

ARRAS_

2018 | DAYS

Book of projects
10th - 11th November



ARRAS_

FILMFESTIVAL

ARRAS

2018 DAYS

LE JURY



FREDDY OLSSON

Born in 1952. At first book publisher but in the film industry since 1983, started as an actor in childrens television, before moving in to producing. Since 30 years also working with Göteborg Film Festival, the leading film event in Northern Europe, and also as acquisitions consultant for the Swedish distributor Folkets Bio. Did *The Mill and the Cross* with Polish director Lech Majewski, starring among others Charlotte Rampling. Now in post-production with *Femme Fatale*, a Japanese-French-Swedish co-production from director Kyoko Miyake.



DRIES PHLYPO

Born in Bruges in 1977. He started his career as a projectionist and film programmer, in particular for a young audience. He founded the production company A Private View in 2004 with Jean-Claude Van Rijckeghem. Since then, he has been behind some of the greatest successes of Flemish cinema in recent years, including *Pas sérieux s'abstenir* (Miel van Hoogenbemt, 2007), *Moscow, Belgium* (Christophe van Rompaye, 2008), *Les Filles* (Geoffrey Enthoven, 2009), *Oxygen* (Hans van Nuffel, 2010), *Lena* (Christophe van Rompaye, 2011), *Zagros* (Sahim Omar Kalifa, 2017). Several of his films have been presented at previous editions of the Arras Film Festival.



EDVINAS PUKSTA

Senior programmer of the Vilnius IFF. He is responsible for film scouting, programming, coordinating, scheduling screenings, writing texts for catalogue. He regularly attends 15-17 film festivals around the globe per year. His review, articles and festival reports are published in Lithuanian media outlets online and print. Edvinas is a former member of the Film Board at the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture (2008-2012). He uses to be Jury member in various international film festivals. He will also take on a new role as a Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival programmer.

At a very early stage, the Arras Film Festival engaged in a proactive policy to promote young European cinema. Back in 2004, we launched the Inédits d'Europe section for new European releases and presented the works of such film-makers as Joachim Lafosse, Giorgio Diritti and Emily Atef, at the same time offering the opportunity to discover all the richness of Eastern European cinema.

A new milestone was achieved in 2009 with the creation of a competition aimed at encouraging access to the French market of the selected new releases. This strategy bore fruit and every year a number of films appear on screens across France thanks to the Festival's backing. In our conversations with directors who were here at Arras to present their work, my colleagues and I felt that they had many concerns around the financing of their new film. And so it was that the ArrasDays saw the light of day in 2012.

For us, this constitutes a new way of supporting the directors and producers of the selected works. In coming here to present their film, they are able to submit their very latest project for consideration by a jury. In most instances, these have never before been shown. So the ArrasDays are a unique and precious opportunity to experience this absolutely premiere screening and to be the very first to see up-and-coming works. The most important thing about our event is exchange, discussion, meeting with a producer. Today, the goal of the ArrasDays is nothing less than to become a new co-production platform for European cinema and its young directors.

To support the development of these new projects, two grants are awarded by the jury: one for €8,000 funded by the Arras Film Festival and the other for €5,000, funded by the Town of Arras.

Éric Miot
Artistic Director

ANTIPOLIS

Kaspar Jancis (Estonia)

SYNOPSIS

Antipolis is an upside-down world inside the Earth. Its inhabitants don't know what the world looks like from the outside. Only the scientist Rupert, her daughter Amanda and the pilot Valentina think differently – they claim that the world is a hollow globe. Valentina succeeds in getting to the surface of the globe. Due to a mistake, a young electronics addict Aksel returns inside the Earth instead of her. Because of the reverse gravity, he is able to fly there. Now Rupert hopes to convince the Antipodes in the truth, but they are only interested in the flying young man, the entertainment.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

With this film, I wish to talk about the growing superficiality and injustice in the World but mainly about the love for truth. The fairytale-like form is the appropriate tool for tackling the relativity of truth. The characters are deliberately meaningful and poster-like, as are their ambitions.

The nature of the story is metaphorical and allegorical, like the literature classic *The Travels of Gulliver* by Swift, also the work of the brothers Strugatski, Sorokin and Pelevin, where the essence of the story lies not in the character, but the surrounding environment.

Antipolis tells about humanity against the vices and stupidity rooted in the society. The film may be named a grotesque absurd fantasy with a shade of social criticism. At the same time, it can also be an adventure film and a comedy.

Whatever the definition of genre, the film contains some naïve and slightly self-ironic world improvement, stylish grotesque, cynical humor, sharp social criticism, in such proportions that it comes together into a delicate film.

