



36. Venice International Film Critics' Week

Venice, 1 – 11 September 2021

to Valentina

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TOWARDS A NEW BEGINNING

Cinema has lived through the most dramatic and complicated season in its more than century-long history. Normality is still something to be regained. The difficulties and problems caused by the pandemic, by lockdown and by the prolonged closure of cinemas have not yet been completely overcome and are still affecting the sector. The current situation makes it even more crucial to hold a prestigious festival such as the Venice Film Festival, a *kermesse* that turns the spotlight back on the sector, arouses the curiosity of the audience and provides an opportunity to reclaim, with the necessary precautions, a social life long denied. In the past few months, the reopening of cinemas in Italy has not been greeted with the desired audience attendance. This is certainly due to the summer and the wonderful Italian sun, and to an offer somewhat lacking in attractive titles, but it has also to do with fear, reluctance and worries which, although unjustified (cinemas have proved to be among the safest places from a health point of view), have curbed public participation. In this respect the Venice Film Festival can help to overcome the remaining concerns. Our hope and our wish is that, as already happened in 2020, in a situation that was even more complicated than today's, the Venice Film Festival will once again show how exciting it is to come together and enjoy beauty and culture.

As for the Venice International Film Critics' Week, now in its 36th edition, the selection committee, headed by Beatrice Fiorentino and composed of Enrico Azzano, Paola Casella, Simone Emiliani and Roberto Manassero, had a particularly challenging task. Even though, unlike theatrical exhibition, production has never completely stopped, the number of films made over the past 12 months has inevitably dropped and, as always happens in difficult times, the weaker players have been especially affected, that is, as far as our industry is concerned, the independent productions, which represent the main hunting ground of the Venice International Film Critics' Week - always committed to discovering debut films. Moreover, the usual opportunities of exchange and scouting offered by film festivals and markets have also dwindled, as they were partly cancelled or held online. In short, we as the National Union of Italian Film Critics would like to express our utmost appreciation to the selection committee, now at the end of their three-year assignment, and to the small but fierce team of collaborators, Anette Dujisin-Muharay, Alessandro Gropplero, Suomi Sponton, Patrizia Piciacchia, without forgetting the press office, Gianni Galli's The Rumors, and the precious behind-the-scene work of Giuseppe Ghigi, for having succeeded in spite of all to present a solid, diverse, interesting and surprising programme, with the usual, careful eye for new modes of expressions and fresh *mise en scène*.

All of this was possible thanks to the collaboration and support of institutions and sponsors to whom we would like to extend our gratitude, starting with the Ministry of Culture and the Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia, in the persons of its president Roberto Cicutto, its general director Andrea Del Mercato, and the director of the Venice Film Festival Alberto Barbera. The BNL/BNP Paribas Group is again by our side as the main sponsor of the Venice International Film Critics' Week, and it is our hope to continue this historic collaboration. No less heartfelt are our gratitude to Nuovo Imaie, Apulia Film Commission, Circolo del Cinema of Verona, Hotel Saturnia & International of Venice, and Agnus Dei Tiziana Rocca Production.

For the past few years, in addition to the seven feature films in competition and the two special events, the Venice International Film Critics' Week has welcomed a new and very important competition section dedicated to short films and to very young Italian directors, a showcase made with the collaboration and support of Istituto Luce-Cinecittà. Again, the purpose here is clear: to bring talented directors to the attention of the audience and, in particular, of production companies. The fact that a number of filmmakers selected in past years, have in the meantime made their feature film debut is a source of great satisfaction and concrete proof of the quality of the section.

Franco Montini

President | National Union of Italian Film Critics (SNCCI - Sindacato Nazionale Critici Cinematografici Italiani)

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2020+1: REINVENTING THE GAZE

Year 1 of the pandemic. Restarting from the gaze; from the relation between the viewer and the film. What is cinema today? What are we looking for in these images after a whole year spent “at a distance”, deprived of physical contact, forced to communicate through the filter of platforms and devices? After an entire year of video calls, distance education and streaming; of interrupted relationships, denied bodies, digital festivals, having to withstand the dissolution of the cinephile community (and other communities) under the relentless threat of the virus, yet trying our hardest to keep intact the spirit of those who - just like us - are always hungry for sharing and engagement.

The real challenge was to reclaim the act of watching in a theoretical way, and to question ourselves. What became of Cinema after the pandemic? What has changed in our outlook? How do we see today?

The selection of the 36th Venice International Film Critics' Week inevitably bears the marks of our recent experiences. The films chosen together with the selection committee - Enrico Azzano, Paola Casella, Simone Emiliani and Roberto Manassero - from almost 600 submitted films from over 75 countries (a surprising number compared to the initial expectations and compared to the past), put our experiences into perspective, help us process them, and lead us to think in universal terms.

Stories that invite us to connect with one another, that seek in the past answers to the doubts of an evidently fragile present, that push us to reflect on these crucial aspects that have been violently upset by COVID-19 and its several variants. The meaning of life and death, the (new) coordinates of space and time, bodies, distance, fear. The status of mankind in the world.

At the same time, the Venice International Film Critics' Week does not want to stop critically thinking about the aesthetics and the politics of images. We cannot and do not want to lose sight of our main goal: to identify the most courageous and vital trajectories of today's cinema, to discover the authors of tomorrow's, to capture the most interesting directions towards which the visual and sound language is evolving.

This double challenge resulted in a program of 7 + 2 titles from diverse backgrounds, with numerous, unusual and fruitful co-production encounters, which are a clear sign of an increasingly global cinema, the reflection of a shifting identity and the need - already pointed out - to encourage connections (not only financial, but of views) both on and off screen. Altogether nine titles, *auteur* and genre films, lyrical or furious, instinctive, intimate, dystopic or carnal. But above all free, authentic and alive.

If there is one thing we have understood, it is that, despite the bad omens, cinema is far from dead. Cinema never dies. It adapts and transforms itself. It indulges and nourishes our inexhaustible need for emotions and stories, truths and dreams. The greatest hope is to finally be able to share in Venice, in the darkness of the theatre, a renewed gaze on reality and images.

Beatrice Fiorentino

General Delegate | 36. Venice International Film Critics' Week

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THE VENICE INTERNATIONAL FILM CRITICS' WEEK – A HISTORY OF DEBUTS

Throughout the years, the Venice International Film Critics' Week, founded in 1984 by Italian film historian and critic Lino Micciché, has selected first feature films by emerging directors from all over the world who then went on establishing themselves in the international panorama.

