

Cinematik will present a retrospective of the unique Lucile Hadžihalilović. Slovak viewers will see her films in the profile section for the first time

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Unmistakable style, bold themes and captivating images that oscillate between dream and nightmare. The work of the French-Bosnian director, screenwriter and producer Lucile Hadžihalilović offers truly exceptional film experiences that, thanks to Cinematik, can now also be seen by Slovak viewers. The festival will present a retrospective of the award-winning filmmaker's films as part of its 17th edition, which will start in Piešťany on September 13, 2022.

Lucile Hadžihalilović was born on May 7, 1961, in Lyon, France, but her roots go back to Sarajevo in today's Bosnia and Herzegovina. She studied filmmaking in Paris and during her career tried almost all filmmaking professions, from editing to production to scriptwriting and directing.

Lucile Hadžihalilović's filmography is not extensive in terms of quantity, but each of her works is intense and memorable, for example thanks to a unique visual atmosphere. According to her, the visual aspect of the film is one of the most important for the director, because it is closest to the language and poetics of our dreams.

Hadžihalilović handles the images delicately and patiently, he does not rush anywhere and does not reveal more than necessary. The main themes of her films include childhood and the mystery of adolescence, which she always captures in an original, but often frightening way. At Cinematik, viewers will be able to see almost all of her films.

Lucile Hadžihalilović's directorial debut was the film **La bouche de Jean-Pierre** in 1996 – a disturbing drama about little Mimi, who is taken in by her aunt after her mother's suicide attempt. However, in her apartment, she meets Jean-Pierre, who has a rather inappropriate interest in Mimi. The film was shown for the first time at the Cannes festival in the Un Certain Regard section.

The director also dedicated the film **Innocence** (2004) to girl heroines. This time, however, it takes us to a mysterious school, where a group of female students balances between orders, prohibitions and a new experience of growing up. The film based on Frank Wedekind's book, in which Marion Cotillard also starred, won the award for Best New Director at the San Sebastián festival.

Probably Lucile Hadžihalilović's most successful film to date is **Évolution** (2015), a chilling story from a sleepy coastal town where little Nicolas spends his days diving. However, one day he sees something under the surface that leaves him uneasy - the body of a boy, which then disappears. Nicolas suddenly discovers that something is wrong with the people around him. The film triumphed

again in San Sebastián, where it won the Special Jury Award and the Award for Best Cinematography. It was also awarded at the Sundance independent film festival (NHK Prize for Filmmakers).

Last year, the director presented her latest film called **Earwig** (2021) in Toronto. Again, it brings a child heroine and a surreal atmosphere full of ambiguities, which the viewer must answer for himself. Ten-year-old Mia (Romane Hemelaers) has a prosthesis made of ice in her mouth, and her old carer Albert (Paul Hilton) has to change it several times a day. But when he receives an instruction over the phone that it's time to go, a new phase of his work begins: Preparing the girl to leave the house that was her only refuge. The film was awarded the Special Jury Prize in San Sebastián and will have its Slovak premiere at Cinematik.

In the *Respect* section of the festival, festival visitors will also be able to see several short films by Lucile Hadžihalilović. **Nectar** (2014) is a mystical metaphorical story from a flower garden, where a group of women perform a special ritual around their queen. **De Natura** (2018) begins with an innocent walk of a pair of female friends in nature. However, it gradually acquires a bitter taste.

In addition to films from the work of Lucile Hadžihalilović, Cinematik will also show a pair of films that she chose herself and considers essential and exceptional from the viewer's point of view. One of them is **Valerie and the Week of Wonders** (1970), a fantastic horror film by Jaromíl Jireš based on the prose of the same name by Vítězslav Nezval. Its main character grows up in an old house with a strict grandmother and faces terrifying visits from a vampire.

The second choice of the director is **El espíritu de la colmena** (The Spirit of the Beehive, 1973). In the magical drama, filmmaker Víctor Erice captured the inner world of seven-year-old Anna, who encounters death for the first time in the desolate Spanish countryside at the time of the waning civil war.

As an editor, co-author and producer, Lucile Hadžihalilović also participated in several films by the Argentinian-French director Gaspar Noé (including the hypnotic *Enter the Void* from 2009). In the Cinematik program, you can enjoy at least part of her work once again, in the form of Noé's new film *Vortex* (2022), which she co-produced. The festival will screen the film in the Paths of Glory section.

The seventeenth edition of the Cinematik International Film Festival will take place from September 13 to 18, 2022. Accreditations are available until the end of August at a discounted pre-sale price on www.cinematik.sk.

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