

Main Info about the Film

Directed by	Jan Hřebejk
Story by	Petr Jarchovský and Jan Hřebejk
Screenplay by	Petr Jarchovský
Cinematography by	Jan Malíř
Set decoration by	Milan Býček
Costume design by	Katarína Bieliková
Film editing by	Vladimír Barák
Sound by	Michal Holubec
Music by	original - Aleš Březina, non-original: Radůza and Glen Hansard
Executive producer	Ondřej Trojan
Production managers	Michaela Kuchynková, Marcela Dvořáková, Daria Špačková
Produced by	Total HelpArt T.H.A.
In cooperation with	Česká televize and HBO ČR
Producer	Ondřej Trojan – Total HelpArt T.H.A.
Co-producers	Jaroslav Kučera - Česká televize
Cast	Aňa Geislerová (Marcela Čmolíková), Jana Brejchová (Zdena Hrstková), Emília Vášáryová (Líba Čmolíková), Josef Abrhám (Evžen Beneš), Roman Luknár (Jarda Čmolík), Jiří Schmitzer (Richard Hrstka), Jan Hrušínský (Havlík), Jiří Macháček (Patočka), Andrei Toader (Mirek), Nikolay Penev (Pičus), Jaromíra Mílová (Havlíková), Adam Mišík (Kuba Čmolík), Michaela Mrvíková (Lucina Čmolíková) and Radůza (singer)
The film was created with a contribution of	Czech State Fond for the Support and Development of Czech Cinematography
General partner	Annonce
Partners	Student Agency, Jameson
Filming timeline	2005 in the Czech Republic and in Italy
Runtime	110 minutes
Format	Widescreen (Cinemascope 1:2.35)
Number of copies	36
Sound	Dolby digital
In theatres from	September 7, 2006
Monopole	Falcon
Certification	15
Genre	Comedy/Drama

About the Movie

The Robert Graves poem by the same name inspired Jan Hřebejk and Petr Jarchovský to tell the romantic story of a young woman (Aňa Geislerová) dealing with dilemma of loving two men at once (Roman Luknár and Josef Abrhám); a dilemma between sexual dependence and assuring a future for herself and her children (Adam Mišík and Michaela Mrvíková); a dilemma in her relationship to her mother (Jana Brejchová) and step-father (Jiří Schmitzer) and with her mother-in-law (Emília Vášáryová). Beauty in Trouble is full of unexpected and twists, humor, a paradoxical ending and amazing performances by the actors.



Marcela (Aňa Geislerová) is an attractive wife and mother of two children in her thirties. Her husband Jarda (Roman Luknár) has a car shop, where he transforms stolen cars to sumptuous vehicles (☛ **Fiddles**).

The family is in a financial and personal crisis after the floods. Only the sexual dependency of the couple keeps them together (☛ **About sex**) and the obstinate endeavor of Marcela's somehow alienated mother-in-law (Emília Vášáryová) (☛ **3**).

One day Marcela loses her patience and she leaves with the children to her mother's (Jana Brejchová). But there they are subjected to the mental terror of the step-father Richard (Jiří Schmitzer) (☛ **On visit!**).

When Marcela is on the lowest, she meets a much older man (Josef Abrhám), who the Jarda's gang stole a car from (☛ **At the station**). Evžen is rich and what's more: noble and cultivated (☛ **Ferrari**). He lives in Tuscany and he owns a restituted villa in the Czech Republic. The Beauty, tested by destiny, sees the possibility of a better life with him (☛ **A better life**). Will Marcela withstand the family dependence and the sexual addiction bounding her to her „rehabilitated” husband?

The tragicomedy, in which you can see our greatest stars, is accompanied by the music of Radůza (☛ **Beauty in Trouble**), Glen Hansard (☛ **Morning**) and Aleš Březina (☛ **A path towards a good soul**).

Beauty in Trouble was **selected to participate in the main competition at the 41st annual Karlovy Vary International Film Festival** where the film will have its world premiere on July 2, 2006!!!

Interview with the director Jan Hřebejk



In your movies you always participate also to the screenplay. What was the inspiration for you with Petr Jarchovský this time?

I've always wanted to do a movie, which would have the same story as Robert Graves' poem Beauty in Trouble. The story of a girl in a hard situation of life ended up being the foundation of the screenplay, though the main impulse was the personalities of the other parts, which we wanted to bring into life (the mother-in-law, the mother, the stepfather etc.).

You cast Aňa Geislerová in the leading role. Why?

I wanted to work with Aňa, because the character of the Beauty is the leading part, but it was for us the vaguest. I've known Aňa for a long time, I know she is a very intelligent woman, and I believed that together with her we would be able to put this part into shape.

What were the benefits of her being already a mother at that time, apart from the fact that she looks very sexy in the movie? Do you think that motherhood also changed her mentally?

I am sure it changed her, motherhood cannot not influence. And it certainly was a benefit for the movie. In the movie she actually plays a mother for the first time, after she became a real mother.

I have a feeling that you are slowly abandoning the retro-comedy genre and turning to the present. But you don't regard it with as much humor anymore. Is it because when you write about the present, you don't have the necessary over-view, which means those movies are more dramas from the real world?

I think that if you saw for example Cosy Dens in 1971, you wouldn't laugh that much. This serene view appears not only through our author's position, but also because we look at it from the distance. And when you look at something with nostalgia, you of course have more reasons to laugh.

Humor can result from many things – from a situation, cranks, but also from a certain truth. For example in the movie Loves of a Blonde, the humor is quite sad. The probably funniest scene, which everyone recollects, is the bed scene, where Pucholt is with his parents. The whole audience is dead laughing to it, and then you see the Blonde who is following it all through the key hole and is weeping. This is the extent of humor.

Beauty in Trouble is full of humor, which results from the fact that we know it. That bitter bite is given by the fact that we are seeking the truth. But on the other hand it has certain purification in itself, a sort of catharsis.



Do you think that to be able to film about the present you need to mature?

We never said: now we are going to write about the past and now we'll do the present. This process was always natural. The things we always talked about matured in such a form that we were full of it, and we felt that we could write it now. I don't know if it has any relation with our maturity, but maybe it is because we started talking more about the present, respectively about the characters. Personally I don't make any difference between retro and present movies in our work. I think this difference is bigger in the audience's perception. But for us the process is the same. We just talk about some characters, and when we feel that we have a story for them, we get to work. The time coulisse isn't that important.

In each movie you draw the attention of the audience to an interesting musician. In Beauty in Trouble it is Radůza.



I put Radůza among the greatest Czech chansoniers, starting with Hana Hegerová, through Zuzana Navarová and Zuzana Mnichová. I am a big fan of hers and I wished her songs to be in Beauty in Trouble. But the design I first had didn't work out. I wanted her songs to be a counterpoint to the leading part. But it didn't work out because the viewer's impression on the trial projections was that I was trying to give the Beauty some intelligence by having Radůza play. That the songs and texts speak for her, and not in a contrast. And we figured that out later. So we didn't use her songs as much as we wanted, as a commentary...

This role was taken by the music of Glen Hansard, which I also respect very much. He is an Irish chansonier, the leader of one of the best Irish bands The Frames, which plays in the Czech Republic about twice a year now. Glen has a girlfriend in the Czech Republic, so he comes here quite often. When we got to know each other, I wished his music to be in our movie. In the end, the last album he recorded with Markéta Irglová was made in the Czech Republic. We actually used 3 whole new songs from this album and one older in our movie. They work as that commentary. With a man's voice and the English language, the feeling that he is talking for the female protagonist doesn't appear.

Apart from Radůza and Glen Hansard, the movie has also its own music, whose author is again Aleš Březina, as it was in Divided we Fall or in Up and Down. I would say that this time the music was a real contrast to Up and Down, in which thanks to Ondřej Trojan producer's generosity and the theme, we used music from the Balkans, from the local scene, rock and other. Here Aleš had only 4 musicians and he wrote a beautiful simple music.



In which most substandard and in which most agreeable place did you ever film? I am of course aiming to jail and Tuscany.

I could explain a basic paradox about this. When we were shooting in the jail on Pankrác, outside it was about 40°C and inside it was cool. The environment is

depressing, but that's where I understood why there are so many prison movies. The whole area is very photogenic. We could aim our camera to any spot, it always worked. I enjoyed shooting in jail. We were in a cool place and everything worked out. While the little idyll we filmed in Tuscany, it was a real horror. There we really got to what Fellini says, that to direct a movie means to command Christopher Columbus' company which wants to go home.



The shooting took place in such a way, that in the morning we would start at 8am, at 10am the sky would becloud and would stay so the whole day long. The first day we weren't nervous yet, because we were shooting interior scenes and we used lamps. But the next days, it was a kind of mental agony! We would wait for an hour if per chance the sun wouldn't appear behind a cloud. We would do one shot every three hours. And this is the situation when you are in movie's paradise and you can't film and you just wait. So the worst filming was in Tuscany and the best in jail.

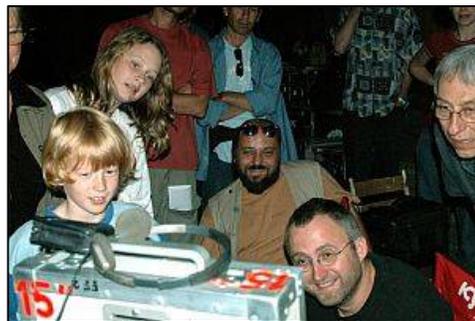
In jail you used extras or actual prisoners?

