



Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival

Festival Daily

THE OFFICIAL ENGLISH DAILY OF THE 43RD KARLOVY VARY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

SPECIAL EDITION OF

PRÁVO

Saturday, July 5, 2008

free • strana / page 9

Tomorrow's program

strana/page 8, 13, 14

Industry Office puts
KVIFF on the map

strana/page 11

day
2

Indie film sidebar gets
a makeover

strana/page 12

**DIVÁČKÁ CENA / AUDIENCE AWARD
DENÍKU PRÁVO**

Vote for the best film of the 43rd Karlovy Vary International Film Festival!
strana/page 2

Films can predict the future

Ivan Passer says Czechoslovak film's New Wave was a grand conspiracy

Honza Dědek

KVIFF Grand Jury president Ivan Passer is a Czech cinema legend. His wistful and melancholic films *A Boring Afternoon* and *Intimate Lighting* (both screening at the fest this year) are widely considered to be some of the finest works produced during the Czech New Wave of the 1960s. Like his close friend Miloš Forman, Passer emigrated to America after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. He continued to make films, however, and has been responsible for critically acclaimed works such as the edgy post-Vietnam thriller *Cutter's Way* and *Haunted Summer*, a stylish examination of the friendship between Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley.

■ **Have you ever wondered why the communists let films from the Czech New Wave be made? They were quite subversive...**

Back in the 1960s, films like [Miloš Forman's] *The Loves of a Blonde* or *The Firemen's Ball* were critical of the political situation. The party eventually didn't like them, but neither the censors, nor the journalists, nor the studio people who saw the films said anything at first. It was a sort of conspiracy. No film then could be screened without the conspiracy of hundreds of people who pretended not to realize what the film was really about, pretending it was just a comedy. That means the majority of the nation went along with things and it kind of predicted the momentum within the country. This kind of momentum eventually reaches a point where change is bound to happen. That's my theory.



Intimate Lighting director Ivan Passer in Karlovy Vary yesterday.

■ **How do you think Czech cinema today compares with the golden era of the 1960s?**

I'm interested in contemporary Czech cinema. I don't know how to read it exactly. After 1989 the filmmakers first tried to copy the 1960s, which was nice. It was good training for them. I think now they have found their own film language. They are more

brutal than us in their grasp of characters, in the plot, in their narration. But I think they have it harder because there is so much commercial pressure.

■ **How do you feel about *The Guardian* including *Cutter's Way* on its list of 50 "Lost Movie Classics"?**

The film has many fans; it received a number of awards. In

Belgium it even got an award for best world movie of the year. I like it even though it is very depressing.

■ **How did you persuade Jeff Bridges to sign up for *Cutter's Way*?**

We sent him the script. He invited us to his log cabin in Malibu and just after we arrived one of his dogs bit off the produc-

er's cheek. You could see his teeth all the way to the ear. So the first thing Bridges said after "Hi" was "Oh my God." He ran into the house to get some towels and we rushed the guy to a doctor. Bridges felt so bad about it that he had no choice. He had to be in that movie. So that's how a German shepherd caused *Cutter's Way* to be made.

■ **Are you bitter about the fact that it was a box office failure despite the critical acclaim?**

The studio went bankrupt because of another movie. A new management was installed and because they wanted to prove that the previous management deserved to be fired, they didn't give any support to my film. The critics from major magazines who saw it loved the movie. Sony even created their Classics Department because of *Cutter's Way*. Later, by word of mouth the film started to be better known. I realized it was beyond my control. So I don't worry about these things. I make the movie as best I can and the rest is fate.

■ **Do you think film is simply entertainment or does it have a more important role to play in people's lives?**

I believe that films can anticipate the future – of a nation or a society, for example. Look at the way Czech film of the 1960s pre-conceived the Prague Spring. The same goes for Polish and Hungarian cinema in the 1950s. All that was halted by Soviet intervention. I think today's Iranian cinema is very interesting and I daresay that within five years there will be a revolution there. Chinese cinema quite precisely predicted today's developments in the country. If I were a film historian, this would be my main topic of research.

The Lowdown

Karlovy Vary officially launched last night with a suitably grand kick-off fete for the screening of *What Just Happened* at the Hotel Thermal's Great Hall. The film, about the intrigues and power plays of Hollywood, was presented, of course, by America's best-known tough guy, **Robert De Niro**, who portrays his friend *Art Linson*, a producer of some of his films.

