

VĚRA 68

UPS AND DOWNS OF THE MOST FAMOUS CZECH GYMNAST
VĚRA ČÁSLAVSKÁ

DIRECTED BY
OLGA SOMMEROVÁ

Screenplay and Directed by: Olga Sommerová
Producer and Executive Producer: Pavel Berčík
Director of Photography: Olga Špátová
Editor: Jakub Voves
Sound: Petr Provazník, Tomáš Kubec
Music: Aleš Březina

Supported by:
Czech State Fund for Support and development
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This full length biographic documentary film about the queen of 1960s gymnastics is the first comprehensive look at the athletic career and life of the recipient of seven gold and four silver Olympic medals in Tokyo and Mexico City. The aim of the film crew is to present the dramatic story of the many ups and downs experienced by this brave woman.

The film follows its protagonist through her childhood, youth, athletic successes (including several world championships), and her first fascinating appearance at the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo, followed by her second Olympic appearance and her stunning victory in Mexico City in 1968.

After her return to the recently occupied Czechoslovakia, the communist power structure considers the "bride of Mexico City" a persona non grata. After the standing ovations in Mexico, she becomes a social outcast who, instead of training new talented gymnasts, is interrogated by state security and earns a living as a cleaning woman. Despite her hardships, she refuses to retract her signing of the "Two Thousand Words" manifesto demanding democracy in Czechoslovakia. Following the Velvet Revolution in 1989, she becomes an advisor to President Václav Havel and is named chairperson of the Czechoslovak Olympic Committee. As a result of her family tragedy in 1993, in which her son Martin is accused of killing his father on the basis of fabricated charges, she retreats from public view for 16 years, emerging to shoot this film.

DCP, Dolby Digital 5.1, HD, 52' and 90', © 2012

AWARDS

26th FINALE PILSEN 2013 – The Golden Kingfisher award best documentary
SHANGHAI 2013 – Magnolia International Documentary Awards – Best of Documentary
10th Atlant International Sportsfilm Festival, Lipetsk – 2nd place in the Sports and Person category



Olga Sommerová

Director and Lecturer

Born in Prague in 1949, she graduated at the Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts (FAMU), Department of Documentary Films.

She is interested in documentary films with social issues and inter-personal relations, woman's issues, later she made films on significant people of social and arts lives. Between 1991 and 2002 she was a lecturer at the Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, in 1994 she became the head of the Department of Documentary Films.

She has created 100 films and received 35 awards on Czech and international film festivals. The successful documentary film *O čem sní ženy* (*What Women Dream About*) was followed by three successful books of interviews and *O čem sní muži* (*What Men Dream About*). Her books have become bestsellers. She is famous for her positive attitude to feminism. She is the chairperson of Film and Television Union.

Her films include

Competition for the Year 2000 (1979), *With You, Papa* (1981), *Thou Shall Love Thy Neighbour* (1990), *Máňa* (1992 co-directed by Jan Špáta), *Feminism in Czech way* (1994), *To have or to be?* (1995), *Immortal Star Božena Němcová* (1997), *The Blessed Damned Poet Bohumil Hrabal* (1998), *What Women Dream About* (1999), *The Lost Soul of a Nation* (2001), *World's End At The Heart Of Europe* (2002), *Mana – ten years after* (2003), *Two Guys in Siberia* (2004), *My 20th Century* (2005), *Seven lights* (2008), *Dancing into solitude* (2008), *Keep the Rhythm!* (2009), *21 spokespersons of Charter 77* (2010).

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