They were extras. But they were real credible. Even Roman Luknár, who didn't know that, thought the man with whom he played a scene in a cell was a real prisoner, and he started asking him what he is doing there, how he spends his weekends etc. Only the wardens are authentic.

For the first time in your movies there is an erotic scene seriously meant. How was it shooting it?

It's the same as with Tuscany. Shooting an erotic scene isn't something me or the actors crave for. But in this movie it is well-founded. I have to thank both actors, Aña and Roman that it ended up as it did.

With sex it is such, that it is a subjective experience. The majority of existing movies have copulation as a theme. All the visitors of internet servers and owners of satellite erotic programs know that there are thousands and thousands of filmed sex scenes, and you could hardly make up something new. But you can't film it as a porno movie. First of all the actors wouldn't do it, and secondly that's not the aim. The purpose of this scene isn't for it to be an erotic instrument, but for people to clear out an important aspect the couple's life together. For example that their marriage doesn't work anymore in anything except for that. Just as plenty of marriages work in everything, except for that, so this is the case, when everything has degenerated, where even respect for each other has gone, but there is some kind of animal attraction. And this is very important for the good understanding of the whole story and for its experience, so we couldn't avoid shooting such a scene.



Back to the casting. The fact that Ms. Vášáryová flourishes under your direction, we already know. But how was it to direct the other stars of the Czech film and theater sky?



With Josef Abrhám I already made my first feature movie. So I already knew him, I always admired him and nothing has changed about it. So it was a sort of meeting after years. I must say I like very much the character played by Mr. Abrhám. It is a charismatic, amiable person, but also very firm inside. Josef Abrhám plays a character who, through his personality and energy, isn't that far from who he actually

is. By that I am not saying it was easy. It usually is even more difficult for the actors.

For the first time I didn't work with Jiří Schmitzer. I met him in FAMU, where I shot my second after-school movie according to Zelenka's screenplay L.P. 1948. In it the marital pair was played by Jiří Schmitzer and Hana Brejchová.

I worked for the first time with Jana Brejchová, and I must say it was great. Also because she is not reduced and absorbed in all those errands, series, dubbings. It was also a good encounter because the part she plays belongs to the best written ones.

I would also mention Roman Luknár. I am glad that after The Garden he is coming back to Czechoslovak cinematography. I would like to continue working with him, because he is an absolutely incredible personality. Also the fact that he's been living in Spain for more than fifteen years is visible on his good shape.

We were also successful with the casting of children, which have a big role in the movie.

Beauty in Trouble will be in the competition for feature movies on the Karlovy Vary festival. Why did you apply the movie to Karlovy Vary?

There were two reasons. First, we like the festival, and what's more I think the premiere in the large room of the hotel Thermal would fit to the Beauty. But also because we will finish the movie in the second half of June, so it is the first opportunity of presenting it. So we were happy it was chosen in the competition.

Since I already was a member of the main jury of the Karlovy Vary festival, I don't have such an immoderate respect for any jury's award. It would be nice, if there was an award, but to tell the truth it wasn't a reason. We would rather apply to an American festival, because there, understandable plots are taken with bigger thanks than on any other European festival.

Interview with the screenwriter Petr Jarchovský

Was Robert Graves' poem Beauty in Trouble the prime inspiration to write the screenplay?

At the beginning of writing a screenplay there is always a certain person, which I know from the neighborhood or from stories. In this case it was a young woman who lives in an unhappy marriage and must decide if she will stay with her

husband or if she will leave him. She chooses to leave into another environment, which is for her an escape from pillar to post. She really gets into trouble.

When we talked about it with Honza, he said: „Well, that is a kind of Beauty in trouble.“ At that moment we remembered Graves’ poem in Šrut’s translation. In the 80’s Petr Skoumal set it to music, and we took a liking in the version sung by Luboš Pospíšil. We declaimed it and realized that we could really follow its track, that the poem lyrically expresses what we would like to show dramatically.



How essentially did Aňa Geislerová influence the figure of the Beauty? She certainly completed her with her charisma, her unique style, with which she does a gesture, a gaze. Did you write it directly for her?

We didn’t write it directly for her, but she was very soon cast in our conception. At one point we realized it could be her. This is quite unusual in our movies; we normally do the casting ex post. Aňa was cast a little earlier. She even stepped in during the finishing of the screenplay in the completion of two versions of the story, as spontaneously and matter-of-factly as she herself is. And I must say she helped me a lot. Those are exactly the important things, when an intelligent actor says: „I wouldn’t do that...“ Or: „Why does that guy behave like this?“ These are the last adjustments I need, so that certain scenes appear credibly.



I will ask you about the love scene. How did you describe it in the screenplay and how did you like it interpreted?

We first need to state more precisely the term love scene. A love scene is for example when in *Cosy Dens* a young boy looks at a girl. This is an erotic scene, sexual. You can’t describe it without becoming a kitscher or a pornographer. In the screenplay I wrote

it in one sentence: they make love passionately. Then it depends on the intelligence and the view of those who have to interpret it in front of the camera. And let me tell you, it really is no fun. There I am awaiting that the great actors will help me.

Professor Vávra, who used to teach us at FAMU, told us that a truly good erotic scene is very hard to do, because it is about a subjective experience of the characters, and not about an objective voyeur thing.

With Honza Hřebejk we never did such scenes, because we never needed them. We were rather annoyed that in movies, even good directors often add eroticism, sex or nakedness because of a special „obligation“ towards the audience. As long as we didn’t need them for our characters, we didn’t use them. So when we use such a scene in our movie, it is only to make the story clear.



To have one part of the story taking place in Italy is also untraditional for a Czech movie. Why Tuscany? Is this region somehow special for you?



We like Tuscany, we travel there a lot. We know this region not only as tourists, but a little more, we stayed there some time, with the local people, we got to know their mentality. And what's more it's a beautiful country. When you need to show in a movie that a person is having a hard time going back home, you can't show Karl-Marx-Stadt.

What role did Radůza have in the context of the whole story? The director said that in the end, she had a different role than she was planned to have originally.

Everything keeps evolving of course. When the whole material is ready, the words of the screenplay are translated into the language of images, the original ghost characters become specific actors, who shift it all further, and suddenly you realize the movie maybe got a new tempo. Then you have to change the original idea, that there will be a specific song somewhere, otherwise it would slow the movie. Suddenly you realize that to place that song in one moment of the movie is stronger than if we had used it four times during the movie in shorter fragments. And this is how the role of Radůza changed. In the movie she plays herself. She plays a chansonier who sings in a music club. Originally we thought she would be less present in the movie, but more often. In the end she has two scenes there, but on the other hand both have a larger extent.

Would you like to say something about a character?

I have to mention the part played by Josef Abrhám. Originally it was supposed to be a thirty-five year old boy. But it somehow didn't fit. I wanted to make up a character for him, but something wasn't correct with him. We left for Italy to have a break from it, and there a miracle happened. The character came to us. Suddenly there was a man there, who presented us his nice young wife and invited us to his house. There we realized he is the part we need in our story. With the only difference that he is thirty years older than ours. So we thought what if we copied reality and made our character thirty years older? I was scared I would have to rewrite the whole screenplay. But in the end I only rewrote three sentences, because our character talked from the beginning as that sixty year old guy. He was conjured from the beginning, and we couldn't bring him to light, so he had to come and say: „It's me!“



How does your cooperation with Honza Hřebejk look like? He interferes in the screenplay. When the screenplay is ready and the shooting starts, do you still have the right to interfere, or do you only stand by?

It was always like that, that I could work with the material until the very end. Of course at one point the director takes on a big responsibility and becomes the

captain in command. It would be counterproductive if the screen player was running around the set telling the actors different directions underhand. It would be a quick end. I have the privilege to be able to be present at the filming. When the director doubts something, he consults it with me, we talk about it. No one has the impression to have degraded the other's work. Nobody will ever hear me say – I meant it differently, but the director did it this way. The complicity is lasting from the beginning to the end. We even carry the blame together for any particular mistakes. On the opposite the gratification can be the shared satisfaction.



All the movies you made and were retro were made with humor and simplicity. The present in your movies is rather bitter than comical. Is it because you don't have an overview or because you perceive it that way?

When you have a theme you remember, or it is a souvenir given by your parents or older friends, the distance enables nostalgia to come in. The look on the present brings a different approach. There are other emotions, for ex. the topicality or the immediate commentary, you can give way to hate, irony, take an attitude. But I would be glad if even the bitterness didn't exclude humor.

How will your future creations go on? First they were retro comedies, now they are movies about the present. Are you willing to write any sci-fi?

Definitely not. You can't even plan like this. We didn't even decide we would first do movies about the past, and then the present. It just met us on the way. The cooperation with Petr Šabach presented us to each other, he was older, he already had studied and written some, and we were just beginning. And that's how it gradually evolves. I would also be glad to know where it is taking us.

I actually have already a certain lead. While we are finishing Beauty in Trouble, I have already written another screenplay. The working title is Medovník (Honey cake).

