

The Sun, Fat Yelling Lady and Strawberries – Czech cinematography

5HD280 From Kafka to Havel

Lecture 13



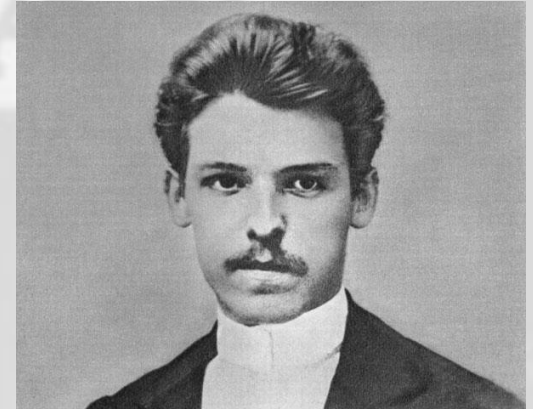
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MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVÍ,
MLÁDEŽE A TĚLOVÝCHOVY

The beginnings

- First movies by the end of the 19th century
- Jan Kříženecký
 - Model Sausage Man and the Poster (1898)
- Josef Šváb Malostranský
 - Laughter and Cry(1898)



Silent movie era

- From 1898 to 1930
- Changes from short sketches to movies of standard length
- Concerning feature film the activity between 1898–1910 was low
- Main wave began around 1910–1912

Silent movie era

Before 1918

- First film studios and companies were established
 - Kinofa (1911)
 - ASUM (1912)
 - Illusion (1906)
- Mostly comedies with loves story plots and Alegories



Silent movie era

Movies:

- Estrella
- Idyll from Old Prague
- Five Senses of Man
- Cycles of movies with main hero Rudi
- Cholera in Prague
- Mr. Professor, the Enemy of Women
- Faust (according to Gounod's Faust)



First cinema

- 1907 Biograph Ponrepo



Dobový reklamní leták na Ponrepův - útulný rodinný biograf-.

Number of Cinemas 1919– 2016

Year	Number
1919	490
1930	1817
1940	1354
1950	3109
1960	3520
1970	3496
1980	3083
1990	1531
1990	1889
2000	690
2010	701
2016	701

Different sources, 1919–1980 for Czechoslovakia; 1990–2016 for Czech rep.. Sources: https://www.kinosvetozor.cz/download/MP_Analyza_navstevnosti_ceskyh_kin.pdf, p. 29 for 1919–1990 and CZSO, for 1990–2016

Silent movie era

Period from 1918 to 1930

- Longer movies
- Adaptations of works of literature
 - Good Soldier Švejk (1926)
- Patriotic and historic themes
 - St. Wenceslas (1930)
- Comedies
 - First movies with Vlasta Burian
 - Lovers of an Old Criminal (1927)



Sound film and interwar period

- From international point of view Czech or Concerning feature film Czechoslovak film industry was not too important
- Only several films gained international recognition
- Many movies are popular among Czech audience up today

Sound film and interwar period

- Most of them were comedies
- They were mostly placed in cities and reflected life of middle and upper classes of society
- Despite crazy situations idyllic atmosphere of biedermeier's nature was present
 - Typical for Czech movies
- Almost every film ended by happy end

Sound film and interwar period

Barrandov studios

- Founder and builder: Miloš Havel
 - His father Václav Havel also established film company called Lucernafilm in 1912
 - In interwar period and especially during WWII it was the most important film producer
- Build and opened in 1933

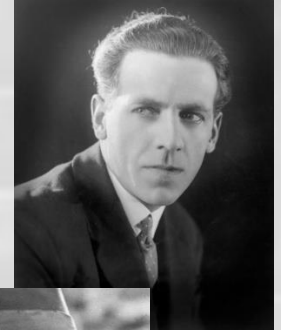
Barrandov Studios



Sound film and interwar period

Most popular and most known directors

- Karel Lamač (1897–1952)
- Martin Frič (1902–1968)
- Svatopluk Inneman (1896–1945)
- Gustav Machatý (1901–1963)
- Josef Rovenský (1894–1937)