The target group is the ageless film-lover who enjoys weird and unconventional, yet widely understandable cinema. The fans of *Delicatessen*, *Tuvalu*, *The City of Lost Children*, why not also *Mad Max*, the work of Aki Kaurismäki, Guy Maddin and Terry Gilliam should very likely also welcome *Antipolis* with eyes wide open.

Kaspar Jancis



Kaspar Jancis was born in 1975 in Tallinn, Estonia. He has been educated at the Turku Arts and Media School, Finland. Kaspar Jancis is a director and composer, known for *Captain Morten and the Spider Queen* (2018), *Crocodile* (2009), *Frank & Wendy* (2004) and *Weitzenberg Street* (2002). A few years ago, he made up children stories which he has illustrated with puppets, searching inspiration by Lewis Carrol, Wes Anderson, Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Henry Selick.

NEVER ALONE

Klaus Härö (Finland)

SYNOPSIS

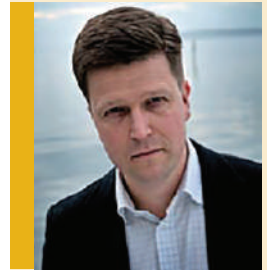
In the years leading up to the Second World War, many Central-European Jews have fled from Hitler's rule, and some have arrived in Finland with hopes of starting a new life. But when Finland joins forces with Nazi-Germany to fight a war against the Soviet Union, it seems as if the refugees are again faced with the horrors that they had tried to escape. This is when they discover that, amidst all the hostility and indifference, there is still one man that is determined to help them.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

In Finland, we have long prided ourselves with the fact that, despite of collaboration with Germany during the WW2, no Jews were persecuted. This turns out to be only half of the truth, since in 1942 eight Jews were indeed deported, five men, one woman and two children, asylum seekers who had fled Hitler's rule. Hearing this I feel lied to. Trying to understand if there wasn't anybody trying to help these poor people, one man stands out from the crowd: Abraham Stiller from the Jewish congregation in Helsinki. At home in two worlds, the Finnish and Jewish one, he acted as a mediator for the asylum seekers. But he soon found himself up against the Nazi friendly politicians and police, facing the impossible choice of either backing down, or keeping his promise even when it meant setting his own community at great danger?

Never Alone is a timeless story of what is the cost of following one's conscience. Through Stiller's actions, we expose a country that by entering into an alliance with Germany, sold its right to exist for a "bowl of soup". We can speculate whether the deportation happened on Finland's own initiative or under German pressure? Maybe even argue that 8 lives are a small price for keeping the country from falling under German occupation and putting the country's own Jews under much greater threat. But up until today, no one has proved the necessity of this sacrifice. What words suffice for those grabbing every last straw trying to survive. *Never Alone* is a compelling drama, raising the question: "Who am I if we shun the foremost responsibility we have as human beings: for the strong to look after the weak?"

Klaus Härö



During his career in film producer Ilkka Matila has produced 21 feature films mostly as international co-productions. His films have received numerous national and international festival prizes. He has twice received the Finnish Jussi award for producing the best film of the year.

Klaus Härö's films have won more than 60 prizes at festivals all over the world including The Crystal Bear at the Berlin Film Festival and the prestigious Ingmar Bergman prize, the winner of which was chosen by Ingmar Bergman himself.

PANOPTICON

George Sikharulidze (Georgia)

SYNOPSIS

After his father abandons him to become a monk, 16 years old Sandro, struggles to reconcile his growing devotion to God and his awakening sexuality, which manifests in uncontrollable ways and leads him to questionable actions, as he searches for meaning and belonging in the turbulent society of post-Soviet Georgia. Left without a moral guide, Sandro battles these opposing forces within his heart in order to survive and make sense of the notions of manhood – a trial that will prove to be a revelation of his humanity, with its dark perversions, as much as a study of the society that nurtures it.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

At 16, when I was finding my sexuality, I was a devout Orthodox Christian. The Georgian Church, which monopolized faith after the Soviet Collapse, forbid sexual experience before marriage for girls. But for boys, there was an unspoken social expectation to acquire such experience at my age. So growing up as boys, our main concern was how to “enter manhood.” I was torn between my body and soul, and I sensed that pretty soon, one side would prevail.

The pressure on young boys was twofold, the shame that you were still a virgin at 16 and sexual experience as a prerequisite for marriage. Young brides, who were denied of such “pleasures,” expected boys to be experienced. I was in love with a girl, whom in my naive heart, I was planning to marry. To preserve our purity, I was repressing all sexual desires towards her. So, what was the alternative? The solution had been programmed in our culture as an unspoken tradition - a parental figure, if you have any, will take you to a brothel. I was a devoted Christian, but I also wanted to belong in this society like any other boy.