Interview with the producer Ondřej Trojan

Beauty in Trouble is already the fifth movie you have produced for Jan Hřebejk and Petr Jarchovský. When this pair comes to you with a new movie, do you automatically produce it? Or are you interested in what the movie is about and do you try to somehow influence it from the producer's point of view?



It's definitely not that I would have to decide if I want to do it or not. I just accept it almost automatically. I also put my potential into the screenplay. The Beauty in Trouble screenplay has changed a lot from its first version to the final one. The movie even changed in the cutting room, some scenes were shortened and moved, which benefited the movie a lot.

Jan Hřebejk with Petr Jarchovský were inspired by Graves' poem. Did you somehow interfere in the screenplay, so that the movie wouldn't be too poetic?



I don't mind poetics. The pattern is nice, but it's still only a frame, which they have filled with a contemporary story. It is by the way very emotive. I would say that Honza Hřebejk had never made such an emotive movie. He got very low under the skin of the characters, which is very appealing in the Beauty. And the audience will certainly appreciate it. We already presented the

movie at a private screening in the United States, and we saw how stricken people were by those emotions.

You had trial screenings for a chosen audience; people abroad saw your movie. Did the movie change according to the viewers' reaction?

The first version was cut with the knowledge, that we would change things in it. We screened it once with a few chosen viewers, so as to confirm together what we wanted to take away of the movie or dynamize, shorten. This is how it went in about five waves.

Did the characters themselves or their behavior change? Or was it only a change in the rhythm of the movie?

The characters couldn't be changed anymore. But when you write the screenplay, you never know how much the actors will be able to put in each scene so that the viewer won't have to still reassure for example that the relations are set a certain way, here the actors fulfilled it fantastically. This is why in the cutting room some scenes appeared to be unnecessary, because they just amplified or repeated something that was clear. But you can never in advance guess which scene will be stronger, which one will come off the best. So a certain level of wastage is natural.

How would you comment the erotic scene, which appears in the movie? Were their big discussions around it?

On the contrary, the shooting took place quite naturally and easily. The actors knew that this scene, or more precisely these two scenes, is necessary to the movie, that it isn't only an art bit to draw viewers to the theater.



What would you say about the meeting of two stars of the Czech cinema scene Aňa Geislerová and Jana Brejchová?

Such a generational casting of two strong personalities can be tricky, as known in the saying about the two roosters on the dump. But actually there were no problems. Both of them complemented each other very well, which the viewers will be able to see by themselves soon. There is definitely no doubt that they are playing mother and daughter. Jana Brejchová after a longer time could show in this character role what an exceptional actress she is. And this is precious in Honza's movies, that he knows how to get some things from the actors, which

themselves might not even think they have. This is why I gladly take off my sombrero for Aňa and Jana for their brilliant performance in the Beauty.

You work a lot with Aňa Geislerová, you cast her already in her first movie, and she also played in Zelary. How does she evolve?

Pretentiously I would say that Zelary were for Aňa decisive in her acting. She could leave the saucy romps and a certain classification, which was beginning to take over on her. She played a fate, dramatic role, which she developed in the Beauty in another direction, it being a contemporary story. Here she could be even more herself in her role and improvise more with the text. I believe it is another step in her acting carrier. Aňa is undoubtedly a talent, who would also succeed abroad without a problem.



In the Czech Republic you are considered as the most successful film producer. You bring a new movie to the theaters every year, you collect awards abroad as well as here. From this point of view is it easier to get money for a next movie, for instance just because Hřebejk – Jarchofský – Trojan is a brand?

Thanks to the experience it is faster, but not easier. Financial sources keep drying out, so movie after movie it is rather harder to finance it. Even with such names, when you can predict the movie will make twenty million on proceeds. But a movie costs

thirty five million, so I need to find somewhere those fifteen non-capital millions ...

In the end you decided you would participate in July to the main competition at the IFF in Karlovy Vary. It is not the first time you are in the international „A” competition. What do you expect from it?

I think this movie could score well at festivals. I believe that alike Divided we Fall, the Beauty could succeed not only here but also abroad.

How would you characterize the movie?

It is an entertaining movie, sometimes tragic. Typically for the creations of Honza Hřebejk and Petr Jarchofský, there is a mix of emotions, an overflow of sympathy to each character and this balancing between the comic and the tragic. A strong story, a surprising plot and excellent actors give the Beauty a gradation. There is beautiful music and on the film-making side, the movie is visually expressive, wide screened.

Interviews with the actors

Aňa Geislerová (Marcela Čmolíková)

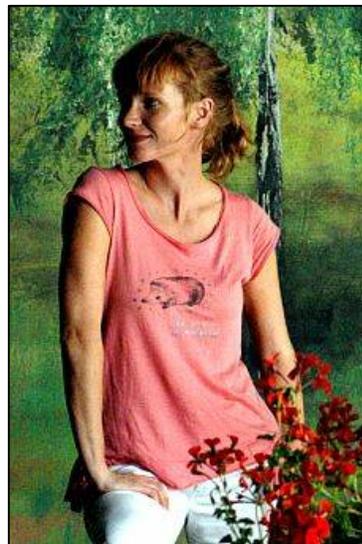
What are your impressions of the movie?

I always try to put off this evaluation as much as possible, because my first impressions are unfortunately selfishly-egoistically hateful, when I am unable to get over self-criticism. I always need a day or two, a year, before I forgive myself. Otherwise I liked the movie very much, it was poignant.

It was the first movie you did with Honza Hřebejk, but you already met him when he was writing the screenplay to Ondřej Trojan's Let's All Sing Around. How did your actor-director collaboration proceed?

Even though someone might think we already knew each other with Honza, it wasn't so. We actually got to know each other only now. Because I was still a nursing mother,

I didn't join in those sessions with wine, where the roles were analyzed and people were getting closer somehow. I didn't have time for that at the time. But since now we will probably work together again, there will be more time for it. And this is what Honza's method is about – the human factor, which each actor brings into his role.



How was it to play with Jana Brejchová?

Jana Brejchová is an actress to whom I've always looked up. I like her diction, her eyes, just everything. But when you play, you have to forget that someone is your idol. You just have to work together. With her it was even easier for she put herself a lot in the role of the mother, and for me it was then easier to build this relation with her. She is a very intuitive actress, warm, but at the same time she's a shy person. I believe our collaboration worked real well.

How difficult were the erotic scenes?

Roman Luknár had an absolutely no problematic approach to those scenes. Sometimes it happens that when one has to make such scenes, everybody pretends they never had sex, that they actually don't know how to do it. Here it was the opposite. I was lucky with my partner. Although I am actually shy, I thought this character is definitely not shy, so I allowed even such things I wouldn't normally do. It was probably the first time in my life when I had real fun shooting such scenes. There was no kink.



You look very sexy in the movie. Did motherhood change you somehow?

People probably change after every experience. Motherhood is for a woman probably the biggest and strongest experience. I felt it more on the personal side, when I was hurrying home, I already wanted to have it all behind me. Work is one thing, one venerates and adores it, but then one wants to be home quickly.

Jana Brejchová (*Zdena Hrstková*)

What are your impressions of the movie, now that you have finally seen it complete?

I must say it took my breath away a bit. In particular because it is very absorbing, true and authentic.

In the movie you play Marcela's mother. Can you present her, as you feel her?

It is a woman who, as her daughter, is in trouble. She's just a few years older. Their personal stories and relations are different, but basically they are very similar.



How pleased are you with your daughter in the movie Aňa Geislerova?

I felt really good playing with her. Aňa is very talented, extremely pleasant and honest. I like the way she looks, she's a special French type, and I like the French, especially French women. But I mostly appreciate in her how true, open and honest she is when performing.

You last stood in front of the camera seven years ago (in the movie The Conception of My Younger Brother). How was it to play again? Did Honza Hřebejk have to urge you?

He was so well-bred as to urge me. Although I wanted to definitively stop with the cinema, I was happy to accept his offer, because I very much like some of his movies. Now I play in the theater and I enjoy it a lot. I've already played in so many movies that I first wasn't too excited. But when I read the screenplay I was enraptured. At some points it was as if I was back in my youth, when I saw the Italian neorealist movies of Vittorio De Sica. And I feel that's what is also in this movie – slight humor of weird people, with their fate, their burden, a little bitter, a little sad and a little happy.

Josef Abrhám (Evžen Beneš)



What are your impressions of the movie, now that you have finally seen it complete?

It is a beautiful movie; the acting is so great that I sometimes fear I will spoil it. My colleague actors are really great, even the children. It is beautifully detached, the acting built on Mr. Jarchovský's superb screenplay. So it all added up into a high quality, no matter if the movie is sad or happy. I am

very glad I could participate to this movie.

You already collaborated with Jan Hřebejk on the movie Big Beat. How was your collaboration this time? Did you have the feeling Jan Hřebejk's directing has become more mature?

I didn't notice a big communication difference between us. We already understood each other very well last time. He was very open to me and working with him was fantastic. It was already very free then, and you could feel it in the movie. And this time it is the same. Of course he is more experienced and has more serenity and background, but the basics are still the same. Jan Hřebejk

works very well with actors, he gives us freedom and space, he allows a certain level of improvisation even within the script.

In the movie you play the role of Evžen. Isn't this man too nice for nowadays? How would you characterize him?

He was even nicer in the screenplay. He isn't a person, who's only nice, he is a man who went through quite a lot in his life. He gets to a situation which appears per accident, and deals with it with a certain refinement. With no designs, attempts, interest in new relations. For him it is even some kind of game. I felt very well in this role.

