



Inside

Main Competition: <i>The Father</i> and <i>Half-Sister</i>	02
Road trip <i>Over the Hills</i>	03
East of the West: tense connections	04



Photo: KVIFF

According to the film's director, Hutchence had a way to cut through Melbourne punk scene bullshit.

Trapped in the 80s

Mystify: Michael Hutchence reveals the complicated figure behind the mythical INXS frontman

In his documentary on the magnetic, enigmatic and ultimately tragic frontman for 80 s megastars INXS, Michael Hutchence, director **Richard Lowenstein** – who arrived in Karlovy Vary for the film's European premiere – plunges the viewer completely into the singer's life and times by only using footage from the past, without relying on talking heads.

by **Michael Stein**

"I wanted to take you on a time-traveling journey," says Lowenstein. "I wanted to take the audience back into the 80 s and keep them there, and trap them there in this imagery."

But not filming the people you interview means you need footage of some kind - concert and music video clips can't fill up an entire film, so where was Lowenstein going to find unique, never-seen,

personal footage of Hutchence? It turns out he just had to walk upstairs to his attic, where he was shocked to find he had a treasure trove sitting in rusty film cans, outtakes from INXS videos he had saved as well as Hutchence's own home movies.

Two distant worlds

Lowenstein came out of what he describes as the countercultural, eclectic world of the Melbourne underground music scene, where the

likes of Nick Cave and The Birthday Party had emerged, another universe from where pop star Michael Hutchence came from.

"Michael and INXS represented mainstream music," he says. "Their songs, from the very beginning were very commercial. They were clean-cut boys. They didn't do drugs. They wore bright colors. So we would sneer at them a bit."

In 1983 Lowenstein got a call asking him to do a music video for INXS, and though reluctant, flew

out to a beach in Queensland and was immediately disarmed by the bands' and Hutchence's warmth.

"They were so friendly and Michael was so effusive," he says. "He just cut through our Melbourne bullshit - I had color in my hair and was pale as a vampire and he was wearing a Hawaiian shirt - but he cut through all the bullshit and within 24 hours we were all snorkeling together off the Great Barrier Reef, which Melbourne punks don't really do."

Beyond the rock star

Lowenstein says in making the film he gained some insight into his old friend's character because he would show one side of himself to his male friends that relied on having a good time, his more public persona. "He would always give you a taste of what it was like to be a rock star," he says. "But you never really sat down and had big discussions about himself."

The film offered another, more intimate view of the singer by the degree to which the perspective on him is female - with deeply revealing interviews from mostly ex-girlfriends such as Michele Bennett, Kylie Minogue and Helena Christensen, as well as their US tour manager Martha Troup.

"It was interesting how multifaceted he was as I would speak to each girlfriend and they would tell me stuff they hadn't told other people," he says. "He was showing a lot more to the women in his life than the men in his life." •

Mystify: Michael Hutchence screens July 3 at 4 pm (Národní dům Cinema) and July 6 at 4 pm (Karlovy Vary Municipal Theatre)

See you there

Dovilė Butnoriūtė
Lithuanian Film Centre



"So how many films have you seen at KVIFF? Any recommendations?" Each year, these are not the questions I can answer after coming back home. For those who work in the industry, festivals are not about watching films – I come here to watch unfinished scenes, to make promises and promote upcoming Lithuanian films. In short: to spend all my time talking *outside* of the cinema. And I love it!

Days at KVIFF are intense; it's all about celebrating talents, matchmaking and brainstorming new ways for partnerships and representation. I feel that

the selection of projects shown during the industry program is getting stronger and stronger every year, it's reflecting the tendencies of what is going on in our region and, which is what I like the most, it spotlights the new generation of filmmakers I'm representing as well. All this, combined with the people who come here to explore, makes this event an important meeting point before a very busy autumn. KVIFF is the place where you can expect the unexpected! • **MB**

KVIFF Eastern Promises Industry Days 2019 take place until July 2.

Replay

Shooting John Malkovich

There is no KVIFF without the festival's beloved trailers: without Casey Affleck trying to pawn his Crystal Globe, Helen Mirren battling hers while it refuses to stay in its box, or John Malkovich exploding in the taxi over the concept of a lifetime achievement award.

