office has hosted several events this week to encourage these sorts of negotiations. Over the years, KVIFF has earned a reputation as a champion of European film industries, as well as a relaxed environment. These characteristics come together in events like the "Cooperating with Hollywood" and "Works in Progress" panels – events designed to educate filmmakers about the Hollywood movie machine, and to expose exceptional new work from Central and Eastern Europe to buyers, sellers, distributors and other industry professionals.

While both of these events were very well attended, Szczuková says, most of the



Directors pitch films at the Works in Progress panel.

participants are still in the talking stages. Directors of 24 forthcoming feature films made eight-minute pitches to a full house at the Thermal's Congress Hall on July 4 for the Works in Progress panel. Szczuková estimates nearly 140 people were in attendance.

The films (some of which were international co-productions) come from Central and Eastern Europe: Croatia, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey.

Now in its seventh year, the Works in Progress panel has become a KVIFF staple, and its popularity reflects a growing interest in Euro-

pean films. "There is a tremendous interest in discovering new European talent," says Steven Gaydos, executive editor of *Variety*. "So many of the major new Hollywood films are being made by European filmmakers."

In past years, many projects have benefited from the Works in Progress panel, going on to appear at other international festivals or to international distribution. Over the past few days, KVIFF's Film Industry Office has set up conversations between the directors and interested parties to facilitate talks on similar opportunities.

"We got feedback that people really liked the panel," Szczuková says. "They found it very useful. In fact,

some of them said that they came *only* for this and they saw many projects they liked, but they didn't give me the exact titles. I hope we'll hear something more definite soon."

The situation with the Co-operation with Hollywood panel, held on July 3, is similar. Moderated by producer, screenwriter and film columnist Tomáš Baldýnský, panel members Karl Austen (a Hollywood entertainment lawyer), Jay Cohen (a producer) and Melinda Jason (president of Conspiracy production company) discussed the ins and outs of Hollywood production for an audience of film professionals.

"After the panel there were several pre-arranged, one-on-one meetings. There have been negotiations about deals, but nothing has been confirmed yet," Szczuková says.

If past years are any indication, some of these films will go on to festival tours and international distribution. But for now, hopeful filmmakers who go to bed with visions of film contracts dancing in their head will have to wait just a little bit longer to see those dreams come true. ■

Indies juror Margaret Corkery is *Eamon* high

Laura McGinnis

Along with fellow jurors, Czech Television programmer Michael Málek, and *LevelK* director Tine Klint, filmmaker Margaret Corkery will be deciding which film from the Forum of Independents sidebar receives this year's Independent Camera award. Corkery's debut feature *Eamon* won the prize in 2009 and went on to screen at 30 festivals and be distributed in several countries.

■ How would you describe the Forum of Independents films this year?

I think there's a lot of talent in the films. The programmers have made great choices, with a lot of real diversity. Each movie has something very different and I've been very engaged while watching them.

■ Does your experience as a filmmaker influence how you judge the films?

As a filmmaker I'm very impressed by the work because you look at it a little differently, I think. I've been through the process of making films so when I see a movie I pay attention to things like how it was made and how much it cost and if they used nonprofessional actors and things like that, because I know how hard it is to get something up on the screen.

■ What sort of characteristics are you and the other judges looking for? Do you have different ideas about what makes a strong film, or are you generally in agreement?

You know, that's very hard to pinpoint really. I guess we want to be engaged and entertained, if that makes sense. You want to be involved in the film. I can't speak for the other two judges, of course; I can only speak on behalf of myself. But it's always very exciting to come across something that challenges you, something new. At this stage, we're just watch-



2009 indies winner Margaret Corkery.

ing everything, taking everything in, and it's a constant process of discussion. It's not a matter of whether we agree or disagree yet. But of course we all have opinions, we all have experience, so I think it will be an interesting debate when we have to make a decision.

■ What advice would you give to independent filmmakers who are just starting out? How can they make the most of the opportunities they have?