Jiří Schmitzer (*Richard Hrstka*)

What do you think about your role, which is the most negative in the movie?

This is the hardest question you could have asked me. I don't like talking about it. Of course I was pleased, for me it was some kind of anti-assignment, but I thought I should try this path. Each person is actually made of both parts, and it depends a lot on which one of those parts he chooses and which one preponderates.



How was it to work with Honza Hřebejk?

Complexly well. You can't really convey it. Jan Hřebejk isn't an usurper, but he knows what he wants. And that's the way it should be. Why, it's the director who makes the movie!

When you accept a role, do you make the decision according to who the director is?

For me the director is of course terribly important. First I read the screenplay, if there is a fatal role, I always want to talk to the director, so that I know how he sees it, what he will want from me and if our conceptions are similar. If you learn how to think in the context how the director sees it, and learn the role in this way, then on the set it isn't that fastidious, as if you only then started clarifying your views with the director. I am not the kind of actor to which one can command „now be sad, now happy“. I don't know that, this kind of routine. I need to be able to lean on something.



How did you tune in before the shooting in the role of such a disagreeable person?

You have to be prepared for it, even before than when the shooting starts. For example we had a two day meeting, when the screenplay was being revised, we read everything again, and various opinions were said. The screenplay and even the final product went through substantial changes.

When you go on the set, you already have the idea of what kind of man it is, you have to. At least that's what I need.

If you could choose, would you choose the role of Richard again, or would you prefer to play someone else?

I never thought about that. This role and the whole screenplay were well written. I didn't even see any weak points in the role. Of course, when you look at yourself you see the weak points. But that's probably the same with everybody. It's hard to look at oneself. Maybe if this person wasn't hit by certain coincidences, he would find a way out.

Roman Luknár (*Jarda Čmolík*)

In the movie you play the role of the Beauty's husband. How would you characterize this role, how do you see it?

Jarda is an ordinary person, who likes his wife and children. There are plenty of such Jardas around us. He doesn't know of any other way how to get his family away from the misery that met them. In the given situation he decides to set out on a slant, for which in the end he pays with jail and the loss of his family. Abandoned he does what he knows best to get his family back.

My opinion upon Jarda is that although he seems to be a rascal, he has a big heart, he has just bad luck.



Sex has an important role in the movie. How was it to shoot erotic scenes with Aňa Geislerová?

We laughed a lot during them. It's the best that can happen, when people from the crew are gaping at you. I think they had fun too. I've already done a few such scenes in my life, but this time it was indisputably the most fun.

Some of the scenes were shot at the Pankrác prison. How did you feel there?

A bit constrained. I prefer freedom. We didn't have contacts with the prisoners, so it felt more like a casern. I am glad I had the chance to see the famous



Pankrác jail from inside. But it's good for a moment and enough. It was on Saturday the 23rd. On that day my family was flying back home to Spain and you can't have phones in jail. So I was happy when I could get away from there and get in contact with them. In the end they didn't even fly away on that day because the plane got out of order.

With what did Jan Hřebejk mainly surprise you during the preparations and the shooting?

The freedom he gives the actors. I mean the team work with every day improvisation and the playing with situations. I've never laughed so much and

had as much fun at work in my life. Last time was when I was a kid. I would wake up every morning with a pleasant tickling in my stomach and was eager to get on the set, to see with what Honza would surprise me that day. And every actor gladly surrenders to such a person as is Honza.

Emília Vášáryová plays your mother. Did you ever meet on a Slovakian stage or movie?

We've known each other with Miluška for years, and in the Beauty we played together for the first time. Since I was a kid she was my idol as a woman and as an actress. So I probably don't need to explain what I felt when I stood up next to her. My secret wish from when I was a child came true. Miluška is unique and inimitable!

Jan Hrušínský (Havlík)

What are your impressions of the movie? What emotions predominated?

Now, half an hour after the projection, the movie is decomposing, I am just beginning to assimilate it. It is just as when you drink a glass of good wine, and you enjoy it only after you have swallowed it. This is the effect the movie had on me. The first ten minutes I didn't exactly know what to think about it, but then it dragged me in to the point that in the end it subjugated me. I thought: Pity it's already the end.



The role you play in the movie is not too attractive. How would you characterize it?

As a personage from life. They are good roles to play, because they have material to work with. And unfortunately there are many people like Mr. Havlík, who I play. He is more of a businessman than a vicar, who feeds on the misery and the faith of his fellowmen.



Was the collaboration with Jan Hřebejk somehow different, original, inspiring, than on the movies with other directors?

Definitely. I originally did a camera trial for the role of the vicar. Then Honza Hřebejk made me try the role of Mr. Havlík. I was extremely pleased when a week later he called me saying they had decided to join both roles. The shooting was very professional.

All the crew around Jan Hřebejk, Petr Jarchovský and the cameraman Malíř were very inclined in making a very good movie.

When you decide which role you will accept, is the name of the director important for you? Did the name Jan Hřebejk influence your decision? Do you know his previous movies?

I admire all of Hřebejk's movies since Big Beat. Honza Hřebejk knows me more like a producer, than as an actor, because shortly before we had collaborated in the theater Na Jezerce, where Honza directed Manželské vraždění (Conjugal

slaughter). I was very pleased when he offered me the role and I wouldn't hesitate in playing even smaller roles in his movies.

Cast

AÑA GEISLEROVÁ (Marcela Čmolíková)

Anna Geislerová is one of the most frequently cast Czech actresses. Apart from being a natural talent that appears only once in many years, her characteristic attitude, style, tremendous sex appeal and success abroad offers the chance of her becoming an international movie star.



She was born in Prague on April 17, 1976. Her father is a Japanese language scholar and her mother an artist. Anna has two sisters: the older Lenka has followed in their mother's footsteps and the younger Ester is a movie actress and model. Anna never completed her studies at the conservatory and worked as a model in Milan, Italy, since the age of fourteen.

Her silver screen debut came in 1990 in Trojan's film **Pějme píseň dohola (Let Us Sing a Song)**. Her first major role came a year later in Filip Renč's film **Rekviem pro panenku (Requiem for a Maiden)**.

She is the laureate of three Czech Lion annual motion picture awards for the films **Návrat idiota (The Idiot Returns)**, director Saša Gedeon, 1999), **Želary** (director Ondřej Trojan, 2003) and **Šťěstí (Happiness)**, director Bohdan Sláma, 2005).

She also received an award at the international film festival in Bangkok for her leading role of Hanule in *Želary*. In 2005 she received the Silver Seashell in San Sebastian for best actress for her performance in the film *Šťěstí*.

She has already played in almost twenty films, including **Jízda (The Ride)**, director Jan Svěrák, 1994), **Válka barev (War of Colors)**, director Filip Renč, 1995), **Výchova dívek v Čechách (Bringing Up Girls in Bohemia)**, director Petr Koliha, 1996), **Kuře Melancholik (The Melancholic Chicken)**, director Jaroslav Brabec, 1999) or **Kytice (Wild Flowers)**, director F. A. Brabec, 2000). Her most recent films include **Shut Up and Shoot Me** (director Steen Agro, 2005), **Šílení (Insane)**, director Jan Švankmajer, 2005), **Night fisherman** (director Joseph Cahill), **Kráska v nesnázích (Beauty in Trouble)**, director Jan Hřebejk, 2006), **Anna** (director Alice Nellis), **Smutek paní Šnajdrové (The Sorrow of Mrs. Šnajdrova)**, director Piro Milkani). She has worked on American, Italian and German movie productions.



JANA BREJCHOVÁ (Zdena Hrstková)

Born in Prague on January 20, 1940. Her career was launched with the role of Pídálka in Jiří Sequens's film **Olověný chléb (Bread made of Lead)** when she was a schoolgirl discovered by Ladislav Helge. She returned in front of the camera three years later in Vladimír Olmer's film **Vina (Guilt)** and after several other roles shined as the greatest talent of late 1950s Czech cinema in Weiss's adaptation of

the novel **Vičí jáma (The Wolf Trap, 1957)**. She became the most frequently cast actress of her generation and enjoyed acclaim at all domestic and international film festivals. She was lucky to have worked with directors who gave her opportunities and were able to guide her. However, were it not for her aptitude, talent and humility, she would have hardly been proclaimed the country's Actress of the Year in 1958. Two years later she received the Silver Sail in Locarno for her performance in Krejčík's **Vyšší princip (Higher Principle)** and again became the country's Actress of the Year.

