**Busy film summer 2016 on Czech locations and stages**

*Press release*

Karlovy Vary, 8 July – **Several big international productions are shooting and prepping in the Czech Republic in the second half of 2016, three of them being epic period TV series: *Britannia* for Sky and *Knightfall* for History Channel started shooting 27 June. Both productions will spend a total of CZK 2 billion in the Czech Republic. Currently prepping is the first season for the anthology *Genius*, a scripted series for National Geographic Channel produced by Fox 21.**

„*Numerous international productions are choosing the Czech Republic particularly for period films and TV series set in various periods, ranging from ancient history to the 20th Century. I believe it is certainly thanks to the variety of great locations the Czech Republic offers, but to same extend also thanks to highly-experienced and creative local artisans – from production and costume designers to the props and set construction crews,“* said Ludmila Claussová from the Czech Film Commission.“*TV series like Borgia and The Musketeers, feature films Marguerite, The Zookeeper’s Wife, Anthropoid or the recently finished Interlude in Prague**centering on Mozart’s creation of Don Giovanni are just a few of the recent productions that have benefitted from this great professional background,”* she adds.

The producers of the epic series *Britannia* just started filming andwill work with Czech crews on location and in studios for long 145 filming days. The story of the 10-episode series is set in the 1st century AD, when Romans started to invade the territory of the today´s Great Britain. Rick McCallum (*A United Kingdom*, *Emperor*, *Star Wars*) from the Czech production company Film United is one of the producers. Kelly Reilly (*True Detective*, *Sherlock Holmes)* is casted for the main female role.Two episodes of the series will be directed by the experienced TV director Kari Skogland (*Vikings, House Of Cards*, *The Borgias)*.

After a first few shooting days in the Croatian Dubrovnik, the Czech shoot of *Knightfall* started just yesterday and will continue through December. The production is based at the Barrandov Studio and will be using also their stages and exterior backlot were large Paris set is being built. The story of *Knightfall* takes place between 13th and 14th Centuries and chronicles the events leading to persecution and fall of Templar Knights. The series is a co-production of the US A+E Studio, Midnight Radio a The Combine, line producing in the Czech Republic is Stillking Films (*Underworld: Blood Wars, Legends, Mission Impossible – Ghost Protocol, Casino Royale).*

According to Štěpán Červený, the head of the set construction unit at the Barrandov Studio, the work on set decorations for both above mentioned series (*Britannia*, *Knightfall*) is currently being finalized. It took ten weeks to build the huge 200x150m Paris set on the studio backlot and eight weeks to create the interiors of a chapel, a pub and other spaces. “*In the busiest moments, over 350 people have been working on the construction: carpenters, masons, painters, plasterers, blacksmiths and other special professions. After the demanding replica of the Cyril and Methodius temple built for Anthropoid last year, this is another great achievement of our craftsmen,”* Červený adds.

The third important production – starting at the end of summer and going on till February 2017, is the first season of the *Genius* series for National Geographic Channel, an anthology about the world’s most brilliant innovators. Albert Einstein is the protagonist of the first 10 episodes based on Walter Isaacson’s book *Einstein: His Life and Universe* and adapted for TV by Noah Pink. Ron Howard (*The Da Vinci Code, Angels & Daemons,* *Frost/Nixon*, *Apollo 13*) will direct the opening episode of the series. Fox 21 Television Studios, Imagine Television, OddLot Entertainment, EUE/Sokolow and Czech Stillking Films are producing.

*“Next to these large TV productions, several feature and television films are currently being shot or prepped. It is a standard now for various German TV channels to shoot their mostly period projects in the Czech Republic. At the moment, Die Vergeltung for the ZDF is in the middle of shooting and Zuckersand for the ARD is in pre-production. Scandinavians are coming back as well, the Swedish film Borg vs. McEnroe will start shooting in August,“* says Claussová. *“The Czech Republic will host also a few Asian productions: closest in time is the Hong Kong production Adventurers with Jean Reno and the Bollywood pic The Ring,”* she adds.

Co-produced by Czech Mia Film for the ZDF, the story of the film *Die* *Vergeltung* takes place shortly after WW2 and is based on true events connected with the Wehnen psychiatric clinic at Oldenburg. The shooting started 14 June and will wrap 17 July. Another German film, *Zuckersand,* is a story set in 1980s East Germany and narrated from a little boy’s perspective. The shooting is planned from 12 July till 20 August. Wilma Film is line producing in the Czech Republic.

The Czech production company Sirena Film is preparing the shoot of the Swedish feature film *Borg vs. McEnroe* directed by Metz Pedersen and co-produced by the Danish SF Film Production and Swedish Tre Vänner Produktion AB. The film concentrates on the 1980 Wimbledon final match between Bjorn Borg and John McEnroe. The cast includes Shia LaBeouf (*Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps, Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen)* and Stellan Skarsgård (*Good Will Hunting, The Avengers, The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo)* as Borg’s trainer.

The Indian director Imtiaz Ali is coming back to Prague this September after 6 years (when he shot *Rockstar* here)with a romantic road movie *The Ring*. The film is produced by one of the biggest Bollywood production and distribution houses Red Chilli Entertainment and starring Shah Rukh Khan, one of India’s most popular stars. The line producer on the Czech side is Punk Film.

Jean Reno returns to the Czech Republic after he worked here on the third instalment of *Les Visiteurs* in 2015. This time, he stars next to Andy Lau in Stephen Fung’s Hong Kong production *Adventurers*. The film is set in France and Prague and will shoot this summer at Prague Studios, in and around the Czech capital, Karlovy Vary and other locations through September. Terence Chang’s Mannix Pictures is producing, with Prague-based Milk and Honey Pictures co-producing.

*“It’s great to see the Czech film industry flourishing and more and more international productions choosing the country for their shoots. Their spend in the Czech Republic has increased almost by 500 percent since the introduction of the incentives in 2010,“* says Helena Bezděk Fraňková, the director of the Czech State Cinematography Fund. “*We believe the recently adopted changes to the incentive scheme, which make the application process easier, will further strengthen this positive trend.“*

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