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Estonia Takes Two Main Awards at goEast in Wiesbaden

Jury distinguishes feature films from Estonia, Serbia and Russia / “Remembrance and Future” documentary award goes to Romanian entry / Striking cinematic diversity displayed by goEast programme / Renewed increase in attendance figures / Wiesbaden audience explores the films and life of Sergei Paradzhanov

The prizes have been distributed at the eighth goEast – Festival of Central and Eastern European Film in Wiesbaden. After viewing the ten feature films and six documentaries screening in competition, the international jury chaired by Eberhard Junkersdorf singled out productions from four different countries. The Škoda Award for **Best Film** – the “Golden Lily” endowed with 10,000 euros by Škoda Auto Deutschland – goes to MAGNUS by Kadri Kõusaar (Estonia/United Kingdom, 2007). Paying tribute to the extraordinary representation of existential questions in the Estonian film, the jury praised its depiction of a youngster’s quest for stability in a society unable to provide him with firm ground to stand on.

The **Best Director** award of the City of Wiesbaden (7,500 euros) has been won by Serbian director Stefan Arsenijević for his film LOVE AND OTHER CRIMES (Serbia/Germany/Austria/Slovenia, 2008). The jury praised the finely tuned balance achieved by the director between a depiction of universal psychological problems and the specific social problems encountered by Serbs in day-to-day life.

The new “Remembrance and Future” documentary prize of the Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future” has gone to the film FLOWER BRIDGE by Tomas Ciulei (Romania, 2008) in recognition of that documentary’s moving portrait of a family that is full of love and hope despite difficult circumstances and the absence of the mother.

The prize (2,000 euros) of the **German Federal Foreign Office** for a competition film displaying particular “artistic originality that creates cultural diversity” goes to Eva Nejman’s AT THE RIVER (Ukraine, 2006). The jury underscored the film’s unusual narrative treatment of the basic human theme of coexistence among the different generations.

MAGNUS by Kadri Kõusaar (Estonia, 2007) is also the recipient of the 2008 **International Film Critics’ Award** (FIPRESCI Award).

For the second year in a row, goEast was the platform for the presentation of the **Co-Production Prize for Young German and Eastern/South Eastern European Filmmakers** of the Robert Bosch Stiftung. Convening in Wiesbaden for the first time, the independent jury of experts awards the prize to film projects considered to be especially convincing, and this year ruled in favour of two short-film projects and one documentary proposal. The two prizes in the Short Film category go to the German-Hungarian project SUNSTROKE, which tells the moving story of a 17-year-old girl, and to the German-Romanian coproduction RENOVATION, which impressed the jury above all with the talent of the director involved. The Promotional Prize for Documentary goes to KEIN ORT – NOWHERE IN EUROPE, a German-Polish project recounting the fate suffered by Chechnyan refugees. The partners of the Robert Bosch Stiftung are goEast, the Filmbüro Baden-Württemberg, and also ARTE television, which has agreed to broadcast at least one of the supported films after completion.

The Promotional Award (1,500 euros) of the BHF-BANK-Foundation for the **best contribution from an Eastern European film school** went to Magdalena Kowalczyk for her documentary BY THE RIVER

(Poland, 2007). The expert jury praised the documentary's "reduced formal vocabulary, authentic characters, and unflinching instinct for light and sound", saying that the film about Polish forest workers on the banks of the Vistula unsparingly shows the reality of people on the losing side of processes of social transformation yet at the same time delivers a poetic tale shimmering with vague hopes and modest daydreams.

The **Awards Ceremony** in Caligari FilmBühne followed by a reception in the Hessischer Landtag (the Hessen state parliament building) brought to a close the eighth goEast Film Festival on 15 April 2008. For a full seven days, Wiesbaden was a site of encounter, of dialogue and creativity, and above all the venue of outstanding film productions from Central and Eastern Europe. The eight festival sections brought together a total of 150 full-length and short films, which were supplemented by a range of film discussions, public debates and panel discussions, as well as the rich programme of accompanying cultural events.

goEast was gratified to record a new **audience record** for the weekend falling during the festival: on Saturday alone, 1,060 filmgoers visited the Caligari cinema. Screenings were likewise sold-out on a number of weekday evenings. The German premiere of Nikita Michalkov's *12* and the screening of Andrzej Wajda's *KATYN* were exceptionally attractive to audiences, and likewise several other non-competition programme items. With a total visitor count of more than 9,500 in the course of the festival and accompanying programme, goEast 2008 has lived up to the organizers' stated target of attracting larger audiences from year to year.

