



George A. Romero is the reluctant godfather of the zombie genre.

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FREE

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ROMERO SLAMS BIG-BUDGET ZOMBIES

LOWDOWN

Gillian Purves, Šimon Šafránek

American screenwriter, director, and producer George A. Romero, best known as the creator of cult horror films beginning with the legendary zombie movie *Night of the Living Dead* in 1968, is a guest at the 50th KVIFF where he presented a special screening of his own film *The Crazies* (1973). He also presented Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's *The Tales of Hoffmann* (1951) as part of the fest's *Out of the Past* sidebar.

At the screening of *The Crazies* you said that when you made the film you were angry about Vietnam and it's an angry film. A lot of the issues that came up in the movie still apply today don't they?

I suppose things won't change. And part of the anger back then was because they didn't change. The sixties didn't change anything. I think there's just as much prejudice in the US; maybe it's worse. I don't see any solution. It would require such a change of everyone's attitude. How can you do that? In North

America, you have politicians who are all appealing to their bases. The religious right gives them strength. I just can't believe that people buy it.

Is your work generally driven by a desire to make some sort of social commentary?

It is. I've spent my whole life walking that line – trying to do something but I can't raise the money to do it if I pitch the real heart of the idea. So I pitch the entertaining side and that's the only way I've been able to get films funded.

Do you have nightmares about zombies?

No, I don't. All my nightmares are about things that actually might happen, nothing supernatural. I'm afraid of people. I'm afraid of what people do to each other. Can you imagine the concept of genocide? How can somebody do that to somebody else? There must be at least two kinds of people. People who won't hurt a fly and people who will happily blow away Palestinians because they're a different sect. Religion is the worst.

Did you come from a religious family?

I was raised Catholic. I swallowed the Kool-Aid up until I reached around the age of 7, the age of reason. They were teaching that you can live beautifully all your life but if you commit a sin, and then you die at that moment, you're going to hell. My grandmother died, and everybody said "Well she's in heaven now," and I said "Maybe not!" My uncles and my father kicked my ass all over the street, at the age of 7. That makes you re-examine things.

You've presented *The Tales of Hoffmann* here at KVIFF because it's a film that you admire. Why do you think it's such a favorite with directors?

Well, first of all, it's a really beautiful film, beautifully conceived. [Co-director Michael] Powell called it a "composed film" and I think that's pretty accurate. He was able to prerecord the soundtrack so he didn't have to have the big bulky cameras with the big blimps for sound baffling and he was just able to shoot it freely. It's basically the first music video. I saw *The Tales of Hoffmann* first when I was 12 or 13 and in those days if you

wanted to watch a film at home you had to go and rent a projector and a 16mm print. So I would use all my allowance money to take out *The Tales of Hoffmann*. And it was always available. Nobody else ever took it out. And all of a sudden somebody else started to book it. It turned out to be [Martin] Scorsese. We were the same age. He lived in Brooklyn and I lived in the Bronx and we were the only two guys that were taking out this movie. We've had some laughs about it since.

What fascinates you about zombies?

Not much. I just wanted to make a film about something extraordinary that is happening and the people are unable to grasp it. They continue to argue about stupid things instead of recognizing that there's something really awful going on. So that's what I wanted, and I thought "what if the dead don't stay dead and what if they were going around eating people?" That was my idea of something awful.

Continued on page 3

Cinephile crowds at KVIFF have gamely proven this year that they are willing to withstand the fires of hell – or at least 30 Centigrade on the Promenade – for the chance to catch films they won't find anywhere else – and meet up with directors who are highly likely receptive to the offer of a cold pivo.

True devotees of classic cinema are sometimes tested with still more challenges and so far none has daunted their determination. Take Czech auteur Jan Hřebejk, maker of such award scorers as *Innocence* and *Kawasaki's Rose*. Likely seeking inspiration, he was spotted at the Richmond looking for a seat at a screening of the 1975 iconic crime flick *Dog Day Afternoon*, starring Al Pacino and this year's posthumous tribute honoree John Cazale.

