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#### **Krakow Film Festival Announces 64th Edition Award Winners**

**Once again, the impressive hall of the Kijów cinema was crowded with the audience and filmmakers eagerly awaiting the verdict. The in-cinema part of the 64th Kraków Film Festival is drawing to a close, culminating in the awards ceremony. This year, the event was preceded by the world premiere of Małgorzata Szumowska and Michał Englert's film *All Inclusive*. A gala ceremony attended by the Deputy Mayor of Kraków, Stanisław Mazur, commenced after the screening.**

**The Verdict of the 64th Kraków Film Festival**

**National Competition**

The title of the most awarded film went to ***Silent Trees*** by Agnieszka Zwiefka. The director received the Golden Hobby-Horse for the best Polish documentary over 30 minutes. The jury of the National Competition, chaired by Piotr Śliskowski, praised the film *for having a story that is a complete work. For a film where a refugee is a human being and not an empty media topic. For a poignant record of pain, despair, rejection, and lack of acceptance, but at the same time for a film that gives hope. The Golden Hobby-Horse went to Agnieszka Zwiefka for the film* ***Silent Trees****.* Agnieszka Zwiefka’s film also received a Special Mention in the International Documentary Competition and was recommended by the Kraków Film Festival for the European Film Awards. A Special Mention was given to the protagonist of the film, **Runa Husni**.

For the second time, three Golden Hobby-Horses were awarded to short films. The title of best Polish fiction film went to ***Comme Des Cowboys*** by Julia Sadowska, recognised *for an intimate and evocative cinematic narrative. For the personal voice of the author, who, without relying on the subject matter, opens the door to the world of her own sensitivity*. The jury, chaired by Jacek Borcuch, awarded the animation ***There Will Be No Other End*** by Piotr Milczarek *for making a satire full of original humour which exposes the flaws of contemporary society*. Among the documentaries, ***Tiger Soup*** by Kacper Świtalski captivated the jury, earning an award *for telling a story about seizing life. For showing us that an extraordinary adventure can be just around the corner. Its lush, colour-saturated cinematography takes us on a journey that knows no limits, carried by the simplest yet most important emotions.* A special mention from the jury was given to **Elżbieta Benkowska** for her short fiction film ***The Power of Resistance***.

The Award for the Best Short and Documentary Films Producer in Poland, sponsored by the Polish Producers Alliance, ATM Group, and FDR Studio, was given to Anna Bławut-Mazurkiewicz for the film ***Everything Needs to Live*** *in recognition of her extremely courageous production and organizational work and in gratitude for co-creating one of the most moving films about the horrors of contemporary armed conflict and the dedication in defending the rights of those most in need.*

The Maciej Szumowski Award for Remarkable Social Awareness – under the patronage of the Society of Authors ZAiKS – was once again presented at the festival. The title went to Grzegorz Brzozowski for the film ***Only Day and Night***. The justification reads: *The film has an extraordinary sense of historical timing and sensitivity in portraying the protagonists in a situation of collective danger, whose result is an exceptionally modern and – simultaneously – universal story about every one of us.*

The Wrocław Feature Film Studio Special Mention for creators debuting with their first or second fiction film was awarded to Ewa Borysewicz for ***Miracle***. The film was also recognised for best editing. The President of the Polish Filmmakers Association Award went to Aleksandra Rosset-Żak.

The award for best cinematography – under the patronage of the Polish Society of Cinematographers and funded by Black Photon – went to Aliaksander Tsymbaliuk for the film ***Koka***. This short documentary was appreciated for *an extremely intimate portrayal of characters living on the coast of the Bering Sea and for exceptional cinematography that creates an unparalleled atmosphere of a deeply tense and tender story.*

**International Documentary Film Competition**

The jury, chaired by last year’s winner Nick Read, decided to award the Golden Horn to Askold Kurov and Anonymous Creator for the film ***Of Caravan and the Dogs***.Their justification states: *Observing the relentless countdown to the war in Ukraine in early 2023,* ***Of Caravan and the Dogs*** *is a unique film of record. It captures not only a moment in history, but also the untold efforts of embattled Russian journalists and activists in defending press freedoms and human rights. This exquisitely crafted, important film captured the jury’s respect and we have no hesitation in recommending it to international audiences.*

The Silver Horn for the director of the film with high artistic merit went to Tomasz Wolski for ***A Year in the Life of the Country***.As we can read in the verdict: *The masterful editing craft on display: the pacing, score, soundscape and narrative design seriously impressed the jury. The film stimulates a range of emotional responses, from humour to empathy & outrage, making distant history more vital & relevant to audiences today.*

The Silver Horn for the director of the film on social issues was awarded to Oksana Karpovych, the director of ***Intercepted***. In the words of the jury *with its distinctive aesthetic approach, we predict* ***Intercepted*** *is a film that will live long in the memory of audiences. Recordings of mobile phone conversations between Russian conscripts and family members create the image of a fractured society. Mothers, sisters and partners become complicit in the banality of evil. Powerful cinematic images of broken landscapes these same soldiers witnessed in Ukraine frame the audio, forming a compelling & original perspective on the present conflict.*

A Special Mention was awarded to the aforementioned documentary directed by Agnieszka Zwiefka. The jury has shown its admiration for ***Silent Trees***, a film that addresses the risks and trauma refugees experience on the edge of Europe, on the borders of Poland. Focusing on the emotions of a single Kurdish Iraqi teenager who shoulders responsibility for all her family, the filmmakers found an eloquent and powerful protagonist. Her inner emotional life is imagined in artful animated sequences, but most of all the jury was impressed by the elegant and sensitive cinematography.

