

>SLOVAK FILMS<

>2005–2007<

In 2006, Slovak audiovisual culture experienced a historical paradox. For the first time in sixty years, not a single feature film, produced with Slovak majority, was premiered in the movie theatres. On the other hand, in 2006, the greatest amount of public funds was allocated to support the development and production of films as well as other activities in the field of audiovision; the sum of almost SKK 175 million [EUR cca 5.3 mil.] was distributed within the grant system of the Ministry of Culture [program "AudioVision"] repre-

senting an annual increase of about 84 %. The Slovak public service channel STV also joined the game by developing several dozens of documentaries, one feature TV movie, and by co-producing five feature film projects. Production of the most expensive project in the history of not only Slovak, but also Central European cinema has begun in full force [**BATHORY** by director Juraj Jakubisko]. A number of exceptional works by students of the Film and Television Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts [VŠMU] in Bratislava has been presented in Slovakia as well as abroad. Last year saw the birth of several interesting documentaries [**INÉ SVETY – OTHER WORLDS, MY ZDES – HERE WE ARE**], which were, for a short while, also screened in movie theatres at home and abroad. For the first time, the Slovak Film and Television Academy, awarded its annual National Film Awards. The essential renewal of audiovisual heritage has been successfully continued by the Slovak Film Institute, and the collection of ten Slovak films from the 80's issued on DVD has recorded major market success. Last but not least, the new government with Minister of Culture Marek Maďarič has clearly declared a strong support for Slovak film culture and industry and the establishment of an audiovisual fund as one of his priorities in the field of culture. Thus, it appears that after more than 15 years of looking for creative orientation and systemic solutions, Slovak cinema might, finally, experience better times. From the viewpoint of creativity, producers or entrepreneurs and also international cooperation [MEDIA, Eurimages, bilateral coproductions] there is sufficient potential. Still missing, however, is the necessary infrastructure for film production, in particular high-tech

camera equipment, film laboratories, modern studio technologies and also technologies necessary for film digitalization. Even though the Slovak audiovisual market [integrated with a tax system in Slovakia] is ready for such investments, on its own, i. e. without the participation of strategic investors and without the support or assistance from the state, it would not be able to make appropriate use of them at the necessary level. In addition to solid financial resources for film culture and cooperation with television broadcasters in the local audiovisual production, this is one of the reasons why we need further systemic solutions in order to guarantee continuous long-term development. Considering tradition as well as current potential, the Slovak film industry certainly deserves such opportunities.

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