



Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

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KARLOVY VARY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL TO HONOUR CINEMATOGRAPHER VLADIMÍR SMUTNÝ

At this year's festival, the KVIFF President's Award will go to cinematographer Vladimír Smutný.



(Credit: Luděk Hudec)

Smutný, whose professional creed is service to the film's narrative, has imprinted his distinctive visual style on dozens of Czech movies and has also collaborated on numerous foreign film projects.

After graduating from FAMU, Smutný worked as an assistant cinematographer, which gave him an opportunity to gain experience alongside legends of the trade such as František Uldrich and Jaromír Šofr. His first projects as DOP came in the 1980s when he worked primarily with director Jiří Svoboda: *Encounter with the Shadows* (1982), *End of the Lonely Farm Berghof* (1983) and *Scalpel, Please* (1985), among others. He then shot *Good Light* (1985) and *Forbidden Dreams* (1986) with Karel Kachyňa, with whom he also worked on the TV romance *St. Nicholas Is in Town* (1992) and the successful TV series *The Train of Childhood and Expectation*. In the mid-1990s his cinematic "eye" became an integral element of the films of Jan and Zdeněk Svěrák. After the Oscar-winning *Kolya* (1996), their collaboration continued with *Dark Blue World* (2001), *Empties* (2007), *Kooky* (2010), *Three Brothers* (2014), and the Svěrák's most recent work *Barefoot* (2017). Smutný, whose



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cinematographic style is marked by his extraordinary approach to working with light, has been repeatedly sought out by other directors as well, including Ivan Fíla (*Lea*, 1996; *King of Thieves*, 2003), Jiří Vejdělek (*Tender Waves*, 2013; *Patrimony*, 2018) and Václav Marhoul, who engaged the camera master for *Smart Philip* (2003), *Tobruk* (2008) and the recently completed *The Painted Bird* (2019). In 1996-2004 Smutný worked on the successful detective series *Maigret* starring Bruno Cremer.

Vladimír Smutný is a seven-time winner of the Czech Lion for Best Cinematography, and a two-time winner of a Czech Film Critics' Award. He also teaches at FAMU in Prague.



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KARLOVY VARY IFF TO PAY TRIBUTE TO ICONIC EGYPTIAN DIRECTOR YOUSSEF CHAHINE



The 54th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival is honoring iconic Egyptian filmmaker Youssef Chahine (1926-2008) with a large retrospective of 11 remastered films consisting of early lesser-known works as well as established classics. All the movies in the program – the biggest of its kind to be featured at any international film fest – are part of a major Chahine restoration project realized over the past several years by the director’s production house, Misr International Films, along with various other institutions such as La Cinémathèque française and Cineteca di Bologna.

Five of the restored films are making their festival premiere at Karlovy Vary IFF this year, and three of them are being shown for the first time with English subtitles. The ambitious program aims to provide a comprehensive overview of one of the greatest filmmakers from Africa and the

Middle East.

“A thorough look at the work of Youssef Chahine has long been overdue in Eastern Europe,” says the festival’s artistic director, Karel Och. *“We are delighted to pay this debt as a tribute to an exceptional artist and humanist with strong political views, as well as to Arab cinema, which has recently found a home in Karlovy Vary.”*

The program charts the different phases of Chahine’s career, starting with early studio works, continuing with his mid-career masterpieces, and ending with his meditative late-career philosophical treatises. Nearly half the program is dedicated to lesser-seen early works, including his debut *Daddy Amin* (1950), a fantasy comedy about a family patriarch who watches the transformation of his household after his death; *The Devil of the Desert*



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(1954), a sword-and-sandal adventure set in an ancient tribal society featuring a Zorro-like figure who decides to rebel against the tyrannical ruler of his village; and *My One and Only Love* (1957), one of Egypt's most beloved musical comedies about a man and woman who are forced into a marriage of convenience before they gradually fall in love with each other.

