International Film Festival for Children and Youth Zlin 2006: Films for Children? Films for Young People?

To admit it in the very beginning: you will not find a clear definition for this distinction here. But you will get some information on the biggest film festival for children and youth in the world, the International Film Festival for Children and Young People in Zlin/ Czech Republic.

Founded in 1940, it is the first film festival in the whole country. In the year 2006 a total of 410 films from 35 countries were shown, 16 prizes and awards in 6 categories were given by 8 juries. The total number of spectators at screenings in Zlin was 31,947 and about 22,554 more in satellite towns, among them 1,822 accredited visitors. Supporting events are not yet included in these figures.

At the Zlin Film Festival you are able to see many varied programs and at first glance you will not believe these films are especially for children and young people. Nevertheless, the festival organizers have a very clear view, not to present films about children but for children, and here it applies to the young audience in general. Of course you will find the two main international competitions with each six films for children and for young people. But there is also an international competition for animated films, an informative section with new productions, the very young section „Zlín Dog“ devoted to student films, including several workshops, and an international competition of full-length European debuts. In the debut section there are of course mostly films made by young directors for a younger audience. But this year there were also films without any children or young people at all, but with older people. At first it was a little bit irritating, but then we had to admit that the themes and topics in these films do concern the young generation as well as the older. And this is also a meaning of films for the young audience.

Compared to the children’s festival situation in other countries it is quite different in the Czech Republic. For example in Germany you will find a lot of festivals especially for children. But the A-Festival of course mostly films made by young directors for a younger audience. But this year there were also films without any children or young people at all, but with older people. At first it was a little bit irritating, but then we had to admit that the themes and topics in these films do concern the young generation as well as the older. And this is also a meaning of films for the young audience.

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What is special about your festival?

First of all we are the biggest festival for children and young people all over the world. And it is not a festival about children but for children, that is our main aim. The concept of our festival is to include the smallest children, teenage groups as well as to show films of young and starting directors. One independent category shows films of Visegrad countries for adults, and these are judged by a student’s jury. As a part of the „big“ festival we have also a festival Zlín dog, which is an international students’ festival, organised solely by students of the Zlín Film school. I would like to add that our festival also takes place in 7 other towns of the Czech Republic incl. Prague, Brno, Ostrava and others, altogether it is visited by more than 50.000 viewers and this year we have screened 410 films from 35 countries.

A Word with the Organizers

Petr Koliha, Zlín

Starting with Petr Koliha, ECFA-journal introduces children’s film festival directors from all over the world.

Since 2004 Petr Koliha has been artistic director of the Film Festival Zlín, Czech Republic. Photo: Holger Twele

What do you think about the present situation of children’s films?

The film for children is becoming an increasingly dominant issue both on national as well as international level. Generally we could say that the children’s film cannot live without the state’s support, be it as an investment into the filmmaking itself, or into children’s festivals. The situation differs country by country, but we can witness increasing serious interest.

In your opinion, what is the most particular of a children’s film?

It should stand on a strong, compelling story, have a high quality form of filmmaking and some kind of „hidden message“, which the child itself can interpret.

Your alltime favourite children’s film?

„The Red Balloon“ by Albert Lamoris, which tells its story in a very poetic way.

The News Section:
Films, Festivals, Awards

Stockholm Film Festival Junior,
Best film for 6 - 10 years old children: ”Heidi“ by Paul Marcus, UK 2005;
Contact: Stockholm Film Festival Junior
P.O. Box 3136, S-10362 Stockholm
Phone: ++46-8-6755051
Fax: ++46-8-200590
E-Mail: junior@filmfestivalen.se
Internet: www.filmfestivalen.se/junior

Leeds Young People’s Film Festival,
Young Audience Award: „Bonkers“ by Martin Koolhoven, NL 2005;
Young Audience and Youth Jury Awards: „Napola“ by D. Gansel, Germany 2004;
Young Jury Award: „The Canterville Ghost“ by Isabel Kleefeld, Germany 2005.
Contact: Young People’s Film Festival P.O. Box 596
GB - Leeds LS1 3AD, UK
Phone: ++44-113-247 8398
Fax: ++44-113-247 8494
E-Mail: filmfestival@leeds.gov.uk
Internet: www.leedsfilm.com

Sprockets - Toronto International Film Festival for Children

Audience Awards – Feature Film: „Move Your World“ by Laila Krishna, Canada 2005; Animation: „Renart, the Fox“ by Thierry Schiel, Luxembourg 2004;
Contact: Sprockets
c/o Int. Film Festival Group 2, Carlton Street, Suite 1600
Toronto ON - Canada M5B 1J3
Phone: ++16-934-3281

International Film Festival for Children and Youth Zlín 2006:

Films for Children? Films for Young People?

