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Photo: Jan Handraha

No one wants to watch the movie after Brad Pitt dies. Unless Casey Affleck is in it.

Hear him roar

In *Light of my Life*, Casey Affleck explores fatherly love in a world without women

The recipient of KVIFF's President's Award in 2017 and an Academy Award, *exactly* in that order, Casey Affleck has returned to Karlovy Vary to present his second film as a director – *Light of My Life*, starring the actor and emerging talent Anna Pniowsky who joined him on stage for the KVIFF Talk yesterday.

By Marta Balaga

It's a man's, man's, man's world in *Light of My Life*, Affleck's second feature as a director, shot while he was still promoting the acclaimed *Manchester by the Sea*. Most women are suddenly wiped out by a mysterious disease including the wife of Affleck's character, played by Elisabeth Moss. But not his little daughter.

"Science fiction stories are a favorite of mine so they find their way into a lot of things I do. First I came up with this bedtime story

about animals that couldn't go on the Noah's Ark. I wrote that as an animated film but nobody wanted to make it so then I added the scene of a parent telling it to his kid," Affleck said during the KVIFF Talk, explaining that he sometimes learns what he is doing while he is doing it. "I started writing it about a father and a son but my kids thought I was writing about them and didn't like it. So I based it on my niece a little bit."

Real footage

Affleck said it was the Zika virus

breaking out that got him thinking about gender more. "I remember thinking what a strange phenomenon it was with one gender more susceptible to it than the other."

But it was mostly the media's portrayal of how people should look or behave that made him uneasy.

"I always despised these beauty magazines, the way they perpetuate ideas about beauty for woman and for men," he said. "Having two little kids with famous people in the family they can walk into a grocery, see their uncle on

the cover and it's says something that's a lie..."

It's a concept he already explored in his directorial debut, 2010's *I'm Still Here* – a controversial mockumentary that saw Joaquin Phoenix fool the entire world into thinking he was retiring from acting to pursue hip-hop.

"Well, I like Andy Kaufman a lot," said Affleck. "I was thinking about making something that would reflect the way people watch things now. I grew up when there was no Internet and I was struck by how captivating real footage can be: just a kitten playing the piano or someone falling down the stairs. When I saw *The Blair Witch Project*, I thought it was real! It's a very strange movie and people were annoyed by it mostly. More people were mad at us than even *saw* the movie."

Kind of a lead character

It's no wonder for his next directorial outing he wanted to make something on the opposite end of the spectrum. "I thought about *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*, which I showed to the financiers: completely naturalistic and for most people a complete snooze," he said laughing. "They were horrified."

Affleck also recounted some of his favorite acting roles including collaborations with his brother Ben, with David Lowery, Gus Van Sant and Andrew Dominik on – big breath now – *The Assassination of Jesse James by Coward Robert Ford*.

"I was kind of a lead in that movie and Brad Pitt was the supporting character, which everyone thought was preposterous. The first cut of the movie was over three hours long and Brad dies at two hours, 28 minutes, so they went: 'Well, that's when the movie should end. No one wants to watch the movie after Brad Pitt dies.' At least not with me in it – so it got considerably shorter."

Luckily, his very first role was better received.

"When I was a kid my school was named after Rosa Parks and she came to our school once. I was playing a lion in a play and my mane fell off and I froze. So I just roared. Afterwards we got to meet Rosa Parks and she told me: 'I liked your roar.' I have been chasing that feeling ever since." ●

Light of My Life screens July 2 at 10 pm [Národní dům Cinema] and July 5 at 10 am [Karlovy Vary Municipal Theatre].

See you there

Daniela Cölle
Sales Agent at Pluto Film



The first time I visited KVIFF I was a 17-year-old high-school backpacker, sleeping at the festival camping site and watching five to six films a day. As a treat, I was swimming in the pool above Hotel Thermal (nowadays closed and known as "Industry Pool") and had long talks about the films seen. It was in Karlovy Vary where my love for the cinema and festival life started and still continues.

This year's I am looking very much forward to the new films of my friends. One of them already premiered yesterday: *Let There Be Light* by Marko Škop. And another, *Silent Days* by Pavol Pekárčik will premiere today. I would also recommend

the documentary *Forman vs. Forman* by the inspiring filmmaker Helena Třeštíková. And, last but not least, buying this year's mug to remember the festival all year long. ● MB

Let There Be Light screens today at 1 pm [Pupp Cinema] and on July 3 at 11:30 am [Drahomíra Cinema]. *Silent Days* screens today at 6:30 pm [Karlovy Vary Municipal Theatre], July 2 at 4:30 pm [Lázně III Cinema], July 4 at 1:30 pm [Husovka Theatre]. *Forman vs Forman* will be shown today at 11:30 am [Grand Hall], July 2 at 1 pm [Národní dům Cinema], July 5 at 10 pm [Pupp Cinema] and July 6 at 1:30 pm [Lázně III Cinema].