“The recent restorations provide us with a golden opportunity to introduce the world to Chahine’s lesser-known early works and to shed light on the evolution of his filmmaking,” says Joseph Fahim, the program’s curator and KVIFF’s international consultant. *“Action epics, musicals, romantic melodramas and political allegories – the diversity and unpredictability of his 1950s output contain the seeds for the psychological complexity of Cairo Station (1958), the sweeping imagery of Saladin (1963), and the genre mashing of The Return of the Prodigal Son (1976), all of which are being shown in the program. Western audiences mostly know Chahine for the neo-realist Cairo Station, but there is so much more to his cinematic oeuvre. That’s what we are trying to show in this program.”*

For more than half a century, Youssef Chahine was the Middle East’s most recognized and most celebrated film director. His pictures were shown at the world’s biggest film festivals, including Cannes, Venice and Berlin. He won the 1979 Silver Bear for *Alexandria Why?* (1978) at the Berlinale. Five of his films were nominated for Cannes’s Palme d’Or, and in 1997 he was presented with the festival’s 50th Anniversary Prize for lifetime achievement. Legendary Egyptian star Omar Sharif got his screen debut in Chahine’s *The Blazing Sun* (1954).

Following Egypt’s 1967 military defeat to Israel, Chahine became a staunch critic of the Egyptian government, which resulted in a number of his films being temporarily banned.

List of films presented in the Tribute to Youssef Chahine:

Daddy Amin (Baba Amin, 1950)
The Blazing Sun (Siraa fil wadi, 1954)
The Devil of the Desert (Shaytan al-sahraa, 1954)
My One and Only Love (Enta habibi, 1957)
Farewell My Love (Wadda’t hubbak, 1957)
Cairo Station (Bab el-Hadid, 1958)
Saladin (Al-Naser Salah al-Din, 1963)
Dawn of a New Day (Fagr yom gedid, 1964)
The Return of the Prodigal Son (Awdat al-ibn al dal, 1976)
Alexandria Why? (Eskanderija... lih?, 1978)
The Sixth Day (Al-yom al-sadis, 1986)



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VĚRA CHYTILOVÁ'S AND JAN NĚMEC'S FILMS IN A SELECTION "LIBERATED" COMMEMORATES THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VELVET REVOLUTION

The 54th Karlovy Vary IFF commemorates the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution with a selection of seven movies shot in 1989-1992. The selected films, made in the "wild nineties" after the disintegration of the totalitarian regime, strongly reflect filmmakers' newly acquired artistic freedom, where the director's imagination was the only limit. The fearless exploration of genre, pointed social critique and, in the words of Jan Němec, "the strange spirit of an era involving the most fundamental changes, not only from bad to good, but from bad to everything" – these are the topics we'll be discussing at this year's festival with the creators of the distinctive work that came out of an era so hopeful for film and the society at large.

Tomáš Vorel captured the unexpected transformation of communism into democracy in his now cult "rhythmical of the totalitarian age" *Smoke* (1991), a highly ironic tale of a young engineer's conflict with a bizarre factory's petrified organizational structure. Irena Pavlásková, meanwhile, offered up a significantly more chilling take on the absurd nature of life in pre-revolutionary Czechoslovakia in her caustic psychological thriller *Time of the Servants* (1989); here, the transformation of timid medical student Dana into an unscrupulous master of manipulation perfectly captured the creeping moral decay of society as a whole. The third choice from a beginning filmmaker is Filip Renč's debut *Requiem for a Maiden* (1991). This drama, based on true events from the 1980s, follows the sad fate of fourteen-year-old Marika, who is mistakenly sent to a home for mentally disabled girls. The film's vivid depiction of her cruel treatment and its tragic consequences heralded the emergence of new and more expressive forms of genre cinema after 1989.

Wherever artistic freedom wasn't being stifled by commercial considerations during the early post-revolutionary era, earlier generations of filmmakers who had worked prolifically under communism found countless new sources of inspiration. It is no coincidence that experienced directors who had always refused to compromise in the face of communist censorship ended up creating some of the most urgent explorations of the new-born democracy. Jan Němec returned to Czechoslovakia after fifteen years in exile and immediately caused an uproar with his aesthetically unusual *The Flames of Royal Love* (1990), a subversive shout in an era of chaos when genius, amateurishness, art, and kitsch suddenly all found themselves back at the same starting point. The rapid transition to capitalism stirred up a plethora of new adventures, which Juraj Jakubisko captured in his comic drama *It's Better to Be Wealthy and Healthy Than Poor and Ill* (1992), a post-1989 tale of two women who jointly throw themselves into business. The selection of post-revolution pictures symbolically concludes with Věra Chytilová's visionary morality tale *The*



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Inheritance Fuckoffguysgoodday (1992) about the foibles of Bohuš, an essentially kind-hearted bumpkin who is eventually corrupted by money; this tragicomic look at the ills of early capitalism was remarkably ahead of its time.



