

ALEF FILM & MEDIA

presents
feature film

directed by
JURAJ NVOTA

HOSTAGE

original title

RUKOJEMNÍK



BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE FILM:

Story: Peter Pišťanek, Marian Urban
Scriptwriter: Peter Pišťanek, Marian Urban
Director: Juraj Nvota
Line Producer: Jana Horáková
Director of Photography: Marek Diviš
Editor: Alojs Fišárek
Sound&mix Peter Gajdoš&Petr Lenděl
Music: Ľubica Malachovská Čekovská
Production Designer: Pavol Andraško
Costume Designer: Simona Vacháľková
Make-up Artist: Zuzana Paulini, Juraj Steiner
Co-producers: Zdeněk Skaunic, Marek Urban, Peter Neved'al, Marek Mackovič
Producer: Marian Urban

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2014

Cast: Milan Lasica, Libuše Šafránková, Richard Labuda, Ondřej Vetchý, Alexander Bárta, Slávka Halčáková, Christopher Pauliny, Ady Hajdu, Szidi Tobias, Robo Roth, Miro Noga, Ondřej Malý a ďalší

This film was financially supported by Slovak Audiovisual Fund and State fund of cinematography (Czech republic)

Locations: Bratislava and surroundings, Vienna, Kaunertal (Alps)
Length: 102 min
Genre: dramedy, family film, tragicomedy
Year of production: 2014
Country of origin: SR/ČR
Format: 2D; 1:2,35 (DCP), 16:9 (HD cam)
Sound: 5.1. Dolby Digital
Opening night: 4/12/2014 Praha (CZ), 8/1/2015 Bratislava (SK)
Official website: www.rukojemnik.sk

HEADLINE

THE WORLD IS DIFFERENT THROUGH THE CHILDREN'S EYES.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Tragicomic story about the world of children heroes - particularly the son of a local Communist officer and his friend, a little hostage of the regime, thanks to the parents who emigrated to the West, few years before the legendary period of "Prague Spring" and the occupation of Czechoslovakia. A family film including not only camaraderie, the first big discoveries of love, enemy gang fights and naïve ideas, confronted with reality of "adult" world. First contacts with bizarre and absurd reality of relationships and attitudes of adults, politics, emigration, but also betrayal and death and how all those things form and transform the lives of small boys, who are forced to grow up too quickly.

DIRECTOR'S NOTICE

Already the first reading of the Hostage captivates the reader. There, Peter Pišťánek opens the first chapter – childhood. The co-author Marian Urban had a good nose for his unpublished short stories, thus initiating the origination of cinematisation of this material. Proverbial slapstick of Pišťánek about communism takes place from the child's point of view. Wonderful world of small children and big revelations takes priority. I confess that the occasion to learn from the young was welcome by me with pleasure. It is well-known that they give us more than we do to them. With our help they allegedly get to know the world that already exists, we, however, learn from them, what the world looks like today and what it will look like tomorrow.

The first ten minutes of the movie are most important. Pišťánek and Urban start the narration of their story with a magic moment – Christmas Eve. The well-known ritual of unpacking the presents in different families, of different habits and values is enchanting. Everything is clear, the story of several families and in particular children starts. The movie is expressed in images, each scene represents a strongly emotive perception. The script delivers a strong situational, relationship- and dialogue-related axis, whereas I as the director know that work with children brings about, in good meaning, also the magic of unwanted. Not everything can be put in words, dialogue, but what cannot be expressed with actors, cannot be expressed anyway. With the cameraman we shall patiently strive to capture the unrepeatably moments of small philosophers, who reveal the absurdity of the world and its relationships from the beginning. Children always accept and seek models. Thus, in their world, also the adults' world is reflected. In most cases, it is amusing to find oneself in such a reflection, but sometimes also not. For example, a child of the communist ideologist in the story, is just like his father, endowed with a fair amount of fantasy or in other words, with the ability to delude the others. Naturally, a soldier's child searches for the inferiors among children, whom he wants to command and etc.



