

■ czech  
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# NEWSLETTER

## 1 | 2005

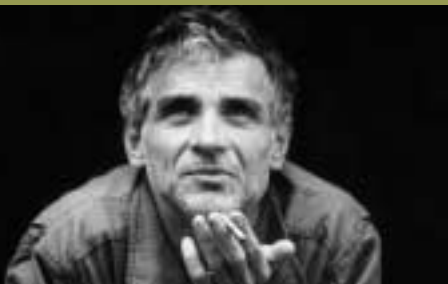
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## WRONG SIDE UP

The new bitter comedy by Petr Zelenka, in Czech cinemas from February 24.

# NEW CZECH FILMS



**SHARK IN THE HEAD | Žralok v hlavě** | D: Maria Procházková  
CZ 2005 | 75 min | 35 mm | released: January 6, 2005

An original feel-good drama about how much we are influenced by those around us. The film revolves exclusively around the main character and his small ground-floor apartment with windows looking onto a quiet street. Veteran actor Oldřich Kaiser dynamically portrays the main role. Finding the perfect location at first seemed like a problem, but it turned out that the ideal venue was the actor's own apartment. 'You've met him: he lives on the ground floor, sits at his window all day long or stands in front of it on the sidewalk. Boxers, undershirt, a cigarette in his hand. He addresses passersby, surprises them, entertains them, and sometimes even touches them. Then Lady strolls down the street and things begin to change. But the shark in his head doesn't stop! *Please visit: [www.zralok-film.cz](http://www.zralok-film.cz)*



**THE NEW BREED! | Sametoví vrazi** | D: Jiří Svoboda  
CZ 2005 | 133 min | 35 mm | released: January 27, 2005

A thriller loosely based on one of the most violent criminal cases of the nineties, popularly known as the Orlík murders. The film delves into the motivation behind the killings, exposing their exceptional cruelty and an absolute absence of moral values. The perpetrators executed four people on their way to achieving material gain. Two of the bodies were found at the bottom of Orlík reservoir, the third perished in a bomb blast, and the fourth was shot at home...



**A LITTLE PIECE OF HEAVEN | Koušek nebe** | D: Petr Nikolaev  
CZ 2005 | 85 min | 35 mm | released: February 10, 2005

Written by Jiří Stránský, this romantic story demonstrates how love can manage to blossom even under the most dramatic of circumstances. It is an intense tale of death, friendship, and solidarity, aspects of life which allows us to maintain our dignity. In the 1950s, Luboš and Dana chance to meet behind the walls of a Communist prison. It's not a real meeting, more of an encounter of looks, a flying of sparks out of which love grows. To help foster their relationship, their co-prisoners organize a small rebellion...

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT OUR WEB SITE [WWW.FILMCENTER.CZ](http://WWW.FILMCENTER.CZ)

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# NEW CZECH FILMS



**WRONG SIDE UP** | Příběhy obyčejného šílenství | D: Petr Zelenka  
CZ 2005 | 107 min | 35 mm | released: February 24, 2005

Life is a bitch and love is a quest. And then you ship yourself off to Cuba in a box...

Wrong Side Up is a comedy of manners where a love story is an excuse to meet people in search of love and understanding, people desperate to make contact with each other, whether jumping from planes, living with shop-window mannequins, making extra money by watching the neighbors having sex, or going mad out of concern for all the wars and disasters of the world. It's a film about a father-son relationship where the son is trying to win his girl back while the father is leaving the mother for another woman and the mother seems more worried about the worsening conflict in Bosnia than about the worsening situation in the family. It's a story of a man shifting boxes at an airport cargo company who comes to like planes more than people, a story of a joker who, when things finally start looking good, can't resist making one more joke.