In 1985, Kevin Reynolds presented a film that became a cult movie: *Fandango*. The following year, the sidebar section screened *Désordre* by debutant Olivier Assayas (Best Director at the Cannes Film Festival in 2016 with *Personal Shopper*). The British director and scriptwriter Mike Leigh joined the 1988 edition with *High Hopes* and sixteen years later came back to Venice to win the Golden Lion with *Vera Drake*. That same year, we premiered *Let's Get Lost*, the directorial debut of legendary fashion photographer Bruce Weber, later Oscar nominee. 1989 is the year of *O Sangue*, the first feature film of renowned Portuguese filmmaker Pedro Costa (*No Quarto da Vanda*, *Juventude em Marcha*, *Cavalo Dinheiro* and *Vitalina Varela*, Golden Leopard at Locarno in 2019). In 1993 Bryan Singer, cult director of *The Usual Suspects* and the "X-Men" saga, debuted at the Venice Critics' Week with his thriller *Public Access*. The 1997 edition brought to light *Gummo*, the debut film by one of the most prominent names in today's US indie cinema, Harmony Korine. The following year, actor Peter Mullan debuted with *Orphans*, and in 2002 won the Golden Lion with his sophomore film *The Magdalene Sisters*. In 1999, Argentinean director Pablo Trapero premiered *Mundo Grúa*, which went on winning many awards around the world. In 2000, the Lion of the Future "Luigi De Laurentiis" Award was presented to *La faute à Voltaire* by Abdellatif Kechiche, director and scriptwriter of *La vie d'Adèle*, Cannes Palme d'Or in 2014, and three-time César recipient with *La graine et le mulet* (2008) and *L'esquive* (2005). That same year, the selection included *You Can Count on Me* by debutant Kenneth Lonergan, Oscar winner in 2017 for Best Script for *Manchester by the Sea*. In recent years, *Tanna* (2015) by Bentley Dean and Martin Butler landed the nomination for Best Foreign Language Film at the 2017 Academy Awards, whereas *The Last of Us* by Ala Eddine Slim won the 2016 Lion of the Future "Luigi de Laurentis" Venice Award for a Debut Film and later triumphed at the African Academy Awards.

The Venice International Film Critics' Week also hosted the debuts of some of the most influential Italian directors: Carlo Mazzacurati's talent came under the spotlight in 2010 with *Notte italiana*. *La stazione* (1990) was the directorial debut of actor Sergio Rubini and won the Lion of the Future "Luigi de Laurentis" Venice Award for a Debut Film, which the following year went to Antonio Capuano for *Vito e gli altri*. Roberta Torre debuted in 1997 with *Tano da morire*, which later won the David di Donatello, the Globo d'Oro and the Nastro d'Argento for Best Emerging Director. In 2001, *Tornando a casa* marked Vincenzo Marra's debut collecting several awards, a few years later he was back at Venice with *Vento di terra* (2004), winning the Orizzonti Special Mention. In 2003, Salvatore Mereu debuted with *Ballo a tre passi*, special mention Lion of the Future "Luigi de Laurentis" Venice Award for a Debut Film; and in 2007 Andrea Molaioli presented *La ragazza del lago*, earning the Pasinetti Award and ten David di Donatello. In 2012 actor Luigi Lo Cascio presented his first film, *La città ideale*. The following year, the section opened with *L'arte della felicità*, the first feature film by the renowned Neapolitan animation artist Alessandro Rak (who created the Venice Critics' Week opening sequence to celebrate its 30th edition), confirming once again the taste for discovery of a section that tirelessly searches today for the new gazes of tomorrow.

After the world premier at the 35th Venice Film Critics' Week, all of the selected films - among which, Grand Prix recipient *Hayaletler/Ghosts* by Azra Deniz Okyay, Mario Serandrei Award for Best Technical Contribution winner *Topside* by Celine Held and Logan George, Verona Film Club Award receiver *Pohani Dorogy/Bad Roads* by Natalya Vorozhbit - went on to win numerous international awards and gather acclaim at festivals around the world, some of them striking theatrical and major on-demand distribution deals.

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THE 36th VENICE INTERNATIONAL FILM CRITICS' WEEK

The **Venice International Film Critics' Week** is an independent and parallel section organized by the **National Union of Italian Film Critics (SNCCI)** during the **78th Venice International Film Festival** (1 – 11 September 2021). The programme includes a selection of **seven debut films in competition** and **two special events** out of competition, all presented as **world premieres**. The selection is curated by the **General Delegate** of the Venice Critics' Week **Beatrice Fiorentino** together with the members of the **selection committee: Enrico Azzano, Paola Casella, Simone Emiliani and Roberto Manassero**.

THE AWARDS

The seven feature films in competition at the **36th Venice International Film Critics' Week** are eligible for the main award, consisting of a € 5,000 prize:

- **Grand Prize Venice International Film Critics' Week**, conferred by an international jury to the best film in competition. The jury members are **Claudio Cupellini, Vanja Kaludjercic and Sandrine Marques**.

Furthermore, the films in competition are eligible for the following prizes:

- **Verona Film Club Award**, bestowed by a jury composed by under-35 members of the Verona Film Club and awarded to the most innovative film in the section.
- **Mario Serandrei – Hotel Saturnia Award for Best Technical Contribution**, sponsored by the Hotel Saturnia in Venice and conferred by a committee of experts. The jury members are **Massimo Causo, Adriano De Grandis and Silvana Silvestri**.

Lion of the Future – “Luigi De Laurentiis” Venice Award for a Debut Film

The seven films in competition at the Venice International Film Critics' Week, together with all the debut feature films presented in the various competitive sections of the Venice Film Festival (Official Selection and Independent and Parallel Sections) are eligible for the Lion of the Future – “Luigi De Laurentiis” Venice Award for a Debut Film. An International Jury of no more than 5 personalities from the world of cinema and culture from various countries, including one producer, will award a prize of 100,000 US dollars, donated by Filmauro, to be divided equally between the director and the producer. No joint award is allowed.

SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

Once again, the Venice International Film Critics' Week is pleased to count on the support of **BNL Gruppo BNP Paribas**, a bank that has always been active in supporting Italian cinema and international film festivals.

The section is organized under the patronage of the **Regione Veneto, Provincia Autonoma di Bolzano Alto Adige, Adige Provincia Autonoma di Trento, Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia** and **Apulia Film Commission**. After the festival, the selected films will travel to several cities of the abovementioned regions of Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige, and Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

The Venice International Film Critics' Week is also made possible thanks to the support of other important sponsors and partners, such as, **Istituto Luce-Cinecittà, Circolo del Cinema di Verona, NUOVOIMAIE, Agnus Dei - Tiziana Rocca Productions, Hotel Saturnia, Frame by Frame, Stadion Video, Fondazione Fare Cinema - Bobbio Film Festival, Communication Hollywood**.

The Venice Film Critics' Week is happy to collaborate with its media partners: **FRED**, multilingual web radio; **Festival Scope**, online platform for film professionals; **Hot Corn**, online film magazine; **Centro Nazionale del Cortometraggio** (Italian Short Film Center) and **Torino Short Film Market**.

