

This year the Czech Republic is sending the film *Brothers* directed by Tomáš Mašín to fight for the Oscars

In Prague, 12th September 2023 – As every year the candidate of the Czech Republic for the Academy award in the category of *Best International Feature Film* is chosen by the Czech Film and Television Academy (CFTA), which is also responsible for the Czech Lion film awards. This year the academics voted for the film *Brothers (Bratři)* by the director Tomáš Mašín and this film will fight for the award of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The drama tells one of the greatest stories of the Cold War – the story of the Mašín brothers, who decided to leave the communist Czechoslovakia with arms in their hands. The film will be premiered in Czech cinemas on 26th October this year.

The voting about the candidate for the Oscars took place from 1st to 10th September and the academics were choosing from 12 Czech feature films and documentaries submitted by their producers. Just behind the film *Brothers* in the voting there were the following films: *Restore Point, Suppressed, The Ballad of Piargy* and *We Have Never Been Modern* (in alphabetical order). The fifteen international feature films that get shortlisted for the Oscar award will be published on 21st December this year. Then the nominations will be announced on 23rd January 2024. The date of the ceremony of presenting the 96th annual awards of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences has been set for 10th March 2024.

Not many topics from the modern Czech history rouse as much emotion as the story of the group around the Mašín brothers, who stood up against the communist regime with arms in their hands in the early fifties. The film is depicting the years of their lives and the lives of their families after the Second World War until their escape to Germany. The group of five young men with guns chased by thousands of soldiers touch the limits of their own fear and bravery while fighting for their lives. The thirty-day-long pursuit brings losses on both sides. Only the two Mašín brothers together with their friend Milan Paumer reach eventually West Berlin. However, the communists take revenge on their families. The screenplay was written by Marek Epstein, the main roles in the film are played by Oskar Hes, Jan Nedbal, Adam Ernest, Matyáš Řezníček, Antonín Mašek, Matěj Hádek and Tatiana Dyková Vilhelmová. The film will be premiered on the 70th anniversary of the escape of the Mašín brothers behind the Iron Curtain.

Tomáš Mašín is a Czech film director, screenwriter and artist. His first feature film *3 Seasons in Hell* was awarded three Czech Lions. It was followed by the movie *Wilson City* or the six episodes of the TV series *Professor T*. Together with Tereza Kopáčová he directed the television series *The Defender*, which has also been awarded the Czech Lion. He is also among the acknowledged directors of advertisements and apart from other works he is the co-writer of the screenplay for the film *Whisper*. At the beginning of September his latest film *Suppressed* was released in the cinemas.

Last year the academics chose the film *Il Boemo* directed by Petr Václav as the candidate for the Oscars for the Czech Republic. So far only two Czechoslovak and one Czech film have managed to get the award for the Best International Feature Film. *The Shop on Main Street* (1965) by Ján Kadár and Elmar Klos. Two years later the film *Closely Watched Trains* by Jiří Menzel won the prize and then *Kolya* (1996) by Jan Svěrák. Six more films have managed to get among the nominees: *The Loves of a Blond*

(1966) and *The Firemen's Ball* (1968) by Miloš Forman, *My Sweet Little Village* (1986) by Jiří Menzel, *The Elementary School* (1991) by Jan Svěrák, *Divided We Fall* (2000) by Jan Hřebejk and the last time *Želary* (2003) by Ondřej Trojan.

About the Czech Film and Television Academy:

The Czech Film and Television Academy was founded in 1995 and in 2013 it was transformed into a registered association. Its main aim is to support and promote Czech cinematographic art in the Czech Republic as well as abroad and create conditions for the development of Czech film. The academy presents the most prestigious Czech film award – the Czech Lion and nominates the Czech candidate for the awards of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. At the moment the CFTA consists of 381 members.

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