



Embassy of the Czech Republic
in Washington, DC

3900 Spring of Freedom Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008
phone: +1 202 274 9101, fax: +1 202 966 8540
www.mzv.cz/washington

Contact: Mary E. Fetzko
E-mail: mary_fetzko@mzv.cz | 202.274.9105

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Updated September 3, 2014



FESTIVAL LAUNCHES IN SEPTEMBER!

www.mutualinspirations.com

***“All I am is literature, and I am not able
or willing to be anything else.” ~Franz Kafka***



The Embassy of the Czech Republic announces the *Mutual Inspirations Festival 2014 – Franz Kafka*, celebrating the legacy of a world-renowned author with a number of events taking place at prestigious venues in the nation’s capital from September 3–October 31, 2014, and an encore presentation on November 8.

The *Mutual Inspirations Festival (MIF)* is an annual initiative spearheaded by the Embassy of the Czech Republic, focusing on the mutual inspirations between Czech and American cultures and featuring each year an extraordinary Czech personality who has greatly influenced and inspired others through his or her work (MIF 2010–Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, MIF 2011–Antonín Dvořák, MIF 2012–Miloš Forman, MIF 2013–Václav Havel, MIF 2014–Franz Kafka).

Now in its fifth year, the *Mutual Inspirations Festival 2014* celebrates one of the greatest authors of the twentieth century, Prague-born Franz Kafka. Through his writing, he opposed the mainstream society and explored themes of mystical transformations, alienation, and psychological cruelty in many of his novels and short works, such as *The Metamorphosis*, *The Trial*, and *The Castle*. Although he never visited, Kafka was also fascinated by America, writing an unfinished novel of the same name.

Running from September–October 2014, the festival highlights events at venues throughout the Washington area, including: the opening of the exhibition *KAFKA & CO.* by renowned cartoonist Jiří Slíva at the Czech Embassy, the concert of violin virtuoso Alexander Shonert at the National Gallery of Art, the *Docs in Salute* film series focused on Jewish themes at the Library of Congress, and the performance of *Metamorphosis* directed by Susan Galbraith at the Woolly Mammoth Theatre, among others. In tribute to Kafka’s monumental literary genius, the festival incorporates a variety of events, including theatrical performances, film screenings, concerts, lectures, and exhibitions.

Let Kafka catch your attention this fall and be inspired!

Please see the full list of festival events below.

2014 FESTIVAL EVENTS

www.mutualinspirations.org

FESTIVAL LAUNCH / EXHIBITION

- On September 3, at 6 pm, the Embassy of the Czech Republic will launch the *Mutual Inspirations Festival 2014–Franz Kafka* with a special exhibition KAFKA & CO. by Czech cartoonist Jiří Slíva, who has been featured in over 150 publications including *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*. The exhibition includes humorous drawings, lithographs, and etchings inspired by Kafka and others. Admission is free. The exhibition will be on display until October 31, 2014. RSVP: www.eventbrite.com/e/festival-launch-and-exhibition-opening-kafka-co-by-jiri-sliva-sept-3-tickets-12431437765.

THEATRE

- On September 9, at 6:30 pm, the Embassy of the Czech Republic will present Kafka's riveting short story *A Report to an the Academy* brought to life in a stunning adaptation by Drew Valins. In this tale, Red Peter details his transformation from ape to human, from the horrors of being snatched into captivity to the realization that he must become something he is not in order to obtain "freedom." Admission is free. RSVP: www.eventbrite.com/e/theatre-a-report-on-the-academy-tickets-12601293809
- From September 10–21, the Alliance for New Music-Theatre will perform Kafka's most influential and popular work *Metamorphosis*, directed by Susan Galbraith at the Woolly Mammoth Theatre. In Kafka's seminal story, salesman Gregor Samsa wakes up to discover that he has been transformed into a monstrous insect. Tickets: www.newmusictheatre.org.

THEATRICAL READING

- On October 29, at 1 pm, Georgetown University students and alumni present *Glimpses of Kafka's Fiction and Memoirs for the Stage*, directed by Georgetown faculty in Theater and Performance Studies, in the Pickford Theater of the Library of Congress. As part of the Docs in Salute Series focused on Jewish themes, the one-hour program will include monologue adaptations from *Metamorphosis*, selections from Kafka's most famous work and letters, as well as a short film on Kafka.

CONCERTS

- On September 18, at 6:30 pm, the Embassy of the Czech Republic will feature pianist Lara Downes in the concert *Amerika: Expression and Exile*, interspersed with the reading of *Nine Parables to Franz Kafka's "Amerika"* written by Andre Singer. The concert includes Bohuslav Martinů's *Etudes and Polkas*, Erwin Schulhoff's *Suite dansante en jazz*, and Erich Wolfgang Korngold's *Sonata No. 2 in E major, Op. 2*. Admission is free. RSVP: www.eventbrite.com/e/concert-amerika-expression-and-exile-tickets-12602084173
- On October 26, at 6:30 pm, violin virtuoso Alexander Shonert will perform the concert *Overlapping Worlds*, an intimate program dedicated to Franz Kafka, at the National Gallery of Art in the West Building, West Garden Court. The concert features Czech and Jewish music that has resonated throughout Prague for centuries. Admission is free.

