



Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival

Festival Daily

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Acting is about making smart choices

Robert De Niro's outstanding contribution to world cinema gets recognition at KVIFF

Veronika Bednářová

Legendary actor and director Robert De Niro hardly needs any introduction. The Academy Award winning star of classic films such as *Taxi Driver* and *Raging Bull* is at KVIFF today to receive the Crystal Globe for Outstanding Contribution to World Cinema. While he is here he will also present his new comedy *What Just Happened*, which will open this year's festival.

■ In *What Just Happened* you play an aging movie producer trying to save his career. Is Hollywood really as ruthless as it's portrayed in the film?

It's just like any other business. The rules are no different in that world. But it's more visible because it's Hollywood. People do what they have to do. And if you can't get something done because it boils down to economics, you have to do something else: Somebody falls by the way-side in that situation.

■ After becoming firmly established as an actor, why did you decide to get into directing films?

I like directing. With *The Good Shepherd* it took me years to get things going. I would have done it earlier. I started 9 or 10 years ago. It took that long to get it going. I'd like to do a couple of other films. A "next episode" of *The Good Shepherd*, which goes from 1961 with the Berlin Wall going up to 1989, with the wall coming down.

■ You said it took a long time to get financing for *The Good Shepherd*. So is it not true then that when Robert De Niro says



Oscar-winning actor Robert De Niro takes in Prague on his way to the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival.

he wants to make a movie, he's going to make a movie?

It was complicated because it was owned by certain people and it had to be reworked. Then I had to get the actors, and I was thinking of Leonardo DiCaprio, but when I started he was too young to approach. Then years later he was going off to do *The Departed* with Marty [Scorsese] and I couldn't stop the momentum at that point. So then I approached

Matt Damon. I had another actor who was wonderful but I couldn't get the movie made with just him in it, because it's an ambitious project. I needed someone like Leo or Matt just to get the financing.

■ When you directed Matt Damon did you think about your own acting work years ago?

Yes, I think when an actor

works with an actor they have a built-in understanding with each other about what it is. So an actor that is being directed by another actor will feel more comfortable. Just inherently knowing he's being spoken to by someone who knows what he does.

■ Do you plan to make another movie with Martin Scorsese sometime?

Yes, we have one project in

particular that we want to do. We've done eight movies together and I'd like to do another couple with Marty. We're going to do this project in a year or two. I'm superstitious about talking about it, but it's supposed to be happening.

■ *New York New York*, which was directed by Martin Scorsese, is the second film of yours being screened at the fes-

tival this year. What do you recall about making this musical, besides the fact that it prompted you to learn how to play the saxophone?

That was a movie we did in 1976-77. Marty wanted to do that kind of musical-type movie. I always knew that the song *New York, New York* would be famous because it was covered by Frank Sinatra. I always knew it would be popular. Then I remember I was sitting on an airplane and they were playing a "muzak" version. I wasn't surprised, but it was almost too catchy.

■ In terms of method acting, do you see any younger Hollywood stars following in your footsteps, like you followed the path of Marlon Brando or Montgomery Clift? Are you happy with the development of the American style of acting?

Ultimately, acting is what you make of it and how smart you are in your choices. An actor like Matt Damon is very conscientious and works very, very hard. I don't know what his formal training was. Whatever works for you... Everybody emanates something different.

■ Several films that are playing here also screened at the TriBeCa Film Festival, which you co-founded in 2002 not long after 9/11. Did the impact of that terrible event on New York's TriBeCa district inspire you to do this?

We were thinking about what it would be like to do a festival. Just as something entertaining at first. But then when 9/11 happened, we thought it was something we should do now, and try it, and start it. It wasn't easy to get going and I'm proud of it. It's a great thing.

SEE YOU THERE

Karel Och

KVIFF Programmer

I'd like to draw attention to a couple of movies from the retrospective, "New Hollywood II," specifically, *Night Moves*, by Arthur Penn, and *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*. I'd recommend *Night Moves* to anyone who likes Gene Hackman, Raymond Chandler or the 1970s. As for *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, I think this is a unique occasion to see wonderful performances by Warren Beatty and Julie Christie and amazing cinematography by Vilmos Zsigmond, all of this accompanied by splendid music by Leonard Cohen.

