

Portorož, 15 September 2018

Award winners of the 21st Festival of Slovenian Film were announced at the closing night ceremony in the Amphitheatre of Avditorij in Portorož, Slovenia, on Saturday 15 September.

AWARDS

1. Vesna Award for Best Feature Film

My Last Year as a Loser

Production: Vertigo, Zavod za kulturne dejavnosti

Co-production: RTV Slovenija, Nuframe, 100 d.o.o., Fs Viba film

Directed by: Urša Menart

Commentary:

My Last Year as a Loser is recognized by the jury as the most comprehensive film of this festival. The relevance of the topic, the refined script and the precise direction of Urša Menart, the excellent acting cast headed by Eva Jesenovec and all other auteur contributions form a convincing whole. The topical and burning generational issues are explored in the film with an intelligent note of humour, absurdity and warmth.

2. Vesna Award for Best Director

Darko Štante / Consequences

Production: Temporama

Co-production: Zwinger Film, Nuframe, 100 d.o.o.

Directed by: Darko Štante

Commentary:

For a uniform and rock solid directorial achievement, creating a story that's both captivating and repulsive, thrilling and depressive at the same time, but without a doubt, a full-on exposure of the complexities of the youth today. An exceptional debut, in which the director conducts all the elements surprisingly well.

3. Vesna Award for Best Screenplay

Urša Menart / My Last Year as a Loser

Commentary:

The script for *My Last Year as a Loser* stands out by being elaborate, thoughtful and having good knowledge of the subject. From the seemingly passive character of Špela, it builds a strong and attractive protagonist, creating a narrative surplus in multiplicity, visual narrative and rich subtext.

4. Vesna Award for Best Actress in a Leading Role

Judita Franković Brdar / Erased

Commentary:

In her role as Ana, Judita Franković's acting is very subtle and convincing, with an intense feeling for emotion, the film plot and the words that are spoken. Using a unique acting process, she integrates all these elements into unparalleled cinematic moments, thus revealing the entire pathos of the character to let it influence the viewer. If at first, she enters the role of Ana quite matter-of-factly, after Ana's loss of identity she slowly transforms the character's palpability into an inward-looking being who finds herself in a desperate situation.

5. Vesna Award for Best Actor in a Leading Role

Matej Zemljič / Consequences

Commentary:

Matej Zemljič is an actor whose introverted cinematic action fascinates us. He approaches the role in a discreet and universal way. Gradually, in even undulations, he constructs Andrej as a human being torn between the benign mechanism of a correctional facility, his traumatic family experiences and the resulting inner anguish. He expresses the absence of love and his fear of future delicately and not at all obtrusively, almost poetically. Despite the brutal occurrences, his presence remains reserved. The fundamental plane of origin for the actor is the feeling of insufferableness, yet in his pain, he always remains quiet and restrained, until his act of violence against Željko.

6. Vesna Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role

Živa Selan / My Last Year as a Loser

Commentary:

Živa Selan is an actress who shines. With her natural, daring and responsive attitude, she shapes the role that comes across as a reflection of the intangible and impalpable constitution of the world. The stifling everyday life as experienced in their utter disempowerment by the generation unable to get jobs, shows in the actress' seeming exuberance and lightness. Her expression is never the same, never blank. Quite the opposite, her suggestive power and detachment from the world continue to communicate, "I am not ok".

7. Vesna Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role

Timon Šturbej / Consequences

Commentary:

Timon Šturbej is brilliant as Željko. In all layers of expression as an actor, he possesses charisma and authority. Having impeccably transformed into a young delinquent, he administers his sassy nature effectively in his bodily and spiritual gestures. Throughout the film, he plays the emotions fluidly, combining softness with his diabolically wild nature. From the very first moment to the last, the film is caught wholly in the demeanour of this manipulative demon.

8. Vesna Award for Best Photography

Mitja Ličen / History of Love

Production: MONOO

Co-production: Nefertiti Films, Incitus Film

Directed by: Sonja Prosenc

Commentary:

For creating a sensuous and immersive visual experience by attentively composing frame after frame in this visually rewarding picture. Clearly, a very talented cinematographer's work who is further building on his style, adding another layer of complexity to his artistic and technical output.

9. Vesna Award for Best Original Music

Jura Ferina, Pavao Miholjević, Vladimir Godár / Erased

Production: Gustav Film

Co-production: Ankica Jurić Tilić & Ira CeciĆ (Kinorama), Biljana Prvanović (Delirium), Diego Zanco (Pakt Media)

Directed by: Miha Mazzini

Commentary:

For creating a very precise and surprisingly organic musical accompaniment to the trials and tribulations of the main character in this historically difficult film. The team of composers with its achievement have undoubtedly elevated the audible experience of the film, heightening even further the emotions and the actions of the story itself.