Replay



The K.V.I.Q. Talk's Fantastic Four.

Work less, sleep more

A handful of industry experts huddled at the Hotel Pupp on Sunday for the first K.V.I.Q. talk, mulling the whirlwind of changes facing indie filmmakers today thanks to tectonic shifts in the digital world.

So good news, right?

Sony Classic Pictures veep Dylan Leiner was optimistic about an explosion of new platforms and niches for films as demand in the US grows. But Linda

Beath, a Canadian producer and founder of Ideal Filmworks Italia countered that these days the average salary for, say, a documentary director in Europe is 14,000 euros per year. Helga Trüpel, a member of the European Parliament, offered a more upbeat insight, saying the body is committed to "good rules for monopolies" that will help ensure that giants like Netflix don't run roughshod over small filmmakers in Europe. But it was Icelandic filmmaker Benedikt Erlingsson who threw the true grenade in the tent in the end.

If we want sustainability, he said, utterly deadpan, "work less, sleep more and plant lots of trees." ● WT

Official selection



Whosoever holds this hammer, if he be worthy, shall possess the power of Thor.

Hammering on Nudist camp tragicomedy Patrick underlines the importance of proper tools.

by Marta Balaga

In his black comedy Patrick Belgian director Tim Mielants doesn't hold back and immediately strips naked – all his characters, that is, middle-aged residents of a naturist campsite spending their summer merrily parading around in the buff, bickering about lotion.

That's the only world thirty-something Patrick has ever known, finding occasional refuge in his workshop and resignedly accepting the fact that the rest of his life will be spent tending to his father's property and its naked clients, using him for sex in exchange for some homemade apricot jam. But one day, his peace is shattered – his favorite hammer is gone. And that's just the beginning.

OCD with a twist
Already in the running for the prestigious title of the oddest film of the year, Patrick delivers the giggles but doesn't settle for easy laughs. Mostly because Tim Mielants seems to actually care for his gentle, tool-obsessed hero, sporting the most unfortunate bowl haircut this side of Dumb and Dumber, and makes sure others will too. He is surrounded by a celebrity named Dustin Apollo (Jemaine Clement, further proving he is unable to play anyone normal) and people who despite wearing precisely nothing hide nasty secrets and petty ambitions. All suddenly come to light once the well-oiled routine is disrupted for good, but somehow he remains unaffected and pure: Prince Myshkin liberated from the burden of pants, if you will. But it's time for him to face the nasty and figure out his own path, however scary it might seem to be. That is, once he finds that damn hammer. •

Patrick premieres tonight at 8 pm [Grand Hall] and screens again on July 2 at 1 pm [Pupp Cinema] and July 4 at 11:30 am [Drahomira Cinema].

Official selection



All play, no work makes Jack one bored boy.

Under the influence It's all midlife crisis and zebras in La Belle Indifference

by Marta Balaga

"We are the happiest people of Istanbul," the zebra-loving protagonist of Kivanç Sezer's La Belle Indifference drunkenly announces to the reluctant taxi driver, but he doesn't really believe it, already experiencing the very first tingles of a mid-life crisis. In his own words,

Onur didn't get fired from a pharmaceutical company but he didn't exactly quit either. And even though he tries his best to remain positive, his wife still whispers about a severance package in the middle of sex – never a good sign.

Corporate punishment
The Turkish director

wastes no time showing the frequent absurdity of the corporate workplace: the "where do you see yourself in ten years" questions, people not getting jobs they don't even want because of being over-qualified, empty promises repeated by life coaches and perfectly tailored gurus. But whatever they are selling, Onur is not buying it. At least not anymore, slowly becoming numb to the entire world with the help of a drug he used to represent, despite knowing its powerful side-effects. Hallucinating his way through the disaster, which quickly rubs off on the ones closest to him, he is looking for a way out: his own version of Eat, Pray, Love, a reward for his decision that surely must come his way. "There are some moments in life when you know you are standing at a road junction," he says at the beginning of the film. Perhaps, but sometimes it might just be easier to take a step back instead, as you can't always get what you want. Even Jagger knew that. •

La Belle Indifference premieres tonight at 5 pm [Grand Hall] and screens again on July 2 at 10 am [Pupp Cinema] and July 4 at 9 am, Drahomira Cinema.