"It was one of the most pleasant shoots," said Ivan Zachariáš, one of two directors behind the trailers alongside Martin Krejčí, who explained how they roll at yesterday's KVIFF Talk held in

Hotel Thermal. "John Malkovich met us in Boston the day before for coffee then he drove us around the city and after that invited us for dinner. He got terribly drunk and started sharing all sorts of conspiracy theories with us such as *The Guardian* being run by the KGB. And as he is so terribly smart it was difficult to disprove it."

Things weren't quite as easy this year: Instead of free meals Krejčí had to rummage through vast archives to



Photo: KVIFF

This year's trailer stars Czech icon Bohdalová.

find material to show Czech actress Jiřina Bohdalová haunted by her past as the voice of numerous beloved children's cartoons. "It was 48 hours of material," he moaned jokingly. "At the end, it was driving *me* crazy." • **MB**

Official selection



The dead don't leave voice mail (or do they?) in Bulgaria's wild ride *The Father*.

Hold the phone

The Father takes on death, phone batteries, grief and madness

by Will Tizard

A Bulgarian road movie, father-and-son rivalry story and a sendup of the Balkan mysticism cottage industry - *The Father* is all these things and more, offering a series of painfully authentic family clashes besetting the clan surrounding Vasil, a pensioner whose wife has just died. Opening with a funeral scene gone horribly awry,

the offbeat film takes off from there, with Vassil's son Pavel forced to endure constant insults while listening to the increasingly wild obsessions of his father. Though it doesn't appear that any visible affection is motivating Pavel, his sheer determination not to explode when faced with more and more madness and abuse is impressive - and the source of escalating tension

in the story. Where is the breakdown that must surely be coming? Or is it just that his life is so attuned to random attacks and chaos that this is pretty much just a day in the life?

Inspired by headlines

Between Vassil believing his dead wife is trying to call his phone and his running off to join a cult that requires him to sleep near a grave while opening his mind to dream messages, this father manages to keep poor Pavel on his toes, certainly. The longsuffering son is not just trying to keep Dad from getting lost in the woods, of course - he's also determined to protect his wife, telling her over the phone increasingly fabricated stories about how the funeral trip is going so swimmingly.

Writer-director-producer team Kristina Grozeva and Petar Valchanov, following up on their previous joint venture, 2014's *The Lesson* and 2016's *Glory*, here hone their penchant for comic absurdity and deeply conflicted, thorny characters. *The Father* caps their trilogy of so-called Newspaper Clipping stories inspired from headlines spotted around the bizarre world of post-communist Bulgaria - a formula that's been winning the filmmakers honors at fests worldwide.

Official selection



They hate each other but they don't know why.

Under the skin

In *Half-Sister*, Slovenia's Damjan Kozole delves into sisterly hate

by Iva Roze

Three years after winning the KVIFF best director award for *Nightlife*, Slovenia's Damjan Kozole brings another drama to Karlovy Vary. *Half-Sister*, starring Ursa Menart, who co-wrote the script alongside Liza Marijina, is a story of two estranged half-sisters - and estranged would be an understatement - who

are forced to share a small apartment in Ljubljana together after years of avoiding each other. The director's real-life experience inspired the script. "A few years ago, I found myself in an unexpected situation. I had to confront the possibility that there could be somebody who shares my blood whom I wasn't aware of," he says. "This confused and

strange feeling sparked the story about two grumpy and stubborn but good and vulnerable women who barely know each other. They hate each other but in reality have no idea why."

Letting go

The two women are so incapable of showing affection it makes even a hardened Central European cringe. "The way we communicate with others always expresses our desires, fears and frustrations," says Kozole. "When we do this in an arrogant, aggressive way we are often concealing our own vulnerability. This is a film about two women who want nothing to do with each other and deny any similarity between them. At the end, though, they uncover what they are both refusing to understand."

The director says he has always been fascinated by people who, because of their feelings or beliefs, are ready to let go of everything and start a new life from scratch. "Sometimes," he says, "Things don't work out the way we had hoped or wanted."

Half-sister premieres tonight at 8 pm [Grand Hall] and screens again July 3 at 1 pm [Pupp Cinema] and July 5 at 11:30 am [Drahomira Cinema].

Three picks for today

Pamela Jahn
Film Critic, *Electric Sheep*, UK



On the town

Stephen Lan
International Film PR



Fifty years on, it's hard to believe there are still documentaries coming out today that manage to capture the magic of the first lunar landing in a new light. Todd Douglas Miller's latest attempt is one of those rare gems - a fascinating, enlightening and utterly absorbing trip to the moon and back.