Night Moves screens today at 12.30pm in the Small Hall. *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* screens today at 7.30pm in the Karlovy Vary Theater.



THE KNOWLEDGE

Fear not the Czech tongue...

Though it can be intimidating at first, speaking a bit of Czech (or *čeština*, as the locals proudly know it) will help you make big points in these parts. What's more, the ancient Slavic language is something of a national cultural treasure in this country, in part because it has often been pushed aside as foreign tongues of oppressors were made the official lingua franca. Some good news, too: If you are arrested after a great KVIFF party, you are legally entitled to a Czech interpreter. The following will help in more common situations:

Basic phrases

Mluvíte anglicky?	mlooveetay anglitskee	Do you speak English?
dobry den	dobree den	Hello/Good day
Ahoj	ahoy	Hello (informal)
Dobry večer	dobree vecher	Good evening
Děkuji	jaykwee	Thank you
Promiňte	promintay	Excuse me
Prosím	proseem	Please
Jak se máte?	yak se mahte	How are you?
Mám se dobře.	mahm se dobzhe	I'm fine

Na shledanou	naskledanoh	Goodbye
Kde je...	gday yeh	Where is...
Restaurace	restowratsesh	Restaurant
Hospoda	hospada	Pub
Kino	keeno	Cinema
Toalety	towahletee	Bathroom

On the town

Kolik to stojí?	kohleek to stoyee	What's the price?
Pivo, prosím.	peevo proseem	Beer, please
Ještě jednou, prosím.	jeshyeh jednoh proseem	One more, please
Máte...	mahtay	Do you have...
jídelní lístek v angličtině?	jeedelnee leestek v anglichtinyeh	a menu in English?

Film-going phrases

Lístek, prosím.	leestek proseem	Ticket please
V kolik hodin začíná promítání?	v koleek hodeen zacheenah	What time is the screening?
Má film anglické titulky?	ma film anglitskay titulkee	Are there subtitles in English?
Vyprodáno	veeprohdanoh	Sold out

Getting to grips with reality

Documentaries in competition take a resolute look at the contemporary world

Filip Šebek

A record 695 documentaries were entered for this year's KVIFF. As is often typical of the genre, many of these films took an unflinching look at topical issues. The 16 movies that were finally selected for the Documentary Films in Competition section also pull no punches in terms of their subject matter.

Helena Třeštková helps fly the flag for the Czech Republic's proud documentary-making tradition with *René*. Spanning two decades, this searingly authentic film looks at the tumultuous life of habitual criminal and eccentric author René Plášil on his journey from prison to prison and his short spells of freedom in between. By contrast, Spanish documentary makers Xavier Baig and Óscar Moreno had less time to paint a portrait of their equally fascinating protagonist in *Today, the Same Day Is Different*. Their visually stunning film follows terminally ill drug addict Toni during the last six months of his life.

Slovak director Juraj Lehotský's *Blind Loves* offers a less bleak portrait of the visually impaired, whose world is often brighter and more colorful than that of those who can see.

Several of the competition documentaries feature very strong female personalities. In *The*



Living in a dark but happy world – Slovak documentary *Blind Loves*.

Ladies we meet two elderly Hungarian sisters who have earned their living for decades as seamstresses in America. 87-year-old Vali and 93-year-old Mimi still remain spirited and vibrant in old age despite a lifetime of hardship. New Zealand director Vincent Ward's *Rain of the Children* also features an elderly lady – 80-year-old Puihi from the Maori Tuhoe tribe. This intriguing character, who has borne 14 children, was a renowned beauty in her youth and was chosen by the tribe's shaman as the wife for his son. Lyuba, the central character of the award-winning documentary *The Mother* "only" has nine kids. This film is a raw but power-

fully poetic portrait of a woman who manages to love her children and lead a dignified life despite the difficulties she faces in contemporary Russia. Argentinian-based Czech director Jana Boková's *Bye Bye Shanghai* takes a very personal look at the fates of several Czech emigrés who fled communism.

The documentary film section also presents films about outstanding personalities whom few people remember today. These include Lithuanian-born Ladislav Starewitch (1882–1965) who is considered to be one of the most inventive personalities of world cinema. In *The Bug Trainer* Donatas Ulvydas and Linas

brates the life of painter Jamshid Aminfar, who fearlessly exhibits and sells his darkly expressionistic paintings on the streets of Teheran. The star of the Spanish documentary *Heroes, Wings Are Not Necessary to Fly* is a well-known trance DJ and caring father, who was born without arms.