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THE 2021 LINEUP

COMPETITION

ELES TRANSPORTAN A MORTE | THEY CARRY DEATH
by Helena Girón and Samuel M. Delgado
Spain, Colombia

ELTÖRÖLNI FRANKOT | ERASING FRANK
by Gábor Fabricius
Hungary

MONDOCANE | DOGWORLD
by Alessandro Celli
Italy

MOTHER LODE
by Matteo Tortone
France, Italy, Switzerland

OBKHODNIYE PUTI | DETOURS
by Ekaterina Selenkina
Russia, Netherlands

A SALAMANDRA | THE SALAMANDER
by Alex Carvalho
Brazil, France, Germany

ZALAVA
by Arsalan Amiri
Iran

SPECIAL EVENTS

Opening film
KARMALINK
by Jake Wachtel
Cambodia, USA

Closing film
LA DERNIÈRE SÉANCE
THE LAST CHAPTER
by Gianluca Matarrese
Italy, France

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COMPETITION

ELES TRANSPORTAN A MORTE | THEY CARRY DEATH

by Helena Girón and Samuel M. Delgado. Spain, Colombia, 2021. Col., 75'

Screenplay: Helena Girón and Samuel M. Delgado. **Cinematography:** Jose Alayón. **Editing:** Manuel Muñoz Rivas. **Music:** Camilo Sanabria. **Sound:** Carlos E. Garcia. **Art Direction:** Silvia Navarro. **Costume:** Atri Gutiérrez, Maika Novo. **Cast:** Xoán Reices, Valentín Estévez, David Pantaleón, Sara Ferro, Nuria Lestegás. **Production:** Beli Martínez - Filmika Galaika. **Co-production:** José A. Alayón and Jamie Weiss - El Viaje Films, Helena Girón and Samuel M. Delgado - La Banda Negra, Carlos E. Garcia - Blond Indian Films. **World sales:** Bendita Films.

1492: a most crucial year. The Old World at the end of the line, the New World to be conquered and History yet to be written. Columbus's caravels are the backdrop for two wanderings: a group of men fleeing death; a woman with the urgent need to return her dead sister's body to Earth. A surprisingly topical film, both spiritual and earthly, pictorial and political, hypnotic and sensorial.

Synopsis

Among the crew captained by Christopher Columbus, travel three men who should have been dead by now. They have managed to avoid their sad fate by participating in this uncertain journey. When reaching the Canary Islands they flee, taking one of the ship's sails with them. Meanwhile, in the Old World, a woman tries to save her dying sister by bringing her to a healer. Both of these journeys attempt to laugh at death. Both journeys are at the mercy of History.

Helena Girón (1988) and **Samuel M. Delgado** (1987)'s work investigates the relationships between mythology and materialism. Helena Girón's work has been shown at many well known international film festivals including Toronto International Film Festival, Locarno Film Festival, New York Film Festival, Mar De Plata and Rotterdam International Film Festival, among others.

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ELTÖRÖLNI FRANKOT | ERASING FRANK

by Gábor Fabricius. Hungary, 2021. B&W, 99'

Screenplay: Gábor Fabricius. **Cinematography:** Tamás Dobos. **Editing:** Bernadett Tuza-Ritter, Wanda Kiss. **Sound:** Tamás Zányi. **Art Direction:** Dorka Kiss, Gábor Fabricius. **Costume:** Judit Sinkovics. **Cast:** Benjamin Fuchs, Kincső Blénesi, Andrea Waskovich, István Lénárt, Pál Frenák, Zsigmond Gerlóczy, Péter Iványi, Zsolt Zayzon. **Production:** Gábor Fabricius - Otherside Stories, Tamás Barna. **World sales:** Totem Films.

A powerful, energetic and raging debut, suspended between realism and oneirism within a tradition of storytelling that encompasses Tarr, Nemes, Serebrennikov (and others) all at once. A universal story in constant motion, capable of recording, through the clash between a punk musician and the Hungarian regime of the early 1980s, the doubts and disorientation of entire generations of young people. Timeless, against repression, against dictatorships, against silence. Today as yesterday: we are all Frank.

Synopsis

1983, behind the Iron Curtain of Eastern Europe in Budapest. Frank is the charismatic singer of a banned punk band that carries the voice of their generation against a totalitarian regime. Taken by the police psychiatric hospital in an attempt to silence him, Frank will sacrifice everything to resist.

Gábor Fabricius (1975) writer and director, graduated from Central Saint-Martins College, London. He has published two novels and "Erasing Frank" is his debut feature film after several shorts that played in various festivals including TIFF.

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MONDOCANE | DOGWORLD

by Alessandro Celli. Italy, 2021. Col., 110'

Screenplay: Alessandro Celli, Antonio Leotti. **Cinematography:** Giuseppe Maio. **Editing:** Clelio Benevento. **Music:** Federico Bisozzi, Davide Tomat. **Sound:** Angelo Bonanni. **Art Direction:** Fabrizio D'arpino. **Costume:** Andrea Cavalletto. **Cast:** Dennis Protopapa, Giuliano Soprano, Alessandro Borghi, Barbara Ronchi, Ludovica Nasti, Federica Torchetti, Josafat Vagni, Francesco Simon. **Production:** Matteo Rovere - Groenlandia, Gianluca Curti - Minerva Pictures with Rai Cinema. **World Sales:** Minerva Pictures.

A wounded and dystopian Taranto whose coordinates are rewritten according to the rules of genre cinema, with an eye on a vast cinematic universe that brings together John Carpenter and Sergio Martino, Lord of the Flies and Waterworld, despair and hope, Ilva and the global environmental crisis. A film that speaks to everyone, in the best tradition of our "popular" cinema, able to entertain without relinquishing political statements..

Synopsis

In the near future, a small town is surrounded by barbed wire that no one, not even the police, dares to cross. The poorest are left fighting for survival, while gangs compete for the territory. Two thirteen-year-old orphans who grew up together, dream of joining one of the gangs.

Alessandro Celli (1976) directed a number of short films that received several awards among them a David di Donatello, a Globo d'Oro and two special mentions from the Nastri D'Argento juries. He has worked as assistant director and director for kids series and television programmes.

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MOTHER LODE

by Matteo Tortone. France, Italy, Switzerland, 2021. B&W, 86'

Screenplay: Mathieu Granier, Matteo Tortone. **Cinematography:** Patrick Tresch. **Editing:** Enrico Giovannone. **Music:** Ivan Pisino. **Sound:** Jean-Baptiste Madry. **Cast:** José Luis Nazario Campos, Damian Segundo Vospey, Maximiliana Campos Guzman, Juan José Nazario Campos, Juan Pedro Nazario Campos, Cristian Nazario Campos, Katerine Campos, Carla Fernanda Napoleon Vasquez. **Production:** Nadège Labé & Alexis Taillant - Wendigo Films. **Co-production:** Margot Mecca - Malfé Film, Benjamin Poumey - C-Side Productions. **World sales:** Intramovies.

A modern and tragic tale, eternal and universal, set between Lima and La Rinconada, a mining town in the Peruvian Andes. A political manifesto intertwined with magical realism. A story that crosses the boundaries of documentary observation to create a new language between fiction and reality, redefining the rules of space and time, exposing the contradictions of a society willing to sacrifice everything in the name of profit.

Synopsis

Jorge leaves his home and family in the outskirts of Lima to try his luck in the goldmines of the Andes, chasing the promises of the mother lode. We follow Jorge through a journey full of omens, where reality and magical thinking blend together, as he discovers that the myth of wealth is built on sacrifices that become ever more tangible - while the boundaries between victims and oppressors get progressively vague and blurred. "Mother Lode" is a fable about the banality of the descent to hell in times of neoliberalism; it is a paradigm of a relentless world in which everything can be sacrificed in the name of profit.

