



PRESS RELEASE:

The winners of the 24th Ji.hlava IDFF have been announced
the online festival continues for another week

Jihlava, October 31, 2020

The winners of 24th Ji.hlava IDFF: *A New Shift* and *White on White*

The 24th Ji.hlava IDFF has announced its winners. The best Czech documentary is *A New Shift* directed by Jindřich Andrš, the award for the most notable international documentary film was granted to *White on White* by Viera Čákanyová. The jury of the Between the Seas section gave the award to Latvian film *Coyote*, and Portuguese *Ghosts: Long Way Home* was appraised as the best documentary debut. Contribution to World Cinema Award was presented to Chinese filmmaker Ai Weiwei. But we are not over yet! The festival films will be available for streaming online until November 8.

Competition and non-competition sections of the 24th annual Ji.hlava IDFF comprised 310 films, 139 of which were presented in their world, international or European premiere. Although the Award Ceremony took place in line with tradition on the fifth day of the festival, Ji.hlava IDFF is not yet over. "Most of this year's documentary and experimental titles will be available until Sunday, November 8. In this online edition, the audience still has enough time to see the top of this year's Ji.hlava," says Festival Director Marek Hovorka.

The Contribution to World Cinema Award was granted to Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei. "When searching for the language to address people, Ai Weiwei discovered documentary cinema. He was able to step out of the shadow of his art projects, and using his experience with the world of visual arts he transformed his films into an instrument of social-political communication that is still a part of the art medium. Films by Ai Weiwei are a powerful testimony about his personal courage, both in his role of an actor and an 'observer'. His works are surprisingly visceral and have a deeply humanistic appeal," says Festival Director Marek Hovorka commenting on the work of the festival laureate.

The **main competition section Opus Bonum** that showcases the cream of world documentary cinema included ten films. The winners were selected by the sole juror, this year Azerbaijani director Hilal Baydarov, whose latest film *In Between Dying* competed in the main competition in Venice a month ago. Baydarov chose *White on White* by Slovakian director Viera Čákanyová to be the winner of the Opus Bonum section. "Most filmmakers make films about others, because it is almost impossible it is to make a film about oneself. Viera Čákanyová managed to do that," explains Baydarov. Special Mention went to the duo of directors Olivier Dury and Marie-Violaine Brincard for their film *A Man Learning*. "For its beautiful structure and well-performed editing that gives strong hints about the nature of cinema through beautiful rhythm and poetic signs," stated the juror.



Czech Joy from Ji.hlava

Czech Joy comprised thirteen films the best of which – according to the jury – is *A New Shift* directed by Jindřich Andrš. “The Czech Joy main award goes to Jindřich Andrš’ film *New Shift* portraying the life story of Tomáš Hisem, a laid-off miner from the Paskov Mine, who at 50 is trying to retrain as a computer programmer. As a careful and sensitive observation showing no prejudices or downplaying, the film allows us to get so close to the main protagonist and his environment that it changes not only us but also its author. Using the example of one person, the film expresses in exact terms the generally valid topics of center-periphery relations, existential struggle, work transformation and alienation in a neoliberal economy and individual adaptability in a world without a strong safety net. Tomorrow, anyone of us can be in the shoes of a Paskov Mine miner,” said the statement of the jury including for example documentarian Brit Plieštík Jensen, curator Denisa Václavová and film critic Jindřiška Bláhová. The jury also decided to give one Special Mention – to Martin Páv’s *Wolves at the Borders*. “*Wolves at the Borders* is a story of our personal boundaries, our shared fear of the unknown and of the possibility of losing our conquered territories where anyone can be the wolf. The strong environmental topic of irreversible ecosystem disruption blends with the unassuming format of a western set in the Broumov region with the author’s unbiased approach unveiling borders being delineated, crossed or shared in a process where even the losing side is a winner,” said the jury. The Student Award went to *Jan Jedlička: Traces of a Landscape* by Petr Záruba. We selected Petr Záruba’s film *Traces of a Landscape: Jan Jedlička* for its visual, sound and content integrity. The film leads the viewer in a self-effacing, modest and precise way. It is a sensitive symbiosis via the shared language of observation. It’s therefore sure to have a concentrated, almost intimate impact,” says the statement of the student jury.