Some of the shorter documentaries on display are also imbued with a specific sense of place. German director Bettina Timm's *Cosmic Station* explores the lives of six people, who have been studying cosmic rays for decades on a remote Armenian mountain in complete isolation from the outside world. The Hungarian film *Lost World* charts the disappearance of a Budapest community that falls foul of progress. In *Just Like Heaven* a Dutch-Polish couple go to a farflung corner of northern Poland and try to adapt to life in a harsh but beautiful environment. In *Everything Is Relative*, Danish filmmaker Mikala Krogh sets off to different corners of the world to try and discover the extent to which supposedly universal human characteristics depend on people's living conditions. *Bigger, Stronger, Faster** is an entertaining documentary by the producers of *Bowling for Columbine* and *Fahrenheit 9/11*, which explores Americans' obsession with physical perfection.

WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

Milan Gagnon
New York, USA



■ What are you doing here?

I'm working in the press center. I guess the title is English editor, or assistant. It involves editing, translations and writing stuff to be translated. It goes onto a website. This is my very first time at the festival, and in the city.

■ Have you been to the Czech Republic before?

Yes, I worked two years as a copy editor and entertainment reporter at the Prague Post.

■ How is being a journalist different in the United States and the Czech Republic?

You don't get your phone calls answered as often here, and the same goes with e-mail. Of course, you can drink beer with lunch and the people you talk to are usually interesting and quotable.

■ What are you most looking forward to?

Free movies. I've been in grad school and I didn't have a chance to step out of school and take in too much culture.

REVIEWERS RECOMMEND

Richard Mowe

Film Critic – The Scotsman/Irish Examiner



In the City of Sylvia

Director: José Luis Guerín, Spain, 2007
July 4, 2pm, Karlovy Vary Theater

Spanish director José Luis Guerín who has scored a reputation from documentaries, revisits his past preoccupation with urban atmosphere and demonstrates his instinctive grasp of cinema in this fictional film that is almost entirely free of dialogue. A young artist (Xavier Lafitte) returns to Strasbourg, the city of Sylvia - whom he met there four years ago. In the climax of the film, the young man's determined pursuit through the backstreets of an ethereal beauty who may or may not be the woman in question, is mesmerising.



Of Time and the City

Director: Terence Davies, United Kingdom, 2008
July 4, 6.30pm, Cas Cinema

Described as a "visual poem", Terence Davies focuses on his love/hate relationship with his home town, Liverpool, this year's European City of Culture. "Cut it as if it were fiction", Davies says, with "images which speak" and a layered sound track of popular and classical music, voices, radio clips and a powerful commentary by Davies himself creates a very personal study of the city beyond the Beatles and its football clubs.



What Just Happened

Director: Barry Levinson, USA, 2008
July 4, 10.30pm, Grand Hall – Hotel Thermal

Anyone with even a remote love of celluloid can hardly fail to warm to Barry Levinson's affectionate and insightful sortie into the biz. Based on producer Art Linson's book *What Just Happened?* Bitter Hollywood Tales from the Front Line, the film tells of one highly successful Hollywood producer and the ways in which he juggles a myriad of professional crises, as well as some awkward domestic issues at the same time. Robert De Niro, one of the festival's special guests, plays the movie producer, and gives a sardonic and knowing-comedic performance.



Days and Clouds

Director: Silvio Soldini, Italy, 2007
July 4, 9.30pm, Small Hall – Hotel Thermal

Silvio Soldini, who made the delightful *Bread and Tulips*, astutely looks at an increasingly familiar nightmare: an upper middle-class family whose comfortable lives suddenly disappear. He's powerfully aided in creating this poignant social drama by two superb lead performances from Margherita Buy as Elsa and Antonio Albanese as her husband. When Elsa's husband Michele becomes unemployed, she realises he has lost more than his job. It feels as if all the energy has been taken from him, and he appears increasingly helpless, all of which soon takes a toll on their marriage.

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Crystal Globe contenders defy easy trend spotting

Will Tizard

It's surprising what Karlovy Vary's feature films in competition can tell you about the state of the world: Last year they conveyed to audiences a widespread European anxiety over urban life, aging and the economy, among other things.

