

1st Czech and Slovak Film Festival of Australia Venues and First Highlights Announced

June 5-9, 2013 in Melbourne

Sat, May 18

Exhibition opening and program launch

Sat, May 25

Curtain-raising screening

The inaugural Czech and Slovak Film Festival of Australia (CaSFFA), under the stewardship of Artistic Director, Cerise Howard, is delighted to make its first venue and program announcements.

Between Saturday, May 25 and Sunday, June 9, 2013, CaSFFA will roll out films at the spectacular **RMIT Capitol Theatre** on Swanston Street and, in conjunction with The Melbourne Cinémathèque, at **ACMI Cinemas**, Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Federation Square, Melbourne.

The first CaSFFA will also feature a visual art exhibition, celebrating the lifework of legendary Czech animator and illustrator, Jiří Trnka, at **Gallery Domov** in North Melbourne.

The opening of the exhibition, "**Jiří Trnka - Serving Imagination**" on Saturday, May 18, presented by The Boite and with support from the Consulate of the Czech Republic in Sydney, will double as the festival's inaugural program launch.

For the festival's first program, Cerise Howard and her team have selected widely from the most remarkable films to have recently emerged from the Czech and Slovak Republics, as well as unearthing some remarkable treats from the Czech and Slovak archives. Aside from a wish simply to bring to Melbourne the best in new and classic cinema from these two very close, culturally rich nations, a loose theme of "togetherness" informs the programming, an agreeably ironic theme given that 2013 sees in the 20th anniversary of the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. Yet, to this day, much film production from the region is highly collaborative, employing the tremendous talents of cast and crew from the two Republics, and even beyond...

Initial Program Highlights

Jiří Trnka - Serving Imagination exhibition

Jiří Trnka is a legendary figure in the history of Czech animation and a Hans Christian Andersen Award-winning illustrator. Once hailed as the "Disney of the East", his illustrations and prize-winning



puppet animations from the 1940s through to the mid-1960s are still adored by children and adult audiences around the world. "Jiří Trnka - Serving Imagination" will present a wide overview of his extraordinary career.

Co-presentation with The Melbourne Cinémathèque

CaSFFA is delighted beyond measure to be bringing to Melbourne, on archival 35mm prints from the National Film Archive in Prague, two feature-length and three short Trnka masterpieces, including his extraordinary final film ***The Hand (Ruka, Czechoslovakia, 1965)***, a peerless, heartbreaking allegory for the struggles of artists under totalitarianism, and his majestic, balletic Shakespeare adaptation, ***A Midsummer Night's Dream (Sen noci svatojánské, Czechoslovakia, 1959)***.

The Sun in a Net (Slnko v sieti, dir. Štefan Uher, 1962, Czechoslovakia)

CaSFFA is no less delighted to present, courtesy of the Slovak Film Institute, a 50th anniversary digital restoration of Štefan Uher's remarkable harbinger of the "Czechoslovak New Wave", that miraculously fecund film movement to have emerged in Czechoslovakia in the 1960s and to have sadly faded with the crushing of the Prague Spring. A beautiful, lyrical film, *The Sun in a Net* employs striking location cinematography and a fantastic *musique concrète* score by Ilya Zeljenka in its landmark depiction of the everyday lives of disaffected youths.

Thu, June 6 – Sun, June 9 at the RMIT Capitol Theatre

The best new (and recent classic) Czech and Slovak cinema

Identity Card (Občanský průkaz, dir. Ondřej Trojan, 2010, Czech Republic, Slovakia)

Ondřej Trojan, director of the Oscar-nominated *Želary* (2003) turns his focus upon four teenage friends in Prague in the years 1973-77 in this comedic drama adapted from a novel by Petr Šabach. Nominated for 11 Czech Lions.

Private Universe (Soukromý vesmír, dir. Helena Třeštíková, 2011, Czech Republic)

A fascinating documentary, 37 years in the making, chronicling the life of a Czech family from 1974 to 2011. Archival footage interspersed throughout illustrates the changing political and social climate in Czechoslovakia and later, in the Czech Republic.

The Blue Tiger (Modrý tygr, Petr Oukropec, 2011, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany)

A magical children's film combining live-action and superb animation in relating how the arrival of a blue tiger – a child's wish – might save a rundown botanical garden and its neighbourhood in present day Prague from wholesale redevelopment.

The Last Bus (Posledný autobus, Martin Snopek & Ivana Laučíková, 2011, Slovakia)

Brilliant, prize-winning animated short film. With the arrival of the hunting season, the animals of the

forest urgently board a bus in order to flee to safety. When hunters later intercept the bus, the animals reveal their true natures...

Dates and venues for the 2013 Czech and Slovak Film Festival

Sat, May 18, 2-4pm

Opening of "Jiří Trnka - Serving Imagination" & program launch

Gallery Domov, 511 Queensberry St, North Melbourne

Exhibition runs until Sun, June 9: Thu - Sun, 12 - 4pm

Sat, May 25, 12.30pm

Jiří Trnka: *The Emperor's Nightingale* (1948) & two classic late shorts

ACMI Cinemas, Australian Centre for the Moving Image

Federation Square, Melbourne

Tickets (Melbourne Cinémathèque memberships) now on sale from www.acmi.net.au

or in person at the ACMI Tickets and Information Desk 03 8663 2583

Wed, June 5, 7pm

"Preludes to the Czechoslovak New Wave: Trnka and Uher"

ACMI Cinemas, Australian Centre for the Moving Image

Federation Square, Melbourne

Tickets (Melbourne Cinémathèque memberships) now on sale from www.acmi.net.au

or in person at the ACMI Tickets and Information Desk 03 8663 2583

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The best new (and recent classic) Czech and Slovak cinema

RMIT Capitol Theatre

Tickets available soon through the CaSFFA website

For more information visit www.casffa.com.au

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Consulate of the Czech Republic
in Sydney