The best Eastern and Central European film is *Latvian Coyote* by Latvian director Ivars Zviedris. The jury of the **Between the Seas** section composed of director and last year’s winner of the Opus Bonum section Lina Zacher and French filmmaker Adrien Genoudet, among others, had nine films to assess. „ Film shows us a global and a well-known topic from a unique unconventional perspective which still allows the audience to get very close not only to the main protagonist but also to dive into the whole story,” says the jury statement, adding: „ this is supported by the strong cinematic vision of the director.”

Their Special Mention went to Austrian film *The Last Image* directed by Judith Zdesar “for its poetic aesthetics, in search of a sensory representation of a daily and familiar environment, and for its visual creation of a memory that permanently disappeared by bringing glimpses of light in a world of darkness.”

The *Between the Seas* award was taken home by director Zaur Kouzarov for his Belgian-Russian film *Time Is*, winning in a competition of five film titles. “For a beautiful and minimalistic narrative approach with which director succeeds, by suspending time in a soothing atmosphere, to open multiple number of topics that unfold in the film and can be relevant not only for the Chechen society,” explained the jury.



This year's best debut is Portuguese film *Ghosts: Long Way Home* by Tiago Siopa. "Pure cinema," says the statement of the jury of the **First Lights section**. Their Special Mention went to *A House* by French director Judith Auffray. "We, who come to the house with director Judith Auffray, are soon enchanted — yet at the same time brutally deprived of the usual rhythms, automatic motions, and safe steps belonging to the familiar regime of our daily existence. We learn new rules, alternative rhythms, movements, we focus on the world differently. It becomes a dance," to quote the jury that appreciated eight film debuts and that brought together personalities such as curator of Sheffield Doc/Fest Christopher Small, film journalist Matej Sotník and poet Petr Borkovec. *A House* also received the Student Jury Award. "*A House* is a gentle observational documentary bringing us a natural glimpse into the specific world of a group of autistic persons. The jury appreciates the author's human approach towards the portrayed topic and the trust that she has gained with her protagonist via her camera. The jury also commends the fact that the film is not trying to be an advocate for David, Zoey or Thomas but lets them speak for themselves. The result is a portrait of several exceptional individuals who are seen by the viewer as an integral part of the environment they are actively helping to maintain but also as fully-fledged human beings with their own eccentricities and history. The author's craftsmanship also stands out with long shots revealing a surprising climax of the portrayed story," says the jury.

Oeconomia by German director Carmen Losmann was triumphant in the **Testimonies section** "The film is reflecting how the elites are cut off from the life of ordinary people." says the statement of the jury including Slovakian philosopher Lukáš Likavčan and journalist Saša Uhlová. Their Special Mention then went to *Vivos* by Chinese artist Ai Weiwei. "The film is a sensitive portrayal of the culture and daily life of local communities avoiding unnecessary exoticization," they said.

The **best experimental documentary** is *We Are Without* by SJ. Ramir from New Zealand. "The jury has decided to award the shortest film of this section: SJ Ramir's *We Are Without*. Despite the author's signature high level of stylization and the use of conventional cinematic devices, this work unlocks in a simple sequence of several images a vast range of interpretations. The increasing desire to see the context, to materialize fragments of the story, to grasp the inner visual realm gives us a chance to see, in the gaps between archaic shots, the offscreen-made film as contemporary, unique, precise and topical. Fascinations showcased twenty films this year. The section's Special Mention went to Dadaist collage *Baroque Femina* (Nr. 7-11) by Hungarian director Péter Lichter. "The jury's special mention goes to Péter Lichter for his video-essay *Barokk Femina* (Nr. 7-11). The visually adventurous collage about today's Hungarian collective unconscious sensitively and with admitted prejudices experiments with the political reality of narrative frameworks," said the jury composed of visual artists Filip Cenek and Martkéta Lisá.

