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**HAIFA
FILM
FESTIVAL
2015**

64. INTERNATIONAL
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VIFF
VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL
OFFICIAL SELECTION
2015

LEEDS INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL
OFFICIAL SELECTION
2015

Official Selection
Dubai
International
Film Festival
2015


50th Karlovy Vary
IFF 2015
Best Actress

HOME CARE

A FILM BY
SLÁVEK HORÁK

CZECH REPUBLIC'S OFFICIAL ENTRY
FOR THE ACADEMY AWARDS®
BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM



"Wryly humorous and bittersweet... An appealing humanist tale."

- Alissa Simon, Variety

Everyone knows that life is short, but each of us comes to grips with life's actual limits in our own and often unexpected way. Home Care, the feature film debut from writer/director **SLÁVEK HORÁK**, confronts the most important questions of life in an engaging way. At times darkly funny, and at times bittersweet, the film examines the finality of human existence through a tender portrayal of a dedicated home care nurse, who puts everyone's needs above her own. She is forced to learn that this attitude is not just selfless but also self-destructive. In contrast, her husband is a traditional small-town male, whose only responsibilities seem to revolve around tending his workshop and drinking plum brandy. But his jokes and light-hearted attitude are only a masculine façade and his true emotions will soon show.

While searching for a topic, Horak went to his parents' home, planning to work on some significant ideas in a tranquil countryside. Once there, he realized that his mother, who worked as a home care nurse, was a much more interesting character than he could ever invent. Her quirky stories had always been right there in front of his eyes.

Both main characters are based on Horak's parents, which helped him to create their richly textured personalities and the complex dynamics of their relationship. Most of the film was shot in his parents'

ABOUT FILM

3/20

house, garden, workshop and vineyard, so the setting perfectly matches the characters. The film uses the actual wardrobe of the director's mother and features non-actors from his hometown.

Even though the film was self-produced on a tight budget, HOME CARE went on to become a major critical and box office success in the Czech Republic.

4/20

SYNOPSIS

Dedicated home care nurse Vlasta attends her capricious patients in the Czech wine country, and lives for her husband Lada and her daughter, giving them more than they are asking for. Then, one day, things change and Vlasta is forced to step outside of her comfort zone. Drama and gentle humor intertwine as Vlasta realizes, for the first time in her life, that she might need some care, too.

"Beautifully written and performed... an examination of what is important in life"

- Alissa Simon, Variety



YOU MUST LEARN TO LOVE YOURSELF
BEFORE YOU CAN TRULY LOVE ANOTHER



My aim was to create an honest film about universal subjects that people are hesitant to discuss, in this case the subjects of compassion and dying. I wanted to infuse an emotional drama with specific humor, to tell a story that will remind viewers about their mortality, in order to better appreciate their loved ones, and also to remind them to take better care of themselves.

As our heroine fights for her life, she contends with the ordinary daily life of her picturesque southern Moravia village, her husband's dismissive humor and the spiritual mentality of her younger friend. These tensions create powerful dynamics as three different worldviews clash against each other.

I chose to play the journey of self-discovery with a very particular local twist; drama and comedy always balancing each other. This specific approach enriches the emotional experience — and this was my vision, to communicate subtly, yet

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

7/20

directly "from heart to heart", even if the film risked bordering on the naive. After all, it is a story of a good-hearted, simple character getting to know herself late in life, so a certain bittersweet kindness and my fondness for these characters were absolutely crucial for finding a true feel for this film.

The biggest challenge was to make the film come alive, with a big, pulsating heart. You can tell us if we succeeded with this labor of love called "Home Care".

Slávek Horák

8/20

VLASTA

ALENA
MIHULOVÁ

ALENA MIHULOVÁ (Vlasta) landed her first leading role in 1983 at the age of 17 and immediately became both a critics' and viewers' darling. Coincidentally, she played a nurse in her first film too. In 1994 she starred in "Kráva" ("The Cow", directed by her husband, acclaimed Czech director Karel Kachyňa) which won „Best Feature”

at the Chicago International Film Festival. Her star turn in "Home Care" is yet another high point in a career spanning more than 30 years.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR ROLE?

Vlasta is a mother, a wife, and a home care nurse, but she is not giving her 100 % to it. She gives 150 %. I can't even imagine how far would this woman go if what happened to her did not happen.