Apollo 11

Director: Todd Douglas Miller
USA 2019, 93 min
July 2 at 9 am, Cinema B



This film tore me apart at this year's Berlinale and it's still one of the most powerful, moving debuts I've seen so far this year. Nora Fingscheidt is certainly a German talent to watch and Helena Zengel as the nine-year-old troublemaker delivers a force-of-nature performance that is impossible to resist.

System Crasher

Director: Nora Fingscheidt
Germany 2019, 118 min
July 2 at 4 pm, Pupp Cinema



Think zombies and schnitzel, kitsch and cult, anarchy and brass music. The artists Kelly Copper and Pavol Liška put it all in and turn things up to eleven in their canny, bold and brilliantly bizarre lo-fi low-budget art-house B-movie based on Elfriede Jelinek's ghostly metaphor for the Nazi past. Bizarre is an understatement actually - the film is a blast.

Die Kinder der Toten

Director: Kelly Copper, Pavol Liška
Austria 2018, 90 min
July 2 at 10 am, Národní dům Cinema



The Coffee Gods shall lead you to this flat white.

Mysterious coffee place

On Day 3 of KVIFF, I'd woken up at 5am. Blame it on jetlag, the anxiety of my film teams arriving imminently, or too much 'pivo' and Becherovka the night before - or all of the above. What's a boy to do in Karlovy Vary when he decides to wake

up with the sun? Take a good stroll, of course! Have you ever wandered around KV when the rest of the city is still cozying under the covers? It is sheer bliss. Before the sometimes-oppressive heat settles in, the air is crisp and the peacefulness is sheer delight. You start to feel like the city belongs to you (as long as you avoid the boisterous groups of severely inebriated youngsters on T. G. Masaryka street who've been partying all night and showing no sign of slowing down at 6am). I was desperate for a coffee; so desperate in fact, that I'd even considered joining the line of morning-after party-goers shuffling their feet in front of the closed doors of a certain fast food chain with a golden arch. But I decided to keep on trudging. That's when the Sweet Gods of Caffeine heard my silent pleas: I'd unexpectedly stumbled upon an unobtrusive coffee shop that was open before 7 am. But this was no ordinary coffee shop. These guys roasted their own beans, had croissants that rivalled those of my favourite boulangerie in Cannes, and had pear and almond tarts lovingly made by a Czech 'nonna' I've been told. Thus, I had one of the most enjoyable treats in KV when I'd least expected it. I do not remember the name of this god-send of a coffee shop, for the life of me. But I certainly do remember how to get there. And if you promise to treat me for a flat white, I will take you there.* * Disclaimer: Festival Daily take no responsibility for the author's encounters with flat whites.

Kviffefe Tweet of the day

Tessie
@angleyard



My summer holiday so far: Julianne Moore shook my hand and gave me an autograph. Casey Affleck told me „NICE HAT“ when he saw my Red Sox cap aand he did the same thing exactly two years ago so that makes us kinda of friends. I also talked to Floriana Lima. OHMYGOD #KVIFF

Czeching in



Father and son try to bridge the distance between their divided family and each other.

Road to help

Over the Hills brings two Czechs on a deeply personal pilgrimage to a Russian monastery

by Michael Stein

Martin Mareček's film *Over the Hills* is not your typical Czech documentary. After a brief opening in Brno, including a birthday trip to grandma's and some cutting back-and-forth dialogue between the father and son pair the film is based on, the local surroundings, past and present, are pulled away. From there, we follow

the duo not only on a road trip to Russia to try to visit their estranged mother and sister but back into their family history to learn why they split into two camps as they did. The story of the father, Vít Kalvoda, had originally struck Mareček and co-writer Tomáš Bojar as a strong character to base a feature screenplay on. "The odyssey of his

family seemed to us like one big laboratory which boldly experiments with various possibilities of living," the co-writers say. "And the results of those experiments presented immensely rich material for a script."

