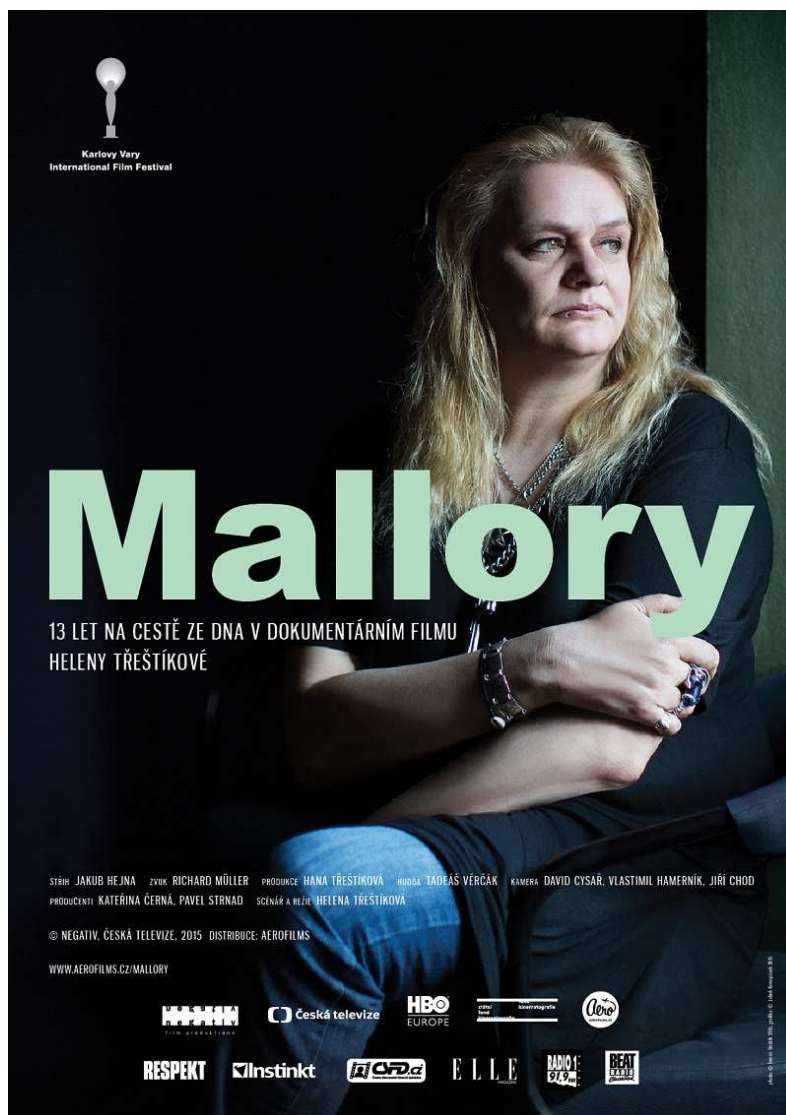


PRESS KIT

# MALLORY

13 years on the way from down and out in a documentary  
by Helena Třeštková



PRODUCER: Negativ, [www.negativ.cz](http://www.negativ.cz), Ostrovní 30, Praha 1, [office@negativ.cz](mailto:office@negativ.cz)  
SALES & FESTIVALS: Negativ, Daniel Vadocky, e-mail: [daniel@negativ.cz](mailto:daniel@negativ.cz)

**length** 101 minutes  
**format** DCP  
**aspect ratio** 1:1,85  
**sound** 5.1  
**genre** documentary  
**trailer** <https://youtu.be/3G8g-2dbkYY>  
**release date** 23. 7. 2015

**scriptwriter and director** Helena Třeštíková  
**producers** Negativ - Kateřina Černá, Pavel Strnad  
**co-producers** Czech Television, Film centre - Helena Uldrichová, Ivana Pauerová

**editing** Jakub Hejna  
**DOPs** Miroslav Souček, Vlastimil Hamerník, Robert Novák, David Cysař, Jiří Chod, Jakub Hejna  
**sound design** Richard Müller  
Jan Gogola ml., Michael Třeštík  
**music** Tadeáš Věrčák  
**with the support of** The State Cinematography Fund of Czech Republic  
**In cooperation with** HBO

## SYNOPSIS

*13 years on the way from down and out in a documentary by Helena Třeštíková*

After unique time-lapse documentaries Marcela, René and Katka, Helena Třeštíková is coming with a new film in which she follows her main protagonist Mallory for 13 years. Mallory is determined to return to a normal life after many difficult mishaps.

Life hasn't been easy on Mallory but after the birth of her son she tries desperately to kick her drug habit, and to stop living on the street. She wants to turn her back on her dark past and help those she knows best – people on the fringes of society. In her latest long-term documentary, Helena Třeštíková demonstrates that even seemingly hopeless lives needn't be cut short halfway.



## ABOUT FILM

**Documentary film-maker Helena Třeštková** finished yet another **time-lapse film** after 13 years. In the past she had already captured dramatic lives in her films *Marcela*, *René* and *Katka* in which she observed their downfalls and often insoluble situations, or, rather reluctantly, even their sheer drops to the lowest lows. **In her new documentary *Mallory* Helena Třeštková manages to capture her protagonist's determination to take a new breath after all her mishaps including living on the street, and to slowly return to a normal life.** *Mallory* is a film about a hope that we all have a chance to change our lives. This documentary will **premiere at 50<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival in Karlovy Vary**. This festival will present Helena Třeštková's film in the **Documentary Films Competition**. Life has never treated *Mallory* kind but she still managed to break out of the vicious circle of drug addiction right after giving birth to her son and also handled the times when she and her baby ended up on the street without a home. Today *Mallory* studies social work at a vocational school and she has found her employment in helping those whose life she knows the best – people on the fringe of the society. This documentary reveals many society-wide topics such as **accessibility of social housing, drug prevention** but also **social rehabilitation** of people who are trying to gain a new position in the society. Together with **Platforma pro sociální bydlení** (Platform for Social Housing), non-profit organisation **Sananim** and provider of social services **Asistence** (Assistance) filmmakers are planning a panel discussion as well as screenings for schools.

