April 26, 2016

Short film at the 56th Krakow Film Festival

**International short film competition presents short documentary and feature films and animated films by film makers from the most distant corners of the world, thanks to which it is the most diverse and intriguing competition collection at the festival. The awards given in this competition shorten the path of applying for the nomination for the Academy Award, and the best European film award is at the same time the nomination for the European Film Award.**

The clearly dominating subject matter of the competition films at this year's edition are current events in the world and strong references to the present socio-political situation. The winner of the last year's music competition Ayat Najafi in the mockumentary "**Nothing Has Ever Happened Here**" observes the situations, moods and opinions after the assassination in Tehran that could have happened. **"Home**," by the British film-maker well-known in Krakow, Daniel Mulloy, is a commentary on the migration crisis which in a tricky way shows how fragile and illusory the carefully worked-out stabilisation can be. The documentary film "**The Mute’s House**" (dir. Tamar Kay) is, however, the story of a family living on both sides of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from the point of view of an eight-year-old boy.

Child protagonists feature also in two closely corresponding feature films, which deal with the issue of the influence of politics on the lives of individuals and harmful consequences of nationalism and chauvinism. In the British film "**Patriot**" (dir. Eva Riley) and the Hungarian **"Tabula Rasa"** (dir. Sándor Csoma) children are forced to confront their emotions, feelings and needs with the expectations of the adult world.

Feature films by Polish directors are also noteworthy. Lech Majewski in his latest film "**Cuba Libre**" tells the story of a woman and a man who become close to each other thanks to a phone call, although they are divided by thousands of kilometres. Piotr Adamski in the film "**The Opening**," featuring the renowned artist Zbigniew Libera as the dying "exhibit" in a museum, deals with the fundamental issues of ethics in art.

At the Festival, there are also classic documentary films in the observational mode, which explore family relationships. Two parallel films tell about the maturing and decaying of love: **"Close Ties"** (dir. Zofia Kowalewska) - the story of a couple who has been married for 45 years, which also includes faithlessness and redemption, and the Slovakian "**The Nest**" (dir. Kristína Schnirzová), which pursues the subject of old age, inevitably connected with loneliness. In turn, the French production "**West Empire**" (dir. Mathieu Le Lay) depicts the life of an unusual society that settled in the heart of a boundless desert in California.

In the competition, there is also a place for genre cinema: futuristic-apocalyptic **"The Last Journey Of The Enigmatic Paul W.R."** (dir. Romain Quirot) is a story of an astronaut who is the last hope for humanity threatened with the final annihilation. The motif of the Apocalypse appears also in the Spanish film "**Graffiti**" (dir. Lluis Quilez),whose protagonist fights for survival in a deserted city. The world inevitably heads for its end in **"Fedor’s Journey Through Moscow At The Turn Of The XXI Century**" (dir. Aksinya Gog)because of the spreading virus of dying love.

Made by Jay Rosenblatt, the award-winner of Krakow Film Festival and the undisputed leader of found footage, the film **"When You Awake"** is a meditation on the power of the subconscious. The director juxtaposes hundreds of incompatible images, which according to him, form one consistent stream of events projected by the brains of the volunteers who underwent hypnosis.

Animated films stand out thanks to the wealth of topics and the diversity of used techniques. They try to describe that which cannot be defined, penetrate imagined world, often balancing on the edge between fiction and realism, like in the film "**Nisse’s Adventures On Land And At Sea"** (dir. Mia Blomgren, Klara Swantesson) - a true story about an eighty-seven-year-old sailor from Sweden, who tells about his rich and extremely colourful work and love experiences, and the Danish "**Mr Sand**" (dir. Soetkin Verstegen), reproducing the atmosphere of the first film screenings. Chen Winner in the experimental film **"Innerviews"** interprets, in a visual form, the utterances of people such as, among others, Allen Ginsberg, Charles Bukowski and David Lynch.

There are also simple, but intensely moving stories: **"99a, Frankfurt Street"** (dir. Evgenia Gostrer) is a film showing how work becomes an antidote to loneliness and helps to fill the void in one's life. In turn, in **"Cold Coffee"** (dir. Stephanie Lansaque, Francois Leroy) work is an indispensable routine for the young protagonist after losing her mother.

There is a strong representation of Polish animated film, and this year the category is unquestionably dominated by Polish women directors. **"Xoxo - Hugs and Kisses**" by Wiola Sowa is a beautiful tale about intimacy, fascination and bodily expression, as well as about emotions and setting emotional boundaries. **"Impossible Figures and Other Stories II**" by Marta Pajek is the image of the world full of paradoxes and illusions, based on the concept of the impossible object. The film by Aneta Kwiatkowska-Naqvi "**Locus**," presents an extremely interesting visual form and animation technique, whereas "**Sexy Laundry**" by Izabela Plucińska is an erotic comedy, made using the traditional stop motion animation.

International short film competition is the core of Krakow Film Festival, it is held continuously since 1961. Films no longer than 30 minutes qualify for the competition. Within the frames of this year's edition, 10 documentary films, 15 feature films and 15 animations will be shown, among them, productions from North and South America, Asia, Africa and Europe. 6 films by Polish film-makers will compete against the most interesting productions from around the world for the trophies: the Golden Dragon and three Silver Dragons.

**56th Krakow Film Festival is held from May 29 to June 5, 2016.**

A detailed programme will be published in the first days of May.

More details: [www.krakowfilmfestival.pl](http://www.krakowfilmfestival.pl)