The festival was especially gratified by the **impressive response to the Homage and Portrait** sections. The six films and the photography exhibition programmed for this goEast Homage conveyed to the Wiesbaden audience something of the overpowering intensity of Sergei Paradzhanov's colour-drenched films. Thanks to the presence at the goEast Sunday Matinee of Georgi Paradzhanov, the nephew of the great director, and Zarven Sargsyan, director of the Paradzhanov Museum in Yerevan, the plentiful audience was granted further insight into the life of the Georgian-Armenian filmmaker, who died in 1990,. The two matinee guests vividly communicated a personal perspective that brought closer to the audience the fascinating and bizarre cosmos of an artist who was also, as his nephew related in conversation with Ulrich Gregor, "somebody who turned everything into a work of art, and kept his special sense of humour throughout his life."

The goEast **Portrait** was dedicated to the contemporary Hungarian filmmaker Benedek Fliegau. Although forty years separate his films from those of Paradzhanov, the two directors are linked by the independence of their respective artistic vocabularies, their ability to produce grand cinema with few words and unforgettable images. Talking in Wiesbaden to the new audiences so impressed by his ascetic and pared-down aesthetic, Fliegau described himself as a minimalist.

The high acceptance enjoyed by goEast an established **forum for industry professionals** was underscored by the presence of numerous institutions committed to furthering international exchange in relation to film, among them the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the Hungarian body Film Unió, the Goethe Institute and German Films. The festival also witnessed the launch of the new **DVD Edition of Eastern European Film**, released by goEast in collaboration with the Frankfurter Rundschau newspaper and Berlin-based film publishers absolut MEDIEN. As Festival Director Christine Kopf said when presenting the new series, "The expanding festival is now no longer limited to one week in Wiesbaden: the highlights of the goEast programme can be experienced all year round."

Overcoming boundaries with the means of film is the foremost goal of goEast. Christine Kopf summed up the 2008 festival edition as follows: "Everybody who came to Wiesbaden for this year's festival experienced with their own eyes and ears – during the screenings, in the course of conversations – the important role played for European cultures by themes like migration, displacement and identity. We are gratified that goEast can offer this discourse a living platform."

The goEast Film Festival is funded primarily by the Hessen State Ministry of Higher Education, Research and the Arts, the Hessen state capital of Wiesbaden, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future", and Škoda Auto Deutschland. Further sponsors are the BHF-Bank-Foundation and the German Federal Foreign Office. The festival also receives vital funding from the Media Programme of the European Union.

Prize-Winners of goEast 2008

JURY

Eberhard Junkersdorf (Germany, president of the Jury)
Stipe Erceg (Germany)
Elena Giuffrida (Italy)
Melina Pota Koljevic (Serbia)
Bojidar Manov (Bulgaria)

FIPRESCI-JURY

Annika Koppel (Estonia)
Ralf Schenk (Germany)
Jan Olszewski (Poland)

AWARDS

The Škoda Award for Best Film – the “Golden Lily”

MAGNUS / MAGNUS
Estonia/ Great Britain 2007
Director: Kadri Kõusaar

Documentary Award – “Rememberance and Future”

THE FLOWER BRIDGE / PODUL DI FLORI
Romania 2008
Director: Thomas Ciulei

Best Director, award of the City of Wiesbaden

LOVE AND OTHER CRIMES / LJUBAV I DRUGI ZLOČINI
Serbia/ Germany/ Austria/ Slovenia 2008
Director: Stefan Arsenijević

Award of the Federal Foreign Office

AT THE RIVER / BILJA RIČKI (U REKI)
Ukraine 2006
Director: Eva Nejman

Honorary Mentions

THE SIMPLE THINGS / PROSTYE VEŠČI
Russia 2006
Director: Aleksej Popogrebskij

THE MOSQUITO PROBLEM AND OTHER STORIES / PROBLEMAT S KOMARITE I DRUGI ISTORII

Bulgaria/ Germany/ USA 2007
Director: Andrej Paunov

International Film Critic’s Award (FIPRESCI-Prize)

