Welcome to the 28th European Film Awards

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This year’s short film nominations include documentary, fiction, experimental and animation films. A lot of them take as a starting point a critical examination of today’s realities, be it unemployment, water pollution, violence and crime, or immigration. We meet a time-travelling martial artist, a genius musician and an abandoned summer resort, urban arts activists, a giraffe and a dog.

Each of the nominated films opens a window into a different world and still altogether they can only offer a glimpse of human experience - and of the creative diversity of European cinema. It is with great pleasure that we present this year’s nominated short films.

The EFA Short Film Initiative has long been an established item on the annual international short film agenda. It is organised in co-operation with fifteen partner festivals at each of which an independent international jury presents one of the European short films in competition with a nomination for the award European Short Film. During the past fourteen years, the interest in the short film initiative and this collection of short films has constantly been increasing. The nominated films go through a series of 50 screenings across Europe and beyond. From Portugal to Georgia, from Finland to Israel, and from China to Brazil, we are proud to draw attention to these short films and their creators. And I invite you to leaf through this booklet and meet the nominees - creative people from all over Europe.

The short film initiative wouldn’t be possible without our friends in the world of short films and I wish to thank all our partner festivals for yet another fantastic year full of surprises and discoveries!

I would also like to thank our friends at the Film Fest Gent and the Royal Academy of Fine Arts (KASK) for the EFA Short Film Weekend - a first gathering of the nominated directors in Ghent for a screening of the nominated shorts and a weekend of meeting and mingling.

Thank you & bedankt!

The members of the European Film Academy will elect the overall winner who will be announced at the 28th European Film Awards Ceremony in Berlin on 12 December.
A genius musician lives a lonely life in a surreal, floating world. He plays the piano every day in a gigantic concert hall, but there is nobody to listen. One day his animated world collapses and he must face reality. He only has one wish: to share his music with his daughter, but her mother doesn’t allow it.

How long did it take to make your short? Was it difficult to get financing? After this he realised some documentaries, a feature and a film studios, while I am developing my own feature. It took me three years (2012-2015) to shoot, animate and make it. I designed and wrote bits and pieces of it for over an ambitious idea that I started to develop in 2007. What is your next project? All, I invested more in this film than I ever imagined it. Making started with a grant from Cineteca di Bologna; after this we signed a contract with the Bordeaux-based company Bien ou Bien Productions with whom we’ve been funded by Region Aquitaine. Yes, it has been hard to get financing, but necessary in order to give birth to E.T.E.R.N.I.T. under the best possible conditions. Which thoughts come to mind concerning a “European cinema community”?

Giovanni Alol Giovanni Alol (Italian, born 22 October 1984) studied Film History and Criticism at the University of Bologna and “arts plastiques” at the University Paris VIII. After graduating he started working as a writer and camera operator for the Italian TV show “Le lene”. My first thought is about all the talented colleagues I’ve met during the last two years attending film festivals throughout Europe. Day by day, we started growing sincere friendships, exchanging our ideas about new cinema projects and old hidden pearls. There’s a specific aspect of European cinema that means never-ending research on cinema language, and the community is here to explore it.

Let’s start with LA PLANÈTE SAUVAGE by René Laloux. I find it weird and surreal, my favourite animation film of all time. After the screening I’m sure you’ll put Alain Goraguer’s soundtrack on your iPod. Around 10pm we could go for a 35mm screening of VARGTIMMEN by Ingmar Bergman, a film showing the pathology of a painter who cannot distinguish pearls. There’s a specific aspect of European cinema community played an essential role to maintain it. If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen? If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen? If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen? If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen? If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen? How long did it take to make your short? Was it difficult to get financing? After this he realised some documentaries, a feature and two short films.