CAN YOU REMEMBER YOUR FEELINGS AFTER YOU READ THE SCRIPT?

"Oh my God, it was written for me!" And then I started to think about how to make the director see it that way as well. We were meeting regularly for about a year, but I was too young for the role. So I just tried to look worse and more devastated at each meeting. And at the last camera test, after I exchanged few words with **BOLEK POLÍVKA** (set to play the husband), I knew we belonged together.

WHAT DO YOU WISH FOR THE FINISHED FILM NOW?

Now I just hope that all viewers will stop for a moment and think about their lives — that's what I really wish for. For people to stop and think about life, so they would leave the movie theater with something meaningful. So they want to live their lives the way they want and to actually do something about it.

9/20





10/20

HUSBAND

LAĎA

BOLESLAV
POLÍVKA

BOLESLAV POLÍVKA (*Laďa*), one of the film's lead actors, is a true legend of Czech cinema, with over 40 films under his belt. Known for his versatile talent and witty humor, he is a founder and artistic director of the Theatre of Bolek Polívka (Brno, Czech Republic). Polívka's work as a mime performer has been widely acclaimed in the Czech Republic and abroad. Audiences worldwide also remember him for a lead in Oscar nominated film "Divided We Fall" (directed by Jan Hřebejk, 2000) and

Bohdan Sláma's "Something Like Happiness" awarded Golden Seashell in San Sebastian IFF 2005. He also won the "Best Actor" award at Karlovy Vary IFF for his lead in "Forgotten Light".

WHO IS YOUR LAĎA, WHERE DID YOU FIND YOUR INSPIRATION?

The inspiration was director Slávek's father. We filmed in Slávek's parent's house, in their vineyard, their garden, or in the father's workshop. I realized once again how difficult it is to transfer amazing, beautiful and vivid life onto a screen. And I admire anybody who tries.

WERE YOU TAKEN BY SCRIPT RIGHT FROM THE START?

I loved it. I laughed a lot and I didn't even know then that my partner and wife would be **ALENA MIHULOVÁ**, who makes everything she touches fabulous. We hadn't worked together before, and I have to say, as all great actresses, she was focused, real and beautifully vibrant. Vulnerable but triumphant.

WAS ANY SCENE DURING FILMING MORE DIFFICULT THAN OTHERS?

Yes, making love next to a broken jug of plum brandy. You can't tell if my sighs are those of passion or those of pain and sorrow over the spilled brandy.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE WORKING WITH FIRST TIME DIRECTOR SLÁVEK HORÁK?

To be a first timer has a lot of advantages. There's a freshness and determination. And with Slávek it's also his sense of humor, and his love and respect for his co-workers. He wrote a beautiful script and has directed a fantastic film. As the French say "chapeaux bas", hats off.

VLASTA'S **GIRLFRIEND**

TATIANA VILHELMOVÁ is one of the major stars of her generation in the Czech Republic. She is acclaimed for her sensitive performances, and she's also earned much international attention. She was the lead in Bohdan Sláma's "Something Like Happiness", which was awarded the Golden Seashell at San Sebastian International Film Festival in 2005. And she won the EFP Shooting Star

TATIANA VILHELMOVÁ

Award for new talent at Berlinale 2003. She's also an accomplished theater actor.

WHAT WAS YOUR REACTION AFTER FIRST READING THE SCRIPT? DID IT TAKE YOU LONG TO DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO GO FOR IT?

I read the script literally in one breath asking myself "Who the hell wrote this? This is great script!!!". I didn't hesitate one minute.

YOUR PARTNERS ON THE SET WERE ALENA MIHULOVÁ AND BOLEK POLÍVKA. HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR COLLABORATION WITH THEM?

I'd already worked with Bolek several times, but with Alena it was our first big collaboration. When I was a kid, I wanted to act like she did — and then I was discovered by Karel Kachyňa, her life partner, and I met her in person! The fact that I could work with her on "Home Care" is my childhood dream come true.