KV Press Department director Alex Furtula, who interviewed him last night, was seen ruminating over De Niro's impressive career at the **Hotel Thermal bar** before the opening ceremony. Since De Niro started his career with people like **Brian De Palma**, **Martin Scorsese** and **Paul Schrader**, all of whom were starving filmmakers very much under the spell of **European New Wave films**, Furtula wondered whether things have now reversed course, with young European filmmakers desperately trying to emulate Hollywood blockbusters.

He thought it might be a good question to ask De Niro about (the interview should be up today on the festival website at www.kviff.com and should be fascinating stuff).

The opening KVIFF film was an appropriate choice, of course, because the business of movie making is as unpredictable in Hollywood as it is in Europe and the connections are often surprising – oddly enough, one of De Niro's first big breaks was playing a corrupt cop for KVIFF jury chair **Ivan Passer** in 1970's *Born to Win*, for example.

Today's big screening, sold out early yesterday, of course, is *Bathory*, the biggest-budget feature in Slovak history, about the legendary woman whose bloodlust and power made her a fearful and fascinating film subject.

SEE YOU THERE

Vanessa Farquharson

National Post, Ontario

I really want to see *My Winnipeg* with a Czech audience. Guy Maddin is basically the most beloved director in Canada, next to Atom Egoyan and David Cronenberg. And he always makes these very trippy films – he made *The Saddest Music in the World*, for example. He's very good at this black-and-white silent film. He's from Winnipeg, which is the coldest city in Canada. Everyone leaves Winnipeg and goes somewhere like Toronto. He has a love-hate relationship with Winnipeg. It has a lot of magic realism elements. You keep watching it and saying, "Wait - is that really happening?" The Czechs could love it – I have no idea. It'll be really interesting to see.

My Winnipeg screens today at 4.30pm in the Lázně III cinema. It also screens on July 7 at 1pm in the Divadlo Husovka theater and on July 10 in the GH Pupp cinema at 10pm



THE KNOWLEDGE

Lights, camera, festival pass...!

So now you've made it to Karlovy Vary you need to get organized and see as many films as possible, right? That means you need a festival pass, like the ones you can see most people around town wearing around their necks on an orange lanyard. By purchasing a festival pass you can get up to three free tickets to three different screenings each day until all the available tickets for screenings are sold

out. A festival pass will also allow you free access to screening halls without a ticket if the hall is not fully occupied before the start of the film.

You may also attend press conferences if the hall is not fully occupied by accredited journalists. And if cheaper movies aren't enough of an enticement, holders of a festival pass can get reduced prices for access to the swimming pool in the Thermal Hotel

and the Vodafone Fér Klub – Lázně I. You will also need a festival pass to get access to Tretter's Party Power Energy Drink Club in the basement of the Thermal, where seasoned KVIFFers continue the fun after a long day of watching movies.

You can purchase a pass at any festival box office. Your festival pass entitles you to get tickets for the screenings of your choice immediately, at the same box office. You may purchase a pass for one, three, or five consecutive days, or for the entire festival.

FESTIVAL PASS PRICES

	1 day	3 days	5 days	Entire Festival
Festival pass	200 CZK	500 CZK	700 CZK	1000 CZK
Discount pass	150 CZK	350 CZK	450 CZK	700 CZK

Students of secondary schools and universities, those with physical disabilities and senior citizens are entitled to buy a discount pass.

OFFICIAL SELECTION

Terribly Happy – a disturbing crime story from Jutland

Danish director Henrik Ruben Genz is no stranger to KVIFF. His offbeat love story *Chinaman* screened as part of the Official Selection in 2005 and picked up both the Ecumenical Jury and FIPRESCI prizes. This year Genz's latest film *Terribly Happy* is also competing in the Official Selection competition. Before coming to Karlovy Vary, he had a few words with the *Festival Daily* about this atmospheric tale involving a Copenhagen policeman trying to navigate his way around the intricacies of a tightknit rural community in southern Jutland

■ **You grew up in southern Jutland where *Terribly Happy* is set. Do you think your film offers a realistic depiction of life in the Danish countryside?**

One might say that on a symbolic level the story is true in terms of the way outsiders are treated in southern Jutland. There are subtle ways of isolating people and the silent treatment can be a powerful weapon in this area as well.

