

## PRESS RELEASE

April 24, 2019

### THE 59th ZLIN FILM FESTIVAL WILL SPEAK IN THE SPIRIT OF EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

Prague – The 59th Zlín Film Festival will feature 280 films from 51 countries around the world. In addition to representatives from traditional film superpowers, it will offer audiences films from non-traditional countries, such as Ethiopia and Albania. The theme of the festival this year is exploring and discovering, which is the central idea of the film and supporting program. The festival will start on May 24 and will run until June 1, 2019.

The oldest and largest film festival of its kind in the world will start in exactly one month in Zlín and other satellite towns. The Film Festival will open on Friday, May 24 with a Czech feature film that combines elements of animated, stop-motion, and live-acted film called **TvMiniUni: The Thief of Questions**, by Janek Jirků, which will have its world premiere in Zlín. During the opening evening for adult audiences there will be the Czech premiere of the Australian family film **Storm Boy**, directed by Shawn Seet and starring Geoffrey Rush. Both films are part of the international children's film competition.

Zlín Film Festival's program directors have watched over 3,600 films this year in order to select **280 films** to present to festival audiences. *"We are continuing the trend of reducing the number of films in the program, responding to the demands of the festival community and placing a preference on quality. In practice, this means more room for repeat showings of films and allowing viewers to see more films,"* says Markéta Pášmová, artistic director, adding: *"This year's program is a lot about premieres, i.e. films that will be shown for the first time in the Czech Republic or at any festival at all. We are lucky enough to have enough new titles and interest in productions to have their premieres in Zlín. In relation to other festivals, we will be able to offer a lot of new films to audiences and foreign guests."*

The number of competition categories has been maintained; there will be six again. Viewers can look forward to films for children and youth, European directorial debuts, documentary films for children and youth, animation and student films. *"This year we have 32 feature films, 62 short animated films, and 51 short student films,"* calculates the artistic director.

Many personalities will also collect awards in Zlín this year for their work in the field of children's film productions. The Grand Prix of the Zlín Film Festival for the long-term contribution to the development of cinematography for children and youth will be taken this year by **executive director of TV station ČT :D, Petr Koliha**. There will also be one new award in the European debut category, called **The Karel Zeman Award - Special Jury Prize for Visual Image in Film**. The festival organizers



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and the Drop of Hope Foundation will unveil stars on the Walk of Fame in front of the Grand Cinema  
this year for singer **Helena Vondráčková** and the actor **Jan Hrušínský**.

59<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival for Children and Youth



## Festival film themes

With an eye towards the 100th birthday of the famous traveller Miroslav Zikmund, the main theme of the 59th year of the film festival will be focused on discovery and learning. Travelling themes will be blended in with both the film and supporting program. This year, the film program structure has been transformed in order to make the three basic program blocks clear and visible. In addition to its traditional competitions and a new section called FESTIVAL CLASSICS, the 2019 film festival will focus on EXPLORE & DISCOVER. *"Film audiences can look forward to discovery and exploration in three areas: NATURE, PEOPLE, and COUNTRY,"* Art Director Markéta Pášmová reminds us and adds that more than 40 films and documentaries will be screened within this section.

In the non-competition section devoted to **Nature**, we will present world-renowned natural history documentaries that will provide interesting, instructive and unique moments to primarily young audiences. They will not fail to accent the topics of ecology and environmental protection. Guests will include the producer, director and maker of shark films **Steve Lichtag**, who will lead young audiences through the unique Aldabra Atoll ecosystem, among others. Other attractions from the world of nature will be brought by director **Marián Polák**, the author of the award-winning documentary *Wilder Than Wilderness*. He will talk to children about the topic "Never Film Animals!" Another guest will include **Přemysl Rabas**, the director of the Zoo in Dvůr Králové. He is accompanying a documentary that maps the life and death of Sudan, the last white rhino in the world.

The chapter devoted to the theme of **People** will focus on live-acted feature films about the native inhabitants of various parts of the world – including Inuits, Australians, Maori, Native Americans and many others – through which we can look into the extraordinary lives of these ethnic groups. Among the guests of this section include **Mnislav Atapana Zeleny**, an ethnologist, writer and journalist, and "Maoravian" (half Maori, half Moravian) **Frank Tomas Grapl**, who will show and perhaps teach audiences the traditional Maori dance the Haka and talk about the life of his ancestors in New Zealand. There will be an interesting probe into the lives of people in one of the coldest inhabited places on Earth – in the Russian village of **Oymyakon** (-72 degrees Celsius) with a film by a talented young student named Dominik Bari, who received the support of the Leonardo DiCapria Foundation and whose film was nominated for an Oscar.

