

## INVITATION:



The Embassy of the Czech Republic and the Embassy of the Slovak Republic present the film series *The Golden 60s of Czechoslovak Cinema*, launching on February 21, 2013, at 7 pm, with the screening of *The Sun in a Net* (*Slnko v sieti*).

The series features four films from the New Wave, an artistic movement of the 1960s, hailed as the “golden era” in Czechoslovakia's cinematic history boasting some of the most attractive films produced in Europe. The films encompass a broad range of approaches, from highly stylized literary adaptations to semi-improvised comedies. The films frequently feature absurd, black humor, and the concerns of ordinary people when faced by political change.

*Opening remarks will be presented by Czech and Slovak Ambassadors or Deputy Chiefs of Missions.*

### **Screenings and Locations**

February 21, 7 pm: *The Sun in a Net* | *Slnko v sieti* (SLOVAK EMBASSY)

February 28, 7 pm: *The Shop on Main Street* | *Obchod na korze* (CZECH EMBASSY)

March 21, 7 pm: *Celebration in the Botanical Garden* | *Slávnosť v botanickej záhrade* (SLOVAK EMBASSY)

March 28, 7 pm: *The Cremator* | *Spalovač mrtvol* (CZECH EMBASSY)

### **RSVPs**

RSVP for films at the Czech Embassy: [czech\\_events@yahoo.com](mailto:czech_events@yahoo.com)

RSVP for films at the Slovak Embassy: [rsvp.washington@mzv.sk](mailto:rsvp.washington@mzv.sk)

### **ADDRESSES**

Embassy of the Czech Republic  
3900 Spring of Freedom Street, NW, Washington, DC 20008

Embassy of the Slovak Republic  
3523 International Court, NW, Washington, DC 20008

*Light refreshments will be served following the screenings.*

# THE GOLDEN 60s

## of Czechoslovak Cinema

February 21, 7 pm

***The Sun in a Net | Slnko v sieti***

Directed by Štefan Uher

1962, 90 min., black and white, Slovak with English subtitles



More than any other film of the early 1960s, Štefan Uher's *The Sun in a Net* opened the doors for the liberated films of the New Wave that extended from 1963 to 1969. Its story centers on a young teenager, nicknamed Fajolo (Marián Bielik), and his love for the fair haired Bela (Jana Beláková). When their relationship undergoes a temporary crisis, he joins a summer work brigade on a collective farm. Against this story of young love, viewers are introduced to the world of their parents. Fajolo's mother is always absent (at work) while Bela's mother is blind and an apparent burden on her husband. While Uher's portrait of everyday life confronted a number of previously forbidden and "negative" themes, his main innovations are formal. The film is dominated by the role of the sun, and a solar eclipse forms one of its essential elements. Fajolo is also an obsessive photographer and, like the film's makers, focuses on the revealing image. The director's mosaic of impressionist effects, the cross-cutting of parallel themes, and use of ambiguous symbolism creates a film poetry that was unique for its time – in which word, image, and music contribute to the film's portrait of individual subjective worlds.

*Opening remarks will be presented by Slovak Ambassador Peter Kmec.*

Location: Embassy of the Slovak Republic  
3523 International Court, NW, Washington, DC 20008

RSVP: [rsvp.washington@mzv.sk](mailto:rsvp.washington@mzv.sk) | Please put "The Sun" in the subject line.