■ **The movie is based on a novel by Erling Jepsen, whose work also inspired Peter Schonau Fog's *The Art of Crying*. What attracted you to doing a film adaptation of his book?**

Jepsen and I grew up not only in the same small town in southern Jutland but on the same street.



Photo: KVIFF archive

We have been friends since childhood. Since we are both storytellers in our own media, it has always been in the cards that we would work together at some point. Jepsen wrote for theater for 25 years before writing novels, and his writing reflects a keen understanding of drama. As such, his work is an obvious candidate for the screen.

■ **What approach did you take to filming the book?**

The main theme of the book is the relationship between a mother and her son. This relationship was not so deeply intertwined with the landscape, so I decided to focus on another aspect of the story – that of the outsider and his or her relationship to the social cohesion that exists in this part of Denmark.

■ **Are there any similarities**

between *Chinaman* and *Terribly Happy*?

There are some connections between the two films, which both deal with loneliness. Both films also ask similar questions. To what extent is one willing to compromise one's understanding of social, moral and cultural norms? How far is one willing to go in order to achieve one's goals? The main characters in both *Chinaman* and *Terribly Happy* share a common objective – to rid themselves of loneliness and to be accepted socially. In the process, both characters distance themselves from their past.

Terribly Happy screens today at 2pm in the Thermal's Grand Hall and tomorrow at 10pm in the Espace Dorleans Cinema

Zbyněk Vlasák

OFFICIAL SELECTION

The Early Bird Catches the Worm – a Tuscan tale of redemption

Italian director Francesco Patierno's second feature film *The Early Bird Catches the Worm* is based on *Il Giacotore* ("The Gambler") the autobiography of renowned Florentine DJ Marco Baldini, who nearly threw away his burgeoning career by becoming heavily addicted to gambling in the early 1980s. With large doses of humor, this Official Selection film convincingly recreates Italian society of that era and Elio Germano (*My Brother Is an Only Child*) gives a stunning performance as the embattled Baldini whose chaotic double life almost destroys him. The *Festival Daily* managed to email a few questions to Patierno before he came to KVIFF.

■ **How did you become involved with Baldini's life story?**

When I "saw" Marco Baldini for the first time, it was not on the radio but on television, about eight years ago on a primetime program. As a person, he really took my interest and I thought I could make a film about him.

■ **Was he reluctant to have his story told by someone else?**

Marco trusted me and was really very discreet. He was never afraid that his book and character would be transformed into something "new". I asked him to tell me everything that wasn't in the book. I taped almost twenty hours



Photo: KVIFF archive

worth of interviews and using that material I started writing the script. He also introduced me to his parents and friends from the time when he lived in Milan – gamblers from casinos all over Italy. Every one of these people told me something interesting about his character. When we finally organized a private screening of the film for Marco, it was very emotional for him. It was different to experience these things as a spectator.

■ **Do you think gambling and its effect on people's lives is often overlooked?**

The numbers of people betting are very high. A great number of people lose large sums every day at betting tables. In recent years there has been rising awareness of this problem. It is hard to tackle because the addiction to gam-

bling almost cannot be escaped (as is said at the end of the film). It is much more difficult than tackling a drug problem. The mechanisms that make a person gamble are simple and complex at the same time.

■ **Do you think your film can help spark a change in how gambling is perceived, and even have some therapeutic value for gamblers who watch it?**

That's a very tough question. I believe that if nothing else, film can provide food for thought, without condemning the person in question.

The Early Bird Catches the Worm screens today at 8pm in the Thermal's Grand Hall and tomorrow at 10am in the Espace Dorleans Cinema

Zbyněk Vlasák



Uslyšíte i to, co jste neviděli!

