

Bata-ville

Press Release • April 2006

Release of CZECH / ENGLISH SUBTITLED VERSION of UK DOC FEATURE FILM

Bata-ville: We are not afraid of the future

Following its world premiere at the prestigious Edinburgh International Film Festival, the British duo of first-time directors Karen Guthrie & Nina Pope release a new Czech / English sub-titled version of their acclaimed documentary **Bata-ville**, which follows a group of UK visitors on a 'Bata pilgrimage' to Zlín in the Czech Republic.

"...somewhere between The Beatles Magical Mystery Tour meets Kinky Boots"

Belfast Film Festival

"Bata-ville was the most unexpected delight at SXSW Film Festival..... drily funny, sad.... and British to the very core of its being. If I owned a TV network, I'd keep playing this until people started to like it."

Beyond the Multiplex by Andrew O'Hehir, on www.salon.com

"A strange, defiantly unclassifiable work.....combining elements of travelogue, documentary and performance piece - Bata-ville takes one of the archetypical aspects of British life, the coach trip, and overlays it with a number of social, cultural and historical preoccupations...Charming is a problematic word, yet it seems entirely appropriate here: this is a charming, yet quietly provocative film"

Edinburgh International Film Festival (Official Documentary Selection 2005)

Bata-ville follows 42 passengers on a unique coach trip across Europe to the origins of the Bata shoe empire in the Czech Republic. Against the backdrop of economic regeneration in their local communities, former employees of Bata's now closed UK shoe factories in East Tilbury and Maryport were led by director / hosts Karen Guthrie and Nina Pope on a journey that sees the passengers reflect on their shared history and what the future holds back at home.

Shoe entrepreneur Tomas Bata - the Henry Ford of Eastern Europe - was a visionary whose remarkable achievements are now little known outside his native country. His ambition that his workers "work collectively, live individually" inspired Czech architects to design Zlín as a Utopian town - a town dedicated to serving the needs of the workers employed at the Bata shoe factory which was then at its heart. Zlín became a functionalist prototype of integrated shops, leisure facilities and homes, and was replicated across the globe, including at the small village of East Tilbury on the Thames Estuary in England, developed by Bata in 1932.

Inspired by the contrast between Bata's idealism and the more recent industrial decline of East Tilbury and Maryport, **Bata-ville** sees artists Nina Pope and Karen Guthrie immerse their passengers in an experience that begins as a free holiday but soon becomes an opportunity for a collective imagining of what Bata's maxim "We are not afraid of the future" means for them in 21st century Britain.

Following the passengers as they trace Bata's history through an en route encounter with the Bata family itself, visits to Zlín's shoe museum, the Moravan aircraft factory and to Bata's grave, **Bata-ville** is a bittersweet record of a uniquely poignant journey through a changing Europe.

MORE INFORMATION:

Somewhere is the cinema and retail distributor of Bata-ville

To arrange screenings, interviews, source press images or for more information contact us at:

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TO BUY BATA-VILLE ON DVD:

Bata-ville is available to buy on DVD directly from www.bata-ville.com

The Czech / English subtitled version will be released on May 12th 2006 and can be pre-ordered by contacting jane@somewhere.org.uk

Bata-ville is a Somewhere project by Nina Pope and Karen Guthrie, developed by Commissions East. The film was co-produced by Somewhere, Commissions East and Illumina Digital Ltd. Bata-ville has been supported by funding from Allerdale Borough Council, Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the European Cultural Foundation, Screen East (through RIFE Lottery) and Thurrock Council, with an in kind contribution from the Czech Centre (London).

www.bata-ville.com