

Czech Film Series 2008-2009

Thursday, February 19, Lindley Hall 102 at 7 PM

Otakar Vávra: *Witches' Hammer*

(1969)



Coming from a country rich in experimental, absurdist, surrealist-tinged and fantastic cinema, the film *Kladivo na čarodějnice* is a surprisingly formalist and unambiguous comment on life under a totalitarian regime. Based on actual transcripts of Moravia's witch-trials during the period 1667-1695, it is a philosophical meditation presenting the Church as an inherently corrupt bureaucracy ossified by constricting dogma. Timeless metaphor for any worldly apparatus designed to steamroller over the human spirit. A humanist horror film and an indisputable work of art, *Witches' Hammer* drives its point home with a cold, methodical rhythm that has weathered the test of time more successfully than many of its modish, pop-centric contemporaries.

(from Andrew Leavold's article)

In Czech with English subtitles. 103 mins.

Introduced by Professor Bronislava Volková

Light refreshments served by the students from the Czech Club