

PRESS RELEASE: Prague, September 19

**22nd Ji.hlava IDFF: from works by Wim Wenders to a programme for kids**

**Czechoslovakia celebrates 100 years, Wim Wenders, Jean-Luc Godard, Lebanese cinema and Czechoslovakian orient. The 22nd Ji.hlava IDFF's programme is brimming with film titles, outstanding guests and additions for kids.**

*"The Ji.hlava IDFF will celebrate 100 years of Czechoslovakia with the film section Foreigner seeks apartment, mapping the stories of Czechoslovakians who were, in the twentieth century, for various reasons forced to look for a new home,"* says festival director Marek Hovorka. *"We have selected films that have not yet been made available to Czech audiences. Pictures from the life of immigrants to the USA, France, Germany, Austria and Switzerland."* Among our guests will be French political scientist and historian Jacques Rupnik. He will introduce his documentary project, *The Other Europe*, prepared for BBC.

**Wenders, Godard & Co.**

This year, the Special Event section will introduce two great figures of world cinema. The first will be Wim Wenders, renowned for his film *Wings of Desire*: the festival will showcase his latest film *Pope Francis: A Man of His Word* (2018). It is the first film in history, in the making of which the Pope himself participated. *"It's not a film made on commission. I was allowed to do what I wanted, and that's exactly what I did. I wanted to give him space,"* says the acclaimed director about the film made on the initiative of the Vatican.

The second main star of the festival will be the classic of French New Wave, 87-year-old director Jean-Luc Godard. The festival will introduce his latest film *The Image Book* (2018) which won him the first ever special Palm d'Or in Cannes – "for continually striving to define and redefine what cinema can be", said the jury in their verdict. The film will be shown in collaboration with the distribution company, Film Europe.

The section, Testimony on Politics will feature *The Waldheim Waltz* (2018) by Austrian director Ruth Beckerman. The film depicts the crisis that affected Austria in 1986 after it had been disclosed that one of the presidential candidates, Kurt Waldheim, had been attached to the Nazi regime. The film was named the best documentary title at this year's Berlinale.

Testimony on Knowledge will present the French film, *John McEnroe: In the Realm of Perfection* (2018). Made by Julien Faraut, who has for many years been the manager of the film archive at the French Sports Institute. The film provides insight into the life and achievements of American tennis player – the renowned "Superbrat" John McEnroe.

**Horáček and Lebanon**

Visitors can look forward to new Czech releases such as *Máme na víc (We Can Do Better)* by Robin Kvapil and Radim Procházka. It focuses on the election campaign of Czech presidential candidate Michal Horáček with whom Kvapil collaborated as an advisor. *"When you are a documentary filmmaker who works on a presidential campaign, you just have to make a film about it,"* says Robyn Kvapil.

This year's edition of Ji.hlava IDFF will also offer a showcase of contemporary Lebanese documentary cinema. Section entitled "Lebanon: Between ashes and roses", the films reflect on various topics: from civil war traumas vexing the country for 15 years to intimate human stories. *"The section includes mostly film essays influenced by the French culture,"* says Petr Kubica, the section's programmer, commenting on the common thread of the featured film titles. *"Lebanon has lately been producing a few of the most interesting additions to contemporary world cinema,"* adds Kubica. For

**Zuzana Kopáčová**

**+420 607 985 380 / zuzana@ji-hlava.cz**

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example, *Erased, Ascent of the Invisible* (2018) by director Ghassan Halwani brings a testimony on people who disappeared during the war. Film essay *Linceul* directed by Selim Mourad captures experiments with nakedness.

### **Orient and experiment**

Another section inspired by the 100th anniversary of Czechoslovakia, includes films depicting Ruthenia in the years 1919 to 1939 when it formed a part of Czechoslovakia. *“The area was considered the Czech “orient”. The films are made poetic, romanticised and full of adventure. Hills, mountains, endless forest, wooden churches, children playing, smiling beauties“*, says Jaroslav Kratochvíl, the section’s programme, enumerating their specifics.

The audience will have the chance to see *Song of Ruthenia* (1937) by Jiří Weiss and Plicka’s *Spring in Subcarpathian Ruthenia* (1929). *“The film contains scenes that are featured in Plicka’s most famous documentary, The Singing Earth, made four years later. For filmmakers, the journey to Ruthenia seemed as a trip back to the seventeenth century. The film also plays on the nationalist note and shows local development, for example the completion of the grammar school or the erection of a monument to Czechoslovak President Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk,”* adds Kratochvíl.

