

# FOREST WALKERS

*Is it possible to wander off the path of your own life?*

**A NEW CZECH-FRENCH-SLOVAK CO-PRODUCTION**

**DIRECTED BY IVAN VOJNÁR**

**PREMIERED IN ROTTERDAM FILM FESTIVAL 2003**

**Press information**

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*Executive producer:* Galina Šustová

*Producers:* Helena Slavíková, Alice Nemanská, Aleš Hudský, Francois Margolin, Marian Urban, Pavel Dvořák

Based on a screenplay and book, *Forest Walkers*, by Martin Ryšavý  
*Adaptation and dialogues:* Ivan Vojnár, Galina Šustová

*Monologues:*

Yveta Shanfeldová, Ivan Vojnár, Jiří Schmitzer, Ester Hocke, Petra Poláková, Lenka Regentová

*Director of Photography:* Ramunas Greičius

*Music:* Irena and Vojtěch Havel

*Design:* Jan Tobola

*Make up:* Jiřina Pahlerová

*Editor:* Šárka Němcová

*Sound:* Jiří Klenka

*English subtitles:* Yveta Shanfeldová

*Made in co-production with:*

GAGA Productions / Czech Television / Synergia Film / Studio Virtual / Margo Films Paris / ALEF Film and Media Group / Filmservice Slovakia

The Czech Republic State Fund for Support and Development of Czech Cinematography

Eurimages

*Film partners:*

DRINKS UNION, The City of Ústí nad Labem, Drama Studio (Činoherní studio) in Ústí nad Labem

*Cast:*

Jiří Schmitzer (Rufus)  
Jitka Prošperí (Puklice)  
Zdeněk Novák (Churchill)  
Petra Poláková (Greta)  
Miroslav Bambušek (Little Rufus)  
Ester Hocke (Little Greta)

## SYNOPSIS

On the way to visit her boyfriend Little Rufus (**Miroslav Bambušek**), Little Greta (**Ester Hocke**) is trying to piece together the past that culminated with their births and affected their destinies.

Bound together by years of friendship and a shared rebellion against a world oppressed by various forms of power, Rufus (**Jiří Schmitzer**) and Churchill (**Zdeněk Novák**) have chosen the life of outsiders. Rufus lives with his sister (**Lenka Volfová**), an employee at the factory where Rufus once worked. Rufus' favorite spot to get together with Churchill is the rail station pub. Churchill refuses to settle down; his world is populated by trains that make him feel free.

In the pawnshop where he has brought his old guitar, Rufus picks up Catherine (**Jitka Prošperí**) whom he later nicknames Puklice. Churchill meets Greta (**Petra Poláková**). After Rufus and Churchill get into a brawl with Greta's hostile friends from the amateur band, they are briefly detained at the police headquarters.

The foursome considers immigration. But only Churchill actually sets off, deserting Greta whose worsening problems have landed her at a psychiatric asylum. Rufus stays with the pregnant Puklice. He now has a job repairing asphalt roads.

Churchill returns from Australia and renews his relationship with Greta who has been working in a dog pound. In time she gets pregnant, gives birth to a daughter and goes back to the psychiatric unit. When they discharge her she disappears without a trace. Churchill's conscience torments him and he can find no relief. His daughter, Little Greta lives with her Grandfather. Meanwhile, Puklice packs up herself and her son, Little Rufus, and leaves her querulous husband. Failing to create a 'normal' life with him and his sister, she finds work and shelter at the Children's Home. Rufus starts taking Little Rufus with him on his wanderings through the woods. He is drifting still farther away from Puklice. Filled with a grandiose wish to affirm their values, Rufus and Churchill betroth their offspring who are still children.

Drunk, Churchill falls out of a freight train and dies.

Little Greta and Little Rufus lose sight of each other. Each spends a troubled adolescence; the first painful incidents of adulthood inadvertently evoke the legacy of their fathers. After many years they meet again, only to discover that their different paths have led them to similar conclusions. Little Greta has recently overcome a drug habit and Little Rufus learned to channel his yearning for freedom into his theater work. Both are hopeful that their newly born relationship can withstand the test of enforced separation after Little Rufus goes to jail for being in a fight. Their love is a germ of hope - if not for their parents, at least for themselves.

