

Cinematik will be full of quality Slovak documents and will get light on the relationship between animals and humans

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In addition to domestic and world novelties, profile sections and competitions, the Cinematik International Film Festival also brings us strong thematic screenings. One of them will be the program section **On Animals and Humans** within the 15th year of the festival, which will present an exceptional selection of films about everything that unites and divides animals and us.

"We live in the Anthropocene period, we are significantly transforming the planet and consider ourselves masters of creation. However, we are only one of the millions of species living on Earth, of which the vast majority we do not notice at best and kill at worst," says festival dramaturg Tomáš Hudák in the section **On Animals and Humans**, which draws attention to invisible animal lives and relationship dynamics between people and nature.

We will see specific animals, their way of survival and how they cope with the human presence. Whether they live close to people or completely independently, human action affects them. The section **On Animals and Humans** offers the opportunity to look at the world through their eyes, often with the help of completely unconventional film techniques.

This is also true of Carlos Casas' **Cemetery** (2019). The Spanish filmmaker captures the last journey of Nga, the oldest elephant in the world, who, together with his human guide, goes to the elephant cemetery to die there. Their mythical journey through the jungle becomes a meditation on death, rebirth and immortality, their goal is perhaps only a legend.

Her Name Was Europa (2020) is an experimental documentary by the film duo Anja Dornieden and Juan David González Monroy. Its protagonist is pratur - the first animal species whose extinction in the 17th century was officially documented. Even three centuries later, however, pratur lives in the human imagination and magical symbolism. There is even an effort to resurrect it.

In the Portuguese time-lapse documentary **Our Home With the Dogs** (2019), a group of film school classmates recorded life in a shared apartment with two dogs for several years. We often observe the seemingly insignificant events of everyday life recorded on ordinary smartphones through the eyes of four-legged roommates.

The relationship between humans and animals is also explored in the film essay **Becoming Animal** (2018) by Emmy Davie and Petr Mettler. The film, inspired by the book of the same name by the philosopher David Abram, who also appears in the film, deals with the place of man in nature and among animal species. The subtle and immersive film maps the place of the clash of wilderness with urbanity, to question the superiority of man and show the interdependence between species.

Los Reyes (2018) is a Chilean-German documentary set in the eponymous skatepark, the oldest of its kind in Santiago de Chile. Not only groups of teenagers, but also two stray dogs Football and Chola spend their time here. The film follows their coexistence in an observational way in a place that is a refuge for both people from their difficult life.

The section **On Animals and People** will be complemented by a range of thematic short films In Captivity and Freedom. It will also include the documentary *Mutts* about the life of stray dogs in a Moroccan shelter and the refugee crisis, the film *Stereotypia* about animals that have to get used to life at the zoo, or the film deconstruction of the myth of the legendary Hollywood tomcat Orangey, *The Hardest Working Cat in Showbiz*.

Cinematik.doc is a competition of new Slovak documentary films, which is an integral part of every year of the Cinematik International Film Festival. The fifteenth year will not be an exception. A varied set of films will compete, brought to the festival by well-renowned documentary filmmakers and talented new creators.

Jaro Vojtek's *Paradise on Earth* (2019) will also be one of the competition films. In this project, the director accompanies the well-known journalist and photographer Andrej Bán, who brings reports from crisis areas around the world. The film blends his observations and reflections with images of destroyed cities or refugee camps and makes an impressive mosaic out of them.

Pavol Barabáš will also bring his latest film *Everest - The Hardest Way* (2020) to the festival. On the canvas, the tragic story of the most ambitious Himalayan expedition is enlivened by four Slovak climbers who, in 1988, as the second and so far the last to conquer the highest mountain in the world, the so-called Hard Way. However, they all disappeared without a trace during the descent.

In the Cinematik.doc competition, you can also see an experimental, audiovisual extremely strong film by Viera Čákanyová *FREM* (2019). It takes the viewer into the enchanting icy wilderness beyond the Arctic Circle, where man ceases to be the central figure of what is happening - and this was the main intention of its author.

The Golden Land (2020) is taking place much closer - Dominik Jursa will take us to the east of Slovakia, where a group of inhabitants is fighting against an oil company that wants to start mining on their territory.

In the film *Devil Worshipers* (2019), Tomáš Davidov and Matej Šulc follow in the footsteps of the genocide of the Yazidis to Iraq and Syria to bring authentic testimonies of those directly affected.

The topic of another documentary film from the Cinematik.doc section entitled *Life for Theater* (2020) is the confrontation of professional theater in Slovakia and the time in which it was created. The author Anna Grusková brings a new perspective on theatrical art, which is usually presented without a broader social context.

The fifteenth Cinematik International Film Festival will take place in Piešťany from 10 to 15 September 2020. Accreditations are available on the website www.cinematik.sk until 31 August for a discounted pre-sale price.

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