



Festival de films
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Europe
autour de l'
Europe

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Press Release #5

European Film Festival L'Europe autour de l'Europe

Prize winners of the 17th edition

Paris, March 31st 2022

The Festival is honoured to announce the prize winners of its 2022 edition.

Prix SAUVAGE – selection of 8 recent European fiction films unreleased in France

The jury composed of Knut Erik Jensen – President (Norway), Aleksandr Balagura (Ukraine) et Iliana Zakopoulou (Greece), has awarded the **Prix SAUVAGE** and its statuette of dancing wolf to **Igor et Ivan Buharov** (Hungary) for the film **Land of Warm Waters / Melegvizek országa**.

*The jury has agreed award the Prix SAUVAGE to **Land of Warm Waters** by Igor and Ivan Buharov. It is a film without a linear story to follow, built up around surrealistic associations. It takes you by surprise from one scene to the next one breaking away from the traditional narrative techniques we are used to. Shot in super 8 mm, this film has a true courage to take us back to the beginning of cinematography with its love of moving images and photography. You cannot help but enjoy the strange and exciting journey they offer you. **Land of Warm Waters** is a vivid, fresh and free artistic provocation to the film industry of today. The role of independent film festivals is to support and highlight the strength of such films.*

The **Special mention** is given to **Stefan Arsenijević** (Serbia) for the film **As Far as I Can Walk / Strahinja Banović**.

Based on a medieval Serbian poem, the film recounts the problems emigrants and refugee have always faced in the history of mankind. Unfortunately, it still is as relevant as ever. Families and lovers are split up because of the nonsensical wars that have plagued mankind through our history. The film leads us into the fight for hope, love and understanding in spite of all troubles that one may have to go through.

The second **Special mention** is given to **Martin Ziegler** (France) for the film **Adieu Vénus**.

These days when we, the audience, are inundated with information, commercial films, series of all kinds, Martin Ziegler insists on making his own film just the way he feels it should be. Which is to say - in his own philosophical, courageous and beautiful way. Pure cinema is hard to achieve. Martin Ziegler is on his way to define it for us...

Prix LUNA – selection of 8 recent European fiction films unreleased in France

The cinema students and young professionals' Jury composed of Tony Chaslas (President), Elizaveta Ankina, Alexandre Delfin, Ghislain Dufourcq-Boutin, Ilgaz Taka, Serena Woosley has awarded the **Prix LUNA** to **Stefan Arsenijević** (Serbia) for the film **As Far as I Can Walk / Strahinja Banović**.

The major success of As Far as I Can Walk, which we are celebrating tonight, comes from its humanism, which is felt through every aspect of the film.

By the great respect it has for his characters, the film never sinks into a voyeuristic fable. On the contrary, it walks this line by way of cinematic distance and screenwriting proximity. This blunt encounter bestows the film with an impressive uniqueness.

The director, Stefan, never uses common devices. He never falls into pathos, which would be easy to do considering the film's subject. His gesture, close to naturalism, denotes the ambition to restore a form of truth proper to our time: the large-scale migratory crises and the family dramas that take place in private. The film anchors it in an even greater temporal space by modernizing the medieval Serbian sung tale of Strahinja Banović. In this way, the film travels through time, as Strahinja travels through space. This palimpsestic writing throws the entire journey of the character into a lyricism specific to the Serbian culture: to the complex situations of the 2020 version of Strahinja, Stefan Arsenijević and Nicolas Ducray respond, helped by the poem, with moments of grace.

Beyond the film's roots in the real and the artistic, a love story unfolds: sincere, tragic, and powerfully lived. Their story is performed by actors who make us forget that they are actors, so fully and forcefully do they incarnate their roles.

All these qualities make As Far as I Can Walk a necessary work, human and powerfully performed. We wish you the chance to experience it.

