



Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival

Festival Daily

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

SPECIAL EDITION OF

PRÁVO

Sunday, July 6, 2008

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DENÍKU PRÁVO**

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All art strives to be like music

Former dissident Mueller-Stahl now an inspired character actor and painter

Will Tizard

Armin Mueller-Stahl, one of the busiest character actors in the movie business, will turn 78 this year and shows no sign of slowing down. On the contrary, having launched his painting career at age 70, with well-received shows at prominent European galleries, Mueller-Stahl is still branching out as an artist – and he radiates a quiet, almost mischievous, energy.

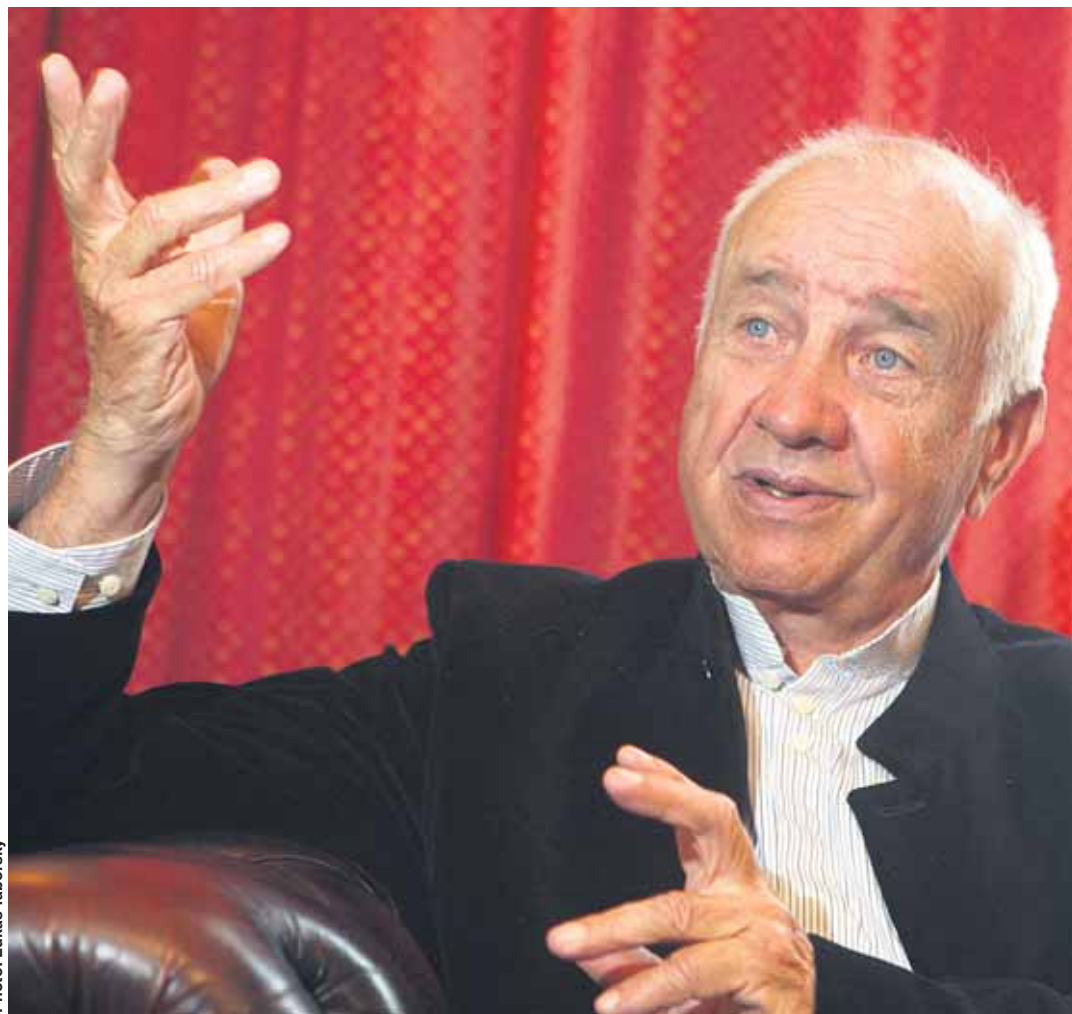
A film actor from age 20 in then East Germany, he emigrated west in 1980 after protesting communist cultural officials, then found himself working with Rainer Werner Fassbinder on films like *Veronika Voss*.

