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Punk hooley opens KVIFF

Good Vibrations, which screened last night, was one of the most eagerly awaited KVIFF opening films in recent years. Directors **Glenn Leyburn** and **Lisa Barros D'Sa**, as well as lead actor **Richard Dormer**, came to Karlovy Vary with this darkly comic biopic of Belfast punk impresario Terri Hooley, set at the height of the Northern Irish Troubles.

■ **Why did you decide to make a film about Terri Hooley, who's not really that well known outside of Belfast?**

LBD: At the time, [DJ and composer] David Holmes – who is a producer on the project and also did the music – and I had a production company. We'd made shorts and were looking for our first feature project for Glenn and I to direct. We'd read a lot of treatments for a lot of scripts and you could just tell there was something very special about this. Yes, it was a local Belfast character that not many other people know, but what was immediately evident was that this was a really universal story. It's about the power of resistance and about youth and creativity and their power to resist even the darkest of times and the darkest of situations.

■ **Did you have to convince Terri to go along with it?**

LBD: We wanted to celebrate everything Terri achieved. But if Terri hadn't wanted to do it, it wouldn't have happened. We wanted something very positive...but you know we're not trying to portray Terri as a saint. It's a detailed look at a man who has his flaws as much as anyone. He was very, very involved. The script was based on conversations he had...based on his story. He was hugely involved in that. He read early drafts of the script. He visited us on set quite often, as did his family and friends. Terri was even at the wrap party DJing.



(Left to right): *Good Vibrations* directors Glenn Leyburn and Lisa Barros D'Sa with actor Richard Dormer.

■ **What did he think of the end product?**

LBD: Before our premiere in Northern Ireland we were very nervous about it and I think Terri was understandably nervous about it. But he really loved the film and was so gracious. Afterwards, he said there were moments that he did find tough to watch but in the end he felt really good about it. We were glad of that.

■ **Did you consciously decide to have such a predominantly Northern Irish cast and crew?**

GL: We actually had a mix of people from north, south, and beyond but there are a lot of key people from Northern Ireland and I suppose it's a testament to where the Northern Irish film industry is at the moment, which is a pretty good place. We have *Game of Thrones* [being made] in the town.

That's coming up to three years now. It's normal to have quite big Hollywood productions there these days. The skill set within crews is tremendous.

■ **Snow Patrol provided funding for the film. How did they get involved?**

LBD: They didn't have to be persuaded at all. Snow Patrol have been big fans of the story from the word go...They've been so enthusiastic about getting this film made. [Drummer] Jonny Quinn actually used to work in Terri's shop and was in a band with Terri at one point. They've known Terri for years and really appreciate what he's done. I think he was a big inspiration to them as well as so many other people. There couldn't have been more love and enthusiasm from them about getting the film made. And

of course they invested in it. The film wouldn't have happened without their investment it's fair to say, but they've also been really involved the whole way through.

■ **In what ways?**

LBD: There's a big gig in the film at the Ulster Hall, which is a big venue in Northern Ireland... Our only problem [with filming it] was that, on our budget, we had to fill it with 2,000 people - 2,000 extras are not easy to find, especially when there's not much cash around. We were actually going to do crowd multiplication, CGI, etc., but then the Snow Patrol guys said they might be willing to play a little gig for us and talk to their fans about coming along as extras, which they were more than happy to do... So they came in their thousands, we were

able to fill the hall and the audience were fantastic. It was an amazing concert.

■ **Richard, did you consult with Terri on how you should play him?**

RD: When we did the pilot, I went down to his Good Vibrations shop just to meet him and talk to him, because I hadn't met him before. He took me for an Ulster fry. And then for a pint. And then the pint turned into three pints. [Initially] we were a bit guarded about each other – I was trying to work him out and he was trying to work me out. But I think by the end of that meeting, we had a mutual "Yeah, you're ok, kind of thing." I really like the guy, and I think that really helps. You have to like somebody to be able to give them a bit of humanity and a bit of soul.

THE LOWDOWN

Despite the minimalist logo of the 47th edition, there was nothing pared down about KVIFF's opening night kick-off at the Thermal's Grand Hall Friday night, which went off with all the **usual pomp and glam**.

