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ANIFILM 2021 Announced the Winners of its Film and Game Competitions, Audience Award Winner Czech Film *Even Mice Belong in Heaven* Successful Also in International Competition, Czech Computer Game *Creaks* Won the Award for Best Visual Art

This year's ANIFILM International Festival of Animated Films will say goodbye to its visitors on Sunday 27th June. On Saturday, the festival closing ceremony will be held in the F.X. Šalda Theatre in Liberec where the winners of the festival's international competition will receive their awards.

The award for the **Best Feature Film for Grown-Ups** goes to the Polish film *Kill it and Leave This Town* by Mariusz Wilczyński who worked on this feature film for eleven years. As the **Best Feature Film for Children**, our jury selected *Wolfwalkers* (directed by Ross Stewart, Tomm Moore) by the renowned Irish studio Cartoon Saloon. In this category, the jury also decided to award a special mention to *Even Mice Belong in Heaven* by Czech directors Denisa Grimmová and Jan Bubeníček.

In the **Competition of Short Films**, the jury awarded the Indonesian film by Fatimah Tobing Rony *Annah la Javanaise* and the **Best Student Film** is Julia Orlik's *I Am Here*. In the **Competition of Non-Narrative and Abstract Animation**, the award goes to Georgian director Mariam Kapanadze for her film *Abandoned Village* and the award for **Best Music Video** goes to the French-Dutch music video *Jo Goes Hunting: Careful* by Alice Saey. The **Best VR Film** is Jonathan Hagard's *Replacements*. The **Best Computer Game for Children** is the Taiwanese project *Carto* by Lee-Kuo Chen and the award for **Best Visual Art** goes to Czech game *Creaks* by Radim Jurda.

The winner of one of the festival awards was picked by the most demanding jury of all – the audience. And the winner of the **Audience Award** – the

Liberec Region Award is *Even Mice Belong in Heaven* by Denisa Grimmová and Jan Bubeníček.

At its opening ceremony, Anifilm announced the winners of the national competition **Czech Horizon**. Unlike the winners of our International Competition, the Czech Horizon winners were chosen by Council of Animated Films, a group of animation professionals whose 114 members voted before the festival. The **Best Commissioned Work** was Noemi Valentíny's *Radiotherapy at the Yellow Hill*, **Best Music Video** *Pavel Čadek: Tanči* directed by Aliona Baranova, **Best Student Film** Anna Podskalská's *Red Shoes* and the **Best Feature Film** (competing in a mixed category with short films) Jan Balej's *A Colourful Dream*. The **Best Animated Film** across all categories is the student film *Red Shoes*. This balladic film with no dialogues works with folk motives and it attracted the attention of not only the members of the Council of Animated Film. It will be included in the prestigious Cinéfondation Selection at this year's Cannes Film Festival. At its opening ceremony, Anifilm presented its **Lifetime Achievement Award** to professor **Edgar Dutka**, long-term dramaturge of the Krátký Film Studio, author of dozens of legendary scripts (*The End of the Cube*, *Club of the Laid-Off*), director and important FAMU pedagogue who inspired many animators. He is also an acclaimed writer and distinguished collaborator of director Jiří Barta.

Few Information About This Year's ANIFILM

Anifilm Liberec 2021 is nearing its end so we can look back. Just like last year's edition (the first one to take place in Liberec), Anifilm, which had to be moved from May to June, implemented safety measures and observed strict rules for cultural events. Everyone was required to have a festival pass, individual tickets for individual screenings weren't sold at all and visitors were required to show their VTI documents (vaccination / test / infection recovery certificate). The capacity of screening halls had to be limited to 50 %.

This year proved that Liberec and Anifilm are a good match. In addition to the premises used already last year, the festival expanded into some new venues – for instance the Museum of North Bohemia and Regional Gallery Lázně. The festival centre was once again set up in Chateau Liberec and the Chateau garden proved to be a perfect place for the festival tent where many visitors ended their festival days at various concerts. Screenings and other programme events were also hosted by the Varšava Cinema, Cinema City OC Forum, Grandhotel Zlatý lev congress hall, Lidové sady cultural centre, Regional Technical Library and also the Dr. E. Beneš square which hosted open-air screenings.

It is appropriate to mention some numbers. In Anifilm's **International Competitions** were in total 10 feature films, 38 short films, 32 student films, 15 music videos, 19 abstract and non-narrative films and 18 VR projects. There were also 15 computer games. In four categories of the national competition **Czech Horizon** were in total 54 animated films. In addition to international and national competitions, the festival also prepared a busy

accompanying film programme. In its individual thematic sections, Anifilm screened 246 short and 16 feature films. As is our tradition, our jury members presented their work in special programme blocks. The main theme of this year's Anifilm was a programme titled **Planet A** which presented feature and short films including testimonies about real problems, space travel, trips to the past and films celebrating nature and life on Earth. The programme also included parodies and ironic and subversive films. For the first time, Anifilm explored the phenomenon of **queer animation** using the possibilities of animation to express the slightest nuances of the inner world of human beings. The festival programme naturally included also films by the recipient of this year's Lifetime Achievement Award **Edgar Dutka**. Several films for shockproof and hard-boiled audiences were screened in our popular **Midnight animation** section. In addition to the festival's many screenings, workshops and exhibitions for children, grown-ups, film fans a filmmaker, Anifilm provided an opportunity for formal and informal get-togethers and discussions mainly about animation. But the entire festival and it's programme wouldn't make any sense without the most important thing – this year, the festival programme was attended by more than 20 000 **accredited authors, guests and viewers.**

And even though the festival ends on Sunday 27th June, you will still find traces of it all around Liberec. Until the 31st December 2021, you can visit the **exhibition to the acclaimed feature film *Even Mice Belong in Heaven*** where you can see many complete scenes from the films, puppets and artistic and technical designs created for this film. The exhibition occupies two floors of the Chateau Garden Wing.

More information about Anifilm at www.anifilm.cz

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