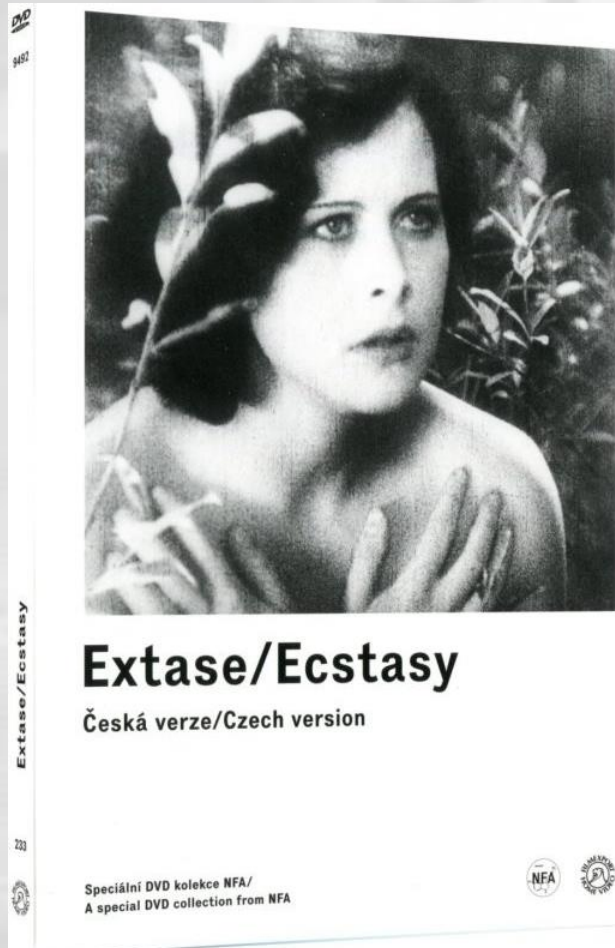


Sound film and interwar period

Internationally recognized and appreciated movies

- **Ecstasy (Extáze) – 1932 by Gustav Machatý**
 - Poetic movie with erotic and sexual scenes
- **River (Řeka) – 1933 by Josef Rovenský**
 - Lyrical and romantic
 - Landscape and nature is important expression element here

Sound film and interwar period

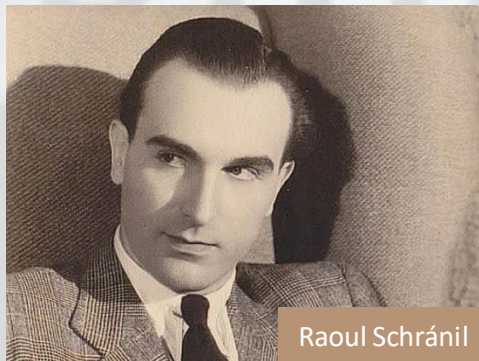


Sound film and interwar period

The most popular films among Czech audience

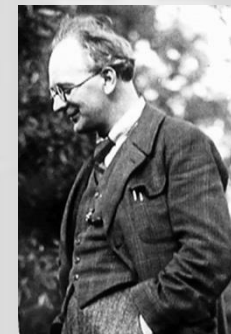
- Movies with Vlasta Burian
 - He Stood at the Till (U pokladny stál) – 1939
 - Ducháček Will Fix it (Ducháček to zařídí) – 1938
- School, the basis of life (Škola základ života) – 1939
- **Christian (Kristián) – 1939**
- Eva Fools Around (Eva tropí hlouposti) – 1939

Most popular actors



Documentary and experimental movie

- Baťa film studios (from 1928)
- Alexander Hackenschmied (Hammid)
 - Walk without Purpose (1930)
 - Crisis (1939) (here as a collaborator)
- Karel Plicka
 - The Country is Singing (1933)
- Otakar Vávra
 - We Live in Prague (1934)



Film during Nazi Occupation

- Strengthening of state control over film production and distribution
 - Censorship (Filmprüfstelle – testing room)
 - New supervising bodies
 - Central Film Department,
 - Bohemian-Moravian Film Centre (from 1941)
- Excluding Jews from the industry
 - as owners or manager of the companies as well as actors and directors
- Only two companies were allowed to make films
 - Lucernafilm (Havel had to leave dominance over the Company to Germans)
 - National film

Film during Nazi Occupation

- Between 1939 and 1941 it was possible to make movies in pre-war mainstream tradition
- Several most popular actors played in them too
 - But those who emigrated or were of Jewish origin
- The frequency of using works of literature increased
 - so besides traditional comedies drama appeared more frequently