Of the directors with whom she enjoyed working the most, she particularly recalls Jiří Krejčí, Vojtěch Jasný, Evald Schorm and Zdeněk Podskalský. Over the years she has performed in all sorts of film genres - as is evinced by movies such as **Baron Prášil (The Fabulous Baron Munchausen, director Karel Zeman, 1961)**, **Každý den odvahy (Courage for Every Day, director Evald Schorm, 1964)**, **Kdyby tisíc klarinetů (If a Thousand Clarinets, directors Vladimír Svitáček, Ján Roháč, 1964)**, **Návrat ztraceného syna (Return of the Prodigal Son, director Evald Schorm, 1966)**, **Ženu ani květinou neuhodíš (Never Strike a Woman... Even with a Flower, director Zdeněk Podskalský, 1966)**, **Noc nevěsty (The Holy Night, director Karel Kachyňa, 1967)**, **Farářův konec (End of a Priest, director Evald Schorm, 1969)**, **Zabil jsem Einsteina, pánové (I Killed Einstein, Gentlemen... director Oldřich Lipský, 1969)**, **Dábelské líbánky (Devilish Honeymoon, director Zdeněk Podskalský, 1970)**, **Luk královny Dorotky (The Bow of Queen Dorothy, director Jan Schmidt, 1970)**, **Noc na Karlštejně (Night at Karlstein, director Zdeněk Podskalský, 1973)** or **Hodíme se k sobě, miláčku? (Do We Match Together, Darling? director Petr Schulhoff, 1974)**.

Following her outstanding performance of the role of Edita in the motion picture adaptation of Páral's novel **Mladý muž a bílá velryba (The Young Man and Moby Dick, director Jaromil Jireš, 1978)**, she has played mature women in numerous other films. Director Jiří Svoboda gave her the opportunity to play similar roles in the television film **Jehla (Needle, 1982)**, as well as on the silver screen in films such as **Schůzka se stíny (Encounter with the Shadows, 1982)**, **Zánik samoty Berhof (End of the Lonely Farm Berghof, 1983)** or **Skalpel, prosím (Scalpel, Please, 1985)**.

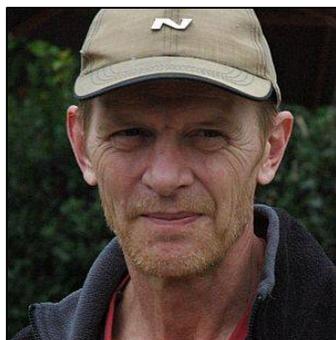
Jiří Svoboda was not the only one to admire her courage to show her aging face without of makeup. Other directors who took advantage of this courage include Evald Schorm - who cast her in his film **Vlastně se nic nestalo (Killing with Kindness, 1988)** - or Vladimír Drha who gave her roles in the films **Citlivá místa (Sensitive Places, 1987)** and **Početí mého mladšího bratra (The Conception of My Younger Brother, 2000)**.



In the early 1970s she also began performing on the theatre stage. It is no secret that her offstage partners included the now world-renowned director Miloš Forman, the German actor Ulrich Thein and Czech actors Vlastimil Brodský and Jaromír Hanzlík. She currently lives with actor Vlastimil Zahajský. Her daughter Tereza, whom she had with her then husband Vlastimil Brodský, has successfully followed in her mother's footsteps and the two have played together in the films *Citlivá místa* and *Vlastně se nic nestalo*.

The impact that Jana Brejchova has made on Czech cinema and on Czech audiences cannot be undone, her face is unmistakable and her performances inimitably distinctive.

JIŘÍ SCHMITZER (Richard Hrstka)



Born on November 25, 1949. After graduating from DAMU (the theatre school of Prague's Academy of Performing Arts) in 1974, he began working as an actor in the Činoherní studio theatre company in Ústí nad Labem. He has been a member of the cast of Prague's Ypsilonka theatre since 1985.

He was first cast in a major motion picture role by director Oldřich Lipský in the comedy **Tři chlapi na cestách** (**Three Journeying Men**, 1973) that was inspired by a popular television series. Minor roles followed in the criminal thrillers **Motiv pro vraždu** (**Motive for Murder**, director Július Matula, 1974) and **Holka na zabití** (**A Girl Fit to Be Killed**, director Juraj Herz, 1975). A breakthrough came a year later with the role of Kroupa jr. in the popular comedy **Marečku, podejte mi pero** (**Marecek, Pass Me the Pen!**, director Oldřich Lipský, 1976) where he played the son of his father, actor Jiří Sovák. He drew attention in his role of the diffident brewery manager in the adaptation of Bohumil Hrabal's novel **Postřižiny** (**Cutting It Short**) that director Jiří Menzel filmed in 1980. He appeared in **Slavnosti sněženek** (**The Snowdrop Festival**, 1983), another adaptation of Hrabal's work, as well as in Menzel's next film **Vesničko má středisková** (**My Sweet Little Village**, 1986).

In the 1980s directors began to frequently cast him in the roles of fathers and in children's films in general: **Všichni mají talent** (**Everyone Has Talent**, director Zdeněk Flídr, 1985), **Outsider** (director Zdeněk Sirový, 1987), **Moře začíná za vsí** (**The Sea Starts Behind the Village**, director Zdeněk Flídr, 1988), **Nefňukej, veverko** (**Don't Cry Little Squirrel**, director Věra Šimková-Plívová, 1988). In the family film **Páni Edisoni** (**The Edisons**, director Vít Olmer, 1987) he also featured as the author of the main theme song and a singer. In the parable **Dům pro dva** (**A House For Two**, director Miloš Zábanský, 1988) he played the challenging tragic role of the reclusive Bóža who tries to behave honestly even in a world full of compromises. In the same period he also acted for the first time in a film by Jan Hřebejk – in the then aspiring director's second extracurricular film at FAMU (the film school of Prague's Academy of Performing Arts) entitled **1948 A.D.** (1989).

In the first half of the 1990s he acted in two films inspired by the work of Franz Kafka – **The Trial** (director David Jones, 1992) and **America** (director Vladimír Michálek, 1994). He played the outstanding role of Kanda both in the television series and in the feature film **Zdivočelá země** (**A Land Gone Wild**, 1997). He received the Český lev (Czech Lion) motion picture award for best actor for his performance of the role of political prisoner Jarda Svoboda in the film **Boomerang** (1997) by director Hynek Bočan.

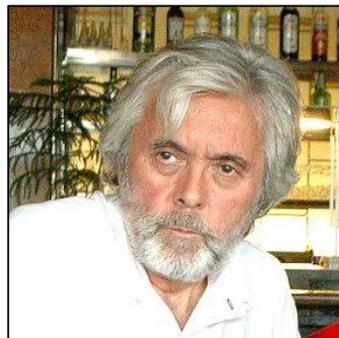
His other films include **Akáty bílé** (**White Locusts**, director Bohdan Sláma, 1997), **Báječná léta pod psa** (**Wonderful Years That Sucked**, director Petr Nikolaev, 1997), **Kanárek** (**Canary**, director Viktor Tauš, 1999), **Kytice** (**Wild Flowers**, director František A. Brabec, 2000), **Krajinka** (**Landscape**, director

Martin Šulík, 2001), **Perníková věž (Gingerbread Tower**, director Milan Šteindler, 2002) or **Lesní chodci (Forest Walkers**, director Ivan Vojnár, 2003).

His song recitals have gained him additional popularity. He has already recorded three albums with his twelve-string guitar.

JOSEF ABRHÁM (Evžen Beneš)

Born on December 14, 1939, in Zlín. After studying acting at Bratislava's performing arts college for two years, he transferred and graduated at Prague's DAMU theatre school in 1962. He began his acting career in Prague's Divadlo na Vinohradech theatre and at the same time occasionally performed as a guest actor on the stage of Prague's National Theatre. Following compulsory military service, he joined Prague's then emerging Činoherní klub theatre company where he spent the key years of his stage career. In 1992 he joined the National Theatre but two years later abandoned the theatre stage permanently.



He first appeared in front of the camera in his third year at DAMU when he accepted a role in the black and white moralist flick **Strop (Ceiling**, 1961) – the directing school graduation film of Věra Chytilová. During the same period he played a minor role in the detective story **Kde alibi nestačí (Where Alibi Is Not Enough**), filmed by director Vladimír Čech. The following year brought him more significant roles – the major role of a lover in Brynych's **Neschovávejte se když prší (Don't Take Shelter from the Rain)** and the smaller role of Datel in **Transport z ráje (Transport from Paradise)**. His collaboration with director Jaromil Jireš on the film **Křik (The Cry)** was demanding yet satisfying. As a young actor he was already able to demonstrate he is endowed with wide-ranging talent and is able to bring contrasting roles to life. His rise was steady ever since.

He performed in many splendid movie roles in the 1960s and 70s: for example in the films **The Great Road** (director Yuri Ozerov, 1963), **Každý den odvahy (Courage for Every Day**, director Evald Schorm, 1964), **Dita Saxova** (director Antonín Moskalyk, 1967), **Pension pro svobodné pány (A Pension for Bachelors**, director Jiří Krejčík, 1967), **Partie krásného dragouna (A Beautiful Dragoon's Part**, director Jiří Sequens, 1970), **Holka na zabití (A Girl Fit to Be Killed**, director Juraj Herz, 1975).

In 1976 he played in the comedy **Marečku, podejte mi pero (Marecek, Pass Me the Pen!)** made by the director/screenwriter duo Smoljak-Svěrák. The film proved a key turning point because the two filmmakers discovered Abrhám's sense of humor and began casting him in their comedies – **Kulový blesk (Ball Lightning**, 1978) and **Vrchní, prchni (Run Waiter Run)**.

He has also been often cast in films by director Jiří Menzel. The first time was in the film adaptation of Vančura's novel **Konec starých časů (The End of Old Times**, 1989), later in the film **Žebrácká opera (The Beggar's Opera**, 1991) and most recently in **Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále (I Served the King of England)**.