The story is colourful and original. Pišťanek and Urban bring a spectrum of portraits from the ranks of adults, also by making them small. The characters of the courageous, timid, believers, atheists, loyal, uncompromising, naive, cynical and the others are built in a conspicuous action, situation, images and relationships. Unlike the adults' world, the world of children is full of energy, emotions, fantasy and humour. The main character, our Hostage, is in a unique situation. He lives without parents. He is taken care of by his grandparents. In the childhood, many times, grandchildren trust more their grandfathers, than fathers. In our story it is also like that.

Good movies have one theme layered, and in different forms. As the title of the script implies, the story is something like „amarcord“ of a small boy, living in the border village. Children usually cluster in smaller, but sometimes also bigger communities, which many times fight each other. Our hero experiences also such moments of the war of the buttons. Also the first love, the first betrayal, the first offence, as well as the first punishment. The most dominant relationship of the story is however between the grandfather and his grandson. The grandfather knows that children are more likely to accept an idol rather than a criticism. The scriptwriters know it as well and prepared a basic pattern of attitudes to freedom, might, fear, the good and the evil for us. As if everything repeated in human history. From this point of view the mankind seems to drive on the ring-road, finding no way out. The direction of the story leads through the final crisis to a surprising and precious catharsis. The authors of the script do not overcrowd their story with motives that are offered to them. In the meaning of the motto that less is sometimes more, they bring their small hero to a big decision.

Juraj Nvota



JURAJ NVOTA – director

- stage, film and TV director was born in 1954 in Bratislava. Studied theater direction at the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava.

He started his career at Theater of Children and Youth in Trnava and Gradually he work in the Naïve Theatre of Radosina, Theater of the Slovak National Uprising in Martin, in Studio L+S. Since 1992 he has been the resident director for Astorka Korzo'90 and he also regularly works with the Studio Ypsilon in Prague.

As an associate professor (1999) Juraj Nvota teaches at the Theater School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava.

He is also known as an actor (Ružové sny, Tichá radosť or Všetko, čo mám rád).

FILMOGRAPHY

2014 – **Rukojemník (Hostage)**

2012 – **eŠtėBák (Confident)**

IGRIC'2012 award (Slovakia) – for the screenplay

2008 – **Muzika (Music)**

Special jury prize 24th IFF Warsaw, Poland

Best film – Award of the Ministry of Culture; 34th IFF Zlín, Czech Republic

Award of Slovak film critics 2008

9 category prizes at the national film awards Slnko v sieti (SUN in a NET)
2008

IGRIC 2008 - Ľuboš Kostelný, Juraj Nvota

GOLDEN CAMERA 2008

The Rudolf Sloboda award 2008 for the screenplay

2002 – **Kruté radosti (Cruel joys)**

IGRIC 2003 for the Best Full-Length Slovak Film

Award of the Slovak Film Critics for 2003

Prize of the Audience - 4th FF in Cran-Gevrier



MARIAN URBAN – co-writer & producer

1975 - Graduate from the Academy of Performing Arts (VŠMU) Bratislava, Department of the screenwriting and script editing
1975 - 1977 freelance screenwriter
1977 - Script editor in the Studio of Short Film production
1989 - Director of Studio ALEF (former ŠKF) in SFT Bratislava
1992 - General Director of Slovenska filmova tvorba
1993 - Owner and producer of ALEF Studio, Ltd.
1997 - Founder and general manager of ALEF Film&Media Group
1999 - Member of the European Film Academy
2000 - President of the Slovak Audiovisual Producer' Association

From filmography:

▪ **Screenplays**

- 1980 **The Emotional Education of one Daša** (dir. by Ján Zeman)
1992 **The End of the Game** (with Dušan Mitana)
1992 **The Rivers of Babylon** (with Peter Pišťanek; dir. by Vlado Balco)
Prize of Rudolfa Slobodu – Annual film prize of LITA for screenplay
2014 **Hostage** (with Peter Pišťanek)