MAGNUS / MAGNUS
Estonia/ Great Britain 2007
Director: Kadri Kõusaar

The Robert Bosch Stiftung's Promotional Prize for Joint Film Productions by Young German and Eastern / South Eastern Filmmakers

Category Short Feature Film:

SUNSTROKE (Germany/Hungary)

Director: Lili Horváth

Production: Henning Kamm

Camera: Róbert Maly

RENOVATION (Germany/ Romania)

Director: Paul Negoescu

Production: David Lindner

Scenario: Simona Ghita

Camera: Paul Andrei Butica

Category Documentary Film:

KEIN ORT – NOWHERE IN EUROPE (Germany/Poland)

Director: Kerstin Nickig

Production: Michael Truckenbrodt

Co-Production: Marcin Wierrzchoslawski

Camera: Michal Tywoniuk

Jury:

Heiko Holefleisch (arte/ZDF, Germany)

Stefan Kitanov (SofiaInternational Festival, Bulgaria)

Nikolaj Nikitin (Berlinale, Germany)

Roland Pellegrino (Producer, Germany)

Mirsad Purivatra (Sarajevo Filmfestival, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The BHF-BANK Foundation Award

BY THE RIVER / PRZY RZECE

Director: Magdalena Kowalczyk, Poland 2006

Academy: Andrzej Wajda Master School of Film Directing in Warsaw

Jury:

Gerd Klee (Wiesbadener Kurier, Germany)

Natascha Gikas (Filmfestival Africa Alive, Germany)

Bernd Kracke (President of the Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach, Germany)

The prize-winning films in the 2008 goEast Students' Competition:

The prize of Documentaries (with 1.000 Euro) is awarded to:

BY THE RIVER / PRZY RZECE

Director: Magdalena Kowalczyk, Poland 2006

Filmschool: Andrzej Wajda Master School of Film Directing in Warsaw

Second prize:

FRAUENBILDER

Director: Tinatin Gurchiani, Germany/Iran 2007

Filmschool: The Film and Television (HFF) "Konrad Wolf", Potsdam

ABOUT THE SHOES / O TOPANKI

Director: Rozálie Kohoutová, Czech Republic 2007

Filmschool: Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts – FAMU, Prague

The prize of Animated- and Experimental Films (1.000 Euro) is awarded to:

CHORD

Director: Simon Rauh, Germany 2008
Filmschool: Hochschule Mainz

Second Prize:

MY HAPPY END

Director: Milen Vilanov, Germany 2007
Filmschool: The Film and Television Academy (HFF) "Konrad Wolf", Potsdam

Third Prize:

PARK BENCH PEOPLE / LAVIČKÁŘI

Director: Denisa Grimmová, Czech Republic 2007
Filmschool: Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts – FAMU Prague

The prize of Fiction Shorts (1.000 Euro) is awarded to:

I DON'T FEEL LIKE DANCING

Directors: Evi Goldbrunner und Joachim Dollhopf, Germany 2008
Filmschool: The Film and Television Academy (HFF) "Konrad Wolf", Potsdam

Second Prize:

WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE MY MOTHER / JAK TO JEST BYĆ MOJĄ MATKĄ

Director: Nora McGettigan, Poland 2007
Filmschool: Andrzej Wajda Master School of Film Directing, Warsaw

Third Prize:

WORMS / ČERVI

Director: Viera Cakanyova, Czech Republic 2007
Filmschool: Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts – FAMU Prague

goEast Reinhard Kämpf Memorial Prize, to the value of of 1,000 euros

AT THE RIVER / BILJA RIČKI (U REKI)

Ukraine 2006

Director: Eva Nejman

Photos of the prize-winners and further press material (director profiles or film stills in print-ready resolution) are available for download from the Press section at www.filmfestival-goeast.de

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The complete 2008 goEast programme as well as up-to-the-minute visual material is available at www.filmfestival-goEast.de.