

The 15th year of Cinematik with a rich program full of unique film experiences taking place from 10 to 15 September

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The International Film Festival Cinematik Piešťany celebrates its 15th year jubilee this year. Despite the difficult circumstances, the organizers decided to remain fully and passionately devoted to preparation without changes of the festival format, with the maximum possible amount of great films and festival sections, but also with the usual two competition categories Meeting Point Europe and Cinematik.doc. The festival will take place from 10th to 15th of September in seven indoor and outdoor venues within the city centre of Piešťany. The programme will also include several attractive premieres.

In the recent months, the pandemic has really dusted the jacket of cultural events. Many domestic and foreign ones got cancelled - from smaller to the most profound ones, such as international film festivals in Cannes and Karlovy Vary. Cinematik, traditionally scheduled for the first half of September, did not do so in spite of the difficult organizational and financial conditions. And even though the global crisis has had a negative effect on the availability of some titles or the ability of foreign guests to participate, the programme of this year's Cinematik will definitely not make it notable for its visitors.

Just like our travel plans have shrunk to our immediate surroundings this year, Cinematik is also focusing on quality news and pleasant surprises from the domestic scene in one of its traditional sections **In the House**. Visitors will be able to see some of them in the absolute world premiere, such as the psychological drama **Into Dust**, directed by Anastasia Hoppanová and Samuel Vičan. A genre movie full of the gloomy atmosphere will take you to the gangland where a self-taught chemist and an ambitious young woman are trying to gain a foothold in the synthetic drug market. In this business, however, you never really know whether you run the business or if somebody else runs you...

Visitors of Cinematik will also see the original documentary **Video Kings** by Lukáš Bulava as a Slovak premiere. It brings us back to the 1980s, the time when new American films were even less accessible than during the pandemic when in socialist Czechoslovakia, viewers eager for Western blockbusters often had to settle for poorly copied videotapes and amateur fast-dubbing distributed by a handful of enthusiasts. These were the times when the film was a captured commodity of the black market and the former pirates, dabbers or distributors are probably the most competent to tell us about it in this documentary.

Another Slovak premiere in the section In the House is Bohdan's narrative historical drama **Shadow Country**. With a remarkable acting ensemble (including Csongor Kassai and Zuzana Kronerová), the film takes us through the turbulent history of a border village which, in several short decades (the 1930s and 1950s), had to switch its flag but also changed coats several times. In addition to a resonant story, the film is sure to impress with its black and white format and also by being inspired by real events.

Ivan Ostrochovský's **Servants** also belongs to the titles that you will be able to see for the first time in Slovakia at Cinematik. Again, this black and white drama takes us back in time. Its main characters are two students of the Faculty of Theology in totalitarian Czechoslovakia, who have to choose between an easier way of collaboration and loyalty to their own faith. This film, unique in its content and form managed to have its world premiere at the Berlinale in February.

In the House section has traditionally included a selection of the best of the work of students of the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava and the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica. And the international workshop **DOX IN VITRO**, organized in cooperation with CED Slovensko, which is intended primarily for beginning documentarians, is also dedicated to young filmmakers. As in previous years, this time it will bring two days full of meetings, lectures, consultations and exchange of experiences led by European professionals from the fields of documentary directing, screenwriting, dramaturgy, editing and production.

The workshop will take place on September 8 and 9 in the Park Avenue Hotel in Piešťany. Those interested in participating can apply with own projects or without a project, until August 16 or August 30 respectively. Slovak applicants have free admission to the DOX IN VITRO workshop.

The accreditations for the 15th Cinematik International Film Festival are already on sale. Until 31 August, they will be available on the official website of the cinematik.sk festival for a discounted pre-sale price.

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