

Czech films in the making: Spring 2021

First months of 2021 have been busy for Czech projects in different stages of the making so far. Promising Czech films and professionals have been awarded in Hong Kong, Trieste or Sofia, and also took part in various key industry events all over the world.

“Every year, many interesting projects are introduced to the film professionals at the co-production markets in Trieste, Sofia or Hong Kong, and this year was no exception. The potential of (not just) European cinema in terms of amount and variety of topics as well as approach to creation was stunning. Therefore, I’m very glad that Czech projects succeeded in this tough competition,” says Markéta Šantrochová, Head of the Czech Film Center.

Kadrnka’s intimate project will be looking for partners in Cannes

Saving One Who Was Dead, the awaited project by director and producer Václav Kadrnka, currently in postproduction, has been awarded the HAF Goes to Cannes award at the Hong Kong Asia Film Financing Forum 2021. This prize gives Kadrnka an opportunity to present his upcoming film within this year’s Marché du Film programme and to attract suitable partners (sales, distributors etc.).

The film is an autobiographical story of a father who falls into a coma, and his family which finds itself in this extreme life situation. Kadrnka’s Sirius Film co-operates on the drama with French (Bocalupo Films), Slovak (SilverArt) co-producers, while Czech Television and Michael Samuelson Lighting Prague joined the project on the Czech side.

The Czech Film Fund supported the project in various stages of the making with altogether EUR 217 000. In addition, *Saving One Who Was Dead* participated in our Czech Film Springboard development programme in 2017, and we also focused on the film and its complexity of origin in the CZECH FILM magazine last fall.

Nutprodukce awarded with two different projects in Trieste

Trieste-based When East Meets West co-production market, held online in January, gave its floor to presentations of three Czech and co-production projects. ***Censor***, Slovak-Czech-Ukrainian directorial debut by Peter Kerekes, was awarded prestigious Sub-ti Award (guaranteeing subtitle services) in the First Cut+ section. The drama about a fate of women who raise their children in prison, is co-produced by Jiří Konečný of endorfilm on the Czech side, and it was also backed by the Czech Film Fund as a minority co-production (EUR 115 000).

Francesco Montagner, who prepares his feature-length debut ***Brotherhood*** in production of nutprodukce with support of the Czech Film Fund (EUR 48 000), received WEMW’s HBO Europe Award (EUR 1000). The ambitious documentary is set in Bosnia and tells a story of sons of a radical Salafi preacher who face their father's sentence for terrorism.

Furthermore, the Flow Digital Cinema Award (guaranteeing post-production services) went to ***The Museum of Revolution***. Croatian-Serbian-Czech documentary focused on never completed monumental museum of Yugoslavia is directed by Srdan Keca, co-produced by nutprodukce on the Czech side and backed with EUR 11 500 by the Czech Film Fund.

Gregorius, the Chosen One conquered the Sofia Meetings

The Czech cinema definitely left its mark at the Bulgarian industry event, because solid number of five Czech projects were introduced within the Sofia Meetings Co-production Forum in March. In the showcase of second feature films in development, **Gregorius, the Chosen One** was awarded Cinelab Romania (Sofia's main prize). Another participant of the Czech Film Springboard 2017 is directed by Tomasz Mielnik and produced by Mikuláš Novotný of Background Films. Their black comedy follows a holly sinner born of incestuous love and it was supported by the Czech Film Fund altogether with EUR 500 000.

Beata Parkanová presented her second film, **The Word**, in the Works in Progress. An insight into everyday life of husband and wife disturbed by the turbulent events of 1968 in Czechoslovakia is being produced by several Czech, Slovak and Polish partners with Vojtěch Frič of love.FRAME being the main producer. In the same category, Boris Missirkov and Georg Bogdanov introduced their Bulgarian-Czech-Danish documentary, **The Cars We Drove into Capitalism** (co-produced by Jiří Konečný from endorfilm on the Czech side).

Two Czech TV series were also presented at the Sofia Meetings 2021. While **Different**, directed by Marek Najbrt and produced by Jakub Košťál of Bionaut, is an atypical series of three feature-length films and seven TV episodes based on figures from Slavic mythology, **Stuntmen ltd** (directed by Jiří Fabík and Luboš Ondráček, produced by Michal Sikora of Lonely Production) tells a story of George, the son of a legendary stuntman, who is suddenly forced to fight for the legacy of his father's company.

Cartoon Movie welcomed the Golem

This March was also important for two Czech animated feature projects. Within the Cartoon Movie pitching event in Toulouse, **Golem** and **Heart of a Tower** were introduced to international experts. The story of **Golem**, directed by Jiří Bárta and produced by Vladimír Lhoták and his Prague-based Hausboot, takes place in communist Prague in the 1950s, where a young student tries to find the famous Golem and bring the creature back to life. The second film with Czech participation at the forum was **Heart of a Tower**, an adventurous story of a boy who escapes from home following a mysterious signal emitted by a shining stone. The film is directed by Peter Budinský and produced by BFILM in co-production with the Czech Republic (BFILM.cz), and other Slovak (platoon, Radio and Television Slovakia) and Belgian (Stacka) partners.

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