

Festival News

Era New Horizons goes from strength to strength

Era New Horizons International Film Festival, whose 10th edition runs from 22 July – August 1, is held in the town of Wrocław (south-western Poland). The largest film festival in Poland, it is accredited by FIAPF and is regarded as one of the most important film events in Central Europe.

As the festival's name suggests, it is an exploration of new horizons in film language, expression and storytelling that goes beyond the borders of conventional cinema. The international programme of films can provoke extreme reactions and emotions, controversies and discussions, applause and protests. The films in competition offer audiences a chance to see works that might otherwise have no chance of being screened for a Polish audience.

The festival's 2010 programme will include retrospectives of the films of Jean-Luc Godard, recent Turkish cinema, Polish filmmaker Wojciech Jerzy Has and the Quay Brothers. The festival will also feature a retrospective of films by acclaimed academic Laura Mulvey.

The festival sections are:

New Horizons International Competition – the most important competitive section of the festival – consists of 14 bold and original Polish premieres. It is meant to pose a question: is there a place in 21st century cinema for directors who go against the grain – for individuals with their own style and inimitable language? The winner of this competition is awarded the Grand Prix (€20,000), the festival's highest honour. The winners of the



*Left Agnès Varda, director of **The Beaches of Agnes** and Festival Director Roman Gulek*

Grand Prix, Audience Award and Film Critics Award are guaranteed distribution in Poland.

Films on Art International Competition – launched at the 2009 edition of the festival, this is sure to become an important section of the programme. Entries are works on the borderline of cinema and visual arts. There are 14 feature-length documentaries, with the winner taking the Best Film Prize (€10,000), which will guarantee distribution in Poland.

New Polish Films Competition – both features and documentaries are eligible, offering foreign professionals and festival audiences an opportunity to assess the latest and most interesting productions from recent Polish cinema. An international jury awards the Wrocław Film Prize (€25,000), and the Best New Director Prize (€10,000). In 2009 the competition consisted of 13 films, four of which were world premieres. This section reinforces the festival's importance as a showcase for new Polish films.

New Polish Short Films Competition – short and medium-length films are eligible. It is also a

unique occasion for younger filmmakers to present their works to an international audience. This section is an essential strand for programmers from other international short film festivals.

European Short Films Competition – aimed at students and young filmmakers. Debut films of a length not exceeding 20 minutes compete for the Best Film Prizes (€1,000 each) in three categories: fiction films, documentaries and animation.

The Third Eye is a cycle of special screenings, presenting films made by visual artists for whom cinema is a means of expression. The section allows audiences to see films previously shown in art spaces rather than cinemas.

A recent addition to the festival was the educational series **New Horizons of Film Language**, which was organised to last several years and is aimed at drawing the audience's attention to how film as a work of art has changed over the last 10–15 years. Programming ten films each year, the key aim of this series is to allow

audiences to appreciate the formal aspects of original works – this will be done through screenings, lectures and discussions.

There are also retrospectives championing the films of national cinemas and also bodies of work by master directors; reminiscence series and cinema lessons; open-air screenings at the Wrocław Market Square for almost two thousand spectators; unique installations and expositions; and, finally, the opportunity to take part in meetings with artists and in discussions.

In 2009, a Polish-Swedish Co-Production Forum took place. It featured one-on-one pitching sessions, lectures and a case study of the film *Miracle Seller*, which was a Polish-Swedish co-production premiered at the festival. Market screenings of new Swedish films were prepared for Polish distributors and TV buyers. The Andrzej Wajda Master School of Directing and Göteborg Film School participated in workshops devoted to film directing, with masterclasses conducted by Jacek Bławut and Johan Palmgren.



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Since its inception, the festival has become one of the leading film music events. Every year it presents large outdoor concerts, silent films with live music featuring artists as diverse as Marianne Faithfull, Michael Nyman, Eleni Karaindrou, Wim Mertens, Meredith Monk, Jocelyn Pook, Tibor Szemző and many others.

Era New Horizons is financed by the city of Wrocław and the corporate sponsor, ERA, the major mobile operator in Poland, the MEDIA Programme of the European Union, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and Lower Silesia Voivodship.

