

The most famous internationally acclaimed Hungarian stuntman

Titanic, The Mummy, Troy, Terminator 3

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USPA NEWS - The four-months-old and vehemently developing civil organization, the Hungarian Hollywood Council also performs a cultural mission when it aims at introducing Hollywood's Hungarian roots and keeping the memories of famous Hungarian film people.

The Council at its latest event hosted Gábor Piroch, the most famous internationally acclaimed Hungarian stuntman and action director. As Arnold Schwarzenegger said once: "Piroch is one of the most important stuntmen in the world's film industry"[1]. Since 1969 he has worked as a stuntman and an actor in over 350 TV films and advertisements. In recognition of his work, in 2007 he received a Taurus World Stunt Award nomination in the Best Action Scene in a Foreign Movie category. As it is widely known, the Taurus Award is the Oscar of the stuntmen.

Ambassador Balázs Bokor, former Consul General of Hungary in Los Angeles who is the president of the Hungarian Hollywood Council moderated the conversation with Gábor Piroch. The full house of the auditorium of the beautiful Normafa House at the top of Budapest witnessed the event with a great joy. Piroch lived a very special life as it has been many times in danger, but "as he put it" it would be impossible to list all the occasions. One thing is sure that there is no part of Piroch's body that has not been broken until now.

Piroch has many special skills. He has used all kinds of weapons through the ages, sword play on horseback, rapier and dagger fencing, etc. used to Judo, boxing, modern pentathlon, diving, acrobatics. He is a specialist of high falls (plus 100 feet). He knows well all horse works, trick riding, fire works, rope and wire works, climbing. We could see him in many films parachuting crashing cars and motorcycles.

The main films Piroch is proud to have been part of them are Titanic, The Mummy, Troy, Terminator 3, 47 Ronin, Eragon, Kingdom of Heaven. But when Bokor asked him this question Piroch stopped for a while and continued to declare that in fact all films he performed in are his love children. He worked with Ridley Scott, Steven Spielberg, Michael Bay and Guillermo del Toro, but he enjoyed very much his last film with Hungarian director Gábor Herendi.

When he talked about his early stunts he said: "I began working as a stuntman on foot before learning horseback riding in the mid to late seventies. I quickly got the hang of it. By the time we went to Bulgaria for a shooting I was already a well trained stuntman. That movie was called Aszporuh and contained many breakneck stunts, mostly with horses. I was already skilled in nearly everything during this three or four year period.

The next stage of my career lasted until 1989, during which we performed in fairs in Germany. In the same year I started working in the USA and I was on my way to the top. In 2000 I applied for a green card as a special person and managed to receive American citizenship. Things have been looking up ever since. I have been a member of the American Actors' Guild and I am constantly traveling in the country." [2]

Answering a question "To whom do you owe the most?" [3] he replied: "I owe my success to myself. Of course everybody needs someone who helps but I have never had a mentor who would have guided me the way I guide some of my younger colleagues. I walked alone and did everything myself. It was a difficult journey but, thank god, here we are now, talking about it." [4]

The excellent conversation could have been continued but the late evening made it stop. The audience still has some time to ask further questions, so the participants learnt a lot from the film industry insights. Piroch signed his book "I was born to be a stuntman" [5]. A famous Hungarian duo played extraordinary good Latin music to raise the mood of the participants. At the end of the evening a famous Hungarian vineyard offered its top products, so all those wine lovers had a really great fun.

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