## ABOUT THE FILM

This motion picture by an experienced documentary filmmaker **Ivan Vojnár** who shot his first feature-film, *The Way through the Bleak Woods* in 1997 doesn't refer directly to concrete historic parallels. But the tale of two generations seeking stability in their lives tells of a thoughtful reflection on the prospects of escape from the realities of place, time, and human responsibility. The story fuses fiction and documentary, past and present, reality and fiction.

The film makes the most of the special ambiance of an industrial city Ústí nad Labem and the unique attributes of its local Drama Studio, linked to **Jiří Schmitzer** (Rufus) who was its member for ten years, actress **Jitka Prošperí** (Puklice), and **Miroslav Bambušek** (Little Rufus), director and actor who works here frequently. Its one time stage technician, **Zdeněk Novák** (Churchill), former cloakroom worker, **Petra Poláková** (Greta) and stage manager, **Ester Hocke** (Little Greta) have also appeared on stage there.

*Forest Walkers* was conceived to probe the outer limits of improvisation, looking for the realm of a truly authentic testimonial. The film initially grew from a screenplay and book of the same name by **Martin Ryšavý**.

Director **Ivan Vojnár** adapted the screenplay and dialogues, working closely with **Galina Šustová** who as part of GAGA Productions was also the executive producer of the movie.

Director **Ivan Vojnár** became interested in **Martin Ryšavý's** memories of a "Rufus" who liked to wander, write seemingly trite diaries, and who betrothed his then ten-year old son to the daughter of a similarly inclined friend. **Martin Ryšavý** developed this idea into a screenplay about a pair of hobo outsiders (originally a trash collector and a road worker) living their lives in the Czechoslovak reality somewhere between the 1960s and 1990s.

The screenplay, taken on by GAGA Productions that had produced **Ivan Vojnár's** *Way through the Bleak Woods*, was awarded in 1999 grants by the Czech Republic State Fund for Support and Development of Czech Cinematography. The project, co-produced by Slovakia and France, then received financial support from the European Fund, Eurimages. Other partners to GAGA Productions were Czech Television, Synergia Film, Studio Virtual, Margo Films /France, ALEF Film and Media Group / Slovakia and Filmservice Slovakia.

At some point, **Ivan Vojnár** and **Martin Ryšavý** agreed that **Ivan Vojnár** would continue to work by himself. **Martin Ryšavý** developed his version into a book. In the end, three 'definitive' forms of the original material evolved: the screenplay, the book, and the finished movie, for **Ivan Vojnár** is an author who continues to shape his creative vision in the course of the filming process through improvisation, welcoming the creative input of each situation, each actor, and each collaborator.

It was clear from the start that the theme of *Forest Walkers* as a contemporary story of two generations contained a broader context. The focus was on six characters - two couples (Rufus/ Puklice, Churchill/Greta) and their children (Little Rufus/ Little Greta), who in some way brought to a head the notion their fathers and mothers had about continuity and fulfillment of their own dreams and destinies.

The film has devoted more attention to the new generation than was planned. **Ivan Vojnár** was drawn to explore the emotions of a story taking place somewhere within the past thirty years. In their attempt to defy the pressure of society, Churchill and Rufus opted to flee into an inner opposition. However, the director believes that their unswerving commitment to this decision also served to isolate and insulate them from the world, and provide them with an easy excuse. The heroes become egoists created a trail of failings such as an inability to hold on to lovers or bring up their children.

The need to attach dates to any events, whether with subtitles, period locations, or acting stylization took a back seat. (Perhaps the strongest 'outward' sign of a shift in the story are the glasses Churchill wears on his return from immigration, or the beard that the incarcerated Little Rufus has shaved off - as has the actor, **Miroslav Bambušek**.) Even Rufus' diary is something of a negation of outward reality and its external transformations. The world and society around the characters might change but the characters don't take notice. Of course, the participants have experienced an external and internal growth, linked to the inadvertent documentation of the changes the actors themselves had undergone in the course of the filming that lasted nearly a year.

In their work on the script, **Ivan Vojnár** and **Galina Šustová** labored to simplify and sharpen the meaning that underpins the motivations, feelings, and relationships between the characters, as well as purge the story of symbols and metaphors. In the end, the forest remained only in the film's title, a metaphor of an impossible dream about freedom. It followed that any tangible associations with tramping and the Beat culture had to go as well.