Although it's a hot hike from the Thermal, with seats you might kindly describe as vintage and an atmosphere one seasoned film hack calls a "stuffy old ballroom," the director was joined by esteemed colleagues for a rare chance to see the gender-bending suspenser on the big screen. █

SEE YOU THERE

LILI HORVÁTH

DIRECTOR,
THE WEDNESDAY CHILD

I'd recommend *Tosca's Kiss*, which I saw several years ago. It's an old Italian documentary from the 1980s about retired opera singers. These old singers and divas are really among the most fascinating characters I have ever seen in a documentary movie. And the whole setting is beautiful, so it's really worth seeing. I'm also intrigued by *Hungry Hearts*, which I haven't seen, but I've read that it's about how the birth of a child changes a woman's life and that it's a psychological thriller which evokes *Rosemary's Baby* – I love those kinds of films.

Tosca's Kiss screens today at 1pm (Thermal Congress Hall). *Hungry Hearts*

screens today at 10:30pm (Drahomíra) and on July 10 at 10pm (Pupp Cinema). You can catch Horváth's film *The Wednesday Child* today at 4:30pm (Lázně III). (COC)



SOME LIKE IT HOT...

Legend has it that the howls of a hunting dog led to the founding of Karlovy Vary. Around about the mid-14th century, when Charles IV was both king of Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor, some of his merry men were in hot pursuit of a stag when the hound's sounds echoing through the woods led them to the hot water the poor creature had found itself in.

Karlovy Vary – literally Charles's Spring – boasts 14 thermal springs, the waters of which are prescribed to treat a host of ailments (it's *de rigueur* to imbibe the healing waters though a porcelain sippy cup, as you stroll along the colonnade).

The hottest of the lot (with an average temperature of 73°C) is the aptly named *Vřídlo* ("Hot Spring"). Its geyser shoots some 2,000 liters per minute, up to 12 meters high and is the



Photo: Jan Handrejch

symbol of the spa town (though festivalgoers could be forgiven for thinking it's a chamois, a mountain-loving antelope often mistaken for a goat or a stag, and the symbol for the 50th KVIFF.)

The Hot Spring Colonnade, built in 1975, is not a gem in and of itself (it's an architectural wonder only in the sense of you wonder who allowed it to be built in the historic city center). Its esplanade hall, where you can see the *Vřídlo* in action, is open daily (6am–7pm) – but there's more to it than meets the eye.

Below the surface, literally, are fantastic cavernous passages (pictured) carved out over millennia. During KVIFF there are special evening tours (8pm–10pm) of an underground hot spring (also daily, 9am–5pm), where you can see the raw aragonite mineral formations and petrified objects that make for popular souvenirs. (BK)

OFFICIAL SELECTION

THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN – MAD POLISH GOAT WHO FOUGHT SOVIETS WITH AFGHAN LION

Brian Kenety

It is fitting, in so many ways, that Romanian director Anca Damian chose to portray the utterly fantastic life story of the Polish refugee and born adventurer Adam Jacek Winkler in an animated docu-drama collage: he had compared himself to comic book hero Koziolatek Matolek – a naïve but passionate billy goat, forever on a quest for justice.

The Magic Mountain is the second part of Damian's planned trilogy dedicated to heroism, in which each film focuses on a person facing death and wanting to give meaning to life – Winkler sought both in Afghanistan, where, alongside the mujahedeen led by Commander Massoud – the "Lion of Panjshir" – he fought the guerilla war against the Soviets.

"Adam Jacek Winkler could be viewed as a madman, a deranged and insignificant adventurer. His life was filled with idealism and ridiculousness, as he was both courageous and absurd. Nevertheless, we still have a clear sense of his own guiding moral values," says Damian, who brought to life Winkler's own drawings and photos in the film, conceived as a dialogue between Winkler and his daughter Ania, who co-wrote the script.

Winkler was a toddler when his uncle and cousin were killed along with 22,000 other Poles in the Katyn forest massacre of 1940, overseen by the Soviet secret police with Stalin's blessing. As a boy, he fantasized about fighting the Bolsheviks and liber-



Anca Damian's *The Magic Mountain* looks at the amazing life of Polish émigré Adam Jacek Winkler, who fought the Soviets in Afghanistan.

ating his homeland, fuelled by stories of exploits by the Polish resistance's Home Army.

He left Poland in 1965 for Paris, where he worked as a house painter and cooperated with groups of anticommunist émigrés. Winkler and other mountaineers also set up a network to smuggle *samizdat* via Czechoslovakia to Poland. His refugee passport didn't allow him to travel, so his wife Maria went (she was caught and spent over a year in jail).

