



## **Julie Černá's *Stone of Destiny* premieres in the Berlinale Shorts competition**

The animated short musical *Stone of Destiny*, created by artist Julie Černá from the Animation and Film Studio at UMRUM in Prague as her bachelor's thesis, will celebrate its world premiere at the Berlinale in the prestigious Berlinale Shorts competition. The best two dozen short films from around the world are presented in this competition section every year. *Stone of Destiny* is based on the author's comic book of the same name, which won the Magnesia Award at the annual Muriel Comic Awards 2022.

*Kámen Osudu (Stone of Destiny)*, the first-ever film by Julie Černá, was produced by Kristina Husová of Pure Shore in collaboration with UMRUM. For the Czech Republic, participation in the Berlinale Shorts competition is an even more significant film event, as the last Czech film in this short film competition was the special screening of Jan Švankmajer's *The Possibility of Dialogue* in 2015.

This lyrical animated musical by artist Julie Černá follows the journey of the anthropomorphized *Stone of Destiny*. On a path filled with mysterious encounters and hidden symbols, he is driven by a desire for freedom. Singing Stone is accompanied not only by a newfound freedom, but also by a fear of failure. He settles in a seaside villa, followed by shadows of doubt, but even here he finds no solace. The narrative, which explores themes of understanding, beauty and loneliness, is based on the experiences of the author herself.

*"I have been working with the main character in my work for a long time and he is my alter ego, my avatar. The subject is partly autobiographical, but my own experiences are largely abstracted in the film. The search for home and the feeling of happiness associated with it is a strong motif in my life and my work. The film works to a great extent with non-literality and a*

*veil of metaphors that make my personal experiences universal for a wide range of viewers,"* adds director Julie Černá.

*Stone of Destiny* was originally a comic trilogy and Julie Černá's graduation project at the Animation and Film Studio in 2022. She later decided to film her comic using digital animation as part of her BA thesis.

*"Thanks to the fact that it is an adaptation of an existing comic, the project was well prepared for the development and production of an animated film from the outset. Discussions between the author and the educational team focused on what content from the comic should be transferred to the film and how to preserve the distinctive artwork while adapting it for animation in a smaller animation team. Julie was always well prepared and the project progressed steadily. Applying for funding from the Endowment Fund Filmtalent Zlín or presenting at the Aniklani pitching was also a natural step. To our delight, it was the producer Kristina Husova from Pure Shore who approached us about the project and now we are facing this great success together. For the studio, the selection of the film for the prestigious Berlinale is also a recognition of our commitment to the change we have been working on over the last few years. I am also glad that Julie will stay with us during her Master's studies,"* says Michaela Režová, who heads the studio at UMPRUM together with Jan Drozda.

The film is characterised by very original music and lyrics by artist Johana Novotná, who performs under the artistic pseudonym Johuš Matuš. So the resulting musical form is very playful, humorous and with a bizarre exaggeration, but at the same time, it draws attention with its sophisticated animation, which could be the reason for its selection for the Berlinale Shorts - a competition known for presenting films that experiment with genres.

#### **About the film:**

Directed and written by: Julie Černá

Dramaturgy: Kateřina Boušková

Editing: Alexandra Wolfová

Animation: Julie Černá, Matouš Valchář

Sound: Juras Karaka

Music and lyrics: Johana Novotná (artistic pseudonym Johuš Matuš)

Producer: Kristina Husová (Pure Shore)

The film was supported by the Endowment Fund Filmtalent Zlín and the Czech Film Fund.

Complete information about the film can be found at <https://pureshore.cz/project/stone-of-destiny/>

#### **About the author:**

Julie Černá (2001) is a visual artist and animator from the small town of Strážnice in southern Moravia. She is currently living in Prague, pursuing her MA at UMPRUM in the Animation and Film Studio. In her work, she explores the feeling of melancholy that lies hidden within every experience of happiness. During her studies, she has created three animated music videos that have been screened at several international animation festivals ([Taskent - Kazue Kahoru is a social detective](#), 2023, Balkanima, Anifilm, Fest Anča, [Johuš Matuš - They sing](#), 2022, Anifilm, Cinematika, Animanie, [Kvítek - Ten sen](#), 2021, Animateka, Anifilm, Fest Anča).

Besides animation, she has a passion for illustration and original comics. Her comic trilogy *The Stone of Destiny* earned her the Muriel Award for Best Student Comic in 2022.

#### **About Pure Shore Production Company:**

Pure Shore is an independent boutique film production company focused on carefully selecting, producing, and distributing successful films by emerging talent through thoughtful collaboration in national and international markets.

The company is currently developing the 3D animated film *Acorn's Adventure* by Filip Mašek, two 2D animated short films *Eeny, Meeny, Miny, Moe!* by Andrea Szelesová and distributing two animated shorts *Stone of Destiny* by Julie Černá (2025, Berlinale Shorts) and *Humanity* by Tereza Kovandová (2024, 7 international awards and over 30 festivals so far).

Pure Shore is dedicated to producing captivating and meaningful films that inspire, challenge, and resonate with audiences. We are committed to nurturing emerging talent through personalized guidance and securing the resources necessary to bring each project to life. With a focus on creativity, collaboration, and inclusivity, we provide a supportive environment where both films and filmmakers can thrive.

Read more at [www.pureshore.cz](http://www.pureshore.cz)

#### **About the Animation and Film Studio at UMPRUM:**

The animated film has many forms, and it is necessary to respond to these nowadays transformations. The Animation and Film Studio provides students with a space for experimentation and exploration of the boundaries of this medium. Thanks to its inclusion in the Academy of Art, Architecture and Design, the studio educates students not only to be those who listen to the demands of clients or the market but also to transfer the best from fine arts to applied arts and vice versa.

During their studies, students become acquainted with the ergonomics of movement and a wide range of traditional and digital animation techniques, always with a special emphasis on understanding the principle of the work's development over time - that is, on dramaturgy. Studio students are guided toward a professional approach to projects and their convincing presentation. A graduate of the studio finds applicability not only as an independent creator in the film industry but, with their universality, can succeed in a much broader scope of forms and techniques.