

PRESS RELEASE

FOCUS ON DUTCH CINEMATOGRAPHY AT THE 51ST KRAKOW FILM FESTIVAL

Krakow, 28th March 2011 – Dutch cinematography is the special guest of the 51st Krakow Film Festival (23rd – 29th May). Each year the Festival focuses on a different national cinema with the aim of introducing documentaries from that region.

The ‘Focus on...’ section, showing national cinematography, has been initiated last year, with the Israeli filmmaking presented at the jubilee edition of Krakow Film Festival. This year the focus is on the Netherlands, a country famous not only for its fascinating film works but also for hosting such festivals as IFF Rotterdam and IDFA Amsterdam.

The ‘Focus on the Netherlands’ section includes a review of the most recent documentaries as well as a conference with the representatives of the Dutch film industry present. Films shown at the Festival are all renowned and awarded. These include, among others, *The Player* by the outstanding John Appen, a story about his father addicted to gambling; *Crips. Strapped'n'Strong*, an exceptionally bold vivisection on the life of black rappers and *mafiosi*; and *Farewell*, composed of archive material from 1929, a gripping account of around-the-world travel of the Graf Zeppelin airship.

In the panel discussion, which is to present the Dutch film market, will participate: **Claudia Landsberger**, president of EYE Film Institute Netherlands and vice-president of European Film Promotion, who helps disseminate Dutch cinema abroad; **Pieter van Huystee**, one of the most active Dutch film producers, whose two films will be presented in Kraków (*Crips. Strapped'n'Strong* and *Farewell*); **Marijke Rawie**, an independent documentary advisor, who collaborates with a number of Dutch and foreign film producers as well as with festivals, especially in the field of pitchings, lectures, and meetings aimed at documentary makers; **Ally Derkx**, founder and president of the biggest documentary festival in the world - IDFA Amsterdam, since 1988.

A review of the most recent Dutch documentaries includes six titles ranging thematically:

„Among Horses and Men” 2010, 78', dir. Marjoleine Boonstra

Chris, Dean, Gilbert, Charles, Steven, Bo, and Mike are all young inmates at the Northern Nevada Correctional Center, in the last phase of lengthy prison sentences. Before returning to society, they are participating in a special project that allows them to capture, tame, and train wild horses for periodic auctions. The filmmaker, Marjoleine Boonstra, follows the detainees over the course of three months of intensive training, during which time the men see themselves reflected in the eyes of their horses. The men learn to win the trust of another living being once again, a skill that has slipped away during their time on the inside. Horses are incredibly perceptive creatures: they take the men as they are, without a history, without a record, but only if the men are just as open and vulnerable as they are. Boonstra captures the intimacy between these "tough guys" and their equine counterparts in a touching moment of transition: on the threshold of freedom, while exchanging looks of reflection.

„The Player” 2009, 85', dir. John Appel

Why do the darkened casino halls come to substitute bedrooms and living rooms? Why does the roulette seem more attractive than any woman encountered? What feelings does gambling trigger so that it can take over the life of a man? John Appel tries to understand the life of his own addicted father by following three confirmed gamblers. Harry Engels works at horse races, Harry Holland serves his time for fraud, and Ted Stonzelbach passes time in casinos.

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„Crips. Strapped ‘n Strong” 2009, 84’, dir. Joost Van Der Valk, Mags Gavan

The film portrays the brutal life of the Crips gang from the Hague, a group consisting of Suriname and Antilles emigrants who deal in armed robberies, drugs, and fight the competing groups. Without signs of censorship, the film shows a culture of violence, which became the basis of a community once brought together by Hip hop music. The authors try to reach deeper into the feelings and reflections of the gangsters, whose lives are very complicated.

„Farewell” 2010, 90’, dir. Ditteke Mensink

In 1929, celebrated journalist Lady Grace Drummond-Hay was invited to take part in the first round-the-world flight of a commercial airship, the LZ-127 Graf Zeppelin. Recently widowed from a man 50 years her senior and bored to tears with covering ladies fashion, Lady Grace leaped at the chance to be the only woman onboard one of the media sensations of the decade. At journey's end she returned to America a star, thanks to her good looks and gutsy charm. But her reports on the ship's travels for the front pages of the Hearst press empire only told part of the story. In her diary she recorded a far more intimate journey - her struggle to get over her secret affair with shipmate, mentor, and married man Karl von Wiegand. Combining spectacular archival footage of the journey across New York, Siberia, Tokyo, and the Pacific with narration drawn from Drummond's articles and her private journals...

„Our Newspaper” 2010, 60' dir. Eline Flipse

Andrei is a journalist, in the remote countryside of Russia, and Moscow is a long way away. People are poor and disgusted by politics and newspapers. Andrei left his job at the regional paper “The Leninist”, because he couldn't go on writing articles about nothing. He created his own newspaper which now has about 7000 readers every week. The authorities are not amused. Andrei is convinced he is doing nothing wrong. Who will win in the end?

„My Long Distance Friend” 2011, 73’, dir. Carina Molier

OG is a beautiful young woman who has wandered around Europe since she left Zimbabwe at the age of 9. From then on she has struggled to survive, continually seeking a balance in her life. OG strives to regain custody of her daughter taken from her at an early age.

Director Carina Molier - her long distance friend - follows her in her quest for reunification and peace of mind. “My Long Distance Friend” is a film about displacement, about longing for security and relationships in an ever globalizing and inhospitable world.

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