ZEBRA Poetry Film Festival presents its prizewinners
Festival celebrating the poetry film ends on Sunday with a record number of visitors

Yesterday, on Sunday, 8 December, four prizes with a total value of €12,000 as well as two audience prizes were presented at the awards ceremony of the ZEBRA Poetry Film Festival. The ZEBRA Poetry Film Festival in the Kino in der KulturBrauerei from 5 to 8 December ended with a new record number of 3000 visitors. In his Word of Welcome, Dr. Klaus Lederer, Senator for Culture and Europe in Berlin, described Berlin as the “capital city of the poetry film.”

An international jury comprising Jana Cernik (cultural scholar, Germany), Charlotte Warsen (poet and artist, Germany) and Tim Webb (filmmaker, United Kingdom) awarded the four prizes valued at €3,000 each. 20 poetry films produced in Germany were in competition for the title.
The 2019 ZEBRA Prize for the Best German Poetry Film (donated by the Haus für Poesie) went to The Magical Dimension by Berlin-based filmmaker Gudrun Krebitz for the film version of her poem with the same title and passages from the poems Shall I name you a rising or a setting (Rainer Maria Rilke) and Hero and Leander (Friedrich Schiller). In their statement, the jury said: “In a virtuoso manner, Krebitz shows us her own magical dimension by skilfully superimposing animation and real image, by juxtaposing text passages and by carefully selecting an audio track that generates a variegation of the voice. Thus – by painting, poetry writing, sketching and talking – she draws us to her side.”

The 2019 Goethe Film Prize (donated by the Goethe-Institut) was won by Subconscious Notes by Susann Arnold for the film interpretation of her own poem with the same title. The jury came to their decision because, “[...] For Arnold the means of black-and-white photography are not an expression of objective coverage, but they are rather deployed to recount in a subtle fashion a kind of split. [...] The narrator responds at the pictorial level to the state of homelessness and placelessness with a yearning for freedom and affiliation. Thus the filmmaker stages an obstinate remembrance within a negative-process.”

The 2019 Ritter Sport Film Prize (donated by Alfred Ritter GmbH & Co. KG) went to O Catator Sem Cabeça (The Headless Gatherer) by Igor Shin Moromisato (Brazil/Germany) for his film interpretation of the poem with the same title by Silvia Voss. “A headless collector as a spectral animation pulls his cart over the facades of a nocturnal city. What drives him, what is he looking for? The male voice, that recites the poem by Silvia Voss, tells us a story of dreams, the ones that we have lost and the ones that we futilely try to retrieve”, wrote the Jury in their statement.

The 2019 Prize for the Best Film for Tolerance (donated by the German Foreign Ministry) was won by Kevork Mourad and Waref Abu Quba for their film interpretation of the poem Four Acts for Syria by Raed Wahesh. The three artists come from Syria and live in the US, respectively Germany. According to the jury “[...] The animated film not only strikingly depicts the war, but also Syria, which was destroyed in its course. In the end, it is the city itself that speaks to us in the poem: They have killed me and turned me into my own graveyard.”

The ZEBRA Poetry Film Festival audience also awarded two audience prizes:

The 2019 ZEBRINO Prize for the Best Poetry Film for Children and Young People was awarded to Francie Liebschner for the film Hurry up, Herold! It is based on the poem with the same title by Anke Kuhl. The audience jury from a 5th grade school at Eliashof and a 3rd grade from Bötzwoschule (both Berlin) justifies the choice: “We chose the film because it shows a father who really does everything for his daughter.”
The 2019 Prize for the Best New Talent went to Giulia Valenti from the University of the Arts Bremen (project lecturer: Joachim Hofmann) for HERR 3000.

Special highlights of this year’s ZEBRA Poetry Film Festival were the first Germany-wide Competition and the films by up-and coming new talents at German universities and film academies. This was accompanied by a colloquium comparing the training of German and British students. Renowned filmmaker Jochen Kuhn gave a master class in his working method, which combines painting, music, text and directing into a total work of art. There were readings by German and British poets whose poems were interpreted in films shown in the festival.

For enquiries and information:
Silvia Jackson
Tel: 030. 48 52 45 24
Email: presse@haus-fuer-poesie.org

Press photos: www.haus-fuer-poesie.org/de/presse/
ZEBRA is on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

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