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FIELD STUDY

DIRECTED BY: Eva Weber
WRITTEN BY: Lina Langek
PRODUCED BY: Julia Goedenskaya & Sophie Vickers
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Chloë Thompson
EDITOR: Tracy Granger A.C.E
PRODUCTION DESIGN: Dorota Borkowska & Agata Trafik

COSTUME DESIGN: Emilia Zawadowska
SOUND DESIGN: Harry Barnes
ORIGINAL SCORE: Stuart Earl
MAIN CAST: Bradley Hall (Martin), Magdalena Różańska (Ewa), Olaf Marchwicki (Jacek), Sławomir Holland (Sandford)

Martin, a shy Englishman in his early 20s, is in Poland doing a field study on river pollution when he sees a woman and her son bathe in the river, a moment of pure joy. Later, he discovers that Ewa works at the guest-house he’s staying at and he warns them not to bathe in the river due to the pollution from the nearby factories. Jacek, Ewa’s son, helps Martin with his research and he becomes something of a father figure to him. As a thank you for letting Jacek help him out Ewa invites Martin for dinner before he is to return home to England. Martin misunderstands the invitation and at the end of the night, a little tipsy, he tries to kiss her - but is rejected. The next day he speaks to a lab technician in the UK about the samples he’s sent back for testing - there is some pollution but not where Ewa and Jacek have been swimming. When Ewa doesn’t show up for work and still hurting from the rejection Martin leaves without passing on the message that the river is fine to swim in.

KUNG FURY

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY: David Sandberg
PRODUCED BY: Linus Andersson & Elen Young
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Mattias Andersson, Martin Gärdefält & Jonas Ehnhill
EDITOR: Nils Moström
SOUND DESIGN: Patrik Öberg
ORIGINAL SCORE: Mitch Murder
ANIMATION: Fidd AB

MAIN CAST: David Sandberg (Kung Fury), Elen Young (Barbarianna), Leonidas Nilsson (Hackerman), Jorma Taccone (Hitler), Triceratops (Triceracops), Steven Chew (Dragon), Andreas Cslung (Thor), Helene Ahlsson (Katana), Eos Karlsson (Red Ninja), Per-Henrik Arvidsson (Chief)

Miami Police Department detective and martial artist Kung Fury time travels from the 1980s to World War II to kill Adolf Hitler, a.k.a. “Kung Führer”, and revenge his friend’s death at the hands of the Nazi leader. An error in the time machine sends him further back to the Viking Age.

How long did it take to make your short? Was it difficult to get financing?

How long did it take to make your short? Was it difficult to get financing? All in all about two and a half years. It was really challenging to find financing for it. It’s such a crazy project and was hard to grasp for some people, especially in the beginning. When I had enough material to show, it went very fast though. With the help of the internet and kick starter, we were able to raise USD 200,000 within 24 hours. Which thoughts come to mind concerning a “European cinema community”?

European cinema is great in the sense that it supports art in film that doesn’t necessarily need to be commercially successful, and letting directors realise their true visions. That’s the first thing that comes to mind. If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen?

What is your next project?

A feature film adaptation of KUNG FURY.
A foreign woman in a burqa brings her young son to a Copenhagen police station to get away from her abusive husband, yet the translator assigned to her seems unwilling to convey the true meaning of her words to the police, thus corrupting the truth of her terrible situation.

www.nordicfactoryfilm.com

The producers secured finances from The Danish Film Institute and The Finnish Foundation. We’re not sure how difficult it was but know that they had to fulfil requirements from both sides, so it wasn’t totally easy.

Which thoughts come to mind concerning a “European cinema community”?

Europe has a distinctive approach to cinema that makes it unique. We are very lucky that it’s possible to get financing for commercial as well as for less-commercial films so you see a whole variety of films to get financing for commercial as well as for less-commercial films to fulfill requirements from both sides, so it wasn’t totally easy.

The European cinema community is the reason we’re getting to make films right now. It’s like a massive crowd sourcing which makes it possible. It may sound like a struggle, but it was a pleasure.

Which thoughts come to mind concerning a “European cinema community”?

Youf Kamal El-Ali (son)

If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen?

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Names of friends to whom I write more often than I talk to, but without whom my films wouldn’t be possible.

If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen?

The first image was shot in December 2012. The last cut was made in January 2015. The film was made without a budget. It may sound like a struggle, but it was a pleasure.

Which thoughts come to mind concerning a “European cinema community”?

A short that I’m co-directing with James Lattimer in Serbia, a short film in Croatia. I’m currently on a Master’s programme in Contemporary Art at Le Fresnoy in France. His films have been shown at the Festival de Cannes, Festival del Film Locarno, IFF Rotterdam, FID Marseille and Sarajevo FF.

He is working on his first feature BEFORE ENMITY.

How long did it take to make your short? Was it difficult to get financing?

From here, you can see everything: the sea to the right, the mountains to the left, the sky between.

The sea to the right, the mountains to the left, the sky between.