The festival's trademark trailer, or *znělka*, is a closely guarded secret in the weeks leading up to opening night, but audiences, dressed in their finery, after being blown away with original choreographed numbers, light and sound FX created by the inimitable team of brothers **Michal and Šimon Caban**, finally got to glimpse the short film. The piece, created by Czech director **Ivan Zachariáš** turned out to be a fine tribute to Czech filmmaking legend and mentor **Otakar Vávra**, who died last year aged 100 and taught such folk as **Miloš Forman** their craft.

Terri Hooley, another legend, at least on the Northern Irish punk scene, was, of course, the subject of the opening night film, *Good Vibrations* by **Lisa Barros D'Sa** and **Glenn Leyburn**. But the extra vigilant should have spotted the former rocker himself in a cameo role as a squeeze-box player in the trad folk band. And when Hooley's daughter is born in the film, guess who's the delivering nurse?

Yep, his **actual daughter**, now grown. How meta can you get?

NOTICE

Two films – *Volcanos and Carnival* and *Vertigo* – have been removed from the blocks of **Michelangelo Antonioni** shorts scheduled to screen at KVIFF. The remaining seven films will still be shown. Tomorrow's screening of *Marley* at Lázně III has been moved from 1:30pm to 10:30am.

SEE YOU THERE

Ira Sachs

Director, co-scriptwriter, *Keep the Lights On*

One of the great things about festivals is that you can catch up on films that you haven't had a chance to see before. *Margaret* is a film that came and went quickly in the US and is now being heralded as one of the greatest American films of the past few years so I want to see that. *The Firemen's Ball* is a very important Czech film that I studied because the way in which the film is shot by the wonderful cinematographer Miroslav Ondříček is a very particular style that influenced me in the creation of my film *Forty Shades of Blue*. It's a Czech style – a sort of beautiful realism that's also highly influenced by photo-journalism and documentary.

Margaret screens today at 10am in the Thermal's Grand Hall and on July 4 at 7pm in the Pupp Cinema. *The Firemen's Ball* screens today at 2pm in the Thermal's Grand Hall and on July 6 at 7pm in the Pupp Cinema. *Ira Sachs' film Keep the Lights On* screens today at 7pm in the Congress Hall, July 2 at 10pm in the Espace Dorleans Cinema and on July 7 at 10:30am in the Congress Hall. (GP)



Photo: KVIFF

EXPLAINER

KVIFF cinemas as diverse as the program

If you got here early enough, you may have caught one of KVIFF's stranger pre-festival rituals – the inflating of the **Espace Dorleans**. This blow-up dome outside the Thermal is one of the weirder film venues Karlovy Vary has to offer, but by no means the most unique.

Alongside the ever-varied lineup of films, the KVIFF visitor has their pick of an astonishing range of cinema styles. Whether it's the small town 1950s Americana vibe at the **Čas Cinema** (also a great post-film hang-out) or the gilded neo-Baroque splendour of the **Karlovy Vary Municipal Theater** (pictured), every screen at KVIFF gives you something impossible to find in mainstream multiplexes – charm. Several of KVIFF's screens are housed in rather grand buildings, including fancy local hotels like the **Richmond** and **Pupp**, and the spa **Lázně III**. And though not quite as plush as the Municipal, the **Husovka Theater** is gorgeous inside. But be warned; many of the



Photo: Jan Handrejch

theaters are very small, most seating under 250, so it's crucial to get those tickets early.

Though tickets are sometimes scarce, the limited seating ensures intimacy, and often camaraderie with the other filmgoers. Only in the Thermal's vast **Grand Hall** is the experience different. With the tiers of crimson seats and the

massive cast-concrete abstract reliefs flanking the screen, this is real spectacle. The feeling of waiting in this epic structure with over a thousand eager fans for a competition film to premiere is not to be missed.

