11 April 2023

Life In Short.
 Polish Films in the International Short Film Competition.

**The International Short Film Competition is undoubtedly one of the most exciting highlights of the Krakow Film Festival. It features a wide variety of genres and film formats, fascinating debuts – all with a maximum runtime of 30 minutes. This year, among the best short documentaries, animations, and fiction films from around the world, we will see four Polish productions that are sure to make a lot of noise.**

The short film competition is a true springboard for Polish filmmakers to make international careers. It is in this format that directors such as Krzysztof Kieślowski and Oscar-winner Zbigniew Rybczyński made their debuts. Perhaps one of this year's Polish short films will repeat the spectacular success of Tadeusz Łysiak's *The Dress*, nominated for an American Academy Award in 2022? “We are keeping our fingers crossed,” says Krzysztof Gierat, director of the Krakow Film Festival.

Returning to the Krakow Film Festival with his latest film is last year's Silver Hobby-Horse winner for “A Dead Marriage” – Michał Toczek. Accompanying him is the outstanding actor Sebastian Stankiewicz, who is brilliantly partnered by Jowita Budnik. The short fiction film ***Be Somebody*** tells the story of a family that accidentally moves into a flat once owned by Lech Wałęsa. Turning their new home into a museum provides a chance to earn extra income but also brutally tests the meaning of life.

After the record-breaking popularity of the TV series *Control* Natasza Parzymies tackles the topic of love between two mature women in her film ***My Old Gals***. The protagonists, played by Polish cinema icons Dorota Pomykała and Dorota Stalińska, reunite after 50 years to embark on one last journey together and fight for their past love. Fantastic acting and Ralpha Kaminski's music gently guide the viewers on an emotional trip to the seaside and into the depths of their own souls.

The protagonist of the short documentary ***Old Summer*** (dir. Maria Wider) also finds her life hasn't quite gone as planned, but despite adversity, she is ready for the next chapter. Krystyna, an energetic 72-year-old, is searching for true love. She updates her personal ads and goes on dates. Unfortunately, her encounters bring more disappointment than satisfaction, forcing her to reconsider what she truly needs to be happy.

The Polish representation concludes with the only Polish animated film in the international competition. Szymon Ruczyński, a director from Hajnówka, has created the shocking animated documentary ***There Are People in the Forest***. The film, with its minimalist style, evokes the dramatic refugee crisis on the Polish-Belarusian border, which has been ongoing since autumn 2021.

All these films will participate in the oldest competition of the Krakow-based festival, competing for the Golden Dragon, a recommendation for the European Film Award, and a shorter path to the Oscars. They will also face the best national productions in the National Competition.

**Polish films in the International Short Film Competition:**

* *Be Somebody*, dir. Michał Toczek, fiction, 26’, Poland, 2023
* *My Old Gals*, dir. Natasza Parzymies, fiction, 25’, Poland, 2023
* *Old Summer*, dir. Maria Wider, documentary, 24’, Poland, 2023
* *There Are People in the Forest*, dir. Szymon Ruczyński, animated, 10’, Poland, 2023

The Krakow Film Festival is organised with the financial support of the European Union as part of the “Creative Europe” program, the City of Kraków, the Polish Film Institute, and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The co-organiser is the Polish Filmmakers Association, and the main organiser is the Krakow Film Foundation.

**The 63rd Krakow Film Festival will be held in Kraków's cinemas from 28 May to 4 June and across Poland at the KFF VOD online streaming platform between 2 and 18 June.**