

**58<sup>TH</sup>  
KARLOVY  
VARY**

**INTERNATIONAL  
FILM  
FESTIVAL**

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**Organizer of the 58<sup>th</sup> Karlovy Vary IFF 2024: Film Servis Festival Karlovy Vary, a.s.**

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## **FRANZ KAFKA AND CINEMA AT THE 58<sup>th</sup> KARLOVY VARY IFF**

**In the unique retrospective “The Wish To Be a Red Indian: Kafka and Cinema” the festival will present cinematic reflections on the work of the most influential figure of 20<sup>th</sup> century literature, from filmmakers such as Orson Welles, Martin Scorsese, Ousmane Sembene, Jan Němec and Steven Soderbergh**

This June we mark the centenary of the final moments of the writer Franz Kafka, who passed away at a sanatorium in the Austrian town of Kierling. As enigmatic as they were distinctive, both Kafka and his works have been defined with considerable insight by Milena Jesenská, though she had but a few hours available to write his obituary: *“Kafka wrote books full of dry scorn and the sensitive perspective of a man who saw the world so clearly that he couldn’t bear it, a man who was bound to die since he refused to make concessions or take refuge, as others do, in various fallacies of reason, or the unconscious – even the more noble ones.”*



The special program’s title is referring to one of Kafka’s most enigmatic short stories which, just like cinema, contains strong elements of a motion and transformation. *“For decades, Kafka’s oeuvre has functioned as a continuing provocation to filmmakers,”* say KVIFF’s artistic director Karel Och and the festival’s consultant Lorenzo Esposito, co-curators of the program. *“It is as if he were slyly challenging them to attempt to capture as authentically and*



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*intensely as possible the elusive nature of his formulations, of his narratives, of the realities he has crafted and the feelings of apprehension he elicits, yet also of the comic situations he has created,”* continue Och and Esposito.

The selection of titles, which might be called “adaptations and inspirations”, is dominated by an original double feature proposed to the festival by the filmmaker himself. Steven Soderbergh created the noir mystery ***Kafka*** in 1991 and, thirty years later, he returned to his original material and came up with a radically different version, in his own words, “a silent movie with sound and music”, ***Mr. Kneff*** (2021).

Orson Welles’s ***The Trial*** has arguably been the most frequently discussed Kafka adaptation over the past sixty or so years; after all, this film enacts a confrontation between two craftsmen and uncompromising titans in their given disciplines. Kafka’s short story *A Hunger Artist* received a politically alarming and turbulent update in the 2016 satire ***Artist of Fasting*** by Masao Adachi, the enfant terrible of Japanese film. As an emigré in West Germany, the inimitable Jan Němec came up with a stirring piece of experimentation in his iconic ***Metamorphosis*** from 1975. Seven years earlier, this arresting figure of the Czechoslovak New Wave had set out to compete at Cannes with *A Report on the Party And the Guests*; the festival, however, was cancelled half way through. One of Němec’s contenders was to have been German director Rudolf Noelte, who was putting forward his outstanding adaptation of the novel ***The Castle***, the cast of which, alongside Maximilian Schell as the land surveyor K., also included Iva Janžurová. Vladimír Michálek conjured up a remarkable visual conception in his debut ***Amerika*** (1994), an inherently postmodernist adaptation of Kafka’s eponymous novel, also known as *The Man Who Disappeared*.

The endless list of titles, whose creators, with laudable humility, acknowledge the cardinal influence of Kafka’s work, should also comprise the unjustly overlooked black comedy by Martin Scorsese from 1985 ***After Hours***, or the Italian duo ***The Audience*** by Marco Ferreri and Federico Fellini’s ***Interview***. As complements to this colourful group of Kafka-inspired filmmakers, we could likewise mention the Senegalese Ousmane Sembene (***The Money Order***), Roman Polanski (***The Tenant***) or Shin’ya Tsukamoto (***Tetsuo***). A striking example of the Kafkaesque, both in a domestic film context and beyond, is encountered in the artistry of Pavel Juráček and his celebrated ***Joseph Kilian***.



