

# On the Screen...

## Molodist (Ukraine) 2014

At the 44th Kyiv International Film Festival (25 October to 2 November 2, 2014) the Ecumenical Jury, appointed by INTERFILM and SIGNIS, awarded its Prize in the International Competition for full-length films to *Difret* (Oblivion) directed by Zeresenay Berhane Mehari, Ethiopia (USA, 2014).

Based on a real-life story, the film tells about a struggle of a committed woman lawyer, Meaza Ashenafi, to defend freedom and rights of a girl abducted and raped because a traditional custom allows it. The film takes place in Ethiopia of 1996, in a society where unjust customs became a social rule. It is a movie about courage when facing violence and social injustice and fighting them.

In addition, the jury awarded a Commendation to *Anywhere Else* (Anderswo) directed by Ester Amrami (Germany, 2014). The movie tells the story of a young Jewish woman experiencing a personal crisis, returning from Germany where she has studied to her homeland and to her family in Israel. It is a positive picture of a family in which a human being can find consolation and support. Reconciliation of social and historical divisions, as between Jews and Germans, is difficult and may last for generations, but it is possible.

In the International Competition for professional short films, the jury awarded its Prize to *Last Time Paris* (Perlmutter) directed by Rupert Höller (Austria, 2013). The short fiction film shows in a humanistic and touching way the issue of growing old as well as feelings, needs and longings of elderly people. It depicts a relation of mature love and respect of an adult daughter to her aging mother.

Members of the Jury: Cyprian Czop (Poland), Radovan Holub (Czech Republic), Olga Volynets (Ukraine).

## Leipzig (Germany) 2014

At the 57th International Leipzig Festival for Documentaries and Animated Film (27 October to 2 November 2014) the Ecumenical Jury, appointed by INTERFILM and SIGNIS, awarded its Prize comprising €2,000 by the VCH-Hotels Germany GmbH – in the “Verband Christlicher Hoteliers e.V.” including the Hotel MICHAELIS in Leipzig to *Toto și surorile lui* (Toto and His Sisters) directed by Alexander Nanau (Romania, 2014).

10-year old Toto lives, together with his two sisters, in the Roma quarter of Bucharest amidst drugs and crime. Thanks to his personality and with the help of his sister Andrea, he finds access to a youth centre. A better future is opening up for both. The deeply documentary narration makes it clear how much strength the two children need to get out of a hopeless context.

Members of the Jury: Thomas Bohne OR (Germany), Guido Convents (Belgium), Angelika Obert (Germany), Peter F. Stucki (Switzerland).

## Lübeck (Germany) 2014

The INTERFILM Jury at the 56th Nordic Film Days (29 October to 2 November 2014) chose as the winner of the Church Film Prize, endowed with €2500 donated by the Evangelical-Lutheran Church District Lübeck-Lauenburg, the film *1001 Grams* (1001 Gram) directed by Bent Hamer (Norway, France, Germany, 2014).

Motivation: Working for the Norwegian Weights and Measures Institute, Marie lives a life of numbers and exact calibrations. However, her father's death brings her new challenges and meas-

urements. In poetical images the film shows what is valuable in life. It tells a story about a measurable world and about the longing for a reality beyond.

**Synopsis:** How much does the human soul weigh? Marie is not the type to ask those sorts of deep questions. She works for Norway's weights and measures institute. Her workdays follow a carefully calibrated routine; she studiously avoids contact with her ex-husband and her only human contact is with fellow workers. But when Marie's father, the institute's director, takes ill, everything changes. Marie must take his place on a trip to Paris. In her luggage, Marie carries Norway's highly-valued prototype kilo, so that it can be weighed against its French counterpart. In Paris, she meets former scientist Pi and undertakes an emotional re-calibration of her own.

**Members of the Jury:** Mirko Klein (President, Germany), Ieva Pitruka (Latvia), Bernd Schwarze (Germany), Sofia Sjö (Finland).



## Cottbus (Germany) 2014

At the 24th Festival of East European Cinema on Cottbus (4-9 November 2014) the Ecumenical Jury, appointed by INTERFILM and SIGNIS, awarded its Prize to *Klass korrektsii* (Corrections Class) directed by Ivan I. Tverdovskij (Russia, Germany 2014).

**Motivation:** Using the example of a Russian School the movie shows how difficult it is for pupils with bodily, mental or social deficits to find their place in society. In doing this the director avoids being one-dimensional or just depicting martyrs. With convincing actors and a sensitive camera Ivan Tverdovskij formulates a sustainable appeal for inclusion.

**Synopsis:** At a Russian school maladjusted and disturbed children are separated in a special class. Lena, who is physically handicapped and confined to a wheelchair, is out of place here. When two classmates are vying for her favours, the situation escalates.

**The Members of the Jury:** Kirsten Dietrich (Germany); György Frenyó (Hungary); Lothar Strüber (Germany); Giuseppe Vitale (Italy).

## Mannheim-Heidelberg (Germany) 2014

At the 63rd International Film Festival held 6-16 November 2014 the Ecumenical Jury, appointed by INTERFILM and SIGNIS, awarded its Prize, endowed with € 1500.- by the Catholic Film Work in Germany and the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), to the film *Nabat* directed by Elchin Musaoglu (Azerbaijan, 2014).

**Motivation:** In a mountain village in Azerbaijan which is threatened by war people leave their homes. Living on the outskirts Nabat stays



*“I came across it through a TV documentary where a woman refused to leave her home when everyone else was evacuated. When asked why, she said that her deceased son and husband were still there. This was where the subject first came from. And when the Russian army came in 1991, I was making a documentary for Azerbaijan Film. I thought about this subject again where the enemy comes to the village and only one person stays. This all came back to mind before I started on Nabat.” Source: [Nabat: An Interview with Elchin Musaoglu and Fatemeh Motamed Arya flickfeast](#).*

although her means of subsistence diminish more and more. As a visible sign of her spiritual resistance and the hope for a return of life she kindles lights in the village every evening. For his moving story the film finds poetic, quiet and expressive images of high symbolic value.

*Synopsis:* Nabat and her bedridden husband Iskender live on a small, remote farm in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. Their only cow gives a little milk, which the old woman takes into the village every other day. From afar, you can hear war sounds from beyond the mountains. More and more inhabitants leave the village, and when her husband dies, she is all alone with her memories; memories of her son, who was killed in action in the 1990s, and of the way things were.

*Members of the Jury:* Alain le Goanvic (President, France); Markus Leniger (Germany); Natalie Resch (Austria); Christine Ris (Switzerland).

## Berlin Film Festival Award

The Homage of the 65th Berlin International Film Festival will be dedicated to German filmmaker Wim Wenders, who will also be awarded an Honorary Golden Bear for his lifetime achievement. The award ceremony on February 12, 2015 in the Berlinale Palast will include a screening of *Der amerikanische Freund* (The American Friend, 1977).

“In dedicating the Homage to Wim Wenders, we honour one of the most noted contemporary auteurs. His cross-genre and multifaceted work as a filmmaker, photographer and author has shaped our living memory of cinema, and continues to inspire other filmmakers,” said Dieter Kosslick, Director of the Berlinale. ■