30 May 2022

Inauguration of Docudays UA at the Krakow Film Festival

**The Ukrainian festival Docudays UA at the Krakow Film Festival**

**The DocuDays UA International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival is the largest documentary film festival in Ukraine. This year's edition was to start on 25 March in Kyiv. This is no longer possible due to Russia's brutal assault and the ongoing war. The organisers of the Krakow Film Festival decided to support their friends and, against cruel fate, to organise a part of the Ukrainian festival in Krakow… in the Kijów cinema.**

The 62. Krakow Film Festival began yesterday in the packed auditorium of the Kijów cinema with a screening of the documentary *The Hamlet Syndrome* directed by one of the most important duos in Polish cinema: Elwira Niewiera and Piotr Rosołowski. The film was completed just before the outbreak of the war in Ukraine in 2022, and – in light of current events – it doesn't let you stop thinking about the fate of its protagonists, some of whom are now fighting on the front line.

One of them, Sławik Gawianiec, received a special pass just the day before and – with the help of the Ukrainian army – managed to reach to Krakow for the event to give his personal testimony of the hell that takes place across the eastern border. The audience present in the hall of the Kijów cinema welcomed him with a long, standing ovation. The film's director, Elwira Niewiera, gave an emotional speech about the need for the entire western world to help Ukraine.

On the second day of the festival (30 May) at 18:00, Docudays UA will be inaugurated at the Kijów cinema with the film *Boney Piles* (dir. Taras Tomenko), which was to open the Ukrainian festival. Both directors of the Docudays festival – Darya Bassel and Viktoria Leshchenko – will be present. And at 20:30, also at the Kijów cinema, the screening of Ihor Ivanko's *Fragile Memory* will begin. This Ukrainian film qualified for the KFF's international documentary competition.

Over the following days, you will be able to watch all the films from the Docudays UA documentary competition every day at 18.00 in the Kijów cinema. Screenings in Krakow will be treated as national (Ukrainian) premieres, which will allow them to maintain the status of international premieres and allow the filmmakers to apply to other prestigious film events.

“I spent several hours watching this films with a heavy heart” – concludes Krzysztof Gierat, director of the Krakow Film Festival. – “They show Ukraine from before this criminal aggression, but the echoes of the war in Crimea are present there, and the threat to the entire country becomes increasingly real. It's very painful when I try to imagine these places and these people now. I believe that we will show these films together with our friends from Kyiv and talk to their creators after the screenings. The presence of films, projects, and guests from Ukraine will be an expression of the Polish and international film community's solidarity with our neighbours.”

In addition, the festival program features the following films about Ukraine:

– *The Hamlet Syndrome* (opening film, national competition, and international documentary competition)

– *My Place Ozerna* (national competition)

– *Fragile Memory* (international documentary competition)

**Viewers from Ukraine have free entry to all Krakow Film Festival screenings. All they have to do is collect the pass first.**

**All proceeds from ticket sales for screenings of Ukrainian films will be donated to the Docudays UA festival to support documentary filmmakers across the eastern border.**

**Krakow Film Festival will be held in Kraków cinemas from 29 May to 5 June and online on 3–12 June 2022.**

The detailed program and screening schedule are available at [www.krakowfilmfestival.pl](http://www.krakowfilmfestival.pl/)