

Document Citation

Title	Larks on a string
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Palm Springs International Film Festival</i>
Date	1991
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Skrivánci na nitich (Larks on a string), Menzel, Jirí, 1990

CZECHOSLAVAKIA • FINLAND • CZECHOSLAVAKIA • FINLAND

Larks on a String *Skrivanci Na Nitich*

Showtimes: Fri., 1/11, 4:00 p.m., Courtyard 3

Director: Jiri Menzel **Producer:** Karel Kochman **Screenwriter:** Bohumil Hrabal, Jiri Menzel **Cinematographer:** Jaromir Sofr **Editor:** Jirina Lukesva **Music:** Jiri Sust **Cast:** Rudolf Hrusinky, Vaclav Neckar, Vladimir Brodsky, Leos Sucharipa, Jitka Zelenohorska **Print Source:** International Film Exchange

A full 22 years after it was made, this courageous, bittersweet comedy is being seen publicly for the first time. Directed by prize-winning director Jiri Menzel (**CLOSELY WATCHED TRAINS, MY SWEET LITTLE VILLAGE**), the film went into production just as the Warsaw Pact invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968. As soon as it was completed, the film was banned. **LARKS'** heresy was to satirize the "re-education" of "bourgeois elements" in the early '50s, immediately after the communists took over the country. Much of the film is set on a scrapheap close to heavily polluting factories. Here, a small group of "bourgeois" types are forced to do manual labor. They include a former professor of philosophy, a former State prosecutor, a musician (he played the saxophone, a politically incorrect instrument), a milkman, a hairdresser, and a Jewish hotelier. They're overseen by a working class functionary, who naturally does very little actual work. A typical running joke has a sinister black car regularly arriving to take away anyone who asks awkward questions. Menzel's pointedly witty, uncannily prophetic film is also perhaps his finest achievement, now gloriously on view for all to see.

Czechoslovakia, 1969, 94 min.