Matteo Tortone (1982) studied Literature at Turin University and then worked in the field of creative documentary as author, producer and d.o.p. He won the jury prize at the Kazan Film Festival ("White Men", 2011 co-directed with Alessandro Baltera), best cinematography award at Krakow Film Festival ("Rada", Alessandro Abba Legnazzi, 2014). Since 2016 he works as a producer at Malfé Film. In 2018 he signed the cinematography on "Traverser" (After the crossing) by Joel Akafou, which premiered at Berlinale – Panorama in 2020. He won the Eurimages Lab Award [Agora Work in Progress TIFF2019] with his film "Mother Lode".

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OBKHODNIYE PUTI | DETOURS

by Ekaterina Selenkina. Russia, Netherlands, 2021. Col., 73'

Screenplay: Ekaterina Selenkina. **Cinematography:** Alexey Kurbatov. **Editing:** Luis Gutiérrez Arias, Ekaterina Selenkina. **Sound:** Andrey Dergachev. **Art Direction:** Darya Litvinova. **Costume:** Anna Braude. **Cast:** Denis Urvantsev. **Producers:** Vladimir Nadein, Ekaterina Selenkina. **Executive Producers:** Rogier Kramer.

Moscow, today. The urban coordinates of the new Russia are rewritten in an exploration that adopts "other" visual codes to reclaim abandoned or neglected spaces: through Google Maps images, used by pushers to place drugs and sell them on the dark web, through cell phone's grainy images and through images that reflect a direct, careful and rigorous observation. Physical and virtual reality, oppression and control; alienation. Geometries that construct an absolute filmic space that is, at the same time, a place of political resistance and of theoretical reflection.

Synopsis

A sprawling meditation on the choreography of bodies in Moscow's urban landscape, "Detours" depicts a new way of dealing illicit drugs via the dark web, the layering of physical and virtual realities, as well as a reflection on the poetics and politics of space. Taking place in sleepy neighbourhoods, among the concrete walls of high-rises, behind garages and amidst abandoned railroads, the film alternately follows and loses track of Denis, the "treasureman" who hides stashes of drugs all over the city.

Ekaterina Selenkina (1992) is a filmmaker, artist and curator born in St. Petersburg, Russia. Her work received the Bright Future Award of the Hubert Bals Fund of the International Film Festival Rotterdam and the Eurimages Lab Project Award at Les Arcs Film Festival. Together with Zaina Bseiso, Luis Gutiérrez Arias and Joie Estrella Horwitz, she is a member of the film collective Bahía Colectiva. She received her MFA in Film & Video from the California Institute of the Arts and studied film directing at the Moscow School of New Cinema.

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A SALAMANDRA | THE SALAMANDRE

by Alex Carvalho. Brazil, France, Germany. 2021. Col., 119'

Screenplay: Alex Carvalho (adapted from *La Salamandre* by Jean-Christophe Rufin). **Cinematography:** José Deshaies. **Editing:** Joana Collier, Agnieszka Liggett. **Sound:** Edson Secco, Danilo Carvalho. **Art Direction:** Juliana Lobo. **Costume:** Andréa Monteiro. **Cast:** Marina Fois, Maicon Rodrigues, Anna Mouglalis, Bruno Garcia, Allan Souza Lima, Suzy Lopes, Buda Lira, Ane Oliva, Thardelly Lima. **Producers:** Alex Carvalho - N Filmes. **Co-production:** Sven Schnell - Sancinema, Julie Viez - Cinenov, Adriana Rouanet.

Beyond romance, an enticing melodrama where attraction, desire and money are used as weapons and bodies are the ground for dominance and mutual conquest. An unexpectedly political film that lives through the thrills of a female character with a lust for life and a boy in search of a future: an incendiary couple whose hearts beat outside the rules of common sense in an unforgiving class system.

Synopsis

In the wake of years lost to the strains of her father's care, Catherine feels suffocated by the contrast between her feelings and real life. She escapes to Brazil, hoping to reconnect with her sister. Finally unburdened, yet still unable to overcome her anxiety, she stumbles into an improbable relationship with an attractive young man. Gil represents a second chance to experience the life she could have lived, had things been different. Determined to start over, Catherine must decide whether to see her reinvention through to a violent and irrevocable conclusion.

Alex Carvalho (1973) spent his formative years in his native town Recife. After a year working in Luanda, Angola, he moved to London to pursue a Master's Degree in Film at Central Saint Martins and study direction at the National Film and Television School. He worked with the BBC, NYTimes, Netflix, Amnesty International, Safer World, U2, Brian Eno, among others. His films were screened at the Santiago Bellas Artes Museum, MAM São Paulo, Photographers' Gallery London, Les Rencontres d'Arles, Les Arcs. "A Salamandra" marks Alex's feature film directing debut.

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ZALAVA

by Arsalan Amiri. Iran, 2021. Col., 93'

Screenplay: Arsalan Amiri, Ida Panahandeh, Tahmineh Bahram. **Cinematography:** Mohammad Rasouli. **Editing:** Emad Khodabaksh. **Music:** Ramin Kousha. **Sound:** Rashid Daneshmand, Amir Hossein Ghasemi. **Art Direction:** Mohammad Reza Shojaie. **Costume:** M. Hossein Karami. **Cast:** Navid Pourfaraj, Pouria Rahimi Sam, Hoda Zeinolabedin, Baset Rezaei, Shaho Rostami, Fereydoun Hamedi, Zahed Zandi, Saleh Rahimi. **Production:** Samira Baradari, Rouhollar Baradari - Touba Films. **Co-production:** Ruth Yoshie Linton.

A ghost story with touches of noir and melodrama, set in pre-Islamic Revolution Iran, in an atmosphere of collective hysteria that clearly echoes many of today's follies. Religious superstition, suspicion, evil feeding on the irrationality of fear. A film that delves into the past in search of answers about the present, triggering an unpredictable short circuit between Shyamalan and Kiarostami. A fierce and tense political horror film.

Synopsis

1978, in a small village called Zalava, villagers claim that a demon is among them. A young sergeant who investigates this claim crosses paths with an exorcist attempting to rid the village of the demon. He arrests the exorcist on charges of fraud, but he finds himself stuck in a cursed house with his lover. The villagers who believe they are both possessed by the demon, decide to burn down the house.

Arsalan Amiri (1975) was born in Kurdistan, Iran. He holds a B.A. in Film Directing from the Art University of Tehran and a Master's Degree in Dramatic Literature from the University of Tehran. In 2003, he began to write scripts, editing, and making documentaries. His first co-written feature script, "Nahid" (2015), directed by Ida Panahandeh, won the Promising Future Prize in *Un Certain Regard* at the 68th Cannes Film Festival. He continued collaborating with Panahandeh in her following three films: "Israfil" (2017), "The Nikaidos' Fall" (2018- Japan & Hong Kong), and "TiTi" (2020) as co-writer, editor, and producer. His debut feature film is "Zalava", filmed in Iranian Kurdistan.

