

Cinematik invites viewers to scarred lands. It will also present the best of new Slovak film titles

Press release, 12 August 2022

The international film festival Cinematik will open its 17th year in Piešťany on September 13, 2022. As part of a six-day marathon of unique film experiences, viewers can look forward to a varied program made up of hot global and domestic news. In addition to the two competitions (Cinematik.doc and Meeting Point Europe), the festival also includes selection screenings every year, which allow the audience to enjoy quality films not only individually, but also in a sophisticated dramaturgical context. This year, the Scarred Lands section also offers such a unique experience.

The **Scarred Lands** section presents a selection of five films that reflect the relationship of man to specific territories from an anthropological, historical and, above all, political point of view. In them, we observe a specific bond of a person to a place - where he has lived for generations, from where he was expelled, where he left a strong mark. But at the same time, we see how the landscape has left a mark on people, how it has been inscribed in their lives.

"Even though the films take place on different continents, in places thousands of kilometers apart, the people in these territories are united by the struggle against various forms of colonialism. They have to defend their historical ties to the territory and their own memory, because someone else is claiming their life. Someone who wants to scar their country," explains Tomáš Hudák, a member of the Cinematik program team, who is in charge of the dramaturgy of the Scarred Countries section.

One of these films is the documentary **House in the Fields** (2017) by British-Moroccan filmmaker Tala Hadid, capturing life in an isolated Amazigh community in the High Atlas region. It follows two teenage sisters - the older one is soon to get married and leave for Casablanca, the younger one dreams of a career as a lawyer, but does not know if she will be allowed to do so. Both question what it means to leave the space where they lived their whole lives, but also the expectations of their surroundings. The intimate poetic film talks about the relationship of man to the geographical and cultural environment that surrounds the narrative.

The word **Eami** (2022) means both forest and world in the language of the indigenous population of today's Paraguay and Bolivia. However, it is also the name of a girl protagonist who is expelled from her native land due to land trading and deforestation. Her community is falling apart and she wanders the forest. In a minimalist story, Paraguayan director Paz Encina introduces us to local cosmology, philosophy and myths, which she interweaves with the native population's narrative of forced eviction. The result is a strong sensory experience based on both beautiful images and a sophisticated sound component.

The film **Landscapes of Resistance** (2021) directed by Marta Popivoda materializes the memory traces of the elderly Sonja, who years ago joined the anti-Nazi resistance as a partisan. However, we rarely see her in the film. Instead, we travel through the land that she herself walked on 80 years ago, as if these lands had her story written on them. The mundaneness and humility of her heroism contrasts with the war monuments that we meet on the way. Sonja is an engaging storyteller and an inspiration in a world where the far right is on the rise again.

Until recently, Australia had the special status of Terra Nullius, or No Man's Land. However, according to the creative duo Soda Jerk, the name **TERROR NULLIUS** (2018) suits it better. The original remix assembled from over 170 film, television and news materials presents Australia as a country that was created on colonial violence and where panic over immigration and LGBTI+ people still shapes public discourse. Funny and chilling satire with a post-apocalyptic touch turns the film canon upside down to talk about the rights of indigenous people, toxic masculinity or political populism.

In the film **Five Broken Cameras** (2011), the amateur cameraman Emad Burnat managed to capture the struggle of his village in the West Bank for several years against the colonial effort to rob it of its territories in favor of illegal construction. The intensely personal film about the new reality with the fence that suddenly separates the population from their fields, about the weekly demonstrations or the harassment and violence by the Israeli security forces is staged in five acts - according to the five cameras that Burnat shoots on, which are successively one after the other broken in battle.

Cinematik is currently the largest Slovak film event, so its position in presenting domestic film news is quite unique. Generous space for new work by Slovak and Czech creators will traditionally be offered in the In The House section. As part of the 17th edition of the festival, eight exceptional titles will be presented.

The audience will be the first to see Michal Blaško's feature-length feature debut **The Victim** (2022), which will also be the opening film of the festival. The story of Irina, a single mother from Ukraine, whose son is brutally attacked by someone in a small Czech town, will come to Cinematik directly from the world's oldest film festival in Venice, where it will have its world premiere in the Orizzonti competition section just a few days earlier.

The Nightsirene (Svetlonoc, 2022) is the name of the second feature film by Tereza Nvotová, who is known mainly for her documentary work. This time, however, in her presentation, it is a horror drama from the environment of a Slovak mountain village, where young Charlotte returns after years to find out the truth about her lost sister. However, when strange things begin to happen in the village, the locals begin to suspect her of witchcraft. The film will be presented by Cinematik in an exclusive Slovak premiere.

Tomáš Hlaváček will bring the Czech-Slovak co-production **Housing Against Everyone** (2021) to the festival – a documentary that will bring the viewer closer to what it's like to be born in a hostel, live there as a child, and finally spend your whole life there with your own family. Decent housing has become a market commodity, which is difficult or completely unavailable for many for various reasons, including ethnicity. How to get out of this trap?

Beáta Parkanová will present her new film **The Word** (2022) at the festival. A period drama follows destiny spouses who promised to always stand by each other and not cross their moral boundaries. However, the year 1968 is a difficult test for them. The drama will be presented by Cinematik in the distribution premiere.

Absence (2021) was a Slovak-Czech-Iranian co-production. Director Ali Mousaffa, who also played the main role in the film, tells the story of Rouzbeha. He comes to Prague to search for the past of his father, a former communist exile in socialist Czechoslovakia.

Vojtěch Mašek's drama **Arvéd** (2022) brings a Faustian story based on real events. Its main character is a genius with a photographic memory sentenced to life imprisonment for collaborating with a totalitarian regime. But what happens when he starts using his extraordinary powers to convict his former friends?

In the *In The House* section, Cinematik will also present the comedy **Vitaj doma, brate!** (eng. Welcome home, brother!, 2022). Director and screenwriter Peter Serge Butko tells the story of the writer Zoli, who comes to a small Slovak village to meet his fiancée's family. As an abstinent vegetarian, he doesn't have the easiest time in a village famous for sausages and brandy, but everything changes when he promises the locals that he will write a book about them.

And the final film of the 17th edition of Cinematik will be a film from the In The House section: **Piargy** (2022) directed by Ivo Trajkov is a black and white lyrical ballad based on František Švantner's novel of the same name. Set amidst a patriarchal rural society in the interwar period, it centers on a forbidden love triangle. However, crooked morals and depravity will not go unpunished. The audience will see Piargy in an exclusive world premiere at Cinematik.

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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