Lost in non-fiction

Ultimately, they realized the spontaneity he projected was lost in fiction and that filming the man himself with his son on a quest for his own family was the only way to get at the essence of his story. The film alternates between a sardonic father-son black comedy, a touching drama of a family torn apart and a visually-stunning portrait of a highly religious ancient part of Russia. And it is precisely the incongruity of these different styles, the director's skill and, most importantly, the reasons it all fits together that make the documentary come across so powerfully. "We had a unique opportunity to watch Vít and Grisha, a father and son who set off for an important, faraway visit," says Mareček. "Full of uncertainties, stumbling as well as showing a sincere determination." ●

Over the Hills premieres today at 3:30 pm [Small Hall] and July 3 at 2 pm [Drahomíra Cinema] and July 5 at 11:30 am [Cinema B].

Top 5



Fuck, shit, *Mid90s* was dope, man.

Most irksome teens in film

By Marta Bałaga & Michael Stein

In Martin Mareček's documentary *Over the Hills* a deeply melancholic family story is leavened by one of the more hysterically stand-offish teenagers to grace a KVIFF screen in recent memory. And so, in tribute, some similarly troublesome screen teens for you to cringe from.

1. Mid90s

Fittingly for a film made by the guy from *Superbad*, Jonah Hill's directorial debut is a true teen-talk extravaganza with first prize easily going to the young Dude – his Dudeness, or Duder, or el Duderino if you are not into the whole brevity thing – named Fuckshit. True story.

2. Let There Be Light

Serious political, social, and family issues – yes of course, but it's František Beleš as the diffident, closed-mouth and hard-to-read teen at the heart of the film that really makes it work.

3. Monos

Teenagers with guns. In a jungle. Out of their minds on shrooms. Left all alone with a cow named Shakira and that redhead from *Law & Order*. What could possibly go wrong?!

4. The Sharks

The constant annoyance of Rosina, the protagonist of Lucia Garibaldi's film, mumbling "what-

ever" so often it would make for a proper drinking game had she been of age might actually be easily explained: Her story has *nothing* to do with *6-Headed Shark Attack*, *Ghost Shark* or even *Sharkanado 3: Oh Hell No!* As if. Whatever.

5. Mean Girls

Although this one isn't showing at KVIFF this year, Amanda Seyfried's Karen Smith is hard to disremember. It was she who made us *really* happy that high school would indeed one day be over with her tendency to laugh at people getting diarrhea at Barnes & Noble or breasts that can always tell when it's going to rain. It's, like, she had ESPN or something. ●

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East of the West



Vadym is recording his way to emigration in *My Thoughts Are Silent*.

Family Bondage

This year’s regional selection takes on a diverse, contrasting gamut of family issues.

With films ranging from a Russian gang thriller to a Saudi homecoming, it’s the power and pain of family ties that forms the foundation of this year’s regional selection. And not the family ties that could title a cheerful American sitcom, but more like ropes and nooses that will strap you down or strangle you.

by Michael Stein

Nevertheless, beneath the constraints and bleak sacrifices there emerges the sense that these connections represent the most lasting, unbreakable bonds in these characters’ lives and that even in tragedy they provide strength and enduring love. In Antonio Lukich’s *My Thoughts Are Silent* the over two-meter-tall main character, Vadym, a sound recordist, is hoping to emigrate from his native Ukraine. He embarks on a quirky, elusive road trip

with his mom in a colorful and briskly-paced collage of genres and extreme situations that seems to take in everything from David Lynch to Eastern European absurdist cinema. “We tried to make a story about a person who is ‘uncomfortable here and now,’ without reference to a particular country,” says director Antonio Lukich. “Emigration for us is just an occasion to share with the audience some intimate feelings. Being abnormally tall, our main hero does not fit in any frame - photo, social or a train car. And

we wanted to show all this inconvenience and awkwardness through all sorts of details.” **Lost and found** Mother and son relations are also the starting point of Greek director Vardis Marinakis’ *Zizotek*. Nine-year old Jason’s mother takes him far from home to a folk festival with the intention of leaving him there, but when Jason’s wandering in the forest brings him to a mute’s makeshift house they form a powerful bond that leads in entirely unexpected directions.

In *The Bull*, former ballet dancer turned director Boris Akopov takes on Russian street gangs and mafia

higher-ups in the chaotic 90 s. But it’s again the main character, nicknamed Bull, and his family that are at the heart of this film in which a tough yet sensitive leader’s own heart (physically and emotionally) plays a crucial role. Martti Helde’s second feature *Scandinavian Silence* is a close-up take on a brother and sister’s relationship and obscure, troubled past. It repeats the scene of a sister picking up her brother on a country road three times, with extreme variations in voice each time. “We all have an inner voice that’s guiding us wherever we go and gives us directions,” Helde says. “Often or almost never we have the chance to hear and experience somebody else’s voice. My wish with *Scandinavian Silence* was to offer this opportunity to the viewer - give an opportunity to empathically view one story from three different perspectives.”