In 1993 he received the Czech Lion annual motion picture award for best actor for his performance in Jan Hřebejk's film **Šakalí léta (Big Beat)**. His other films include: **Andělské oči (The Eyes of an Angel)**, director Dušan Klein, 1994), the comedy **Stůj, nebo se netrefím! (Halt, Or I'll Miss!)**, director Jiří Chlumský, 1998), **Všichni moji blízcí (All My Loved Ones)**, director Matej Mináč, 1998), **Návrat ztraceného ráje (Return to Paradise Lost)**, director Vojtěch Jasný, 1999), **Pánská jízda (For Men Only)**, director Martin Kotík, 2004) and Hřebejk's **Kráska v nesnázích (Beauty in Trouble)**, 2006).



Josef Abrhám has also had luck with his roles in various television series: his role of head doctor Blažej in the legendary series **Nemocnice na kraji města (Hospital on the Outskirts)** brought him nationwide acclaim. In several other series he played alongside his wife Libuše Šafránková, most recently in the series **Náves (Village Square)** of the countries public broadcaster Česka televise (Czech Television).

Despite his stardom, Josef Abrhám never succumbed to star-like behavior – he gives interviews only sporadically and does not like to show off in public.

ROMAN LUKNÁR (Jarda Čmolík)

Born in Bratislava on June 1, 1965. Graduated from Bratislava's musical arts college in 1987. He worked as an actor in a children's theatre in Trnava and in the Astorka Korzo '90 theatre. Since 1991 he has been living and performing in Madrid, Spain. He has had over a hundred acting roles in Slovak, Czech, Spanish, German and Hungarian television productions and on the silver screen.



His acting prowess can be seen in the films **Chodník cez Dunaj (A Bridge Across the Danube)**, director Vladimír Körner, 1990), **Let asfaltového holuba (Flight of the Asphalt Pigeon)**, director Vladimír Balco, 1991) and **Vášnivý polibek (Kiss of Passion)**, director Miro Šindelka, 1995). In 1996 he was nominated for the annual Czech Lion motion picture award for best actor for his role of Jakub in Martin Šulík's film **Záhrada (The Garden)**. His more recent films include **Jadvice's Pillow** (director Krisztina Deák, 2000), **Duše jako kaviár (A Caviar-like Soul)**, director Milan Cieslar, 2004), Hřebejk's **Kráska v nesnázích (Beauty in Trouble)**, 2006) and **Pokrvné vztahy (Blood Relations)**, director Oleg Harenčár, 2006). He is a universal type of actor but is most comfortable playing the role of a lonesome hero who intuitively fights for his beliefs and the meaning of his life.

EMÍLIA VÁŠÁRYOVÁ (Líba Čmolíková)

Born in Horna Štubna on May 18, 1942. She and her younger sister Magda, a fellow actress, grew up in a teachers' family. Already as a child, Emilia played in an amateur theatre company and also actively practiced gymnastics. In 1964 she graduated from Bratislava's musical arts college and that same year became an actress in the Slovak National Theatre where she immediately gained repute with



her performances of major roles of the classical repertoire. She has recently been pronounced the Slovak actress of the century.

Her silver screen debut came in the joint Slovak-Hungarian film production **Dáždnik sv.Petra (St. Peter's Umbrella)**. By the early 1960s she gained a foothold in Czech cinema with her role in Vojtěch Jasný's film **Až přijde kocour (When the Cat Comes, 1963)** where she played the mysterious dancer Diana alongside Jan Werich. The most famous titles in her expansive film portfolio include the fantasy story **Bláznova kronika (The Jester's Tale,**

director Karel Zeman, 1964,) or the drama **Lidé z maringotek (Trailer People,** director Martin Frič, 1966).

She has recently taken on major roles in the drama **Hazard** (director Roman Petrenko, 1995) and the generational story **Modré z nebe (Blue Heaven,** director Eva Borušovičová, 1997). Her wide-ranging acting experience has also predestined her to the roles of interestingly aging women in Martin Šulík's parable **Orbis Pictus** (1997) and in Jan Hřebejk's blockbuster **Pelíšky (Cosy Dens, 1998)**. She also got a role in Hřebejk's following film **Horem pádem (Up and Down)** for which she received the annual Czech Lion motion picture award for best actress. The same director cast her in his film **Kráska v nesnázích (Beauty in Trouble)**. She also performed in Vojtěch Jasný's film **Návrat ztraceného ráje (Return to Paradise Lost)**.

Apart from that, Emília Vášáryová regularly performs on the stages of Prague's theatres (Divadlo Na zábradlí, Činoherní klub, Shakespeare summer festival). She is a laureate of the Czech Republic's prestigious Alfréd Radok theatre award. She is also a lecturer at Bratislava's performing arts college.

JIŘÍ MACHÁČEK (Patočka)

Jiří Macháček was born in Litoměřice in 1966. He simultaneously studied law at Prague's Charles University and Ježek's conservatory. He performed in several theatres (e.g. Divadlo Na zábradlí, Sklep) and acted in many films. He received the annual Czech Lion motion picture award for best supporting actor for his role of the permanently stoned Jakub in the film **Samotáři (Loners,** director Petr Zelenka, 2000). Apart from that he's also played in the films **Návrat idiota (The Idiot Returns,** director Saša Gedeon, 1999), **Jedna ruka netleská (One Hand Can't Clap,** director David Ondříček, 2003) and **Mazaný Filip (Smart Philip,** director Václav Marhoul, 2003). In 2004 he was again nominated for the Czech Lion motion picture award for best leading actor for his role in Hřebejk's film **Horem pádem (Up and Down)** where he played the soccer fan František who is raising a dark-skinned baby.



In addition to acting, Jiří Macháček also performs as singer in the band MIG 21 for which he also writes lyrics. He has already released three records with the band. In 2005 he played the role of a butcher in the slapstick film **Skřítek (The Manikin,** director Tomáš Vorel) for which he and MIG 21 also composed the soundtrack.

JAN HRUŠÍNSKÝ (Havlík)



Jan Hrušínský was born into the famous Hrušínský actor family on June 9, 1955. He has been an actor since his early childhood: he first performed on stage at the age of four. At the age of ten he performed on the stage of Prague's Estates Theatre in the play *Měsíc na vsi* (A Month in the Village) and a year later theatre critics note of his talent thanks to his role of Mamilius in the play *Zimní pohádka* (Winter Fairytale). After graduating from Prague's conservatory, he joined the Činoherní studio theatre company in Ústí nad Labem. There he married his wife Miluše and met the director Jan Grossman who significantly affected his perception of acting and of theatre in general. After that he performed in the now-defunct Realist Theatre in Prague until 1989. His acting career then led him to the theatre Na zábradlí, the theatre in Řeznicka and to guest performance in, among other places, the National Theatre and in Prague's city theatres.

He first appeared on the silver screen at the age of five in František Filip's television drama **Český koncert (A Czech Concert)**. However, his first true film acting came in the television film **Babička (The Grandmother, 1971)** in which he played the role of the romantic Orlík under the directorship of Antonín Moskalyk. Beginning with the age of sixteen he started regularly appearing on television as a favorite performer of roles depicting wholesome yet insecure youngsters and princes, which gained him considerable popularity. However, film directors also associated him with such characters and so for a long time he was cast rather stereotypically – **Dívka na koštěti (The Girl on the Broomstick, director Václav Vorlíček, 1972)**, **Můj brácha má prima bráchu (My Brother Has a Cute Brother, director Stanislav Strnad, 1975)**, **Jak se budí princezny (How to Wake Princesses, director Václav Vorlíček, 1977)**, **Brácha za všechny peníze (A Brother for All the Money's Worth, director Stanislav Strnad, 1978)** and **Lásky mezi kapkami deště (Love Between Rain, director Karel Kachyňa, 1979)**.

His first filmmaking experience with Schorm in the film **Lítost (Regret, where he rarely played alongside his father)** brought him a somewhat different role, as did the leading part of the hooligan in Pinkava's moralist film **Panter čeká v sedmnáct třicet (The Panther Waits at Five Thirty)** or the role of Dušan in Čech's **Pasiáns (1977)**. His other films include **Kdo hledá zlaté dno (Who Looks for Gold? (director Jiří Menzel, 1974)**, **Hadí jed (Venom, director František Vlácil, 1981)**, **Straka v hrsti (Clenching a Magpie, director Juraj Herz, 1983)**, **Mág (Magician, director František Vlácil, 1987)**, **Vážení přátelé, ano (Yes My Dear Friends, director Dušan Klein, 1989)**, or **Konec starých časů (The End of Old Times, director Jiří Menzel, 1989)**.

In the 1990s he attracted attention particularly with his convincing performance of the leading role in the film **Ceremoniář (Master of Ceremonies, director Jiří Věřčák)** – a story from the 1950s in which he played the inconspicuous head waiter František who finds himself in the midst of the powerful and with the role of the servant Štěpán in the fairytale **Jezerní královna (Queen of the Lake, director Václav Vorlíček, 1998)**. He is frequently cast in television shows and series. His most recent films include Ondřej Trojan's film **Želary (2003)**, Hřebejk's film **Kráska v nesnázích (Beauty in Trouble)** and he is currently

performing in Karel Janák's new film **Ročk podvratáků (The Rock Year of the Half-breeds)**.