Winkler had long felt ashamed for having left his country – for not having been brave like Adam Michnik and other dissidents – and began looking for ways to fight the "reds" in direct combat. He first tried to go to Congo and Vietnam. "Then, in 1979, I would be born a second time. The Russians invaded Afghanistan. From then on, my eyes were fixed on that part of the world," Winkler says in the film, which draws on

his letters, war journal, and a narrative he recorded.

"It was what I'd dreamed of all my life: I could meet the people who were not frightened of the Red Army... I'd finally found my own kind," he says.

Damian's first "hero" film, *Crulic: The Path to Beyond*, which told the story of Claudiu Crulic, a Romanian who died in a Polish prison while on a hunger strike, won the best film prize at the 2012 Annecy International Animated Film Festival; like *The Magic Mountain*, its weaving together of graphics, stop motion and digital 3D gives it an otherworldly, dreamlike air; both end with footage to remind audiences of reality.

The Magic Mountain screens today at 5pm (Thermal Grand Hall), tomorrow at 10am (Pupp Cinema), and on July 11 at 11:30am (Drahomíra). ■

OFFICIAL SELECTION

THOSE WHO FALL HAVE WINGS – A POETIC BREATHLESSNESS, DRIVEN BY LOSS

Brian Kenety

It begins in darkness. Ever so slowly, a faint blueish light illuminates one sleeping pig, and then another. A mournful male voice begins to rise, singing a song based on a Heinrich Heine poem, a cappella:

I wept in my dream, for I dreamt you were in your grave: I woke, and tears ran down my cheeks. I wept in my dreams, thinking you had abandoned me: I woke, and cried long and bitterly. I wept in my dream, dreaming you were still good to me: I woke, and even then my flood of tears poured forth.

The song is drowned out by grunts and squeals as the camera makes its way through the pig sty, finally coming to rest on a teenage girl, asleep in another pen. A flash cut later, we see her in the cold light of day, shivering and distressed, her face and lip bloodied. And then, with a gasp, Peter Brunner's lyrical *Those Who Fall Have Wings* begins.

"The passing of my grandmother, the poem 'The Game is Over' by Ingeborg Bachmann and Robert Schumann's song 'I Wept in My Dream' were the starting points for making the film," says Austrian director Peter Brunner, whose basic idea was to create an "abstract mood" connected to the experience. "Six months after her death, we shot this movie in her small, cramped house."

The grandmother is played by Brunner's own mother, Renate Hild, and her character's grand-



The title of Peter Brunner's lyrical film, about a girl coming to terms with her grandmother's death, comes from an Ingeborg Bachmann poem.

daughter Kati – the bloodied girl from the opening sequence – by Jana McKinnon, who had a role in his debut feature, *My Blind Heart* (shown in competition at Rotterdam in 2014).

Exceptional familiarity between the actors and creative team allowed for the improvisation and rethinking of scenes, as well as "writing in editing," says Brunner, who has worked with cinematographer Franz Dude since they were both Vienna Film Academy students.

"This way of working – to let chance play a role and to trust new ideas that come up during the process of finding a solution within a situation – is not for everyone and not for every film," he says. "I chose this approach because it is a method I know from making music and because it reflects the flowing atmosphere and structure of the poem that inspired me."

Wings has a dreamlike, lyrical quality, as it weaves past moments Kati shared with her grandmother, and the present – with the odd surreal interlude (such as when a naked, bearded man, his hair matted and body caked in mud, walks through a garden sprinkler in the dark).

Throughout, remembering her grandmother, the only person she could really talk to, appears to trigger Kati's (possibly psychosomatic) asthma attacks. "You're in the shadows, and I'm there with you," she says in narration after one attack. "The skin of your face was blue. They said you gasped... And at 3:46pm you inhaled and exhaled five times. And then I was alone."

Those Who Fall Have Wings screens today at 8pm (Thermal Grand Hall), tomorrow at 1pm (Pupp) and on July 11 at 2pm (Drahomíra). ■

FACES

Andy Fehu, director of *The Greedy Tiffany*, is here with the actors from the film Jiří Panzner and Leoš Noha. *Gold Coast* director Daniel Dencik is expected to arrive in Karlovy Vary today with actor Jakob Oftebro. Director Kim Ki-duk is here with his own film *Stop* and will present Lee Chang-dong's film *Poetry* as part of the Six Close Encounters sidebar.

