

Cinematik is coming to Piešťany again, presenting competitions of the best European feature films and Slovak documentaries

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This year, the Cinematik International Film Festival will bring a rich selection of quality film experiences to Piešťany for the sixteenth time. Two competition sections have already become a traditional part of its program: Meeting Point Europe and Cinematik.doc. In the first section, viewers will see the best of new feature films from all over Europe, the second is a competition of Slovak documentaries. Visitors to the festival will see many of these films in the competition sections as a Slovak or world premiere.

The main competition of the Cinematik International Film Festival - **Meeting Point Europe** will present a selection of exceptional European films. Not only the audience, but also the jury of experts composed of film critics and members of the FIPRESCI federation will choose the winner from these films. The selection traditionally consists of extraordinary works, which have many times achieved successes from world festivals. Cinematik is the first to bring several of them to Slovak viewers.

From the varied film collection in the main competition, be sure not to miss the film **Dear Comrades!** (*Dorogie tovarishchi*, 2020). In a fascinating black and white film, Andrei Konchalovsky captured the course of a bloody suppression in an industrial town in the middle of the Soviet Union. His main heroine, the passionate socialist Ludmila (Juliya Vysockaja), loses her illusions and ideals. The film premiered at the Venice IFF, winning the Special Jury Prize.

In the main competition, Cinematik will also present new film **Quo vadis, Aida?** (2020) by Jasmila Žbanić, which won the Audience Award at the Rotterdam IFF and gained an Oscar nomination. The main character is a translator at the UN service, desperately trying to gain extra time to prevent what will later go down in history as the Srebrenica massacre.

Beginning (2020, dir. Dea Kulumbegashvili) is a disturbing Georgian drama about the wife of a leader of a religious sect who faces an internal crisis as well as brutal intimidation by the police and the orthodox population. The film won three awards at the San Sebastián IFF and many other festival awards.

One of the most original titles in the competition section is undoubtedly **Gunda** (2020) by Victor Kossakovsky. This experienced Russian documentary filmmaker captured the daily life of a piglet on a farm in an unusually personal and sensitive way, offering a whole new perspective on livestock farming. The film collects awards mainly for its breathtaking camera, but the animal "actress" cast in the leading role also gained fame and recognition.

Romanian director Radu Jude won the Golden Bear this year at the Berlinale for the best film with a film that you certainly won't want to miss just because of its title - **Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn** (*Babardeală cu bucluc sau porno balamuc*, 2021). The story of a teacher who faces a scandal over a leaked pornographic video offers a nonconforming satirical look at the hypocrisy of today's society.

The movie **What Do We See When We Look at the Sky?** (*Ras vkhedavt, rodesac cas vukurebt?* 2021) comes from Berlinale to Cinematik as well. Georgian director Aleksandre Koberidze tells us the story of love, which was connected by fate, but it is divided by a curse.

Another film coming from the Berlin festival is the drama **DAU. Natasha** (2020). The film was created by the Russian duo Ilya Chrzanovsky and Yekaterina Oertel as part of the multi-genre project DAU, which simulates life in the Soviet Union in the time of Stalinism in various formats. The main heroine of the film is the aging Natasha working in a buffet, which dispels the grief of a hopeless life with countless drinks. However, everything changes when she is approached by the secret service.

The rich selection of the Meeting Point Europe competition section also offers the extraordinary drama **Night of the Kings** (*La nuit des rois*, 2020, dir. Philippe Lacôte), a drama with elements of fantasy and theatrical aesthetics, which, although set behind prison walls, invites you into the captivating world of African myths and legends. The film by a French director from Côte d'Ivoire premiered at the Venice Film Festival.

Cinematik.doc is a competition of Slovak feature-length documentaries that premiered during the past year, but it often happens that some have their premiere directly at the festival. This year, the competition will present new works from nine experienced and beginning domestic documentary filmmakers with a variety of topics and approaches.

One of the competition films will be a new film by director Miro Remo, **At Full Throttle** (*Láska pod kapotou*, 2021), a story from the Moravian-Slovak borderland about a man in his fifties who finds a new meaning in life when building autocross cars for his old school love after divorce. The film will have its world premiere at Karlovy Vary festival. Mária Pinčíková's feature debut **On Your Marks!** (*Na značky!* 2021) gives an insight into the behind-the-scenes preparations for the legendary Falcon-Rally (The largest assembly of the Czechoslovak Association of Physical Education "Falcons"). Watching two diametrically opposed members of the association, high school student Radek and coach Mirek, the film explores what this movement gives people today.

The novelty of Viera Čákanyová **White on White** (*Biela na bielej*, 2020) will also appear in the competition. The story takes us beyond the Arctic Circle, where the director's experimental film *FREM* was made. *White on White* captures how the film was made, but also further develops its themes, drawing attention to the contrast between the dehumanized world and artificial intelligence. Maia Martiniak will bring an important documentary **Invisible** (*Neviditeľná*, 2020) to the Cinematik.doc competition, showing the condition of contemporary Slovak obstetricians based on the stories of specific women and their experiences.

In this year's Cinematik.doc competition, several film portraits of unique personalities from various areas and corners of the world meet. In the documentary **Blood, Sweat and Tears** (*Na krev*, 2020), Erik Knopp captured the eighth generation of the famous Czech puppeteer family Kopecký in times of turbulent changes and new challenges. In the film **Architect of Brutal Poetry** (*Architekt drsnej poetiky*, 2021) by Ladislav Kaboš, you will meet the famous Brazilian architect Hans Broos, a Carpathian German from Slovakia. However, it is not a completely traditional portrait - the architect suffering from Alzheimer's tells his life story to his own reflection in the mirror.

Marek Janičík's film **The Wandering Dutchman Ľubomír Feldek** (*Blúdiaci Holand'an Ľubomír Feldek*, 2021) tells the story about one of the most important personalities of Slovak literature of the 20th century. The film will be premiered at the 16th year of Cinematik. We will also see the work **The Commune** (*Komúna*, 2021), in which Jakub Julény dusts off the forgotten story of the artist, philosopher politician and leading figure of the Košice underground scene Marcel Strýko.

The series of nine competition films in the Cinematik.doc section is completed by **The Sailor** (2021). Lucia Kašová tells the story of an aging bohemian who sails the sea all his life, seeking an answer to the question of how much happiness actually fulfilled dreams bring in a person's life.

Accreditations for the 16th year of the International Film Festival Cinematik are on sale on the official website of the festival www.cinematik.sk.

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