The prize-winning films: at the Kinderfilmfestival Berlin in 2006 the Danish film „We Shall Overcome“ by Niels Arden Oplev was presented as a children’s film. At Zlín it was a film for young people. Despite the different category in both festivals it won first prizes. In Berlin it was the „Crystal Bear“ for the best children’s film, in Zlín it did not only win the „Golden Slipper“ for best feature film for young people but also two more awards from other juries and the spectators’ award. Therefore, some critics who judged this well played late sixties drama to be more interesting for adults than for young people, have been disproved. This story is about Frits, a thirteen year old boy with a mentally unstable father. In his provincial school Frits fights with all his strength against injustice in the person of a cruel headmaster who beats the pupils very hard. Like his idol Dr. Martin Luther King, Frits succeeds in the end, but until then, he has a very hard journey.

There were two more great winners in Zlín: „Bonkers“ by Martin Koolhoven from the Netherlands received two awards and a special mention as a children’s film, and „Greenhouse Effect“ by the Uzbekistan director Valery Akhadov won two prizes as an outstanding film for youth. Both films deal with daily problems in modern societies, enable identification with the young main characters and give hope and courage to the young audience. In „Bonkers“ it is the mother of the nine year old Bonnie, who is unable to solve her problems. After the sudden death of the grandmother, who educated the girl, the children’s welfare wants to take care for her. Bonnie however wants a real family and a brother. Her mother thinks a pet would be better and one day she brings home a live elephant.

The discovery of the festival however was „Greenhouse Effect“, the film about two lost teenagers in the megacity of Moscow. When Rita, a small-town girl, arrives at the central station, to visit the unknown father of her unborn child, her baggage and all her money is stolen. Rita is saved by a homeless boy nicknamed Mute, whom society does not want either but who is very strong and has found shelter for some weeks in a greenhouse. Like sister and brother, but with some touches of shy sexuality they try to survive together and realize their dreams of a better life. This film is perfectly done, in best tradition of Russian cinematography, with poetic and metaphorical images, with discreet music and very intense actors on screen. For example when the ashes of Mute’s friend, who died from cancer were strewn into the river. This film shows with humor how mutual care for each other develops an appetite for life despite the difficult times they have to go through.

Holger Twele
The digital progress in the non-theatrical distribution:

Films on Demand in Norway

Even faster than the cinemas switched the non-theatrical screenings of films in schools, film clubs or youth clubs to the digital technology. At the moment DVDs and video projectors are the most common techniques. In Norway they do not even use DVDs any more, they started to use video streaming almost two years ago.

The Norwegian Film Institute and NorgesFilm AS have developed a new and important distribution channel for Norwegian and international feature films, documentaries, short films and historical film material. It is called „Filmarkivet.no“ („The Film Archive“) and is a co-operative effort between the Norwegian Film Institute and NorgesFilm AS.

The primary objective of the Norwegian Film Institute is to preserve, make available and promote Norwegian films and film as a cultural medium. With the help of new partners, new technology and an ever-expanding broadband net, we hope that the use and importance of the Norwegian film heritage will improve.

In addition to the national film heritage, being digitalized by the Norwegian Film Institute, NorgesFilm is responsible for making agreements concerning the online distribution licences and to digitalize foreign films. There is an amount of around 600 films available on Filmarkivet.no now, rapidly increasing every week, with both Norwegian (features, documentaries, shorts) and foreign quality films (features and documentaries). But we also digitalize old historical footage and educational films for use in schools.

The Film Archive on the Internet

The Film Archive was launched in the autumn of 2004 as a nation-wide Video-on-Demand service to every Internet user with a broadband connection.

An increasing part of the Norwegian film heritage was made available in an acceptable streaming quality for PCs. The system has advanced searching options, security systems based upon cryptography technology and payment solutions for both mobile phones and ordinary billing systems.

The Film Archive on TV - To School and Homes

The Film Archive is also available as a TV service for educational institutions and customers connected to upgraded fiber optical TV-networks(IP-TV). The Video-on-Demand for TV requires a set-top box, and here the films will be available in a higher quality than on the Internet, similar or better than DVD. By now, 40 schools in the south of Norway have direct access to films in broadcast quality.

The Film Archive in Libraries

From 2005 the Film Archive has been offered in high quality to libraries all over Norway. We offer a complete distribution and projection system for small size screening rooms. Seven different libraries have this service available for their users.

We are now working to expand this service throughout the country.

