



Press Release #4

European Film Festival L'Europe autour de l'Europe

Prize winners of the 16th edition

Paris, November 30th 2021

The Festival is honoured to announce the prize winners of its 2021 edition.

Prix SAUVAGE – selection of 9 recent European fiction films unreleased in France

The jury composed of Andréa Štaka – President (Switzerland), Arne Körner (Germany) and Szabolcs Tolnai (Serbia/Hungary), has awarded the **Prix SAUVAGE** and its statuette of dancing wolf to **Tomas Vengris** (Lithuania) for the film **Motherland / Gimtine**.

The story of a blind spot somewhere in eastern Europe is told with precision and consistency from a teenager's point of view. The cinematography is impressive and the characters are portrayed without compromise. The existential topic of identity and home is told with warmth and empathy. The actors are excellent.

The **Special mention** is given to **Javier Fernández Vázquez** (Spain) for the film **The Storm Was Coming / Anunciaron tormenta**.

This story is set 120 years back in the past with almost no material to work with. The light is a real actor in this research for the forgotten culture of the Bubi people and the questions of colonialism. The film reveals this important story from the mist of the past and transposes it into a new reality with strong inner pictures.

Prix LUNA – selection of 9 recent European fiction films unreleased in France

The cinema students and young professionals' Jury composed of Imane Amlaiky – President (France), Eli Bourdon (France) and Lineo Tseppe (South Africa) has awarded the **Prix LUNA** to **Anna Melikyan** (Russia) for the film **The Three / Tpoë**.

The prize is awarded to The Three by Anna Melikyan for multiple reasons. The plot centers on the triangle between the three main protagonists, bringing the film close to everyday reality and therefore to the reality of the audience. It exposes the emptiness of the illusionary world based on

money and success. The metaphysical meaning of water is explored beautifully on many levels of interpretation, but the film also deals with a wide range of topics and uses various stylistic approaches. The result is funny and romantic but with a touch of sadness. A true film d'auteur featuring great acting from the three exceptional leading actors.

Prix PRESENT – selection of 9 recent European documentary films

The Jury composed of Federico Rossin - President (Italy), Delphine Leccas (France) and Eléonore Weber (France) has awarded the **Prix PRESENT** and its statuette of dancing wolf to **André Guiomar** (Portugal) for the film **Our Land, Our Altar / A Nossa Terra, o Nosso Altar**.

A Nossa Terra, O Nosso Altar stands out thanks to the rigour and the beauty of the director's work. The filmmaker's vision of the future of Aleixo – the poor neighbourhood of Porto, masterfully avoids all the clichés of the documentary approach. Neither empathic, nor effusive, it exposes the violent reality without outpouring or complacency, but through withheld lyricism which is evermore staggering. This film is an example of what can be called political cinema in which all social and economic markers are clearly stated. The director never substitutes his own feelings for those of the film protagonists. This is not a cold-hearted work, it is the film which, quoting Serge Daney, is all too well aware of the non-reciprocal nature of the documentary filming and finds its strength in respecting this distance.

The **Special mention** is given to **Nadya Zakharova** (Russia) for the film **The Promenade / Набережная**.

Following the change of seasons, the pandemic and the lockdowns, Nadya Zakharova films a succession of everyday episodes, capturing moments of life as if they were postcards from a river bank in a town somewhere in Russia. Despite the anecdotal, often funny, aspect of many scenes, we are able to grasp the social and political context from the snatches of passer-by conversations. The critical vision of the society present on the screen brings to mind the alienated and comic vision of Jacques Tati and the aesthetic rigour of Artur Aristakysyan, one of Zakharova's mentors. The film also stands out in the competition selection for its length, only of 45 minutes. By awarding a special mention we wish to distinguish the singularity of this film.

Prix SAUVAGE CORTO – selection of 20 European recent short films

The Jury composed of Cécile Vacheret – President (France), Agnese Làposi (Switzerland) and Petar Mitrić (Serbia) has awarded the **Prix SAUVAGE CORTO** and its statuette of dancing wolf to **Knutte Wester** (Sweden) for the film **You Can't Show My Face**, for its research for freedom in the formal expression as well as in the content.

La **Special mention** is given to **Fabio Serpa** (Italy) for the film **Cracolice**, for the troubling mix of film genres which, using the fiction, delivers an important message about the reality.

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.

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