In 1989 he gave up a comfortable and remunerative career in German television to try his luck in the US, where he was almost unknown. Roles in *The Music Box*, *Avalon*, *Night on Earth* and *Shine* followed, as directors like Costa-Gavras, Barry Levinson and Jim Jarmusch fell under the spell of the softspoken native of the Prussian city of Tilsit.

Currently working on *Angels & Demons* with Tom Hanks, Mueller-Stahl is in Karlovy Vary opening an exhibition of his portraits at the Karlovy Vary Art Gallery.

■ **You've painted all your life. Is there something about doing portraits on canvas that prepared you for a career in acting? Both are really about discovering a character visually, no?**

To a certain extent, yes. Sometimes I'm going to draw some images and I say, 'Oh yeah! That's exactly the man I want to play.' You know, it's some kind of



German actor and artist Armin Mueller-Stahl whose paintings can be seen at KVIFF.

evidence of how someone behaves. And it's sometimes very quickly done because I'm a quick drawer. That's what I've done all my life. But 40 years ago, there was a friend of mine who said, 'Why don't you make exhibitions? I can arrange it.' I said, 'No, I won't do it. I will do it when God gives me a long life.'

When I become 70 I will do it. Then I became 70, and then I did it. And it was at a film museum in Potsdam and it became a big suc-

cess. And it was a surprise because I didn't expect it. That was a wonderful present I got in my late life.

■ **You've worked with some great film artists as well. What were some of the issues when you made your films with Fassbinder after you escaped to West Germany?**

He was always crossing the border – in all ways. Even in his sexual life... even between life or

death. When he took drugs, sometimes in the morning people came to see can we shoot this day. It was like: "Oh yeah, he's still breathing." And one day they came and he was gone. He told me once, "Life has to be full, not long."

■ **From concert violinist in your youth to an actor with over 130 credits between film and television roles, what's the key to your incredible energy?**

I ask myself, 'What's the purpose to my life on this planet? What can I do best? What should I do? I can best be creative. That's music, that's writing, acting, and painting. And every art wants to become music. Painting is very funny. If you have a pen in your hand, it's going to be concrete. Color makes it abstract. Color's always trying to push on the edges. And abstract is going to be music again. It's like composition.'

■ **And was your musician-ship of use to you in terms of preparing for your film roles? In adjusting the tone and rhythm of your lines and dialogue?**

Absolutely. That's so important. To listen to the other guy you're playing with. I remember when Bernstein told one flautist, "Just listen to the other guy, to what he's playing. Answer him. That's everything." On a film set, you never know what will happen. Your partner may speak slow, so you have to speak quick. If he's very quick, you can have your pauses. You have to feel how it comes together.

■ **You've said you believe in building a character from the outside in. Have you always been suspicious about the New York method school of acting so loved by Americans of the Al Pacino generation?**

That's always a danger. I know everything about such actors. If the person revealed all his secrets now he's open – too open. That was the wonderful thing about Kafka. They're still trying to discover things about Kafka. Now they're discovering he was even laughing. They didn't know. And I love to laugh.

The Lowdown

As KVIFF gets into full swing, the incidents and accidents that make up **great Lowdown items** are beginning to flow in earnest. Keep up the good work, kids – remember: this column's for you, after all. (Who doesn't need **engaging stories to recount at the bar or industry party?**)

One that's fascinated the international press involves a "terrible science teacher," according to *Variety's* executive editor for features, **Steven Gaydos**. While picking up an award at the KVIFF opening ceremony, given for his work in helping discover and promote new European filmmakers through the **Variety Critics' Choice: Europe Now!** film section, Gaydos paused to thank the many people who have made this series a success for 11 years.

They included respected critic **Derek Elley** and his august crew, the European Film Promotion organization, festival talent consultant **Tatiana Detlofson** and daughter **Natalia** for surviving a certain notorious middle-school teacher named Mr. Vanderveen. Said Gaydos later in the evening at the swanky **Grand Hotel Pupp** party, "Some Dutch people are upset." For the record, the terribly unpopular Vanderveen is all-American. OK?

