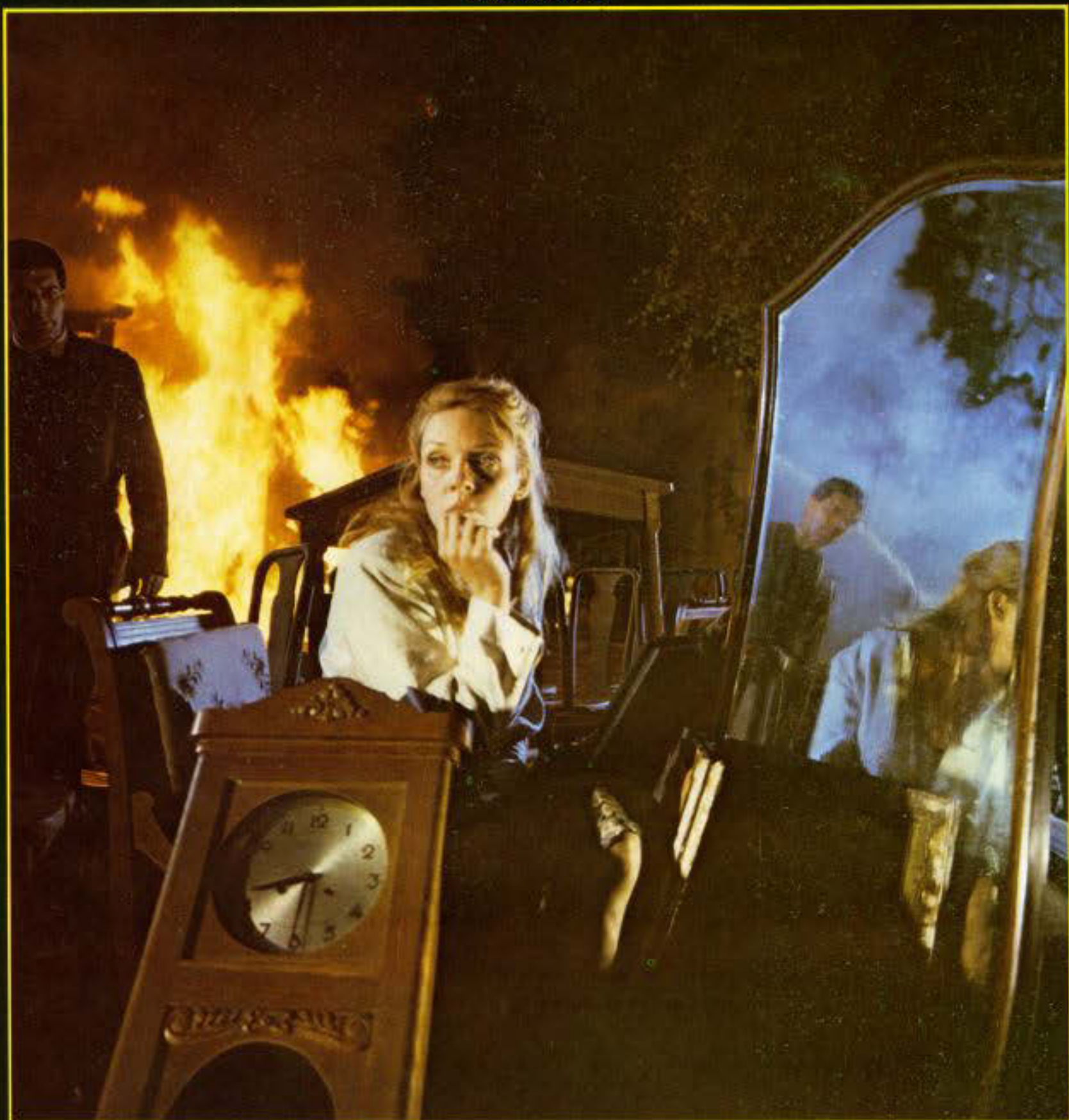


SLOVAK FILM



SOUTHWARD MAIL

A RETURN INTO THE COUNTRY HIDDEN IN A MAN'S HEART

SLOVENSKÝ
KINOVÝ ÚSTAV
SLOVAK FILM
INSTITUTE



Script: Jozef Heriban
and Jozef Slovák
after the fiction of
Ladislav Ballek,
the Artist of Merit

Script editor: Jozef Paštéka
Directed by: Stanislav
Párnický

Photography: Laco Kraus
Music: Václav Kašík

Starring: Jiří Bartoška, Magda
Vášaryová, Pavol Mikulík,
Zdena Studénková, Pavel
Nový, Eva Jakoubková, Gaber
Koncz, Izchak Finzi, Peter
Zeman, Matej Matejka, Zolo
Struhár and others



The pictures sunk into a sultry post-war summer – the pictures of the not easy beginnings of our young republic's life emerge before us through the memories of a 40 year old writer.

The story of the film begins with the moving of a the young customs officer Jurkovič and his family towards a little frontier town in the south Slovakia. Kováč's group of smugglers operates successfully in this region of unstabilized matters. Jurkovič's son John does not find a unison talk with his fellows in the society where he lives and thus the companionship of an old coffee house keeper, a rough coachman and an odd wanderer is closer to the boy's solitary soul.

However, a precious homing pigeon called Gin is his greatest consolation. The pigeon becomes the prey of the frequent „business transactions“ by John's elder brother, but following every sale it flies back home. John suffers through his brother's acting but their parents do nothing to solve the problem. . . Kováč, in his effort to show his male predominance seduces the wife of Jurkovič's colleague Gonda, who commits an attempt for a suicide. However, Gonda dies only later, by the hands of the leader of the smugglers, at a risky action on the boundary. Meanwhile John wants to help the seriously ill Kováč's son Ľula in that he decides to present his precious pigeon to the boy. His naïve, although sincere and unspoilt intention fails. It is late – little Kováč has died of tuberculosis and his father being arrested for murder John sets Gin free. This deed symbolizes the passage of one stage of human life: it is an expression of the first step on the long road to adulthood.



**SOUTHWARD
MAIL**