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OUT OF COMPETITION

SPECIAL EVENT - OPENING FILM

KARMALINK

by Jake Wachtel. Cambodia, USA, 2021. Col., 102'

Screenplay: Jake Wachtel, Christopher Seán Larsen. **Cinematography:** Robert Leitzell. **Editing:** P Harrison Atkins, Stephanie Kaznocha. **Music:** Ariel Marx. **Sound:** Vincent Villa. **Art Direction:** Olga Miasnikova. **Costume:** Olga Miasnikova, Evren Catlin. **Visual effects supervisor:** Blaise & Kyle Hossain. **Cast:** Srey Leak Chhith, Leng Heng Prak, Sahajak Boonthanakit, Cindy Sirinya Bishop, Rous Mony, Sveng Socheata. **Production:** Valerie Steinberg - Valerie Steinberg Productions. **Co-production:** Sok Visal - 802 Films, Christopher Rompré - littleBIG Films. **World sales:** XYZ Films (Nord America), Level K.

A film about memory, collective consciousness and the greed of Western thought. A story of connections, friendship, dreams (and karma) that goes beyond the homage to the American cinema of the 80s and 90s, to embrace an imagery straddling two visions, two opposing approaches to life. A visually spectacular Buddhist science-fiction film that warns against the risks of a hyper-technological, consumerist, increasingly connected society.

Synopsis

In near-future Phnom Penh, a teenage boy teams up with a street-smart girl from his neighborhood to untangle the mystery of his past-life dreams. What begins as a hunt for a Buddhist treasure soon leads to greater discoveries that will either end in digital enlightenment or a total loss of identity.

Jake Wachtel (1987) grew up in Palo Alto, California but now considers himself a dedicated peripatetic, having spent much of the past decade wandering the globe. After graduating from Stanford University with degrees in Psychology and Film Studies, he began a career making short documentaries for nonprofits and social impact ventures working in the global south - his work has been featured on NYTimes.com, Wired, NPR, and MSNBC.

In 2015, hungering to get to know a single community more in-depth, he moved to Cambodia to teach a year-long class in filmmaking to children living in disadvantaged neighborhoods. His Phnom Penh-set short film "The Foreigner Here" premiered at the Cambodian International Film Festival alongside the works of a new wave of young Cambodian directors. Phnom Penh became his home base for several years as he developed "Karmalink" - Cambodia's first sci-fi movie - set in the community where he taught, starring his former students. He is an avid meditator and eclectic musician, playing over 100 instruments from around the world. He also moonlights as an aspiring Cambodian pop star.

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SPECIAL EVENT - CLOSING FILM

LA DERNIÈRE SÉANCE | THE LAST CHAPTER

by Gianluca Matarrese. Italy, France, 2021. Col., 100'

Screenplay: Gianluca Matarrese, Nico Morabito. **Cinematography:** Gianluca Matarrese. **Editing:** Gianluca Matarrese; Giorgia Villa; Giovanni Donfrancesco. **Production:** Giovanni Donfrancesco - Altara Films. **Co-production:** Bocalupo Films.

An intimate and daring confession, a two-way conversation between the director and his lover, a game of dominance and submission that moves through the universe of bondage, the traumas of HIV and the theory of image. The human being is observed from beyond the principle of pleasure, revealing universal questions punctuated by impulses of life and death. A journey of painful complicity in which the eternal duality between Eros and Thanatos is rewritten.

Synopsis

Bernard just retired. He is 63 years old. He lives alone with his two cats and decides to move in the house where he will live the last chapter of the book of his life. While packing, he starts to have to choose what to take with him. Bernard is my master and I am his slave. His last lover.

I help him put away his whip in a box, between the remains of his memory, tokens of lovers stripped from his arms by AIDS, traces of a foster family that pushed him away, of a rigid education that marked him, of a mother and a father that he never met. Our sexual games are the possibility for two generations to meet: between a whip and a leather harness we discuss love, death, the AIDS epidemic of the 80s, his new life project, us. The wounds and the grave goods of a survivor, a cry of life under the lights of sexual pulsions.

Gianluca Matarrese (1980) was born in Torino and moved to Paris in 2002 to study cinema and theater. He graduated in History and Critique of North American Cinema at the University of Torino and Paris VIII, also graduating at the Ecole Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq in Paris. In 2008 he started working in French television, as author, reporter, artistic coordinator, segment producer. He also works as an actor for cinema and theater in France. Between 2013 and 2014 he directed two short-films. "Il mio bacio come al cinema" was awarded the Achille Valdata at the Torino Film Festival. In 2019 his documentary "Fuori Tutto" won the award for Best Italian Documentary at the Torino Film Festival. He is currently co-directing two films with Mattia Colombo.

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36. Venice International Film Critics' Week

with the contribution of



This year more than ever the SIC@SIC, in its 6th edition, is to be considered a fundamental element of the Venice International Film Critics' Week programme; its core; its substance. Not only an incubator, an observatory or a launch pad for some of the most promising talents of the Italian cinema of the future, but the extension of an organic discourse, where short and long feature films complete each other by pointing out, reaffirming and reinforcing an idea. Thanks to the support of the Istituto Luce-Cinecittà, the Venice International Film Critics' Week has become an exciting place for experimentation. This year, our bet is on these seven titles: *Eva* by Rossella Inglese, a tale of desire and despair that take us from the origins of Earth to the pandemic world of today; *Freikörperkultur* by Alba Zari, a counterpoint of images, words and bodies in Nature; *L'incanto* by Chiara Caterina, a disquieting dark landscape, among superstitions and bloody news reports; *Inchei* by Federico Dematté, a coming-of-age story at its finest, the rite of passage of a Roma boy about to leave the suburbs of Milan for Berlin, a sort of duet between Andrea Arnold and Claudio Giovannesi; *Luna piena* by Isabella Torre, a situationist *divertissement* that feeds on colour, nocturnal atmosphere and magic; *L'ultimo spegne la luce* by Tommaso Santambrogio who captures the end of a couple's relationship in a single sequence-shot; *Notte romana* by Valerio Ferrara, intertwining drama and comedy, the impossible love between a young couple from the wealthier and poorer suburbs of Rome. As a tribute to Valentina Pedicini who recently passed away, the opening film: *Era ieri*, the short film she premiered at SIC@SIC back in 2016. The closing film will be *A Chiara* by Jonas Carpignano, a filmmaker who, almost as a ritual, composes first a short version of what will later become a feature film, a sort of diary, of sketch-notes or preparatory work. This only to prove, once again, that cinema is never a completed act, but an infinite motion and in perpetual becoming.

Beatrice Fiorentino

General Delegate | 36. Venice International Film Critics' Week

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SIC@SIC - *Short Italian Cinema @ Settimana Internazionale della Critica*, the partnership between the Venice International Film Critics' Week and the Istituto Luce-Cinecittà, is now in its 6th edition.

Some of the directors whose short films were selected in competition over the years have now completed their first long feature film: Chiara Marotta, Giovanni Dota, Letizia Lamartire, Hleb Papou, Leandro Picarella and Valentina Pedicini. While others, such as Alain Parroni, Elio Di Pace, Luca Capponi, Andrea Corsini and Tommaso Santambrogio, are currently developing it.

We like to think that their presence at the Venice Film Festival gave these young filmmakers visibility and brought them closer to their debut feature films. Therefore, while the Venice Film Festival is in its 78th edition, seven short films are being presented not only to be enjoyed but also to generate the right amount of curiosity and interest in directors who deservedly participate in the world's oldest festival. The Venice International Film Critics' Week is the perfect setting, with its showcase of debut films from around the world working almost as a good omen for these young directors.