Oh, and if you're looking for **Drahomíra Cinema** and find Kino Panasonic instead, don't worry; you're in the right place. Drahomíra was renovated several years ago, adopting the electronics giant's name and logo. But it's still an arthouse cinema at heart, and no-one's stopped calling it Drahomíra anyway. (PLC)

OFFICIAL SELECTION

Hay Road – a quietly desperate western

By Klára Kolářová, Will Tizard

Rodrigo Areias's film, *Hay Road*, is a fascinating hybrid of western, road movie, and a philosophical consideration of the corruption and so-called progress of modern civilization. The Portuguese director uses the main character's love for the writings of Henry David Thoreau to explore these issues as the man returns home from the cold north to take revenge on killers and thieves who have victimized his family.

Areias says Thoreau's 19th-century advocacy of civil disobedience has relevance today because it's a "way of presenting basic principles that became an important thesis for the fight for human rights."

This theme also resonates in today's era of global economic meltdown, he adds, "but the problems that led to this crisis are much older and much deeper within our capitalist culture."

The director's bold decision to make his film as a western was born both of his love of the genre and his desire to try something almost unknown in Portugal.

"It's a genre that I think has everything to do with the subject and time of action," he says. "I wanted to make a film where the genre influences the character. So it's a western character in a Portuguese film."

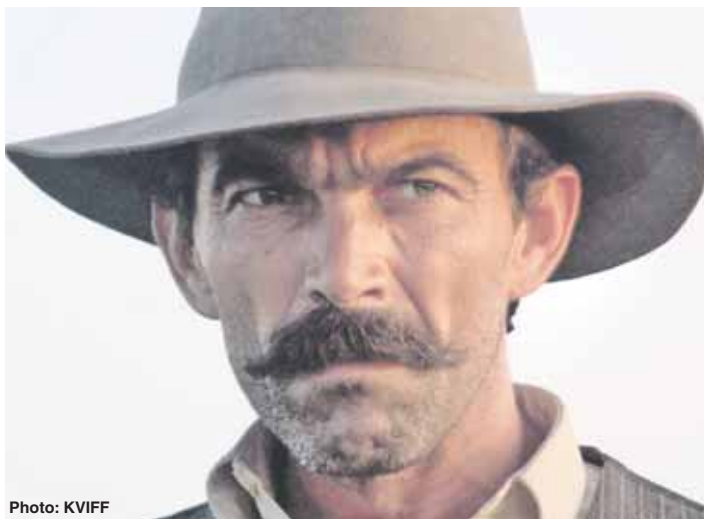


Photo: KVIFF

Hay Road owes a debt to Henry David Thoreau.

The decision cost him, he explains. "I knew it would be very difficult to get any funds to finance such a film. So we decided to go for it anyway without any money."

And that, in turn, determined largely what scope his kind of western would have - though he also found creative ways to include homages to his most beloved inspirations.

"As for cinematographic references, I think that all John Ford, Sam Peckinpah, and Sergio Leone's [works] are mandatory, but also *Dead Man* by Jim Jarmusch and *El Topo* by [Alejandro] Jodorowsky are extremely important for me. And, of course, a lot of comics like *Blueberry*..."

The silence of typical western characters was also an attraction for Areias, he admits.

"I'm not sure that it's a show of manhood," he explains. "It has more to do with his lonely

journey. He starts as an isolated man who lives away from everybody, more in the style of David Henry Thoreau in *Walden*, and he is translating *Civil Disobedience* into Portuguese. Then he has to travel back into his old life and finds a corrupt country that he has to fight."

Locations were key, of course, and the director says that, except for the opening, which was shot "in the extreme north of Finnish Lapland," everything was shot in Portugal.

"Most of the action was set in Portugal between Serra da Estrela and high Alentejo following the original tracks of shepherds. The main idea was to try to be as accurate as possible concerning the route."

Hay Road screens today at 5pm in the Thermal's Grand Hall and tomorrow at 1:30pm at the Pupp Cinema.

OFFICIAL SELECTION

The Almost Man – irony as escape from adulthood

Jaroslav Švelch

Festival Daily talked to Martin Lund about his Official Selection competition entry, which paints a bleak portrait of one Norwegian father-to-be's refusal to live up to reality.

■ **The film really clicked with me as I have some friends who are lot like Henrik...**

I have some old friends who act much like Henrik's friends in the movie. They don't act like this all the time, but the male codes, the way they goof around and behave, have been my inspiration... As for Henrik, I think it is possible to see oneself in him even though very few of us do so many stupid things in such a short timespan... Henrik is the extract, the distillation.