Filmžurnál 008 102,6 FM

Denně 9–11.30 a 12.30–17.30 hodin

- aktuální informace o dění na 43. MFF KV
- reportáže ze zákulisí, rozhovory s filmovými hvězdami
- „Filmový kurýř“ – stručný přehled festivalových událostí – 4x denně
- filmová hudba
- „Host Radiožurnálu“ a další pořady pro celostátní vysílání ČRo1 – Radiožurnálu vysíláme také z proskleného studia v hotelu Thermal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Karlovarské spektrum úvodní přehled očekávaného festivalového dění ➤ Filmtip co si nenechají ujít V.I.P. hosté ➤ Portrét rozhovory se zajímavými osobnostmi filmového světa ➤ Červený koberec rozhovory s hvězdami stříbrného plátna 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Kino bez bariér informace pro handicapované návštěvníky a posluchače ➤ Festivalové epizody kuriozity z festivalového dění ➤ Kinoautomat rady posluchačů, co si nenechat ujít a varování před propadáký ➤ Odcloněno názory filmových publicistů a tvůrců
---	--

Podrobné zprávy z festivalového dění najdete a Filmžurnál můžete poslouchat na adrese:
www.rozhlas.cz/filmzurnal

www.radiozurnal.cz


 Radižurnál
 ČESKÝ ROZHLAS 1

Vaše zpravodajství. Vaše rádio.

REVIEWERS RECOMMEND

Alissa Simon
Film Critic for *Variety*

**Amal**

Director: Richie Mehta, Canada, 2007
July 5, 4pm, Congress Hall – Thermal

The color and chaos of contemporary India come alive in this tightly plotted humanistic drama that sports a surprising O. Henry-style twist. Already voted an audience favorite at many US fests, it follows the unexpected reverberations from a small act of kindness. For his first feature, charismatic Canadian Richie Mehta expanded his prize-winning short and talked some of India's top actors into participating.

**Moscow, Belgium**

Director: Christophe van Rompaey, Belgium, 2008
July 5, 7pm, Congress Hall – Thermal

A top-notch cast delivers sharp (and frequently comic) dialogue in this endearing drama set in working-class Ghent. Sexy Barbara Sarafian leads the way as a tart-tongued 40-ish heroine (a role that would suit Frances McDormand if a US remake is ever in the cards). Christophe Van Rompaey's accomplished feature debut about a working mother unexpectedly caught in a love triangle won multiple prizes in Cannes Critics' Week.

**My Winnipeg**

Director: Guy Maddin, Canada, 2007
July 5, 4.30pm, Lazně III Cinema

The surreal hallmarks of Manitoba auteur Guy Maddin's distinctive oeuvre mark this delirious tribute to his hometown. A "docu-fantasia," it employs what my colleague Eddie Cockrell calls "a fusion of silent film technique with pre-moistened melodrama." The later strain is epitomized by his casting of American "B" movie star Ann Savage (the femme fatale of "Detour") as his mother in re-enacted family scenes brilliantly portrayed in film noir style. Enjoy Maddin's grandiloquent narration ("Snowy, sleepwalking Winnipeg... I must leave it..."), the dream-like, black-and-white cinematography and playful animated segments.

**Bad Timing**

Director: Nicolas Roeg, United Kingdom, 1980
July 5, 10pm, GH Pupp Cinema

Originally released in the U.S. as "Bad Timing: A Sexual Obsession" the titillating title provided a certain truth in advertising, although Nicolas Roeg's fifth feature is far from lurid. His trademark editing style, which fractures the time-space continuum, adds compelling mystery to the passionate relationship of a disturbed young woman (Theresa Russell) and her psychiatrist (Art Garfunkel) that's being investigated by Harvey Keitel. Shot in widescreen amid the decaying elegance of cold-war Vienna, with a rousing soundtrack including Billie Holiday, Tom Waits and The Who, this shouldn't be missed.

KVIFF Industry Office shoots for the stars

Laura McGinnis

Andrea Szczuková, head of KVIFF's Film Industry Office, has one goal for the festival: to be the best.

For Szczuková and her colleagues in the industry office, that means accommodating filmmakers and industry members, facilitating meetings and – most importantly – connecting the various agents involved in film production and distribution. If the goal of the festival is to promote the development and production of quality films, the goal of the industry office is to help those films find a wider audience.

"We want it to be the first in Central and Eastern Europe, with the press and with the distributors," Szczuková says. When filmmakers are deciding where to hold their premieres, Szczuková wants them to choose KVIFF because they know the festival will have distributors from every country in Europe.

To that end, the industry office has concentrated on inviting European distributors this year. Representatives from 50 countries are in attendance, and distributors from 20 European nations.

KVIFF's industry office is in only its seventh year of operation, but it has already helped promote the festival's reputation as "the most significant film event in Central and Eastern Europe."