**BONDS OF BLOOD** | Krev zmizelého | D: Milan Cieslar  
CZ 2005 | 151 min | 35 mm | released: March 3, 2005

An intimate ballad following the lives of a mother and daughter who go through topsy-turvy historical times. The plot is divided into four seasons set between 1939 and 1961. A Czech woman named Helga works at a German hospital. Out of her love for a Baltic nobleman named Arno, a volunteer in the Finnish War, her daughter Dorli is born. But Arno commits suicide and after the war is over mother and daughter must bear the victors' revenge alone – Helga is humiliated and expelled from her native region. Mother and daughter survive thanks only to the aid of the Jewish head doctor of the hospital. Years later Arno's body is exhumed and Dorli, who has always felt close to him, wants to trace her father's roots. She and a Greek boy try to escape but Communist repression spoils their plans. In order to protect her daughter, Helga puts herself at the mercy of a secret police torturer...



**THE IMP** | Skřítek | D: Tomáš Vorel

CZ 2005 | 100 min | 35 mm | released: March 17, 2005

A tragicomedy full of slapstick and vignettes, and even an unexpected shootout. A family of villagers moves up in the world – to the county seat. Dad works as a butcher at a meatpacking plant, mom is a checker at a supermarket. The daughter is at odds with her teacher, while the son – a vegetarian, anarchist, and avid pothead – is apprenticing as a butcher to please his father. The kid's in hot water with both his forewoman and the police. But dad isn't much of an example, letting himself be tempted by the charms of a lovely young butcher. However much mom tries – visiting the beauty parlor, her psychologist, or even the confessional – her husband shows his interest by moving out. Mom plots revenge. And somehow an imp gets mixed up in it all...

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# F I L M C O M M I S S I O N N E W S

## **WWW.FILMCOMMISSION.CZ OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED!**

Do you want to find out more about filming in the Czech Republic? Check out the new Czech Film Commission web site which provides key contacts to local film professionals, companies and resources available for filmmakers visiting the Czech Republic.

The web site also offers an online sampler showing many attractive locations in and outside of Prague. Some of the other features include film industry news, media links and a section where you can find out who is presently on location in the Czech Republic!



## **ONGOING PRODUCTIONS: STILLKING'S HOT SEASON**

The Prague Barrandov Studios and various locations across Prague and the Czech Republic host several current and upcoming film productions by Stillking Films, the international film production company, including a four month shoot of the blockbuster *Doom* based on the legendary computer game. The film is directed by Andrzej Bartkowiak and is a co-production by the Czech Republic, UK, Germany and USA for Universal Pictures, starring Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson who plays one of the Marines battling against demons and other blood-sucking creatures from other dimensions.

'Our first project of 2005 is the Paramount remake of the classic 50's comedy *Last Holiday* which kicked off with a big ski scene in the Austrian Alps and returns to Karlovy Vary for six weeks shooting at the famous Grand Hotel Pupp', comments David Minkowski from Stillking Films on one of the latest productions. It stars Queen Latifah, LL Cool J and Gerard Depardieu. Wayne Wang is in the director's chair. Similarly, various mountain and snow scenes across the Czech Republic stand in for the set of *Disney's The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, directed by Andrew Adamson (Shrek). The production also includes a stage shoot at Barrandov studios.

Stillking also acts as co-producer on the shoot of the TV series for NBC-Universal *Revelations* directed by Lili Zanuck and starring Bill Pullman and Natascha McElhone which takes place between January and April 2005 in Prague and Italy, as well as an eight week shoot of Stratus Entertainment's *The Illusionist* starring Edward Norton that brings the production to the historical Czech town of Český Krumlov in April.

See [www.stillking.com](http://www.stillking.com) for more details.

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# INTERVIEW

Karl Baumgartner, independent producer of international renown, is currently co-producing three films together with young Czech directors. These are *Something like Happiness* by Bohdan Sláma, *Key to the Dream* by Saša Gedeon and the just finished *Wrong Side Up* by Petr Zelenka.

**What were the decisive factors for you to choose these three scripts by Zelenka, Sláma and Gedeon when they were first presented to you?**

For years, I have been closely watching the films these three directors have made and I appreciate their work a lot. Czechoslovakia – and I deliberately refer to both countries – has a history of incredible talent where you do not have a hiatus as you find it in Germany. There is a continuity stretching from Forman and Menzel to the young directors of today. And what I also like is that these directors are making films very much orientated towards the audience. The Czech Republic is one of the few countries where you do have a potentially large movie-going public for domestic films. There is a strong bond between that audience and the young directors. The audience loves the directors and evidently the directors love the audience.