The director decided to abandon the black-and-white retro-stylization and Cinemascope of *The Way through the Bleak Woods*, opting instead for the color material that brought out the peculiar non-romantic poetics of the contemporary industrial setting.

The film crew found in the Northern Bohemia's regional city Ústí nad Labem practically all they needed. There was the railroad web, so closely tied to the character of Churchill, and the mighty flowing Elbe River leading the internal dramaturgical line of the story 'all the way to Australia'. The city that still bears traces of the boom of Czechoslovakia's first years as a republic, and those of the Socialist era had suffused the movie with its lively, unpredictable atmosphere. An important role in the film went to the Ústí periphery with its factory complex, Setuza. Its old unmistakable 'fragrance' was the subject of a largely improvised dialogue between Rufus and Puklice. Lastly, the film has benefited from the multicultural atmosphere of a city of dwellers whose roots lie elsewhere, and of a strong Roma minority - a plausible background for the lives of 'unusual wanderers' of Rufus' and Churchill's ilk. A significant role in the film belongs to the forest-rich countryside, stretched to the city limits and ignored by its inhabitants.

Reinforced by their local colleagues, the Prague film crew spent a whole year in Ústí, recording the passing of the four seasons and the imprint such passage leaves in its wake. The decision to film in this Northern Bohemian metropolis led **Ivan Vojnár** to discover the unique attributes of another of the film's partners, the Ústí nad Labem Drama Studio. The ensemble that won the 2000 Alfréd Radok Theater Prize peoples its performances with a cast of actors as well as employees of the theater (hence the cast of *Forest Walkers*). This theater has produced **Jiří Schmitzer** (Rufus) and other well-known Czech actors.

## ABOUT THE FILMING

*Forest Walkers* was shot between May 2001 and April 2002, primarily in Ústí nad Labem and its environs (the Elbe port, industrial complex Setuza, train station and railroad tracks).

**Ivan Vojnár** chose actors that would realize his vision of the characters. They usually received their text right before filming a scene that often ended up being shaped by their own life experiences. The director frequently provided a mere outline for improvisation; as in the conversation between Little Rufus and Little Greta in the outdoor amphitheater. Sometimes it was the weather or mood of the location that served as Mr. **Vojnár's** primary inspiration.

The constant improvisation in front of the camera placed an increased demand on the concentration of the film crew. The actors' mostly unrestricted movement on the set required the cameraman, **Ramunas Greičius's** full attention. Thanks to his experience with documentary film, he knew that the first take would usually be the best and the only one of its kind. His partnership with **Ivan Vojnár** operated on mutual respect rather than professional discipline which **Greičius** thinks would have caused tension. In making *Forest Walkers* the absence of preexisting rules required that the whole team invest their trust into the director and his vision.

Originally a cameraman with years of experience behind him, **Ivan Vojnár** planned from the start to use the knowledge of some of his foreign colleagues, distanced from the Czech reality.

Although **Ivan Vojnár** tells a story of two generations, he and **Ramunas Greičius** agreed not to differentiate between individual time periods in the traditional manner, for instance by using color. Their goal was to appeal to the viewers' subconscious rather than intellect. Sound engineer **Jiří Klenka** had a similarly difficult task recording improvisation. Often he didn't know who would speak next. His work was aided by microports. *Forest Walkers* was taped with contact sound, without the use of post-synchronization (during post-production only one word had been switched and one reply clarified). **Jiří Klenka** taped thirteen hours of actual 'industrial' sound to capture the sense of the city during different times of day and different seasons. The film used almost exclusively these sounds.

**Ivan Vojnár** came up with the idea of fleshing out some of the characters by adding an inner monologue - voiceover. He asked **Jiří Schmitzer** (Rufus), **Petra Poláková** (Greta) and **Ester Hocke** (Little Greta) to answer his questions and thus enrich their protagonists. The more extensive inner monologue of Little Greta received a somewhat different treatment; it was written by the director and by **Yveta Shanfeldová**, a Czech American poet living in the USA since the age of 18, who has been publishing in both the Czech Republic and America.