Other directors you will see around town today include Helen Walsh (*The Violators*), Yasutomo Chikuma (*The Ark in the Mirage*), Eileen Hofer (*Horizons*), Tinne Zenner (*Sleeping District*), Laura Bispuri (*Sworn Virgin*) and Alanté Kaváité (*The Summer of Sangaile*). ■



Alanté Kaváité



Helen Walsh



Tinne Zenner



Andy Fehu



Kim Ki-duk



Eileen Hofer



Daniel Dencik

DIRECTING HOPEFULS LOOK FOR HOME RUNS AT PITCHING SESSION

Will Tizard

Regional directors, writers, and producers learned to brave uncensored critiques from veteran film industry pros this year at the annual Pitch & Feedback session held at in the restored century-old Barrandov Studios Villa, an elegant pile built by a member of the Becher family.

In listening to the pitches, coaches including veteran producer Katriel Schory, head of the Israel Film Fund, gave useful pointers on focus, presentation skills, and conveying plot and character with remarkable efficiency.

The Czech/Finnish biography *Zátopek*, based on Czech Cold War running champion Emil Zátopek, was the project with the highest hopes for production values, with an estimated budget of 2.7 million euros. Built around the 1952 Olympics in which the champion won three gold medals, the film is directed by David Ondříček and co-written with Jan P. Muchow.

Another Czech project focusing on history, *Il Boemo*, written and directed by Petr Václav and produced by Jan Macola, explores the life of a Bohemian musician who was also a maestro composer for the Italian opera, and a mentor of Mozart, Josef Mysliveček. The 18th-century artist, largely forgotten by history, was "one of the most popular and prolific composers of Italian opera" says Macola.

Czech writer-director Ondřej Provaník has won documentary prizes at Jihlava for *A Town*



Katriel Schory (third from left) and other mentors don't hold back at the KVIFF pitching session yesterday.

Called Hermitage, co-directed with Martin Dušek, a portrait of a town on the Czech-German border, and *Coal in the Soul*, also co-directed with Dušek.

Fish Blood, his new upcoming feature based on a the real-life razing and flooding of villages in South Bohemia to make way for a cooling lake for the Temelín nuclear power plant, grows out of his passion for social and environmental crisis stories. His main character, the returning Czech emigrant, Hana, is just one of those whose home has been lost forever to the energy industry.

Other work pitched included ironic Czech family story *Snowing!*, written and directed by Kristína Nedvėdová; Slovak border drama *SchengenStory* directed by Peter Bebjak and produced by Wandal Production; *The Disciple*, a Slovak story of surviving corrupt church institutions

by Ivan Ostrochovský; and *By a Sharp Knife*, a Slovak crime drama by Teodor Kuhn.

Organized by the Czech Film Center, the Slovak Film Institute and the Karlovy Vary fest, with the MIDPOINTSscript Center training program as partner, the event generally has some of the region's most capable filmmakers sweating before talking up their work.

Coaches representing co-production markets, film funds, sales and production houses, included Schory; Kristína Trapp, fest consultant and former matchmaker at the Berlinale Co-Production Market; Angeliki Vergou, a script evaluator and project executive at the Thessaloniki fest; Tassilo Hallbauer of sales and co-financing company Beta Cinema; and Christoph Thoke of Mogador Film, a German producing and financing house. ■

ROMERO SLAMS BIG-BUDGET ZOMBIES

Continued from page 1

How do you feel about the recent wave of big-budget zombie productions?

That's why I got out of it. I did *Land of the Dead*, which was a bigger budget movie with Dennis Hopper. I really didn't like the experience. I loved Dennis Hopper, by the way. But one of the line items was Dennis Hopper's cigar budget. I would have liked to have bought two extra days of shooting instead!

Did you have to make a lot of compromises on that film?

Yes, the first three [zombie] films had African American lead males. The first time was an accident. Duane [Jones] was just the best actor available. Then it got such a reaction and I honestly think that it's one of the reasons that that film was so widely played. People interpreted it as a racial message. I decided to keep doing it. First of all, to give a chance to those actors who couldn't get work. But [the studio] wouldn't let me [cast an African American lead] on *Land of the Dead*. They blamed the Europeans. They said Europeans wouldn't accept it. I had to concede, so what I did was I made the main zombie black and they really fought me on that too.