Prix PRESENT – selection of 9 recent European documentary films

The Jury composed of NC Heikin - President (France/USA), Toni Glamcevski (North Macedonia) et Timon Koulmasis (France) has awarded the **Prix PRESENT** and its statuette of dancing wolf to **Eva Stefani** (Greece) for the film **Days and Nights of Demetra K. / Μέρες και νύχτες της Δήμητρας Κ.**

The Jury was particularly taken with Demetra for her expansive humanity and love for her fellow human beings. Eva Stefani established a relationship of trust and confidence with her subject to the point where she was utterly natural and open in front of the camera. In addition, the many years during which Stefani filmed Demetra allowed the film to encompass an era, with rich developments in both their relationship and Demetra's life trajectory. Through one woman's life, we are given a brief history of Greece during the last 30 years, and most poignantly, a look into the usually hidden world of sex-workers and their concerns. They could not have asked for a better champion than Demetra K. Eva Stefani has brought Demetra's fascinating story to the world with great sensitivity and a welcome touch of humor.

The **Special mention** is given to **Ines T. Alves** (Portugal) for the film **Waters of Pastaza / Juunt Pastaza Entsari**.

Ms. Alves is to be commended for her unprecedented access to the children of this tribe in the Amazon and the great finesse with which she filmed them. She has given us an immersive experience in a different world, capturing the group's dynamic as well as individual characters. Ms. Alves documents the abundant natural beauty of the Amazon, reminding us that it, along with a way of life, are in danger of disappearing.

The second **Special mention** given to **Florent Marcie** (France) for the film **A.I. at War**.

We would also like to cite the audacity of Florent Marcie's concept: bringing a very cute little robot into the jaws of the ugliest of mankind: war, death and destruction. His dialogue with his innocent friend Sota led to some strikingly poetic moments. The reactions Sota elicited among the rescue workers in Mosul and Aleppo showed a moving capacity for delight despite the surrounding horror. Marcie's ability to film in the midst of conflict is also to be commended.

Prix SAUVAGE CORTO – selection of 20 European recent short films

The Jury composed of Henning Backhaus – President (Germany), Hakob Melkonyan (Armenia) et Olia Verriopoulou (Greece) has awarded the **Prix SAUVAGE CORTO** and its statuette of dancing wolf to **Alina Gudovskaya** (Russia) for the film **Leap Year / Високос**.

Father, mother, son, you might think. What begins as a classic family constellation turns out step by step to be a dysfunctional group of people held together by material interests. Work, support, affection, joy, love - everything is a trade. The film uses the smallest social cell - the family - to describe the excesses of a thoroughly economized world.

With a sharp, incorruptible eye, a precise screenplay, and actors and a camera that act like forces of nature, the film manages the terrific balancing act of being raw, poetic and analytical at the same time.

The award for the best short film goes to Leap Year/Високос by Alina Gudovskaya, a film that, to quote Tarkovsky, not only looks, but sees.

The **Special mention** is given to **Borbála Nagy** (Hungary) for the film **Land of Glory / Pannónia Dicsérete**.

The Special Mention of the Jury goes to Land of Glory by Borbála Nagy, a brilliantly written, cast, acted and directed film that uses subtle humor to pick apart the mechanics of state-supporting ceremonies. By limiting the setting to a school, the director distills a satire about the relationship between Power and the Individual. The comic, the tragic, the grotesque and the tangibly political go hand in hand. This film may be set in Hungary, but ultimately it is a mirror for any society.

A few words about the Festival

The *L'Europe autour de l'Europe* film festival takes place every year in Paris. For two weeks, the festival presents films of Greater Europe (47 European countries, members of the Council of Europe). About 50 long feature films and a selection of documentaries as well as short, animation and experimental films are screened in legendary Parisian theatres, foreign cultural centres and other exceptional venues, where the viewers can discover old and contemporary European film masterpieces. Since 2012, the festival presents a selection of 9 European films, unreleased in France, for the Prix SAUVAGE competition. The Prix PRESENT is awarded to the best documentary. The Prix SAUVAGE CORTO, founded in 2019, presents a panorama of the European short films – fiction, documentary, animation and experimental movies.

Irena Bilic
Déléguée Générale
+33 6 60 44 83 28

Ivanka Myers
Coordinatrice Générale
+33 6 78 74 02 85