Film during Nazi occupation

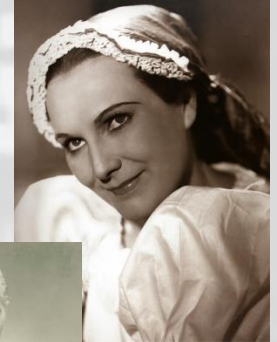
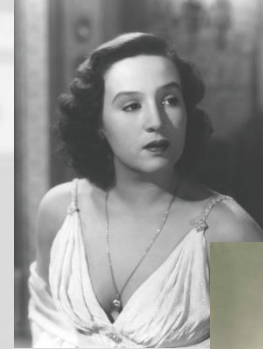
- Many of movies made between 1939–1941 are popular up today
- Journey into the Depth of Student's Soul (1939) by M. Frič
- The Girl in Blue (1939) by O. Vávra
- Grandmother (1940) by F. Čáp
 - Based on famous novel by Božena Němcová

Film during Nazi Occupation

- Many directors and actors were forced to play in German movies
 - Especially after Barrandov Studios were incorporated in German film company UFA in November 1941
- There were efforts not to include Nazi ideology in Czech movies but there were three anti-Semitic movies
 - The Street is Singing (1939), Jan Cimbura (1941) and Big Dam (1942)

Film during Nazi Occupation

- New generation of actors began to perform in movies
 - Rudolf Hrušínský, Jiřina Štěpničková, Dana Medřická et. Al.
- Most frequent directors
 - Otakar Vávra
 - Miroslav Cikán
 - František Čáp
 - Vladimír Slavínský



Czech Film since 1945

Periodization:

- Period 1945–1948
- Communist period 1948–1989
 - Stalinism and after 1948–1958/60
 - New wave 1958/60–1969
 - Normalization 1970–1989
- Era after 1989



Czech(oslovak) film production in 1945–1992

	Total	Annual Average
1945–1949	70	14
1950–1959	195	19,5
1960–1969	325	32,5
1970–1979	406	40,6
1980–1989	429	42,9
1990–1992	69	23

Czech(oslovak) Film in 1945–1948

- Many actors were accused and condemned for collaboration with Nazis
 - Václav Binovec, Jan Sviták, Čeněk Šlégl
 - In some cases the accusations were unjust
 - Vlasta Burian, Adina Mandlová
 - Emigration of several popular actors and directors
 - Adina Mandlová, Lída Baarová, Jiří Voskovec, Karel Lamač, František Čáp
- Nationalization of Czechoslovak cinematography (August 1945)
- Establishing of Film Academy of Arts (1946)

Czech(oslovak) Film in 1945–1948

- Reflection of occupation and the War
 - Stolen Frontier (1946) by Jiří Weiss
- Crimi
 - Čapek's Stories (1947) by Martin Frič
- Drama
 - Conscience (1948) by Jiří Krejčík
- Social drama
 - **Siren (1947) by Karel Steklý**
- Science Fiction
 - Krakatit (1948) by Otakar Vávra
- Animated film
 - Jiří Trnka, Karel Zeman



Czech(oslovak) film during Communist period

From late 1940s to beginning of the 1960s

- Cinematography orientated toward promoting communist regime
- Socialistic realism
 - Schematic Screenplays
- Gradual change toward more civilian cinematography, especially after 1956
 - Influence from world cinematography, especially from Italian neorealism

Czech(oslovak) film during Communist period

From late 1949s to the beginning of 1960

- Socialistic realism
 - New Fighters Shall Arise (1950) by Jiří Weiss
 - It Was in May (1950) by Martin Frič
 - Botostroj (1954) by Otakar Vávra
- Historical
 - Vávra's Trillogy
 - Jan Hus (1954); Jan Žižka (1955), Against All (All Our Enemies) (1957)
 - Emperor's Baker – Baker's Emperor (1951) by Martin Frič

Czech(oslovak) film during Communist period

From late 1949s to the beginning of 1960:

- Fairy tales
 - Proud Princess (1952) by Bořivoj Zeman
 - Once Upon the Time There Was a King (1954) by Bořivoj Zeman
 - Dařbuján and Pandrhola (1959) by Martin Frič
- Comedies
 - Holiday with Angel (1952) by Bořivoj Zeman
 - Angel in the Mountains (1955) by Bořivoj Zeman