And you returned to lower budget productions after that?

I did two more films then all of sudden along came *The Walking Dead* and *World War Z*. This whole idea of zombies who swarm like army ants – I don't find it frightening or entertaining, I just find it stupid. Now you can't do [zombie movies] any more for a low budget, so I decided to do a comic book. It's very traditional. It's got

zombies and vampires. It's set in post-apocalyptic New York City and the vampires are basically the ruling class, and zombies are used for entertainment or ignored.

You've collaborated on video games too. You make an appearance in *Call of Duty: Black Ops*...

I'm the guy that you have to kill! I think video games really are what kept zombies alive, not movies. I was almost the only guy doing zombie movies for a long time.

If you had unlimited funds, what sort of movie would you make?

I'd like to do Tarzan the way [Edgar Rice] Burroughs wrote it. That's just a childhood fantasy but if I had an opportunity that's what I would do.

Do you enjoy how you've come to be seen as the godfather of the zombie genre?

Not so much. I never wanted to just make zombie films but I found out that I could easily talk about social issues by using that genre. And that's the biggest disappointment for me right now, because zombies have become something else.

Throughout your career have you seen substantial changes in cinema besides the technical ones?

You know what? As far as I'm concerned when you see a very personal thoughtful film from a good filmmaker, it hasn't changed at all. Perhaps more films can be made because of the new portable and inexpensive ways of shooting them, but a good film that has some sort of a soul can come from anywhere and I don't think that aspect has changed. ■

Christine Eloy

General Manager, Europa Distribution
www.europa-distribution.org

Can you tell us a little bit about your organization?

It was set up nearly 10 years ago by distributors. It's an association and a network. We represent independent film distributors, mainly European, but also from outside Europe. The idea behind it is to create a network – a place where they can talk to each other. We do this through organizing panels and workshops. We also inform them about what is going on in our area and we cooperate with journalists, working on articles informing about distribution in different countries. We also share our experiences with each other.

And why are you at KVIFF?

Because we are a European organization, we need to be in several regions of Europe. This area of Europe is important to us, so that's why we're in KV. We had an open panel Monday morning and we've also just held a closed panel tackling what's been happening in the last month in the European Parliament and European Commission with respect to the proposed digital single market.

You don't like the EC's proposal to create a digital single market for films, which could make movies available as videos on demand all over Europe regardless of whether or not they've been released in their home countries. Why?

Because we are Europe, we are a fragmented continent. That's normal. We have some 20 different languages, we have varied cultures and we even have different holidays – if we take a children's film, it will never be released on the same date, because, of course, you want to release it on the date when kids go on holidays. The problem is that, if there's a country where a film is being released on one particular



date and a Czech producer wants to release it at a later time, because it's a better moment for him, this means that it could already be available on another platform somewhere. As a result, the Czech distributor, who is working on his own territory to make the film known, could lose part of his public, because some of his potential audience may have gone and watched it on a platform that is not local.

Any other potential ramifications?

It also has an impact on windows. Take *The Great Beauty*, for instance. The film was shown in Cannes two years ago, but was released during Cannes in some countries, such as Italy, of course, and France. So, France had a theater release in May... Belgium released the film into theaters in September... If the film had been available at that time on VOD, no Belgian theater would have taken that film. They would have just said no. It would have made the release impossible for a Belgian distributor, as his first window would already have been shut for him. It's just an unworkable idea. Our sector is like an

ecosystem. If one part of the sector is touched, then everyone is affected. If you touch the exclusive territoriality of rights, it means a distributor can't recoup the investment he made to acquire a film he believes in and wants to promote on his own territory, thereby making the film exist for an audience. That's really what distributors do.

How are you responding to the EC's proposal?

We are trying to find other solutions, which would really help films to circulate, knowing that some things just won't circulate anyway, because they are aimed at a local audience and that's okay. It happens all the time... But it's also true that some films should travel more and don't, so we're trying as a part of a working group set up in Cannes [along with other interested organizations] to see what we can do for those films that should be available in some territories, but aren't, because there are not enough cinemas, for example, or the distribution sector is still only small and emerging. It is true that we need to find ways for people to have access to this output. Hopefully, the Commission will drop its bad, bad idea and then we'll really have a dialogue with them to really find a solution to improve the circulation of films.