Director **Ivan Vojnár**, cameraman **Ramunas Greičius**, and sound engineer **Jiří Klenka** all believe the collaboration with editor **Šárka Němcová** was invaluable. As she has worked with the director on his documentaries, she knew **Vojnár's** approach to feature-film would be similar. Although the story is embraced by Little Greta's journey to prison and pierced by her monologue, the film was shot and edited chronologically, subtly altering the inner tissue of the scenes. **Jiří Klenka** praised the editor most of all for her feeling of rhythm and the internal connection between scenes. After **Galina Šustová**, **Šárka Němcová** was the next closest collaborator, balancing **Ivan Vojnár's** intuitive approach with a mix of rational detachment and 'female' approach toward the material.

Another personality influential to *Forest Walkers* was the experienced make-up artist, **Jiřina Pahlerová** who has among others worked with the French movie star, **Annie Girardot**. Ms. Pahlerová originally expected the protagonists to slightly age throughout the decades. As it became clear early on that the film would gain its proper form later in the editing room, she strove to create a most commonplace, unchanging look. Amused, she now reminisces on 'making up actors for a documentary film'.

The decision not to draw attention to the passage of time also effected the work of designer **Jan Tobola**, another of **Ivan Vojnár's** collaborators from *The Way through the Bleak Woods*. **Tobola**, too, had to work in raw conditions that denied him the 'professional' services of a continuity girl or property man. The blend of the timeless and the concrete reminded him of the stylizations common to theater, and of the simplicity of Italian Neo-realism.

An inconspicuous but important component of *Forest Walkers* is music. **Irena** and **Vojtěch Havel** who wrote the music for *The Way through the Bleak Woods* knew music would be used sparingly. Inspired by the director's commission, they created a minimalist, introspective musical recording in cooperation with **Michal Gera**, **Pavel Polášek**, **Štefan Sukup** and sound engineer **Jiří Klenka**, a clarinet player. From that, **Ivan Vojnár** made his choices in the editing room. .

## ACTORS

As in *The Way through the Bleak Woods*, **Ivan Vojnár** chose for *Forest Walkers* individuals that had perhaps at some point in their lives parted with acting. In that sense, the actors invested the verity of their characters with their own lives. The only lead role played by an experienced film professional was **Jiří Schmitzer's** Rufus.

Like most of his colleagues, **Schmitzer** has maintained a close tie to Ústí nad Labem where he started his career at the Drama Studio. He welcomed the opportunity to return for one year to the setting where he spent ten years. Although he regularly visits family in Ústí, he has only now been able to appreciate the changes that have taken place there.

**Schmitzer** bore most of the responsibility for matching his performance to that of his colleagues who have had a minimal theater or film experience. The amount of improvisation initially threw him off; the need for authenticity forced him to lessen his own expressive means, stop relying on routine and habit, and make space for the element of chance. He liked filming *Forest Walkers* as a handmade, non-industrial production where no one manipulated outer effects to 'work' the viewer.

The role of Churchill fell to **Zdeněk Novák**(1959), a native of Teplice who related to his hero through his own love for the adventure of life. **Ivan Vojnár** discovered him as a stage technician in the Drama Studio in Ústí, where he also acted. (Today he works as a bus driver.) The work on this film tapped right into his element - he had experience with improvisation from the theater.

But **Zdeněk Novák** didn't always know where a scene would lead him: for instance when he as Churchill was opening with his knife an old, suspicious looking can, neither he nor any of the crew knew what would be inside (it was halvah). In one scene he acted on an impulse and got into a fight with **Jiří Schmitzer**. The hardest thing for him wasn't jumping off a moving train but the seemingly unproblematic scene in the fountain on the Lidice Square in Ústí. During that, he said, he and his acting partner, **Petra Poláková** 'almost drowned'.

**Vojnár** offered the part of Catherine, alias Puklice to the thirty-three year old **Jitka Prošperí**. A native of the Central Bohemian town of Nymburk, she says her acting 'schools' were the A-Studio Ruby and the Drama Studio in Ústí where she's spent seven years, appearing in the performances of *Crave* (by **Sarah Kane**) and *Four Little Dramas* (**Samuel Beckett**). Although in the theater she often finds herself working within stylized planes, her Puklice is a character striving for a 'normal' life despite a normalization reality on one hand and Rufus' constant attacks and eccentric, independent existence on the other. Shooting wasn't for **Jitka Prošperí** always pleasant but it was always an intensely personal matter that forced her to draw on the experiences and incidents from her life and made it impossible to 'hide' behind the character. The hardest thing for her was to overcome feeling intimidated by her film partner, **Jiří Schmitzer**, whom she greatly admires as an actor.

