

# Czechoslovak Film Week

19<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> February 2018 / Embassy of the Czech Republic in London



In cooperation with the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in London and the Czech Centre London The Embassy of the Czech Republic in London is pleased to announce that a Czechoslovak Film week will take place in our recently refurbished cinema on 19<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> February 2018. In cooperation with the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in London we will introduce a selection of three Czech and three Slovak films, which will be accessible free of charge.

The Film Week will be organised during this important year for both the Czech Republic and Slovakia when we will be celebrating many important anniversaries from the modern history of the Czech and Slovak states. The aim of the Czechoslovak Film Week is not to reflect all the anniversaries but rather to present the signature pieces of Czech and Slovak film-making – films that we believe to be immortal and have the potential to appeal to the viewers of today, regardless of their background. Each screening will be introduced by an expert on Czech and Slovak film.

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Doors will open 30 minutes before the start of the programme. The cinema is accessible through the reception of the Embassy of the Czech Republic in London, 26 Kensington Palace Gardens, London W8 4QY. Please note the entrance is on Bayswater Road. All films will be screened with English subtitles. Reservations can only be made through the Eventbrite system.

## PROGRAMME

### **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018 / 7pm / CAPRICIOUS SUMMER / [seat reservation](#)**

Jiří Menzel / 1967 / 74' / CZ / EN subtitles

Czechoslovak Film Week will be opened by the Ambassadors of the Czech and Slovak Republics in London. All guests are cordially invited to a glass of wine after the screening.

### **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018 / 7pm / SOUL AT PEACE / [seat reservation](#)**

Vladimír Balko / 2009 / 93' / SK / EN subtitles

### **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018 / 7pm / THE POWER OF GOOD: NICHOLAS WINTON / [seat reservation](#)**

Matej Mináč / 2002 / 64' / SK / EN subtitles

### **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 / 7pm / ESCAPE TO BUDÍN / [seat reservation](#)**

Miloslav Luther / 2002 / 138' / CZ, SK / EN subtitles

## **Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018 / 7pm / LEMONADE JOE / [seat reservation](#)**

Oldřich Lipský / 1964 / 95' / CZ / EN subtitles

There will be a western-style dress-up party with live music following the screening. A western-style costume is not compulsory but we will award three best-dressed guests with a small present.

## **Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2018 / 3:30 pm / FIMFARUM, THE THIRD TIME LUCKY / [seat reservation](#)**

Vlasta Pospišilová, Kristina Dufková, David Súkup / 2011 / 72' / CZ / EN subtitles

Screening for children. There will be a film-themed **ANIMATION WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN** organised after the screening at **5pm**. During 90 minutes the children will learn basics of a stop-motion animation, making of animated toys and the techniques of Pixilation (animation of movements of real people) or Claymation (plasticine animation).

**Seat reservation for the workshop** [here](#). Please note that the number of places available at the workshop is limited to 30.

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As for the **Czech production**, three viewer-friendly films were selected to represent the typical features of Czech cinematography. All of them also happen to be literary adaptations of Czech books. It is this close bond with the language and the original authorial context of the literary or theatrical works that makes these films good representations of the unique national cinematic features.

The works of the first of the selected authors, Jiří Menzel, serve as great illustrations of this view. As a director, he famously brought to the big screen a number of works by Bohumil Hrabal, a Czech writer who managed to portray the world of ordinary Czech or Slovak people using almost ecstatic language devices. **Capricious Summer** (Rozmarné léto), Menzel's second feature film, is an adaptation of a novel by Vladislav Vančura, another writer also famous for his mastery of the Czech language. The spirit of poetism, a literary movement of inter-war Czechoslovakia, is present throughout the entire film and it flows from the language into the visual imagery and its intoxicatingly melancholic mood.

The second film, a Western parody, **Lemonade Joe** (Limonádový Joe), became a legend in Czechoslovakia. Despite the enormous decades-long popularity of this film, not many people are aware that this is in fact a literary adaptation as well. The screenwriter, Jiří Brdečka, first used his ideas in a short story, which he then made into a short movie with the director Jiří Trnka and also a play, all of which preceded the successful film adaptation. This may seem to be a topic very distant to the Central European reality, but it actually represents another typically Czech phenomenon. The popularity of Western stories resulted in a mass wave called the "tramping movement" which emerged at the beginning of the 20th century and continued to influence popular culture throughout most of the 20th century. The tramping life-style also became a form of escape from the gloomy reality of the Communist drabness and/or conformity.

The last of the selected films, **Fimfárum - The Third Time Lucky** (Fimfárum, do třetice vše-ho dobrého), is the most recent one. It is a 2011 animated adaptation of fairy tales based on a collection of "modern fairy tales" Fimfárum by Jan Werich, a well-known actor, playwright and director of the inter-war years. He is another example of an artist with an original and specific approach to Czech language. Written in 1960, Fimfárum closes an imaginary frame of the "golden sixties" – a crucial period for both the Czech and the Slovak culture and a time to which even some contemporary artists still look back to with a certain feeling of nostalgia.

The most important aspect, which stretches like a red thread, not only through all the three selected films, but also through Czech cinematography as such, must not be forgotten. It is a specific humour, which emerges from the everyday life of ordinary people and is an inseparable part of our present culture even in stories in which the characters are trying to behave and speak in a very peculiar way, such as in *Capricious Summer*, or which are populated by tough cowboys, just like in *Lemonade Joe*, and even forms the basis of a kind fairy tale humour drawing on life's lessons in *Fimfárum*.

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Spectators of the **Slovak films** are going to be taken into the 2000s, viewing a historical movie fresco, as well as a suggestive story, set in the rugged scenery of Slovak mountains. Special emphasis will be given to *The Power of Good* – the film dedicated to Sir Nicolas G. Winton. The presented selection of those three Slovak films belongs to remarkable artistic creations in the Czech and Slovak cinematography, still carrying an up-to-date message about the importance of hope and perseverance on the life paths.

The noticeable contribution of the Slovak cinematography into the film festival begins with **Soul at Peace** (2009) – a feature debut of the director Vlado Balko, bringing a powerful story about the values of family, friendship, faith and love, surrounded by the vivid coulisse of splendid Slovak mountains. „Soul at Peace“ is not only the film title but both dream and desire to get and have inner peace in life. The final movie headlines come together with a captivating song by Jana Kirschner. The film won the Grand Prix in the Kansas City, as well as four of the Slovak National Sun in a Net Awards.

In the second film, the genre shift into a biographical documentary is not random. **The Power of Good** – a story of „the British Schindler“ - pays tribute to Sir Nicholas Winton for rescuing 669 predominantly Jewish children during the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia by transporting them to Great Britain. This was done on his own initiative, while Sir Nicholas Winton had remained silent for 50 years afterwards. Joe Schlesinger, a Canadian television station reporter, CBS, who is also one of “Winton’s children”, adds a great deal of testimony to the film.

**Escape to Budín** – the third film, based on the novel by Vladislav Vančura of the same title, was shot in a specific way; as if its director Miloslav Luther was painting a historical image of passions, failures, and disappointments of the movie characters who experienced their dramatic life moments in Prague, Slovakia, Budapest and Vienna. All set against the backdrop of far-reaching social, economic and political changes, following the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

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**We believe you will like our selection of films to be screened during Czechoslovak Film Week and are looking forward to welcoming you soon to our recently refurbished cinema.**

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