■ **Is this kind of prolonged puberty and fear of commitment widespread in Norway? Is it considered an issue on a more general level?**

In a way I feel I belong to a generation that's based very much on irony and playing around. I think this is an interesting thing, pushing adulthood further away, prolonging the need for getting serious. That said, I haven't made this film as a comment on Norwegian life. When I write I describe the things that are close to me, that I find interesting and true. If it hits a nerve with someone,



Photo: KVIFF

Thirty-something angst abounds in The Almost Man.

and/or in a broader sense, it's great.

■ **Henrik Rafaelsen gives a terrific performance in the film. How did you cast him as the lead? Did it take much to persuade him to take on a part like this?**

I had seen Henrik in a couple of things... I made a pilot at an early stage and that was a great way to see if we clicked, and we really did! After that I wrote the script more or less knowing Henrik would do the part. The funny thing is that Henrik recently became a father for the first time... That was a nice coincidence that made it easier to close in on the things the character struggles with.

■ **There have been quite a few contemporary Norwegian films about thirty-somethings with identity issues; yours seems to be more realistic and – given that it is about**

somebody who uses irony as defense – not as ironic.

Hehe... yes. I used to joke that I was making yet another film about a thirty-something guy trying to find himself. The thing is I didn't plan on this theme when I started writing. In the Norwegian Film Institute's experimental "NyeVeier" program, the idea was that I wrote scenes and situations without plot or character journeys lined up. This gave me freedom to describe moments as honestly as I could. When I took a step back I realized that I was writing about a man trying to keep his feet on the ground, while the ground was moving beneath him.

The Almost Man screens today at 8pm in the Thermal's Grand Hall. You can also see it tomorrow at 10:30am in the Pupp Cinema.

REVIEWERS RECOMMEND

Gabe Klinger

Writer, Film Comment/Sight & Sound

**Antonioni Shorts Program**

Director: Michelangelo Antonioni
Italy, 1940s, various short films
June 30, 10am, Cinema B

What better way to start the day than with this collection of several picturesque shorts by Antonioni, many of them lyrical documentary studies of bygone cultures in provincial and urban Italy filmed mainly in and observant, passive style without much intervention in each of the films' respective subjects. *N.U.* and *People of the Po Valley* are especially striking and look forward to the director's mature period. Italy's post-war documentary wave – notable also in the early films of Vittorio De Seta – is too often eclipsed by the neorealist fictions of De Sica and others. This is a unique opportunity to dive headfirst into this largely forgotten tradition and to see some of its most exemplary specimens.

**Margaret**

Director: Kenneth Lonergan
USA, 2011, 150 min
June 30, 10am, Grand Hall

You'd frankly have to be nuts not to jump at the chance to see Kenneth Lonergan's film maudite; a long-time-in-the-works, nearly unreleased masterpiece that is surely a contender for the best American film of the young century. In an "indie" film landscape dominated by quirky stories of dysfunctional families embarking on journeys of self-discovery (*Little Miss Sunshine* and its ilk), *Margaret* offers a potent anecdote and a reminder that low-budget American cinema can still be thoughtful and complex. Starting with a devastating incident in the life of Margaret, a teenager in Manhattan, Lonergan spends the next two and a half hours exploring the haunting echoes of the trauma and the eventual catharsis.

**You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet**

Director: Alain Resnais
France, Germany, 2011, 115 min
June 30, 10am, Cas Cinema

I haven't seen Alain Resnais's latest film – which recently premiered in Cannes – but I can count on one hand the number of filmmakers who began their careers before 1950 and are still tirelessly working. This would seem like a mere technicality or dubious distinction, but in Resnais's case, like Manoel de Oliveira's, there are very good reasons for him going on, not least because he is one of the most youthful filmmakers around, always trying out new ideas with a somewhat reckless abandon. Resnais's films evidence a worldview unlike any other, equal parts pop and rigorous intellectual cinema.