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KARLOVY VARY FILM FESTIVAL TO PRESENT DIGITALLY RESTORED “THE CREMATOR”

The 54th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival continues its tradition of holding premiere screenings of digitally restored classics of Czech cinema. This year the honour has fallen to a seminal work of the 1960s Czechoslovak New Wave, director Juraj Herz’s *The Cremator*.

This dark tale was adapted from the eponymous Gothic novel by author Ladislav Fuks, which describes the transformation of an ordinary man into a psychopathic killer. Karel Kopfrkingl works at a crematorium and otherwise leads a happy and peaceful life with his wife and children. The constant presence of death so consumes him, however, that he lets himself be influenced by the growing Nazi propaganda, which claims that racial impurity has no right to exist. Kopfrkingl becomes an active member of the Nazi Party, participates in anti-Jewish activities, and is ready and willing to liquidate his own family in the name of ideology. His slow shift from peace-loving man into human beast reveals how easily ideology can bring out a person’s dark side.



(Credit: NFA)

The Cremator is one of director Juraj Herz’s most distinctive films and it provided actors with a unique opportunity to shine. Rudolf Hrušínský appears as the title character, and Vlasta Chramostová portrays Kopfrkingl’s wife in one of her last roles before her open political views landed her on the communist regime’s blacklist. A similar fate befell her husband,



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cinematographer Stanislav Milota, who gave the black-and-white film its original visual style. The film, too, had a turbulent history: After premiering in 1969 the regime tried to keep it from being seen by broader audiences; it was gradually removed from domestic distribution and not shown in cinemas again until 1990.

The Karlovy Vary festival will present a renewed international premiere of the digitally restored version of ***The Cremator*** in honour of its recently-deceased creators Juraj Herz (1934-2018) and Stanislav Milota (1933-2019). The National Film Archive will then return the picture to cinemas precisely fifty years after its creation.

The movie's digital restoration, made possible thanks to a gifts from Mr. and Mrs. Kučera, was realized by the Karlovy Vary IFF, UPP and Soundsquare in collaboration with the National Film Archive and the State Film Fund.

This year two more films will be restored thanks to generous gifts from Mr. and Mrs. Kučera – Miloš Forman's *Loves of a Blonde* and Gustav Machatý's *Ecstasy*, both of which will hit the big screen over the course of 2019.



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NEW FESTIVAL TRAILER WITH JIŘINA BOHDALOVÁ

The festival's tradition of creating unique trailers continues this year as well. The 54th KVIFF presents the premiere of a new trailer with Czech actress and KVIFF President's Award laureate **Jiřina Bohdalová**.

The trailer was shot by director **Martin Krejčí**, who has worked with Ivan Zachariáš on festival trailers featuring famous stars from the world of cinema since the very beginning. For instance, Krejčí has shot trailers with Jiří Menzel, Helen Mirren, and Mel Gibson, among others.

Jiřina Bohdalová received the KVIFF President's Award for outstanding contribution to Czech cinema in 2016.



(Credit: Michal Čížek)



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FILM INDUSTRY AT KARLOVY VARY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

The Festival has strived to help create new opportunities for talented filmmakers from the Central and Eastern Europe. Apart from the time-tested competition section **East of the West** showing the first or second films of the region's directors in world premieres, it is just as important to support local producers as they often set out on a very complex mission when gathering funds to finance films in the CEE region as well as in the Middle East.

Since last year, the newly titled **KVIFF Eastern Promises** has worked to make it even more comfortable for film buyers to pick some as yet incomplete film projects still looking for investors. Programmers of major international film festivals are welcome to select potential prospects for their international premieres.

The festival wishes to offer a wide and varied range of film projects to choose from, motivating the region's best to participate through giving them a chance to win one of the awards bestowed by international juries. **The Works in Development — Feature Launch** platform presents projects in development, i.e. completed scripts developed in MIDPOINT programme, where filmmakers from Central and Eastern Europe benefit from expert feedback and the possibility to approach potential co-producers, while producers learn about new carefully treated stories. The best project will leave with the prize amounting to EUR 10,000.