The Film Archive in Digital Cinemas

We also plan to make our film heritage available to audiences by means of digital storage and distribution, as well as digital screenings transmitted directly to cinemas all over the country. In April 2004 the Norwegian Film Institute and NorgesFilm AS made the first tests with the streaming of three full length feature films and 14 short films at the Kristiansand International Children’s Film Festival. The films were not downloaded at the cinema, but streamed to and projected directly in the theatre. This year, 2006, we streamed films at the festival for the 3rd time.

The Kristiansand-based company Norgesfilm AS is responsible for operation and payment services connected to The Film Archive. Among the main owners of Norgesfilm AS you find our partners Agder Energi, the cultural foundation Cultiva and Kristiansand kino (the municipal cinema of Kristiansand). The Norwegian Film Institute is the main partner in running the service as well as in tasks like further development of the digital film archive, entering contracts and film digitising.

Since the project was started in November 2004 until now (June 2006) Norgesfilm streamed more than 175,000 films to the users. Amongst them the most successful titles are some short films that have almost got a „cult“-status. There are also some old commercials available, from the fifties, those are for free. This is a streaming service, not downloading. But soon we will also provide downloading through EST (Electronic Sell-Through). Our aim is to reach every one who wants to rent (stream) and/or buy (download) films. Due to restrictions in the film distribution contracts the service „Filmarkivet.no“ is restricted to Norwegian territory only, but together with the Norwegian Film Institute Norgesfilm plans to develop a new service to handle festivals and buyers abroad, who want access to digital screenings of Norwegian films.

Rune Tellefsen, Norgesfilm AS
www.norgesfilm.no
(in Norwegian language only)

The News Section:

Films, Festivals, Awards

Fax: +44-169-54974
E-Mail: sprockets@torfilmfest.ca
Internet: www.bell.ca/sprockets

Kristiansand Int. Children’s Film Festival

Film&Kino’s Jury Award for the best Children’s Film: „The Italian“ by Andrei Kravchuk, Russia 2004;
Toya Award and Audience’s Ludi Award: „Heidi“ by Paul Marcus, GB 2005;
CIFEJ’s Jury Award: „Boy Called Twist“ by Tim Green, South Africa 2004;
FICC’s Jury Award: „Homesick“ by Petri Kotwica, Finland 2005.
Contact: KICFF, c/o Kristiansand Kino P.O.Box 316
NO-4663 Kristiansand
Phone: ++ 47-38-10 42 05
Fax: ++ 47-38-10 42 01
E-Mail: d.krohn@krskino.no
Internet: www.krskino.no

Int. Film Festival for Children & Youth Zlin

Special mention: „The Story of Xiaoian“ by Fang Gangliang, China 2005;
Best film for Youth: „We Shall Overcome“ by Niels Arden Oplev, Denmark 2005;
Special mention: „Greenhouse Effect“ by Valery Akhadow, Russia 2005;
European Debuts’ Jury, Main Award: „Love + Hate“ by Dominic Savage, Ireland & UK 2005; Special Price of the Jury: „Saimir“ by Francesco Munzi, Italy 2004; Audience Awards: „We Shall Overcome“ and „Superhero’s Son“, 13-min.-animation by Kaisa Penttilä, Finland 2005;
FICC-Jury: „We Shall Overcome“;
Contact: Int. Film Festival for Children and Youth Zlin, Filmfest, s.r.o.
Fax: ++420-57-75922442
E-Mail: festival@zlinfest.cz
Internet: www.zlinfest.cz

Forthcoming Festivals

Plain la bobine - Sancy Film Festival for Young People, Massif du Sancy, La Bourboule & Le Mont-Dore,
June 13th to 18th 2006
Contact: Plain la bobine - Sancy Film
Films on the Horizon

New European films for children which are ready to be discovered for your programmes. More information and more films can be found at www.ecfaweb.org. Of course we can never guarantee that we cover all important new films. Producers, distributors and sales agents are kindly invited to inform us of their new releases.

The Greenhouse Effect
Feature Film, Russia 2005
Director: Valery Akhadov
Festival: Zlin 2006
Production: The Centre Of National Film (P)SC
World Sales: The Center of National Film (P)SC
Valdaisky preezez 16
12445 Moscow, Russia
phone: +7 - 495 455 9213
fax: +7 - 495 451 8051
E-Mail: pushkareva@cfn.ru

The Horror Bus
Feature Film, Netherlands 2005
Director: Piet Kuipers
Production: Bos Bros. AVRO TV
World Sales: FRV Media International
225 Roy Street east
Montreal, Quebec, H2W 1M5
Canada
phone: +1 - 514-843 3355
fax: +1 - 514-843 0064
E-Mail: distribution@frvmedia.com
Internet: www.frvmedia.com