Section Fascinations: Expmntl.cz had sixteen films to show. The best is *Catastrophe* by Zbyněk Baladrán. "The main jury award goes to Zbyněk Baladrán for his film *Catastrophe*. An established figure of Czech contemporary art, his systemic work is characterized by an ability to achieve, using simple and formally and stylistically pure devices, movements of thoughts



which, instead of becoming illustrations of theoretical discourses, use visual shortcuts to connect audiences to lived reality and to its reflection in societal and individual memory,” says the jury. Two Special Mentions have been awarded in the section. One of them is *To Sparkly Shiny Brightly See, Kaleidoscope Grows from Ears* by director duo Tereza Chudáčková and Klára Ondračková. “The jury has decided to award a special mention to two Czech experiments: *To Sparkly Shiny Brightly See, Kaleidoscope Grows from Ears* by Tereza Chudáčková and Klára Ondračková for its sensitive work with light, its narration indescribable in words and for its simplicity and non-speculative nature.” The second appreciated film is *Nobody Needs to Know About This, He Said*, directed by Ester Grohová. The jury adds: “The second special mention goes to *Nobody needs to know about this, he said* by Ester Grohová for a bold approach to a personal topic without inclination to its ironization or non-transferable self-experiencing and for the not-so-obvious blending of the therapeutic layer with the artistic one.”

The winner of the **Short Joy section** was selected by the audience by voting at Dafilms.cz between October 19 and 29. The price for the best short doc is taken home by Farah Hasanbegović for her *First Birthday after the Apocalypse*. “Our traditional competition section existed before the festival went online. It is great to see documentary cinema going in popularity - both in Czechia and abroad,” says Diana Tabakov, Executive Director at Dafilms.cz.

The **Silver Eye Award** for the best feature documentary of the East Silver Market was presented by the Institute of Documentary Film. It was granted to Jindřich Andrš for his *A New Shift*. “The 2020 Silver Eye award goes to a film which has not only captured our attention by addressing a very topical, burning topic, but also charmed us with its sensitive approach to the main protagonist and its own setting. Although he has dedicated several years of his life to the topic, and made both a short and a debut feature film about it, the filmmaker has not lost sight of the bigger picture and remained humble in his approach. We believe that the documentary is an excellent representation of Central and Eastern Europe and has a potential to resonate with audiences in the wider international context. The winner of the 2020 Silver Eye award is *New Shift* by Jindřich Andrš,” says the statement of the jury composed of programmer of One World festival, Tomáš Poštulka, sales agent Michaela Čajková and programme director of AFO, Ondřej Kazík. The Silver Eye Award 2020 for the best short doc of the East Silver Market went to Mohammed Almughanni for his *Son of the Streets*. “How unwelcomed can you feel in this world? The director’s unique connection allows him to uncover the nature of Khodor’s crucial dilemma in a very tangible and memorable way. The intense film experience of a daily life in a camp will make a deep imprint on the viewers’ memory,” said the jury including director of FIPADOC Christine Camdessus, co-founder and programmer of DokuBaku Veronika Janatková and executive director of Doc Alliance Films, Diana Tabakov. The jury also decided to grant a Special Mention to Hanna Hovitie for her *To Feather, to Wither*: “For exquisite directing skills reviving the dead. The director created a gentle and poetic portrait of a life cycle.”

**Ji.hlava
International
Documentary
Film Festival**



The Award Ceremony does not mark the last night of the 24th Ji.hlava IDFF. Films will be available online at the [festival's website](#) and at [DAFilms.com](#) for the audiences outside the Czech Republic until November 8. This year, the programme showcased 310 films, 95 world premieres, 30 international premieres and 14 European premieres in nine sections.

The recording of the Award ceremony is available [here](#):

All awards with statements [here](#):

More information is available at www.ji-hlava.com and at the festival's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Contact (trailers, stills, photos, interviews): Ji.hlava IDFF Press service (pressservice@ji-hlava.cz)

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27.10. — 1.11.2020
www.ji-hlava.com

**24th Ji.hlava International
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