**International Music Film Competition DocFilmMusic**

The story of a rebellious singer and activist for women's and LGBTQ+ rights was named best music documentary. **The Golden Heynal** was awarded to the creators of ***Teaches of Peaches*** – Philipp Fussenegger and Judy Landkammer. The jury, composed of chairman Matej Bobrik together with Ana Sofia Fonseca and Michał Fojcik, justified their verdict: *this film is an amazing journey to the life of someone that shows us the power of fighting for our rights, bringing to the stage important issues like women empowerment, sexual freedom and aging even when these subjects were not popular. The film impresses with its authenticity.*

**International Short Film Competition**

This year, the Golden Dragon once more went to an animated film. The winner was Akihito Izuhara, awarded for his film ***Kawauso***.Justification: *pure piece of art that is both minimalist and maximalist. Mysterious poetic movie that stops us for a moment of powerful silence for meditation about the relationship between human civilization and nature.*

The jury, chaired by Corina Schwingruber-Ilić, decided to award the Silver Dragon for the director of the best documentary to Ivan Zahinos for ***Don Benjamin***.In their verdict, the jurors had this to say: *it's a story about a local community defending their home and home of all of us. By example of the unbreakable spirit of the main character this uplifting movie brings back belief in humankind, tears to your eyes and some hope to your heart.* The award for the best short fiction film went to Anna Korom for ***Diamond Beauty***.For the jurors it was a *unique, emotionally and visually intense film, repulsing and charming at the same time, telling the story with a twisted sense of humour but also with respect and empathy to its characters*. The Silver Horn for Best Short Animation was awarded to Seung-Hee Jung for ***Dark Cloud Memories***, or a *creative depiction of madness of our nowaday's reality and unreality that everyone can relate to. Dystopia can be very colourful.*

The award for the Best European Short and title of Kraków Film Festival’s candidate for the European Film Award in the short film category, went to Mohammed Almughanni for the Polish-Palestinian-French production ***An Orange from Jaffa***.

**FICC Award**

The Jury of the International Federation of Film Societies decided to award the **Don Quixote Award** to ***Buzz of the Earth*** directed by Greta Stocklassa and gave a Special Mention to the animated film ***On the 8th Day*** directed by Agathe Sénéchal, Alicia Massez, Elise Debruyne, Flavie Carin, and Théo Duhautois. This short fiction film captivated them by *showing the importance of comedy in difficult times. For creating a universal and engaging portrayal of the issues troubling the contemporary world. For asking important questions, such as: what does it mean to be human? What defines us as a species? Does it even matter? The FICC Jury awards its main prize to the film* ***Buzz of the Earth*** *by Greta Stocklassa.* In their justification for the Special Mention for the animated film, the jury wrote: *This colourful film very clearly speaks about pollution and the devastation of the environment, creatures, and humanity. The film utilises a fascinating technique of animation, and the collaboration between the five young students predicts a bright future for them.*

**FIPRESCI Award**

The jury of the International Federation of Film Critics awarded Oksana Karpovych for the documentary ***Intercepted***. The director was praised *for a skilful and innovative combination of audio recordings and video footage representing the complexities of war. It's a story about people experiencing the spiral of wartime nightmares and the damage caused by wartime propaganda brings a true testament to humanity.*

**Student Jury Award**

After watching all the competition films, the Student Jury decided to award the music documentary ***Omar and Cedric: If This Ever Gets Weird*** directed by Nicolas Jack Davies. The students awarded this film *for a lively reflection on the power of music and friendship in the face of adversity such as substance abuse, burnout, and Scientology.*

**Audience Award**

This year, the audience gathered in Kraków’s art-house cinemas decided that its favourite film was the feature-length documentary ***Everything Needs to Live*** directed by Tetiana Dorodnitsyna and Andrii Lytvynenko.

The Krakow Film Festival is on the exclusive list of qualifying events for the Oscars® in the categories of short film (live action, animated, documentary) and documentary feature, as well as a recommending event for the [European Film Awards](https://europeanfilmawards.eu/?p=1) in the same categories.

The Festival is organised with the financial support of the Municipality of Kraków, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the European Union's Creative Europe program, the Lesser Poland Province, the Polish Film Institute. It is co-organised by the Polish Filmmakers Association.

The 64th Krakow Film Festival will be held in cinemas from 26 May to 2 June and online across Poland on the KFF VOD platform from 31 May to 16 June 2024.