Finally, the **Country** section will present a profile of Balkan cinema. In 15 full-length feature live-acted films, audiences will get to know the lively and hospitable atmosphere of former Yugoslavia, as well as Albania and Bulgaria. The festival will present the work of Albanian children's film director **Xhanfis Keko**. With the contribution of the Albanian National Film Archive, two of her works will be part of the Balkan film section - *Spoiled Mimosa* (1973) and *Tomka and His Friends* (1977). An integral part of the Earth section will be a program block dedicated to Miroslav Zikmund and those who followed in his footsteps. The festival will present two narrated montages composed of Hanzelka & Zikmund films intended for children and youth. Film screenings and discussions with travelers will follow that. The list of competition films and pictures in the EXPLORE & DISCOVER section can be found at [www.zlinfest.cz](http://www.zlinfest.cz)



## Czech representation in the festival program

Czech film will have a relatively strong representation at the festival. Aside from the opening and competition film in the category for children, **TvMiniUni: The Thief of Questions**, the Czech-German co-production **Scent of Oranges** by director Ivan Pokorný will have its premiere in the category of competition films for youth. Fighting for the Golden Slipper in the category of short animated films against films from all over the world is a new bedtime story from Czech Television called **The Kokoška Family on the Road**, directed by Zlín director Ivo Hejcman.

Festival audiences will also be able to see some films outside the competition, such as **The Magic Quill**, **Great Adventure of the Lucky Four**, and the Czech Lion-winning films **Winter Flies** and **King Skate**. In the EXPLORE & DISCOVER section, the Czech Republic will be represented by **The Ark of Lights and Shadows**, **Trabant: There and Back Again** and **A Journey Like No Other**.

The festival dramaturgy has also prepared a new format for this year's festival called **Film Lessons**, which will allow children to learn more about interesting personalities and historical events of our history. Education will take place through the ČT: D programs, which were created for the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic (Cycle of Stars, Speaking of Our Country, At Seven at the Horse, Scout Post).

The complete film program will be available on May 10, 2019 at [www.zlifest.cz](http://www.zlifest.cz)

## Juries and Other Famous Festival Stars

This year, competitive films will again be judged by experts and child judges from different countries from around the world. *"The Czech Republic is represented by the director and producer **Petr Oukropec** and together with film professionals from Canada, the Netherlands, India and Serbia will be focused on films for children and youth. It is also worth mentioning that the chairperson of the main jury this year is **Xiaojuan Zhou**, president of the Canadian distribution company Attraction Distribution, which is a world leader in the realm of children's and family film. Director, journalist and newest holder of the Czech Lion award for the documentary **King Skate**, **Šimon Šafránek**, will, together with other colleagues, judge European debuts and **Libor Pixa**, a director of animated film, will deal with short animated films. Producer **Tomáš Michálek** will join the jury for student film,"* says Markéta Pášmová.

While two promising actors came to Zlín last year, Art Parkinson (*Game of Thrones*) and Josh Wiggins (*The Bachelors*), the 59th Zlín Film Festival will welcome three young European actresses. **Jordane Jones** from Ireland returns to Zlín after some years to present the competition debut of Irish actor Hugh O'Connor (*My Left Leg*, *Chocolate*), *Metal Heart*. Seventeen-year-old actress **Eleanor Worthington-Cox** and director William McGregor are coming from the UK; at the age of ten, Eleanor became the youngest Laurence Olivier Award winner for her performance in the musical *Matilda*. She

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is currently acting in the popular Britannia series. Gwen brings us a dark historical story from Wales to Zlín. The trio of this year's Young Stars will be composed of **Milena Tschardtke**, the newest winner of the German Golden Camera Award for discovery of the year. Viewers can see this rising German star in the drama *Isy Way Out*.

## Film Industry program

For five years, an integral part of the festival has been a program for film professionals, which as of this year will go by the name of ZLÍN INDUSTRY DAYS. Based on gained experience and contacts, it will be more about being a co-working / networking platform specializing in the development of the film industry in the area of children's or youth film and support for young and emerging filmmakers.

The program for film professionals will undergo structural changes; it will be divided by genre into three blocks: ADVISE ME (conference), INSPIRE ME (masterclasses), MEET ME (co-working platforms). Each day will be named by topic and target audience:

### Inspiring Industry Day / Tuesday, May 28.

- Media for children conference, media with children organized by RRTV
- Competition for financial support for audiovisual projects announced by the FILMTALENT ZLÍN foundation / Pitching
- Rainbow Marble – a conference on film marketing organized by TBU students

### International Industry Day / Wednesday, May 29

- Works in Progress – presentation of Czech, Slovak, and Balkan films in post-production phase
- Share with Us – a presentation of projects, platforms and innovations that can be shared between festivals
- Festival Community – a meeting of festival representatives

### Networking Industry Day / Thursday, May 30

- Film Analysis – Czech films through the eyes of film science students at UP in Olomouc
- ANOMALIA One 2 One – networking meetings with a unique opportunity for artists, illustrators, animators, studios and producers looking for new members for their teams or seeking original ideas
- Film Exchange – a networking platform for filmmakers, business representatives, students and people of different professions who have something to offer to filmmakers and want to work with them

### Innovation Industry Day / Friday, May 31

- New Cinema – working with films for children in Czech cinemas / a seminar for cinema operators
- Green Screen – greening the film industry – a workshop for film professionals on the issue of sustainable development in the audiovisual sector



## Supporting program

The film program is also traditionally complemented by a varied supporting program. It consists of a number of theater performances, concerts, workshops, professional lectures, exhibitions, interactive and benefit programs, as well as sports and social events.