In *Panopticon*, I want to dramatize these issues. Sandro fights for visibility, but the more visible he becomes, the more he gets trapped by the society and God. He is a product of a culture in which he is alienated and unable to confide in anyone. I want to deliver him from this trap and hope that this painful search for love and meaning will reveal humanity in this boy, who will grow a little in the process.

George Sikharulidze



George Sikharulidze was born and raised in Tbilisi, Georgia. At 18, he moved to New York where he received a B.S. in Media Studies from NYU and an M.F.A. in Film Directing from Columbia University. His short films include *Red Apples* (2016), *Fatherland* (2017) and *A New Year* (2018), selected at festivals such as TIFF, Clermont-Ferrand, Cinemed, etc. Currently at the Cinéfondation Residence, he is developing his first feature *Panopticon*, which explores adolescent sexuality and Christian fundamentalism in the post-Soviet Georgia.

THE HIGHWAY OF TEARS

Wolfgang Fisher & Ika Künzel (Germany)

SYNOPSIS

The Highway of Tears takes viewers on a journey into the wilderness of the Canadian North, showing its people as a fundamental part of nature at its most untamed. Along the eponymous road where numerous girls went missing the film portrays a rural community that suffers from grief, violence and distrust. It's a place where, ultimately, only the fittest survive. The movie asks what happens when anything is possible – out of reach of detection, regulation, ethics and prohibition. What becomes of a community that's left to its own devices when – thanks to poverty and isolation – it's abandoned by politics and left behind by progress? Does the tyrannised majority retaliate? Do they give in and fall into pieces? Or do they eventually all become predators?

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The Highway of Tears is a drama film, based on the eponymous true crimes against young women along the Highway 16 in British Columbia, Canada. The film is narrated by 21 characters in 21 episodes. It's a matter of fact that the disappearances of female members of First Nation communities neighbouring the infamous road hardly provoke any closer criminal investigations, whereas the collective turning of a blind eye stop once a white girl suffers the same horrible fate. Racism, misogyny and partisanship are common practices among the authorities and widespread within the population.

The Highway of Tears unfolds against this backdrop, where the vast and inaccessible nature defines a tight set-up and is complicit in the crimes by covering up any evidences. The cold calculation, with which the high probability of impunity transforms supposedly ordinary citizens into brutal offenders, divides the community into hunters and hunted.

The film traces the actions of each of its characters as a white girl disappears and the former public ignorance of the ever-present threat turns into hyperbolism that finally escalates into vigilante justice.

Human nature lacking a corrective agent reveals itself as wild, and it becomes obvious that more than one person is exploiting the cover of the forests and the turmoil alike for their abysmal machinations.

The Highway of Tears mirrors the deepening distrust and polarization in the face of the cultural and human challenges that define the brink western societies currently find themselves on. In the end, no one is innocent.

Wolfgang Fisher



Wolfgang Fisher is an Austrian film director and screenwriter. He studied Psychology and Painting at the University of Vienna, followed by Media Art and Film at the Art Academy in Duesseldorf and the Academy of Media Arts (KHM) in Cologne. *What You Don't See* (2009), his film debut, was met with wide critical acclaim. His latest film *Styx* (2018) premiered at the Berlinale 2018 and was presented at festivals worldwide. It won numerous awards and is among this year's finalists of the LUX Film Prize. Wolfgang Fisher lives and works in Berlin.

THE LITTLE BIG PRINCE

Bodo Kox (Poland)

SYNOPSIS

After a sudden loss of his beloved wife Rose, King leaves his run-down planet to find out what has happened to the ideals and dreams of his youth. He lands in a small, provincial town. King is shocked by the grotesque reality around him. He finds solace with eccentric, redhead Martha Fox. In the meantime, the police search a burned house of the local rose supplier Bertie King, where they discover the body of his wife Rose. An ambitious police officer Viper is leading the investigation. Martha begins to notice King's extra-terrestrial features but King continues to play the fool.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

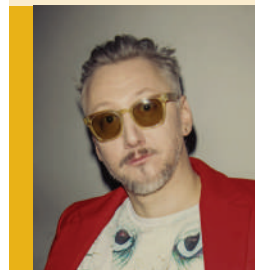
Little Big Prince is meant to complete the triptych about outsiders, featured in my two previous movies: *The Girl From The Wardrobe* and *The Man With The Magic Box*. In the former, the maladjusted and disillusioned characters condemn themselves to alienation. In the latter, it is the oppressive system that exiles them from the society, without the hope of return.