Media attorney **Alan L. Grodin** had them laughing as well on Saturday at a panel discussion sponsored by Prague production company **StillKings Films**. Speaking to an audience of local filmmakers, Grodin claimed the **Sundance** festival was the best place to find indie film in the West. And what are the magic ingredients that get movies accepted there? "Most of the films are about death," Grodin suggested. "Sometimes sex – but not straight sex."

SEE YOU THERE

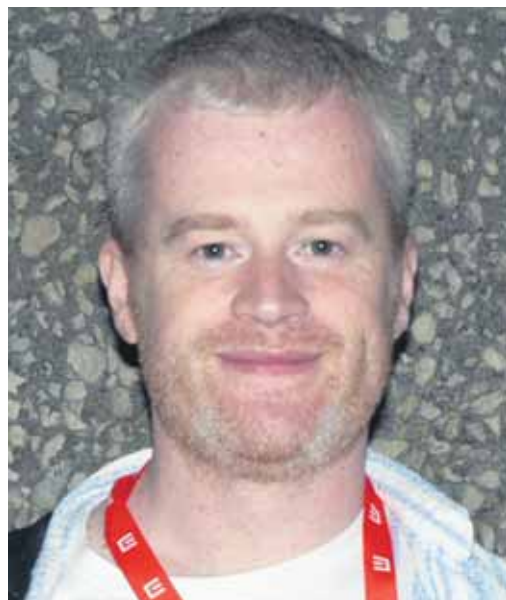
Macdara Vallely

Director of *Peacefire*

I'd like to go and see *14 Kilometers* because it's about immigrants. I'm an Irish immigrant myself, living in New York. I am interested in immigrant stories and I can relate to them. I would also like to see *Absurdistan*, because it sounds different and funny compared to the usual story we get from that part of the world [Central Asia]. I think getting more stories and diversity from that region would be a healthy thing

14 Kilometers screens today at 10am in the *Husovka Theater* and on 10 July at 10.30am in the *GH Pupp Cinema*. *Absurdistan* screens today at 2pm in the *Karlovy Vary Theater* and on 8 July in the *Richmond Cinema* and 12 July at the *Thermal Congress Hall*.

You can see *Macdara's Peacefire* on 8 July at 1pm in the *Espace Dorleans Cinema*.



THE KNOWLEDGE

KVIFF trailer gets a quirky makeover

The Karlovy Vary trailer, the mini-feature that screens before the films, is always much anticipated because it's usually done by one of the country's top directors. This year's offering – by the respected Ivan Zachariáš – is no exception. In fact, his three inspired black-and-white shorts christen a new and permanent format for the KVIFF trailer.

Each focuses on a past winner of the festival's vaunted Crystal Globe, and takes an ironic look at where the statuette may happen to be standing today and what purpose it's serving. Zachariáš found major stars like Miloš Forman, Danny DeVito, Harvey Keitel and Věra Chytilová surprisingly willing to perform short comic sketches with their awards.



"They were all shot in New York except for Věra Chytilová's in Prague and Miloš Forman's in Connecticut." As for the plot in each, he adds, "It was kind of random to be honest."

The Forman piece slyly uses a riff on his masterpiece, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, while the Keitel film was improvised in a Brooklyn neighborhood bar to

incorporate a real medical issue the actor was enduring, having just suffered through a foot operation.

"I was a bit scared of Harvey Keitel, the same with DeVito," says Zachariáš, but both films were shot in just two hours without a hitch."

The trailers, shot with small crews, "like shooting back at film school," were lean, mean productions done on the fly but will now be a template for future trailers.

So don't be surprised in the next year or so to see Robert De Niro or Sharon Stone popping up with new and original uses for their Crystal Globes. It's said they make great blunt objects with which to silence alarm clocks, for one thing...

OFFICIAL SELECTION

**Behind the Glass –
a film that embraces
the twists of fate**

Official Selection film *Behind the Glass* is Croatian director Zrinko Ogresta's third appearance at Karlovy Vary. His dysfunctional family drama *Washed Out* was selected for the official competition in 1995 and his thoughtful critique of Croatian society *Here* won the Special Jury Prize in 2004. Ogresta's latest KVIFF offering focuses on the plight of 35-year-old architect Nikola Jeren, who finds himself at the centre of an impossible love triangle.

■ *Behind The Glass* seems to be very authentic. Was the script based on a true story?