In 1997 he opted for freelancing and in 2002 he founded the Theatre Company of Jan Hrušínský. In December 2004 he launched his own home stage: the theatre Na Jezerce.

ANDREI TOADER (Mirek)

Born in Frýdek-Místek on March 5, 1966. He studied cello at the Ostrava conservatory and also studied at the pedagogical faculty – though he did not finish his studies there. Until 1998 he played in the pop music band Buty and participated on the creation of its first four albums. He then started a brand new band called Laputa that consisted of three other members of Buty and two musicians from the former Brno-based funky ensemble Narvan.



In Prague he began working as a producer and assistant director. He co-authored the several scripts of the satirical television show **Šteindler, Vávra and Čtvrtníček presents**. He currently works in advertising.

His first film role was that of a police officer in Hřebejk's film **Horem pádem (Up and Down)**.

NIKOLAY PENEV (Pičus)



Born in Bulgaria on November 2, 1974. He studied Slavic languages at the Sofia University before going to Prague where he studied directing and dramaturgy at DAMU. He performed on numerous stages in both Sofia and Prague (Švandovo divadlo, Divadlo Disk) and has also directed plays himself. He received a diploma from the international academy of arts in Paris for staging the play **Čtivo pro klidný spánek (Bedtime Reading)** with Sofia's Sfumato theatre.

He first appeared on the silver screen in the Bulgarian film **Rhapsody in White** that was directed by Tedi Moskov. The Czech films he played in include **Ládík je nejlepší v okrese (Ladik is County Champion)**, director Jan Prušinovský), Hřebejk's **Kráska v nesnázích (Beauty in Trouble)** and he has also been cast in Jiří Menzel's new film **Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále (I Served the King of England)**.

Crew Members

JAN HŘEBEJK, film and theater director, screenwriter

Jan Hřebejk (*1967) and Petr Jarchovský studied together at the Prague Academic Gymnasium and, between 1987 and 1991, at the school of screenwriting and dramatic art at the Prague Film and Television Academy of Musical Arts (FAMU).

During his studies at FAMU, Jan Hřebejk directed and produced his first two short films: **Everything You Wanted To Know About Sex And Are Afraid To Experience** (1988) and **Year 1948** (1989) according to the scripts written by his fellow student Petr Zelenka. His professional directorial debut came in the short live-action film for Czech Television **Don't Do Anything Unless You Have A Good Reason** (1991). The films grabbed the attention of viewers and critics alike and won many awards at student film festivals.



Together with Jarchovský, Hřebejk wrote the script to the generational comedy set in a communist youth organization summer camp **Let Us Sing A Song**. Director (and current producer) Ondřej Trojan and cinematographer Asen Šopov then filmed their debut feature film according to the script. Aňa Geislerová, today a successful young actress, first appeared in this film, as did Jan Semotán (Kšanda in **Big Beat**).

In 1992, Jan Hřebejk filmed his own adaptation of Egon Hostovský's novel **Charity Ball** (his thesis) as a TV film for Czech Television starring Jiří Kodet, Ivana Chýlková and Bohumil Klepl.

The original musical **Big Beat**, a retro-comedy from the end of the 1950s about the coming of rock'n'roll to Czechoslovakia, premiered in 1993. Petr Jarchovský wrote the script according to Petr Šabach's short stories while musician Ivan Hlas wrote the music and lyrics. Hřebejk made his feature film debut as a director with well-known cinematographer Jan Malíř behind the camera. The film was very successful at the box office and won several prestigious awards including Hřebejk winning the Czech Lion for Best Director, Josef Abraham the Czech Lion for Best Actor, Best Music Czech Lion going to Ivan Hlas and the Best Film of 1993 Czech Lion.



Together with Jan Malíř, Jan Hřebejk shot the children's television series **Where Stars Are Falling** in 1996, which was then sold to many other European countries.

Another success for the Jarchovský - Hřebejk duo were the three original stories filmed for **The Bachelors** television series, which won the Film and Television Association and the Literary Fund award its contribution to live-action television production for 1997.

Hřebejk-Jarchovský put their creative forces together with director and producer Ondřej Trojan's Total HelpArt T.H.A. Film Production Company at the end of the 1990s. Under the auspices of this production environment, Hřebejk directed, according to Jarchovský's screenplays, his most successful feature films to date.

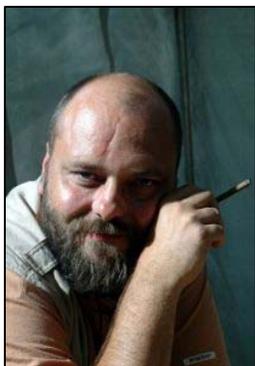
These were 1999's Czech mega box office smash **Cosy Dens** and **Divided We Fall** a year later, which received an Oscar nomination for Best Foreign Film, five Czech Lions and a series of awards at international film festivals as well as being shown in theaters worldwide. **Pupendo**, another very successful film at the box office, debuted in 2003. The following year he topped the box-office charts for many weeks with his tragicomedy **Up And Down** which gained him 5 Czech lions; including Best film, direction and screenplay.

Between shooting feature films, Jan Hřebejk directs many smaller projects, such as music videos, advertisements and documentaries, including television portraits of hockey goalie Dominik Hašek and musician Vladimír Mišík for the Febio production company.

In 1997, Hřebejk made his theater directorial debut with Christopher Hampton's **Dangerous Relations**, starring Vilma Cibulková, Aleš Procházka and Zita Kabátová, in Prague's Pod Palmovkou theater.

In March 2000, another premiere of a Hřebejk-directed play took place in the same theater. The piece this time was an adaptation of Woody Allen's well-known film **Bullets Over Broadway**. Hřebejk then directed **Amadeus** starring Jiří Bartoška at the Pod Palmovkou theater in 2002.

PETR JARCHOVSKÝ, screenwriter



Petr Jarchovský (*1966) and Jan Hřebejk studied together at the Prague Academic Gymnasium and, between 1987 and 1991, at the school of screenwriting and dramatic art at the Prague Film and Television Academy of Musical Arts (FAMU). Jarchovský today works as a teacher at the screenwriting school and his book, *Divided We Fall*, was published by Paseka in 1998.

Petr Jarchovský debuted as a scriptwriter with one of the short stories in the

Non-mysterious Stories television series, which was directed by his fellow student Igor Chaun. Together with Jan Hřebejk, he wrote the script for debut director and FAMU classmate Ondřej Trojan that later became the generational comedy **Let Us Sing A Song**.

In 1993, the musical **Big Beat**, premiered, which Jarchovský wrote the script for according to the stories of writer Petr Šabach. This retro-comedy about the coming of rock'n'roll to Czechoslovakia at the end of the 1950s launched Jarchovský's professional cooperation with director Jan Hřebejk.

Three original short stories for the TV series **Bachelors** was another success for the duo, as they won the prestigious Film and Television Association and Literary Fund award for their contribution to live-action television production for 1997.

Jarchovský wrote the script to the feature film **Cosy Dens**, which premiered in 1999, and **Pupendo**, which premiered in 2003, according to the short stories of Petr Šabach. He also wrote the script to **Divided We Fall**, which premiered in 2000, according to his own story, and the script to **Up And Down** (2004), on the basis of his and Jan Hřebejk's present-day story.

All four of these films were directed by Hřebejk for Ondřej Trojan's Total HelpArt T.H.A. film production company.



Jarchovský wrote the script for the World War Two drama **Želary**, directed and produced by Ondřej Trojan, on the basis of the novel Jozova Hanule. The film premiered in 2003 and just like *Divided We Fall* was nominated for the Best Foreign Film Oscar.

Petr Jarchovský has also written the scripts to the yet unrealized films **The Cowards**, according to the novel of the same title by Josef Škvorecký, and **I Served The King Of England**, according to the novel of the same name by Bohumil Hrabal.

JAN MALÍŘ, cinematographer



Jan Malíř (*1948) graduated from FAMU in 1972.

Feature films:

The Very Late Afternoon Of A Faun - 1983, directed by Věra Chytilová

Prague – The Restless Heart Of Europe - 1984, directed by Věra Chytilová

The Jester And The Queen – 1987, directed by Věra Chytilová

Mahuliena, Golden Maiden - 1987, directed by Miloslav Luther

Tank Battalion - 1991, directed by Vít Olmer

Big Beat - 1993, directed by Jan Hřebejk

The Dance Master- 1994, directed by Jaromil Jireš

Ruffiano And Sweeteeth - 1997, directed by Karel Smyczek

Cosy Dens – 1999, directed by Jan Hřebejk

Divided We Fall – 2000, directed by Jan Hřebejk

Cruel Joys – 2003, directed by Juraj Nvota

Pupendo – 2003, directed by Jan Hřebejk

Up And Down – 2004, directed by Jan Hřebejk

Jan Malíř has also taken part in Radúz Činčera's multimedia projects. *He has shot short films with animator and director Jiří Barta.* He also directed one episode of the German TV series **Tat Ort** (Crime Scene) for the German TV station NDR, which was shot partially in Prague. He regularly directs commercials and works on American films being shot in the Czech Republic.