▪ **Producer**

- 1992-1993 **History of Slovakia** (30 short documentaries)
1996 **Paper Heads** - dir. D. Hanák (Slovak-French-Swiss co-production)
1998 **Rivers of Babylon** - dir. V. Balco (Slovak-Czech co-production))
2002 **Cruel Joys** – dir. J. Nvota (Slovak-Czech co-production)
2003 **Forrest walkers** – dir. I. Vojnár (Czech-Slovak –French co-production)
2004 **Želary** – dir. O. Trojan (Czech-Slovak-Austrian co-production)
2007 **Muzika** – dir. J. Nvota (Slovak-German co-production)
2008 **Small Celebration** – dir. Zd.Tyc (Slovak-Czech- Italian co-production)
2009 **Eye in the Wall** – dir. M.Kohout (Slovak-Czech co-production)
2010 **Sign of horse** – dir. M.Cieslar (TV series)
2011 **The Enchanting World of Animated Film** – dir.R.Urc & M.Urban (TV series)
2013 **Indian Summer** – r. Gejza Dezorz (Slovak-Czech co-production)
2013 **Cyril & Methodius – The Apostles of the Slavs** – dir. P. Nikolaev (Czech- Slovak-Slovenia -Russian co-production) 4-parts docu-drama
2013 **Square in the circle or Life between escapes and dreams** – dir. L. Štecko
Slovak-Czech co-production
2014 **Cyril & Methodius – The Apostles of the Slavs** – dir- P. Nikolaev, feature film
(Slovak-Czech co-production)

ALEF FILM & MEDIA

is among the first Slovak production houses established in Slovakia during the post-1989 era. The basic goal of our activity is the development and realisation of film projects in the genre of fiction, documentary and animated film. **ALEF** produced and co-produced films with partners from many European countries (*UNLIMITED Films, EOS Films Lausanne, Margo Films Paris, DOR Film Wien, ZDF Mainz, TotalHelpArt Prague* and others). The most successful productions: **PAPER HEADS** - e.g.: GOLDEN SPIRE 40. IFF San Francisco, RUNNER UP prize 8. IFF Yokohama and **ŽELARY 2003** – e.g.: The nomination for the best foreign language film - The American Academy Awards – OSCAR- 2004. **MUSIC 2007** – e.g. 9 x SUN in The NET - 2008, National Film Awards by Slovak Film Academy and so on. Now in Slovak distribution and soon in the international distribution: **HOSTAGE 2014**.

FROM FILMOGRAPHY:

INDIAN SUMMER (2013)

- Directed by Gejza Dezoz, Slovak – Czech coproduction
- Thriller
- **Selected to** : IFF Tirana , FF Budapest

SMALL CELEBRATION (2008)

- Directed by Zdeněk Tyc , Slovak – Czech – Italian coproduction
IGRIC 2009 – award the best actress
- **Selected to:** IFF Sevilla (2009), IFIF Rome (2009), IFF Seget (2009), LAF Zwierzyńc, 2009 Finals, Plzeň (2009)

MUSIC (2008)

- Directed by Juraj Nvota, Slovak – German coproduction
- THE SPECIAL PRIZE OF JURY 24.IFF Warszaw, Poland
- The Prize of Ministry of Culture Czech Republic, IFF Zlín
- Ther prize of Slovak film critics 2008
- The Film MUZIKA won 9 National Film Awards SLNKO V SIETI (The Sun in a Net) 2008 (for the period 2006 – 2007)
- IGRIC 2007– award for director and leading actor Lubos Kostelny
- GOLDEN CAMERA'2008
- Rudolf's SLOBODA PRIZE 2008 for script

Selected to: 43rd IFF Karlove Vary, Czech Republic; IFF Montreal, Canada; IFF Vilnius, Latvia; IFF Sofia, Bulgaria; IFF Warszaw, Poland ; European Film Festival Chicago, USA; European Film Festival Nairobi, Kenya; European Film Festival Edinburgh, Scotland; EFF London, Great Britain; New Wave Festival, New York, USA; IFF Subotica, Serbia; International Music & Film Festival Jecheon, Korea; EFF Segovia, Spain....