In 2016 the late filmmaker Valentina Pedicini took part in the first edition of SIC@SIC, presenting her short *Era Ieri*; this same short will open this year's SIC@SIC as a tribute to her.

Carla Cattani

"I'm unsure whether I've found and caught Moby Dick, but the journey has been one of the best and hardest I took so far".

Valentina Pedicini

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SIC@SIC - Short Italian Cinema @ Settimana Internazionale della Critica

The sixth edition of SIC@SIC (Short Italian Cinema @ Settimana Internazionale della Critica) offers a selection of **seven short films in competition** by Italian directors who have not yet completed a full-length film, and **two special events** out of competition. The short-films programme is part of the **36th Venice International Film Critics' Week** and is curated by the **General Delegate Beatrice Fiorentino** with the members of the **Selection Committee: Enrico Azzano, Paola Casella, Simone Emiliani and Roberto Manassero**. The programme was born thanks to the synergy between the **National Union of Italian Film Critics' (SNCCI)** and the **Istituto Luce-Cinecittà**, as an initiative supporting the development of new Italian cinema and promoting young directors.

THE AWARDS

The seven short films in competition, all screened in **world premiere**, are eligible for the following prizes to be given by a jury composed of three film professionals: **Jacopo Chessa, Silvia Luzi and Nadia Trevisan**.

- **Best Short Film Award**
sponsored by Frame by Frame and consisting in post-production services for the next short film by the winning director.
- **Best Director Award**
sponsored by Stadion Video and consisting of English subtitling for the next short film by the winning director.
- **Best Technical Contribution Award**
sponsored by Fondazione Fare Cinema and consisting of an invitation to the 2022 edition of the Advanced Training Course in Film Directing "Fare Cinema".

After premiering in Venice, the short films presented at SIC@SIC will be promoted at an international level by the Department for International Promotion of Contemporary Cinema of the Istituto Luce-Cinecittà through a series of initiatives and festivals, such as the Mostra de Cinema Italià de Barcelona (Short Films Competition section) programmed in Spain in December 2021. Furthermore, the short films will be made available for industry professionals through the online platforms Festival Scope Pro and Italian Short Film Video Library – a tool for the promotion of Italian short films realized by the Centro Nazionale del Cortometraggio (Italian Short Film Center) in collaboration with Istituto Luce-Cinecittà. Last but not least, at the end of November 2021 they will attend the TSFM – Torino Short Film Market, organized by the Italian Short Film Centre.

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SIC@SIC 2021- THE LINEUP

COMPETITION

EVA by Rossella Inglese

FREIKÖRPERKULTUR by Alba Zari

L'INCANTO by Chiara Caterina

INCHEI by Federico Demattè

LUNA PIENA by Isabella Torre

NOTTE ROMANA by Valerio Ferrara

L'ULTIMO SPEGNE LA LUCE by Tommaso Santambrogio

*

SPECIAL EVENTS

Opening Short Film

ERA IERI

by Valentina Pedicini

Closing Short Film

A CHIARA

by Jonas Carpignano

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COMPETITION SIC@SIC

EVA

by Rossella Inglese. Italy, 2021. Col., 20'

Screenplay: Rossella Inglese. **Cinematography:** Andrea Benjamin Manenti. **Editing:** Rossella Inglese, Antonio La Camera. **Sound:** Marcello Sodano, Antonio La Camera, Matteo Eusepi, Boris Riccardo D'agostino. **Art Direction:** Alexandros Mars. **Costume:** Aida Ghafouri. **Cast:** Giorgia Faraoni, Franco Giusti. **Production:** Massimiliano Zanin, Federico Lami - Wave Cinema, Rossella Inglese. **Co-production:** Andrea Gatopoulos, Marco Crispano - Il Varco Srls. **World sales:** Gargantua Film Distribution.

Synopsis

Expelled from Eden, a man and a woman find themselves immersed in the violence of the Earth. Eva will guide Bruno in a profound journey within himself.

Rossella Inglese (1989) screenwriter, editor and director, she graduated in screenwriting at the NUCT in Rome following a bachelor's degree in digital filmmaking from the SAE Institute of Milan. Her short film "Vanilla" was selected at the 31st Venice International Film Critics' Week. Her short film "Denise" was selected in several film festivals after premiering at the 75th Venice Film Festival, winning several awards. She is currently developing her first feature film: "L'origine del mondo"

FREIKÖRPERKULTUR

by Alba Zari. Italy, 2021. Col., 18'

Screenplay: Alba Zari. **Cinematography:** Alba Zari. **Editing:** Fabio Toich. **Music:** Andrea Gulli, Giorgio Pacorig. **Sound:** Massimiliano Borghesi. **Voice:** Sandro Pivotti. **Production:** Manuela Buono - Slingshot Films. **World Sales:** Slingshot Films.

Synopsis

A family spends the summer months on a nudist beach. Intimacy and beauty of naked bodies, leaves drawing geometrical shapes on the skin, the water seems relieving from any thought. "Freikörperkultur" is a poem about longing for what is lost and will never return. It's the expulsion from Eden.

Alba Zari (1987) led a nomadic life since childhood, living in different cities and countries. Born in Thailand, she graduated in cinematography at the DAMS in Bologna and continued her studies in Photography and Visual Design at NABA in Milan, followed by Documentary Photography at the International Center of Photography in New York. Her traveling experience influences and reflects in her photography focused on social issues. She regularly collaborates with fashion brands and newspapers. Her most recent works are "Places" (2015), a book and photographic project done with "ElementWo", an analysis of the visual communication of ISIS propaganda; "Radici" (2013), a documentary project about the vegetation in the Mesr Desert in Iran; "The Y - Research of Biological Father" (2017), the result of a journey in search of her origins. She is currently researching the Children of God cult in India, Nepal and Thailand. She is also developing her first long-feature documentary, "White Lies".

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L'INCANTO | ENCHANTMENT

by Chiara Caterina. Italy, 2021. Col., 19'

Cinematography: Chiara Caterina. **Editing:** Valentina Andreoli. **Sound:** Mirko Fabbri. **Producer** Chiara Caterina. **Co-producer:** Luca Mosso.

Synopsis

The voices of five women fill the sound space of the film, weaving the threads of the narrative: a woman reads from tarot cards; a survivor of the "Circeo Massacre", one of the most heinous episodes of kidnapping and violence in Italian crime history, answers a journalist's questions; a woman accused of the murder of four people is questioned by the magistrates; a woman recounts her relationship with death, while another seeks an answer to violence through religious practice. These voices bring out, in different ways, the relationship to life through the discourse of death.

Chiara Caterina (1983) is a filmmaker and artist. She graduated in cinematography from DAMS in Roma Tre. She then got a diploma at Le Fresnoy Studio National des Arts Contemporains in France. Her first short-film, "Avant la nuit" won the Festival Cinema Zero in 2013 and the A corto di donne festival. Her documentary "Il mondo o niente" premiered at the 58th Festival dei Popoli and was selected in several international festivals. In 2018 "The afterimage", a generative installation, was presented at several photography and digital arts festivals in France. She is currently developing the documentary "Il dominio, il diamante e il diavolo". In 2020 she participated in the collective film "La citadel teatro" with the episode "Pugno". In 2021 her short-film "Sei ancora tu" was selected at the 57th Pesaro Film Festival.

