

A man wearing a cap, a light-colored shirt, and dark trousers is lying on his back on the grass in an orchard. He is surrounded by numerous wooden crates and baskets overflowing with ripe, yellowish-red apples. A small black dog is perched on one of the crates in the background. To the right, there is a piece of machinery, possibly a scale or a press, partially covered with a white plastic sheet. The scene is set under a tree with green leaves, and the ground is covered with fallen apples and leaves.

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A FEAST OF SNOWDROPS

FILM BY JIŘÍ MENZEL

BACK IN CINEMAS

Jiří Menzel directed six films based on literary works by Bohumil Hrabal. The penultimate of these was the 1983 film *A Feast of Snowdrops*. Hrabal's eponymous book, which is a colorful collage of portraits of the inhabitants of a cottage settlement in the Central Bohemian village of Kersko, was first published in 1978, but then still in censored form. Jiří Menzel wanted to rehabilitate the long-censored author for film, so he prepared a film script based on his book. However, the film was only allowed to be made by the state cinema management after the audience success of *Cutting in Short*, another adaptation of Hrabal's work. The film is set in the local restaurant, where seasonal holidaymakers and old-timers from Kersko gather day after day. The peaceful life of the village is disrupted by a grotesque boar hunt and the ensuing dispute between two groups of gamekeepers over who should get the trophy. The tragicomedy, which accentuates the bucolic rather than the existential level of the subject, was filmed in the real cottage village of Kersko.

Jiří Menzel (1938–2020)

The world-renowned Czech director Jiří Menzel was one of the leading figures of the Czechoslovak New Wave of the 1960s. Employing subtle lyricism and sensitivity, he made many popular tragicomedies about everyday joys. After graduating from the Prague Film Academy – FAMU, where he studied alongside Věra Chytilová and Evald Schorm among others, Menzel made his first feature film *Closely Watched Trains* (*Ostře sledované vlaky*, 1966). This tragicomedy set during the Nazi occupation of Bohemia in World War II won the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film. Menzel's next film, an adaptation of Vladislav Vančura's novel *Capricious Summer* (*Rozmarné léto*, 1967), opened the New York Film Festival. His *Larks on a String* (*Skřivánci na niti*) from 1969 received the Golden Bear at the Berlinale. However, because the film had been immediately banned, this did not happen until 21 years after its completion. His bittersweet comedy *My Sweet Little Village* (*Vesničko má středisková*, 1985) was nominated for an Oscar.

Czechoslovakia 1983 • 83 min. • DCP & Blu-ray • English subtitles

Directed by	Jiří Menzel
Story	Bohumil Hrabal
Screenplay	Bohumil Hrabal, Jiří Menzel
Director of Photography	Jiří Macák
Set Designer	Zbyněk Hloch
Editing	Jiří Brožek
Cast	Rudolf Hrušínský, Jaromír Hanzlík, Josef Somr, Petr Čepek and others

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