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TRANSPORT FROM PARADISE

FILM BY ZBYNĚK BRYNYCH

BACK ON SCREENS

Fourteen years after Alfréd Radok's *Distant Journey*, only the second Czech feature film directly dealing with the Holocaust was made. In *Transport from Paradise*, director Zbyněk Brynych presents a naturalistic picture of everyday life in the Terezín ghetto during the autumn of 1944, prior to the visit of the International Red Cross. As a result of this visit, the ghetto was briefly transformed into a spa town for Jews, where everybody was ostensibly well cared for. This polyphonic drama, which weaves together many individual fates, is inspired by the personal memories of the writer Arnošt Lustig, as described in his short story collection, *Night and Hope*, and also by letters and photographs from the ghetto from this time. The soberly realistic approach to the subject matter is also reflected in the characterisation of the characters. In regard to both Jews and Nazis, Brynych avoids the usual stereotypes, pathos and demonization. Despite its documentary moderation and its focus on concrete acts rather than symbolic images, *Transport from Paradise* is also an existential parable about people in an extreme situation at whose core is the question of whether we as human beings can maintain our dignity and remain true to our moral principles even when the most precious thing is at stake – our own lives. The qualities of this evocative film have been confirmed by its screening and awards won at many international festivals. It has received, for example, the Golden Sail and diploma at the XVI International Film Festival in Locarno, and the winning plaque at the International Festival of Resistance Film in Cuneo, Italy.

Czechoslovakia 1962 • 96 min. • drama, thriller • MP4, DCP • accessible

Director	Zbyněk Brynych
Screenplay	Arnošt Lustig, Zbyněk Brynych
Photography	Jan Čuřík
Set designer	Karel Škvor
Editing	Miroslav Hájek
Cast	Zdeněk Štěpánek, Ilja Prachař, Ladislav Pešek, Jindřich Nareta, Vlastimil Brodský a others

The new digitization of this film was funded by Milada Kučerová and Eduard Kučera.

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