



Czech film festival returns

BY MARION FERNANDO

> Enjoy free screenings of five of the best productions from this Eastern European nation at selected GSC cinemas this month

THE CZECH Film Festival returns after last year's successful debut, with five specially-selected films by the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Malaysia. The films will be screened at selected Golden Screen Cinemas (GSC) from March 22 to 25.

The films - *Barefoot*, *Adela Has Not Had Supper Yet*, *The Seven Ravens*, *Kooky*, and *Angel of the Lord 2* - all bear elements of this year's theme, Fairy Tale Stories from Fairy Tale Country.

The first film, *Barefoot*, is more like a historical drama comedy told from the perspective of a child protagonist.

The 2017 film is produced by the father-and-son team of Zdenek and Jan Sverak, whose 1996 film *Kolya* won the best foreign-language Academy Award.

Barefoot is directed, written and produced by Jan, based on his father's autobiographical novel. The film was included in this year's festival in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the now-dissolved country of Czechoslovakia.

Members of the press and invited guests were given a preview of *Barefoot* at a recent press conference to announce the return of the Czech Film Festival.

Present at the event were Czech Republic ambassador to Malaysia Rudolf Hykl, GSC manager for film festivals and international screens Tan Gaik Lian, and Patricia Sargunan from Knowmad Productions.

Hykl in his speech said of this year's festival: "We had about 75% attendance throughout the film festival [last year] and it was something I really didn't expect. So, we wanted to keep



(left, from left) Tan, Hykl and Patricia announcing the festival, which presents films like (clockwise, from top, far left) *Barefoot*; *Adela Has Not Had Supper Yet*; *The Seven Ravens*; *Kooky*; and *Angel of the Lord 2*.

the momentum [going] for this year."

The Czech Republic is renowned for its artistic animation and futuristic cinematography, as well as its fairytale themes.

Hykl added: "When we look at the role which these movies play in our lives, in our culture, this is something quite distinguishable, quite strong, and quite typical of the Czech Republic.

"It has to do with the long tradition going back to the Middle Ages, and the oral transmission of fairy tales ... then in the 19th century, it became part of the literature [and] part of the national revival of Czech ethnicity or Czech language."

Speaking about *Barefoot*, Hykl pointed out that the movie is about the life of a young boy during the second half of World War II where viewers will get to see the intricate history of his country at the time.

"You have the realistic settings. You have the real stories, and it draws you in. Hopefully, it will leave you thinking after you leave [the cinema]," he added.

As for the other films in this year's selection, *The Seven Ravens* is based on the classic fairytale by Bozena Nemcova about seven brothers cursed to become ravens, and a sister who tries to break the curse.

The remastered 1978 film *Adela Has Not Had Supper Yet* is

set to make audiences laugh with its comedic take on a detective who must solve a case involving a carnivorous plant.

The last two films are geared more for families. *Kooky* tells the tale of a stuffed toy which was thrown out and made its way back to its owner, while *Angel of the Lord 2* revolves around an angel and a demon sent to the human world on a quest to retrieve an apple from the Tree of Knowledge.

These films will be screened at GSC Pavilion and GSC Mid Valley, and free tickets to the screenings will be available from this Thursday.

For more, visit the website of the Czech Republic Embassy in Kuala Lumpur or GSC.

SCREEN SHORTS

UP FOR RISKY ROLES

JEFF DANIELS, 63, says he doesn't want to be limited as a Hollywood star, and instead wants as much range as possible.

He adds this is the reason why he took the role of John O'Neill in the Hulu miniseries, *The Looming Tower*, about the terrorists who plotted 9/11.

He says: "I've been doing this for 40 years, and I just don't wanna be the actor who becomes a brand: I want the range."



NOT CARING

JUSTIN THEROUX, 46, has stopped caring what people think of him.

The actor believes the person he is when he's in the spotlight is a different avatar to who he is when he's away from the cameras.

He said: "In that sense, I don't lose any sleep over it. I've stopped caring about what other people think of me."



SEEKING REAL ROLES

LESLEY MANVILLE, 61, thinks movies and TV shows need to show more older women having sex.

The star claims viewers wanted to see characters they can relate to on screen, and that means love stories with older actors and actresses.

She said: "You can have a lover at 60. You don't have to be shoved in a corner in a cardigan doing knitting." - Bang Media