Film director **Helena Třeštková met *Mallory* for the first time in 2002** when taking part in a film cycle about drugs "Women and Drugs" where *Mallory* was presented as an example of a mother who quit taking drugs after having given a birth to her child. And *Mallory* actually did say goodbye to drugs overnight back then despite the fact that having left the community for mothers and children and sheltered housing in Prague Sananim she was forced to struggle for her existence. This woman made a huge impression on Helena Třeštková not only because of her naturalness but also because of her ability to express her thoughts and feelings clearly. Třeštková decided to follow *Mallory* with her camera, at first alone, **later supported by Kateřina Černá and Pavel Strnad from Negativ film productions**. At that time *Mallory* lived with her partner and after a period of fights and conflicts she suddenly found herself homeless. She worked as a bartender but because she was forced to stay in a car she had to separate from her son and that's when another battle broke out – a battle with bureaucracy. *"My return to society was pretty tough. When I finally managed to deal with my cravings and stress of raising a child, when I managed to get used to some daily routine, I hit a wall of obstacles and mistrust. If you want to get into a programme of social housing you need to have a stable income from a permanent job which is an impossible task for a homeless mother with a child. My attempt to get a place to live in an apartment for non-payers was the last straw. I actually was not a non-payer and that was the stumbling block," describes *Mallory* her infinite battle with authorities.* Eventually *Mallory* rented a private flat. She had to give all she earned to pay for it but her son was allowed to come back to her. In 2012 *Mallory* started to study social work at a vocation school and after her practice where she was looking after disabled people at Jedlicka Institute she has been volunteering at Asistence organisation. She would like to continue in her studies at a college of higher education and she has also extended her activities in the social sphere within her school practice to working with elderly, children in a low-threshold daily centre, or as a fieldworker among homeless.

*"The period of time when *Mallory* lived on the street was very dramatic. We would see each other quite often, the situation was changing all the time, we wanted to capture the breaking point. I couldn't believe dealing with authorities would be so frustrating and that it would take such a long time. It is quite obvious she was the one who had to help herself out in the end," says director **Helena Třeštková**. She calls her protagonist a real fighter and appreciates her ability to keep fighting no matter what. Třeštková admits that one of the hardest documentary nuts to crack is the extent to which you can go when filming and showing the material to public. *"There is no manual for what is ok to show in the film and what is not so ok, how far you can go in the matter of the privacy of your protagonists. It is always about the specific situation, person and context. As well as about the filmmaker's conscience," says Třeštková. "I have never regretted my decision to take part in this film and even today I believe this documentary might serve as a compass for those who are wavering on a crossroad. Just go and fight, no one else will do that for you," adds *Mallory* who is currently, according to her own words, trying to survive her son's puberty and finish her studies.**

The film came to existence in a co-production of **Negativ** and **the Czech Television**, with support of **The National Fund for Cinematography** and cooperation with **HBO**.

## Helena Třeštková



One of the most important Czech documentary filmmakers, Helena Třeštková has directed some forty films since graduating from Prague's FAMU film school in 1974. She worked for a long time in Czech television, which funded the hit series *Marriage Stories* (1987), seven year portraits of young married couples. The series' six episodes combined sociology, demography and cinéma-vérité, making the filmmaker very popular in her country. It was followed in 2006 by a second series, *Marriage Stories 20 Years Later*, which catches up with the couples later in their lives. Both series feature Trestikova's signature working method, known as time collection.

During her years in Czech television, Trestikova showed an interest in female characters, directing several portraits of women with tragic lives. The disgraced actress in Lída Baarová's *Bittersweet Memories* (1995), the imprisoned opponents of *Communism in Sweet Century* (1998), the victim of Nazism and Stalinism in *Hitler, Stalin and Me* (2001) and the concentration camp survivor in *My Lucky Star* (2004) all recount their personal histories, marred by 20th-century totalitarian ideologies.

Her latest trilogy of portraits (*Marcela*, *René*, *Katka*), shot in the late 2000s, brought her international attention. *René* won the prestigious best documentary prize at the European Film Awards in 2008. *Katka* won two awards at the RIDM in 2010, including best editing. In these three portraits of society's outcasts, shot over a period of ten to twenty years, the director focuses more than ever on continuity over time, patiently building stories and waiting for events that will signify a life. Masterpieces of editing, the three films confirm the filmmaker's deftness at transforming the humdrum existence of the downtrodden into unique, fascinating narratives. The trilogy also highlights Trestikova's complex relationship with her characters, especially in *René*, where her own life increasingly comes into play. She continued with her time-lapse method also in her latter works, like *Private Universe*, covering a span of 37 years from the life of one family.

Recently, Helena Trestikova's works have been the subject of retrospectives at several major festivals, including Buenos Aires International Festival of Independent Cinema (BAFICI), the Thessaloniki Documentary Festival and RIDM Montreal.