



Karlovy Vary
International Film Festival

Festival Daily

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PRÁVO

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Madness exhausts others, not me

Crystal Globe winner Isabelle Huppert says she might try directing

Honza Dědek

Although Isabelle Huppert is probably best known to English-speaking audiences for her appearances in David O. Russell's *I Heart Huckabees* and Michael Cimino's *Heaven's Gate*, she has also starred in some of the most striking French films of the last Three decades, including *La dentelière*, *Loulou* and *La pianiste*. The fact that she has appeared in a record 16 films testifies to her standing in French film. She came to KVIFF this week to pick up the festival's Crystal Globe for Outstanding Artistic Contribution to World Cinema.

■ **You made your debut in *Les valseuses*, alongside Gérard Dépardieu who was not such a huge star at the time. What are your memories of him?**

It was a very pleasant though short encounter. Later, I played in *Loulou* with him. Dépardieu is a great French actor. When you are playing with him everything flows naturally, you don't even feel like you are playing. And that is the magic of great actors.

■ **In film as well as in theater you often play mentally deranged women. Would you perhaps like to take a break? Do you feel exhausted by this sort of role?**

No, it does not exhaust me. Maybe it exhausts others but not me. I have just finished a comedy directed by the young French director Marc Fitoussi called *Copacabana*. It was very interesting work and I enjoyed it very much. I do make comedies but not as often as dramas, but that's because there are very few comedies with enough depth that would interest me. In the film I appear alongside my



Isabelle Huppert who received KVIFF's Crystal Globe for her outstanding contribution to cinema.

daughter Lolita Chammah. If a comedy role comes up, I'm all for it.

■ **How did you feel about your daughter becoming an actress? Were you happy?**

I think it did make me happy because I believe she is talented and she has a lot ahead of her. Also I know from my own experience what the life of an actress entails; there is a lot of joy but also a lot of disappointment. But I believe I have taught her how to resist the disadvantages and

how to enjoy the advantages that this job brings along.

■ **A photo show in New York's Museum of Modern Art, called *Isabelle Huppert: Woman of Many Faces*, featured photographs of you taken by many renowned photographers. What was the collaboration like and which one of those pictures reflects the true you?**

The exhibition started in New York but then traveled around the world, currently it is in

by 120 different photographers and each of them sees her differently. So it always shows a different approach by the photographer and a different way of seeing. It presents their own personality.

■ **Do you have any other creative ambitions besides acting?**

You mean to become a director? No, not really. It's true that my work both in film and in theater has been so varied that I never really felt the need. I tried to make sure to appear in many different films. If I ever did try it, it would be more out of curiosity than real ambition, and also because I am being asked more and more often by other people. So I think maybe I will give it a try once just to see what my brain is capable of turning out.

■ **Many French actors, such as Jean Reno, for example, have attempted to establish themselves in Hollywood. How difficult is it to do this?**

I would like to say that there are not a great number of French actors who would really like to make it in Hollywood. They just happen to make an American film in Hollywood from time to time if they get a chance. Just as they would make Chinese or Russian films. It's not that America or Hollywood are a goal or dream for them. For me working on American films was always pleasant when I had the opportunity but there is no way I would give up the rest of the films I made in Europe that I would never have been able to make in the States. American films for me are just films that I made but not the ultimate goal. Things no longer work in such a way that an actor settles down in Hollywood to win recognition.

THE LOWDOWN

As *The Lowdown* has mentioned before, not all that's worth raving about at KVIFF involves serious drama, even if that form of film may indeed be an endangered species, according to *Taxi Driver* writer and *Adam Resurrected* director Paul Schrader. Sometimes, that is, you just gotta talk big-caliber handguns, drugs, hos and Cadillacs.

Thus it was that *The Lowdown* joined up with the (literally) huddled masses, pinning to get in at 11pm at the Thermal Hotel's Grand Hall for the screening of Scott Sanders's hilarious blaxploitation flick *Black Dynamite*. Central European audiences were clearly won over, by the scenes of **smack-crazed children and pimps** in hats that could double as manhole covers. And not only did they stay rapt till the end of the film, they next rushed to the Aeroport bar to see Sanders taking over the DJ decks. Queues snaked down the block – not a bad showing for a nice ex film student who has never before left North America, as Sanders confessed to audiences before the screening.

Idea for a great prank, courtesy of *The Lowdown*: Let's all tell him that Czech dudes always come before screenings wearing elevator shoes, gold chains and sunglasses at night to introduce directors – nothing special about the two who announced him at all... ■

A special English-language edition of the **Czech Cinema magazine *Film a Doba*** is being distributed at KVIFF free-of-charge. Among other things, this edition, which was co-produced by the Czech Ministry of Culture, contains interviews with Czech filmmakers Jan Švankmajer, Petr Zelenka and Bohdan Sláma. You can pick up a free copy from the Press Centre on the first floor of the Thermal. ■

SEE YOU THERE

Haim Tabakman

Director, *Eyes Wide Open*

Broken Embraces, by Pedro Almodóvar, is a movie about this director who becomes blind. And one of the main themes involves returning to a movie he did 15 years ago, which I felt was like Almodóvar talking about how he's changed as a filmmaker ... as if he was saying, "Look, I've been there, but I've moved beyond that." I found it touching, this feeling of tender adulthood, like not being able to go back to the stuff he did before. I think this would be a good film for anybody interested in life and love ... and the feeling of maybe having lost something along the way but at the same time gaining something else.

Broken Embraces screens today at 2pm in the Thermal's Grand Hall. You can also see Haim's film *Eyes Wide Open* on July 10 at 11.30am in the Thermal's Grand Hall and July 11 at 9.30pm in the Čas Cinema.



THE KNOWLEDGE

KVIFF's other (non-statutory) awards

As filmmakers and housebreakers both know, the Crystal Globe is a substantial trophy. But **hefty statuettes** aren't the only prize available for films screened at the festival. A quick glimpse at KVIFF's webpage shows that the number and type of non-statutory honors vary yearly. Next week there will be many opportunities for filmmakers to walk away with a prestigious prize – albeit, one that may not be heavy enough to smash open a locked door.

Only one Official Selection film can win the **Grand Prix**, but that doesn't mean the other contenders leave empty-handed. This year, the Official Selection films are also up for consideration from two non-statutory juries. The **International Federation of**

Film Societies will present the **Don Quijote Prize** to one outstanding film in the Official Selection, as will the **Ecumenical Jury** – comprising representatives from the Catholic association Signis and the Evangelical organization Interfilm.

"Like all of the juries, we are looking for something with high artistic value," says Ecumenical Jury member Jan Eliáš. "But we are also looking for something with hope and a positive message."

The **International Federation of Film Critics**, or FIPRESCI, also presents a non-statutory award to "promote film-art and to encourage new and young cinema." And since 2004, the **Forum of Independents** and **Czech**

Television have presented the **Independent Camera Award** to one film from that sidebar.

Two non-statutory prizes focus on specific regions. **The Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema** will present the NETPAC Award to an exceptional film from an Asian country. And **Europa Cinemas** will present the **Europa Cinema Label Award** to the best European film that premieres in the official competition and East of the West sidebar – 16 films in total this year. The winning film will receive promotional support and screen in theaters within the Europa Cinema network.

Each prize takes a different form, but they all carry prestige – which is **why people make films** in the first place, right? ■