One of their main objectives is



Photo: Lukáš Taborský

Head of the KVIFF Film Industry Office Andrea Szczuková.

to ensure that distributors and filmmakers can contact one another easily. Two weeks before the festival, Szczuková and her colleagues send contact information and schedules to industry attendants. In Karlovy Vary, this information is updated with the official film industry guide – a 293-page collection of industry contacts and festival events.

Throughout the festival, the office hosts a variety of panels and events. "East of the West – Works in Progress" will give producers from Central and Eastern Europe an opportunity to showcase recently completed and post-production projects to prospective distributors, buyers and festival

programmers. Additional panels will focus on promoting documentaries, interacting with Hollywood and developing internationally competitive films.

In past years, the office has also been particularly successful in promoting European films. *Jar City* and *The Art of Negative Thinking*, two films from the 2007 KVIFF Official Selection, are excellent examples. *Jar City*, produced in Iceland and Germany, took home the Crystal Globe last year, and Norwegian Bård Breien received the Best Director Award for *Negative Thinking*.

"Both films premiered in the main competition last year, and

both [enjoyed] many distributions in Europe," Szczuková says.

This year the industry office is stepping up its efforts. For one thing, Szczuková says, there will be more press and industry screenings, over 100 in total. Distributors and other press and industry representatives can attend such screenings without obtaining tickets beforehand, giving them greater flexibility and more opportunities to see the films. Press and industry screenings will be held for every competitive film in the Official Selection, as well as the East of the West and Forum of Independents sidebars.

Every year, the industry office adds more successes to its record, but the staff are not resting on their laurels. Szczuková and her colleagues in the industry office have big plans for the future, she says. That plan includes seeing "festival films bought and distributed in as many countries as possible, and having all the important distribution and sales companies come to Karlovy Vary and really enjoy the festival – its film selection, its atmosphere and services."

With over 700 industry representatives pouring into the city over the next week, it seems that they're well on their way. ■

Some upcoming industry events

Interfacing with Hollywood

July 5, 2pm-4pm

Chopin lounge, Grandhotel Pupp

Four Hollywood insiders discuss the ins and outs of business in Tinseltown. Open to the general public.

East of the West – Works in Progress

July 6, 1pm-6pm

Chopin lounge, Grandhotel Pupp

International distributors, sales agents and festival programmers are invited to view presentations on recently completed and post-production films from Central and Eastern Europe.

DocuTalents from the East 2008

July 7, 10.30am-12pm

Cinema A, Thermal Hotel

Directors and producers from Central and Eastern Europe will present brief pitches for their documentaries to festival organizers, distributors, buyers and journalists.

* More information and a complete list of industry events can be found online at <http://www.kviff.com/en/film-industry-events/>

FACES

Today you may run into director **Daniel Wallentin**, producer **Fredrik Wikström**, actor **Shebly Niavarani** or director of photography **Ari Willey**, who are here to present Sweden's *One Eye Red*.



Daniel Wallentin

Directors **Stefan Komandarev** (*The World Is Big and Salvation Lurks around the Corner*) and **Olga Špátová** (*Well-Paid Stroll 2007*) are also in town. New Official Selection arrivals include director **Zrinko Ogresta**, and actresses **Jadranka Djokić** and **Daria Lorenci** (*Behind the Glass*), director **Francesco Patierno** and actor **Elio Germano** (*The Early Bird Catches the Worm*), director **Sam Karmann** and actress **Catherine Olson** (*True Enough*). You can expect to meet director/producer **Mustafa Zaveri**, producer **Muzaffar Zaveri** and DP **Prashant Rai**, who are here with their film *R(evolution)*, and director **Stian Kristiansen**, producer **Yngve Saether** and actors **Ole Christoffer Ertvaag** and **Arthur Berning** (*The Man Who Loved Yngve*).



Stian Kristiansen

Screenwriter **Lorenzo Semple Jr.** (*Pretty Poison*) is here, as is producer **Thomas Gammeltoft**, actors **Kim Bodnia** and **Jakob Cedergren** and editor **Kasper Leick** (*Terribly Happy*). ■



Gymp



Medvídek



Nejkrásnější hádanka



O rodičích a dětech



Nestyda



Tobruk

www.rwe.cz
www.barrandov.cz/nadace



RWE – energie českého filmu

Hlavní partner 43. Mezinárodního filmového festivalu Karlovy Vary
Navštivte náš stánek u hotelu Thermal a soutěžte s námi o vstupenky a další výhry!