"This year, it's harder to spot an overarching theme that's on the mind of the world's filmmakers," says KVIFF Program Director Julietta Sichel. "There is no unifying moment, theme or character," she says of this year's 14 Official Selection films.

"But that may just be the result of deliberately seeking out diversity," she adds. "We try to present as rich a picture of contemporary cinema as possible. No two films are alike, either in style or in topics."

Content and themes aside, the films also convey a varied – and impressive – range of filmmaking technique and approach. The chilling style of films like the French-Belgian *Distant Tremors*, which explores witchcraft in Africa, and Denmark's police story *Terribly Happy*, to name just two, are certainly distinctive and atmospheric.

"In terms of style," says Sichel, "the entire competition selection is quite remarkable even though it does not necessarily mean that each film brings something completely new into the world of cinema – it is more that the filmmakers we focus on work in a very clever way with already existing motifs and styles."

She contrasts the "dark drama with comic elements" of Hungarian-Swedish-Irish co-production *The Investigator* or the "almost Fargo-like" *Terribly Happy* to stories of people "looking for happiness and their place in the life" such as the characters of Czech entry *Night Owls*.

Meanwhile, a film like *Dr. Aleman* takes viewers into the world of Latin American crime gangs through the misadventures of a naïve young European physician.

Such characters studies make for a rich offering this year, Sichel says: "Characters dealing



Czech director Petr Zelenka's masterful Dostoevsky adaptation *Karamazovs*.

with social predicament in their lives like those in *The Shaft*, characters taken by surprise by such things as chance or destiny in Amy Redford's U.S. entry *The Guitar* and Croatian psychological drama *Behind the Glass*."

Others make use of striking settings, which become almost characters in themselves, such as in Czech writer-director Petr Zelenka's adaptation of a Dostoevsky tale, which takes place in a steel mill, *The Karamazovs*. A more intimate, perhaps claustrophobic setting pervades the Spanish drama about a struggling marriage, *Pretex*, while the glitzy, fast-paced world of the media and its conflicting demands drives the characters and story of France's *True Enough* and Italy's *Early Bird Catches the Worm*.

Far off, exotic and perplexing lands also make for dramatic backdrops in films like the European-Indonesian co-production *The Photograph*, Russian-Bulgarian war film *Captive* or Senegal-set *Distant Tremors*.

This last group of films illus-

trates another trend that KVIFF is witnessing more and more each year: films that are conceived through the coordinated financing and production of multiple countries (*The Photograph* is a multi-hyphenate drawing on the talents and coffers of France, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden and Indonesia).

"Co-productions seem to be very common for lots of different reasons, finances naturally being one of the most important factors," Sichel explains. "Some films get a very 'international' touch because of it, which is unfortunately not always good for the film." The example of a character who "goes to a certain country just because they were one of the co-producers" who required a few shooting days there to justify putting up backing – even though the plot could easily do without it – is a hazard of such deals, of course.

But, Sichel points out, "Some films stay the same no matter how many co-producers they had," which is the case with *The Photograph*. It "looks like

year is the strength of European filmmaking, which tends to dominate the Official Selection entries more so than in the recent past, when Middle Eastern, South American and more Asian films were in the running.

"Asian films are in quite a crisis at the moment," says Sichel, something borne out by a look at the programs of other film fests. And while many from other continents were considered, "our European candidates seemed much stronger." Africa and South America do still get significant screen time, of course, in the films like *Distant Tremors* and *Dr. Aleman*.

Czechs can take particular pride in the strength of their film output this year, as well, with two locally made features in competition for the Crystal Globe. Interestingly enough, the last time this happened, in 2002, Petr Zelenka was also one of the contenders – in fact, he won the grand prize for *Year of the Devil*, beating out Zdeněk Tyc's *Brats*.

This time around, his creative re-thinking of the Dostoevsky classic "The Brothers Karamazov" goes up against Michaela Pavlátová's tale of modern Czech urban angst, *Night Owls*. As the screenwriter of the latter, Irena Hejdová, can attest, it's clear that good films – and film ideas – can come from anywhere. Hejdová, who has covered KVIFF for years as a working journalist for news website Aktualne.cz, says she doesn't think of Zelenka as a competitor. "I liked his *The Karamazovs* very much. Fortunately the movies are so different that they will not blur into one Czech mess – they are distinguishable and I think of his movie as I do about every other film in the Official Selection."