And what do you think would happen if the EC ignores the objections and pushes ahead with the proposal?

It would decrease production on a very epic level... It means that distributors would only buy films that they know will see them recoup their investment in theaters – so they'll buy the more commercial ones. Ultimately, instead of increasing circulation, you would decrease production and reduce the circulation of films. It would be a nightmare. It would kill European cinema as well as diversity, of course, because films wouldn't travel as much as they do now. (COC) ■

CRITIC'S CHOICE

Giovanni Marchini Camia, Film Critic, *The Film Stage*

Brilliant Chilean director Pablo Larraín's films always confront the more controversial aspects of his country's history and culture. With *The Club* he turns his attention to the Catholic Church. Four elderly priests are living incognito in a small coastal village, escaping punishment for former crimes. When their past threatens to



THE CLUB

Director: Pablo Larraín
Chile, 2015, 97min
July 8, 9am, Grand Hall - Thermal

come to light, they go to violent extremes in order to maintain their fraudulent façade. Though at times difficult to stomach,

Larraín's scorching condemnation of institutional hypocrisy is allegorical filmmaking at its most powerful.

With every film, Jia Zhangke cements his status as one of the most inventive and compellingly humane directors working today. One of the highlights of this year's Cannes festival, *Mountains May Depart* continues Jia's career-long interest in charting the momentous societal changes that have swept over China as a result of its ascen-



MOUNTAINS MAY DEPART

Director: Jia Zhangke
China/Japan/France, 2015, 131min.
July 8, 1pm, Národní dům

sion in the globalized world economy. By splitting his protagonists' story into three chapters – set in 1999, 2014 and, fi-

nally, 2025 – Jia gives a bleak yet heartfelt estimation of the future towards which his country is heading.

Films that talk about love convincingly are hard to come by; films that talk about love in old age even more so. Andrew Haigh's *45 Years* does both. The film chronicles the blossoming of a marital crisis in the week leading up to a couple's 45th wedding anniversary. Haigh's excellent, highly nuanced script and understated direction and



45 YEARS

Directed by: Andrew Haigh
UK, 2015, 93min
July 8, 7pm, Pupp

the two stellar central performances (Charlotte Rampling is absolutely phenomenal) come together in an incisive and emo-

tionally ensnaring tour-de-force. This is what films should talk about when they talk about love.

Paul Thomas Anderson pulled off the impossible with *Inherent Vice*, twice: a) he wrote and directed a brilliant adaptation of a novel by the crazy, "unadaptable" genius Thomas Pynchon, and b) he managed to give the film his own distinctive flavor while remaining perfectly respectful of his source material. Throw in



INHERENT VICE

Director: Paul Thomas Anderson
USA, 2014, 148min
July 8, 10pm, Pupp Cinema

a killer ensemble cast led by Joaquin Phoenix, sumptuous 35mm photography, and an amazing soundtrack, and you

get one of the best films of the year as well as one of most gorgeous ever cinematic recreations of 1970s LA. ■

FINLANDIA BAR LESS ORDINARY

MFF Karlovy Vary



středa 8. 7. 2015

ELECTRO SWING DEN

- 14.00 a 16.00 Losování o volné vstupenky
- 17.00 Filmový kvíz o volné vstupenky
- 17.30 Workshop Tomáše Kučery o míchání vodky
- 17–21 Flash Make-up od Douglas
- 21.30–23 InStyle party

O Electro swing vlny se postarají Mackie Messer f. Candy, Billy Hopp f. Johan (sax) a James Wing. Celý den je pro vás připravena nadupaná filmová knihovna nejen pro filmové geeky.

#nevsednizivot



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Finlandia Bar Less Ordinary – terasa u hotelu Thermal (otevírací doba 10 – 4, vstup zdarma) partneři / ROXY, Buggy's a Aerofilms
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HEADING EAST FOR CINEMA GOLD



Hungarian director Lili Horváth takes a soul-searching look at the institutionalization of kids in *The Wednesday Child*.