Forum of Independents finds new gems

Revamped festival sidebar focuses on supporting gifted and uncompromising mavericks

Laura McGinnis

What makes an "independent" film? Traditionally, the label was reserved for films made without the support of a major studio, but developments in the film industry have blurred the distinction between independent and studio projects in recent years.

Many major studios now have "independent" divisions, and champions of the indie scene are reassessing the genre's definition. Under the direction of co-directors Štefan Uhrík and Hana Cielová, KVIFF's Forum of Independents celebrated films with unconventional content and spirit for 14 years. This year, program director Julietta Sichel continues the tradition with 12 films by 12 directors – many of them fledgling filmmakers.

Eight of these films will have their world, international or European premiere at the festival.

"We really wanted to focus on discoveries – films which really correspond with what the filmmaker was trying to say," Sichel says.

The most significant change to the program this year is in the number of entries. The festival programmers opted to present fewer films in order to give audience and jury members an opportunity to see all of the films at main screenings. But in other respects, this year's program aims "to keep the tradition of what the Forum of Independents used to be," Sichel says.



Ying Liang's *Good Cats* puts a human face on the Chinese economic boom.

From the beginning, the Forum of Independents has supported films that might not receive traditional studio backing, but that's not its only function, Sichel says. It also strives to discover new talent and to give audiences the opportunity to see films that are long shots for film and television distribution.

The 12 films in this year's sidebar lack the characteristics of a typical Hollywood blockbuster, but each presents a unique story, and a new voice.

"We really tried to focus on the factor of independence of the filmmakers, and especially the conditions under which the films were made," Sichel says.

Most of the films in the section

were made on small budgets with small production teams. In many cases, the director also served as a scriptwriter, producer, distributor or actor.

Although united by an independent spirit, the content and style of the films varies considerably.

Unemployed Easter bunnies, a drumless drummer and a magical teenager are among the characters gracing the screens this year. *Adventures of Power* is an offbeat comedy about a talentless musician with big air-drumming dreams. In *Hank and Mike*, two Easter bunnies attempt to find new jobs after they're laid off. And *Mermaid* is a modern fairy tale, based loosely on the Norwegian

classic, about a young woman with the power to grant wishes who nonetheless struggles to make her own dreams come true.

Several films explore themes of modern urbanity in very different settings. In *This Beautiful City*, five strangers are drawn together by tragedy when a young woman falls from her Toronto balcony. Three months later, their lives continue to intersect and transform one another in unexpected ways.

In *Good Cats*, urbanization brings changes to the Chinese province of Sichuan. And *Divizionz*, directed by a Ugandan creative team that refers to their style as "guerrilla filmmaking," tells the story of a day in the life

of a young man in Kampala.

Several of the films deal with the ever popular themes of love and friendship. *Good Morning Heartache* follows a young couple whose lives totter between comedy and tragedy, privacy and exposure, as their deteriorating relationship is captured by a documentary team. *The Man Who Loved Yngve* is a coming-of-age tale in which 17-year-old Jarle must choose between the two people he loves.

A young man, growing up in the political turmoil of Northern Ireland, finds himself torn between the demands of friendship, family and the political ideology of a long-dead father in *Peacefire*, a film based on director Macdara Vallely's stage play. *Poppy Shakespeare*, a film about a friendship forged by two women in a psychiatric ward, explores the blurred line between sanity and madness.

Written is an existential drama that examines the creative process itself. The film follows a character trapped within a story. Although he longs for freedom, his creator keeps sending him back to the beginning to follow the narrated path.

The films may have disparate topics and production styles, Sichel admits, but what unites them is a dedication to the message they are trying to convey, without making any studio-friendly compromises. All 12 films will compete for the Independent Camera-Czech Television Prize for the Best Film.

WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

Phillip Bergson
ShIPLEY, West Yorkshire, UK
(KVIFF International Consultant)



■ What are you doing in Karlovy Vary?

Well, as a film critic and broadcaster, this is one of my favorite events.

■ Who do you work for as a film critic?

I've always been what was called independent, but now it's called freelance. In the very same week I left Oxford, I started at *The Sunday Times* and BBC radio. I was starting at the top and I've been working my way down ever since!

■ How does it compare to other festivals?