VLADIMÍR BARÁK, editor

Vladimír Barák (*1964), FAMU graduate

Feature films:

Cosy Dens – 1999, directed by Jan Hřebejk

Divided We Fall – 2000, directed by Jan Hřebejk

Out Of The City – 2001, directed by Tomáš Vorel

Pupendo – 2003, directed by Jan Hřebejk

Zelary – 2003, directed by Ondřej Trojan

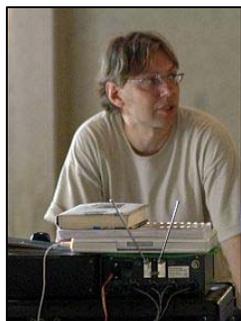
Up And Down – 2004, directed by Jan Hřebejk



As an editor, Barák has participated on a whole series of short films, such as the documentary **Ivan Kral Dancing Barefoot**, TV films such as the **Multicar Movie Show**, **Wartburg Movie Show** and **Milan Is Coming**. He also edited Petr Zelenka's TV film **Powers** and Igor Chaun's **The Red Card**.

Barák also regularly works on Czech Television's programs and is one of the chief creators behind the documentary series **Bigbít** and the satire **Česká soda** as well as the **Šedesátka** and **Trip** programs. He also edited the television portraits of hockey goalie Dominik Hašek and musician Vladimír Mišík as well as many music videos and commercials.

MICHAL HOLUBEC, sound recordist



Graduated FAMU in 1994. Worked for Czech Television since 1982. Worked on a plenty of shorts for both independent producers and Czech television. Main sound man on feature films **Razorblade** (1994), **Passionate Kiss** (1995), **Bridge of Stone** (1996), **Buttoners** (1997), **Royal Promise** (2001), **Year Of the Devil** (2002) and **Pupendo** (2003). Also worked for foreign crews: **Bohemians** (1997), **Dune** (1999), **Monkey King - Lost Empire** (2000), **Anne Frank: The Whole Story** (2001), **Children Of Dune** (2002).

A member of Cinema Audio Society. Three nominations for Best Film Sound Award, **2 Czech Lions** for **Year Of the Devil** (Petr Zelenka, 2000) and **Příběhy obyčejného šílenství** (Petr Zelenka, 2005). Has other two nominations for C.A.S. for **Dune**, **Anne Frank: The Whole Story**.

ALEŠ BŘEZINA, musician

Aleš Březina studied violin at the Pilsen Conservatory and musicology at universities in Prague and Basel. Since 1994 he has been the Director of the Bohuslav Martinu Institute in Prague. He has published in Czech and foreign magazines and miscellanies a number of specialist studies about 20th century music, primarily concerning the life and work of B. Martinů.

Alongside musicological and organisational activity, Březina has composed music for a number of films, theatre and television productions. Among the most notable are the films:

The Buttoners (directed by Petr Zelenka, 1998); **Divided We Fall** (directed by Jan Hřebejk, 2000) – nominated for the Oscar 2000 in the Best Foreign Film category, soundtrack by Sony BMG); **Up & Down** (directed by Jan Hřebejk, 2004) – nominated for the Czech Lion prize for the best music, soundtrack by Sony BMG) and the music for the German film **Through this night starring Corrina Harfouch** (directed by Dagmar Knöpfel, 2005). Apart from the film **Beauty In Trouble** he has worked this year on the highly expected film by Jiří Menzel **I Served the King of England**.



Producer



ONDŘEJ TROJAN, producer

TOTAL HELPART T.H.A.

Total HelpArt T.H.A. was founded by the following members of the Sklep theater group in 1992:

Ondřej Trojan: film and television director (FAMU graduate in 1990), producer, actor;

Jiří Burda: economist, screenwriter, theater director, actor;

Tomáš Hanák: actor, screenwriter, lyricist and moderator.

Total HelpArt T.H.A. is a film and television production and distribution company that focuses on feature films, production services for the Sklep theater company and organizational and commercial cultural activities.

Total HelpArt T.H.A., feature film history:

Cosy Dens (PELÍŠKY), directed by Jan Hřebejk, 1999

Produced by Total HelpArt for Total HelpArt and Czech Television

Winner at the Sydney International Film Festival

Divided We Fall (MUSÍME SI POMÁHAT), directed by Jan Hřebejk, 2000

Produced by Total HelpArt for Total HelpArt and Czech Television

Winner of five Czech Lions and other prestigious Czech film awards

Nominated for the Best Foreign Film Oscar in 2000 by the American Film Academy First Czech film ever included in the Sundance Film Festival official section

Sony Pictures Classics purchased the film for distribution in the United States and Canada and it entered the top 50 in its first weekend even though only eight copies (!) were in distribution.

Winner at many foreign film festivals, such as the Sydney International Film Festival

Out Of The City (CESTA Z MĚSTA), directed by Tomáš Vorel, 2000

Produced by Total HelpArt for Vorel Film, Total HelpArt and Czech Television

Cruel Joys (KRUTÉ RADOSTI), directed by Juraj Nvota, 2002

Co-producer

PUPENDO, directed by Jan Hřebejk, 2003

Produced by Total HelpArt for Total HelpArt and Czech Television

Zelary (ŽELARY), directed by Ondřej Trojan 2003

Produced by Total HelpArt for Total HelpArt, Barrandov Studio, Czech Television, Alef Film (Slovakia), Dor Film (Austria)

Nominated for the Best Foreign Film Oscar in 2003 by the American Film Academy Sony Pictures Classics purchased the film for distribution in the United States and Canada and it will be released on August 27, 2004.

Up And Down (HOREM PÁDEM), directed by Jan Hřebejk, 2004

Produced by Total HelpArt for Total HelpArt, Falcon and Czech Television



Total HelpArt T.H.A.'s short films:



Prgue 5, documentary about the Pražská 5 artistic and musical project
directed by Petr Nikolaev; produced for Czech Television, 1992

Pension, two-part TV Sklep theater group television film
directed by Ondřej Trojan; produced for Czech Television, 1993

Milles, a special presentation of the Sklep

theater group

directed by Ondřej Trojan; produced for Czech Television, 1994

Fireside Stories, a series of eight short stories

directed by Tomáš Vorel, Zdeněk Tyc, Ondřej Trojan, Václav Koubek; for Czech Television, 1994, 95

Forest Wisdom Sklep's New Year's presentation

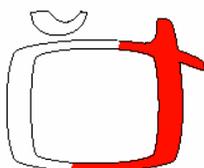
directed by Ondřej Trojan; for Czech Television, 1997

Multicar Movie Show and **Wartburg Movie Show** Sklep's New Year's presentation

directed by Ondřej Trojan; for Czech Television, 1998/99

Total HelpArt T.H.A. has also produced many music videos (Vltava, Karel Plíhal, Jaromír Nohavica, Ivan Hlas, Mňága a Žďorp, Divoké srdce ...) and commercials...

Coproducer



JAROSLAV KUČERA, Coproducer

Czech Television – Centre for Drama, Theatre and Music production

The Centre covers the main part of Czech Television drama production, i.e. produces television films broadcast in primetime on Sundays and Mondays series. The Centre is also involved in co-production of selected films for distribution. It takes care of transmissions of theatrical performances, concerts of classical music and pop music, produces series about theatre, books, music, and documentaries about art and personalities of our culture.

The Centre's chief script editors and specialist script editors for drama, theatre and music are headed by Head of Scripts Ivan Hubáč.

Two producers in chief are in charge of the production and economy of the Centre: producer in chief of drama production Jaroslav Kučera and producer in chief of theatre and music production Viktor Průša.

Jan Otčenášek is the chief script editor of drama production and Ondřej Šrámek is the chief script editor of theatre and music production. Individual script editors are in charge of editorial preparations, i.e. the selection of stories, work on scripts and cooperation with directors.

Directly subordinated to the producer in chief are heads of production who are responsible for the production proper of films and serials.

Since 2004, the Centre has produced several popular serials (**THE SEVEN OF SPADES RANCH, THE GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD, TOWN SQUARE, VILLAGE GREEN, THE LAST SEASON**) and films appreciated both by critics and viewers (**3+1 WITH MIROSLAV DONUTIL, OVERSIZED LITTLE THINGS, 9 LIVES, IN NOMINE PATRIS**) and coproduced the following feature films: **LOVERS AND MURDERERS, INDIAN AND THE NURSE, SKRITEK, OVER AND OVER!, STILL LIVING** and **LUNACY**. Jan Hřebejk's **BEAUTY IN TROUBLE** is one of the films prepared for this year.

About HBO in Czech Republic and Slovakia



Home Box Office, America's leading premium television network arrived in the Central European Region in 1991, providing basic and premium pay television entertainment channels. HBO was launched in the Czech Republic in 1994 whilst in 1997 it expanded its services to Slovakia.

Currently the HBO family offers two premium pay television channels HBO and Cinemax in Czech and Slovak Republics. Addition to this, HBO is responsible for the distribution of a documentary channel, Spektrum and also a basics action and adventure channel AXN owned by Sony Pictures Entertainment. The channels are distributed via cable and satellite.

HBO is bringing the biggest blockbusters, award winning original series, exclusive events and the biggest stars into the home. The channel is politics and commercial free, and delivers programming around the clock.

Cinemax is a movie channel, showing top movies with top stars in entertaining stories, International and European award winning films, film festival hits and evergreen movies. Cinemax provides additional choice for real movie lovers. Cinemax broadcasts 24 hours a day without commercial interruption.

HBO office in Czech and Slovak Republics is located in Prague.

Partners



in cooperation
with



general partner



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media partner

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