Zlin is 50 and Zeman is 100!

This year, the International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Zlin will celebrate its 50th anniversary. And amongst its many celebrations, there will be an opportunity to look at the work of the great Czech filmmaker, Karel Zeman, with the commemoration of 100 years since his birth.

Zlin is the oldest festival for children and youth cinema. It is also the biggest, screening the most films of any similarly themed festival. It was originally created solely to be a showcase for Czech and Slovak films for children. However, since 1989 it has widened its focus to include international productions. It has also increased in size since 2000, not to mention prestige.

The main competitive sections are for children and for youth, as well as a section of short



Actor Tim Curry in front of the Zlin Film Festival main theatre

animated films and two sections for an older audience: European Debuts and films from the Visegrad countries. The 2010 edition will also see non-competitive sections: Night Horizons, targeted at films about problematical and provocative issues related to teenagers; and the return of the popular Japanese Anime section.

The 50th anniversary will be celebrated with a strong focus on Czech and Slovak cinema. This showcase will also present a retrospective of one of the most innovative Czech filmmakers, Karel Zeman, to commemorate 100th anniversary of his birth.

European Film Awards 2009

The 22nd European Film Awards took place on 12 December 2009 in the heart of Germany's industrial Ruhr area. It was a unique change from the norm, which normally sees the European Film Awards hosted in Berlin – the home of the European Film Academy – every two years.

Michael Haneke's *The White Ribbon* was the big winner of the evening, garnering the three top prizes: European Film, Director and Screenwriter. Haneke called his film 'a truly European production'. He was accompanied on stage by the film's Austrian, German, French and Italian co-producers.

Another favourite of the evening, *Slumdog Millionaire*, received two awards; director Danny Boyle accepted the People's Choice Award, voted for by film fans across the continent, and Anthony Dod Mantle's Cinematographer Award for his diverse work on both *Slumdog Millionaire* and Lars von Trier's *Antichrist*.

Stephen Daldry, the recently appointed European Film Academy ambassador, accepted the award for European Actress on behalf of Kate Winslet for her performance in his adaptation of the bestselling novel, *The Reader*.

The award for European actor went to newcomer Tahar Rahim for his role as a



Winners and presenters at the 22nd European Film Awards
Picture: EFA/jens-braune.de

prisoner forced to kill another inmate in Jacques Audiard's *A Prophet*. The prison drama also took home the European Film Academy Prix d'Excellence, which went to the film's sound designers, Brigitte Taillandier, Francis Wagnier, Jean-Paul Hurier and Marc Doisne.

Broken Embraces composer Alberto Iglesias was awarded European Composer, while Swiss filmmaker Peter Liechti's *The Sound of Insects – Report of a Mummy*, an account of a man starving himself to death, received the European Film Academy Documentary – Prix Arte. The European Co-Production Award – Prix EURIMAGES went to producers Diana Elbaum and Jani Thiltges.

Two awards went to Poland: Marcel Lozinski's *Poste Restante* was awarded European Short Film and this year's Critics' Award, the Prix FIPRESCI, went to Andrzej Wajda for *Tatarak*.

For the first time in its history, the Academy gave an award for Best Animated Feature,

which went to Jacques-Rémy Girerd for *Mia and the Migoo*.

How much of cinema comes down to the passion and enthusiasm of individual artists was rarely more apparent than in the nominees for European Discovery for Best Debut. Like his four co-nominees, British director Peter Strickland, who shot his disturbing revenge drama *Katalin Varga* in Romania with Hungarian-speaking actors, fought for his film for years before he completed it.

French actress Isabelle Huppert, who received the award for European Achievement in World Cinema from German director Volker Schlöndorff, spoke emotionally when she opined that the language that unites Europe is cinema.

One of the most moving moments of the ceremony was when surprise guest Eric Cantona took the stage in honour of Ken Loach, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the star of his latest film, *Looking for Eric*. The football legend hailed Loach as 'a genius' and added: 'For five decades he has not stopped tackling social issues and always with realism, humour, love and modesty.'