None of my films is purely fictional. All of them are based on real life, and so is this one. Fiction in my work is always an addition to reality and a dramaturgical "necessity." I believe that both my personal life and the region from which I come are full of authentic, often painful stories, and there is no need to invent them. Your question is rather delicate and I hope you will understand if I only say that the film is completely personal, but not autobiographical in all its details.

■ Without giving anything away, it has to be said the film's ending was really surprising. Why did you choose such a radical conclusion to the movie?

Because life is like that. Unlike a movie, we cannot



Photo: KVIFF archive

direct it, no matter how much we try. I attempted to make my film as authentic as possible. In its prologue, you will find a quote from Victor Hugo's classic novel *Les Misérables*: "Nothing is more imminent than the impossible." None of us knows what will happen five minutes from now, not to mention tomorrow. Life is the absolute opposite of what you find in typical scriptwriting. Especially where I live.

■ Destiny plays a very big role in your movie. Do you believe in fate?

I believe that we are not the masters of our destiny, no matter how much we try to influence it. There is Somebody or Something much more powerful than men. Some call it "God," others "Fate," and some will

make it simple and call it "Chance."

■ You are currently teaching at the film academy in Zagreb. What is the most important thing you try to pass on to your students?

The most important thing is to be what you are. Not to imitate; to believe in your own world. And to live! That is actually the most important thing for every author. Not to shy away from life, but to feed on it. Anything else will simply result in art for art's sake, which is actually a lie.

Behind the Glass screens today at 8pm in the Thermal's Grand Hall and tomorrow at 10am in the Espace Dorleans Cinema.

Honza Dědek

OFFICIAL SELECTION

**True Enough –
telling the truth
about lies**

At one point in Sam Karmann's *True Enough*, which screens at KVIFF today as part of the official competition, the protagonist Anne turns to her husband Thomas and says, "I need to talk to you. There are things you don't know about me..."

"And it's perfect that way," he replies. "Shall I fix you dinner?"

In many ways, this wry remark encapsulates much of what this film has to say about the tangled web of human relationships. The movie focuses on the marriage of TV host Anne and college lecturer Thomas – a middle-aged couple who find themselves struggling to remain successful in both their professional and personal lives. When Anne begins to collaborate on a documentary about a forgotten jazz singer, it sparks off a series of events that forces the two of them to reassess their life together.

Karmann's French film adaptation of the acclaimed novel by American author Stephen McCauley remains faithful to the original, in which one of the characters describes love as "an acute form of tolerance." To successfully navigate your relationships, candor often has to be sacrificed for altruistic diplomacy. You can't stay true to the people you love if you want to remain close to them, but you must be true enough.

"I'm deeply interested in human relationships and the way



Photo: KVIFF archive

we all deal with truth and falsehood," says Karmann of his third feature since debuting with the Oscar-winning short film *Omnibus* in 1992. "We're all told since childhood that it is a big deal to tell lies. In some religions we're even obliged to confess our lies, but these lies are actually our truth."

The universal appeal of the issues explored in McCauley's novel, which is set in Boston and New York, meant that Karmann had little trouble setting the story in a French milieu. "When I read the book, the characters were so familiar to me that I forgot the 'cultural problem' straight away," he says. "I had to respect the balance between the different atmospheres of New York and Boston, because it's important in the book. But I also

found the same balance between Paris and Lyon. The latter town is a much more middle-class and bourgeois city with a university tradition."

In the novel, the artist who is the subject of Anne's documentary is a 1960s pop singer, but Karmann instead makes her a jazz chanteuse (played by his wife, Catherine Olson). In many ways, the change adds an extra layer of meaning to the story as the subtle impact of Olson's soulful singing serves to punctuate the emotional complexity of the film.

True Enough screens today at 5pm in the Thermal's Grand Hall and tomorrow at 1pm in the Espace Dorleans Cinema.

Cóilín O'Connor,
Kristýna Pleskotová

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REVIEWERS RECOMMEND

Ronald Bergan

Film Historian and Critic, *The Guardian* (UK).**In the City of Sylvia**

Director José Luis Guerin, Spain, 2007
July 6, 1pm, Congress Hall – Thermal

Some of the best films are about looking, often an essential part of the texture of the film. The way characters, with whom the voyeuristic audience can identify, observe each other. Here, a young Spaniard, in order to try to rediscover the woman with whom he had an affair six years previously, returns to Strasbourg, the city of the title. Using very little dialogue, Guerin creates the visual and aural environment seen and felt by the romantic protagonist. One of the most essential films of the last few years.