Czech(oslovak) film during Communist period

- From late 1949s to the beginning of 1960:
- Socially critical movies from the late 1950s
 - A the Terminus (1957) by Ján Kádár and Elmar Klos
 - Three Wishes (1958) by Ján Kádár and Elmar Klos
 - Scars of the Past (1958) by Václav Krška
- Science Fiction
 - Journey to the Beginning of Time (1955) by Karel Zeman
 - **Invention for Destruction (1958) by Karel Zeman**

Czech(oslovak) film during Communist period

Czechoslovak New Wave (1959–1969)

- Golden era of Czechoslovak cinematography
- Opened to foreign influences
- New approaches and new topics
- Socially critical

Czech(oslovak) film during Communist period

Czechoslovak New Wave (1959–1969)

- Topics
 - Generation problems
 - Reflection of war and post-war history
 - Feminism
 - Critic of contemporary Czechoslovak lifestyle

Czech(oslovak) film during Communist period

Czechoslovak New Wave (1959–1969)

- New approaches
 - Using non-actors
 - Using parables
 - Disrespect of continuity of time and space
 - Documentary features
- First Czechoslovak musicals
 - Old men on the Hop Brigade (1964) by Ladislav Rychman
 - Lemonade Joe or Horse Opera (1964) by Oldřich Lipský
- Experimental animated films
 - Jan Švankmajer



Czech film during Communist period

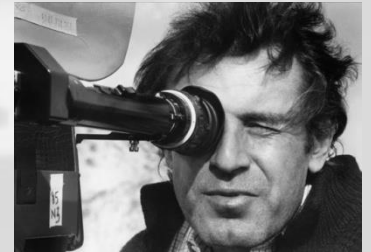
Czechoslovak New Wave (1959–1969)

- Important directors

- Miloš Forman
- Věra Chytilová
- Jiří Menzel
- Ivan Passer
- Jan Němec
- Juraj Jakubisko
- Pavel Juráček

- Directors standing outside new wave

- František Vlášil
- Jan Švankmajer



Czech(oslovak) film during Communist period

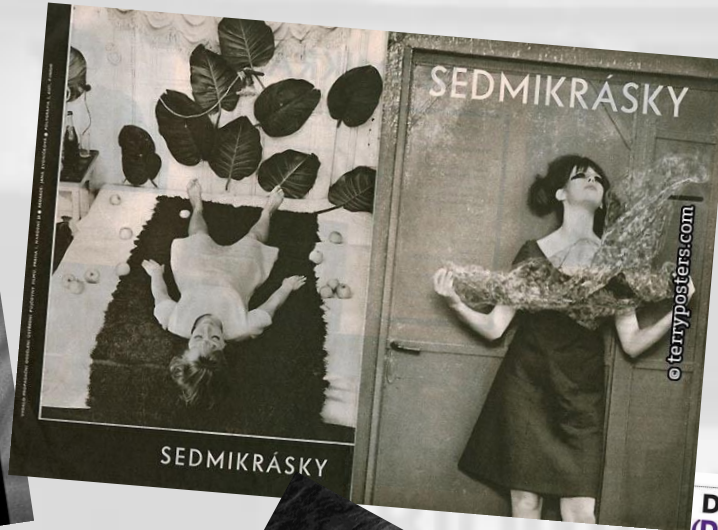
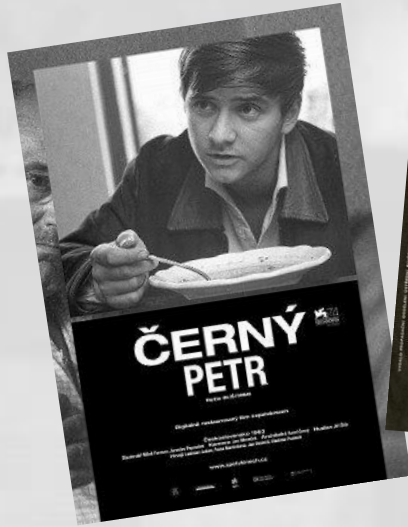
Czechoslovak New Wave (1959–1969)

- Several important movies
 - The Sun in the Net (1962) by Štefan Uher
 - Diamonds of the Night (1964) by Jan Němec
 - Loves of a Blonde (1965) by Miloš Forman
 - **Intimate Lighting (1965) by Ivan Passer**
 - **Closely Watched Trains (1966) by Jiří Menzel**

Czechoslovak New Wave (1959–1969)