February 28, 7 pm

***The Shop on Main Street | Obchod na korze***

Directed by Ján Kadár and Elmar Klos

1965, 125 min., black and white, Slovak and Yiddish with English subtitles



During World War II, mild-mannered carpenter Tono Brtko (Jozef Króner) is torn between greed and guilt when the Nazi-backed bosses of his town appoint him "Aryan controller" of an old Jewish widow's sewing shop. To appease his money-hungry wife, he takes on the responsibility of running the shop. Meanwhile, the old Jewish woman (Ida Kaminska) is oblivious to the outside world and does not understand that Tono is now the new owner. Offering no financial gain, Tono debates giving up the shop. The Jewish community, knowing that the woman could be sent to be exterminated if he leaves, offers Tono a weekly payment as an incentive to keep the store. Tono

agrees to stay and even develops a friendship with the old woman. When the authorities start rounding up the town's entire Jewish community for transport, Tono must decide whether to save her or turn her in to the authorities. The film won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film (1966) and received the Special Mention Award at Cannes Film Festival for the acting performances of Jozef Kroner and Ida Kaminska (1965).

*Opening remarks will be presented by Czech Deputy Chief of Mission Jaroslav Zajíček.*

Embassy of the Czech Republic  
3900 Spring of Freedom Street, NW, Washington, DC 20008

RSVP: [czech\\_events@yahoo.com](mailto:czech_events@yahoo.com) | Please put "Shop" in the subject line.

**March 21, 7 pm**

***Celebration in the Botanical Garden | Slávnosť v botanickej záhrade***

Directed by Elo Havetta

1969, 83 min., color, Slovak with English subtitles



Mária (Hana Slivková), the innkeeper in the town of Babindol in the Little Carpathians, has eight daughters by the same father, Pišta, who lives in a hermit's hut outside the vineyards. Their lives are disturbed by the arrival of Pierre (Slavoj Urban), a wanderer from France, who brings new life to the village. Pierre (a counterpart of Pierrot from the Commedia dell'Arte) becomes a rival of the botanist Gašpar (whose counterpart is Casper, the jester from puppet theatre). Pierre achieves a miracle during the celebration of the vintage when local legends about a spring of red wine come to fruition. The film's episodic structure and liberated style express a freewheeling sense of creativity, joy, and freedom. Director Havetta admits to the influence of

René Clair's *An Italian Straw Hat (Un chapeau de paille d'Italie)* and of French cinema of the "golden era," and the film opens with an extract from the Lumière brothers. Like *Jakubisko*, Havetta draws on folk traditions but there are also visual links to le Douanier Rousseau, Monet, and Renoir. With its elephant, tightrope walkers, and ambling musicians, the whole film evokes the spirit of carnival.

*Opening remarks will be presented by Slovak Deputy Chief of Mission Peter Zeleňák.*

Location: Embassy of the Slovak Republic  
3523 International Court, NW, Washington, DC 20008

RSVP: [rsvp.washington@mzv.sk](mailto:rsvp.washington@mzv.sk) | Please put "Celebration" in the subject line.

**March 28, 7 pm**

***The Cremator | Spalovač mrtvol***

Directed by Juraj Herz

1969, 95 min., black and white, Czech with English subtitles



*The Cremator* is a stunning example of the New Wave movement of Czechoslovak cinema, gliding effortlessly between surrealism and expressionism. The horror film, filled with black comedy, centers on Karel Kopřivka (Rudolf Hrušínský), who lives in Nazi occupied Czechoslovakia and works at a crematorium in Prague during the 1930s. Obsessed with his duties, he believes that he is not just cremating the bodies, but liberating the souls of the departed. With Nazi forces gathering at the Czechoslovak border, Karel descends into a mania that allows him to carry out his disturbed beliefs. No one is safe from his quest for salvation, not even his own family. The film is

based on a novel by Ladislav Fuks. After its premiere in 1969, the film was banned and not released until the collapse of the communist regime in 1989. The film was selected as the Czechoslovak entry for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 42nd Academy Awards, but did not make the shortlist. It won the Best Film award at the Sitges Film Festival (1972), and also received awards for Best Actor (Rudolf Hrušínský) and Best Cinematography (Stanislav Milota). The film is considered to be one of the best movies ever made in the former Czechoslovakia.

*Opening remarks will be presented by Czech Ambassador Petr Gandalovič.*

Location: Embassy of the Czech Republic  
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