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MORGIANA

FILM BY JURAJ HERZ

BACK ON SCREENS

At the beginning of the period of normalisation in Czechoslovakia, dramaturge Vladimír Bor, the head of one of Barrandov's creative teams, approached Juraj Herz. He offered him an adaptation of a short story by Russian Neo-romantic novelist, Alexander Stepanovich Grin, *Jessie* and *Morgiana*. The director was not initially interested in the work, but he realised that Bor's patronage would give him a relatively large amount of freedom in making the film. He therefore conceived this gothic horror story of two sisters whose relationship is consumed by greed, lust and black magic as a stylistic exercise. Both main roles, the ethereal Klára and the jealous Viktorie, are played by Iva Janžurová. The character of each of the sisters is conveyed through Irena Greifová's costumers, as well as a mise-en-scène interwoven with symbols. Primarily, however, their difference is evident through Janžurová's nuanced acting. The evocative orchestral music of Luboš Fišer and the expressionist camerawork of Jaroslav Kučera, who based the visual dynamics of the picture on the contrast of black and white, thus emphasising the central theme of duality, contribute to the film's darkly fairytale atmosphere. Too daring for its time, the film was considered an artistic failure at Barrandov. Progressively, however, *Morgiana* became a cult film, to which international filmmakers such as Peter Strickland have made reference.

Czechoslovakia 1972 • 102 min. • drama • 16mm, 35mm , DCP 2-D, MP4, BRD • accessible

Director	Juraj Herz
Screenplay	Vladimír Bor, Juraj Herz
Photography	Jaroslav Kučera
Set designer	Zbyněk Hloch
Editing	Jaromír Janáček
Cast	Iva Janžurová, Josef Abrahám, Nina Divišková, Petr Čepek, Josef Somr and others

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

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