**Boogie**

Director Radu Muntean, Romania, 2008
July 6, 5pm, Karlovy Vary Theater

Radu Muntean, the director of the excellent *The Paper Will Be Blue*, makes another impressive contribution to the 'Romanian New Wave' with this wry and realistic study of three 30-something men whose hopes have not been fulfilled after the revolution of 1989. In a way, it reflects the kind of self-deprecation and gloomy self-examination that Romania and Romanian films seem to be going through. At the heart of the movie is a tour-de-force scene of a domestic argument that will be painfully familiar to many.

**Don't Touch the Axe**

Director Jacques Rivette, France, 2007
July 6, 4pm, Panasonic Cinema

Unwithered by age, 79-year-old Jacques Rivette has delivered a film as intellectually satisfying and as subtly erotic as any of his best work. While not betraying the spirit of the 19th century original – the Balzac novella *The Duchesse de Langeais* – Rivette remains faithful to his own preoccupation with the interaction between film and the other arts – literature, music and painting. The period recreation and the graceful by-play between Guillaume Depardieu (finally becoming a good actor) and Jeanne Balibar is a joy to behold.

**The Innocents**

Director Jack Clayton, UK, 1961
July 6, 12am, Karlovy Vary Theater

Jack Clayton brought modern psychological insights to the Henry James ghost story, *The Turn of the Screw*, while losing none of the original's eerie atmosphere. The brooding, haunted realism is aided by superb black-and-white widescreen photography by Freddie Francis and Georges Auric's distinguished score. Deborah Kerr gives an impressive portrayal of the sexually repressed Victorian children's governess who sees ghosts by sunlight while battling to save her charges' possession by the souls of two evil, and very sexual, servants. Is she imagining everything or projecting her own evil onto the children? ■

Variety Critics' Choice – Europe Now!

Reviewers' sidebar offers delicious slice of contemporary European cinema

Laura McGinnis

"It's an important part of the creative process to have your work recognized," says Steven Gaydos, executive editor of *Variety*. Recognizing extraordinary works of European cinema is at the heart of the *Variety Critics' Choice – Europe Now!* sidebar, now in its eleventh year at KVIFF. The sidebar – organized by KVIFF, *Variety* and European Film Promotion (EFP) – is showcasing 10 films from European helmers, seven of which are directorial debuts. Each of the films will be presented by its director or a cast member.

Derek Elley, *Variety* Senior International Film Critic, coordinates the program by conferring with reviewers and gathering a list of promising films. Often these are first-time efforts, or films the reviewer felt were overlooked by audiences or the press.

"Elley makes sure that every year there's a mix of extremely austere and vigorous art films, side by side with wonderful comedy and genre films," Gaydos says.

Striking that balance is an important part of the selection process. Some members of the film community have a tendency to focus on arthouse films that are dark, experimental and intellectual, Gaydos says, but that attitude overlooks a lot of quality films. Critically – and commercially – successful dramas don't always stand the test of time. And lighter fare, such as Hollywood's screwball comedies of the 1930s, can turn out to be enduring classics.

"I don't agree with the idea that something has to be a rigorous hard slog for it to be good, or that something effervescent and fun is not as good," he says. "I love the idea of really celebrating genre films and



Mind-bending and spine-chilling Spanish thriller *Fermat's Room*.

comedies that sometimes the snootier film effects maybe look past."

The films represent a variety of countries, genres, production styles and themes.

Little goes *According to the Plan* as the family at the heart of this German feature prepares a birthday party for their mother. The film examines how family members can both hurt and protect one another – and how easily habits and intentions can be derailed by the twists of fate.

Obsession and deception beat at the heart of *Arabian Nights*, a multinational production about a Luxembourg man's growing fascination with an Algerian woman he meets on the train.

The Swedish romantic comedy *Ciao Bella* is director Mani Maserrat-Agah's directorial debut, dealing with the univer-

sal themes of young love, personal identity and football.

Don't Waste Your Time, Johnny! is set in mid-1970s Italy, as a recent graduate attempts to dodge military service and support his mother as a guitarist.

