

EIFF Awards ceremony held today



The winners of this year's prestigious Edinburgh International Film Festival awards were announced at the Festival's awards ceremony, held at Filmhouse today and hosted by Grant Lauchlan, producer and presenter of stv's Moviejuice. The ceremony took place ahead of Sunday's Closing Night Gala, NOT ANOTHER HAPPY ENDING, which will conclude the 12-day Festival.

The Award for Best Film in the International Competition was presented to **Mahdi Fleifel's A WORLD NOT OURS** (Lebanon/UAE/Denmark/UK), which received its UK premiere here at EIFF. The award is given to filmmakers from outside of the UK in recognition of their imagination and innovation. Acclaimed South Korean director Bong Joon-ho chaired the International Feature Film Competition Jury, which also included actress Natalie Dormer and film critic Siobhan Synnot.

The jury citation read: "The International Jury loved this film's warm regard for the people at the heart of the film. A difficult subject was handled with confidence and humour. We hope that many more people get the opportunity to see A WORLD NOT OURS."

Mahdi Fleifel said: "I am immensely grateful to the programmers at the EIFF for inviting my film. I have lived, studied and worked in the UK for 13 years, but I've never

managed to screen any of my work at a single British film event – not even my short films which were pretty successful internationally. Winning the prize in Britain’s No. 1 Film Festival is too good to be true. I hope this will help bring our film to a wider audience in the UK and I would like to thank the jury for this wonderful honour.”

The jury also gave a special mention to Elias Giannakakis’ JOY (Greece). The citation read: “The Jury would like to make special mention of Elias Giannakakis’ unique character study in JOY and an outstanding performance by Amalia Moutousi.”

The Michael Powell Award for Best British Feature Film went to **Lucien Castaing-Taylor** and **Véréna Paravel’s LEVIATHAN** (UK/USA/France), which received its UK Premiere at the Festival. A visually stunning documentary, LEVIATHAN wins one of the longest-running film awards in the UK, honouring imagination and creativity in British filmmaking.

The winner was chosen by the Michael Powell Jury, chaired by Iranian director Samira Makhmalbaf and including actor and director Kevin McKidd and film critic Derek Malcolm. The jury described the film “as an original and imaginative documentary which observes the brutal routine of deep sea fishing in a way which completely immerses the watcher in its story.”

Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Véréna Paravel said: “We are totally bowled over by the news of this award. All our films have been rejected by every British film festival to date, so it is all the more moving for us! We also admire in so many

ways the work of this jury, which makes this award especially meaningful to us both. It also gives us the courage and conviction to continue to keep pushing at the envelope – of cinema, of documentary, of art.”

The jury awarded a special commendation to Paul Wright’s *FOR THOSE IN PERIL* “for its passionate portrait of a young Scots survivor of a tragedy at sea.”

The Award for Best Performance in a British Feature Film was shared by **Jamie Blackley** and **Toby Regbo** for their performances as the dysfunctional schoolboys in **uwantme2killhim?** The performance awards were voted for by the Michael Powell Award Competition Jury.

Jamie Blackley said: “I felt lucky enough to hear that two films I was in had been selected for the EIFF, so to then win this award is a wonderful shock that I wasn’t expecting and I am proud to share it with Toby. I’d like to thank Andrew Douglas and the cast and crew for making the experience so special for me and to EIFF for making me feel so welcome.”

Co-star Toby Regbo added: “I’m absolutely over the moon. Making this film was so positive: a really interesting story, a great director and a superb actor to work opposite, what more could you want really? I’d like to say thank you to the EIFF for supporting British independent film and young actors.”

Reinstated in 2013 after a two-year absence, **The Audience**

Award, supported by Sainsbury's Bank, went to **FIRE IN THE NIGHT** (UK) directed by **Anthony Wonke** for his deeply moving documentary detailing the 1988 Piper Alpha disaster in the North Sea. The film, which received its World Premiere at the Festival, skilfully combines archival footage, audio recordings and interviews with some of the 61 survivors of the disaster, some of whom are interviewed for the very first time.

Voted for by cinema-goers attending public screenings, films were eligible from across the Festival programme at the discretion of the Artistic Director.

Anthony Wonke said: "It's 25 years ago this July that Piper Alpha exploded and sunk into the North Sea and we hope that with this film the memory of that fateful night that affected so many lives will act as a suitable remembrance. I'd like to thank everyone who voted for FIRE IN THE NIGHT, it really does mean an awful lot to everyone involved especially all the men who took part in the film. I know that they will be incredibly touched and thankful that the public engaged with this film and their story in such a positive way."