Little Big Prince, however, is about waking up from a life of stagnation. The main character returns from the exile, to which he committed himself and tries to undermine the system that disappointed him. He is fully aware of how small his effort will be when directed at soulless mechanisms setting the modern world in motion. The driving force behind his actions is love: the need to reconnect with his beloved. The main character, just like the Little Prince, decides to die, because only this way he can he reunite with the love of his life.

In our script, we want to create an oneiric universe, inspired by magical realism, showing through the cracks of a brutal, dirty reality. It might be seen as a reference to *Dancer in the Dark* by Lars Von Trier, in which the heroine escapes from the cruel reality into her visions in the form of musical sequences. Another good reference is also *The Fisher King* by Terry Gilliam, as well as *Paris, Texas* by Wim Wenders in terms of imagery and mood.

I wish to keep the tone of my film within the framework of tragicomedy and a combination of harsh realism and magical realism.

Bodo Kox



Director, scriptwriter, performer born in 1977. He has completed Journalism at the University of Wrocław and the «Studio Prob», "Ekran" at the Wajda's School. Member of Polish Film Academy and European Film Academy. He is numbered among the most important and expressive authors of the Polish independent cinema, where he gained the nickname of «off icon» and brought numerous awards. *The Girl from the Wardrobe*, his cinema debut, gained critics enthusiasm appreciation and many festival awards including Arras Film Festival. The last movie *The Man with the Magic Box* is a first big SF movie in Poland since eighties.

THE FATHER WHO MOVED MOUNTAINS

Daniel Sandu (Romania)

SYNOPSIS

Right before Christmas Mircea, a retired intelligence officer, discovers that his son from a previous marriage has disappeared in the mountains. The rescuers are mobilized immediately and are searching even if the weather is not in their favor. Their efforts become more and more vain as the hours and the days are passing; their chances are getting smaller and smaller. Then Mircea is gathering unbelievable resources – ambitious, powerful, technical and financial – and expends the research to unreasonable limits. He is driven by ambition, a guilty feeling (as he is able to better understand his son now that he is missing than when he was still present) and his habit to hold a certain power over other people. This kind of power that has effect on mankind but not on nature itself.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

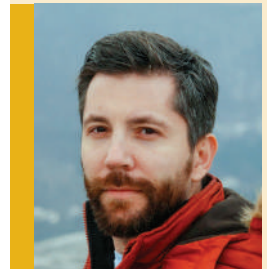
We live in a country where normality is mimicked. Corruption and carelessness have become so present in everyday life that Romanians accept them as the norm, and for the eyes of the foreigners things are made to seem better than they actually are. And this leads to people trying to do justice on their own. The film tells the story of such a man who is decided to face anyone who will stay in the way of him finding his lost son. His determination makes him go against people, authorities and nature itself.

The script is based on a series of true events that took place some years ago and which have touched and inspired me so much that I decided to transform them into a feature film. From the few details featured in the news, I got the feeling that this story is different from all other similar events, but it took me a few years to really get a grasp on my own way of telling this story.

I don't intend this to be a story about a rescue operation, but one about the inability to let go and its effects, about ambition and about the thin line between sanity and insanity in a crisis situation. One of the side stories also focuses on heroes. I want to examine more closely the difference between those who are hired to save lives and those who turn into heroes unwillingly. I for myself do not believe in the concept of being a «hero» for a living. There are heroes, villains and those really particular characters that fall in between these two categories and who are both flawed and determined enough to fight for their cause.

The Father Who Moves Mountains is not a film with special effects or expensive operations on a snowy mountain, but a visually spectacular portrayal of the emotional experience of a man who just can't let go.

Daniel Sandu



Born in 1977 in Piatra Neamt, Romania. After 5 years studying at the Seminary of Orthodox theology when he was teenager, Daniel Sandu has decided to make a turn in his career. Then he studied film directing at the MEDIA university in Bucharest. He is screenwriter and director of short films, including *The Counting Device* (2011) and *Horsepower* (2014), and TV series. His debut feature *One Step Behind the Seraphim* has won eight trophies, including Best Film, at the Romanian Gopo Awards.

