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THE NINTH HEART

FILM BY JURAJ HERZ

BACK ON SCREENS

During the period of normalisation, Juraj Herz wanted to avoid making political films. Thus he welcomed the offer he received in the late 1970s from Ota Hofman's creative dramaturgy group, which specialised in productions for children and young people. Originally, he was only meant to film an adaptation of the classic fairytale, *Beauty and the Beast* for them. However, the old castle's sets for its film adaptation, renamed *The Virgin and the Monster* in Czech, were so expensive that Herz, under pressure from Barrandov Studios, was required to make another film. This is how *The Ninth Heart* came into being. The protagonist in this horror-laden story with captivating visuals is wandering student Martin. He decides to free Princess Adriena, imprisoned by the sorcerer Aldobrandini. But Martin's true love is the puppeteer Tonička, whom he meets amongst the travelling performers. Both fairytales were created in parallel, and had more or less identical crews (cinematographer Jiří Macháně, architect Vladimír Labský, costume designer Irena Greifová). The exception was the production designers. While the painter Josef Vyletal worked on *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Ninth Heart* owes its original fairground stylisation to Eva and Jan Švankmajer. The two films also had entirely different casts. Herz required a fresh young face for the male lead in *Ninth Heart*, and this led to his discovery of Ondřej Pavelka. Similarly, the Slovak actress who played Tonička, Anna Mařová, would also later become famous.

Czechoslovakia 1978 • 88 min. • fairytale • DCP, MP4, Blu-Ray, DVD • accessible

Director	Juraj Herz
Screenplay	Josef Hanzlík, Juraj Herz
Photography	Jiří Macháně
Set designer	Vladimír Labský
Editing	Jaromír Janáček
Cast	Ondřej Pavelka, Anna Mařová, Julie Jurištová, Josef Kemr, Juraj Kukura and others

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

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