EIFF Artistic Director Chris Fujiwara said: "The Audience Award, which we reinstated this year after a two-year hiatus, is not only one of the most significant of EIFF's initiatives designed to engage audiences with cinema, it's also one of the most fun. We're delighted by the enthusiasm shown by our audience members who took part in choosing this award, and we're grateful for the support and commitment of Sainsbury's Bank."

GHL by **Lotte Schreiber** won **The Award for Best Short Film** in

the shorts category. The prize was one of three awards bestowed by the Short Film Competition Jury, which included International Film Festival Rotterdam programmer Inge de Leeuw (chair), film critic Christoph Huber and independent film programmer Ricardo Matos Cabo.

The jury citation read: "The jury unanimously gives this prize for Best Short Film to a visually and rhythmically precise architectural study that doubles as a portrait of current social changes with the ghost of capitalism haunting the space of a popular landmark of communal recreation erected as a socialist utopia in Vienna.

Lotte Schreiber said: "I am very proud to receive this amazing award from this fantastic film festival, which is the most exciting one I've ever received! I'm proud of my little team and I want to thank them all for their precious contribution to this little movie: especially Johannes Hammel, who did the breathtaking camerawork and Michael Krassnitzer for his perfect low-key acting. This award makes me sure to keep on filmmaking, even under extremely tough economic circumstances, which will probably become even tougher for all of us independent filmmakers in the next years. But it's worth carrying on! I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Festival Programme Committee who has selected the Film to be part of the International Competition at EIFF and likewise to the Short Film jury members, who have put their whole confidence into this little Viennese movie."

The Award for Creative Innovation in a Short Film, given for the first time this year, was awarded to **DOLL PARTS** by **Muzi Quawson**, as voted for by the Shorts Jury. The jury citation read: "The prize for creative innovation goes to a short that

takes an unusual approach to documenting subculture and its protagonists, utilising paradoxical means. The film achieves a sense of drift by focusing on moments of stasis and capturing the energy of touring musicians through surprising ellipses and attention to incidental details.”

Another newly introduced award within the shorts category, **The Award for Outstanding Individual Contribution to a Short Film**, which celebrates imaginative and innovative work in short cinema, was awarded to **Josh Gibson** as Director of Photography of **LIGHT PLATE**, which he also directed.

The jury citation read: “The prize for outstanding contribution to a short film goes to the camerawork of a magical landscape study, capturing a day in the Tuscan countryside with a series of subtle, imaginative and mesmerizingly textured images forged with careful attention to the possibilities and beauty of 35mm films.”

Josh Gibson said: “I am honoured and humbled to receive this award and to be recognized along with this small, personal film at such a prestigious international film festival, brimming with work by talented people that I have admired for a long time. Unlike feature films, short films are delicate creatures that owe much to the programming. In shorts programmes the individual films reverberate against one another, sometimes changing fundamentally depending upon the other pieces in the programme. I especially want to thank the EIFF programmers for finding a place for LIGHT PLATE where its particular point of view and visual preoccupations could be acknowledged and admired.”

The jury also gave a special mention to three filmmakers whose work holds great promise for the future: Charlotte Rabate for LUCILLE IN THE SKY; Ivan Castineiras for THE BORDER; and Anna Frances Ewert for ENDLESS DAY.

As voted for by the audience, **The McLaren Award for Best New British Animation**, supported by the British Council, went to **MARILYN MYLLER** by director **Mikey Please** and co-animator **Dan Ojari**. Named after Scottish-born filmmaker Norman McLaren, the McLaren Award is the longest running award celebrating creativity amongst UK animation talent. The award was presented at the awards ceremony by Richard Williams, widely regarded as one of the world's greatest animators.

Mikey Please said: "The team and I are absolutely thrilled to receive the prestigious McLaren Award. We hope that our gonzo, the-rules-are-there-to-break-them approach to filmmaking was very much in a spirit that would have made Norman proud. This was Marilyn's World premiere, so naturally we were very nervous about how she'd be received. To have the warm welcome of an audience vote is wonderful, the best result we could have possibly hoped for."

The Student Critics Jury Award, supported by Morag and James Anderson, was awarded to **CELESTIAL WIVES OF THE MEADOW MARI** by **Alexey Fedorchenko**. The award was determined by a jury of seven aspiring film critics, Lewis Camley, Ruth Swift-Wood, Kathryn Craigmyle, Phil Kennedy, Catarina Mourao, Rebecca Lily Bowen and Vivek Santayana, who took part in a workshop on film criticism at EIFF under the guidance of Kate Taylor (Independent Cinema Office), Gabe Klinger (independent film critic and programmer) and Nick James (editor, Sight & Sound).

The jury citation read: "Bearing in mind what the Artistic Director said, film is reality and also something more. A witty, perceptive and beautiful celebration of folk mythologies".