Three picks for today

Ruben Nollet
De Tijd film journalist, Belgium



On the town

Jakub Švejkovský
Festival Daily Writer



The absurdities of life and death are as hilarious as they are scary. Which seems exactly what Swedish director Johannes Nyholm is getting at in this darkly comedic and allegorical horror film. Not to mention how freaking creepy nursery rhymes can be.

Koko-di, Koko-da
Director: Johannes Nyholm
Sweden / Denmark 2019, 84 min
July 1 at 10:30 pm, Drahomira Cinema



In their impressive debut feature Goodnight Mommy, Austrian directors Veronika Franz & Severin Fiala serve up an ice-cold and perverse story about the strangeness of family. They're at it again in this claustrophobic thriller.

The Lodge
Directors: Veronika Franz and Severin Fiala
USA / United Kingdom 2019, 100 min
July 1 at 11:59 pm, Čas Cinema



One should make a point of catching up with at least one film classic at every festival. So brush up on your Kubrick with one of his earlier films, a harrowing and timeless account of the futility of idealism in the face of war.

Paths of Glory
Director: Stanley Kubrick
USA 1957, 88 min
July 1 at 4 pm, Pupp Cinema



Hurry up, the venue will close for renovation after the festival.

Kaiser 54
Mariánskolázeňská 2

Open 10 pm to 5 am (except July 3)

Since there's no Aeroport this year – the ever so popular pop-up club – you might just have to be content with partying at the majestic Emperor Spa palace. And that can't be bad, can it?

This multi-genre concert venue, also a pop-up club, is called – for the purposes of KVIFF – Kaiser 54 and it's in town for the second time. That means the programming is far more worked out than last year, from

hip-hop to alternative rock. Tonight, you can look forward to the best of electronic music. The main concerts will set you back no more than 350 CZK, which comes to about 14 euros. Best of all, a new touch this year are the afterparties. For only four Euros you can see some of the best Czech DJs spinning until the early-morning hours. Kaiser's programming director is a Czech multi-artist and modern Renaissance man, Vladimír 518. Well, he's actually a rapper, but he also performs as a graffiti artist, graphic illustrator and stage designer for experimental theater. Spoiler alert: There is a new 21-meter light installation. See you at the spa, comrades. •

Kviffefe Tweet of the day

Paul Ridd
@PaulRidd



Just saw a beautiful restoration of demented Czech New Wave film THE CREMATOR, in which a breast-fixated mortician with a Tibet fetish collaborates with the Nazis and progressively bumps off his family. Crazy visual style, abrupt tonal shifts, funny and harrowing. #KVIFF54

Feature film

Riley Keogh loses herself in an unreal winter landscape in *The Lodge*.

Get the hell out of *The Lodge*

It's a different kind of family outing in the Austrian suspense drama

by Michael Stein

Family life has its darker aspects and this awareness has become something of a specialty for directing pair Veronika Franz and Severin Fiala, most recently in *The Lodge*, which has its European premiere at KVIFF. "It is heavy stuff, being a mother, being a child, having a family," says Franz.

No light matter

The story follows a man who has asked his wife to finalize their divorce so he can marry his girlfriend. His two children are far from happy about this and then there's his girlfriend's past, which includes having been raised in a suicide cult. So she comes up with the idea of spending a couple days alone with the kids in the family's winter cabin to do a little bonding. What could go wrong?

"Actually, why would someone make a film about the light stuff?" Fiala says. "Why would you do that? It's such an effort to make a film with so many people coming together to do it that it should be about something that matters, maybe something unpleasant but something that needs to be talked about."

The directing pair's previous feature, the 2014 Austrian film *Goodnight Mommy* also takes a problematic child-adult relationship and creates a chilling, suspenseful story from it. In *The Lodge*, there are moments the viewer expects something from an ordinary horror movie to happen then moments when those expectations are dashed. The film is also a blending of its American cast and setting with the sensibilities its European directors and



Co-directors Veronika Franz and Severin Fiala hate romantic comedies.

cinematographer, who have their art-house backgrounds to draw on.

"Actually, we never make a distinction and say this is art house and this is genre," says Franz, laughing. "We like films from all areas, except maybe romantic comedies. We hate romantic comedies! So we don't make this difference."