By Will Tizard

One of KVIFF's most vital functions, presenting the work of rising filmmakers from the former eastern bloc, is a role the fest relishes in – and not just because it requires programmer Lenka Trpáková to travel around the region, finding unconventional new work – and no doubt dangerous offerings of vodka at festival functions.

This year the program she and colleagues developed with the oversight of artistic director Karel Och makes for rich and varied offerings indeed – with few risks of a nasty hangover. Note that a few will not be screening again this year (but are likely bound for fest play in the future somewhere else).

One of the most rewarding aspects of this section is participating in the nurturing of promising writers, directors, and producers, Trpáková says. And that is just what we're witnessing with two of the most talked-about films of the 12 screening in **East of the West**.

"The Turkish film *Ivy* was presented here last year at the Works in Progress presentation," she explains. "We thought it might be something for us. So we followed the film and

it was also selected for the Sundance Film Festival, where it had its world premiere. So that's a nice story."

The film, Tolga Karaçelik's second following studies in NYC and success with 2010's *Toll Booth*, is a taut suspense story that riffs on events that are all too familiar to global news-watchers this year – the barring of a ship full of increasingly desperate people from docking.

It was the same case for *Journey to Rome*, she adds – a project presented at KVIFF while still in progress. "Then it was chosen to be the opening film of the East of the West section," Trpáková says. "It's formally innovative, very interesting with creative structure and unusual style and a new director."

Identifying surges in talent – which is sometimes seasonal – is another goal of East of the West.

"It's a strong year for Polish films. We've two wholly Polish films, *Chemo* and *No Matter How Hard We Tried*; *Journey to Rome* was also a Czech-Polish co-production."

The films show a departure from some conventions that are often attributed to Polish work, she adds. "What connects these for me is that all the Polish films here have a great sense of humor and they are dealing

with subjects that are very heavy. This is non-traditional for Polish cinema, I would say."

The first of these, Bartek Prokopowicz's *Chemo*, is an intriguing look at a wild ride of a relationship that's literally toxic – and all-consuming. The director was inspired by tragic events in his own life to pen the fascinating story.

Grzegorz Jarzyna, a young and popular filmmaker, has adapted a stage play by Dorota Masłowska, with *No Matter*, and the original material's strength shines through, says Trpáková. "The writing is great and she's making fun of everyone in Polish society. It's very dark, politically incorrect humor. It's a great adaptation."

Hungarian filmmaker Gyula Nemes, who won attention for his short docu *Lost World* at KVIFF in 2008, is back, this time in East of the West with a story that shows off the almost limitless imagination he's known for, *Zero*. The work "is really interesting," notes Trpáková – Nemes has no borders in what he's creating. He's combining black-and-white with color, different styles, genres...but it works together really well. A very unusual ecological love story told in a post-modern way. ■

The films screening this year are not limited to Eastern Europe, of course. The Greek entry, *Wednesday 4:45*, "is dealing with a really contemporary topic," says the East of the West chief. But it's no dry account of the economic crisis, she says. "It's a thriller, and noir but it's also telling us about the social situation – though not like a heavy social drama would."

And the Kyrgyz film, Mirlan Abdykalykov's *Heavenly Nomadic*, is "a great discovery," says Trpáková – "very modest, slow and with beautiful imagery. It's a world premiere here."

Other discoveries screening this year are Czech entry *Dust of the Ground*, a family drama by Vít Zapletal; Albanian/Kosovar/German/Greek *CHROMIUM*, a troubling coming-of-age tale by Bujar Alimani; Hungarian/German entry *The Wednesday Child*, a soul-searching look at cyclical child institutionalization by Lili Horváth; Romania's *The World is Mine*, a debut tale of teen ambition by Nicolae Constantin Tânase; and Croatian/Slovene/Serbian/Montenegrin *You Carry Me*, a tableau of characters struggling for hope and dignity against tough odds by Ivona Juka. ■

SOME MONEY FOR THE GREEKS



Sofia Exarchou's *Park* nabs this year's Works in Progress prize.

KVIFF's **Works in Progress** presentation offers a great opportunity to ambitious filmmakers from the CEE region, the Balkans, Turkey and the former Soviet Bloc, who are looking to raise the profile of their newly completed features, or to find the support for finishing post-production on their labors of love.

