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# 'For Some Inexplicable Reason': Karlovy Vary Review

12:04 PM PDT 7/31/2014 by Boyd van Hoeij

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Courtesy of Karlovy Vary Film Festival

## The Bottom Line

Charm and invention triumph over technical inadequacies.

## Venue

Karlovy Vary Film Festival (East of the West)

## Cast

Aron Ferenczik, Katalin Takacs, Zsolt Kovacs, Zalan Makranczi

## Director

Gabor Reisz

**This charming if unpolished feature debut from young Hungarian director Gabor Reisz stars Aron Ferenczik as a slacker approaching 30 and trying to make sense of it all**

The debut feature of Hungarian director **Gabor Reisz**, *For Some Inexplicable Reason* (*VAN valami furcsa es megmagyarazhatatlan*), has a freshness of vision that's derived somewhat paradoxically from putting a playful spin on elements from a range of earlier films, from silent comedies to cinema verite, French New Wave movies and even a touch of **Michel Gondry**. The story of a Budapest slacker pushing 30 who tries to make sense of life and love is a lovely cinematic doodle that makes up for its lack of technical perfection with occasional moments of emotional honesty and an *adorkable* sense of invention and humor.

The film offers a glimpse into the life of 29-year-old regular dude Aron (**Aron Ferenczik**), who's just been ditched by his girlfriend, Eszter (**Juli Jakab**). She took all her stuff with her — not even leaving any hair in the bathtub drain — much to the dismay of the protagonist, for whom Eszter's sudden vote of no-confidence is a bitter pill to swallow. There he is, almost 30, barely out of university, without a job or woman in his life other than his controlling and overly patriotic mother (**Katalin Takacs**).

From the film's first frames, Reisz shows his imaginative side. An early montage sequence rapidly cuts between shots of Aron abruptly falling down slapstick-style in various places, though no one around him seems to notice (in voiceover, after having explained that he's been dumped, Aron gives a supremely concise and dry explanation: "I'm dead"). Not much later, his group of guy friends (played by real-life friends of the director) is introduced, with each stating his profession, income and relationship status directly to the camera, making it clear that Eszter was practically the only thing keeping Aron from feeling inadequate.

Though Aron normally doesn't drink, a Facebook photo of Eszter canoodling with another guy results in a wild night out. Their binge is even responsible for sending the protagonist to sunny Portugal a couple of weeks later, courtesy of an online-shopping-under-the-influence incident with his parents' credit card. But before he leaves, a female bus conductor with a funky name, Eva Ink (**Kata Bach**), catches his eye during a routine ticket check, suggesting he might be actively trying to get over his ex. Of course Aron has an irrational fear of random ticket checks, so finding her again simply to talk to her takes him on another adventure.

If the film, which was also written by Reisz, might at first feel like a heterogeneous collection of scenes and ideas, there are several binding elements that keep it from rambling too much. Firstly, there is the undeniable if nebbishy charm of the protagonist, with his unkempt hair, wire-rimmed glasses and constant two-day stubble. It helps that he's played to perfection by Ferenczik, who manages to look both insouciant and heartbroken, sometimes at the same time.

Because of Aron's fruitless search for a post-university job — his mother has grown so frustrated she's even rewritten his resume in ways only a mother could — and his conversations with peers about whether it might be worth moving abroad, the film feels very much anchored in contemporary Hungary, despite its occasional cinematic flights of fancy. And the film's second half shows that Reisz planned ahead carefully, as many initially random-seeming scenes, such as a video-quality flashback to poor picked-on Aron in high-school, actually pay off later.

Throughout, the tone of the film is admirably elastic and incorporates both documentary-style footage as well as totally unrealistic and very whimsical shots that nevertheless make sense emotionally, such as when Aron is followed down the street by a long line of Eszters, as if she were literally haunting him. A Gondry-like sequence sees Aron follow an electric wire from his parental home and through town that finally enables him to unplug his bickering parents (they're still discussing the cost of Aron's air ticket).

From a purely technical point of view, *For Some Inexplicable Reason* won't win any prizes in a beauty contest, though the film's grungy, semi-improvised cinematography, handled by Reisz himself, in many ways mirrors the aimless but well-meaning protagonist.

*Production company: Proton Cinema*

*Cast: Aron Ferenczik, Katalin Takacs, Zolt Kovacs, Juli Jakab, Kata Bach*

*Writer-Director: Gabor Reisz*

*Producers: Julia Berkes, Miklos Bosnyak*

*Director of photography: Gabor Reisz*

*Production designer: Peter Klimo*

*Costume designer: Julia Szlavik*

*Editor: Zsofia Talas*

*Composers: Loci Csorba, Gabor Reisz*

*Sales: Alpha Violet*

*No rating, 91 minutes*