Prisonbound

In Serhat Karaaslan’s *Passed By Censor*, a Turkish prison guard who works censoring inmate’s letters wants more from life than his colleagues so he takes a writing class and begins mixing his literary interests with his work, leading to what might be a legitimate concern for

a women’s well-being or an extreme obsession. Andrei Cohn’s *Arrest* sees its protagonist abruptly taken from a family holiday by the police in late-80 s Romania and placed in a cell with a small-time criminal by the authorities eager to get information, laying bare the pointless degradation of the totalitarian system. Pavol Pekarčík’s *Silent Days* tells the story of four hearing-impaired Romany children. In Czech director Michal Hogenauer’s *A Certain Kind of Silence*, Mia is an au pair who finds herself facing something well beyond what the job description detailed. In Saudi director Abdulmohsen Aldhabaan’s *Last Visit*, paternal relations are seen against the backdrop of traditional, religious customs. Albania serves as the remote rural setting for Lendita Zeqiraj’s debut *Aga’s House*, the story of a young boy growing up among women. In *Mamonga*, a formally innovative work by Serbian director Stefan Malešević, the events of a single night alter the lives of protagonists Jovana and Marko. In Karolis Kaupinis’ *New Lithuania*, meanwhile, a geographer comes up with a highly unusual plan to keep the country’s inhabitants safe as WWII approaches. ●



Aga’s House is filled with a surprisingly tuneful group of women.

Faces



Zhai Yixiang

The 5th day of the 54th KVIFF welcomes director **Zhai Yixiang** and actress **Zhang Tongxi** with their Chinese main competition film *Mosaic Portrait*. Other main competition arrivals include



Martha Stephens

American director **Martha Stephens** to screen her film *To the Stars* and **Felipe Ríos** with his Chilean/Argentine film *The Man of the Future*. The Official Selection - Out of Competition will see the arrival of actor **Jaeden Martell** to present the film *The True Adventures of Wolfboy*. He is also appearing in the film *The Lodge*. Director **Marc Schmidt** is coming to screen his



Felipe Ríos

film *In the Arms of Morpheus* in the Documentary Films competition. The East of the West section welcomes director **Michal Hogenauer** to present the world premiere of his film *A Certain Kind of Silence* while **Vardis Marinakis**



Marius Olteanu

arrives to screen his film *Zizotek*. Romanian director **Marius Olteanu** is coming to present his film *Monsters* in the Another View section. And finally, German director **Thomas Heise** arrives to screen his three-and-a-half-hour opus *Heimat Is a Space in Time* in the Imagina section.



Vardis Marinakis

Industry events



Hugo Rosák, head of the KVIFF Industry Office

Coming up today

Film professionals shouldn’t miss today’s presentation of the **Eurimages Lab Project Award** projects at 11 am at Cinema Čas. For the fourth time at KVIFF Eurimages has selected eight promising projects made outside the traditional film-making framework. “Presenting projects that are often at the crossroads of cinema and other art forms, these pitches are especially relevant to film festival representatives, art institutions and film students,” says Hugo Rosák, head of the KVIFF Industry Of-

fice. The best project will receive a 50,000 EUR award. At 1 pm the Vodafone Lounge will host a panel discussion titled **Potential of Czech Film in International Markets: Challenges and Opportunities**. The debate, organized by the Czech Audiovisual Producers’ Association (APA) and hosted by film journalist Tomáš Baldýnský, aims to coin the key factors that would allow Czech producers to succeed in international markets, attracting foreign audiences, festivals, broadcasters and distributors alike and establishing Czech film and TV drama as an internationally recognized brand. Documentary film aficionados might want to check out **Docs in Progress** at 2 pm at Cinema Čas. Producers and directors of eight selected documentaries from CEE, the Balkans, the former Soviet Union and the Middle East will present projects that are currently in production or post-production that will officially premiere after this year’s KVIFF. The most promising project will receive an award of 5,000 EUR. ●