I think this is the most enthusiastic audience of any festival in the world. You see crowds in Cannes but they're only there for the leers. Here in Karlovy Vary the audiences love the films. There are also increasing numbers of important critics, producers, and filmmakers. I'm putting together an agency to represent European actors and filmmakers and this is a great place to brainstorm new projects face-to-face with people who can make them work.

ON THE TOWN

Pub Watch

Rotes Berlin

Jaltská 7

☎ 353 233 792

Open from 5pm to 6am during fest

True to its name, this buzzing club is a star of the local scene for its old school Berlin clubbing vibe. With resident DJs like Freedom, Gummy and Chosekilla, it's fair to say there's a double helping of atmosphere with your beer. The place to see and be seen if you're a clubbing maven, with cool red walls and bizarre statues everywhere. It's also a decent option for a late, late night meet-up if you're just too jazzed to go to bed (or don't have one in town). Service can be sparse but it's all just part of the show, somehow. Surprisingly reasonable drink prices.

XXX Long

Vřídelská 23-94

☎ 353 224 232

Open daily from 11am till 1or 2am as required

With a wall-to-wall chic ethic, this plush little Italian eatery is a place to nosh your gnocchi in style to be sure. Its motto, "Not everything cool must be expensive," is encouraging, though you could still spend a fair packet here without too much trouble. Still, the creamy color tones, Philip Stark designs, banquette seating and chrome accents do make for a Hollywood-style experience if you need to woo a star or impress a potential producer. Aside from the delicious pastas and delicate pizzas, the

Food and Drink

grilled steaks (200-390 CZK) and fish (up to 850 CZK) are done with a deft touch and interesting sauces. Word of caution: Unless you're a real power player, you may feel awkward unless you dress for dinner.

Schaffy's Garáž

I.P. Pavlova

(100 m from the Thermal)

☎ 775 727 928

Open daily from 5pm

till at least 1am

With a rollicking American college bar feel, a close proximity to the Hotel Thermal and a huge cocktail menu (starting at 89 CZK), Schaffy's would be a good find even if it didn't feature a secret weapon. But it does: This lively little spot offers hot food

until late into the night. It's also got a decent selection of non-alcoholic cocktails, another welcome and rare innovation in Karlovy Vary. Do try the Sticks Menu (don't be put off – it's actually an appealing range of mozzarella pieces, chicken strips and such). Besides offering 0.4 l pitchers of Granát (a malty amber-coloured Czech lager) there is also a whole range of shooters (50 CZK).

U Švejk

Stará Louka 10

☎ 353 232 276

Open daily from 11am to 11pm

Don't be thrown off by the life-size model of one of Czech literature's most iconic characters sitting outside. This is no haunt for

soldiers hoping to avoid the front. But the Good Soldier Švejk would indeed have approved of the atmospheric (borderline fantasy) interior, which is almost like a film set of an old-world Czech pub. What's not a prop is the excellent Pilsner beer (although at a hefty 65 CZK per half-liter, you probably shouldn't settle for anything less). The kitchen, as you'd expect, has mastered all the Bohemian classics, from beef goulash and bread dumplings to more zesty game dishes (venison's a treat) for a range of 150-350 CZK, depending on weight. Non-carnivores, however, should be wary of typical Czech "vegetarian" dishes, which include a tuna salad and an omelette with ham.

Side Events

KVIFF's first big Saturday night will not disappoint, with live acts, hot DJ scratching, and scenemaking all over town. If you're out to spot celebs, a good bet is the **Vodafone FER Klub** (Lázně I, Mlýnské nábřeží 5), where everyone staying at the Grand Hotel Pupp is likely to be at some point. On the main stage, leading Czech rappers Indy & Wich take charge at 11pm, followed by PSH (DJ Mike Trafik, Orion and Vladimír 518) and DJ Robot Funky. At the Hotel Thermal's newly redone basement disco, **Tretter's Party Power Energy Drink Club**, it's Mega Star Night (appropriately) with Techronic and Daisy Dee Live, plus DJ Witek Cerweny, rocking till the wee hours.

DAILIES



Photo: Laura McGinnis

Who says KVIFF's too cool for cats?!



Photo: Laura McGinnis

Halušky (Slovak gnocchi) are now a fine fest tradition.



Photo: Laura McGinnis

KVIFF just wouldn't be the same without the rain.