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Bille August and Jiří Menzel receive Kristián award at Febiofest closing ceremony

After a three-day stay in Prague at which he presented his new film *A Fortunate Man* and conducted interviews and a master class, the Oscar-winning Danish director **Bille August** received a Kristián award for lifetime contribution to cinema at the 26th Prague International Film Festival – Febiofest at its closing ceremony on Thursday 28th March. The festival also bestowed the prize on director **Jiří Menzel**; it was collected by his wife **Olga Menzelová**.

“I really appreciate this prize. In my youth I was inspired by two Czech directors, Jiří Menzel and Miloš Forman, and they were the reason I started to make films. I liked the purity of their films, the bittersweet humour and above all their humanity. To this day I occasionally watch their early films. And when I have also received this prize on the same day as Jiří Menzel, it means a lot to me,” Bille August said.

The Slovak film *By a Sharp Knife* directed by **Teodor Kuhn** won the festival’s New Europe competition section, outclassing nine other pictures by emerging European filmmakers in the opinion of an amateur jury headed by photographer **Jan Saudek**. Its makers walked away with a prize of EUR 5,000 for the hard-hitting drama about a man whose son has been murdered by a gang of neo-Nazis and is forced to seek justice himself.

The closing also saw the presentation of the Amnesty International Febiofest Award to *The Load* by director **Ognjen Glavonić**. The jury, who considered seven competing films on a human rights theme, included actor **Petr Vacek**, Danish director **Isabella Eklöf** and **Petr Benda** of Amnesty International.

The winner of the You’re the Filmmaker amateur category was **Filip Rzepka** with his short *World of Actors*. Second place went to **Jan Paul** for *Cohera* and **Martin Studnický** finished third with *The Fools*. The school teams category was won by the pair of **Darek Husták** and **Jakub Syrovátka** with *Don’t Believe Everything You See on the Internet*, second were **Jan Ryba**, **Filip Lizner** and **Ondřej Veselý** with *Moment of Truth* and third place went to **Adam Závěrka** and **Stanislav Nacár** for *Be Online*. Prizes were presented to the winners by **Marie Mališková** from O2 Czech Republic.

Febiofest brought a great number of big-name filmmakers from around the world to Prague, with the French actor and director **Louis Garrel** making perhaps the biggest impression. He introduced his film *A Faithful Man*, which proved a hit with viewers. After the festival Garrel’s movie, in which he also stars, will enter cinemas in the Czech Republic on 4 April, distributed by Film Europe.

This year’s closing film was *Stan and Ollie*, a biopic of the comedy duo **Stan Laurel** and **Oliver Hardy** directed by **Jon S. Baird**. On Friday, the final day of the festival, the TV miniseries *Monsters of the Shore* will receive a gala premiere at Febiofest. Directed by **Viktor Tauš**, it stars **Klára Melišková**, **Václav Neuzil**, **Miroslav Krobot**, **Zuzana Stivínová**, **Lenka Krobotová** and others.



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The festival's most popular films were *Mia and the White Lion*, *Mirai*, *The Aftermath*, *At Eternity's Gate*, *The Old Man & The Gun*, *Can You Ever Forgive Me?*, *Boy Erased*, *The White Crow* and *Free Solo*.

Following the Prague section of the festival, Febiofest is set to continue from 1 to 18 April 2019 in 14 other cities and towns: České Budějovice, Hradec Králové, Plzeň, Beroun, Jihlava, Ostrava, Mikulov, Kladno, Liberec, Děčín, Olomouc, Uherské Hradiště, Chomutov and Zlín. As is traditional the closing will take place in Zlín.

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