The craziest ones

Yet the two directors think there are some particularly important reasons for the horror and suspense elements in their films.

"We like to be disturbed," Franz says. "We like to be attacked. We like to kind of face abysses. And you find this in art films and you find this in drama films but we like films to be told in a very suspenseful way and usually art-house films are not told that way."

"We think films should

also entertain you because they tell you unpleasant things," Fiala says. "Clearly, in our case, our films are telling you stuff that's really unpleasant, that no one really wants to confront, so we feel at least that it's the responsibility of the filmmakers to tell the film in a way that's suspenseful."

Because they were unable to work with their Austrian cinematographer they turned to renowned Greek cameraman Thimios Bakatakis, known especially for his work with Yorgos Lanthimos.

"Obviously we love how Lanthimos' films look," Fiala says. "He [Thimos] was the most impressive one and also the craziest one. We always go for the craziest people." •

The Lodge screens tonight at 23:59 [Čas Cinema], July 3 at 23:59 [Small Hall] and July 5 at 23:59 [Čas Cinema].

Top 5

A family that dreams together schemes together in *Parasite*.

F'd up families in film

by Michael Stein

With *The Lodge* inspiring thoughts of poisonous, destructive and downright dangerous family situations, here's a look at some of the films in this year's KVIFF that take on similarly fraught households. We'd need a bigger newspaper to list them all, but...

1. Parasite

Bong Joon-ho's Palme d'Or winner has been lauded for everything, from its outstanding pacing, camerawork, acting, and more - but the two families in the film will not be featured in a psychological textbook as a role model anytime soon. Poor and rich families both have some major issues, and

when these issues burst forth, well....

2. After the Wedding

Two dysfunctional families in a film! Bah, says director Bart Freundlich, give me your two and I'll raise you three. Watch Crystal Globe winner Julianne Moore, festival guest Billy Crudup and Michelle Williams show that blood isn't thicker than anything.

3. Zizotek

Fighting, scheming and lying are one thing, but in this Vardis Marinkakis flick, nine-year old Jason's parents aren't even present enough for that. After his father has left his family, his mother is so

depressed that she schemes to bring her son to a folk festival and abandon him there. A folk festival!

4. To the Stars

Middle-American past can look glossy, but once the camera gets inside the houses of the two main protagonists, the picture suddenly ain't so pretty.

5. Scandinavian Silence

This film never shows a family and almost never has anything more than monologue, brother to sister, or sister to brother, yet it reveals a family history that makes one through four on the list above seem like model families. Go Scandinavia! •



World Premiere:

Su 30. 6. 16:00
Municipal Theatre

Mo 1. 7. 10:30
Cinema A
(Press & Industry)

Mo 1. 7. 19:00
Congress Hall

Th 4. 7. 19:00
Národní dům Cinema

Fr 5. 7. 20:00
Cinema B

A FEATURE FILM DEBUT
BY AWARD-WINNING
DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKERS
DUŠEK & PROVAZNÍK

Staříci Old-Timers



Tribute



Photo: KVIFF

Alexandria... Why? is one of his hometown tributes.

From Alexandria to Cannes

A generously conceived retrospective shows just why Youssef Chahine is a cinema master

by Vojtěch Rynda

Social drama, musicals, action movies, psychological studies, odes to growing up in his hometown – the Egyptian director Chahine didn't shy away from any genre. "Chahine was above all a great storyteller - he had the capacity to pull you

in immediately," says KVIFF artistic director Karel Och. As for why the Egyptian classic should attract the festival's young audience, he adds, "Filmmakers with such a broad thematic, genre and esthetic scope have always been few and far between. It would be an unforgiveable sin not to

watch at least some of the films in this extraordinary retrospective."

The Egyptian dream

His early work *Cairo Station* (1958) – a Berlinale competition nominee – reveals many of the characteristics of his films. The psychological drama, considered

perhaps the most influential and best-known Arab movie ever, reflects a variety of influences and inspirations while expressing resistance to conventions and social taboos. Set in the Cairo railway station, the story shows a poor disabled youngster from the countryside who has arrived in the city to try

his luck. Even though he ends up a common newsboy, he doesn't give up on his dream, which involves the seductive soda seller Hannuma. In *Cairo Station* Chahine sets this Hitchcockian suspenseful story in an environment inspired by Italian neorealism, sticks to the form of social criticism and isn't afraid to openly approach hushed up topics such as sexual frustration.

