International documentary film competition

**The latest films of the previous Festival winners who come back this year, the horror of the Syrian war seen from the different sides of the conflict, difficult family relations and non obvious places rich in inspirational stories - this is only a part of the topics that make up this year's programme of the international documentary film competition.**

This year two Polish productions are in the competition: **“Over the limit”**, a successful documentary thanks to which its director Marta Prus was included in the prestigious Variety magazine "10 Europeans to Watch" list. It is a story of a Russian gymnast Margarita Mamun, who has to face not only her rivals but also her own inhibitions in order to win the Olympic gold in Rio de Janeiro.

Grzegorz Zariczny, the director behind “The Whistle” which was awarded in Sundance, will present his latest film. This time he focuses his camera on the students graduating from high school. **“The Last Lesson”** is a story about making first important decisions as a step towards adulthood. A Polish protagonist can be also found in a non-Polish film. Amir Yatziv from Israel in his film **“Standby Painter”** brings back the notorious theft of Monet's painting from the museum in Poznań. While listening to the perpetrator's confession he tries to understand his motives many years after the incident.

The filmmakers who previously won in Krakow come back to the Festival this year. Till Schauder, the last year's winner of the DocFilmMusic competition, in his latest film takes us to Jamaica, where he follows the national football team preparing to the World Cup qualifications. However, **“The Reggae Boyz”** is something more than a story about competing in sports.

The winner of the 2014 Silver Horn for his film “Return to Homs”, Talal Derki, once again will confront the audience in Krakow with the sheer terror of the Syrian war. In **“Of Fathers and Sons”** the director visits a family of a radicalised ISIS member and follows the process of forming of jihadist fighters. On the other side there is **“The Deminer”** (dir. Hogir Hirori, Shinwar Kamal), breathtaking image of the same war but seen from the other side of the barricade. The film protagonist is a Kurdish deminer, father of eight, who every day puts his life and health at risk to protect others.

Kaleo La Belle for his film “Beyond This Place” won the documentary competition in 2010. In his latest film **“Fell in Love with a Girl”** he talks about a family and points the camera at himself to present his relation with two most important women in his life.

The theme of a family and difficult relations is explored also in the other documentaries. In the Russian film **“White Mama”** the mother of six black children decides to adopt a white boy struggling with serious health issues. The new family member is a source of discord in so far peaceful family life. One of the directors, Zosya Rodkevich, received the 2016 Golden Horn for the director of the best documentary for her film “My Friend Borys Nemtsov”.

Chinese film **“Son, Son”** (dir. Shen Zhang) is an utterly different story, but it also shows a dramatic decision that a mother has to make. After a tragic death of her son she decides to adopt a boy who killed him. It is a shocking documentary about a black despair, never-ending mourning and essential forgiveness.

In the film **“The Saint of Thugs”** Maïlys Audouze – director's daughter – tries to understand and get to know better her father who very early in his life committed a crime. In an intimate conversation she discovers in detail his criminal past but also confronts him with certain documents that she managed to find many years later.

**“Hafis & Mara”** (dir. Mano Khali) is a portrait of a lengthy marriage. He is an artist painter from Lebanon, a globetrotter, constantly crossing the limits in art and his own life and she is his stay-at-home faithful wife and muse. The documentary, made up of interviews and observations of the couple's everyday life, attempts to grasp their unique, unusual relation.

In this year's competition we also won't miss the topics presented from the perspective of particular places. **“Rabot”** tells a story of a council house in Belgium that is due for demolition. The director Christina Vandekerckhove follow the lives of the tenants who have to move out which for some of them means that they will need to make some very tough decisions. Another building, this time in a multicultural district of Jerusalem, is presented in the film **“The Stars of Stern”** (dir. Gad Abittan). It is a personal story of the director who used to live in it and who for a few years has been filming his neighbours. When the new tenants appear - the ultra-Orthodox Jews - the cultural and religious pluralism of the neighbourhood starts shaking.

**“Open to the Public”** (dir. Silvia Bellotti) presents the work of an office in Italy and its attempt to create order out of the reigning chaos. It is a universal tale of bureaucracy, told from the point of view of the annoyed clerks and people who every day wait in a line for their turn and keep being sent off from one place to another.

In the meantime a chapel by the German highway becomes a protagonist of **“Highway Confessions”** (dir. Elsbeth Fraanje). Thousands of people pass it every day: some of them stop here for a moment of contemplation or reflection or to write their names in a visitors' book. We get to know better the visitors and the people who take care of this unusual point along the route.

Belarusian film **“Debut”** (dir. Anastasiya Miroshnichenko) follows the rehearsals of the amateur theatre group in a women's prison. For many inmates taking part in a play is the only chance to forget about the harsh reality they found themselves in, but also a way to deal with how much they miss their loved ones.

In the film **“The Dread”** (dir. Pablo Aparo, Martín Benchimol) the life and death of the Argentinean villagers of El Dorado is dominated by the faith in the special powers of the local witchdoctors. From the conversations with various healers and their patients we get an image of a very conservative and radical community living outside the modern civilization.

Tracy Taylor, who passed away last year, is a protagonist of **“The Rape of Recy Taylor”** directed by Nancy Buirski. In 1944 24-yeras-old Taylor became a victim of a group rape. The perpetrators, even though they were quickly identified, were never convicted. Taylor was an African American woman and was raped by six white men. For all her life she was seeking justice.

It will be the 12th edition of the documentary competition. The author of the best film will receive the Golden Horn - the highest award of the competition.

**The list of films selected to the documentary competition:**

“White Mama”, dir. Zosya Rodkevich, Evgeniya Ostanina, Russia, 97’, 2018

“Debut”, dir. Anastasiya Miroshnichenko, Belarus, 80’, 2017

“Open to the Public”, dir. Silvia Bellotti, Italy, 60’, 2017

“The Rape of Recy Taylor”, dir. Nancy Buirski, USA, 91’, 2017

“Hafis & Mara”, dir. Mano Khali, Switzerland, 88’, 2018

“The Dread”, dir. Pablo Aparo, Martín Benchimol, Argentina, 64’, 2017

“Of Fathers and Sons”, dir. Talal Derki, Germany, Syria, Lebanon, Qatar, 98’, 2017

“The Last Lesson”, dir. Grzegorz Zariczny, Poland, 53’, 2018

“Over the Limit”, dir. Marta Prus, Poland, Germany, Finland, 74’, 2017

“The Stars of Stern”, dir. Gad Abittan, Israel, France, 58’, 2018

“Rabot”, dir. Christina Vandekerckhove, Belgium, 95’, 2017

“Reggae Boyz”, dir. Till Schauder, USA, Germany, Jamaica, 72’, 2018

“The Deminer”, dir. Hogir Hirori, Shinwar Kamal, Sweden, 83’, 2017

“Standby Painter”, dir. Amir Yatziv, Guy Slabbinck, Belgium, Israel, 52’, 2018

“The Saint of Thugs”, dir. Maïlys Audouze, France 34’, 2017

“Son Son”, dir. Shen Zhang, China, 62’, 2017

“Highway Confessions”, dir. Elsbeth Fraanje, Netherlands, 52’, 2017

“Fell in Love with a Girl”, dir. Kaleo La Belle, Switzerland, 120’, 2017

Films selected to the other competitions will be regularly announced at [www.krakowfilmfestival.pl](http://www.krakowfilmfestival.pl).

**The 58th Krakow Film Festival will take place May 27th - June 3rd, 2018.**