- Several important movies (cont.)
 - Daises (1966) by Věra Chytilová
 - **The Firemen's Ball (1967) by Miloš Forman**
 - The Cremator (1968) by Juraj Hertz
 - Ecce Homo Homolka (1969) by Jaroslav Papoušek
 - Birdies, Orphans and Fools (1969) by Juraj Jakubusko
 - Case for a Rookie Hangman (1969) by Pavel Juráček

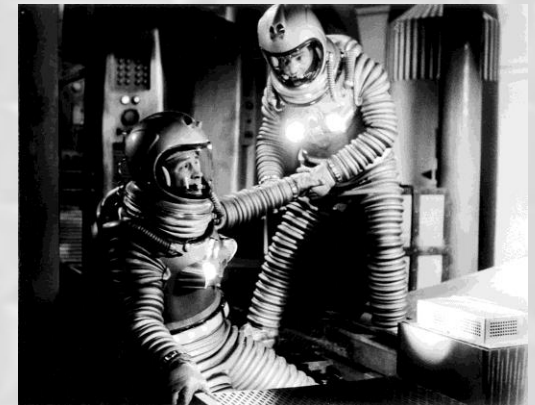
New Wave movies



Czech(oslovak) film during Communist period

Other important Movies from the 1960s but outside the new wave:

- Icarus XB 1 (1963) by Jindřich Polák
- Romance for Bugle (1966) by Otakar Vávra
- **Shop on the Main Street (1965) by Ján Kádár and Elmar Klos**
- **Markéta Lazarová (1967) by František Vlácil**
- All My Compatriots (1968) by Vojtěch Jasný
- Riders in the Sky (1968) by Jindřich Polák
- Adelheid (1969) by František Vlácil
- Short movies by Jan Švankmajer (1968): The Flat, The Garden, Picnic with Wiessmann



Czech(oslovak) film during Communist period

Normalization era (1970–1989):

- Renewed censorship
- Many directors of new wave and also several actors went to exile
 - Miloš Forman, Ivan Passer, Vojtěch Jasný, Jan Němec, Jan Tříska
- Several film from late sixties never went into distribution
 - The Ear by Karel Kachyňa, Larks on a String by Jiří Menzel
- Bans for several actors and directors
- Era with biggest quantitative production of movies
- Important role of TV



Czech(oslovak) film during Communist period

Normalization era (1970–1989):

- Turn to nonconflict themes and also to ideological topics
 - Comedies
 - Family movies from daily life and romantic films
 - Historical movies about WWII or History of Communist party and regime
 - Fairy tales and movies for children
 - Socialy critical films appeared more in the second half of the 1980s

Normalization

Comedies:

- Popular comedies based on screenplay from Zdeněk Svěrák or Ladislav Smoljak or both of them
 - Joachim put him in the Machine (1974) by Oldřich Lipský
 - Mareček, Pass Me the Pen (1976) by Oldřich Lipský
 - Waiter, Scarper! (1980) by Ladislav Smoljak
 - **My Sweet Little Vilage (1985) by Jiří Menzel**



Normalization

Comedies:

- I Enjoy the World with You (S tebou mě baví svět) – 1982 by Marie Poledňáková
- Comedies from the countryside by Zdeněk Troška
 - The Sun, Hay and Strawberries (Slunce, seno, jahody) – 1983
 - The Sun, Hay and couple of Smacks (1989)



Normalization

- Very popular was also series of romantic comedies about young doctor made by Dušan Klein
 - How the World Loses Poets (1982)
 - How Poets Lose Illusions (1984)
 - How Life Tastes to the Poets (1987)



Normalization

- Comedies and Family films:
- Popular movies by Jiří Menzel
 - The irony and poetic is not so strong as in his movies from the 1960s
 - Based on novels and stories by Bohumil Hrabal
 - Cutting it Short
 - The Snow Drop Festival

Normalization

Fairy Tales and films for Children:

- Czechoslovak production was internationally recognized
- Collaboration with western, especially with German film studios
- Several of those films are more family films than only for children

Normalization

- Fairy Tales and films for Children:
- Three Wishes for Cinderella (1973) by Václav Vorlíček
- Long Live Ghosts (1977) by Oldřich Lipský
- Films by Jindřich Polák
 - Series of films on Mr. Tau (1969–1978)
 - ... And Again that Lucy (1983)
 - Street Be aware of Lucy (1983)
 - Octopuses from the Second Floor (1986)



