

Czech films at festivals: Occupation to compete in Tallinn

Czech films and co-productions are definitely not slacking off with the arrival of autumn. *Occupation* by Michal Nohejl will compete at the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival, Sao Paulo selected 6 Czech films for this year's edition, and Czech filmmakers also are present in Chicago, Denver, Busan or London. Czech animation collects more awards and Czech documentaries are not lagging behind either. What more is in store for Czech films these days and coming weeks? Here is the summary of what is important to know.

Estonian Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival (November 12-28, 2021) revealed the line-up of this year's First Feature Competition, and Czech black comedy *Occupation* is part of the selection. In his feature-length debut, director Michal Nohejl delivers an original contribution to the topic of 1968 Soviet invasion to Czechoslovakia, in which a sleepy actor's party at the theatre bar is disrupted by a drunken Russian officer. Producers Julie Žáčková and Jan Hlavsa of Unit and Sofa made the film in co-production with PFX and Czech Television and also with the support of the Czech Film Fund (EUR 77 000 in 2019). The rest of the Tallinn's selection will be revealed in the following weeks.

Major festival event in South America, **Mostra – Sao Paulo IFF** (October 21 – November 3, 2021), features 6 Czech films and co-productions in the programme of its 45th edition. The winner of Locarno's Pardo d'oro, documentary *Brotherhood* by Francesco Montagner, will compete in the New Directors Competition along with Polish-Italian-Czech *Silent Land* by Aga Woszczyńska which is co-produced on the Czech side by Jordi Niubo (i/o post). Mostra's International Perspective includes *Bird Atlas* by Olmo Omerzu, Ali Mosaffa's *Absence* screened in world premiere and festival favourites *Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn* and *Leave No Traces*.

The aforementioned co-production films will also appear at **Denver Film Festival** (November 3-14, 2021) and **Chicago International Film Festival** (October 13-24, 2021). *Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn* and *Silent Land* will be screened at both events. In addition, a traditional event in Colorado, will screen *Leave No Traces* and animated short film *Love Is Just a Death Away* by Bára Anna Stejskalová, which will compete in the Student Shorts: Animation Competition. Chicago's selection also includes Peter Kerekes' *107 Mothers* which recently won Venice Orizzonti's Best Screenplay award, also with the participation of Czech co-producers of endorfilm and Hypermarket Film.

It's a busy season for *Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn*. The Golden Bear winner is also screened at the ongoing **Busan International Film Festival** (October 6-15, 2021) in World Cinema section as well as at the **BFI London Film Festival** (October 6-17, 2021), which also gives floor to feature film for young audience *Martin and the Magical Forest* by Petr Oukropec, short anidoc *Love, Dad* by Diana Cam Van Nguyen and co-production features *Leave No Traces* and *The Crossing*.

Czech films will also please the audience at the upcoming **Cinekid festival in Amsterdam** (October 13-31, 2021), which has grown into the most respected festival for children and youth in the world. The programme includes animated features *A Colourful Dream* by Jan Balej and *Even Mice Belong in Heaven* by Denisa Grimmová and Jan Bubeníček, *Pat & Mat: Baking and Grilling*, fiction feature *Martin and the Magical Forest* as well as animated shorts *Old Gramophone's Ghostly Tones* and *Sounds Between the Crowns*. The Polish **Kids Kino IFF** (September 25 – October 3, 2021), which had a similar Czech representation this year, honored the Norwegian-Dutch-Czech film *Dragon Girl* with festival's main prize and also the ECFA award.

Czech animation has been scoring quite frequently lately. *My Sunny Maad* by celebrated auteur Michaela Pavlátová won the international competition of the **Guadalajara IFF** (October 1-9, 2021), where it was accompanied in the International Animated Feature Competition by *The Crossing* (co-produced on the Czech side by MAUR film). Both films also appear on the menu of Romanian Animest (October 8-17, 2021), along with the short film *Sisters* by FAMU student Andrea Szelesová. Furthermore, Greek Animasyros was literally flooded with Czech animation in September – the festival featured *Love, Dad* as well as *Red Shoes* by Anna Podskalská and *Sisters* in the Student Competition and also screened *A Colourful Dream* or *Hungry Bear Tales* by Kateřina Karhánková & Alexandra Májová

Rising star of Czech animation Diana Cam Van Nguyen received an honorable mention in the IMDbPro Short Cuts Competition at the Toronto International Film Festival, and with her film *Love, Dad*, talented director spices up the programme of ongoing **Montreal Festival de Nouveau Cinema** (October 6-17, 2021) and also heading to major documentary events of this autumn.

The oldest documentary festival in the world, **DOK Leipzig** (October 25-31, 2021), selected 4 Czech films and co-productions for the Competition for the Audience Award: shorts *Love, Dad* for and *Fluid Life* by Zora Čápková, and features *The Cars We Drove Into Capitalism*, Bulgarian-German-Danish-Croatian-Czech will world-premiere at the festival, along with *The Crossing*.

The prestigious **IDFA – International Documentary Festival Amsterdam** (November 17-28, 2021) revealed the noncompetitive selection and selected *René – The Prisoner of Freedom*, directed by celebrated auteur Helena Třeštíková and produced by Kateřina Černá and Pavel Strnad of Negativ, to world-premiere in the Masters section. *Love, Dad* will be screened in IDFA's Best of Fests section as Dutch premiere, and the festival will also screen Viera Čákanyová's student film *Alda*.

Millennium Docs Against Gravity (September 3 – October 3, 2021) included Helena Třeštíková's previous time-lapse doc *Anny* in this year's edition, and also presented *Forman vs. Forman*, *Katka* and *René* within festival's retrospective dedicated to Třeštíková's work. In addition, the festival screened Vitaly Mansky's celebrated *Gorbachev. Heaven*, which will also be part of **DocLisboa** (October 21-31, 2021). The major Portuguese documentary event also includes *Traces of Landscape* by Petr Záruba.

Last but not least, *Wolves at the Borders* by Martin Páv won the Central and Eastern European Competition of the **Astra Film Festival** (September 5-12, 2021) and *Living Water* by Pavel Borecký celebrated its French and Italian premieres at the Nancy International Film Festival (August 27 – September 5, 2021) and *Visioni dal Mondo* (September 16-19, 2021), respectively.

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