I don't know! I feel like I'm still starting out right now because I've only made one feature. I think it's a very tough market, the feature film market, and there's a lot of talent out there as well. I think... just practicing your craft is important, being humble and realizing that you have to work very hard to make something good because there's so much good stuff already around. ■

REVIEWERS RECOMMEND

Peter Debruge
Senior Film Critic, *Variety*



Kill List

Director: Ben Wheatley, UK, 2011, 92 min
July 7, midnight, Small Hall

Just when you think you've figured out what kind of movie *Kill List* is, it goes and transforms into something else. Stick with this intense, shape-shifting thriller, and you'll discover a seat-of-your-pants horror flick with an unbelievably frightening *Twilight Zone*-worthy twist. One reason the film's shocker ending is so scary is that director Ben Wheatley (*Down Terrace*) elected to use the sort of kitchen-sink naturalism you expect in far drearier indie fare to create tension and establish his firecracker-sharp characters. The film's rooting interest is a forever-angry guy who hasn't quite adapted to married life, parenthood or keeping up the payments on his posh house and jacuzzi. Did I forget to mention he kills people for a living?



Black Venus

Director: Abdellatif Kechiche, France, 2010, 160 min
July 7, 9pm, Small Hall

European helmers tend to be far more progressive than their American counterparts at "atonement cinema" – that is, films with the nerve to unearth and potentially even reconcile embarrassing chapters from our checkered social past. But the point of *Black Venus* is not to punish viewers. Rather, Tunisian director Abdellatif Kechiche seeks to enlighten, exploring still-potent aspects of racism through the sympathetic, yet deeply unsettling true story of "Hottentot Venus" Saartjie Baartman, a South African freak-show attraction whose act perpetuated primitive stereotypes about her people. Through its frank depiction of Baartman's semi-voluntary degradation, this tragic portrait restores a measure of dignity and understanding to this most objectified of 19th century women, thanks in large part to Cuban actress Yahima Torrès' soulful lead performance.



Medianeras

Director: Gustavo Taretto, Argentina, Germany, Spain, 2011, 95 min
July 7, 7pm, Pupp

Whereas most big-screen romances start with a "meet cute" (a contrived scene in which future lovers experience love at first sight), *Medianeras* builds up to the inevitable moment when two characters destined to be together finally experience that spark. In the meantime, handsome Martin and frustrated artist Mariana go about their modern lives, cut off from not just romance, but any form of satisfying human connection in the bustling Argentine capital of Buenos Aires. Expanded from an award-winning short, Gustavo Taretto's enchanting first feature invents all sorts of creative ways to comment on the frustration of 21st century love, including a running "Where's Waldo?" joke that underlines the challenge of finding a soulmate in the big city. ■



Autentická česká a asijská kuchyně.
Unikátní lázně v bývalé renesanční kapli.
Originální koktejly v moderním baru.
Nezapomenutelné oslavy, bankety, svatby.
Nejpříjemnější personál v Praze.

Víc než jen luxusní postele.



OFFICIAL SELECTION

Romeo Eleven – a universal story in a specific environment

Jaroslav Švelch

When he chats with his virtual female friends as Romeo Number Eleven, he poses as a successful businessman collecting miles on his frequent flyer card. He writes that he lives in a hotel with a view of the Empire State Building and has just closed a huge deal. In real life he's a sickly boy living in the claustrophobic environment of Montreal's Lebanese minority. His greatest life achievement is that he managed to learn to walk despite his disability.

Romeo Eleven director Ivan Grbovic set his feature debut in an environment he is deeply familiar with. He himself comes from a family of immigrants – he has Montenegrin and Slovenian roots and most of his family live in Belgrade. So why did he not set his film among the Balkan community?

"The story doesn't hinge on a specific nationality but it does touch upon varying degrees of culture and a broad sense of where one comes from [in terms of identity]," he says. "I wanted to tell a universal story in a specific environment... This is a Montreal film. The characters are Montrealers and have been for a long time."

In a low-key manner, almost without words, *Romeo Eleven* depicts a conflict between reality and desires as well as between



Photo: KVIF

Grbovic's film shows the tension between desire and reality.

self-determination and the expectations of society. The camerawork plays a major role in the movie, which is not surprising given that Grbovic studied cinematography at LA's renowned American Film Institute (AFI).

"Los Angeles was a great place to meet and learn from cinematographers that I admired – the late Conrad Hall, László Kovács, Jean-Yves Escoffier, amongst many others," he says. AFI is also the place where I met my wife Sara Mishara, the cinematographer and co-screenwriter of the film [who also studied at Prague's FAMU film school], so that affected my filmmaking – and life – in many ways."

