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# THE END OF OLD TIMES

FILM BY JIŘÍ MENZEL

BACK IN CINEMAS

In 1934, the novel *The End of Old Times* by Vladislav Vančura was published. Fifty years later, it was revived by Jiří Menzel's film adaptation. The nostalgic comedy is set shortly after the First World War on a farm with a castle, where a Russian emigrant, Megalrogov (Josef Abrahám), a would-be prince, arrives. A charming man of refined manners, he is in fact above all a skilful storyteller and fantasist who likes to embellish his stories. That is why he manages to charm the snobbish society so much that the running of the estate starts to revolve around him. The basic theme of Vančura's satirical story is the conflict between two social orders. Menzel has shifted this conflict to a more conciliatory lyrical level through the camera of Jaromír Šofr, and has strengthened the comedy by imitating the style of silent slapstick.

### 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 1989 • 93 min. • DCP & Blu-ray • English subtitles

Directed by	Jiří Menzel
Story	Vladislav Vančura
Screenplay	Jiří Blažek, Jiří Menzel
Director of Photography	Jaromír Šofr
Set Designer	Zbyněk Hloch
Editing	Jiří Brožek
Cast	Josef Abrahám, Marián Labuda, Jaromír Hanzlík, Rudolf Hrušínský and others

The donors of the digitization project were Mrs. Milada Kučerová and Mr. Eduard Kučera.

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