INCHEI

by Federico Demattè. Italy, 2021. Col., 16'

Screenplay: Federico Demattè. **Cinematography:** Filippo Marzatico. **Editing:** Federico Demattè. **Music:** Tommaso Lapiana. **Sound:** Tommaso Barbaro. **Art Direction and Costume:** Claudia De Salve, Laura Pintacorona. **Cast:** Armando Barosanu, Melanie Kimberley, Andrea Giorgiani, Marco Ezechieli, Ivan Andreozzi, Gabriele Barosanu, Michaela Barosanu. **Production:** Andrea Italia - Nieminen. **World sales:** Premiere Film.

Synopsis

Armando, a 15-year-old Roma teenager lives with his mother and siblings in the suburbs of Milan. The family is about to leave the shacks built ten years ago, to move to Berlin, where his mother's partner found a job and a house. In the two days before departure, Armando moves through his teenage friends, shy feelings of love and a nostalgia for a Milan that is now home.

Federico Demattè (1996) moved to Berlin in 2016 and then London to develop his musical project. After three years abroad he returned to Italy and published his first novel "Jennifer salta giù". He started studying at NABA in Milan and began directing video-clips for Sony, Asian Fake, Bombadischi among others, and commercials for Porsche and Golden Goose. Federico is about to graduate. "Inchei" is his first short-film.

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LUNA PIENA | FULL MOON

by Isabella Torre. Italy, 2020. Col., 15'

Screenplay: Isabella Torre. **Cinematography:** Gemma Doll-Grossman. **Editing:** Melanie Akoka. **Sound:** Giuseppe Tripodi. **Special effects:** Beast VFX. **Cast:** Isabella Torre, Lea Pedri Stocco, Paolo Carpignano, Jonas Carpignano, Tim Curtin, Agnese Draicchio, JD de Virgiliis, Marta Natoli, Nicola Oliva, Koudous Seihon, Giuseppe Tripodi, Lucia Vesco, Alessio Zaccuri. **Production:** Paolo Carpignano, Jonas Carpignano - Stayblack productions srl, Lucia Vesco - GUAI.

Synopsis

A sudden and inexplicable event interrupts an interview that a TV crew is conducting with Lina, a famous actress in a villa in Calabria. Waking up after a short sleep, Lina finds herself alone. The crew has disappeared, the water in the pool is now covered by a layer of slime, as if contaminated. The world seems to have emptied out. There is only a small flock of goats wandering along a deserted beach under the moonlight.

Isabella Torre (1994) directed and starred in her first short film "Ninfe" in 2018. She is currently developing her first feature film based on the same short, called "Basilea". In 2019 she wrote and directed a short documentary film about second generation migrants in Italy.

NOTTE ROMANA | ROMAN NIGHTS

by Valerio Ferrara. Italy, 2021. Col., 12'

Screenplay: Valerio Ferrara, Alessandro Logli, Matteo Petecca. **Cinematography:** Andrea Pietro Munafò. **Editing:** Diego Bellante. **Music:** Alessandro Speranza. **Sound:** Giulio Maria Sereno. **Art Direction:** Nike Paolucci. **Costume:** Beatrice Del Conte, Giorgia Tomatis. **Cast:** Lorenzo Aloi, Raffaele Nardi, Sara Santostasi. **Production:** CSC Production.

Synopsis

In an upper-class neighborhood of Rome, Paolo is having a drink with his friends, as per usual. When he decides to go home, he is approached by two dodgy-looking guys. Gioacchino, one of the two, is immediately very aggressive towards Paolo. He has been looking for him for the last three months, and now he has finally found him. An impossible love triangle between people who come from different backgrounds, a love story that began in the summer days and ended on a warm winter night.

Valerio Ferrara (1996), after a classical diploma and studying piano and composition, graduated in History of Art and Drama at the Sapienza University of Rome, with a thesis on the return of horror gothic in contemporary Italian cinema. Since 2019 he is studying film directing at Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Rome.

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L'ULTIMO SPEGNE LA LUCE | CLOSING TIME

by Tommaso Santambrogio. Italy, 2021. Col., 19'

Screenplay: Tommaso Santambrogio. **Cinematography:** Antonio Morra. **Editing:** Michela Zolfo. **Sound:** Paolo Benvenuti. **Sound designer:** Tommaso Barbaro. **Cast:** Valentina Bellè, Yuri Casagrande Conti. **Production:** : Ivan Casagrande Conti – Rossofilm. **World sales:** Sayonara Film.

Synopsis

Returning from a dinner party with friends, a young couple finds themselves locked outside their house, and have to deal with the remains of their relationship.

Tommaso Santambrogio (1992) is a director and writer from Milan. He lived and studied between Milan, Paris, Rome and La Habana, and collaborated with international authors such as Werner Herzog and Lav Diaz. His last short-films, "Escena Final" and "Los Océanos Son Los Verdaderos Continentes", participated and won awards in several film festivals around the world and they both premiered at the 2019 Venice International Film Festival, the latter at SIC@SIC.

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SPECIAL EVENTS – OUT OF COMPETITION

SPECIAL EVENT – OPENING SHORT FILM

ERA IERI | IT WAS YESTERDAY

by Valentina Pedicini. Italy, 2016. Col., 14'

Screenplay: Francesca Manieri, Valentina Pedicini. **Cinematography:** Jakob Stark. **Editing:** Luca Mandirle. **Sound:** Martin Fliri, Stefano Grosso. **Costume:** Carol Cordella. **Cast:** Giorgia Argese, Matteo De Vita, Paola Re, Samuel Lanzillotti, Mario Critelli, Andrea Fiore, Francesco Funedda. **Production:** Alfredo Covelli - Meprodocodasolo. **Co-production:** Gianpaolo Smiraglia - Jump Cut.

Synopsis

13-year-old Giò and Matteo are best friends. A small strip of land between the sky and the sea in Southern Italy is their kingdom. They head a group of boys, they do some petty thefts to feel grown up in an age of hope and childish games. Love bursts in on a late summer day in the form of Paola: love arrives and turns the world upside down. How far will Giò go to be true to herself, to follow her own desire? The final challenge is a precipice from which one re-emerges, changed, like a breath after apnoea. A black abyss, a baptism of fire, to recount the cruelty of growing up and the courage to choose which part of the sky to belong to.

Valentina Pedicini was born in Brindisi in 1978 and graduated with distinction in Directing at the Zelig School for Documentary, Television and New Media. During her student years she directed the short films “Pater Noster”, “Mio Sovversivo Amore” and “My Marlboro City”, selected and awarded in several international film festivals. In 2013 her documentary “Dal Profondo” was awarded the Solinas Prize, won the Rome Film Festival, won prizes at the Nastri D’Argento and was nominated for the David di Donatello. In 2016 she directed her first fiction work, the short-film “Era ieri”, selected and awarded at the Venice International Film Critics’ Week. Her long feature debut, “Dove Cadono Le Ombre”, was selected at the Giornate degli Autori in Venice the following year. In 2019 she returned to documentary with her film “Faith” selected at Berlinale and IDFA. Valentina Pedicini passed away prematurely in 2020.