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**List of films (work in progress)**

**The Trial** (dir. Orson Welles, France/Italy/West Germany 1962, 116 min.)

**Joseph Kilian** (Postava k podpírání, dir. Pavel Juráček, Czechoslovakia 1963, 38 min.)

**The Money Order** (Mandabi, dir. Ousmane Sembene, Senegal/France 1968, 105 min.)

**The Castle** (Das Schloß, dir. Rudolf Noelte, West Germany 1968, 88 min.)

**The Audience** (L'Udienza, dir. Marco Ferreri, Italy/France 1971, 112 min.)

**Metamorphosis** (Die Verwandlung, dir. Jan Němec, West Germany 1975, 55 min.)

**The Tenant** (Le Locataire, dir. Roman Polanski, France 1976, 126 min.)

**After Hours** (dir. Martin Scorsese, USA 1985, 97 min.)

**Fellini's Intervista** (Intervista, dir. Federico Fellini, Italy 1987, 105 min.)

**Tetsuo** (dir. Shin'ya Tsukamoto, Japan 1989, 67 min.)

**Kafka** (dir. Steven Soderbergh, USA/France 1991, 98 min.)

**Kafka** (dir. Zbigniew Rybczyński, France 1992, 52 min.)

**Amerika** (dir. Vladimír Michálek, Czech Republic 1994, 90 min.)

**Franz Kafka's a Country Doctor** (Kafka Inaka Isha, dir. Koji Yamamura, Japan 2007, 21 min.)

**Artist of Fasting** (Danjiki geinin, dir. Masao Adachi, Japonsko 2016, 104 min.)

**Mr. Kneff** (dir. Steven Soderbergh, USA 2021, 78 min.)

**The Tomb of Kafka** (Le Tombeau de Kafka, dir. Jean-Claude Rousseau, France 2022, 14 min.)





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## **HONORING CASTING DIRECTOR FRANCINE MAISLER**

The Karlovy Vary International Film Festival and *Variety* magazine have teamed up to honor Francine Maisler, one of the world's most respected casting directors. Maisler has worked on more than seventy feature films and is a recipient of fifteen Artios Awards from the Casting Society of America. She has worked with such directors as Denis Villeneuve (*Dune: Part Two*, *Dune*, *Arrival*, *Sicario*), Terrence Malick (*Tree of Life*, *Knight of Cups*), and Alejandro González Iñárritu (*The Revenant*, *Birdman*). As part of its homage, the Karlovy Vary festival will hold a special screening of one of the films which Maisler worked on. Maisler will also give a public master class, in which she will reflect on her career so far.



*Photo credit: Sam Taylor-Johnson*

*“We are glad to have begun a new tradition at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, where every year we honor one important representative from the film industry. One goal of this project is to call attention to film professions that are not immediately visible but that are vital to a film’s success. After honoring longtime director of Marché du Film Jérôme Paillard and producer Christine Vachon, this year we will pay homage to casting director Francine*



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*Maisler. The profession of casting director has gained increasing attention over the past years, as evidenced among other things by the fact that, starting in 2026, the Academy Awards will include an Oscar for casting,”* says KVIFF’s executive director Kryštof Mucha.

Francine Maisler is one of the most highly respected casting directors in the industry, having cast over seventy features and numerous television projects. In 2022, she won a Primetime Emmy Award for her work on HBO’s *Succession*. Her work has been honored by the Casting Society of America’s Artios Awards with fifteen awards (including *Marriage Story* in 2020 and *Don’t Look Up* in 2021) and over fifty nominations. In 2023, Francine served on the International Jury at the Berlinale Film Festival – the first casting director to do so. She has also received two Robert Altman Awards from the Independent Spirit Awards.

Her notable projects include *The Revenant* and *Birdman* (dir. Alejandro González Iñárritu), *The Big Short* and *Vice* (dir. Adam McKay), *Creed* (dir. Ryan Coogler), *Milk* (dir. Gus Van Sant), *As Good As It Gets* (dir. James L. Brooks), *The Tree of Life* (dir. Terrence Malick), *12 Years a Slave* (dir. Steve McQueen), *Captain Phillips* (dir. Paul Greengrass), *Mud* (dir. Jeff Nichols), *Ex Machina* (dir. Alex Garland), *Little Women* (dir. Greta Gerwig), *Sicario*, *Arrival*, *Blade Runner 2049*, and *Dune* (dir. Denis Villeneuve), and *Mickey 17* (dir. Bong Joon-Ho). In 2024, her projects include *Dune: Part Two* (dir. Denis Villeneuve), *The Bikeriders* (dir. Jeff Nichols), *Challengers* (dir. Luca Guadagnino), *Civil War* (dir. Alex Garland), *Joker: Folie à Deux* (dir. Todd Phillips), and *Mufasa* (dir. Barry Jenkins). Francine has also just finished casting an as-yet untitled Ryan Coogler feature (dir. Ryan Coogler), *Klara and the Sun* (dir. Taika Waititi), and *A Big Bold Beautiful Journey* (dir. Kogonada).



