

9. Jiří Menzel: *Closely Watched Trains* (*Ostře sledované vlaky*, 1966).

Screenplay: Jiří Menzel and Bohumil Hrabal, based on a novel by Bohumil Hrabal. Director of photography: Jaromír Šofr. Editor: Jiřina Lukešová. Music: Jiří Šust. Cast: Václav Neckář (Miloš Hrma), Jitka Benclová (Máša), Vladimír Valenta (Stationmaster), Libuše Havelková (his wife), Josef Somr (Hubička), Jitka Zelenohorská (Zdenička), Vlastimil Brodský (Zedníček), Květa Fialová (The Countess), Nad' a Urbánková (Victoria Freie), Jiří Menzel (doctor). 95 min.

Film and theatre director and actor **Jiří Menzel** took a short novel from Bohumil Hrabal for his debut as a director. The power of this tragicomedy consists in the combination of the action story about the resistance movement against German occupation during World War II, and a very personal love story about the first erotic experience of a young man. The role of Miloš Hrma is played by the popular singer Václav Neckář. The film won an Academy Award in 1968 as the best foreign film. Jiří Menzel has adopted other works by Bohumil Hrabal: *The Death of Mr. Balthasar* (in the film entitled *Pearls of the Deep – Perličky na dně*, 1965), *Larks on a String – Skřivánci na niti* (1969-1990), *Short Cut – Postržížiny* (1980), *The Snowdrop Festival – Slavnosti sněženek* (1983). His other films include *Capricious Summer – Rozmarné léto* (1967), from the novel of the same name by Vladislav Vančura, and *The Beggar's Opera – Žebrácká opera* (1991), from a stage version of John Gay's original play by Václav Havel.

Assigned literature

Hames, Peter. *The Czechoslovak New Wave*. "Jiří Menzel"