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SPECIAL EVENT – CLOSING SHORT FILM

A CHIARA

by Jonas Carpignano. Italy, 2019. Col., 12'

Screenplay: Jonas Carpignano. **Cinematography:** Tim Curtin. **Editing:** Melanie Akoka. **Music:** Dan Romer, Benh Zeitlin. **Sound:** Danilo Romancino. **Special effects:** Can Film. **Cast:** Swamy Rotolo, Grecia Rotolo, Giorgia Rotolo, Carmela Fumo, Claudio Rotolo. **Production:** Paolo Carpignano, Jonas Carpignano - Stayblack Productions srl, Lucia Vesco - GUAI.

Synopsis

Chiara feels that there is something wrong. She has a strange feeling she cannot explain to her mother or sister. During the night, after overhearing a heated argument between her parents and witnessing something shocking, her world is overturned and her safety net crumbles. Reality and dreams start to blur and Chiara's life will never be the same.

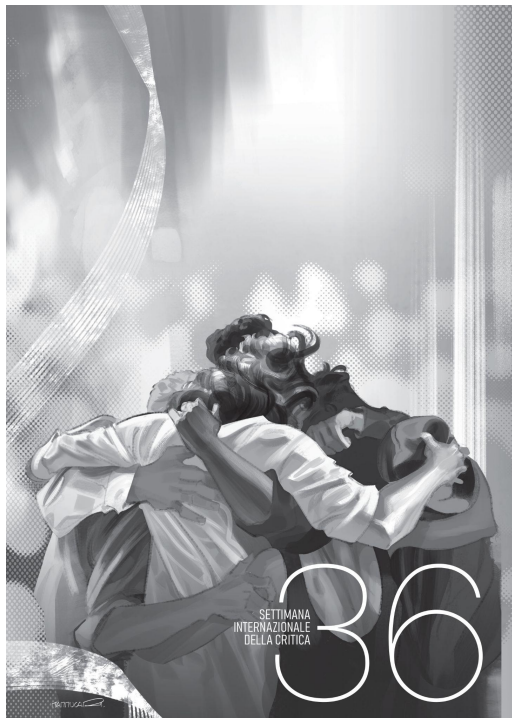
Jonas Carpignano (1984) Jonas Carpignano grew up between Rome and New York. His first two acclaimed short films received awards at the 68th Venice Film Festival and at the 2014 Critics' Week in Cannes. His first feature film, "Mediterranea", was selected in Cannes Critics' Week in 2015. His second feature, "A Ciambra", premiered in 2017 at Cannes Directors' Fortnight. In 2021 he went back to Cannes Directors' Fortnight with the final film of his trilogy, "A Chiara". This same year he presented the short-film "A Chiara", a prelude to the long feature film of the same titles, at the Venice International Film Critics' Week.

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EMBRACING AGAIN



We bear on our bodies the scars of the pandemic that has forced us to distance and isolate ourselves, to see others as something to keep away in order to keep safe. We emptied communal spaces, we shut ourselves inside our homes and we ventured out with masks covering half our faces, eyes to the ground, ashamed to show fear. We created our own islands to protect ourselves and to allow those tirelessly working on a cure to succeed.

And now that one step at a time, we are slowly reconquering all that once seemed obvious and taken for granted, we decided to celebrate the most precious thing we were losing while drifting apart: coming together, finding each other, erasing distances and embracing again. To live and rejoice together once more, reclaiming our bodies, our internal and external spaces, starting with the screening room as celebrated in this image, acknowledging it as an absolute intersection of emotions and experiences. This illustration – resulting from a photograph that captured a moment of pure happiness taken in our beloved Sala Perla in Venice – encapsulates our desire to go back to experience cinema as a moment of sharing and synergy among people. We chose to use mainly white as it is the colour of balance, of life, of the energy that (re)unites all the others; we sculpted it by tracing open and floating lines to draw tightly embraced figures, giving

them form with meshes and digital brushes, so as to bring together the worlds that belong to us: photography, illustration, graphics and images.

Emiliano, Fabrizio and Mauro

Emiliano Mammucari is a cartoonist, writer and illustrator. He began his career in 1998 with the graphic novel “Povero Pinocchio”, published by Montego, the publishing house he helped to create. In 2013 he released “Orfani”, Sergio Bonelli Editore's first monthly colour series, later published worldwide. For the 2017 “Orfani: Terra”, he also wrote the story. He worked on the drawings for “La nuova alba dei morti viventi”, a reimagining of Dylan Dog's first famous publication. In 2018 he published the book “Lezioni spirituali per giovani fumettari”. In 2020 he drew “Zardo”, the “rediscovered” graphic novel written by Dylan Dog's father Tiziano Sclavi.

Mauro Uzzeo has been working with comics, cinema and television for many years now. He scripted the adventures of “Dylan Dog”, “Orfani” and “Zagor”. Together with Giovanni Masi he created “Il Confine”, a multi-media narrative universe, and they also scripted together “Flash Vs. Zagor”.

He was head director of the creative department of Rainbow CGI and is the right arm of Iginio Straffi in the creation of the “Winx Club” cartoons. He worked on the special effects of “L'ultimo terrestre” by Gipi, he directed the animated credits of Fausto Brizzi's “Com'è bello far l'amore”, wrote the script for “Monolith” and “Se mi vuoi bene”, the latter by Fausto Brizzi with whom he co-wrote the film “Bla Bla baby”. He scripted the film “Dampyr” and doubled as a creative producer for the animated series “Dragonero”. Uzzeo collaborated with Italy's Department for Equal Opportunities for several campaigns supporting women victims of violence. He participated in the biggest collective exhibition of cartoonists “1938/2018 Eighty years from Italy's racials laws”. Together with Daniele Bonomo, Paolo Campana, Stefano Piccolu and Fabrizio Verrocchi creates the ARFI!, a cartoon festival that in 2020

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published “Come Vite Sistanti”, a collective work of over eighty among the most important Italian cartoonists. Throughout the years his works have been awarded at the Future Film Festival, Castelli Animati Lamezia Film Festival and Animago. As recognition of his activities as “cultural agitator”, he received in 2016 the Andrea Pazienza award.

Fabrizio Verocchi started off as character designer for one of the main Italian software houses in 1999 and then moved on to work as graphic designer and art director, advertising and fashion (BCVa, Sixty Group, Fendi), web and mobile UI/UX design (Agid - Agenzia per l'Italia Digitale, Maiora Labs, RedBit Games, SciamLab) and publishing, mainly comics (Arancia Studio, BAO Publishing, Disney, Coconino-Fandango, Sergio Bonelli Editore, Star Comics). He is the coordinator of the Graphic Design course, department of Comics and Illustration at the RUFA - Rome University of Fine Arts. In 2015 with Stefano Piccoli, Mauro Uzzeo, Daniele Bonomo and Paolo Campana founded ARF! Festival di Storie, Segni & Disegni, Rome's comics festival, where he is in charge of brand identity and communication.



LOS NADIE by Juan Sebastián Mesa, Sala Perla
12 September 2016 - 31. Venice International Film Critics' Week

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