Dunya & Desie is a multinational road trip pic. It's bubbly and bright, but this is no brainless chick flick. As the girls travel from Amsterdam to Casablanca, they deal with some serious issues, including abandonment and unplanned pregnancy.

Fermat's Room is a mind-bending thriller in which four mathematicians find themselves trapped in a locked room by a stranger with an agenda, with only their wits to protect them as the walls begin to close in.

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon's *Xian*

Gao choreographs the vigorous martial arts scenes in *Fighter*, the story of a girl whose family loyalties are tested by her passion for kung fu. This is a charming tale, with a strong heroine struggling to balance her obligations to herself and those around her.

From the Slovak Republic, *Half-life* tells the story of a middle-aged business man in crisis – only part of which is related to his wife and three girlfriends...

The Homecoming explores the long-standing tension between Greeks and their Albanian migrant population in this story of love, loneliness and betrayal.

And *The Killer* investigates the disturbing relationship between an assassin and his target. Striking cinematography and dramatic character development make this film a fascinating watch.

Despite the accolades they've received, the films face tough distribution prospects.

"There was a time when terrific films from Europe would probably get seen in America," Gaydos says, but today that's less likely. The American market for foreign films is less welcoming, and it can be difficult to distribute a European film to other countries on the continent. Recognition and positive press aren't always enough to ensure that a film gets the distribution it deserves, Gaydos says, but they can't hurt.

"I don't have any illusions that this sidebar is going to completely change this grim environment, but recognition can only help," he says. "I think it's terribly important for people to be celebrated. They make a small film and maybe this [recognition] tells them 'you're on the right track, keep plugging on, because the quality of your work is special.'" ■

FACES

Today at KVIFF you may spot director Veit Helmer, actress Kristýna Maléřová, and actor Radomil Uhlíř



Veit Helmer

(*Absurdistan*). Director/producer Marek Jícha, producer Thomas Hasler, screenwriter Arnošt Lustig and director Josef Lustig are here with *The Immortal Balladeer of Prague*. Director James Marsh (*Man on Wire*) is in town, and director Alice Nellis and director/producer Jan Svěrák (*Little Girl Blue*). Director Andrea Molaioli and producer Nicola Giuliano are here with *The Girl by the Lake*.

The *Tribute to Arturo Ripstein* will be attended by the director himself and audiences will have a chance to see examples of his work such as *Castle of Purity*, *Lecumberri (The Black Palace)* and *The Virgin of Lust*. The *Tribute to Nicholas Roeg* sidebar has also brought

the director himself, along with screenwriter Dan Weldon, actor William Houston and actress Rita Tushingham (*Puffball*). You may also spot director and producer Thomas Thurman (*Nick Nolte: No Exit*), or director Christophe van Rompaey (*Moscow, Belgium*). ■



Christophe van Rompaey

Vote for your favorite flick



Last year's Audience Award winners Jan and Zdeněk Svěrák (for *Empties*). Photo: KVIFF archive

Laura McGinnis

Everybody leaves the cinema with an opinion. You laughed, you cried, you felt a bit queasy. You liked it, loved it, hated it. Every year, KVIFF gives festival attendants an opportunity to share their opinions and recognize their favorite films by ranking the movies they've viewed and choosing the recipient of the annual Audience Award.

■ What is the Audience Award?

Every year the Audience Award is conferred to the film that receives the most favorable ranking from audience members. The voting process gives festival attendants a chance to rate the films they've seen. All films that receive 50 or more votes will be shortlisted for the award.

■ What happens to the winner?

The highest rated film will be recognized at the festival's closing ceremonies.

Many of the films that screen at festivals like KVIFF hope to catch the eye of a film distributor or production company. The Audience Award results help film producers and distributors estimate how well the films resonate with an international audience – so if you liked the film you just saw, give it a boost with a high rating.

■ What films have won in the past?

Recent winners include *Empties* (2007), *Other Worlds* (2006) and *Life with My Father* (2005).

■ How do I vote?

There are two ways to cast your vote. For ticket voting, simply grab a ticket at the cinema entrance and rate the movie by punching the right box. Drop it in the ballot box on your way out and you're set.