10. Vesna Award for Best Editing

Zlatjan Čučkov / *How Much Do You Love Yourself?*

Production: Sever & Sever

Directed by: Nina Blažin

Commentary:

Having edited *How Much Do You Love Yourself?*, Zlatjan Čučkov created a consistent structure with a clear dramatic arc and rhythm that reveals the multiplicity and controversy of the protagonist Victoria deliberately and at the right moments. In an observational documentary, structuring and giving meaning to a massive amount of the recorded material is one of the major challenges, and Zlatjan has executed it brilliantly.

11. Vesna Award for Best Production Design

Matjaž Pavlovec / *Erased*

Production: Gustav Film

Co-production: Ankica Jurić Tilić & Ira Cecić (Kinorama), Biljana Prvanović (Delirium), Diego Zanco (Pakt Media)

Directed by: Miha Mazzini

Commentary:

For the meticulous recreation of the surroundings and the atmosphere of Slovenia in 1992. From the smallest casual details to the overall capturing of the bygone times, this successful and very demanding work on the production design plays a crucial role in the authentic qualities of the film itself.

12. Vesna Award for Best Costume Design

Sanja Džeba / *Erased*

Production: Gustav Film

Co-production: Ankica Jurić Tilić & Ira Cecić (Kinorama), Biljana Prvanović (Delirium), Diego Zanco (Pakt Media)

Directed by: Miha Mazzini

Commentary:

In *Erased*, the vision of Sanja Džeba in costume design was more than just to research the fashion of the nineties in detail. Her achievement is an artistic expression that is not pushing to the foreground but is able to coexist with the film. Her thoughtful visual approach always remains balanced with situations and the environment, which results in the consistency of the film's costume design and contributes to the environment being non-illustrative. Her costume design provides natural support to characters' psychology and effectively works to the narrative's advantage.

13. Vesna Award for Best Make-up

Nataša Sevčnikar / *Gaja's World*

Production: Felina Films

Co-production: RTV Slovenija

Directed by: Peter Bratuša

Commentary:

Nataša Sevčnikar created discreet but consistent make-up for the whole cast of *Gaja's World*, which, to the right extent and with feeling, visually supports the unreal and simplified world of children's and youth film.

14. Vesna Award for Best Sound

Julij Zornik / Greetings from Free Forests

Production: Pica Pica Productions

Co-production: Barbara Rosenberg, Luka Rukavina (Plan 9 Produkcija), Sarah Noor Phoenix, Anna Winter

Directed by: Ian Soroka

Commentary:

With the film *Greetings from Free Forests*, Julij Zornik has reached a peak in his long-time sound creation for many feature and documentary films. A clear and mature auteur concept without music establishes a minimalist soundtrack as a key narrative element of the film, composed mainly of narrative voices and sounds of nature.

15. Vesna Award for Best Documentary

How Much Do You Love Yourself?

Production: Sever & Sever

Directed by: Nina Blažin

Commentary:

With a sensitive documentary approach, Nina Blažin enters the lives of two young addicts, crossing into a world one tends to ignore. The protagonists are down and out in a world where some love and need for beauty can nevertheless be found. While capturing their innermost layers, Blažin respects their human dignity with the sublime feeling of an auteur. Despite the challenging documentary approach, the film's visual aspect is executed in a thoughtful manner.

16. Vesna Award for Best Short Film

The Final Day of Rudolf Nietzsche

Production: Nukleus film Slovenija

Co-production: Utopia Film, filmska produkcija d.o.o., Tomahavk, zavod za kulturne dejavnosti,

Ritem, studio za avdio in video storitve

Directed by: Blaž Kutin

Commentary:

Using the short film cleverly as an opportunity to explore film as a medium, Blaž Kutin makes *The Final Day of Rudolf Nietzsche* a radical audio-visual adventure that has been dreamt more than it has been filmed. The author boldly makes use of the seemingly simple postulate, i.e. that film is not only what it shows and says, but also what it holds back and conceals. This way, he gives the viewer the freedom to find their own way into the story of the everyman, guided by the allusion to the great philosopher.