**What approach do you take while looking for new directors and stories?**

I saw previous movies and then approached the directors. I have been following Zelenka's work for 10 years, ever since *Buttoners* was shown in Rotterdam. And after Saša Gedeon made *Return of the Idiot* I told him that I would like to work with him. It is also important that there is a local producer who is open to the idea of international co-production, who stands behind the project, because the production company is the safeguard that the project will develop properly and will be brought to a successful conclusion. But for me, it is the director who is vital. The director is even more important than the script.



**What advice would you give to young directors and independent producers from Central and Eastern Europe who want to launch their projects on the international market?**

There is a danger that the young directors are taking compromises, but there is also a danger in not being willing to take any compromises. It is really important that directors have an audience at home. That they do not produce into the void. And it is important that they look around at what else is happening in the world, how cinematography is developing in other countries. If they have got a strong personality, they will take good influences from outside on board. Yet, I can only encourage them to maintain their distinctiveness. Thus, a film by Saša Gedeon is a Saša Gedeon film but it is also a Czech film. The synergy between these two aspects is very important. And that is what people in other countries find interesting.

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# TELEGRAM

Rotterdam's prestigious market CineMart has chosen *Substitute* by director Martin Krejčí. The feature is produced by Vratislav Šlajer (Bionaut Films), ACE producer 2004, and Helena Uldrichová (Barrandov Studios). For further information please visit [www.filmfestivalrotterdam.com](http://www.filmfestivalrotterdam.com).



For the 2004 EAVE program young producer Ivana Vrbíková has been selected with the project *Three Seasons in Hell* directed by Tomáš Mašín. This project represented by production company Dawson has also been selected for the Berlinale Co-production Market held on February 13 and 14, 2005 in Berlin. For further information please visit: [www.eave.org](http://www.eave.org).



Young actor Jan Budař has been selected for the Czech Shooting Star in 2005. He will be presented together with his European colleagues during Berlin IFF. For further information please visit: [www.efp-online.com](http://www.efp-online.com).

Budař is currently working in two films. He appears in Jan Němec's latest film *Toyen* on the leading Czech surrealist and one of the women who played an important role in the International Surrealist movement. And in *Hrubeš and Mareš are best friends – come rain, come shine*, which is the sequel of Vladimír Morávek's *Bored in Brno*. Morávek's debut film was awarded by 7 Golden Lion and will be distributed in Germany by Ventura Film from 27<sup>th</sup> January 2005.

The master of Czech Animation Jan Švankmajer is currently shooting his latest feature *Lunacy* which is based on motives from Edgar Allan Poe. The film supported by Media Programme and Eurimages will, like his earlier *Otesánek*, mixt feature and animation and is due to be premiered in November 2005.



# EUROVISIONS IN BRADFORD

## 'EUROVISIONS: CZECH REPUBLIC'

**1-31 MAY, 2005 AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY,  
FILM AND TELEVISION IN BRADFORD/ENGLAND**

The award-winning National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford hosts since 2002 the

**Eurovisions** seasons to showcase contemporary and classic **European cinema** and foster exchanges between film-makers and audiences.

**Eurovisions: Czech Republic** in May 2005 will include a retrospective of the comedies of **Jiri Menzel**, in his presence, and bring to Britain a baker's dozen of UK premieres, reflecting the richness and diversity of Czech talents, from *One Hand Doesn't Clap* to *Choking Hazard*, as well as documentaries, shorts, and FAMU and other graduate work. In seminars professionals from the British and Czech film industries will discuss co-production possibilities, film education, the craft of the critic, and distribution.

The Museum – located in the centre of the Yorkshire city of Bradford – is one of the most visited attractions in the British Isles. The nearby airport daily serves Nice, Prague and other European capitals.

All events are open to the public, and are free to accredited professionals.

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