Every year they get chance at the fest to pitch their projects to colleagues, journalists and industry scouts, who invariably turn up for this useful preview of upcoming work in their droves. At a packed session on Monday, 15 filmmaker teams (selected from a total of 57 who entered) got the chance to impress their peers and to compete for 10,000 euros in services from the event's partner, Barrandov Studios.

Last night, a jury consisting of Paz Lázaro from the Berlinale team, Titus Kreyenberg of unafilm and Jan Naszewski of New Europe Film Sales, awarded this prize to the Greek film *Park*, a topical tale of young Athenians hanging out in decaying athletic facilities built for the 2004 Olympic Games. "Set in the ruins of past glory, this film takes us to the bottom of society and ignites a firework of raw energy," said the jury in their closing statement, describing Sofia Exarchou's film as the "portrayal of a young generation that has been betrayed and deprived of its future."

This year's Works in Progress also included entries by two Czech directors. Jan Němec, a major exponent of the 1960s Czech New Wave, presented his *The Wolf of Royal Vineyard Street*, a stylized adaptation of the director's four autobiographical short stories, featuring Jiří Mádl in the lead role. The second Czech project was *Mars* by Benjamin Tuček, a slightly bizarre "sci-fi indie comedy" made by a team of twelve people plus a robot during 20 days in the Utah desert, in a setting used to acclimatize potential astronauts for a visit to Mars. (COC/ZV) ■

ON THE TOWN

Tandoor

I P Pavlova 25 (in the courtyard), Tel. 608 701 341, tandoor-kv.cz
Open: noon-9pm

Located a stone's throw from the Thermal, Tandoor has been serving up tasty Indian dishes to festgoers for years. This year they're offering a limited menu so meals are served within minutes of being ordered. The only starter available is a crowd-pleasing dal soup at 30 CZK. Then there's a range of six different curries (all served with rice), from a mild vegetable korma (150 CZK), to a moderately spicy tender lamb madras (190 CZK) to a super-spicy chicken vindaloo (160 CZK). Extras of raita or pickle will set you back 20 CZK. Beer is reasonably priced at 35 CZK for a half liter of Gambrinus or 0.33 l bottle of Pilsner. There are no desserts as such this week but a cool fruity lassi (yoghurt drink, 50 CZK) makes a pleasant sweet finish.



Tandoor is a godsend for vegetarians in meat-loving KV.

Star Casino

T.G. Masaryka 11
Open non-stop

Need one last beer at 4am? It happens to us all. Star Casino is open round the clock and is a lot less dodgy on the inside than it looks on the outside. Avoid the ground-floor games altogether and head upstairs to the recently refitted and tranquil bar where beaming barmaids serve up various beers for around the 30 CZK mark.

Republica Coffee

T.G. Masaryka 28, Tel. 720 347 166
Open: 7am-7pm

Perfect for when only the best coffee will do. The comfortable interior has ample plug sockets for laptops as well as free Wi-Fi, making it an ideal spot to recharge your batteries (literally and figuratively). All drinks can be packaged to go if you're really in a rush. (GP) ■

EVENTS

BECOME A VACHKOPHILE!

Today's KVIFF Talk is an hour-long presentation in the Thermal's **Cinema C**, introducing Czech film director and educator Karel Vachek and his work using excerpts (with commentaries) from his seven film novels dating from from the 1960s to the present. Starts at 1:30pm

RADIO 1 NIGHT WITH JAN P. MUCHOW

It's **Radio 1 Night at Aeroport**, Horova 3, which means a stellar line-up of Jan P. Muchow (*The Ecstasy of Saint Theresa*), Tim Otis and Pierre Urban. Free for accredited guests, 50 CZK for others. From 8pm till last man standing.

CZECH AND HUNGARIAN ROCKERS

There'll be a double concert by Czech rock band **Olympic** and Hungarian rock legends **Omega** accompanied by the **Karlovy Vary Symphony Orchestra** at the **Outdoor Cinema** today at 6pm. Tickets cost 450 CZK at the event. (GP) ■

DAILIES

- 1/ Brothers on screen and in real life: Kryštof and Matěj Hádek (right) from *The Snake Brothers*.
- 2/ Longtime Lars von Trier collaborator Udo Kier at the Thermal.
- 3/ KVIFFers discuss screenings in the popular "outdoor lounge."



Photo: Jan Handrejch



Photo: Jan Handrejch



Photo: KVIFF