THE PRINCESS SPRING

Çağla Zencirci et Guillaume Giovanetti (Turkey)

SYNOPSIS

Istanbul. Bahar ("Spring"), 35, had formed a brilliant duo of architects with her husband Alper. But the children arrived sooner than she thought, and despite her own expectations, she couldn't cope with career and motherhood. So, encouraged by Alper, she withdrew, for the children's sake, yet with frustration. But when she realises that Alper somehow planned the children and her withdrawal, she feels deeply betrayed and gets crazy: she decides to divorce and to refuse the children's custody, to find back her identity as a woman. She first lets go at a bachelorette party, where princess-dressed women get wild, drink and do drugs, and which leads her to meet Dilek, 35, a Kurdish transsexual. She accepts to pretend to be Dilek's wife to help her obtaining her dying father's heritage, in a village in South-East Turkey. They both embark on a journey that will help Bahar to look for the strength to conceive her own way of being a woman and a mother.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

As a Turkish/French duo, after 2 features in Pakistan and Japan, we had to focus on Turkey, at a crucial moment in its history.

With the current political change in the background, we chose to portray a woman who must fight in order not to drown. Bahar belongs to a social class scarcely represented in Turkish Cinema, the "White Turks", born to the 68ers, over-educated, apolitical, atheist, rich, but lost and frustrated.

Our film is a quest for identity, a journey to redemption. It's a character-driven story that breaks all ties in order to act freely: Bahar must find her own way to be a woman. Indeed in Turkey, women, targeted by a schizophrenic society, lose their balance: they should be strong and independent but still bow to expanding conservatism and deny their femininity.

But in Istanbul, we've met Dilek, a transsexual who turned out to be a very balanced and self-confident individual. This is why we want Bahar to get to know her: from the relationship they will build, we would like to bring to light the struggle people must go through in Turkey to define their identities. And we hope that *The Princess Spring's* audience will join their quest, whatever their gender or country.

Çağla Zencirci
& Guillaume
Giovanetti



A Turkish-French couple, Çağla Zencirci & Guillaume Giovanetti have been co-directing films and life since 2004. After several shorts (selected in Berlin, Locarno, Clermont-Ferrand), and two features films, *Noor* (Pakistan, 2012 / Cannes Acid) and *Ningen* (Japan, 2013 / Toronto). *Sibel*, their third feature film, was premiered in the international competition of Locarno 2018, where it received 3 awards, before being invited to 35 festivals in autumn 2018. It will be released in France, Germany, Turkey and Switzerland in early 2018.

WORKS IN PROGRESS



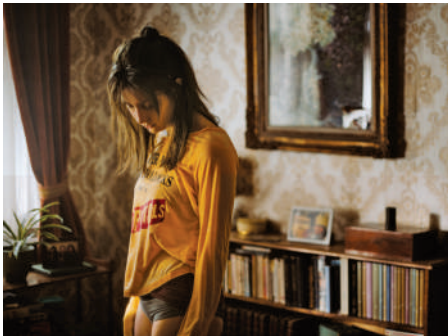
Carte Blanche au VAF

ArrasDays innovate this year and welcome the Flanders Audiovisual Fund for a carte blanche.

Presentation of Works in Progress: 2 feature films debut by 2 young Belgian female directors.

CLEO

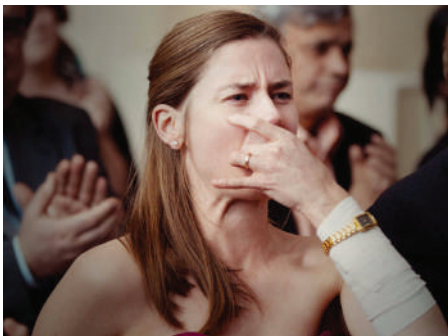
Eva Cools. Producer: Annemie Degryse (Lunanime)



Cleo is the story of a 17 years old girl who survives a traumatic car accident in which her parents die. After that fatal night, she loses herself in Brussels and seeks refuge with the older, mysterious Leos. Her father was a famous concert pianist and she has been playing as well since she was a child. Although she often listens to contemporary music, it is the piano – and especially Rachmaninov's work – that plays a key role in Cleo's healing process.

THE BEST OF DORIEN B.

Anke Blondé. Producer: Dries Phlypo (A Private View)



Dorien (37) has everything to make her happy: a successful husband, two adorable boys and a thriving small pets practice. But when her father reveals that her mother has been having an affair for years and her husband turns out to be very close to a colleague, she begins to doubt. A phone call bearing bad news is the final straw... Dorien realises that she is stuck in a life she didn't want. A comedy drama about a woman who rediscovers herself.

ARRAS

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Renseignements
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www.arrasfilmfestival.com

DANS LE CADRE DU ARRAS FILM FESTIVAL

BOURSES ATTRIBUÉES PAR



ARRAS 2018
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