FILMS

- On September 17, at 1 pm, the Library of Congress will kick off the Docs in Salute series with *The Trials* from the documentary trilogy *Between a Star and a Crescent* in the Pickford Theatre. The film examines how the Jews of Czechoslovakia were victims not only of the Holocaust but also of the subsequent communist tyranny. Q&A with director Martin Šmok follows the screening. Admission is free. (*Petr Bok & Martin Šmok, 2003, 58 min., in English*)
- On October 1, at 1 pm, the Library of Congress will screen *Father of Refugees* in the Pickford Theatre as part of the Docs and Salute series focused on Jewish themes. The film centers on the mysterious death of Charles Jordan, executive vice-chairman of one of the largest Jewish humanitarian organizations in the

world. He wanted to change the very core of the conflict in the Middle East. In the summer of 1967, his body was fished out of the Vltava river shortly after he had disappeared. Admission is free. (*Petr Bok & Martin Šmok, 2003, 58 min., in English*)

- On October 8, at 8 pm, the Avalon Theatre will showcase director David Ondříček's highly acclaimed film *In the Shadow (Ve stínu)*. In this film noir set in the 1950s, Captain Hakl (Ivan Trojan), a Czech police detective, searches for truth as he tries to solve a robbery and blood libel that soon morphs into a police conspiracy. The film won nine Czech Lion Awards (2013) and was the Czech entry for the 2012 Academy Awards. (*David Ondříček, 2012, 106 min., Czech with English subtitles*) Tickets: www.theavalon.org.
- On October 9, at 6:30 pm, the Embassy of the Czech Republic will screen director Vladimír Michálek's debut film *Amerika*, based on Kafka's unfinished novel of the same name. The story centers on the wanderings of 16-year-old Karel Rossman, who was forced to travel to New York to escape the scandal of his seduction by a maid who becomes pregnant. Admission is free. (*Vladimír Michálek, 1994, 90 min., Czech with English subtitles*) RSVP: www.eventbrite.com/e/film-amerika-tickets-12602242647
- On October 18, at 5 pm, the Embassy of the Czech Republic will screen director Pavel Jandourek's film *Maharal – Secret of the Talisman (Maharal - Tajemství talismanu)*. The film follows three kids from Prague and treasure hunter Aaron Cohen who venture to the most mysterious places of old Prague in search of the talisman, the fabled Golem, and the legendary Philosopher's Stone. Admission is free. The screening is geared towards adolescents, but all ages welcome. (*Pavel Jandourek, 2007, 100 min., Czech with English subtitles*) RSVP: www.eventbrite.com/e/film-maharal-secret-of-the-talisman-tickets-12602328905
- On October 21, at 7 pm, Bistro Bohem will screen director Zeno Dostál's *Golet in the Valley (Golet v údolí)*. Using light humor, the film tells the story of a Jewish village in Czechoslovakia during the 1930s. When the peaceful village is interrupted by the desecration of a ritual bath, everyday life is thrown off balance. The film received a Czech Lion for cinematography and is comprised of the stories of the famous Czech writer Ivan Olbracht. Admission is free. (*Zeno Dostál, 1995, 90 min., Czech with English subtitles*) RSVP: bistrobohem@gmail.com.

LECTURES

- On September 17, at 6 pm, documentary director Martin Šmok will present the lecture *Czech Jews under Communists 1945–1989* at the Embassy of the Czech Republic. Using documents, photographs, and filmed interview excerpts, the lecture will explore aspects of postwar history of the Jewish community of Prague, as presented by the groundbreaking exhibition installed in the Jubilee synagogue. Admission is free. RSVP: www.eventbrite.com/e/lecture-czech-jews-under-communists-tickets-12737152165
- On October 23, at 6:30 pm, Czech Cultural Attaché Robert Řehák will give the lecture *Kafka's Magic Prague* at the Embassy of the Czech Republic. Prague is a magical city with a vibrant history spanning more than a thousand years of coexistence among Czechs, Germans, and Jews. Řehák will explore this majestic city through its many legends and delve into its origins. The stories paint a backdrop into the unique history that created a base for Franz Kafka's works. Admission is free. RSVP: www.eventbrite.com/e/lecture-kafkas-magic-prague-tickets-12602379055

ENCORE

- On November 8, the Katzen Arts Center at American University, in collaboration with the Shoah Memorial Prague, will open the exhibition *Eugenic Minds* comprised of a documentary by Pavel Štingl, animations and paintings by Xenie Hoffmeisterová, and literary artwork by Patrik Ouředník. The exhibition offers a timeless meditation upon the abuse of the human pinnacles of science and education. It addresses the question of academic careerism, which under totalitarian regimes reaches self-destructive proportions. The moving documentary, animations, and artwork delve into the definition of science and the situations when learning becomes a pseudo-science. Admission is free.

###