Still, her screenwriting breakthrough is something she should be able to take some pride in: "Night Owls" nosed out would-be contenders that KVIFF staffers have seen at festivals over the past year including Madrid, Rome, Paris, Copenhagen, Montreal, Tokyo, Seoul, Vienna and Munich, among the many other countries covered by national festivals.

FACES

Documentary Films in Competition will be well represented today by *Everything is Relative* director Mikala Krogh and screenwriter Mogens Rukov. You may also spot director/producers Alex Buono and Tamsin Rawady (*Bigger, Stronger, Faster**), director Christina A. Voros or producer Sergei Krasikau (*The Ladies*). Producer Rasa Miskinyte is also here with *The Bug Trainer*.



Mikala Krogh

From the East of the West - Films in Competition section you may run into director Marina Razbezhkina (*The Hollow*). Lithuanian film *The Collectress* has been brought to the festival by its director Kristina Buožyte, producers Aidan Avizinis and Ieva Norvilienė, director of photography Feliksas Abrukauskas, actor Marius Jampolskis and actress Gabija Ryskuviene. Producer Karolina Rozviudė and legendary actress Danuta Szafarska are here with Polish film *Time to Die*.

Vogelfrei directors Janis Kalejs and Janis Putnins also arrived at the festival today. Those interested in independent film can watch out for directors Ari Gold (*Adventures of Power*) and Matthew Klinck and actor/producer Thomas Michael (*Hank and Mike*). Northern Irish drama *Peacefire* is being represented at KVIFF by its director Macdara Valley, producer Chris Martin and actor John Travers. Director/producer Kim Byungwoo and director of photography Kim Ji-Hoon are here with *Written*.

The Horizons section brings directors Austin Chick (*August*), Salvatore Mereu (*Sonetáula*) and Tom McCarthy (*The Visitor*). Director Jiří Vejdělek has two films in the Czech Films 2007-2008 section, *Little Girl Blue* and *Roming*. Czech actresses Marie Doležalová, Petra Nesvačilová and Sandra Nováková are here with their film *Dolls*.

Industry insiders will want to talk to Vincent Maraval, head of the cinema co-production, acquisition and distribution company the Wild Bunch (*Buddha Collapsed Out of Shame*). While director Richie Mehta is here with *Amal*, also in the Another View section.



Macdara Valley

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OFFICIAL SELECTION FILMS IN COMPETITION

Behind the Glass (Croatia)
July 6, 8pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 7, 10am, Espace Dorleans Cinema

Captive (Russia, Bulgaria)
July 9, 8pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 10, 10am, Espace Dorleans Cinema

Distant Tremors (Belgium, France)
July 7, 8pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 8, 10am, Espace Dorleans Cinema

Dr. Aleman (Germany)
July 8, 5pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 9, 1pm, Espace Dorleans Cinema

The Early Bird Catches the Worm (Italy)
July 5, 8pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 6, 10am, Espace Dorleans Cinema

The Guitar (USA)
July 11, 8pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 12, 10am, Espace Dorleans Cinema

The Investigator (Hungary, Sweden, Ireland)
July 10, 8pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 11, 10am, Espace Dorleans Cinema

The Karamazovs (Czech Republic, Poland)
July 9, 5pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 10, 1pm, Espace Dorleans Cinema

Night Owls (Czech Republic)
July 7, 5pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 8, 10pm, Espace Dorleans Cinema