SLÁVEK HORÁK was born in 1975, in Zlín, Czech Republic. He is a graduate of Zlín Film School and he also studied directing at the Prague Film School FAMU. His rapid career growth as a director of various international commercial campaigns prevented him from finishing his FAMU studies, but the work earned him several awards at International Advertising festivals. He shot two short films for the international project Straight 8 that were selected in top six and shown at Cannes Film Festival. He also worked as an assistant director with Jan Svěrák on his Academy Award winning film "Kolja" (1996). In 2012 he started his own production company TVORBA films. "Home Care" is his feature debut.

Featured filmography:

Two Little Wings (2004 — short)
Deja Vu (2005 — short)
Home Care (2015)

YOU USED TO DIRECT COMMERCIALS. HOW DID YOU DECIDE TO MAKE A MOVIE?

For any director of commercials, a feature film is the ultimate challenge, sort of a "Holly Grail", so I has been waiting until I was ready and mature enough to create something significant. And after 20 years I realized that with this kind of approach it's never going to happen. So I stopped waiting and started working.

WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR INSPIRATION? HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO WRITE THE SCRIPT?

It was long and painful process. I thought long and hard about what kind of story would match my ambitions. At some point I started to go back to my home town to meditate and focus at my parents' house. My mom, though, was constantly disturbing me, telling me stories from work, telling me about people I never met. ("But of course you know him... he is the one whose cat hanged herself.") It took me awhile to realize this is much more interesting than anything I could ever come up with.

DID YOU MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS? CAST, LOCATIONS, TEAM...

It all ended up well, even the grass in my parents' garden started to grow again! We filmed the wedding scene there. All of us — actors, crew, my parents and other people living in Zlín area, they were all unbelievably helpful and thanks to them I had the best working conditions. Even the gentleman at Zitkova village, who was very suspicious at first, ended up allowing us to burn down his tree.

WHAT WERE THE EASIEST AND THE HARDEST PARTS OF THE WHOLE PROJECT?

The easiest part was working with actors, which came as a shock to me. But they all understood their parts right away, and the fact that it was my first time working with real actors never came up. In commercials I

mostly worked with models and orange juice packs. The hardest part was to get up every day when the alarm clock rang, often before lunch — but that's the hardest thing in life in general.

WHO SHOULD SEE THE MOVIE? WHO DID YOU MAKE IT FOR?

I would send everybody to see it! Compulsory! Including newborns, infants and toddlers, because they are often overlooked as a target group, but even they will be confronted with their own mortality, so they better be ready. Not to mention the older ones.

KARLOVY VARY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

(July 2015, World premiere)

CRYSTAL GLOBE AWARD for **BEST ACTRESS**, ALENA MIHULOVÁ

BUSAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

(October 2015, International premiere)

HAIFA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (October 2015)

VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (October 2015)

INTERNATION FILMFESTIVAL MANNHEIM — HEIDELBERG

(October 2015)

VALLADOLID INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

(October 2015)

LEEDS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (November 2015)

CAIRO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (November 2015)

ARRAS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (November 2015)

LJUBLJANA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (November 2015)

ZAGREB FILM FESTIVAL (November 2015)

DUBAI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (December 2015)

PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

(January 2016)



18/20

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TECHNICAL DETAILS:

Original language: Czech

Running time: 92 min

Format: DCP, aspect ratio 1, 85:1, sound: 5.1, color

Production year: May / 2015

Czech Republic / Slovakia

Original title: Domáci Péče

CREW:

Written & Directed by **SLÁVEK HORÁK**

Produced by TVORBA FILMS (CZECH REPUBLIC)

Co-producers: ČESKÁ TELEVIZE, FOG N' DESIRE FILMS,
SVOBODA & WILLIAMS (ALL CZECH REPUBLIC),
SOKOL KOLLÁR (SLOVAKIA)

Executive producer: **TOMÁŠ ROTNÁGL**

Director of photography: **JAN ŠTASTNÝ**

Sound design: **PETER SUROVÝ, JURAJ BALÁŽ**

Editor: **VLADIMÍR BARÁK**

Costume designer: **NATÁLIE STEKLOVÁ**

Make up artist: **ADRIANA BARTOŠOVÁ**

CAST:

ALENA MIHULOVÁ / VLASTA

BOLESLAV POLÍVKA / LÁĎA

TATIANA VILHELMOVÁ / HANÁČKOVÁ

ZUZANA KRONEROVÁ / MIRIAM

SARA VENCLOVSKÁ / MARCELA

19/20





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