**Alps**

Director: Yorgos Lanthimos
Greece, 2011, 93 min
June 30, 1:30pm, Richmond

One of the better films in the Venice competition, but not an easy one to like for its dark, ghostly and ultimately perplexing view of humanity. Lanthimos has found a complete freedom of tools as well as the trust of his collaborators – the outstanding lead performers (Aggeliki Papoulia, Ariane Labed), his producing collaborator Athina Rachel Tsangari (*Attenberg*), etc. – to be able to generously carve out a vision of a world for audiences, and the results are hauntingly precise.



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.



Diverse dozen displays independent spirit

Gillian Purves

The Forum of Independents is a competitive section in which 12 feature films vie for the Independent Camera Award. This diverse dozen serves up a healthy smattering of strong female leads, some highly inventive narrative structures, and locations from Dubrovnik to Quebec to Hong Kong. The independent nature of the films often means they are made on a shoestring budget by young up-and-coming filmmakers. "We try to give a chance to independent filmmakers who are very often not just the directors but also the screenwriters, actors and even producers of their films," says Ivana Novotná, Senior Programmer for KVIFF. "It is a platform where we screen a lot of feature film debuts."

This year we will offer **three world premieres, two European premieres and seven international premieres**," Ivana says.

French-language Canadian production *Fair Sex* offers us a glimpse of life through the lens of newly graduated filmmaker and seasonal amusement park worker Sophie, who goes on a very personal journey to face the demons of her childhood in Africa. "I think this film is very touching and very moving. I think it speaks about topics which in Europe and especially in Central Europe people don't really talk about," says Novotná.

Noor (France, Pakistan), too, is an intimate study of the epony-

mous central character, who leaves a transgender community in Pakistan and embarks on a journey both literal and metaphorical, on a quest for true love. According to Novotná, "*Noor* is similar to *Fair Sex* in that it has the feel of a video diary. It's so personal and intense."

"*Vacuum* is also very realistic," says Ivana. "The actor who plays the husband is also the director so in a way he is part of the film as well." Indeed Giorgio Cugno straddled the roles of actor, director and screenwriter for this bleak yet engaging Italian production centered on a young family blighted by postpartum depression and economic recession.

Like *Fair Sex*, the Dutch production *Inside* introduces us to a young girl who is struggling with dark memories, this time in the setting of a youth correctional facility. "I think the director is a very talented filmmaker," says Novotná. "The actress who plays the main character is very strong; her performance is great and very subtle. You don't get very much information about her but as a viewer you are still interested in her story."

Polish production *In a Bedroom* also leaves questions unanswered. In director Tomasz Wasilewski's feature debut we follow 40-something Edyta as she drives around a Polish city, trying to disentangle herself from the crisis she has found herself in. "As a viewer you suddenly see her and you don't know anything about



Facing up to childhood demons in Canadian film *Fair Sex*.

her. You have to use your own experience to fill in certain gaps in the film and I think that this gives the film a great atmosphere of uncertainty," says Novotná.

American film *Leave Me Like You Found Me* functions as a mirror held up to our own lives. A couple who have reunited after a period of separation go on a camping trip together. In scenes that will be uncomfortably familiar to many viewers, the relationship begins to unravel anew as the old cracks start to show again.

Moroccan/Swiss production *The Miscreants* offers something

completely different. When on their way to perform a play, a group of young Moroccan actors are kidnapped by an extremist gang. "We really fell for this film immediately after watching it," says Novotná. "The film is so well written psychologically. You really feel everything with the characters."

Wherever You Go, from Israel, offers up more tense moments. The lives of two young women become entwined when one is driving to a wedding and her car is stopped by the other. Director Rony Sasson Angel will attend

the festival, as will the directors of most of the films in the Forum of Independents section. Novotná is happy to say that "all the films will have delegations in Karlovy Vary. There will be an introduction before and a Q&A after each film so people can talk to the filmmakers."

The biggest delegation by far will be for the mockumentary *Noseland*. The director/protagonist of the film is getting married just before the screening and the whole wedding party of more than 30 people are getting on a bus and heading to the festival.

No doubt they will set a celebratory tone to the proceedings. *Noseland* takes us on an irreverent roller-coaster ride through a classical music festival in Dubrovnik. Expect blistering self-deprecation from Hollywood heavyweight John Malkovich and a delightful impersonation of a gay snake by Sir Roger Moore.