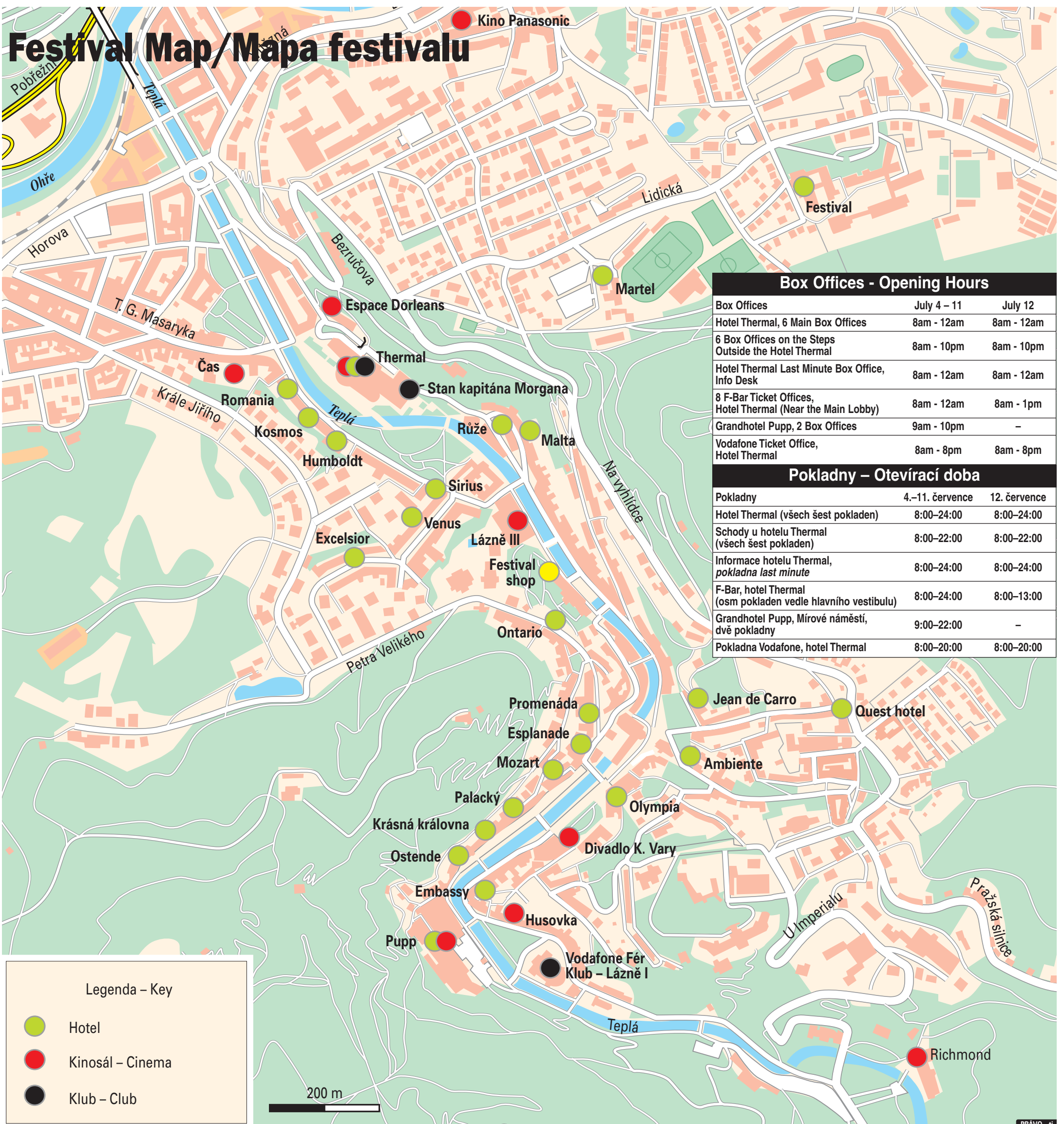
The Photograph (Indonesia, France, Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden)
July 11, 5pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 12, 1pm, Espace Dorleans Cinema

Pretex (Spain)
July 8, 8pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 9, 10am, Espace Dorleans Cinema

The Shaft (China)
July 10, 5pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 11, 1pm, Espace Dorleans Cinema

Terribly Happy (Denmark)
July 5, 2pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 6, 10pm, Espace Dorleans Cinema

True Enough (France)
July 6, 5pm, Grand Hall – Thermal
July 7, 1pm, Espace Dorleans Cinema



Box Offices - Opening Hours		
Box Offices	July 4 - 11	July 12
Hotel Thermal, 6 Main Box Offices	8am - 12am	8am - 12am
6 Box Offices on the Steps Outside the Hotel Thermal	8am - 10pm	8am - 10pm
Hotel Thermal Last Minute Box Office, Info Desk	8am - 12am	8am - 12am
8 F-Bar Ticket Offices, Hotel Thermal (Near the Main Lobby)	8am - 12am	8am - 1pm
Grandhotel Pupp, 2 Box Offices	9am - 10pm	-
Vodafone Ticket Office, Hotel Thermal	8am - 8pm	8am - 8pm