The sea to the right, the mountains to the left, the sky between.
OVER presents a crime scene. During the course of nine wide shots, told in reverse order, we witness an intriguing story unfold. What has happened in this quiet neighborhood? A murder, a hit-and-run, an accident? The reality is profound, and deeply unexpected.

How long did it take to make your short? Was it difficult to get financing?

Rather quick, fortunately. I wrote it in September and had a locked cut by January 2015. The post took a couple more months, because it was a ‘freebie’. The film was self-financed. It actually didn’t cost very much to make it. Not moving the camera cuts costs radically!

Which thoughts come to mind concerning a “Euro-ean cinema community”?

Historically, European cinema has been the stalwart of ‘arthouse’ film. It still is on many levels. But Europe is such an increasingly fragmented entity: this makes for incredibly exciting, diverse and progressive cinema, but what of ‘community’ in such fractured times? Difficult. If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen?

SEKVENCA – a feature film called AWAKENINGS; a movie that continues my exploration of family dynamics and difficulties in maintaining interpersonal relationships. It leans heavily on the formal aesthetics I’ve developed throughout, taking each obstacle as an opportunity to somehow improve upon the project. We developed it further by participating in various pitching forums and workshops, such as Euro Connection or Sarajevo City of Film, Berlinales Talents Short Film Station in particular turned out to be a huge leap in the right direction; it was there that the project took on its proper form. Securing funding for a short film is always difficult, but in the end I believe that we’ve gained a lot of experience from the process.

Which thoughts come to mind concerning a “European cinema community”?

I see it as a vibrant community comprised of many different personalities, growing larger and larger every year.

How long did it take to make your short? Was it difficult to get financing?

It took about two years from conceiving the original idea to completing the film. It was quite a challenging experience, but we maintained a positive outlook throughout, taking each obstacle as an opportunity to somehow improve upon the project. We developed it further by participating in various pitching forums and workshops, such as Euro Connection or Sarajevo City of Film, Berlinales Talents Short Film Station in particular turned out to be a huge leap in the right direction; it was there that the project took on its proper form. Securing funding for a short film is always difficult, but in the end I believe that we’ve gained a lot of experience from the process.

What is your next project?

My short films HALF AN HOUR FOR GRANDMA (2010) and UMBRELLA (2012) were shown at more than 50 festivals winning six awards. His third short film PICNIC (2015) premiered at the 65th Berlin IFF in the Generation 14plus programme. It went on to win different awards like the GRAND PRIZE – Best narrative short at Flickers – Rhode Island FF (RIF’s official Oscar submission) and GRAND PRIX – Best film at the 24th Croatian Film Days.

How long did it take to make your short? Was it difficult to get financing?

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SEKVENCA – a feature film called AWAKENINGS; a movie that continues my exploration of family dynamics and difficulties in maintaining interpersonal relationships. It leans heavily on the formal aesthetics I’ve developed throughout my work on previous short films.
One cold December night, Israeli soldiers come up to the al-Haddad family home in a Palestinian neighborhood of Hebron and knock on the door. They’ve come to search the house. Diaa, the teenage son, reaches for the family’s video camera. As the search unfolds, a strange power struggle evolves, pitting gun against camera. The night grows colder, and the soldiers take Diaa outside and order him to face the wall. They won’t leave until he stops smiling.

www.btselem.org/btselem/smile

The directors
Diaa, Shatha, Abdelkarim and Ahmad al-Haddad are a Palestinian family from Hebron, West Bank. Ehab Tarabieh was born in the Golan heights in 1982 and graduated from the Sam Spiegel Film & TV school in Jerusalem in 2012. Yoav Gross, born in Jerusalem, in 1977, studied film at Tel Aviv University and has worked as a documentary filmmaker and video activist ever since.

How long did it take to make your short? Was it difficult to get financing?
The short is a by-product of an ongoing project we worked on for B’Tselem, an Israeli NGO - in which hundreds of Palestinians get cameras to document their life under occupation.

The process of editing the film was very short – though, the daily work of training and making hundreds of people take part in this project. The financing, as well, is a by-product of funding for the whole project.

Which thoughts come to mind concerning a “European cinema community”?
Being a part of the European cinema community is a great opportunity to expose our film world-wide - and locally. We use the support and recognition we get in Europe to bring the film back to the local audience and media.