The couple took inspiration for *Romeo Eleven* from the award-winning film *Time Out* by the French filmmaker Laurent Cantet as well as the work of DPs Gordon Willis (*The Godfather*) and Harris Savides (*American Gangster*); but the locations themselves

played a big role. Casting was the most difficult part of the production. The protagonist Rami and his mother are played by non-actors Ali Ammar and Éléonore Millier, authentic Montrealers. Rami's younger sister is played by an Algerian and the imposing figure of the father, a patronizing family dictator and Middle-Eastern macho-man, is rendered by Joseph Bou Nassar, a theater actor from Beirut.

Two-and-a-half years have passed between the writing of the script and the Karlovy Vary world premiere, which means *Romeo Eleven* is something of a labor of love for the director. "Shooting this feature debut was the most exhausting and emotionally difficult experience in my life," he says. "I am glad I did not lose my sanity."

Romeo Eleven screens today at 5pm in the Grand Hall and tomorrow at 1pm in the Espace Dorleans Cinema. ■

OFFICIAL SELECTION

Room 304 – the things that happen behind closed doors

Zbyněk Vlasák

Birgitte Starmose's *Room 304* is an intriguing ensemble piece that follows people from vastly different walks of life whose fates gradually intertwine in a Copenhagen hotel over the course of three days. This Official Selection contender is the first feature by the Danish director, who previously made a mark with her documentary *Out of Love*, winning a Special Mention at the Berlinale in 2010.

■ **Your film *Room 304* is concentrated in a hotel. In what ways is this kind of place interesting for you as a filmmaker?**

I am fascinated by the hotel as a place outside of time. I am a very curious person. I always wonder when I stay in a hotel "what happens behind all those closed doors?" A hotel has this duality: it is extremely intimate and, at the same time, a very anonymous place. You're so close to other people, sleeping in the same beds that other people just slept in. The maid will come and move your personal belongings around, and you pretend it is not so.

■ **Your hotel is kind of a "melting pot" where everyone has to speak a little English. Is this what makes you interested in this sort of place?**



Photo: KVIF

Vastly different lives converge in a Copenhagen hotel.

Yes, I think of the hotel as my Babel. I relate to this international disconnected identity having myself lived in the US for 14 years. I also love that people, who otherwise would never intersect, get really close here. The hotel opens up the possibility for telling one story about people from very different walks of life. It also opened up the possibility for me to work with wonderful actors from many different countries. That was the true treat of making the film – the actors.

■ **There is no character in your film who is happy or even content, everyone has some problem they're trying to work through. Do you think this discontent is necessary for drama?**

Well, being Scandinavians, we have a reputation to live up to. But I also do think that I connect to people's struggles more than when things are going just fine. The people in the film are all trying to be happy and make some

sense of it all. I have a lot of empathy for what people go through in their lives... You can make drama about a lot of things, but I think that as a storyteller you have a role to play in reflecting back people's lives. And maybe we need to have the difficulty we encounter in our lives reflected more in order to cope...

■ **Was it difficult to keep the story together? Especially when there are so many characters?**

Editing the film was a tremendous task. The biggest obstacle we faced was to keep the audience emotionally connected to the individual characters and their stories when we cut between so much. I was blessed to work with my long time editor Anne Østerud (*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*).

Room 304 screens today at 8pm in the Grand Hall and tomorrow at 10am in the Espace Dorleans Cinema. ■

FACES



Katherine Borowitz



Michael Di Giacomo



John Turturro



Michaël R. Roskam



Peter Křišťufek

In the Official Selection but not competing, *Somewhere Tonight* is based on Theo van Gogh's 1994 film *06 (I-900)*. Arriving today to present the world premiere of this tale of dysfunctional love and adult chat lines is writer/director **Michael Di Giacomo**, who's accompanied by co-producer **Gijs van de Westelaken** and lead couple **John Turturro** and **Katherine Borowitz**.

Writer and director **Peter Křišťufek** is here today to compete in the East of the West selection. He is also responsible for the music in *Visible World*, his dark tale of envious obsession. He's accompanied by Slovak producer **Soňa Javorská**.

Arriving today to take part in the Horizons sidebar,

writer/director **Michaël R. Roskam**'s *Bullhead* dramatizes the Belgian cattle industry's "hormone mafia." Also here for the sidebar is actor **Jerzy Stuhr** from Nanni Moretti's moving Vatican drama *Habemus Papam*. And from the selection of non-competing documentaries, Spanish producer **Víctor Cavaller** is here to support Trisha Ziff's *The Mexican Suitcase*.