Pokladny - Otevírací doba		
Pokladny	4.-11. července	12. července
Hotel Thermal (všech šest pokladen)	8:00-24:00	8:00-24:00
Schody u hotelu Thermal (všech šest pokladen)	8:00-22:00	8:00-22:00
Informace hotelu Thermal, pokladna last minute	8:00-24:00	8:00-24:00
F-Bar, hotel Thermal (osm pokladen vedle hlavního vestibulu)	8:00-24:00	8:00-13:00
Grandhotel Pupp, Mírové náměstí, dvě pokladny	9:00-22:00	-
Pokladna Vodafone, hotel Thermal	8:00-20:00	8:00-20:00

Legenda - Key

- Hotel
- Kinosál - Cinema
- Klub - Club

200 m

ON THE TOWN

Pub Watch
Captain Morgan Tent
 Beside the Hotel Thermal
 Open daily from 9am to 6am
 KVIFF's official cocktail bar is situated a few steps from the monolithic Hotel Thermal, so festivalgoers who emerge shaken from the latest Midnight Movie in the Small Hall can stumble straight into the tent for a comforting quaff. The tent is an unpretentious hot spot with upbeat dance tunes, accommodating hours and a well-stocked bar. As the venue's name suggests, this is the perfect spot to kick off an evening of revelry with your friends and then watch the sun rise with a mojito in your hand.

Sklípek
 Moskevská 2
 ☎ 353 220 222
 Open daily from 11am "till as long as it takes"
 For a classic old Bohemian-style meal in simple, unpretentious surroundings, you could do a lot worse than this cozy cellar restaurant and bar. The menu lists all the (highly filling) classics from goulash to schnitzel, or řízek, all done with panache, along with the ever-popular beer sop *smažený syr* (fried cheese in breadcrumbs). What's more, it's all at prices a student of film could manage (main courses range from 80 - 250 CZK). Situated at the top of Moskevská Street, Sklípek is at

a slight remove from KVIFF central, which makes it the perfect place to take a break over a few cool Zlatopramen beers on its outdoor terrace, well away from the festival hordes.
Venezia
 Zahrádní 43
 ☎ 353 229 721
 Open daily from 11am "till at least eleven"
 Just a one-minute walk from the Hotel Thermal, this favorite of festivalgoers and staffers for years back is still at it, with an airy terrace overlooking the action. It's a great place to meet, deconstruct a film and take in pasta or a steak and a frothy *Budvar* (35 CZK). The Italian sauces and cheeses are

tasty and the pizzas, with generous toppings, are a step above what others offer, all in the price range of 100-260 CZK. Steaks and grilled seafood are more pricy but also well done. Particularly delectable are the trout, pike-perch and turbot, which is a bit of a novelty in the land-locked Czech Republic.
Cafe Bar Retro
 TG Masaryka 18
 ☎ 353 100 710
 Open from 11am till "early morning during the fest"
 Always a scene with youthful locals, this is one of those rare venues in Karlovy Vary that's just as lively year-round as during the film festival. But it's well known

to festival fans too, with its location just off the main shopping street, a three-minute walk across the River Teplá from the Thermal. The house special cocktails, fruit drinks and ice coffees go well with hot days and warm nights, while meal options are generally light. Retro also has an appealing terrace on the slope of the cobbled street out front, handily equipped with a retractable cover in case the sun is just in your imagination. The menu covers the bases, with soups, salads, light appetizers and pastas (50-150 CZK), plus the usual traditional Czech offerings (120-250 CZK), which certainly do the job - even if gourmets probably won't be impressed.

Side Events
 Adults with kids in tow can enjoy a family-friendly dose of Czech culture under the **Chebský Bridge** today. Events kick off with the Karlovy Vary Music Theater's presentation of "Frantik the Kangaroo" at 4pm, followed by screenings of short films for kids at 5pm. Take a break for dinner, then stake out a spot near the Thermal to catch the festival fireworks - an opening night tradition - at 9.40pm. Looking for an older crowd? Several of Karlovy Vary's finest nightclubs are kicking off the festival with DJ performances, including **Cafe Rotes Berlin** and **W Club**, starting around 9pm, and the **Energy Drink Club**, underneath the Thermal, around midnight.