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## VISUAL IDENTITY OF THE 58TH KARLOVY VARY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Once again, the festival's visual identity has been designed by Studio Najbrt.

*"As in the past, this year we have worked with the numbers marking the festival's edition. Our symbol for the 58th edition was inspired by a simplified pattern of the Hotel Thermal's ground plan. The result is an abstract black-and-white design consisting of one square and three circles,"* says Aleš Najbrt.

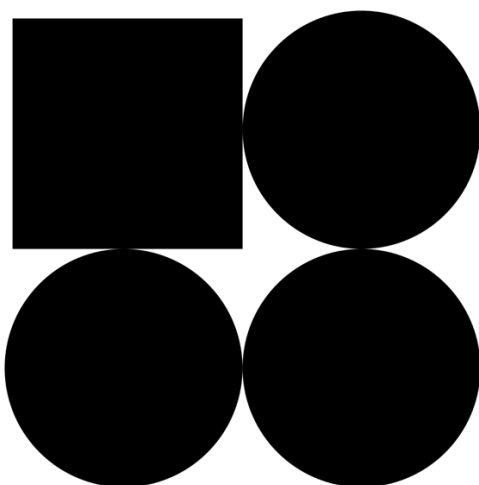
*"This time around, we have taken the idea of maximum simplification as a starting point for transforming the symbol into iconic objects from the world of cinema and the Karlovy Vary festival. Brutalist concrete, Věra and Vladimír Machonin's armchairs, film canisters, or an old camera,"* is how Studio Najbrt's designers describe this year's concept.

Authors of the visual identity:

Design: Jonatan Kuna

Art director: Aleš Najbrt

Animation: Zdeněk Trinkewitz



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## **FUTURE FRAMES CONTINUES ITS PARTNERSHIP WITH ALLWYN AND COLLABORATION WITH UTA AND RANGE MEDIA PARTNERS**

***Future Frames – Generation NEXT of European Cinema***, a program organized by Karlovy Vary International Film Festival and European Film Promotion, has been helping talented European directors start their careers in the film industry since 2015. By partnering with leading multinational lottery operator Allwyn and collaborating with American talent agency UTA and Range Media Partners, *Future Frames* last year significantly expanded the opportunities it offers young filmmakers.

*“Allwyn is delighted to continue its support of the Future Frames initiative and the development scholarship to Hollywood, thus helping emerging directors to realize their full ambitions and potential. I have no doubt that each of them will go on to leave an indelible mark on the film world. Bringing people and communities together is something that matters more than ever before. Collaborating with the Future Frames initiative enables Allwyn to support that mission. We’re really looking forward to meeting all the talented directors at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival this summer,”* says Pavel Turek, Allwyn’s Chief Officer of Global Brand, Corporate Communication, and CSR.

Every year for *Future Frames*, the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival programming team selects ten film school students and graduates who have been recommended by member organizations of European Film Promotion to present their short and medium-length films to the festival’s audiences. The participating filmmakers are also treated to a specially tailored mentoring program that includes training, networking, and promotion. Leading filmmakers who have shared their experiences with *Future Frames* participants at past editions of the program include Felix van Groeningen, Denis Côté, Tim Sutton, and Jasmila Žbanić.

One selected participant is given the chance to go on a special study trip to Los Angeles sponsored by Allwyn. Last year, this three-week residency was awarded to Amalie Maria Nielsen of Denmark. Thanks to UTA talent agency and Range Media Partners, Nielsen could connect with professionals from the American film industry.

*“This is the tenth year of the Future Frames program, and during its existence it has provided support to a number of talented filmmakers,”* says the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival’s executive director Kryštof Mucha, adding, *“We are glad that, thanks to our partner Allwyn and our close collaboration with UTA talent agency and Range Media Partners, we can offer promising European directors the chance to start their careers and to engage in*



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*creative development while also giving them the opportunity to gain experience from renowned figures of international cinema.”*

*“Going to LA was an unforgettable life experience that has helped me to grow as a filmmaker and human being. Thinking about it is still overwhelming! I had the opportunity to experience the center of American film production and meet some of the most experienced and talented creators. During my visit, the whole city was filled with filmmakers from all over the world because of the Oscar campaigns, and I watched a lot of inspiring films. Future Frames sends a strong message about the power of film by connecting people across borders, and I made many new contacts and friendships that I will take with me further in the future,”* says Amalie Maria Nielsen, Future Frames participant.