In the Czech film section, *Fateful Fortune* is a treatment of a Karel Čapek story by director Jiří Krejčík. Lead **Gabriela Marcinková** arrives today for the screening of the international premiere. Another local, 60s siren **Jiřina Jirásková** is here today for a special presentation of 1969 comedy *Man About Town* tomorrow. (PLC)

PRÁVO Audience Award

Here are the latest results for the **Top 5 Films as selected by you, the audience!** If you want to participate in this competition, pick up your voting cards whenever you see a film, and on the way out, tear the card at your chosen place – 1 for **Excellent**, 2 for **Good**, 3 for **Average** and 4 for **Poor**. Then hand the card to a collector, or drop it into one of the ballot boxes provided by *Právo*, the Czech daily newspaper that organizes the competition. The votes will be counted each evening so we can provide regular updates.

Current Standings

1. *Nicky's Family*
2. *Almanya*
3. *Incendies*
4. *Collaborator*
5. *Hello! How Are You?*

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46. Mezinárodního filmového festivalu Karlovy Vary

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Amir Bar-Lev slams 'poverty porn'

Will Tizard

Amir Bar-Lev, who heads the KVIFF Documentaries jury this year, has fond memories of the fest from the days when he was a film student in Prague, struggling to piece together his first film: the documentary *Fighter*, which this year returns to the screen 11 years after winning a special mention at KVIFF. The docus *My Kid Could Paint That* and *The Tillman Story* followed, both nominated for the Sundance fest's top prize, and he's now preparing his first feature, to be based on the life of legendary Grateful Dead founder Jerry Garcia.

■ **In your debut film *Fighter* we follow two Holocaust survivors haggling over the meaning of survival. How did you find new territory in such a thoroughly worked genre?**

The thing about *Fighter* that I'm always struck by is it's a story about storytelling, which, actually, all three of my films are in a different way. I think you can make a monolith out of a historical event. And, in fact, we tend to. And with the distance of time, you tend to see things in very reductionist terms. And those guys really swam against the current of that. To hear somebody talk about losing their virginity at Theresienstadt, it makes you understand the tragedy in even deeper terms because you understand that people were living their lives.

■ **What are the biggest hazards in documentary making?**

There's just a handful of movies every year that push the envelope and it seems like it's fewer and fewer people. I'd rather see somebody take a risk and fail than to do something that basically feels like television. I think there's a whole class of documentary fans which gets off on the same kind of prurient interests that non-documentary fans indulge in. Watching people fall apart. Watching sensationalist, titillating sexual things, watching warfare... but they allow themselves to do that because



Photo: Jan Handrejch

The American filmmaker is chairing this year's KVIFF docu jury.

it's packaged in this supposedly high-brow documentary form, when really it's low-brow material.

■ **You've been willing to take on big, complex subjects such as the US government's willingness to lie about Iraq to create patriot heroes, as we see in *The Tillman Story*. How do you attack such complex material without getting overwhelmed?**

I think a lot more about the role of the

camera, the ethical dimension of the work. I think you have to choose your subjects very well and then interrogate your relationship with them. In the films I'm drawn to, that dialogue is apparent. You learn a lot about the humanity of the filmmaker by the way they choose their subjects. To the degree that your subjects are in any kind of desperate straits, the audience is going to naturally wonder about your relationship with them. The challenge for Tillman was

that the family didn't want us to dissect the central subject. They didn't want Pat Tillman laid bare for all to see. So we had to make a film that actually gave the family back their privacy while at the same time letting the audience understand something about what they had been through and who their son was. We tried to make a film where, at the end of it, you don't care to shine the light in every nook and cranny of Pat Tillman's biography. You're ready to say "give this family back its privacy."

■ **Your relationships with your subjects can get pretty rocky, as in *My Kid Could Paint That*, in which you confront a couple with your doubts that their child really is an artistic genius. What should the documentarian's relationship be with his subject?**

You have to be telling your audience where you stand on these things. And I think you have to be allowing your audience the room to disagree with you, to see things differently than you saw it. You don't want to be pedantic. At the same time, you can't pretend you're an impartial, invisible fly on the wall. You have to be asking yourself these questions. Something could be great subject matter but for all the wrong reasons. I actually think there's a lot of that. It's poverty porn.

