

Czech films compete at autumn festivals: Tallinn, Cottbus or Thessaloniki

Czech films and co-productions beyond borders of the Czech Republic: In the coming weeks, what more awaits us at film festivals? So far, the fall has been loaded with Czech festival participations and achievements. The recently unveiled programme of the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival only confirms it. Here is the summary of what is important to know.

Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival (13.-29.11.)

The most important event in the Baltic region revealed its programme on Friday with total of 15 Czech majority films and minority co-productions in the line-up. In the two most important competition sections, the Czech Republic is represented by three minority co-productions. Latvian-Lithuanian-Czech co-operation *The Sign Painter*, directed by Veisturs Kairišs and co-produced by Julietta Sichel's 8Heads Productions is part of the Official Selection – Competition (the film also leads the nominations for Latvian National Film Awards in all 15 feature film categories).

The Baltic Competition includes Latvian-Czech brand-new documentary *Gorbachev. Heaven* by celebrated Vitaly Mansky (*Putin's Witnesses*), which was made with the contribution of established Czech company Hypermarket Film, and Sharunas Bartas' *In the Dusk* – Lithuanian-French-Czech-Serbian-Portuguese-Latvian co-operation is represented by Sirena Film on the Czech side.

Three festival favourites are part of the Current Wave section: *Charlatan* (directed by Agnieszka Holland and produced by Šárka Címbalová of Marlene Film Production) *Havel* (directed and produced by Slávek Horák (TVORBA Films), and Slovak-Romanian-Czech-Irish *Servants* (directed by Ivan Ostrochovský and co-produced by Negativ on the Czech side).

In the DOC@PÖFF section appears *Caught in the Net* (dir.: Barbora Chalupová & Vít Klusák, prod.: Vít Klusák, Filip Remunda / Hypermarket Film), and Environment Agency Environmental Film Programme gives its floor to another documentary, *Wolves at the Borders*, directed by Martin Páv and produced by Zuzana Kučerová of Frame Films.

While Tomáš Polenský's *The Pack* will compete in the Just Film Youth Competition, a total of six Czech shorts will be presented in the various sections of the festival dedicated mostly to animated or experimental films: *Carrousel* (dir.: Jasmine Elsen, presented in Shorts Animation Competition), *Delimitation* (dir.: Tereza Vejvodová, presented in Dance Films: Kinetic Novellas), *Fibonacci* (dir.: Tomáš Hubáček, presented in Dance Films: Kinetic Novellas), *Forget Me Not* (dir.: Adéla Křižovská, presented in Animated Realities), *Hopus* (dir.: Lucie Kokoliová, presented in Shorts Kids Animation Competition), *Washing Machine* (dir.: Alexandra Májová, presented in Shorts Animation Competition).

Thessaloniki International Film Festival (5.-15.11.)

The festival presents the programme to the audience online, and Czech cinema is being represented especially by the Focus Věra Chytilová: *Something Different* (1963), *Daisies* (1966), *Fruit of Paradise* (1969), *The Apple Game* (1976), *Tainted Horseplay* (1988). In addition, three Czech co-productions

also appear in the programme: ***Servants*** (Open Horizon), ***In the Dusk*** (Special Screenings) and George Bogdan Apetri's ***Unidentified*** (Meet the Neighbors Competition) co-produced by Viktor Schwarcz.

Camerimage (14.-21.11.)

Czech films also take part in events of the East Slavic area. While the Main Competition of the Polish Camerimage includes Agnieszka Holland's ***Charlatan***, the Directors' Debuts Competition give its floor to co-production ***Servants***.

Cottbus Film Festival (8.-13.12.)

A total of 16 Czech films and co-productions will be presented during the festival postponed to December this year: In the Close-up WWII will be screened ***Shadow Country*** and minorities ***Blackandwhite***, ***Town of Glory*** and ***The Chronicles of Melanie***. ***Amnesty*** will represent Slovak and Czech cinema in the Hits section, documentaries ***When the War Comes*** and ***Wolves at the Borders*** will participate at the Von Frust und Freiheit and at the Heimat / Domownja / Domizna, respectively.

A traditional bastion for Czech films is this time enriched with the focus Spotlight Česko: TV miniseries ***Actor*** (dir. Peter Bebjak, 2020), features ***A Certain Kind of Silence***, ***Droneman***, ***Havel***, ***Lost Coast***, ***The Banger*** and shorts ***Daughter***, ***Fibonacci*** and ***Don't Be a Pussy***.

IDFA (18.11.-6.12.), DOC NYC (11.-19.11) & Festival dei Popoli 15.-22.11.)

Helena Třeštíková returns to her favorite Amsterdam to world-premiere documentary ***Anny*** in the IDFA Competition for Mid-Length Documentary. In addition, Vitaly Mansky will premiere his ***Gorbachev. Last Word*** in the IDFA Competition for Feature-Length Documentary. ***S P A C E S*** by FAMU student Nora Štrbová will celebrate its Dutch premiere in the Best of Fests section.

While ***The Vasulka Effect*** is part of the Official Selection of the DOC NYC festival (held online), Festival dei Popoli will give its floor to ***Traces of Landscape*** and ***Pripyat Piano*** (Doc at Work – Future Campus).

This fall has been a successful shift for Czech films

The most celebrated Czech film of recent days is ***A New Shift***. Jindřich Andrš's documentary, produced by Miloš Lochman, Karel Chvojka and Augustina Micková of moloko film, scored twice at the oldest European documentary floor, DOK Leipzig. The film won the MDR Film Prize for outstanding Eastern European Documentary Film and also the Golden Dove in the Competition for the Audience Award Long Film.

Agnieszka Holland's ***Charlatan*** produced by Šárka Cimblová & Kevan Van Thompson of Prague's Marlene Film Production, was selected as this year's Czech Oscar candidate in the middle of October, and along with that, the film was also presented in the Masters section of the Chicago International Film Festival.

Charlatan was also screened at one of the world's oldest film events, Moscow International Film Festival postponed to the beginning of October this year – during which Irena Pavlásková's ***The Prague Orgy*** was also presented, in the Russian Trace section.

Eleven Czech features and shorts, including festival hits ***Havel***, ***Charlatan***, ***Caught in the Net*** or ***SH_T HAPPENS***, were presented at the Luxemburgish CinEast festival, focused on films from Central and

Eastern Europe. The Grand Jury Prize went to Ivan Ostrochovský's *Servants*, and in the Short Animated Films Marathon category, *Way of Sylvie* pleased the spectators and won the Audience Award.

In Kiev, the Czech Republic was represented by 5 films at the Visegrad Cinema Days: *Cook Fuck Kill*, *Charlatan*, *Havel*, *Punk Is Now* and *Servants*. The showcase, organized by the Molodist festival was on the Czech side supported by the Czech Film Fund / Czech Film Center.

The good condition of Czech animation was once again proved at the Cinekid Film Festival which gave floor to 4 Czech animated films: Martin Kukul's *At the End of the World*, Jakub Kouřil's *Pearl*, Eva Mlynarčíková's *Shoot* and *Truffles*, an episode of *Hungry Bear Tales* series, by Kateřina Karhánková & Alexandra Májová.

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