This year’s *Future Frames* will take place at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival **from 30 June to 3 July**. The Hotel Thermal will once again host the *Allwyn Future Frames Lounge*, a creative and networking space for the program’s workshops and also a space for individual meetings with representatives from UTA and Range Media Partners, who will be on hand to provide participants with important feedback and advice. They will also subsequently select one *Future Frames* filmmaker for the special scholarship and study trip to Los Angeles.

*“We are delighted to continue the collaboration with Allwyn for our Future Frames program at KVIFF for the second year. Allwyn’s generous support allows us to expand our program to a new level and to provide young filmmakers with the opportunity to broaden their horizons outside of Europe,”* says **Sonja Heinen**, Managing Director, European Film Promotion.

*“Building upon the resounding success of our inaugural partnership last year, we are thrilled to once again collaborate with the renowned Karlovy Vary Film Festival and its Future Frames Program,”* said Rena Ronson, Partner & Head of UTA Independent Film Group. *“We are honored to support the next generation of visionary filmmakers as we anticipate another year of extraordinary talent and innovative storytelling.”*

*“The Karlovy Vary Film Festival is one of the world’s most renowned festivals, championing incredible films and talent. We are thrilled to continue being a part of the festival’s Future Frames program, helping young filmmakers showcase their talent and expand their relationships around the globe,”* says Kevin Hussey, Range Media Partners.





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**KARLOVY VARY FILM FESTIVAL TO PRESENT PREMIERE OF DIGITALLY RESTORED “SHADOWS OF A HOT SUMMER”**

**The long-running tradition of premiere screenings of digitally restored Czech and Czechoslovak films continues at KVIFF 58 with a screening of František Vláčil’s SHADOWS OF A HOT SUMMER.**

Legendary Czechoslovak director František Vláčil shot his Western ballad *Shadows of a Hot Summer* in 1977 on the basis of a screenplay by Jiří Křižan. The film was subsequently shown to great audience interest in competition at the 21st Karlovy Vary International Film Festival in 1978, where it was awarded a Crystal Globe for Best Film (ex aequo with *White Bim Black Ear*).



*Photo Credit: Národní Filmový Archiv (NFA)*



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The film is set two years after the Second World War on an isolated farmstead in the Beskid Mountains inhabited by Ondřej Baran and his family. Their quiet life is interrupted by a gang of Banderites who, desperate to escape across the border, are not afraid to use violence. They force the farmer, his wife, and a doctor to look after one of their injured comrades. Ondřej must engage in a deadly game in which he tries to protect his family while passively resisting wanton, unfettered evil. He slowly comes to realize that he has no choice but to confront the superior force in open conflict.

The work of screenwriter Jiří Křížan, a native of Valašské Meziříčí, is intrinsically associated with the Beskyd Mountains. His protagonists are determined and distinctive mountain men capable of choosing the right side in the ancient struggle between good and evil. In *Shadows of a Hot Summer*, this classical drama plays out in the expert hands of director František Vlácil and his understated poetic style and unique visual approach to filmmaking, fundamentally aided by Ivan Šlapeta's camera and the music of composer Zdeněk Liška.

Starring in this gripping story are **Juraj Kukura** as Ondřej, **Marta Vančurová** as his wife, **Gustav Valach** as Dr. Valchar, and **Jiří Bartoška** as one of the Banderites.

*Shadows of a Hot Summer* is another in a series of award-winning Czech films to be digitally restored thanks to financial support from Milada and Eduard Kučera. The Karlovy Vary International Film Festival regularly includes renewed premieres of films whose digital restoration has been made possible by the Kučeras in its official program and as part of its special KVIFF Classics retrospectives.

The film was digitally restored by UPP and Soundsquare, working in collaboration with the National Film Archive and the State Fund for Cinema on the basis of original materials stored at the National Film Archive. The image was digitized from a duplicate positive and a print. The sound was digitized from a duplicate positive, a print, and a duplicate negative.



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## **FESTIVAL PRESIDENT'S AWARD TO BE PRESENTED TO ACTOR IVAN TROJAN**

**At the closing ceremony of this year's 58th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, the President's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Czech Cinema will be presented to actor Ivan Trojan.**

Ivan Trojan is one of the most frequently cast Czech actors in film, television, and theater of the past quarter century.