If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen?
Ehab: A night of Carlos Reygadas. Yoav: Mike Leigh oldies. What is your next project?
Ehab: Currently I’m working on the development of my first drama feature film called THE TASTE OF APPLES IS RED.
Yoav: More collaborative and political documentary work.

SMILE, AND THE WORLD WILL SMILE BACK
DIRECTED BY: Yoav Gross, Ehab Tarabieh & the al-Haddad family
PRODUCED BY: Yoav Gross, Ehab Tarabieh & Helen Yanovsky
EDITOR: Yoav Gross & Ehab Tarabieh
SOUND DESIGN: Nimrod Eldar

SON OF THE WOLF
FILS DU LOUP
DIRECTED BY: Lola Quivoron
WRITTEN BY: Lola Quivoron & Pauline Guvrand
PRODUCED BY: Margaux Juveaud
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Lucie Terrisien

Between the walls of an ancient military fort, Johnny, a young boy, learns how to train and dominate Iron, his first guard dog.

Lola Quivoron
Born in 1989 in Paris, Lola Quivoron completed a preparatory school, studied modern literature and obtained a Masters in Cinema. In 2012, she entered the Film Directing Department at La fémis. She also practices photography. After two narrative short films and a short documentary directed within the school, SON OF THE WOLF is her fourth film.

How long did it take to make your short?
SON OF THE WOLF is a school film I shot during my third year at La fémis. I spent about two months with the instructor at the center where trainees and security guards learn how to handle and dominate attacking dogs. I wrote the script for all the people I met there and then shot the film with them.

Which thoughts come to mind concerning a "European cinema community"?
To me, it evokes a huge space of creation opened to the world, without any border.
If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen?
RIVER WITH NO RETURN by Otto Preminger, AGUURRE THE WRATH OF GOD by Werner Herzog, CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND by Steven Spielberg, LA BELLE ET LA BETE by Jean Cocteau.
What is your next project?
I’m currently working on a short movie about two children who behave like adults to survive in their environment. At the same time, I am writing my first feature film. It tells the story of a young boy who is welcomed into a community of bike riders. The bike life community is a growing phenomenon of the rebellious youth based in Paris suburbs. They all have a passion for riding on wheels using motorbikes and quads. It’s kind of a big family. I am writing the script for the riders I met during my investigations.
SYMBOLIC THREATS

DIRECTED & PRODUCED BY: Mischa Leinkauf, Lutz Henke & Matthias Wermke
SOUND DESIGN: Alexander Heinz

Poetry or threat? An act of surrender or perhaps art? These were the theories that New York puzzled over last summer. How can one incident be interpreted in so many ways? By means of press reports, SYMBOLIC THREATS allows the public at large to express their extreme disparity of interpretation. Inspired by the heated debate over the two “White American Flags” that suddenly appeared on the towers of New York City’s iconic Brooklyn Bridge, the film asks what kind of societal scope art has in the present day. What happens when threatened freedom reinstates art with the element of danger? Who or what makes it into a threat? Are we safe in the city? What is next?

www.wermke-leinkauf.com

EUROPEAN FILM AWARDS 2015

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THE RUNNER
EL CORREDOR

DIRECTED BY: José Luis Montesinos
WRITTEN BY: José Luis Montesinos & Iakes Blesa
PRODUCED BY: Arturo Méndez & José María Torres
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Marc Zumbach
EDITOR: José Luis Montesinos
PRODUCTION DESIGN: Carlos Pequerul

Five years ago the boss closed the company and fired 300 workers. The first day that he goes out to run the company is about.

José Luis Montesinos
Engineer and screenwriter. Director for Catalunya Television. Director of several short films such as: FI- NAL (2003), MATAGATOS (2009) and LA HISTORIA DE SIEMPRE (2010). Currently works as director and screenwriter on several feature films, commercials and for television.

Which thoughts come to mind concerning a “Euro- pean cinema community”? When I think of a European cinema community I think of co-production, mix of cultures and effort synergy. It’s beautiful when you film a story and people from a lot of different countries can identify with it. I think we’ve got this luck. Also, with THE RUNNER we are trying to change the second chance concept in all of Europe, we think it’s necessary. When you have lost everything, you deserve a second chance.

If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen?

All the scenes censored by anyone all through the story of cinema. And then one or two films by Luis García Berlanga. What is your next project?

