World Stories

Non-competing series at the 61st Krakow Film Festival.

**Each year, World Stories attract moviegoers fascinated by distant cultures, extraordinary places and extraordinary stories. This time, within the frames of the series we will see, among others, the world chronicle of July 25, 2020, in the camera lenses of ordinary people, a journey in the footsteps of the first polar research expedition and the return of the uprooted people, who still remember their abandoned home country, to their places of birth.**

"From among hundreds of film submissions, we decided to select five films that show in a special way how people confront past, present and future," this is how Krzysztof Gierat, the Director of the Krakow Film Festival, justifies the selection. - "Another motive that seems clear is the longing for the loved ones, which allow the contemporary slaves, working illegally in the Middle-East, to survive, but also the longing for the life in harmony with oneself, which accompanies homosexual Orthodox Jews."

One of the films from the series will be presented in the unique space of the open-air Kino pod Wawelem on Monday, the 31st of May. **"Life in a Day 2020"** is the next instalment of the global film project by the outstanding director, the winner of the Academy Award and numerous other prestigious awards around the world - Kevin Macdonald. The film consists of over 300 000 amateur video recordings which were submitted from all over the world and constitute an informal chronicler's record of events coming from one single day, the 25th of July 2020. For many participants of the project, it was just an ordinary Saturday in the new reality of the pandemic, but for others, an unforgettable date - the day on which their child was born, when they proposed to their beloved or when they said goodbye to their close ones. All these experiences are united by the awareness of the camera's presence and of the participation in the project. Admission to the open-air screening - free.

The eponymous **"Buromsky Island"** is located off the coast of Antarctica. It is an ice-bound, threatening land that few have heard of. For years, it has been explored by the polar explorers, who sacrificed their relationships with the loved ones, and even their lives for this land, often without gaining due recognition. It is them or their relatives who share with us the stories about the times when they stayed at the end of the world. Their remarkable accounts are accompanied by archival photos and recordings. Their stay on the island was an unforgettable experience for the researchers, which left them vivid memories until today.

**"Room without a View"** (dir. Roser Corella) depicts contemporary women slaves working in the rich countries of the Middle East. Most often they come from Kenya, the Philippines and Ethiopia. Forced to undeclared work, for starvation wages, without any perspectives for the future, invisible. They live from hand to mouth in tiny windowless rooms, devoting their youth and health to the privileged rich. Together with the director, we get to know the stories of many such silent, exploited women who, thanks to mutual support, begin to regain their voice. They do not want to be the victims of capitalist exploitation any longer and start to fight for themselves.

The documentary film **“Shtetlers”** (dir. Katya Ustinova)isa nostalgic story woven out of longing for the lost world of small Jewish towns. Most of their pre-war residents have lived in the United States and Israel for decades, but the memory of their abandoned homeland is still very much alive in their hearts. They are not, however, the only ones who cherish the memories. In the vicinity to the former shtetls, there are some people left who try and remember their neighbours from the past. They cultivate their traditions, prepare kosher meals, and one of the protagonists decides even to convert.

In turn, the protagonists of the film **"Marry Me However"** (dir. Mordechai Vardi) are contemporary homosexual Jews who gave up their desires for the good of the community and their relatives. They try to get their lives together, visit rabbis, participate in therapies, but this is not enough. They lack intimacy and love; fortunately, they are not alone. Together they pluck up the courage to come to the fore, boldly marching in pride parades, they come out of hiding and accept their true identity.

The list of films in the series World Stories:

"Life in a Day 2020," dir. Kevin Macdonald, Great Britain, 2021

"Room without a View," dir. Roser Corella, Austria, Germany, 2020

"Shtetlers," dir. Katya Ustinova, the USA, Russia, 2020

"Marry Me However," dir. Mordechai Vardi, Israel, 2020

"Buromsky Island," dir. Olga Stefanova, Russia, 2020

The Krakow Film Festival is included on the prestigious list of film events qualifying for the Academy Awards in the short film competition (feature film, animated film, documentary film) and feature-length documentary film, and it also recommends the films to the European Film Awards in the same categories.

The Krakow Film Festival is organised with the financial support of the co-organiser - the Polish Filmmakers Association and the City of Krakow, the Polish Film Institute, the Ministry of Culture, National Heritage and Sport and the Lesser Poland Voivodeship.

**The 61st Krakow Film Festival will be held from the 30th of May to the 6th of June 2021, simultaneously at the cinemas in Krakow and on the Internet.**