The traditional Works in Progress will present projects in post-production stage — i.e. films that will premiere sometime next year. Upon careful consideration of a large number of submissions, the festival selects projects to compete for a prestigious prize, namely a post-production package amounting to EUR 100,000 to complete the post-production with the help of UPP, Soundsquare and Barrandov Studio. Documentary films will be similarly presented at **Docs in Progress**, with their filmmakers competing for the prize of EUR 5,000. Films leaning towards the experimental will be introduced at **Eurimages Lab Project Award**, whose winner will be — this year for the fourth time — leaving with EUR 50,000.

Three projects selected by KVIFF Eastern Promises last year have met with a great success at Berlinale; one project has won Sofia International Film Festival, and it is safe to assume that some of the completed films will be screened at this year's edition of the Karlovy Vary IFF. Some documentary films have received financial backing from major film institutes. These achievements are exactly what the festival's Film Industry aspires to, making it its priority to support the region's film projects.



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This year's new feature, **First Cut Lab** workshop, which also continues to be hosted by the Italian industry platform When East Meets West, will now find its second hub at the festival, giving three carefully selected films in rough cut stage the opportunity to be presented before a panel of international experts and to benefit from some timely advice on editing. Such advice aims at helping attract international audience as well as suggesting a strategy to the film's marketing and distribution.

Projects can be submitted until mid-May.



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THE KARLOVY VARY FESTIVAL TO COMMEMORATE MILOŠ FIKEJZ'S PHOTOGRAPHIC WORK

Miloš Fikejz – respected Czech film expert in Czech, Slovak, and world cinema, columnist, librarian, encyclopedist, and photographer – lost the fight against leukemia this January. He was 59.

From the start of his professional career, he was inextricably linked to the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival where he worked as a photographer, specialized editor, and text writer on individual films and filmmakers. From 1996 on, he was an editorial staff member for the festival's Catalogue, and he helped edit Eva Zaoralová's *The Story of a Festival* (2015), which charts the history of the Karlovy Vary IFF.

Also fundamental to his output are the monumental two-volume work *Dictionary of Late 20th Century Foreign Film Actors* (2003) and the three-volume dictionary *Czech Film: Actors and Actresses* (2006-2008). Fikejz was also a noted photographer.



“International cinema lost a great friend, passionate ally and most of all a trained, discerning eye for the soul of the film industry’s leading figures,” wrote Steven Gaydos in his impressions piece for Variety magazine.

(Credit: Miloš Fikejz for KVIFF)

His extensive portfolio contains unique photographs of world personalities, including snapshots of Václav Havel in 1987-1989 and photographs from 1994 when he immortalized the as-yet-unknown Leonardo DiCaprio at the Karlovy Vary IFF.



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“Thanks to Fikejz and his camera, there’s a record of a very special, human moment in the life of a young actor who went on to become an Oscar winner, tireless environmental advocate and one of international cinema’s most important artists. But 25 years ago, Fikejz showed us that once upon a time, he was just a boy, enjoying the Bohemian summer of his youth,” recalls Steven Gaydos.

His camera captured such renowned stars as Gregory Peck, Alan Alda, Mia Farrow, Sharon Stone, Robert Redford, Miloš Forman, Whoopi Goldberg, Keira Knightley, Michael Douglas, and many others.

His documentary portraits were not exclusively about film but also took in theater, literature, and music. Beginning in the 1990s he received independent exhibitions at home and abroad, including Prague, Paris, Moscow, and Budapest. His pictures were published in numerous foreign and domestic periodicals and books.

Miloš Fikejz, originally educated as a librarian, was the embodiment of perfectionism and of systematic and highly professional work. In 1981-2018 he was a specialist at the National Film Archive in Prague where he added his writing talents to the NFA publications *Czech Feature Film I-VI 1898-1993*, *Czech Animated Film I 1920-1945*, and *Motion Picture Yearbook 1993-2012*.

This year the Karlovy Vary IFF will organize an exhibition on the first floor of Hotel Thermal featuring 40 black-and-white documentary portraits of prominent artistic personalities that Miloš Fikejz captured over the years at KVIFF.