I’m developing a feature film called BA & D. I’m now searching for financial possibilities in the “European cinema community”: I love the characters who survive using their particular gifts, and that’s what this film is about.
Yusuf, a Syrian refugee boy who lives in exile in a remote Turkish border town is chosen for his newfound power but he has to experience how to use it, at the cost of his innocence.

Emre Kayiş
Born in 1984 in Turkey, Emre Kayiş is an Istanbul-based director and screenwriter. During his studies at the law department of Ankara University, he decided to become a filmmaker after watching BICYCLE THIEVES. Then he moved to London and graduated from the London Film School in 2014 with his final project THE TRANSLATOR. He aims to tell human stories that have a social relevance. Currently he is developing his first feature film entitled Leopard.

How long did it take to make your short? Was it difficult to get financing? It took us about a year from pre-production to final cut. The film was financed mainly by the London Film School. It was also supported by the Turkish General Directorate of Cinema.

What is your next project? Currently I’m writing a feature film, LEOPARD, set in Ukraine, and how it affects everyday life of those who stay at home; of those who are waiting. With a main focus on imagery over dialogue and with a fragmented storyline, the film depicts the conflict in Ukraine, and how it affects everyday life of those who stay at home; of those who are waiting.

Two friends on the floor proud pine trees and current rivers grenades without detonation. In the staircase dust is dancing. Women bring home sunflowers.

Deafening silent is Ukraine, before the boys are leaving. War is strange, people try to make sense, in this place we call our home.

“War” is normally understood as action, and the images we think of are the ones from a battlefield. In this film, “war” is something else. It is depicted as most people will experience it; something out of your control, far away from you, something you worry about. A worry you try to suppress, while trying to continue living. Something that might separate you from someone near to you. With a main focus on imagery over dialogue and with a fragmented storyline, the film depicts the conflict in Ukraine, and how it affects everyday life of those who stay at home; of those who are waiting.

Yusuf, a Syrian refugee boy who lives in exile in a remote Turkish border town is chosen for his newfound power but he has to experience how to use it, at the cost of his innocence.

www.thetranslator-shortfilm.com
WASHINGTONIA

WASHINGTONIA starts when the giraffe’s heart can no longer be heard. WASHINGTONIA is an alternative name for Athens, a place where people, like animals, fall into summertime sadness because of the heat. WASHINGTONIA is the only palm tree that its heart is not devoured by the red beetle. Because its heart is small and dry and no one likes small and dry hearts.

Konstantina Kotzamani
A graduate student of the Film Department of Fine Arts of Thessaloniki, Konstantina Kotzamani’s shorts have participated in several international festivals and have won several awards. In 2012, she was a participant of the Berlinale Talent Campus and the Sarajevo Talent Campus as well. Her short film MORNING PRAYERS, co-directed with Katarina Stankovic premiered at Sarajevo FF 2013.

How long did it take to make your short? Was it difficult to get financing?
One and a half months from the very first idea up to the final edit … The film was made with EUR 5,000 from the Greek Film Centre and with a very small team of close friends. But I guess this is WASHINGTONIA, if there was more time and logical thinking it would be something completely different, less magical.

If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen?
If it was a summer night, it would be TROPICAL MALADY by Apichatpong Weerasethakul, if it was autumn, it would be A CASA by Sharunas Bartas …

What is your next project?
I am shooting a short film project at the moment. It would be A CASA by Sharunas Bartas … ADY by Apichatpong Weerasethakul, if it was autumn, TROPICAL MALADY by Apichatpong Weerasethakul, if it was a summer night, it would be TROPICAL MALADY by Apichatpong Weerasethakul, if it was autumn, it would be A CASA by Sharunas Bartas …

If you owned a theatre for one night, which films would you screen?
If it was a summer night, it would be TROPICAL MALADY by Apichatpong Weerasethakul, if it was autumn, it would be A CASA by Sharunas Bartas …

What is your next project?
I am shooting a short film project at the moment. It is called LIMBO. 13 kids and a whale washed ashore.
Founded in 1988, the European Film Academy (EFA) now unites more than 3,000 European film professionals with the common aim of promoting European film culture. Throughout the year, the EFA initiates and participates in a series of activities dealing with film politics as well as economic, artistic, and training aspects. The programme includes conferences, seminars and workshops, and a common goal is to build a bridge between creativity and the industry. These activities culminate in the annual presentation of the European Film Awards.