■ **So now you're working on your first non-documentary, based on the life of Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead. How are you approaching that?**

It's progressing well. It's my first fiction feature and I've been trying to be very careful on casting. You run the risk of losing the veracity. What drew me to this project is that the script eschewed a lot of the biopic conventions that tend to turn great rock'n'roll stories into cheesy tropes. That set a high bar for how we're going to conduct the film. It's a music lover's script. It's about music making. It's gonna have multiple threads of narratives but what you're panning around to is going to keep you in the music. ■

WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

Breandáin O'Shea
Deutsche Welle radio,
culture reporter



■ **Have you met artists here that might inspire Deutsche Welle audiences?**

Yes, I've found lots of artists, lots of very interesting filmmakers... I had a really interesting discussion with Jes Benstock, who made the documentary *The British Guide to Showing Off*. I thought it captured a whole aspect of English-ism in a way that maybe only the people who know a few Brits would really understand. And *Tree of Life* was mind-boggling. I'd have so see it again to comprehend what it's really all about.

■ **What films are you looking at for your reports?**

As an Australian, I was quite interested in seeing *Mad Bastards*. It really does show the indigenous people very close up and you can see that he's built up a lot of trust. I can well imagine as an Australian how long that takes, because we have treated them so incredibly badly. (WT)

ON THE TOWN

U Švejka

Stará Louka 10
www.svejka-kv.cz
353 232 276
Open daily 11am-11pm

With a life-size model of Czech icon The Good Soldier Švejk seated at one of its tables and an interior that looks like an old Czech pub, visitors can enjoy a fairly genuine Bohemian dining experience at U Švejka. Having said that, its prime location halfway between the Pupp and the Thermal means it's a little bit more expensive than your average local eatery. Nonetheless, if you don't mind paying 69 CZK for a half-liter of (admittedly excellent) Pilsner, there's also a pretty authentic range of local cuisine for you to sample. This includes old favorites such as an Old-Bohemian Platter of pork, cabbage and dumplings (209 CZK) and a beer goulash that is a

cut above. Like all Czech eating houses, however, there is not a lot here for vegetarians or those on a special diet. (COC)

Cafe Pupp

Mírové náměstí 2
353 109 622
www.pupp.cz
Open daily 9am-7pm

The old-school brasserie, interiors covered in brass and mirrors brass overlooking cozy booths, is one of the most overlooked gems in the opulent pile that is the Grandhotel Pupp. Film stars staying at the hotel who eat and drink free in the posh Club Malá Dvůrka have been known to slip around the corner to this down-to-earth cafe and buy their own coffees (60-90 CZK) just for its more cozy ambience. There's only bottled Pilsner available (65 CZK) and the menu's mainly limited to light fare – Viennese-style cakes (90-180 CZK) – but



Photo: Jan Handrejch

The Good Soldier sleeps it off at U Švejka.

all delicately done with top-notch ingredients, as befits the place's history. The hotel was founded by uber-successful confectioner

Johann Georg Pupp, after all. On warm days, the terrace seats are a prime spot for watching the arrivals of celebs of all stripes,

which certainly adds to the appeal. (WT)

Belagio Restaurant

T.G. Masaryka 10
Open daily 10am-midnight

Five minutes from the Thermal, Belagio boasts attentive staff and a terrace with the most comfortable seating in town. And you needn't worry about KV's notoriously mercurial weather; the translucent roof is proof against the most torrential downpour. The menu caters to Russians, Germans, Czechs and Anglophones with a wide range of dishes to suit all pockets – spaghetti Bolognese is a very reasonable 140 CZK, and the 930 CZK bison steak with demi-glace is sure to satisfy those after something special. Our table sported a little Russian flag, so we tried the Siberian pelmeni (150 CZK), which didn't disappoint. And no doubt the spoon we were given to eat them with is traditional somewhere... (PLC)

Today's Master Class meets at 2pm in the Jameson Festival Lounge. Polish director, screenwriter and author Lech Majewski, in Karlovy Vary to present his new film *The Mill & the Cross*, will discuss such topics as the challenges of bridging the gap between art and film, and the importance of symbolism. Czech film critic Tomáš Baldýnský moderates. Also on tap for today is Amnesty International's *A Day with Amnesty*. Stop by the stand in front of Aeroport after 11am to sign a petition to support wrongfully imprisoned people, or come to the United Flavour concert at 10pm. Admission is free with a festival pass, but a 50 CZK donation (the cost of a ticket) goes toward Amnesty's human rights work. (McG)

DAILIES



Photo: Petr Hloušek

Hey! Watch the threads! – couturier John Malkovich.



Photo: Jan Handrejch

Freewheelin' on the catwalk at the No Barriers fashion show.



Photo: Petr Hloušek

Tees and cigs for KVIFF president Jiří Bartoška.