Karo and God Himself
Feature Film, Austria 2005
Director: Danielle Proskar
Production: Mini Film
World Sales: Mini Film
Schaumburgergasse 14/1
A-1040 Vienna
phone: +43 - 1-503 42 20
fax: +43 - 1-503 42 33
E-Mail: office@minifilm.at
Internet: www.minifilm.at

Unna and Nooke
Feature Film, Finland 2006
Director: Saara Cantell
Production: Mandart Entertainment
World Sales: Mandart Entertainment Ltd.
Kalevankatu 28 A 3
00100 Helsinki
phone: +358 - 9 694 3142
fax: +358 - 9 694 3136
E-Mail: mandart@mandart.com
Internet: www.mandart.com
www.unnajanuuk.fi

A Year in my Life
Feature Film, France 2005
Director: Daniel Duval
Production: Elia Films
World Sales: TFI International
1, Quai du Point du jour
F-92656 Boulogne-Billancourt
phone: +33 - 141161763
fax: +33 - 141161769
E-Mail: merami@tf1.fr
Internet: www.tfiinternational.com

Unna and Nooke (Photo: Mandart)

"Karo and God Himself" (Photo: Minifilm)
More than 500 films from 53 countries worldwide were submitted for the Kids For Kids Festival 2006 – 200 more than last year.

The preselection juries have chosen 49 of these films to participate in the final event in Cyprus, June 15th to 18th, where young filmmakers from all over the world will meet to screen their films and attend film workshops. The festival is a co-organized project between CIFEJ, ECFA and supported by the Cypriot S.O.F.I.A. Foundation. A detailed report will follow in the next ECFA-Journal. Until then for more information look at: www.kidsforkidsfestival.org

The Selected Films 2005:

Category Animation 6 – 12 years
1. Nicole & Cecilia, by Pinacoteca Internazionale, Rezzato/Italy
2. Once upon a Time there was a Library, by Laboratorio Immagine, Torino/Italy
3. The Enchanted Gourd, by C-Media Productions, Barnsley/UK
4. Pavel & Gavel, by Galeria Entropia, Wroclaw/Poland
5. Why Cows Don’t Fly, by La Matatena, Mexico
6. A Doll’s House, by Children’s Film Festival Kristiansand/Norway
7. Peace in Jacerzinho, by Multirio
8. Classroom Capers, by Mary McKay, USA
9. My School, Your School, by Zorbabel, Brussels/Belgium
10. Today Starts, by Kaoru Muzuguchi, Japan
11. The War of the Presidents, by Taller Fierro, Argentina
12. Moraqua Dump, by School of Animated Film, Vranje/Serbia
13. Kicubizm, by School of Animated Film, Vranje/Serbia

Category Animation 13 – 16 years
1. Animosity, by AAA, Annecy/France
2. Squirrels Ate My Hammock, by C-Media Productions, Barnsley/UK
3. Kitchen Match, by Budapest Cultural Center, Hungary
4. Last Tango in Hamptonville, by Thomas Sammut, UK
5. Rabi Dabi, from Israel
6. Closing Time, by CentAF, Cacak/Serbia
7. What a Wonderful World, by CentAF, Cacak/Serbia

Category Live Action, 6 – 12 years
1. Lost & Found, by Joseph Procopio, CAN
2. The Gig, by ValoAurinko, Turku/Finland
3. The Inner Eye, by Center Communications & Development, India
4. The World Upside Down, by Centro Cultural Montethermoso, Vitoria-Gasteiz/Spain

Category Live Action, 13 – 16 years
1. Silver Stampede, by Arc Media
2. Wired, by Live Wire Studios, Manchester/UK
3. Behind the Screen, by Gorilla Cinema Sheffield/UK
5. Fish, by Station Next, Hvidovre/Denmark
6. Asphalt Angel, by Station Next, Hvidovre/Denmark
7. Crime Courtrooms, by Capix, Canada
8. My Fantastic First Movie, by Dodeca, Uruguay
9. Rapping at Fear, by Beyond Borders, Colombia
10. Elevator, by Children’s Rainbow, Nis/Serbia
11. The Trap, by DZMP, Krsko/Slovenia

Category One Minute 6 – 12 years
1. A Little Walk, by Galeria Entropia Wroclaw/Poland
2. Don’t Be the One, by Shaughnessy Park School, Canada
3. Marshmellow Land, by Olivia Allen Winckler, USA
4. Terrorism, by little Village School, Syria
5. Tsunami, by Nagabhara Workshop, India

