

Days of European Film Knows Its Winners and Heads to Regions

Prague, 26 April 2023 – The 30th anniversary annual edition of the Days of European Film festival was concluded in the Přítomnost cinema on 25 April with the ceremonial announcement of the winners of competition categories. The main BEST FILM DEBUT award was won by the director duo of Lise Akoka and Romane Gueret for *The Worst Ones*. The BEST MUSIC FILM award was received by director Einari Paakkanen for *Karaoke Paradise*. This year, the jury also decided to award a Special Jury Mention, which went to director Damian Kocur for *Bread and Salt*.

From 26 to 30 April, as part of Festival Echoes, Days of European Film will come to dozens of cinemas in other cities and towns across the Czech Republic. Audiences in Boskovice (Panorama cinema), Havířov (Centrum cinema), Červený Kostelec (Luník cinema), Jablonec nad Nisou (Junior cinema), Hradec Králové (Bio Central cinema), Hodonín (Svět cinema), Vrchlabí (Střelnice cinema), Šumperk (Oko cinema), Vyškov (Sokolský dům cinema) and Znojmo (Svět cinema) can look forward to a selection of successful and topical films from various parts of Europe.

The complete programme and tickets are available at eurofilmfest.cz.

The jury for the main debut competition was composed of producer Pavel Strnad, actress Hana Vagnerová, film critic Aleš Stuchlý and director Juraj Lehotský. *“The selection of competition films judged by the jury was extraordinarily strong this year. The amount of magnificently handled debuts shows that a new generation of authors with strong personalities is emerging, which is certainly an encouraging news for European cinema,”* adds Pavel Strnad, the jury chairman. A total of nine films competed for the award in the European debut of the year category. From among them, the jury chose the film made by the director duo of Lise Akoka and Romane Gueret, titled *The Worst Ones*, which reflects on the coming of age at a forgotten French housing estate in an original and very sensitive manner. The award was received by Sarah Doignon, the Cultural Attaché of France, on behalf of the authors.

Special Jury Mention was awarded to *Bread and Salt* by Polish director Damian Kocur. The award was received by Wojciech Bednarek, the Deputy Director of the Polish Institute. *“Bread and Salt is one of the best formally handled and, in the broadest sense, one of the most mature debuts of recent times. We appreciated particularly the subtle and yet enormously urgent directing style of Damian Kocur and his extraordinary feeling for mundane interactions between characters and the traumas hidden beneath them. The authenticity, combined with precise visual stylisation, resulted in the creation of one of the most vivid European films about the current racism, toxic legacy of the past and bullying, which, at the same time, can do without judgement and moralising,”* explains Aleš Stuchlý, one of the jury members.

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Tones and melodies set the rhythm in the competition section focused on avant-garde, documentaries and live actions films where music plays the lead role. The jury members were music journalist and writer Karel Veselý, American director Jay Walker and Estonian documentary filmmaker, screenwriter and director Ivar Murd. *“The jury decided to present the award for the best music film to Karaoke Paradise for the touching, deeply human and, in terms of filmmaking, fresh insight into the community surrounding a travelling karaoke show. The documentary shows the magical power of music to connect lonely people in remote regions of Finland,”* explains Karel Veselý, the jury chairman. The award was personally received by director Einari Paakkanen in Prague.

The film awards were authored by Zdeněk Vacek. Glass cylinders decorated with engraving and sanding were cast from uranium crystal. The prominent mark ground into the smooth cylinder symbolises the author’s “first notch”. The award for the best music film is decorated with grooves as a reference to vinyl records.

The main part of the 30th anniversary annual edition of the Days of European Film festival took place in Prague, Brno and Ostrava from 20 to 25 April. The genre-rich programme offered highly acclaimed live action films and documentaries from nearly thirty countries. In nine theme-specific programme sections, the festival focused on such current topics as coming of age, environmentalism and sustainability or disinformation. A separate section was dedicated to renowned German director Fatih Akin or to musical films. This year, the festival featured a special focus on films from the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg.

Trailers of the award-winning films:

The Worst Ones - <https://youtu.be/S1cxy7q-xgg>

Karaoke Paradise - <https://youtu.be/pPKtAEIKFFE>

Bread and Salt - <https://youtu.be/AeRSBJV4I7A>

Links:

Website: www.dnyevropskeho filmu.cz

Facebook: www.facebook.com/DnyEvropskehoFilmu/

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