If you'd rather vote online, visit <http://www.kviff.com/en/program>. Select the appropriate program (Official Selection, Forum of Independents, Horizons, etc.) and a list of movies will appear on the screen, each of which will have the numbers one through four listed beneath it. Scroll down to the movie of your choice and click on the rating (1 – excellent, 2 – good, 3 – average, 4 – poor). Keep your festival pass handy; your vote won't count unless you enter your accreditation or pass number.

■ How can I check the results?

Polls close on July 12 around 2am. Results will be published online, in the official KVIFF journal and on the festival's closed-circuit television. The winner will be recognized at the closing ceremony on July 12.

For more info go to: www.kviff.com/en/audience-award

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Midnight movies recall golden age of horror

This year's KVIFF late-night screenings showcase best work of British fear merchants

Gillian Purves

The highly popular Midnight Screenings section this year dips into the archives and comes back up with seven chillers from a golden era of British horror. Vic Pratt, fiction curator from the British Film Institute National Archive has brought a selection of classics and rare gems to the festival. "I wanted to do a retrospective that touched on some of the key British horror films from the 1930s to the 1960s," says Pratt. "So what I've tried to do is pull out things that people will recognize, ones like *Dracula* and *Peeping Tom*, and some more obscure ones."

The oldest two films in the selection, *Dark Eyes of London* and *The Man Who Changed His Mind*, are very rare 35-mm prints, possibly the only prints in circulation, so this is a unique opportunity to see them. *The Man Who Changed His Mind* is our first stop on this trip through British cinema history. "Everyone should go and see this," says Pratt. "Boris Karloff in a much underrated British horror that he made between making films in America. It's about a scientist who learns how to transfer brains from the body of one person to another – a classic idea. It's one of the very best of that kind of film."

The Dark Eyes of London features the brilliant Bela Lugosi as a murderously evil insurance broker who knocks people off for his own gain. The setting is eerily foggy London by gaslight. Director Walter Summers' creepy feature was the first British film to be certified as "H" for horrific, the censors having deemed it unsuitable viewing for under-16s.

Dead of Night, which was made by Ealing Studios, was released just after the Second World War. It offers audiences the chance to enjoy the work of four different directors in one tightly constructed "port-



Michael Redgrave in the Ealing horror *Dead of Night*.

manteau of horror." A man arrives at a house in the country, which he has never been to before, only to discover that it is the setting of a recurring nightmare that he has been experiencing and that all of the people in the house have featured in this disturbing dream. Each person then relates an uncanny experience of their own where logic has failed them. One of the most famous sequences showcases Michael Redgrave as a disturbed ventriloquist who believes his dummy has a mind of its own.

A lull followed until Hammer Film Productions kick-started British horror again. "*Dracula* was one of two key films, along with *The Curse of Frankenstein*, which started a horror boom that ran into the 1960s," says Pratt. KVIFF audiences can look forward to seeing a very special version of director Terence Fisher's *Dracula* from 1958 that has just been restored by the BFI. "It's a high-quality restoration which has restored the Technicolor to its original luster, reinstated the original British title sequence,

which was missing for many years, and four missing seconds that the censors cut out from its original release have been put back in," says Pratt. "It's a key four seconds where a vampire gets a stake hammered into its chest. You hear this terrible scream and there's blood. It's a great moment. But it was too strong for the censor in 1958."

Peeping Tom caused such a stir when it was released in 1960 that it effectively destroyed the career of respected director Michael Powell. The spellbinding Carl Boehm plays a voyeuristic loner who has been left deeply disturbed after being used as a guinea-pig in his father's scientific experiments, which involved filming children's reactions to fear. It questions the nature of filmmaking itself and hints at the sickness and voyeurism that inspire some people to make movies.

The Innocents (based on the Henry James novella *The Turn of the Screw*) "is a very cerebral film," says Pratt, "about a governess who becomes obsessed with the idea that the children she's looking after are somehow perverse, and possessed by spirits. It's a very creepy film, but not entirely characteristic of that period because it's not very bloody. It's about repression, about pent up sexuality. There's no blood and gore. It's about the mind. So that's a nice counterpoint to *Dracula* I think."

Witchfinder General was directed by Michael Reeves, who was somewhat of a "boy genius" of British cinema in the late 1960s and strongly influenced by the work of director Don Siegel. "It features Richard Price as a witchfinder traveling around 'ye olde England' hunting out witches," says Pratt. "It's very bloody and very much influenced by people like Don Siegel. It's brutal and in your face, that realist strand of filmmaking that Don Siegel liked to do."

WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

Albert Milgrom
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA



■ So, what brings you to KVIFF?

Well, I'm representing the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Film Festival and looking for some movies I haven't caught up with yet. Also I'm running two arthouse cinemas and have been since 1962. The Czech New Wave films from the sixties actually gave me my first impetus to do that.

■ How long have you been coming to the festival?

Since 1981. Karlovy Vary has always played an important role in my own cultural background, partly because it was always one of the few viewing posts for Central European film.

■ What sort of profile does Czech cinema have in Minnesota today?

Well last year at the festival we showed a number of Czech films, including the US premiere of *Citizen Havel*. Both that and Jan Svěrák's *Empties* were among the top films in our audience poll. I was very surprised at how well *Empties* travelled.

ON THE TOWN

Pub Watch

Barracuda Caribbean Cocktail Bar

Jalitská 7
☎ 774 708 000
Open daily from 7pm to 4am

This is a place where people often stay a lot longer than they should. And little wonder too. With special samba-inspired DJs lined up for the fest, this is a good port of call for those who feel like partying Latino-style after the midnight movie. Most cocktails cost around 85 CZK. Mojitos are a firm favorite with the locals, but this joint also does its own special Barracuda Colada, which is a marvelous concoction of Spanish liqueur, pineapple juice and cream served in a coconut shell.

Thermal Restaurant

I. P. Pavlova 11
Breakfast 7.30am to 10am,
lunch: 12pm to 2pm, dinner:
6pm to 8pm.

With retro commie decor and elevator muzak that will make your ears bleed, this place in the basement of the Thermal hotel doesn't look too enticing at first glance. Nonetheless, the set lunch and dinner menu is really good value for festivalgoers who simply want to refuel quickly between screenings. For just 135 CZK you get a choice of soup starters, a self-service salad bar and a selection of five courses. Most of these are perfectly edible, but we would advise you to

Food and Drink

pass on the french fries, which tend to taste like they were made in the morning and then left under a hot lamp for the rest of the day.

Hotel Promenáda

Tržiště 31
☎ 353 225 648
Open daily from 12pm to 11pm

The Promenáda is at the other end of the culinary spectrum to that occupied by the Thermal. A firm favorite every year with KVIFF luminaries, this place is just one of two eateries outside of Prague to have been included in the latest list of best Czech restaurants compiled by the *Grand Restaurant Guide*, which

is kind of like a local *Zagat*. Specialties include *fois gras* roasted with Calvados and venison medallions with cranberries. With most main courses costing around 400-500 CZK, you'll definitely have to fork out more than you would in a lot of other local eateries, but it's definitely worth it if you feel like treating yourself to a real gourmet experience.

Re Carlo Pizzeria-ristorante

Moskevská 5
☎ 733 217 388
Food served from 10am to 2am.
Bar open around the clock.

Let's be honest: KVIFF is more

of a Mecca for film fanatics than for foodies, and festivals are rarely known for promoting healthy dining habits. Thus, locating a good pizzeria within easy walking distance of the cinema is no small feat. Pies at Re Carlo are light-crusted, imaginative affairs, decked out with toppings that range from eggplant to anchovies, all reasonably priced at 95-155 CZK. Pastas are equally inspired, with some of the more authentic Italian interpretations available in town (79-135 CZK). With outdoor tables looking onto the bustling Moskevská Street, Re Carlo attracts a stylish clientele – usually a good sign of classy cuisine and atmosphere.

Side Events

With the fest well and truly underway, there are now plenty of accompanying events to keep you entertained. The ZigZag Bar on Třída Dr. Davida Bechera will have a selection of Czech and international DJs on the decks from 2pm. If you fancy a bona fide Czech musical experience, we would strongly recommend the Čechomor concert, which starts at 7pm on Divadelní náměstí. This traditional Moravian folk band is pretty sensational and should not be missed. If you don't want to take our word for it, you can sample some of their stuff at www.cechomor.cz/ukazky.php before heading off to enjoy their stunning live show.

DAILIES



Photo: Lukáš Táborský

Robert De Niro and KVIFF president Jiří Bartoška.



Photo: Laura McGinnis

KVIFFers make a rare daylight foray for more tickets.



Photo: Laura McGinnis

KVIFF bag ladies hit the town.