After graduating from the Theater Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (DAMU), Trojan worked with the Realistic Theatre and the Vinohrady Theatre before, in the second half of the 1990s, becoming one of the central figures of the newly established ensemble at Prague's Dejvice Theatre. In 2000 he earned a Thália Award for the title role in *Oblomov*, in 2012 he received the Alfréd Radok Award for his performance in the theater's iconic production of *A Blockage in the System*, and in 2022 his part in Petr Zelenka's *Fifty* earned him the Theater Critics' Award.

Trojan film career began its meteoric rise at the turn of the millennium. He was first discovered for the big screen by director David Ondříček, who cast him as the neurotic Ondřej in his comedy *Loners*, a role that brought Trojan his first nomination for a Czech Lion Award. Since then, he has regularly appeared in movies and on lists of nominations for the annual ČFTA film awards.



*Photo credit: Film Servis Festival Karlovy Vary*

He is a seven-time recipient of a Czech Lion – for the films *Seducer* (2002, dir. Andrea Sedláčková), *The Brats* (2002, dir. Zdeněk Tyc), *One Hand Can't Clap* (2003, dir. David Ondříček), *Václav* (2007, dir. Jiří Vejdělek), *In the Shadow* (2012, dir. David Ondříček), *Nowhere in Moravia* (2014, dir. Miroslav Krobot), and *Charlatan* (2021, dir. Agnieszka Holland) – and has received an additional four nominations. Besides *Loners*, which was based on a screenplay by Petr Zelenka, these were for his roles in two of Zelenka's directing efforts, *Wrong Side Up* (2005) and *The Karamazovs* (2008), and one for the television miniseries *Burning Bush* (2012, dir. Agnieszka Holland), which also earned him a Golden Nymph Award at the 53rd international television festival in Monte Carlo. He has also





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appeared in several films directed by his brother, the director and producer Ondřej Trojan: *Želary* (2003) and *The Banger* (2020). *Želary* was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

Trojan gained greater popularity thanks to his television roles, in particular his appearances in the series *Cops and Robbers* and in several detective shows by director Jiří Strach: *Satan's Stratagem* (2009), *Lost Gate* (2012), and *The Associate Professor* (2023). Along with his acting colleague Jiří Dvořák, Trojan has made regular appearances in Strach's film and television work, including the wartime drama *Operation Silver A* (2007), the fairy tale *Lucky Loser* (2012), and the tragicomedy *Wisdom Teeth* (2014). Trojan's most popular films are *Angel of the Lord* (2005) and its sequel, *Angel of the Lord 2* (2016), the latter of which sold more than a million tickets at cinemas.

Ivan Trojan has long lent his acting talents to radio plays and dubbing as well, and he has also tried his hand at directing at his "home" theater, the Dejvice Theatre. He is a patron of the non-profit Club of People with Cystic Fibrosis, whose activities were highlighted at last year's Karlovy Vary International Film Festival and for which Trojan attends numerous charitable sporting events.



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## **JAKUB VORÁČEK FOUNDATION BECOMES THE OFFICIAL NONPROFIT PARTNER OF THE 58TH KARLOVY VARY IFF**

Each year, as a part of its accompanying program, the Karlovy Vary IFF provides a platform to a selected non-profit organization, allowing it to showcase its activities to the general public.

The official nonprofit partner of the 58th Karlovy Vary IFF is the Jakub Voráček Foundation, whose main objective is to help patients with multiple sclerosis (MS).

Founded in June 2015 by Jakub Voracek, one of the most famous Czech hockey players, and his sister Petra Klausová, the Jakub Voráček Foundation aims to improve the quality of life for patients with multiple sclerosis. Petra lives with the diagnosis, runs the foundation and has seen first-hand the challenges that patients with the disease face in the Czech Republic.



During his long-standing career in the NHL, Jakub Voracek financially supported the foundation's activities based on the success of his Canadian scoring in each season of the world's most famous hockey competition. Following the end of his active playing career, this form of financial support was taken over by the most successful Czech hockey player of the present, David Pastrňák.

*Photo Credit: Jakub Voráček Foundation*

At the events during the 58th Karlovy Vary IFF, the public will have the opportunity to learn about the activities of the Jakub Voracek Foundation and the possibilities of its support.