There is another nod towards the world of classical music in the Serbian film *Death of a Man in Balkans*. A music composer commits suicide in his apartment and we are privy to the subsequent arrival of the man's neighbors and the emergency services via a webcam that has been left activated on the composer's computer. Our vantage point as observers from a fixed point gives the film the feel of a theater production.

Meanwhile, black-and-white German production *Oh Boy* takes us for a stroll around modern-day Berlin in the company of offbeat 20-something Niko. This is an accomplished feature debut for director Jan Ole Gerster.

And last but by no means least, *Love Me Not* (Hong Kong) considers what might happen if a gay girl develops feelings for her gay male friend.

What is striking about the selection of independent films at KVIFF this year is the incredibly diverse array of topics, bound by their creators' ingenuity when it comes to realizing their visions. These filmmakers take risks that pay off. ■

FACES



Vladimír Javorský



Rafaël Ouellet



Ester Martin Bergsmark

Veteran Slovak cinematographer **Stanislav Szomolányi** arrives today, here to represent the restored print of *The Sun in a Net*, a watershed 1962 film marking the start of the Czechoslovak New Wave. And born in the same year that classic was released, respected Czech actor **Vladimír Javorský** arrives today at the top of his game after playing the lead in Czech Lion winner *Flower Buds*, a strong contender in the East of the West section. Javorský's faultless portrayal of a man consumed by a relentless gambling addiction is highly recommended viewing. Young Czech actor **Vojta Kotecký** gets into town today to support Alice

Nellis' thoughtful adaptation of Liz Lochhead's *Perfect Days*, part of the Czech Films 2011–2012 section this year.

Young Canadian **Rafaël Ouellet**, writer, director and editor of *Camion*, arrives today for the Official Selection. He was first seen at KVIFF with the Forum of Independents selection of his third feature, the 2009 *New Denmark*, which he also wrote, directed, shot and edited. This dedicated *auteur* is one to watch.

Another multi-talented rising star is arriving today for her Forum of Independents offering *Leave Me Like You Found Me*; **Adele Romanski** is best known as a producer of independent

American films, but is also no stranger to the editing room with two features and three shorts under her belt. This is her debut in the writer/director's chair, and she's joined at KVIFF by lead **Megan Boone**.

In the Another View section, award-winning documentarist **Ester Martin Bergsmark** presents a portrait of transgendered artist Eli Levén in *She Male Snails*. Also look out today for the arrival of *Noor*, the eponymous lead in the unique transformational road movie about transgender life in Pakistan. Playing yourself is never easy, and especially courageous in this case. (PLC)

Czech, please!

"*Jak se máš*" (pronounced yak se mahsh) is known to most Western audiences as a typical Kazakh greeting popularized by British comic actor Sacha Baron Cohen. In fact, it is the standard informal way of saying "How are you?" in Czech. (Trivia-fiends may be delighted to learn that many veteran Prague expats insist that Cohen picked up the catchphrase for his popular *Borat* character when he hung out in the Prague Klub Borat way back in the 1990s).

There are a number of responses that you can use if someone asks you this question – although if they don't know you, you'll more likely hear "*Jak se máte*" because, like the French, Czechs use the sec-

ond person plural when they want to be polite. (So make sure you say "Yak se mahte" when you ask someone how they are in more formal situations).

Standard answers to the query include "Jde to" (deh toe), which roughly translates as "Oh, alright, I suppose," "Mám se dobře" or simply "Dobře" (mam se dob-rshe/dob-rshe), i.e., "Things are fine!" and "*Špatně*" (shpat-nyeh), meaning "Things are bad!"

Of course, at KVIFF, you're more likely to say "*Uf, mám hroznou kocovinu*" (Oof, mam hrozno kotso-vinu) which means "Ugh, I've got a terrible hangover!" Definitely a useful phrase to know at this kind of festival! (COC)

A co jste ochotni kvůli festivalu udělat vy?