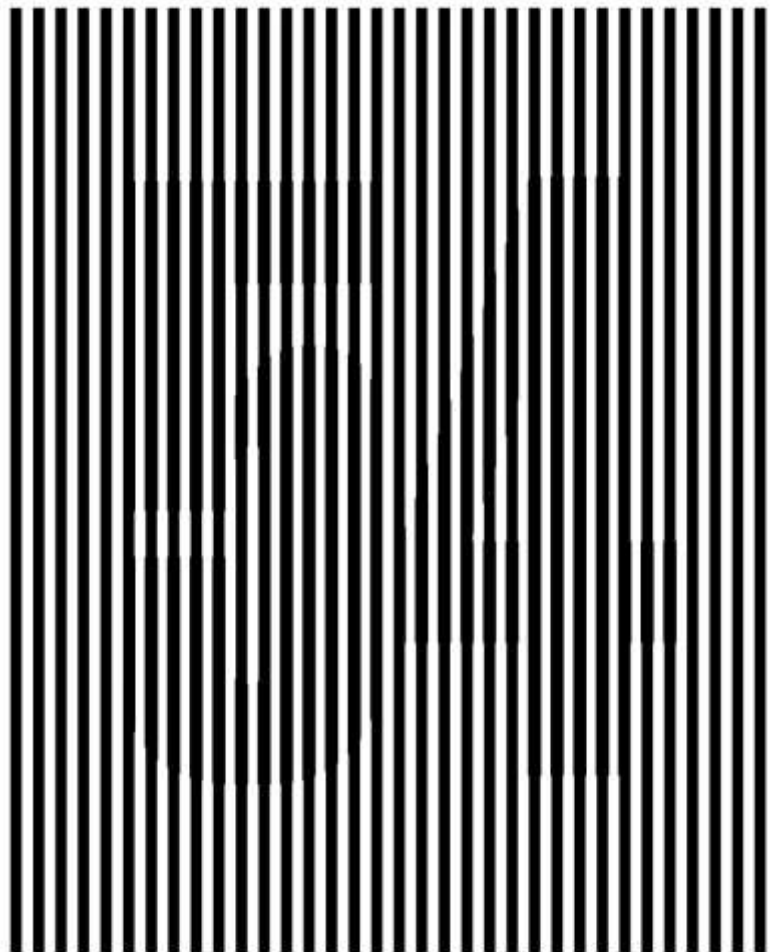
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STUDIO NAJBRT CREATES VISUAL DESIGN FOR THE 54TH KVIFF

Once again the visual design for the Karlovy Vary festival has been created by Studio Najbrt, whose uninterrupted collaboration with KVIFF goes all the way back to 1995. This year's submission thus marks their **twenty-fifth visual design** for the festival; this time around the design has been created by graphic artist Jakub Spurný.

*"The visual design by Jakub Spurný of Studio Najbrt continues to work with a simple typography that plays with numbers and emphasizes visibility. Some people may find references to TVL, meaning lines of horizontal resolution on a television screen, while others will be reminded of the classic Czechoslovak film *The Incredibly Sad Princess*. Some may see a zebra. Or is just the emperor's new clothes? In any case, just like when watching the big screen, it's a good idea to look at the poster from a distance,"* says Studio Najbrt's creative director Michal Nanoru.

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www.kviff.com



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PEOPLE NEXT DOOR FOURTH TIME AT KVIFF

For the fourth year in a row, the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival will present People Next Door, a section organized with the Sirius Foundation, the official non-profit partner of the 54th KVIFF. This section will screen new films whose main characters have a physical disability or are visually or hearing impaired.

PATRON OF CHILDREN – OFFICIAL NON-PROFIT PARTNER OF KVIFF

This year's official non-profit festival partner is the Patron of Children (Patron dětí) project. The project is run by the Sirius Foundation, an organization the festival has collaborated with successfully for several years on the People Next Door section.

Patron of Children is a unique project whose website shares the stories of children who need some form of assistance. Anyone can choose a story to support with an amount of their choice. But most importantly, the project's operations are completely funded by the Sirius Foundation, meaning that every last crown you donate goes directly to the child of your choice.

On the festival's official website, www.kviff.com, you will find a link to Patron of Children's website with full information on the project.

SPECIAL SCREENINGS OF AWARD-WINNING FILMS ON SUNDAY, JULY 7

Given the positive response from prior festivals, this year we will once again hold special Sunday screenings of award-winning pictures from the 54th KVIFF.

The special screenings of the festival's award-winning films will take place **on Sunday, July 7** in the **Grand Hall at Hotel Thermal**. Three separate showings (10 am, 1 pm and 4 pm) will present three award-winning movies from this year's festival, including the main winner. Tickets to the screenings will be available on Saturday and Sunday (July 6 and 7) with either an accreditation valid on Saturday, July 6 or by purchasing tickets at selected box offices.