The topic of *Home* also weaves through the retrospective of film experiments – experimental cinema being another staple of the festival programme. *“We focus on works with a clear connection to reality. For many experimenters, the theme of home provides a powerful instrument: an object of representation as well as a probe into intimate and innermost topics,”* explains Andrea Slováková, the programmer of Ji.hlava’s experimental section.

For the fourth time in a row, Conference Fascinations will take place as part of the festival programme. *“Ji.hlava provides an opportunity for distributors and gallerists to get acquainted with older experimental and underground works from Eastern Europe, mainly from the communist past. This year’s edition will showcase films made in the Baltics,”* says Slováková. The Conference’s guests will include French art theorist Charlène Dinhut from Centre Pompidou in Paris and curator of the Centre of Contemporary Art in Tel Aviv, Nicola Trezzi.

### **Inspiration Forum: dive into the debate!**

This year’s festival edition will introduce a new and extended Inspiration Forum that annually offers space for discussion with outstanding figures from outside the film world. In the past, the Forum hosted figures such as American psychologist Philip Zimbardo and Chinese writer and Nobel prize winner Gao Xingjian. This time, the participants can look forward to full six days of meetings with around fifty prominent names.

*“Each day will be dedicated to one particular topic: faith and religion, the future of journalism, education and schools of tomorrow, crisis of the Left, Central European identity, artificial intelligence and new technologies. The programme will offer debates, panel discussions, interviews, but also the more intimate format called the Inner World. That will provide an insight into the inner realms of artists, writers and musicians,”* says the festival programmer Tereza Swadoschová. This year’s speakers include an Austrian writer and contributor to the Berlin-based *Die Tageszeitung*, Robert Misik, Mexican educational expert Emiliana Rodríguez Morales and Polish scientist Aleksandra Przegalinska, who explores the impact of artificial intelligence on humans.

### **Kids welcomed!**

This year, Ji.hlava IDFF has prepared a more varied programme for kids that will comprise film screenings, workshops and concerts for kids aged two to fourteen. *“School and preschool children can fly into space or dive in the ocean in the cupola of the planetarium where natural science documentaries will be shown. A playroom will be available every day throughout the day,”* says Šimon Bauer, the director of the Centre

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for Documentary Film, the event's co-organiser. The programme will offer workshops specific for different age groups. "Older kids will have the chance to make camera obscura out of a can or to try to perceive the world around only by listening. Rapper Bonus and Mary C from Radio Wave will help them create their own film soundtrack," adds Šimon Bauer. Will also bring daily theatre performances, and the day will end with screenings of bedtime stories. Parents can get free accreditations for their children in advance or on the spot during the festival.

### And music?

The Siren Test section dedicated to music films will present a portrait of producer and singer *M. I. A.*, or a visit to Japan after the Fukushima accident as part of the probe into the life of Oscar-winning composer Ryuichi Sakamoto. British award-winning experiment *Arcadia* combining UK's archival footage from the last 100 years and the music by Portishead and Goldfrapp will also be among the section's titles. Ji.hlava IDFF's music curator Pavel Klusák will facilitate a workshop focusing on archives of Czechoslovak propagandist pop music of 70s and 80s. The main guest of this year's music programme will be David Toop – a musician and a world-acclaimed British author of books on music. Toop will appear as one part of a duo with Lucie Štěpánková, a London-based producer and performer who is only emerging on the Czech music scene. This year, "Nothing or Very Little" is a section dedicated to the topic of quieting, reduction and conciseness in contemporary music and lifestyle. Festival visitors can become members of a two-day ensemble under the baton of the legend of Czech non-conforming song-writing Oldřich Janota. Soundwalk was tailor-made for Jihlava by composer Eliška Cílková, duo Vendula Guhová & Michal Kindernay will present the premiere of their performance in Jihlava's catacombs. Polish musician and curator Michal Libera brings his "film without image" *Léthé*; and you can also look forward to powerful and fresh projects – coincidentally generally produced by women – Leto s Monikou, Metastavy and Hellwana as well as the numerous formation, Zappa-inspired bigband, Divergent Connections Orchestra conducted by saxophonist Pavel Zlámal.

**22nd edition of Ji.hlava IDFF will take place from October 25 to 30; until October 1 early bird accreditations are available for CZK 600.**

For more information visit our new website: <http://www.ji-hlava.com/>.

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