

PRESS RELEASE

24TH JI.HLAVA IDFF WILL BE LAUNCHED ON TUESDAY BY *A NEW SHIFT*

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24th Ji.hlava IDFF kicks-off in five days – this year happening online! The programme will offer over 270 films, Q&As, Inspiration Forum discussions and a programme for children. **The festival will open with *A New Shift* by Jindřich Andrš**, features tributes to **Roberto Minervini** and **Karel Vachek** and the audience will be treated to a preview of a documentary about **Milan Kundera**.

“Even though we are going online, we want to bring Ji.hlava’s unique atmosphere to our audience who will be able to join discussions with filmmakers as well as during the Inspiration Forum,” says festival director Marek Hovorka. **“To keep Ji.hlava rolling, we will be streaming live from our Lighthouse studio on the Jihlava’s main square.** From morning till night, we will bring information about the current events: interesting films and discussions, and the filmmakers themselves will be talking about their work,” continues Marek Hovorka. The live service will include both the discussion platform Inspiration Forum and the programme Ji.hlava for Kids. “The film world found itself in an unprecedented situation. Most of the festivals were cancelled or truncated while some fully adapted to the online environment. This is also case of the 24th edition of the Ji.hlava International Documentary Film Festival and it is clear that this will require many changes and a different approach from past editions. The current and future development will show how we all are able to join forces and keep the Czech film industry alive. And not only alive but also competitive in the upcoming years,” says Helena Bezděk Fraňková, director of the Czech Film Fund, the partner of the Lighthouse.

This year’s exceptional edition will open with a world premiere of a film by Jindřich Andrš called *A New Shift*. “The director follows up on his previous film *The Last Shift of Thomas Hisem*, screened at Ji.hlava two years ago,” says Hovorka. The time-lapse documentary *A New Shift* follows the main protagonist who has lost his job and retrain as a programmer. “The film was shot over the course of almost four years. We started shooting intensively in 2017, just before the closure of the Paskov coal mine. This was the initiation moment of our story: Thomas’s mine where he had worked his whole life closed down and he had to decide what to do next,” says the director about his film. “Thomas made an impression on me immediately at the programming course because he was very straightforward like a typical miner, and charismatic,” he adds. *A New Shift* will be released in cinemas after the festival.

Work in Progress is a section that showcases outstanding films in the stage of development, this year presenting *Milan Kundera – from Joy to Insignificance* directed by Miloslav Šmídmajer. “Most people say that it makes no sense to shoot a film about Milan Kundera without Milan Kundera. And that it is completely impossible to get close to him or his friends. The question arises: To give up or to try?” concludes the director.

The 24th Ji.hlava will celebrate the 80th birthday of the legendary Czech poet, philosopher and **documentary filmmaker Karel Vachek** by a special section named [Vachek 80](#).

The *Translucent Being retrospective* will also be unique, presenting French philanthropist and banker [Albert Kahn](#). At the age of thirty-three, he created the “Garden of the World” at the outskirts of Paris: a place where he wanted to grow all world’s plant species. Kahn was

an avid traveller and collector of herbs and trees of all kinds; only to extend his collection with pictures and film footage from across the globe. His films capture brothels in Beirut, lamas in Mongolia, WWI battle fields observed from an airship, as well as refugee camps in Thessaloniki and Sokol's national physical exercise festival in Prague. "Albert Kahn's goal was to 'once for all capture all aspects, processes and types of human activity that will inevitably cease to exist'. After his return from his missions, the documentarians were ordered to develop, inventory, categorize and archive the footage, creating one of the most comprehensive visual archives in the world," says programmer David Čeněk. The archive was gradually built over more than twenty years: from 1908 to 1931, when Kahn went bankrupt.

Masterclasses by Minervini and Sauper, Baydarov will be the main juror

The festival prepared a **rich Industry programme for film professionals**, which includes presentations, discussions, and masterclasses. **The masterclasses will be held by Austrian director Hubert Sauper** – the author of Sundance winner [Epicentro](#), which will be screened at Ji.hlava, and the **US-based Italian film director Roberto Minervini**. The festival will present a Tribute to Minervini, featuring three of his films including [What You Gonna Do When the World's on Fire?](#) awarded at Venice Film Festival. The industry accreditation for film professionals and students of film schools is free of charge.

The Ji.hlava IDFF traditionally has **one sole juror for the main [Opus Bonum section](#)**. This year it will be a comet on the documentary film skies, **Azerbaijani director Hilal Baydarov**. "Just two years ago, we picked Baydarov's debut film for our Docu Talents from the East pitching, and since then his films have been at major world festival and his most recent work shone in the main competition at Venice", comments Marek Hovorka. Members of other juries include German director and Ji.hlava's 2019 Opus Bonum winner Lina Zacher, film producers Jasmina Sijerčić and Madeline Robert, Slovak philosopher Lukáš Likavčan and others.

The 24th Ji.hlava IDFF will take place on October 27 – November 8. The programme consists of more than 270 films (including 59 world and 26 international premieres), which were selected from over 2,900 submissions.

The entire programme will be available online, geo-blocked for the territory of the Czech Republic. The festival accreditation, which includes a 14-days access to all films can be obtained for a symbolic 350 CZK (equivalent of 13 EUR).

The viewers from outside of the Czech Republic will have a possibility to watch between October 27 and November 8 over 80 selected festival titles from the festival's competition sections via DAFilms.com, for a fee 2–4 EUR per stream.

More information is available at www.ji-hlava.com and at the festival's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). Contact (trailers, stills, photos, interviews): Ji.hlava IDFF Press service (pressservice@ji-hlava.cz)