

Animated film at the 55th Krakow Film Festival

Animated film is on the rise! This year, the DRAGON OF DRAGONS goes to the eminent Estonian animated film-maker **Priit Pärn**. At the last edition, the GOLDEN DRAGON for the best short film director went to **Jerzy Kucia** for the film "**Fugue For Cello, Trumpet and Landscape**," while the animated film "**Summer 2014**" by Wojciech Sobczyk was nominated for the European Film Award.

In the short film competition, you will see the premieres of 7 animated films, which are also included in the programme of the international festival in Annecy, France - so it would be an opportunity to see them earlier at one of the largest animated film festivals in the world.

What can we expect at the 55th edition of the festival? Which titles and directors are worth seeing, tells us Robert Sowa, author of animated films and curator of animated film section at Krakow Film Festival.

What's new in animated film at Krakow Film Festival?

Let's start from the large number of animated film submissions, which is still growing. This year, together with Zbigniew Czapl, we had to choose from among over 350 films. This is thanks to a very good standing and renown of Krakow Film Festival, about which the organisers are quite pleased. All films submitted this year are definitely diverse and of a very high quality. I have also noticed that the medium-length films tend to get longer in recent years. The films which last several minutes, not a couple of minutes, appear more often. In this year's international competition, over a half of the films are of this length. Of course, it is not the rule, and there are also very short films on this list. For instance, Spanish animated film "**Zepo**" by César Díaz Meléndez, only 2 minutes long. It is enough to achieve a great final result.

Interestingly, in Krakow there are seven premieres of films which are later included in the programme of the largest animated film festival in Annecy, France. One can say that the Krakow Festival is a very good choice.

Could you also reveal to us a couple of interesting, recommendable films, which we cannot miss at this year's edition of the festival?

Definitely "**Zepo**," which I have just mentioned. It a great short form, actually a film miniature, which has a very powerful message. It turns out that one can tell incredibly much about violence, or even

about totalitarianism, in two minutes.

We have also very good films and a large representation from Estonia. This year's DRAGON OF DRAGONS award goes to **Priit Pärn**, and it so happened that there are three Estonian films in the international competition, so it proves that Estonian animated film is of very high quality.

Can we consider Priit Pärn the mentor of these people? For instance, is his visual technique visible in their films?

No, the visual technique is totally different, which I believe to be good, but the films are made also by the authors who made their débuts under his tutelage, so it is a pleasant and meaningful coincidence. I think that it would be a great feeling for **Priit Pärn**, who receives the DRAGON OF DRAGONS award, to know that his students are such good representatives of Estonian animated film at the moment. We will see the films: "**The Master**" by Riho Unt, "**Tick Tack**" by Ülo Pikkov and "**Life with Herman H. Rott**" by Chintis Lundgren.

Which cinema also has a strong representation?

In this edition, Hungary, but also our neighbours from Slovakia, as well as Russia, Greece and South Korea. It worth emphasising that art house animated films from this region, particularly from South Korea and China, are better and better developed. It is caused by, among others, the fact that the system of artistic education has been significantly strengthened there. They invite well-known filmmakers from Europe, who considerably assist in this process. This is why the films made there are more and more frequently quite artistically expressive, with a strong art house character. The animated films by these authors do not look for entertainment, but delve into its own condition or into social context. It is a very interesting phenomenon, relatively fresh on the "map" of animated film. In the festival competition, we will see the film "**Each other**" by Lee Kyutae. Aptly, the film seems to be about growing up and becoming an adult...

I recommend the Hungarian film "**Limbo Limbo Travel**" by Zsuzsanna Kreif, Borbála Zétényi. It is a film which splendidly captures new social phenomena, fascination by gadgets and also, or maybe most of all, the need to escape them. It shows how other dimension is desirable, some kind of land where everything is close, tender and pleasant. Where someone takes care of us. This is a hipster film about the land of tenderness.

Great French film "**Natural disaster**" by Joseph Wallace, where you can feel, both narratively and formally, how the main protagonist's life turns into a collage cut-out, eponymous funny puzzle, consisting of fragments of accidental, often irrelevant elements. And you have to live with it somehow... Another very interesting film comes from India, it is "**TrueLoveStory**" by Gitanjali Rao. The author of this film is a very well-known artist, the most representative name for animated film in

India. Producing animated films is a very difficult phenomenon in this country, difficult as far as creation is concerned, as there is no support for film industry such as we know in Europe, support for artistic, independent productions, particularly animated productions. Making animated films in India is most of all determination and commitment of the author. **"TrueLoveStory"** is a kind of discourse with Bollywood. It is even a sort of pastiche of the Bollywood form. The author verifies and in a way undercuts from within this myth of Bollywood as a colourful, positive illusion for the masses.

You have already mentioned a couple of films, whose productions we will also see?

We have some strong names, among others, the new film by Ülo Pikkov **"Tick Tack."** Interesting, philosophical film made using the pixilation method, in which objects are animated, as well as the main protagonist, who is a real actor. Another name is Veronika Obertová. The author of the perfect film "Viliam." This year, the Slovakian will show us her new film, **"Nina,"** about the traumas of childhood. Very expressive, wonderfully narrated, using the method of cut-out in an interesting way, so perfect that it is a feast for the eyes. Russia will be represented by two names: Vasil Bedoshvili with his film **"The Hen"** - it is a very funny, splendidly animated film, which half-jokingly deals with the subject of pro-family policy. The second author is Konstantin Bronzit, who won the Silver Dragon for his film "At the Ends of the Earth" but also made the festival audience in Kijów cinema cry with laughter and give peals of ovation. This year, we have his new film **"We can't live without cosmos,"** revealing a hilarious story of a friendship between two cosmonauts! Cosmic mirages and men's feelings...

I also recommend the English-American-Hungarian film **"Teeth"** by Daniel Gray and Tom Brown. This, in turn, is a very interesting, personal and powerful feature film about the owner's endeavour to create perfect teeth.

So, we have a lot to watch. You are invited!

The interview with Robert Sowa was conducted by Marta Pawlik.

The list of animated films qualified to the short competition:

1. *Natural Disaster*, dir. Joseph Wallace (France) 5'
2. *The Master*, dir. Riho Unt (Estonia) 18'
3. *Tick Tack*, dir. Ülo Pikkov (Estonia) 9'
4. *Nina*, dir. Veronika Obertová, Michaela Čopíková (Slovakia) 17'
5. *TrueLoveStory*, dir. Gitanjali Rao (India) 19'
6. *Limbo Limbo Travel*, dir. Zsuzsanna Kreif, Borbála Zétényi (Hungary) 16'
7. *Teeth*, dir. Daniel Gray, Tom Brown (UK/USA/Hungary) 6'
8. *The Hen*, dir. Vasil Bedoshvili (Russia) 7'
9. *Warm snow*, dir. Ira Elshansky (Israel) 5'
10. *Zepo*, dir. César Díaz Meléndez (Spain) 5'
11. *Each Other*, dir. Lee Kyutae (South Korea) 6'
12. *Life with Herman H.Rott*, dir. Chintis Lundgren (Estonia, Croatia, Denmark) 11'
13. *A Portrait*, dir. dir. Aristotelis Maragkos (Greece) 2'
14. *We can't live without cosmos*, dir. Konstantin Bronzit (Russia) 15'
15. *Oscar Wilde's The Nightingale and The Rose*, dir. Brendan Fletcher, Del Kathryn Barton (Australia)