Miroslav Zikmund's significant life anniversary is commemorated by the festival not only by screened films, but also with debates and exhibitions, on whose program and content the Museum of Southeastern Moravia in Zlín has cooperated with and, of course, the Hanzelka and Zikmund Club in Zlín. *"It is worth mentioning the Zikmund100 project, which maps the journeys of H+Z from 1959 to '64 and provides documentation of a retrospective nature 54 years after their journeys, and a lecture by the film director and traveller **Petr Horký** connected with the screening of the film "A Century of Miroslav Zikmund", says the festival's president Čestmír Vančura, who adds: "The theme of travel will also be reflected in supporting activities for children. Through the popular educational program "In the Footsteps of Zikmund and Hanzelka" in Comenius Park, we will provide children with a unique way to learn about interesting places from their journeys."*

Connecting to the "EXPLORE & DISCOVER" theme, among the festival's guests there will also be significant Czech travellers, travel popularizers, and adventurers whom festival goers will be able to meet both at and outside of film lectures. In addition to the above-mentioned **Steve Lichtag** and **Mnislav Atapana Zelený**, others who have accepted invitations to Zlín include adventurer with a yellow Trabant **Dan Přibáň** and professional traveler and journalist Lucie Radová, who among other things toured South America in a tuktuk. A series of travel lectures will be accompanied by the artist, writer and traveller **Dorota Nvotová** and photographers **Václav Šilha** and **Jan Rybář**. Visitors can also look forward to a talk called **Socks Travelling**, which will be on low-cost travel and about an adventure tour through India on rickshaws.

A traditional part of the Zlín Film Festival is the auction of artistically rendered film clapperboards. This year's collection of film clapperboards is made up of 124 original pieces by leading domestic artists, some of whom have been involved in the project since its very beginning. The 22nd year of the Film Clapperboard Salon has five stops this year and will culminate again with a traditional auction that will take place on May 26 in the Congress Center in Zlín.

For the fourth time, the film festival in Zlín will finish with the Festival MONET + Zlín Half-Marathon, which is scheduled to start on Saturday, June 1 at 4 pm. Preceding this, at 2 pm, will be the popular Festival Family Run with ING Bank; it's a 1400-meter course designed for parents with children and for those who prefer shorter runs.

The 59th Zlín Film Festival will officially come to a conclusion with the screenings and supporting program in Mikulov, where the Mikulov Echoes of the Zlín Film Festival will be held for the third time, June 7-11.

A new item at this year's festival will be special food areas, where both young and older visitors will have the opportunity to eat during the whole of the festival. A special electronic chip system will be



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introduced to speed up the check-in process. Selected restaurants in Zlín will also be included in the festival's catering system. They will offer guests a special festival menu.

The complete program and the possibility of online ticket purchases will be enabled by a festival application for smartphones.

## About the Zlín Film Festival

The Zlín Film Festival – International Film Festival for Children and Youth is the oldest and, currently, largest film festival of its kind in the world. *"The festival's mission is to present international film productions for children and teenagers, to make them accessible to the child audiences, and offer a high-quality alternative to commonly available audiovisual content,"* says the president of Zlín Film Festival, Čestmír Vančura. He also adds: *"An important aspect of the festival is to educate young audiences through the medium of film, expand their awareness of the outside world, and develop their aesthetic, social, and moral feelings. The aim of the program is to contribute to the development of Czech cinema for children and youth."*

**This year's 59th ZLÍN FILM FESTIVAL will be held from May 24 to June 1, 2019 in Zlín and in many other cities in the Czech Republic. The organizer of the festival is the company FILMFEST, s.r.o..**

You can find out more at [www.zlinfest.cz](http://www.zlinfest.cz).

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The organizer of the Zlín Film Festival, FILMFEST, s.r.o., would also like to thank all of our partners and supporters, who were absolutely crucial for making it possible for the 59th festival to happen. They are:

**Co-organizer:** statutory city of Zlín

**General partner:** Kovárna VIVA a.s.

**General Media Partner:** Czech Television

**Financial supporters:** Ministry of Culture, Zlín Region, State Fund of Cinematography, City of Otrokovice

**Main partners:** ENAPO OBCHODNÍ a.s.; ŠKODA AUTO a.s.; KOMA MODULAR s.r.o.; Zlaté jablko, a.s.; GOLDEN APPLE CINEMA, a.s.

**Main media partners:** Czech radio; Total Film

**Significant partners:** Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně; PFNonwovens Czech s.r.o.; MONET+,a.s.; ING Bank N.V.; ABB s.r.o.; Navláčil stavební firma, s.r.o.; EUROVIA CS, a.s.; ROBE Lighting s. r. o.; PRIA SYSTEM s.r.o.; IS Produkce s.r.o.; IMPROMAT-COMPUTER s.r.o.; POZIMOS, a.s.; DISK Systems, s.r.o.; DHL Express (Czech Republic) s.r.o.