Churchill's introverted and unstable girlfriend was played by a twenty-two year old native of Ústí, **Petra Poláková**, who came to the Drama Studio at sixteen as a cloakroom worker. In the past five years she has also joined the theater troupe on the stage. She considers filming of *Forest Walkers* an interesting and pleasant creative experience, during which **Ivan Vojnár** helped her overcome even the hardest moments, such as the draining 'nude' scene.

**Ivan Vojnár** found in the Drama Studio of Ústí also **Ester Hocke**, a twenty-three year old native of Česká Lípa, who plays Greta's and Churchill's daughter, Little Greta. Neither she considers herself an actress; she has been an EMT in the infectious disease department of a hospital, a salesgirl in a boutique in Kladno, and a theater property person. Finally she has become a stage manager, but also appeared in the performance of *Fímejl*. Another of her creative outlets is studying voice.

*Forest Walkers* had been the first professional film experience for **Ester Hocke**. She too played mostly her own self. The exciting opportunity to utilize, in a creative agreement with the director, her own memories, experiences, and transitory emotions has helped her tackle her own inner life. What she found most draining emotionally was neither shooting in the penitentiary at Bory nor the love scene she accomplished with the support of her acting partner, **Miroslav Bambušek**, but the scene where her character walks, seemingly carefree, on the railroad tracks in front of a moving train.

The character of Rufus' and Puklice's son was played by **Miroslav Bambušek** (1975), an up-and-coming artist who is the resident artistic director, dramaturge, author and director at the theater of Multiprostor Louny. He also freelances with the Drama Studio in Ústí, the theater in Cheb, and the Prague theater Na zábradlí.

## PRODUCERS

### **GAGA Productions (Galina Šustová)**

GAGA Productions has been in operation since 1991, making documentaries, feature-films, and TV movies and shows primarily for Czech television companies. A significant part of GAGA's recent work has involved producing their own titles (such as the TV documentary of screenwriter and director **Martin Ryšavý**, *Siberia - Soul in a Museum*). In conjunction with Czech Television, GAGA produced the feature-film debut of **Ivan Vojnár**, *The Way through the Bleak Woods* (1997) as well as his full-length documentary,

*Prophets and Poets: Chapters from the Calendar* premiered in Rotterdam 2001. Then came *Forest Walkers*, where **Galina Šustová** also participated in the script adaptation.

### **Synergia Film (Aleš Hudský)**

was founded in 1991 as an independent studio of one of the biggest Czech film companies *Krátký film*. Since 1993 it is a private production company with activities in production of feature, documentary and advertising films.

*Synergia Film* is one of Czech feature films independent producers taking part in following international co-productions:

2003 - *Forest Walkers* (a Czech-French-Slovak co-production)

1994 – *The Fortress* (a Czech-French co-production, dir. *D.Vihanová*, starr. *Gyorgy Cserhalmi*, FIPRESCI Award in San Sebastian 1994)

1992 – *Something Lighter* (dir. *J.Čísařovský*, in competition in San Remo and Berlin)

1990 - *Why Havel* (a Canadian-Czech coproduction, dir. *V.Jasný*, full-length documentary describing first steps of V.Havel as a Czech president, featuring Milos Forman )

## **ABOUT THE CREATORS**

### **Jiří Schmitzer (Rufus)**

One of the strongest personalities of the domestic acting scene, **Schmitzer** was born in 1949 in Prague, graduated in 1974 from the Prague Theater Academy (DAMU) and joined the Drama Studio in Ústí nad Labem. After ten years he received an invitation to the Prague theater, Ypsilon. The most recent among the many powerful roles he created for television are on the series *Land Run Amok*, or TV projects *Thirteen Hours*, *Dinner Invitation*, and *The Kain Case*. His film debut was as Honza in the 1973 comedy by **Oldřich Lipský**, *Three Men on the Road*, inspired by the beloved TV series. One of his most popular roles has been that of Kroupa Junior in the 1976 comedy, "*Mareček, hand me the pen!*" where he played the part of the son alongside his real-life father, **Jiří Sovák**. In the 1980 film version of **Bohumil Hrabal's** *Shortcuts*, directed by **Jiří Menzel**, he shone in the role of a timid custodian of a beer brewery. He appeared in another **Hrabal** film, *Snowdrop Festivities* (1983), and in the next **Menzel** film, *My Sweet Little Village* (1985). In a family motion picture, *Mr. Edisons* (1987), he made his debut as the author of the film's main song and as a singer. In a character sketch, *House For Two* (1988, **Miloš Záborský**, director), he portrayed the introverted Bóža, a man trying to lead a life of honesty in a world full of compromise.