Normalization

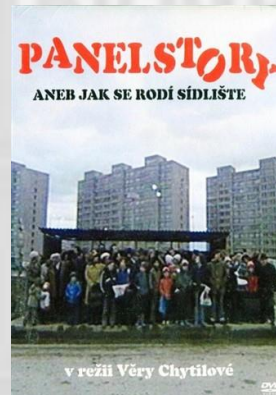
Films for Children:

- Very popular among Czech audience was Václav Gajer's trilogy from Šumava Mountains:
 - Under the Badger's Rock (1978), On Poacher's Path (1979) and Behind Thorny Bush (1980)
- Good quality had films by Karel Kachyňa reflecting Nazi occupation:
 - Golden Eels (1979) and The Death of Beautiful Roe Deers (1986)

Normalization

Socially critical and artistic film:

- After forced pause several directors from sixties could make films since the second half of the seventies
 - Věra Chytilová
 - Jiří Menzel
 - Karel Kachyňa
 - František Vlácil



Normalization

Socially critical and artistic film:

- Věra Chytilová
 - Reflected critically problems of contemporary socialist society and interested in new topics
 - Prefab Story (1979)
 - About life in estate development under construction
 - Tainted Horseplay (Snowball reaction) 1988
 - Reflecting promiscuity and AIDS



Normalization

- **Socially critical and artistic film:**
- František Vlácil
 - made psychological and lyrical movies of good quality
 - Smoke on the Potato Fields (1976)
 - Shadows of a Hot Summer (1977) and on similar theme Little herdsman from the Valley (1983)
 - Snake's Poison (1981)
 - On alcoholism

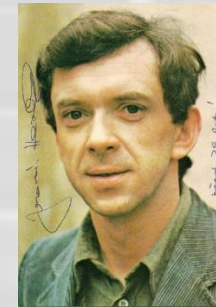
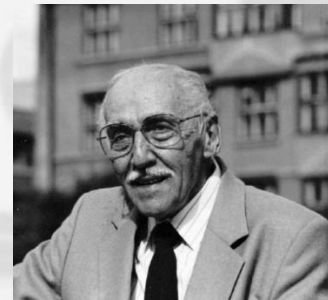
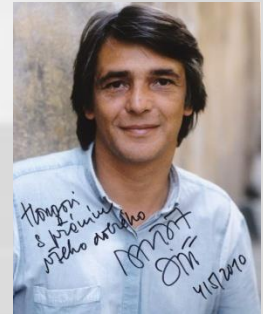
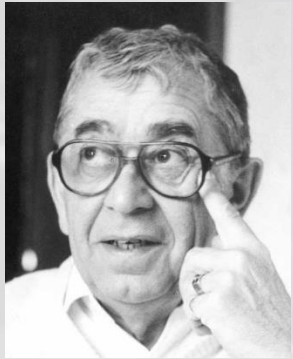
Normalization

- **Socially critical and artistic film:**
- Karel Kachyňa
 - Besides films for children he made several important film on various topics
 - Jumping Over Puddles Again (1970) based on Marshal's novel
 - Nurses (1983)
 - Reflecting 1950s in the village
- Love between the Raindrops (1979)
 - Concerning life of a poor family of a small shoemaker in Prague in 1930s

Normalization

- During 1980s films reflecting problems of Czechoslovak society appeared, especially concerning problems of young generation
- Karel Smyczek or Zdeněk Zaoral worked successfully with these topics
 - Snowdrops and Boffins (1982) by Karel Smyczek
 - Why? (1986) by Karel Smyczek
 - Spiderweb (1986) by Zdeněk Zaoral

Popular Actresses and Actors during Communist era



Czech Film after Fall of Communism

- Breakup of existing institutional and organizational structure
 - End of state monopoly
 - End of censorship
 - Opening to the world competition
 - Changing of the financing model during the period

Czech film production in 1990– 2017

	Total	Annual average
1990–1999	212	21,2
2000–2009	281	28,1
2010–2017	376	47

Czech Film after Fall of Communism

- The 1990s meant bigger freedom concerning topics and expression but on the other hand
- There was lack of money
- It took some time to learn to operate in new condition and how to grasp new reality
- New generation of directors and actor appeared

