



FESTIVAL
SLOVENSKEGA
FILMA

Press Release
Ljubljana, 12 October 2020

Winners Announced at the 23rd FSF

The 23rd Festival of Slovenian Film closed last night with the awards ceremony to celebrate the highest creative achievements in Slovenian cinema. Directed by **Matej Filipčič** and hosted by **Jure Longyka**, the event took place in the Grand Hall of the Hotel Union and started with an address by the Director of the 23rd FSF, **Jelka Stergel**. The ceremony also saw the presentation of the Metod Badjura Award for lifetime achievement in cinema to the 2020 laureate, **animation filmmaker Koni Steinbacher**, and a screening of his latest work, [*The Legend of the Happy Hill*](#).

A total of 51 films were in the running for Vesna Awards. The jury decided **not to present the 2020 awards in 6 categories**: best feature film, best director, best screenplay, best actress in a leading role, best make-up, and best animated film. On behalf of the jury, its chair Matic Majcen gave the following statement:

“In this edition of the Festival of Slovenian Film, the main jury had a slightly different task than in previous editions. If the purpose of the jury is usually to choose the best from among good, if not excellent works, this year we were faced with a very limited selection of films, as a result of conditions that discourage the funding of new as well as completion of ongoing projects. This unexpectedly raised a set of entirely different questions, questions that had more to do with the role and value of Vesna Awards as the most important awards for cinema in Slovenia. In some of the categories, no prizes could be given at all as there simply were not any films that had to give what the awards asked for. More frequent still was the dilemma of what to do when one of the films is beyond compare. Can something legitimately be declared the best if there has been no real competition to begin with? The jury was not unanimous in adopting the final list of award-winners, a good indicator of the complexity of these questions. That said, it is our pleasure to say that we managed to award – where the rules allowed us to – all the films that stood out in our eyes from this year’s selection, be it big productions or small student or independent films. This was our way of making sure only outstanding works were awarded, to help maintain the value of Vesna Awards as the highest Slovenian accolade in cinema. Refusing to believe that filmmaking is what should be paying the price of the difficult situation that Slovenian cinema has found itself in, we considered this a vital task.”

The Vesna Award for best feature-length fiction film went to [*Don’t Forget to Breathe*](#) by Martin Turk, which also won the Vesna Award for best cinematography (**Radislav Jovanov – Gonzo**). [*Antigone – How Dare We!*](#), a docudrama by Jani Sever, took home the most awards last night, winning Vesnas for best documentary, best actor in a leading role (**Primož Bežjak**), best editing (**Miloš Kalusek**), and the award presented by the Association of Slovenian Film

Critics FIPRESCI. Vesna for best actor in a supporting role was awarded to **Gojmir Lešnjak** for his role in [Let Him Be a Basketball Player 2](#) (dir. Boris Bezić), while Vesna for best actress in a supporting role was awarded to **Katarina Čas** for her role in [Paradise – A Second Life](#). Directed by Davide del Degan, the latter film also won the Vesna Awards for best production design (**Niko Novak**) and best costume design (**Polonca Valentinčič**).

Vesna for best original music went to **Marjan Šijanec** for [Exemplary Behaviour](#), a film directed by Audrius Mickevičius and Nerijus Milerius. [Apples](#) by Christos Nikou won the Vesna Awards for best minority co-production and best sound (**Sašo Kalan** and **Tom Lemajič**). The best short film is [Bits](#) by Áron Horváth Botka, while the best student film is [Playing](#) by Lun Sevnik. Vesna for best original AV work was awarded to [Vesna Goodbye](#), a short film by Sara Kern. The jury also presented two Vesna Awards for special achievements: to Dejan Babosek for [Breakthrough](#), and to Sebastian Korenič Tratnik for [Gmajna](#).

With an average score of 4.72, [Breakthrough](#) also won the Vesna Audience Award. A special award for best short film about Covid-19 lockdown was presented by FSF, to Luka Marčetić for his film [What Day Is It?](#). The award presented by the educational programme Sharpening the Gaze was split between two filmmakers: Lun Sevnik for [Playing](#), and Sebastian Korenič Tratnik for [Gmajna](#).

Photos of the closing night and the awards ceremony are available [here](#).

The list of winners with jury commentaries is available [here](#).