In the first half of the 90s, he played joined two projects inspired by the work of **Franz Kafka** - *The Trial* (1992, **David Jones**, director), and *America* (1994, **Vladimír Michálek**, director). For his role as a political prisoner, Jaroslav Svoboda in the drama by **Hynek Bočan**, *Boomerang* (1996), he received the Czech Lion for Best Male Actor. Recently we've seen him in *White Acacias* (1996), *Those Wonderful Dog Years* (1997), *Land Run Amok* (1997), *Canary* (1999), *Landscape* (2000) and *Bouquet* (2001).

### **Ivan Vojnár (Director, adaptation of script and dialogues, costumes)**

Photographer, cameraman and director, **Ivan Vojnár** (1942) majored as a cameraman at the Prague Film Academy FAMU (1960 - 1965). After graduation he collaborated as a cameraman on a number of Czech and Slovak feature-films and documentaries (for

instance, many years with **Drahomíra Vihanová**, or a full-length documentary by **Karel Vachek**, *The New Hyperion, or, Liberty, Equality, Brotherhood* (1991).

Then came independent works: a portrait of **Boleslav Polívka**, *Dream of Pierot* (1998), followed by *Fear* (1989, with **Jaroslav Hovorka**). Next he made a documentary variation on the theme of homelessness, titled *Journey* (1992), a portrait of artist **Petr Kavan**, called *Landscape with Fire* (1992), a GEN about his colleague, **Miroslav Ondříček** (1993), a depiction of the 'small' actor, **Jiří Krytinář**, called *Sleeplessness* (1993), a documentary about young thespians in Prague, *Actors* (1995), and a documentary essay about the patients at a psychiatric asylum, *In the Garden* (1995 - Main Prize for Documentary Film at the Film Festival in Karlovy Vary). For the TV series, *Confession*, he made documentaries titled *Driver* and *Václav Klíma in Penal Servitude*. For another TV series, *The Eye*, he made *Ukraine Hasn't Died Yet* and *We, the People of the Century*.

Mr. **Vojnár**'s feature-film directorial debut, *The Way through the Bleak Woods* was awarded the 1997 Czech Lion for Visual Art Achievement. Its international premiere was at the 1998 Rotterdam Film Festival. At the New European Talent Festival in Barcelona, the film received an award for Best Photography (**Jaromír Kačer**), and at the 20th annual Dutch Noordelijk Film Festival Leeuwarden, it won the Main Prize, Matador for Best Feature Film. The film was sold for distribution in Germany and Netherlands. While ZDF/Arte bought the TV rights for Germany and France, HRT secured them for Croatia. In 2000, Mr. **Vojnár** directed a full-length documentary, *Prophets and Poets: Chapters from the Calendar* that collected the Audience Award at the Documentary Film Festival at Jihlava, and had its international premiere at the Rotterdam Film Festival 2001.

### **Martin Ryšavý (Screenplay and book, Forest Walkers)**

Born in Horní Počernice (1967), **Martin Ryšavý** graduated from the Agricultural High School in Brandýs and was a Sociology Major at the Biology Department of the Charles University in Prague, only to major afterward in Dramaturgy and Scriptwriting at the Film Academy, FAMU, where he worked as an assistant professor. He made a full-length documentary, *Siberia - Soul in a Museum*, and a short movie, *Arghish*, about the life of the nomadic Nentsy people of the Timur Peninsula.

In addition to the Siberian documents, he directed *Dialogues on Method* (1997), an experimental movie about the work of scientists and researchers at the Biology Department of the Charles University in Prague, and a short story film, *The White Indian Woman*, for which he also wrote the script. The list of **Ryšavý**'s accomplishments includes collaboration on the script of a feature motion picture by **Roman Vávra**, *Catching In the Rye* (nominated for the Czech Lion Award), a script for *Forest Walkers* and a book of the same name, both of which became the basis of **Ivan Vojnár**'s feature-film.

