

The films **Victim** and **Piargy** at Cinematik: The Festival will open and close with exclusive film premieres

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The seventeenth edition of the Cinematik international film festival in Piešťany will start on September 13, 2022. As usual, it will closely follow the prestigious film festival in Venice – its 79th edition will end just three days earlier. Thanks to this timing, Cinematik visitors can often look forward to exclusive screenings of films that just had their world premiere in Venice. It will be the same this year, and the reason for joy is all the greater because it will also be the Slovak premiere of a film by a Slovak director. **Victim** is Michal Blaško's feature debut. Cinematik will present the film during its grand opening ceremony.

Irina is a single mother from Ukraine who lives with her son Igor in a small town in the Czech Republic. When Igor is brutally attacked, the whole town stands in solidarity with Irina and unanimously condemns the Roma perpetrators who are allegedly responsible for the attack. After Igor wakes up in the hospital, the incident becomes a story that takes on a variety of perspectives under the influence of media personalities, politicians and the public. The Victim is the story of a mother who seeks justice but faces discrimination, nationalism and prejudice. In order to protect his family and search for the truth, he must ultimately make a fundamental decision.

The main role in the film Victim was played by the successful actress known from the TV series Vita Smachelyuk, who currently lives and works in Germany. The character of Igor is played by the talented Gleb Kuchuk, who studies in Prague. The film also starred Alena Mihulová, Viktor Zavadil and Elizaveta Maximova.

Michal Blaško studied film and television directing at the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava and FAMO Písek. Although Victim is his first feature film, he is no newcomer to the international festival scene – his short student film Strach (eng. Fear, 2015) already premiered at the San Sebastián IFF, with his student film Atlantída (eng. Atlantis, 2017) he was presented at the Cannes festival and won also the Czech Lion Award for the best student film. For example, he also participated in the filming of the popular TV series Slovakia (eng. The Slavs), Za sklom, Profesor T and the miniseries Podezření (eng. Suspicion), which was part of the program at the IFF Berlinale.

His film The Victim will have its world premiere at the Venice Film Festival in the competition category Orizzonti, which is considered a kind of "incubator" of international film talents. Last year, another Slovak creators, Peter Kerekes and Ivan Ostrochovský, presented their title *107 Mothers*, and even won the Orizzonti award for Best Screenplay from Venice. *107 Mothers* was also screened at Cinematik last year as the opening film. This year's premiere of The Victim will therefore be a confirmation of a lovely tradition and a celebration of the ongoing world successes of Slovak cinematography.

A spectacular start and a spectacular finish. The organizers of the 17th edition of Cinematik present the closing film at the same time as the opening film of the festival, and it will again be an exclusive presentation of a domestic feature film. The audience will see **Piargy** directed by Ivo Trajkov during the closing ceremony of the festival in an absolute world premiere. It is a lyrical ballad based on the novella of the same name by the Slovak author František Švantner, which takes place in the middle of a patriarchal rural society in the interwar period.

After marrying the son of a rich landowner Roháč (Attila Mokoš), the main character Juliša (Judit Bárdos) finds herself in the vortex of a rough love triangle. The metaphorical story of modern Sodom and Gomorrah tells about the difficult position of women, crooked interpersonal relationships and the dark power of corruption. Although it takes place in 1939, in many ways it is quite timeless and relevant even today.

Screenwriter Jana Skořepová took part in the retelling of the 11-page novella into a feature film, and the audience can look forward to Daniel Fischer, Lucia Šipošová, Jana Ol'hová or the late Marián Geišberg in supporting roles. In addition to the dramatic story and the excellent cast, Piargy will certainly impress with its captivating black-and-white visuals, which correspond perfectly with the chilling poetics of the film.

The seventeenth edition of the Cinematik International Film Festival will take place from September 13 to 18, 2022. Its program will consist of almost a hundred unique films, and many of them, like Victim and Piargy, will be seen by the festival audience in an exclusive premiere with the participation of their creators or actors. Accreditations for the festival are available right now at a discounted pre-sale price on www.cinematik.sk

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