17. Vesna Award for Best Minority Co-production

Winter Flies

Production: Endorfilm (Češka), Cvinger Film (Slovenija)

Co-production: Česká Televize, Cvinger Film, Koskino, Punkchart Films

Directed by: Olmo Omerzu

Commentary:

Winter Flies is a charming road movie that travels, above all, through the exciting, timeless landscape of growing up. The film makes the viewer find the child within, full of innocent pleasures, with an ever-insatiable desire for adventure, exploration, and ceaseless travels through the sweet sorrows of the world. Olmo Omerzu guides the story with an ease of a fairy tale, enhancing it with refined humour yet always treating the subject responsibly.

18. Vesna Award for Best Animated Film

Koyaa – Wild Sunbed

Production: ZVVIKS

Directed by: Kolja Saksida

Commentary:

Koyaa, a returning visitor of this festival, has been a well-known animated hero for quite some time. His author Kolja Saksida has brought puppet animation to the level comparable with the world's best works, while staying true to his hero as well as the youngest audience, which receives far too little attention from Slovenian cinema.

19. Vesna Award for Best Student Film

Voyage voyage

Production: FAMU Praga

Directed by: Lun Sevník

Commentary:

Although there have lately been many films on the topic of refugees, *Voyage voyage* manages to surprise. Treating the subject in an apolitical way, with a clear ethical stance, it weaves the smuggler and their 'goods' into a profoundly humane message: We are all human. Lun Sevník displays mature treatment of today's social reality, confident use of the film language, and fine progress in his creative expression as an auteur.

20. Vesna Award for Special Original Achievement (replacing Vesna for Best Experimental AV Work)

History of Love

Production: MONOO

Co-production: Nefertiti Films, Incitus Film

Directed by: Sonja Prosenc

Commentary:

The crew of the film *History of Love* receives an award for special achievements for creating a unique and unusual original concept that takes the film away from the anticipated standard authorial drives. The artistic sensitivity of the director and scriptwriter Sonja Prosenc is supported by the excellent photography of Mitja Ličen, the international cast and crew, as well as the business and connective competence of producer Rok Sečen.

21. Vesna Award for Special Achievements

Gaja's World

Production: Felina Films

Co-production: RTV Slovenija

Directed by: Peter Bratuša

Commentary:

For a topical and entertaining children's film that deservedly fares very well against all the live action features, regardless of the perceptions on the hierarchy of film genre. High quality films for young audiences are developing the future cinemagoers across Europe. As part of this very necessary development, *Gaja's World* has succeeded to be a worthy continuation of the tradition of films for children in Slovenia.

22. Vesna Award for Special Achievements

Days of Madness

Production: Restart

Co-production: Petra Pan Film

Directed by: Damian Nenadić

Commentary:

Days of Madness all but scares us by raising second thoughts whether mental illness is perhaps merely a combination of the infinite vulnerability of life, human powerlessness and evil demons that roam our midst. Without moralising, the film raises harrowing questions of how one responds to psychological distress; and how the system, the medical science, the pharmaceutical industry react. Thanks to well-thought-out yet only seeming absence of the author, what is left is an honest, brutally compelling document that leaves the viewer with an almost physical effect.

23. Vesna Audience Award

Consequences

Production: Temporama

Co-production: Zwinger Film, Nuframe, 100 d.o.o.

Directed by: Darko Štante

OTHER AWARDS

IRIDIUM Award is presented to the winner of the Vesna Award for Best Feature Film and comprises postproduction services in the amount of EUR 5,000.

MY LAST YEAR AS A LOSER

Film Critics' Jury Award

CONSEQUENCES

Commentary:

The award is presented for strong acting, refined direction and unrelenting focus of the story, for the exceptional feeling for nuancing emotions and relations among protagonists and for thoroughly authentic construction of the microcosm at the margin of Slovenian everyday life.

Film Critics' Jury Special Mention

MY LAST YEAR AS A LOSER

Commentary:

The award is presented for a consistent critical reflection on the current time and young generation, which with regard to protagonists is humorous, bitter and loving at the same time; and for a comprehensive directorial portrait of Ljubljana, which appears in the film as a character of its own.

Youth Wing award and Special Mention

METUM

collective project

Production: ZVVIKS

Co-production: Secondary School of Design and Photography Ljubljana

Commentary:

The award for best film goes to the collective work *Metum*. This stylised animation excels in refined details. The use of plasticine stresses the childlike perspective of fear, helping the film address a taboo topic in a light manner.

WHAT A MAN FEELS

Directed by: Urh Pirc

Commentary:

Special mention goes to the film *What a Man Feels* by Urh Pirc, which is primarily marked by authentic acting. Based on a clear-cut and integrated story, the film explores a burning issue in a direct and realistic manner.