Chahine's movies featured regularly at the most prestigious festivals in Berlin, Cannes and Venice. In his multi-layered panorama *Alexandria... Why?* (1978) the filmmaker recalls growing up in the diverse city. Five languages were spoken fluently in the household of Chahine's parents, which apparently wasn't uncommon at that time. The director paid another three autobiographical tributes to his hometown, the final screened at Cannes in 2004, seven years after he received a lifetime achievement award there.

Restored versions

World cinema has to thank him for discovering Omar Sharif. He gave the star-to-be his first chance in the melodrama *The Blazing Sun* (1954) and cast him

again later that year in his action adventure *The Devil of the Desert*.

His comedic debut *Daddy Amin* (1950) and musical *Farewell My Love* (1957) bring a lighter tone to the Chahine retrospective. Och calls Chahine a humanist with strong political views. The political dimension of Chahine's work is also significant – it is no coincidence that towards the end of his life he contributed to the short story film *11'09"01*, responding to the 9/11 attacks.

Chahine's work is currently undergoing extensive restoration. Five films in renewed versions will have a fest premiere at KVIFF, three of them to be screened with English subtitles for the first time. "All credit for the outstanding quality of the Tribute to Youssef Chahine belongs to our consultant for Arab countries, Joseph Fahim," says Och. "The distinguished critic and programmer was in close contact with the copyright holders when he compiled the exclusive selection." ●

The Tribute to Youssef Chahine, including eleven films from 1954 to 1986, screens throughout the festival.



Photo: KVIFF

Youssef Chahine's work had strong political dimensions.

Faces



Damjan Kozole

Among the new arrivals on the fourth day of KVIFF are directors **Kristina Grozeva** and **Petar Valchanov** (*The Father*) as well as Slovenian director **Damjan Kozole** (*Half-Sister*) presenting their films in the main competition.



Martti Helde

The East of the West competition welcomes directors **Andrei Cohn** (*Arrest*), **Martti Helde** (*Scandinavian Silence*), while **Ksenia Okhapkina** is screening *Immortal* in the documentary film competition. Directors **Andrea Caccia** (*Gold Is All There Is*) and **Peter Strickland** (*In Fabric*) are bringing their films to the Another Views section.



Ksenia Okhapkina

Czech directors **Bohdan Karásek** (*Karl, Me and You*) and **Jiří Strach** (*The Cage*) come to represent the Czech Films section. Actors **Filip Březina** and **Stanislav Majer** are coming to screen the film *Golden Sting*.



Bohdan Karásek

Director and producer **Ondřej Trojan** arrives to introduce his debut *Let's All Sing Around* while director **Filip Renč** comes to present his first feature film *Requiem for a Maiden*. Both films can be seen in the Liberated section. The Special Events section welcomes writer and screenwriter **Vladimír Křemánek** with the film adaptation of his novel *The End of Berhof*. ● EH



Andrei Cohn

Industry events



Benedikt Erlingsson got the Audience Mention.

Diversity of European cinema

Last night at KVIFF the ten films that will compete for the 2019 European Parliament's LUX Film Prize were unveiled. The Audience Mention from last year's edition went to Benedikt Erlingsson's *Woman at War*.

This year once again the European Parliament supports the old continent's cinema with its LUX Film Prize. "From the diverse original list, a commission

of 21 European film professionals chose ten movies for the Official Selection. They are fresh and charming films from all corners of Europe – feature debuts, social dramas and documentaries," says Jindřich Pietras, organizer of the LUX Film Prize in the European Parliament. The Official Selection was unveiled at KVIFF by vice-chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Culture

and Education **Helga Trüpel**, vice-chair of the Committee on Budgetary Control **Martina Diabajová** and LUX Film Prize coordinator **Doris Pack**.

Four out of the ten films in this year's selection were made by women – among them *God Exists, Her Name is Petrunija* directed by Teona Strugar Mitevska or the social drama *System Crasher* by Nora Fingscheidt. The visually spectacular piece of cinema verité *Honeyland* is a joint work of Tamara Kotevska and Ljubomir Stefanov. Using the story of a beekeeper in rural Macedonia the filmmakers try to show the significance of bees for the global environment. Rodrigo Sorogoyen's adrenalin-packed thriller *The Realm*, about a successful politician's fall, addresses one of the most pressing issues in today's Spain – corruption in politics.

Three of the ten films in the Official Selection will be subtitled into the EU's 24 official languages and screen in all the 28 EU member countries during the LUX Film Days. The winner of the 2019 LUX Film Prize will be announced on November 27. ●

FŠ