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PRÍPAD BARNABÁŠ KOS (THE BARNABÁŠ KOS CASE, dir. Peter Solan, 1964, 92 min)

*"Until recently we only knew concerts for cello, piano and that sort of thing.
Today we go much further. "*



A satirical comedy criticising hypocrisy illustrating tragicomic consequences of rise and fall of a conscientious musician. A story about a person who "consents," and then gradually succumbs to a feeling of his own importance and geniality.

"The film takes a close look at practices of making incompetent power decisions in the field of arts, at consequences of ignoring expertise and talent. More than on Barnabáš Kos (the main character of the film, a man without any personal qualities, a victim without opinion) the director focuses on bureaucratic machinery behind, machinery which praises politically harmless conformists. The film is inspired by poetics of absurd theatre (Kafka) dealing with conflicts of an individual versus society. A confrontation of satirical

and absurd. The film depicts everyday encounters of ordinary man with manifestations of absurdity and irrationality in public life of the era. Using delirious shots of people appearing and disappearing like ghosts in the corridors of office buildings, Solan makes dialogical connection with Josef Kilian by Pavel Juráček. The Barnabáš Kos Case is a case study about invincibility of absurdity." Martin Kaňuch; film historian, Slovak Film Institute

"Perhaps the restrained and almost austere way of processing deprives the film of frenetic rhythm of a typical comedy. But the film is not a crazy comedy, it is a social satire where all the components leading to the climax had to be played. And especially here, when Kos' megalomania or trianglomania culminates in a rehearsal of the concert for triangle, the comical effect of the film is intensified using a series of witty and intelligent musical ideas. In this context, it is worth mentioning musical collaboration with the composer Pavel Šimaj, who completes and clarifies core ideas of the film. Josef Kemr in the titular role gives an extraordinarily precise and sensitive acting performance of at first miserable and good-naturedly laughable but then a bubble-like expanding Barnabáš Kos." Agneša Kalinová, Film a doba, 11, no. 5 (1965)



The film has been digitally restored and is available on 2K DCP in Slovak (OV) with English, French and German subtitles.