The 2010 Awards Ceremony will take place in Tallinn, Estonia's beautiful capital, on the banks of the Gulf of Finland, the easternmost arm of the Baltic Sea. The event will be an early highlight of Tallinn's European Capital of Culture tenure in 2011. The 23rd European Film Awards are scheduled for 4 December 2010.

4 DECEMBER 2010

THE 23RD EUROPEAN FILM AWARDS

TALLINN / ESTONIA

www.europeanfilmacademy.org www.europeanfilmawards.eu

Tampere Film Festival celebrates its 40th Anniversary

Located in southern Finland and surrounded by two beautiful lakes, the Tampere International Short Film Festival celebrates its 40th anniversary in March 2010.

The Opening Jubilee will look back at some of the best and most memorable films screened at previous festivals, while in the Rake Special: Harvest programme, there will be a chance to savour some of the finest Finnish shorts of all time.



Opening reception at Bravo Plaza. Photo: Markus Nikkilä

Two screenings of the extensive ¡Viva el Corto! programme will be devoted to Uruguayan short films. There will also be plenty of chance to catch up with other Mexican, Spanish and Ibero-American films throughout the whole festival.

Besides the actual short film programme the festival bursts with related events and activities. On Saturday, Yo-talo gathers friends of indie filmmaking to the Trash Film Festival



International Jury 2009: Ngo Phuong Lan (Vietnam), Maike Mia Höhne (Germany), William Sloan (United States), Montserrat Guiu Vals (Spain) and Kristiina Pervilä (Finland). Photo: Wilhelmiina Saikkonen

tenth anniversary gala. Videotivoli, International Children and Youth Video festival, will be held for the seventh time. And FestArt, a media art exhibition held in TR1 at Väinö Linna Square, will be open from February 14th.

The retrospective sections will champion the work of Laila Pakalnina, Patrik Eklund, Gustav Deutsch, Julien Temple and Gustavo Taretto. Meanwhile, the Fortress Europe programme will focus on the complex issues surrounding immigration in European societies through new short films and debates.

The competition programme has always had strong international appeal, with the 2009 Grand Prix awarded to Pablo Lamar for Ahendu nde sapukai, which was the first Paraguayan film to feature in the festival. Professionals can participate in the comprehensive Film Market, and can join filmmakers, guests and audience members later at the unforgettable Sauna Party. Tervetuloa Tampereelle!



Cottbus celebrates 20 years of their Festival

With an anniversary that almost coincides with the fall of the Berlin Wall, FilmFestival Cottbus will celebrate its 20th edition in November 2010. Over two decades, FilmFestival Cottbus has become the world's most renowned Festival of East European Cinema. Each year, it provides a comprehensive programme of recent productions from the Baltics to the Balkans and from Central Europe to Central Asia.

Originally founded to offer young filmmakers from Eastern Europe a platform for their work, the festival now presents a wide variety of new and recent feature films from the region. In addition to the competition features and short films, there are sections dedicated to regional blockbusters, experimental work and countries particularly active in the film business. In many cases, the festival serves as a stepping-stone towards a theatrical release in Germany and other countries.

The festival closed its 2009 edition with a record attendance of 18,900 visitors, who attended 140 films from 35 countries, including Russia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Azerbaijan, Hungary, Croatia and Serbia, who were all represented in the main competition programme. 'We're no longer a special-interest section,' stated Festival Director Roland Rust. 'Meanwhile Cottbus may be regarded as home of Eastern-European film,' he added. The 2010 edition will include a programme of films representing how the world views



The Opening Night of the Cottbus Film Festival

contemporary Eastern Europe. It is hoped that this view will span the globe, offering audiences the opportunity to see how Eastern and Central Europe looks from inside and out.

The East-West co-production market, Connecting Cottbus, is the festival's industry section. It supports the development of new films that go on to achieve recognition at festivals around the world. Artistic Director Gabriele Brunnenmeyer should have much to look forward to in 2010, following the success of last year's event: 'The 14 presented ideas for feature films showed an astonishing variety... accordingly high was the interest of producers and financiers. This gives us reason to hope that many projects will be realised from this year's market.'

As well as the many screenings, there is an extensive supporting programme, with exhibitions, parties and concerts by Eastern European bands, which all work towards promoting the culture of the filmmaking countries in focus.

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