Czech Film after Fall of Communism

- In 1990s many films reflecting post-war history were made
 - Novels of previously banned authors were often subject for those films
 - Tank Battalion (Tankový prapor) – 1991 by Vít Olmer
 - Some very popular films used nostalgia for certain aspects of communist era
- There are also several films reflecting building of capitalism in 1990s and new lifestyle

Czech Film after Fall of Communism

- Besides efforts for artistically valuable movies many movies were of commercial nature
- Not many films from 1990s are of good quality
- Documents were more appreciated by domestic and international experts than feature films
- Directors succesful in earlier periods did not make such a good film anymore

Czech Film after Fall of Communism

- Among most popular movies belongs nostalgic films directed by Jan Hřebejk who collaborated with Petr Šabach who wrote screenplays
 - Big Beat (Šakalí léta) – 1993
 - Musical situated in the 1950s in Czechoslovakia
 - **Cosy Dens (Pelíšky) – 1999**
 - They are situated in Czechoslovakia of the 1960s

Czech Film after Fall of Communism

- Very popular are also movies by Jan Svěrák who often collaborated with his father Zdeněk
 - The Elementary School (Obecná škola) – 1991
 - **Kolya (1996)**
 - Won Oscar prize
 - Dark Blue World (Tmavomodrý svět) – 2001

Czech Film after Fall of Communism

- Commercially successful are also films by Zdeněk Troška who made especially comedies or fairy tales
 - Princess from the Mill (Princezna ze mlejna) – 1994
 - From the Hell of Luck (Z pekla štěstí) – 1999

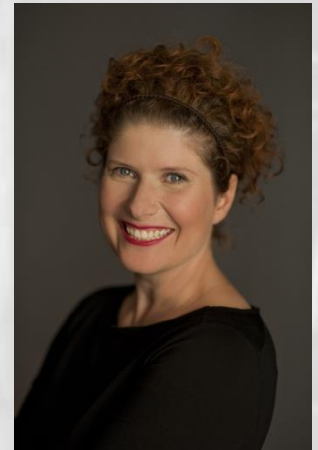
Czech Film after Fall of Communism

- From movies reflecting building of Czech capitalism are appreciated especially
 - Inheritance or „fuckboysgutentag“ (Dědictví aneb kurvahošigutentág) – 1992 by Věra Chytilová
 - Nudity for Sale (Nahota na prodej) – 1993 by Vít Olmer
 - Both they are more as a document of the time than good film

Czech Film after Fall of Communism

- New generation of directors and screenwriters appeared in the 1990s and in new millenium, particularly

- Vladimír Michálek
- Petr Zelenka
- Alice Nellis
- Petr Václav



Czech Film after Fall of Communism

Vladimír Michálek

- Especially his films from the 1990s belongs to the best among Czech film production
 - Forgotten Light (Zapomenuté světlo) – 1996
 - Reflecting prosecution of Catholic Church in the 1980s
 - **Sekal Has to Be Killed (Je třeba zabít Sekala) – 1998**
 - Drama reflecting behavior of people during Nazi occupation

Czech Film after Fall of Communism

Petr Zelenka

- Is screenwriter and director as in the theatre as in film
- His films are popular especially among younger generations
 - Buttoners (Knoflíkáři) – 1997
 - Reminds approaches used by Jim Jarmusch
 - Year of the Devil (Rok Ďábla) – 2002
 - On Alcoholism and art
 - Loners (Samotáři) – 2000

Czech Film after Fall of Communism

Alice Nellis

- Concerns especially female and family problems of the middle class
 - The Trip (Výlet) – 2002
 - Road movie
 - Little Girl Blue (Tajnosti) – 2007

Czech Film after Fall of Communism

Petr Václav

- He focuses on lives of people from lower classes
 - Marian (1996)
 - A Way Out (Cesta ven) – 2014
- And partnership in modern world
 - Parallel worlds (Paralelní světy) – 2001

Czech Film after Fall of Communism

- There are another interesting movies by Czech and also Slovak directors made in last 28 years
- For example
 - Ride (Jízda) – 1994 by Jan Svěrák
 - The Garden (Záhrada) – 1995 by Martin Šulík
 - Unclear Report on the End of the World (Nejasná zpráva o konci světa) – 1997 by Juraj Jakubisko
 - Boredom in Brno (Nuda v Brně) – 2003 by Vladimír Morávek
 - The Snake Brothers (Kobry a užovky) – 2015 by Jan Prušinovský



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