356

dní netrpělivého čekání na začátek

978

minut filmů během jednoho dne

220

minut hádky o smyslchilského filmu

016

lidí na pokoji

143

minut v lžákuv letním kině

006

ochutnávek pramenů při cestě z Puppů do Thermalu

024

hodin denně jen o vodě a oplatkách

007

ročníků spaní v tělocvičně



No shortage of talent East of the West

Peter Le Couteur

Located firmly in Central Europe, and yet less than 50km from Germany, KVIFF is perfectly positioned to act as a gateway to the rise and rise of film-making in those countries **East of the West**. From the Czech Republic all the way to Belgrade, this fairly recent addition to the competition list at KVIFF showcases the talents of a diverse region with unique and often disturbing stories to tell. This is a chance to experience cultures rarely accessible to Western audiences.

Toomas Hussar's tragicomic national character study *Mushrooming* and Zdeněk Jiráský's harrowing but darkly funny *Flower Buds* are the Czech offerings for this year. *Flower Buds* is near flawless film-making; no surprises that it won the Czech Lion for Best Film. Charting the inexorable downfall of the central character Jarda, Jiráský takes an unflinching look at small town life in today's Czech Republic. As with many of the other films in this section, we're never far from the seedier side of life; we can chart the damage that the local "herna" bar's slot machines and strip shows does to personal relationships. The situation in small-town Latvia is fairly similar, with the teenage ennui of weed and petty crime in Aik Karapetian's *People Out There* broken only by the fleeting promise of romance and a better life. Handheld camerawork adds to the realism in this exploration of the effects of environment on character.



Photo: KVIFF

Chronicling the life of a Polish outlaw in Piotr Mularuk's *Yuma*.

Youthful dreams of romance dissolving into casino strip-shows seems a popular motif in this year, featuring strongly in Iveta Grófová's gripping and uncomfortable docudrama *Made in Ash*. We follow the life of Dorota, an optimistic Slovakian Roman girl who travels to Aš (pronounced "ash"), the Czech Republic's westernmost town, to find work after graduating from highschool. "We should enjoy our youth because life is hard when you're old and then you end up in the ground." This cheerful line from the graduation song pretty much sets the tone for Grófová's deeply unsettling

exploration of life on the infamous road to the German border, where young women offer themselves to passing drivers. *Made in Ash*'s extensive use of non-actors and real locations guarantees a disturbingly authentic look at this brutal landscape.

There are, of course, always strong links with Western film-making, but this year there's a direct connection with classic westerns. Piotr Mularuk's portrait of a charming modern-day Polish outlaw in *Yuma* references Delmer Daves' iconic *3:10 to Yuma* with powerful results. Continually echoing the music and cinematography to

bring irony and depth to his story, Mularuk manages to avoid being heavy-handed. This is definitely one to watch, and don't be surprised if you find yourself returning to Daves' classic afterwards. From life during the collapse of communism, we move to a troubling look at modern day Poland from Filip Marczewski, whose full-length debut *Shameless* explores the themes set out in his well-received student short *Melodrama* about a young man's more-than-brotherly interest in his elder half-sister.

If *Yuma* links former troubles with those of the present, Péter

Bergendy's Hungarian psychological police thriller *The Exam* and Eva Neymann's psychological portrait of a Russian child *House with a Turret* are set firmly in the Soviet past. Both of these beautifully shot pieces display a deep sensitivity for classic cinematography, achieving a timeless aesthetic perfectly appropriate for their subjects. Although he thought he was living in the up-to-date 1960s, a young Romanian doctor finds himself trapped in a small-town time-war in Silvio Purcărete's *Some-where in Palilula*. And returning to the past through his archived Hungarian secret police file, the lead in Sára Cserhalmi's *Dear Betrayed Friends* discovers the extent to which tyranny can compromise even the closest friendships. This is a **late, unscheduled addition to the program**, so keep an eye out for screening times.

It's not all misery in the East though; deep in Lithuania, a romantic young scientist is journeying into the mind of a comatose woman in the sci-fi *Vanishing Waves*, finding spectacular visuals and meditations on how dreams influence reality. And Bojan Vuletić's *Practical Guide to Belgrade with Singing and Crying* delivers what it promises with a collection of gently ironic short stories demonstrating that there are many kinds of dream. Although (as Vuletić puts it) Belgrade can't quite make the grade for the EU, "By making love to guests from abroad, Belgrade citizens are at least one step closer to Europe."

WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

Jiří Konečný
Producer, Czech Republic



■ Have you got any films at KVIFF?

Besides being on the documentary jury, I'm also here with the world premiere of *Made in Ash*, Iveta Grófová's debut feature. It's opening the East of the West competition today. Another film I produced – *A Night Too Young* by Olmo Omerzu, which premiered at the Berlinale – is also on the festival program. On July 3, we'll introduce *Family Film*, a new project we've been developing with Olmo Omerzu. On the same day, I'll present the *Eugenic Minds* documentary project by Pavel Štingl at the **Docu Talents from the East** panel. And in the second half of the festival we plan to make a surprising presentation of *Gaston*, a project by Martin Dušek that is under development.

■ All work and no play?

In my spare time I'm looking forward to swimming in the Thermal's outdoor pool. I'll watch the Euro 2012 final during our *Made in Ash* evening party on Sunday. I have to see *Yuma* by Piotr Mularuk and David Cronenberg's *Cosmopolis*. (WT)

ON THE TOWN

FooPaa

Jaltská 7
☎ 722 658 334
www.foojaa.cz
Open daily 9am-4am

The venue that many KVIFF veterans will remember as the grungy Klub Rotes Berlin has since taken a definite step upmarket. FooPaa (pronounced *faux pas*) charges a 50 CZK cover, but that's a small price to pay if you're looking for a slightly more high-end nightlife experience in Karlovy Vary. With an elegant interior and friendly efficient staff, this slick club-cum-bar offers a healthy choice of cocktails in the 80-120 CZK price range. You can also get a Stella Artois beer for 40 CZK and all the usual shooters for 60-90 CZK. During the daylight hours, this place doubles up as a classy cafe, offering a decent breakfast with coffee for just 80 CZK. They also serve various tortillas, paninis, and bruschetta for

a reasonable 65-110 CZK. Hungry nightowls will also appreciate the fact that FooPaa even sells a selection of pizzas for 100 CZK apiece until the place closes in the wee small hours. (COC)

Dobrotky

Zeyerova 2
Open daily 8am-10pm

Named simply after the Czech word for treats, this unprepossessing street food place is known to longtime festivalgoers as a reliable, cheap, and cheerful outlet for the Bohemian specialty, *palacinky*. Made fresh before your bleary eyes on the hot grill, this sweet or savory pancake – choose your filling at 35 CZK each – makes for a decadent start to the day that, in all likelihood, is a better option than what your hotel is putting out. Dark chocolate or nougat are decided faves among the youthful crowd that queues up here in the early hours. Afternoon or evening



Club-cum-bar FooPaa serves pizzas till 4am.

top-ups tend more toward cheese, ham, or the Czech cream cheese equivalent, *ivaroh*. No tables on the street were visible here at press

time but clientele seem just as happy to take their crêpes away and sit by the fountain on T.G. Masaryka to enjoy their bounty. What's

more, it's all just a 10-minute stroll west of the Thermal – just enough to allow for a healthy walk and a quick, tasty refueling. (WT)

Following the popularity of last year's program, KVIFF has organized some eagerly-awaited master classes and talks. Today's controversial subject is "Why Would You Steal Movies?" at 11:30am in the Press Conference Hall, with US director and producer Taylor Hackford (*Devil's Advocate*, *Ray*) leading the panel. The discussion will be in English and Czech with simultaneous interpretation.

Today, for the fourth year running, the ČEZ Group are hosting their free, one day music festival **ČEZ Energy Fest at Poštovní dvůr**. Open to anyone with accreditation or a festival pass, there's a huge lineup running all the way from 1pm to 2am.

And at 5pm at Lázně III is the **Reflexor gala opening** with a gallery show, silent slapstick with live piano, and much more. (PLC)

DAILIES



Photo: Milan Malíček

Crystal Globe winner Helen Mirren and husband Taylor Hackford.



Photo: Jan Handrejch

The opening ceremony dives into action.



Photo: Milan Malíček

Czech President Václav Klaus and his wife Livia.