### **Ramunas Greičius (Photography)**

**Ramunas Greičius** was born in 1968 in Vilnius, Lithuania where he studied acting and TV directing. He worked for Lithuanian Radio and played theater. Between 1994 and 1996, he served as the Prague correspondent for Lithuanian TV. In 1993, he was accepted at the Prague Film Academy, FAMU to the graduating class of 2000. As a cameraman, scriptwriter and director he made a number of short films. His documentary, *Noah's Arc* was awarded first place at the 1995 student film festival in Lodz, Poland, and the FITES Prize at the FAMU Film Festival. His short feature, *Summer, the Time of Long Flights* represented the Czech Republic in 1997 at film festivals in Oberhausen and Cannes, and won the FITES' Special Award and other awards at festivals in Písek, Brno, and Dresden. His feature-film, *Maritime Waltz* was elected Best Film at the 2000 Cottbus festival.

Among the films he worked on as a cameraman are documentaries *Island* (1996) and *Nevena* (1997), or the short animated film, *Footsteps* (1997). As a cameraman he can also boast feature-films *Ene bene* (1999) and *The Trip* (2001), both directed by **Alice Nellis**, and a film by **Roman Vávra**, *The Closet* (2001). For the **Jan Svěrák** film, **Dark Blue World** (2000) he was second cameraman. His latest work has been a fairytale, *Devil Knows Why* (2003), directed by **Roman Vávra**. Since the year 2000, he has been a lecturer at the Lithuanian Art Academy.

### **Šárka Němcová (Editor)**

She edited documentary TV sequels *Gen*, *Genus*, *The Eye* or *Travelmania*. With **Jan Němec** she worked on the in-depth portrait, *The Name of the Ruby Code* (1996) and with **Věra Chytilová** on a two-part art documentary, *Flights and Falls* (2000), and tragic comedy, *Expulsion from Paradise* (2001).

### **Jiří Klenka (Sound engineer)**

Majored at the Prague Conservatory in clarinet and sax, and in 1992 - 1999 in sound engineering at the Prague Film Academy, FAMU. He took part in many TV productions, radio and television commercials, animated films and documentaries. Another field of his professional activity is dubbing (films like *Lion King*, *Tarzan*, *The Prince of Egypt*). With **Alice Nellis** he made *Ene bene* (2000) and *The Trip* (2002). For *Bouquet* (2002), directed by **F. A. Brabec**, Mr. **Klenka** won the Czech Lion for Best Sound. At present, he is working with **Ondřej Trojan** on the film, *Želary*, and on a television debut of **Sabina Remundová**, *Maryška*.

### **Jan Tobola (Design)**

Graduate of the Technical and Art School and was a student at the Stage Design Department of the Theater Academy, DAMU, in Prague. As a freelance designer he works primarily in theater (for instance, *Brothers Karamazov* at the Prague Theater in Dejvice), television and film (e.g. *Jackal Years*, directed by **Jan Hřebejk**, or *The Way through the Bleak Woods*, directed by **Ivan Vojnár**).

### **Jiřina Pahlerová (Make-up)**

Born in 1944, Ms. **Pahlerová** is one of the foremost professionals in theater, television, and film. She considers frequent switching between genres to be helpful in preventing her sliding into a rut, but admits to a soft spot for period projects. On her list of achievements are *Daisies* (1966), directed by **Věra Chytilová**, *The Vicar's End* (1969) by **Evald Schorm**, *Marketa Lazarová* (1967) by **František Vlácil**, or **Jiří Menzel's** *Shortcuts* (1980) where she met among others **Jiří Schmitzer** with whom she worked now again in *Forest Walkers*.

She also worked with: **Jaromil Jireš** on *Opera in the Vineyard* (1981), **Otakar Vávra** on *Europe Used to Dance the Waltz* (1989), a drama by **Andrea Sedláčková**, *Victims and Murderers* (2000), with **Filip Renč** on *Rebels*, and with **Zdeněk Troška** on the *Angelic Face*. Added to her filmography are also fairytales, *The Royal Promise* or *Lucky as Hell*. Two of her foreign films are *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1967, directed by **Egon Gunter**) and *A Burning Secret* (1988, **Andrew Biken** director).

