

## Funding News: Summer 2022

At the verge of this summer, the Czech Film Fund supported feature-length fiction and documentary projects for development. Family dramas, the difficulties of growing up and social relationships in general are at the forefront of projects supported among the feature films – the Council decided to back 7 projects, including five debuts. Among the docs, Helena Třeštková, Zuzana Kirchnerová or Francesco Montagner will also develop their new projects with the support from the Czech Film Fund.

### Development of fiction features

The highest amount (EUR 36,000) in the second development call of the year received two promising films. One of them is ***Ice Horses*** (*Ledoví koně*), which is a joint venture of debut director Dodo Gombár and production company Kompliment Film. Based on his own play, Gombár will tell an intimate story about the ever-present themes of dealing with the past and the complicated, sometimes traumatic relationships of a family consisting of three siblings and a mother.

The theme of adolescence is the focus of several filmmakers who have received support in this call. Belarusian-born Sasha Stelchenko, a graduate of Prague's FAMU, whose short film *Deserter* was nominated for the Magnesia Award for Best Student Film at the Czech Lion Awards, will be preparing his debut ***The Thirty-Seventh Kilometre***. A psychological drama about a teenage girl, growing up in an isolated military town, focuses on the mentality of people living in post-totalitarian countries and the gradual loss of the protagonist's illusions. Producer Dagmar Sedláčková of MasterFilm was supported with EUR 36,000 for development.

Another debut director Kristina Elšíková will depict the issue of the environmental crisis and its averting in ***Stormwater*** (*Bouřlivák*), which is produced by Frame Films (backed with EUR 30 000). The subject of the film is the events of a dry summer among a group of teenage friends in the Czech border region, threatened by water shortages due to mining and social conflicts stemming from poverty and life on the periphery.

Two debut films, supported in this call, will target explicitly children's audience. While producer Pavla Klimešová (Helium Film) and emerging documentary director Barbora Chalupová (*Caught in the Net*) will focus on the development of children along with accelerating progress and technological developments in ***Divine Lightning***, Jan Bártek is preparing a film with screenwriter Tomáš Pavlíček and producer Kateřina Buzková of DARQ Studio CZ about the exchange of experiences of two generations of scouts. ***Smarty & Fang*** received the amount of EUR 24,000, Chalupová's ***Divine Lightning*** was backed with EUR 32,000.

Tomáš Pavlíček (*Bear with Us*) will also make his second film ***Cut a Few Branches*** in co-operation with producer Eva Pavlíčková of Bratři, supported by the CFF with EUR 33,000 for the development of the film. A tragicomedy will depict a seemingly simple effort to get rid of branches overhanging the neighbour's garden, which leads to a chain of more or less serious accidents and minor conflicts.

Lust but not least, established director Jitka Rudolfová (*Delight, Watchmaker's Apprentice*) and producer Viktor Schwarcz of Cineart TV Prague will focus on the story of a woman who decides to become a mother after partial paralysis and the departure of her partner. ***The Unique Experience*** will be developed with the support of EUR 24,000.

## Development of documentary films

Human dignity and the superficial judgments and generalizations we tend to make about our fellow human beings are the themes of *I Would Never Go Cleaning in Sweatpants* (*Nikdy bych nešla uklízet v teplákách*). Zuzana Kirchnerová, the winner of Cannes' Cinéfondation with *Baba* (in 2009) focuses on the lives of Ukrainian women working in the Czech Republic in menial positions and unattractive jobs. For the development of this project, MasterFilm was supported with the highest amount in this call, EUR 20,000.

Three time-lapse documentaries were supported in this call and all of them received EUR 18,000 for development. While celebrated auteur Helena Třeštíková rejoins forces with negative and co-director Jakub Hejna (this time also supplemented by Jiří Stejskal) for *Victory – Vítězství* about a young talented female athlete (boxing, ice hockey) whose goal is to qualify for the Summer and Winter Olympics, Eliška Cílková is preparing a documentary *Rotation* (produced by nutprodukce) about a young top figure skater whose efforts are complicated by the presence of a Russian coach at her training. The third time-lapse film backed in this call is *What Are We Going to Do with Péťa?* (*Co s Péťou?*). Martin Tablík will, under the wings of Gnomon Production, follow the adolescence of an autistic and mentally handicapped boy who, after the death of his mother, lives only with his father.

The fate of women who are forced to undergo abortion for health reasons will be followed by Hana Muchová in the film *In Hope*. Production company Punk Film will develop the film with the support of EUR 18,000.

In addition, the Czech Film Fund supported one short documentary film in this call. Francesco Montagner (*Brotherhood*), whose short doc *Asterión* will premiere in Locarno next month, is going to bring up a controversial topic of zoophilia. *The Arc of Michael*, an unconventional portrait of German zoophilia, is intended to be a story of exclusion and loneliness, and it is produced by Veronika Kührová and Michal Kráčmer of Analog Vision (backed with EUR 10 000).

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