ŽELARY (2004)

- directed by Ondrej Trojan, Czech – Austrian - Slovak coproduction
- OSCAR – The American Academy Awards nomination for the best foreign language film, 2004
- Czech Lion for the best actress – 2004
- Czech Lion for the best sound - 2004
- The Prize of the Slovak film critics 2004
- The Prize for the Best Film Music, IFF Karachi

- The Prize for Ana Geislerova - The Best Woman Actress, IFF Bangkok, Thailand, 2005
- The Prize of Audience, IFF Sydney

Selected to: Sydney Intl. Film Festival, Australia, 2004; IFF Karlovy Vary, 2004; IFF Edinburgh, Great Britain, 2004; World Film Festival Montreal, Canada, 2004; IFF Warsaw, Poland 2004; FF Cottbus, Germany, 2004; FF Seville, Spain, 2004; IFF Bangkok, Thailand, 2005; FF Cairo, Egypt, 2005 and many others

FORREST WALKERS (2003)

- directed by Ivan Vojnar, Czech – French - Slovak coproduction
- The Main Prize of Minister of Culture of CR
- The Visegrad Country's Film Competition / IFF Zlin

Selected to: IFF Rotterdam, 2003; IFF Prague (Febiofest), 2003; IFF Karlovy Vary, 2003; IFF Zlin, 2003; IFF Jerusalem, 2003; IFF Sao Paulo, 2004; IFF Calcutta, 2004; FF New York, 2004

CRUEL JOYS (2002)

- directed by Juraj Nvota, Slovak - Czech coproduction
- Igric – The Best Slovak Film, 2003
- The Prize of the Slovak Film Critics, 2002
- Silver Arrow – the Best Man Actor Ondrej Vetchy, IFF Faces of Love Moscow, 2004

Selected to: IFF Karlovy Vary 2003, CR, 2003; Finale Plzeň, CR, 2003; MECCA, Fort Film, Terezín, CR, 2003 ; IFF, Jerusalem, Israel 2003, Finale Plzeň, CR, 2003 20-th JIFF, Jerusalem, Israel, 2003; 8-th PIFF, Pusan, Korea, 2003; IFFI New Delhi, India, 2003; Denver IFF, Denver, USA, 2003; LIFF 2003, London, Great Britain, 2003; Kyiv IFF 2003, Kiev, Ukraine 2003; Cottbus IFF 2003, Cottbus, Germany, 2003; Medfilm Festival 2003 Rome, Rome, Italy, 2003; IFF Faces of Love 2003, Moscow, Russia, 2004 and many others

RIVERS OF BABYLON (1998)

- directed by Vlado Balco, Slovak-Czech coproduction
- The prize of spectators – IFF Torun, 1999
- The prize of the Slovak critics 1998 - for the producer
- The prize of Rudolf Sloboda – for the best Slovak screenplay
- Igric – the prize for the best director, D.O.P. and producer 1998

Selected to: IFF Karlovy Vary, 1998; IFF Antalya Golden Orange, Antalya, 1998; IFF Mannheim-Heidelberg, 1998; AFI Fest '98, Los Angeles, 1998; IFF Molodist 1998, Kyiv, Ukraine 1998; IFF London, 1998; IFF Cottbus, Germany, 1998; IFF Cairo, Egypt, 1998; IFF Alpe Adria Cinema, Trieste, 1999; IFF The Nortel Palm Springs, USA, 1999 ; IFF Santa Monica, USA, 1999; 22th Göteborg IFF, 1999 ; 5th Bradford FF, Great Britain, 1999; Freedom FF 1999, Los Angeles, 1999; Freedom FF 1999, Berlin, Germany, 1999 and many others

PAPER HEADS (1996)

- directed by Dusan Hanak, Slovak – French – Swiss - German coproduction
- GOLDEN SPIRE 40. IFF San Francisco
- Special prize of Jury 33. IFF Karlovy Vary

- Runner - up prize 8. IFF Yokohama
- Special mention 11. IFF Hong - Kong
- Igric – the best Slovak film, 1996
- Kristián – the best Czech film, 1996

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In Slovakia distributed by:



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