Category One Minute 13 – 16 years
1. Strings, Sticks & Co, by AAA, Annecy/France
2. Disconnecting People, by Kristine Ingebritsen, Norway
3. The Edges, by Anima - Fantasia, Dresden/Germany
4. Dumb Crust, by PK Productions, CAN
5. Do Pecuniun, by Jugendfilm e.V., Hamburg/Germany
6. Praise the Lord, by Film House Tvbít, Tromsø, Norway
7. (R)Evolution, by Claudiu Gilcescu Celia, Romania

The News Section:

Films, Festivals, Awards
Buster - Copenhagen International Children’s Film Festival, Copenhagen/Denmark, September 8th to 11th 2006
Contact: Buster - International Children’s Film Festival Gøthersgade 175, 2.th 1123 Copenhagen, Denmark
Phone: ++45-33 93 07 21
Fax: ++45-33 93 07 22
E-Mail: buster@buster.dk
Internet: www.buster.dk

Goyang Intern. Children’s Film Festival, Goyang City, Gyeonggi-do, South Korea, September 14th to 24th 2006
Contact: Goyang International Children’s Film Festival #05 Dreamworld Bldg. 863-1, Janghang-dong Ilsan-gu KR- Goyang-city, Gyeonggi-do 411-837, Korea
Phone: ++82-31-9027376-8
Fax: ++82-31-9027372
E-Mail: gicff2006@gmail.com
Internet: www.gicff.com

17th Cartoon Forum, Pau-Pyrénées, France, September 20th to 24th 2006
Contact: Cartoon Movie Annick Maes Bd. Lambermont 314 B-1030 Brussels Phone: ++32-2-242 93 43
Fax: ++32-2-245 46 89
E-Mail: annick.maes@cartoon.skynet.be
Internet: www.cartoon-media.be

Lucas International Children’s Film Festival, Frankfurt/M., Germany, September 24th to October 1st 2006
Contact: Lucas - Int. Kinderfilm-Festival Deutsches Filmmuseum Schau mainkai 41 D-60596 Frankfurt/M.
Phone: ++49-69-963 763 82
Fax: ++49-69-963 763 82
E-Mail: lucas@deutsches-filmmuseum.de
Internet: www.lucassfilmfestival.de

Carrousel International du Film, Rimouski, Canada, September 24th to October 1st 2006
Contact: Carrousel Internat. du Film 92, 2e Rue Ouest Rimouski G5L 8B3, Canada
Phone: ++1-418-722-0103
Fax: ++1-418-722-0504
E-Mail: ciff@carrousel.qc.ca
Internet: www.carrousel.qc.ca
ECFA in Persons:
Kathy Loizou, Showcommotion/UK
Sheffield Int. Film Festival for Children & Youth

Kathy Loizou is director of Showcommotion Young People’s Film Festival, Sheffield/UK

Since 2002 Kathy Loizou has been director of the Showcommotion Young People’s Film Festival. For six years before that she directed the Sheffield International Documentary Festival (SIDF). For her, being a member of ECFA is not only important on a practical or on an editorial level: “It also makes a statement about you and your festival: that you believe in co-operation and co-working and not competition and aggressive working practices. Showcommotion Young People’s Film Festival is a also a member of CIFE and the European Coordination of Film Festivals (ECFF). When I was Director of SIDF, we were one of the first UK festivals to join ECFF.”

In her job Kathy Loizou wants to encourage the expression of creativity in young people and to encourage an understanding of media and how media works. “Most young people receive their information about the world through the moving image and we try to provide some of the mechanisms to enable young people to critically examine what they are being shown. Also we want to achieve a common understanding in society, that good films are an important factor in the upbringing of our children, and that learning to be media literate is as important as learning to read books and learning to write. And of course, we want to introduce children and young people to films that they are not used to seeing, to show them that an alternative exists to mainstream films and big brands and hopefully to encourage a liking for ‘arthouse cinema’ or ‘independent cinema’ when they are adults.”

For Kathy Loizou ECFA also provides emotional support: “You might be mad to be running a children’s film festival but at least there’s some comfort in knowing that there are other insane people out there!” Through ECFA I have met some lovely people and made friends with people around Europe; it’s certainly a good feeling when you realize you know the person you are emailing when discussing print movements! Some festivals are large and daunting to attend; through ECFA I know I can go to the Zoo Palast and see a friendly face.”

Thinking about possible additional ECFA activities Kathy Loizou would appreciate a staff exchange programme similar to ECFF (European Coordination of Film Festivals). Also a scheme whereby ECFA could support the organization of sessions and discussions on the theme of children’s film and media at film festivals & media education events in Europe: “This would encourage a deeper understanding of activities in each individual country and encourage networking.”

www.showcommotion.org.uk

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