Prague, 25 Sept.

**Servants triumphs at 2020 Prague IFF – Febiofest 2020**

***New Comedy Competition is won by Swedish film Call Mom!***

**The Slovak-Czech-Romanian-Irish drama *Servants* and the zany Swedish comedy *Call Mom!* were the winners in the 27th edition of the Prague IFF – Febiofest. *Servants* triumphed in the Main Competition, which this year was judged by an expert jury for the first time. *Call Mom!* was chosen by a jury of viewers. The Amnesty International Febiofest Award went to the Iranian-Czech drama *Son-Mother*, which is prohibited from being screened in Iranian cinemas. The prizes were presented during the festival’s closing ceremony on Thursday evening. The closing film was *The Truth*, a new French-language film by Japanese director Hirokazu Kore-eda.**

The festival is already up and running in the regions. It kicked off in Liberec while viewers can also look forward to versions of Febiofest in České Budějovice, Ostrava, Děčín, Beroun and Zlín, where the festival’s ceremonial closing is set for 8.10.

**Ivan Ostrochovský wins Main Competition**

The Main Competition jury, comprising directors Beata Parkanová and Slávek Horák and actress Anna Polívková, had to choose from among five excellent, though completely different, films. “Each of the films made an impact on us, affecting different parts of our personality. That’s why we also decided to bestow a Special Mention. And it was just that award that represented the toughest choice among well-matched films. In the end it went to the film *Hope*, which won us over with its sensitive telling of a story, with excellent acting performances,” the jury said.

The jury had no trouble reaching an unanimous decision on the winning film, with the prize going to *Servants*. “An extremely powerful story told by purely cinematic means, a genuine celebration of film language that at the same time delivers a clear message comprehensible to viewers. All elements of this film are of the highest standards in terms of filmmaking, combining to create a highly compelling, brave and original whole,” they said of the drama, which is about two young seminarians who come under secret police pressure in the early 1980s.

“I have to admit I never expected an award, never mind winning,” said the picture’s director, Ivan Ostrochovský. “More than anything I’m happy that my film was screened at a festival and that viewers had a chance to see it before it enters cinemas. The fact that *Servants* also won has made my very happy indeed!”

**Sweden picks up Best Comedy prize**

The Comedy Competition jury comprised 33 viewers headed by actress Dana Morávková. They were most impressed by a movie that handles the difficult subject of fruitless interpersonal communication with elegance and humour, the Swedish film *Call Mom!* by director Lisa Aschan.

**Amnesty International Febiofest Award goes to banned Iranian film**

The jury in the competition Amnesty International Febiofest Award decided to honour a film that they praised for its unusual formal handling of two parallel storylines, naturalness of acting performances and unvarnished, powerful story. “The drama *Son-Mother* concerns the absurd situation of a contemporary Iranian family imprisoned in a trap of social conventions, stereotypes, archaic rules and the threat of slander that springs from them. The story explores deeply engrained negative prejudices against single women and their voices in a male society. It highlights the negative impact of the patriarchy and the repression of women’s rights on a boy, a future man, who inadvertently reproduces the system of social repression,” said the jury, comprising the director of the Czech branch of Amnesty International Linda Sokačová, actress Hana Vagnerová and documentary maker Klára Tasovská.

The director of the winning film, Mahnaz Mohammadi, is not just a filmmaker but also a prominent women’s rights activist in Iran. The uniqueness and importance of the subject matter of her film is borne out by the fact that the film has still not received a distribution permit in Iran. “I can’t even describe the joy this prize gives us,” was the immediate response to the award of the film’s producer, Gabriela Daniels. “Above all else because of the director, Mahnaz Mohammadi, who has been locked up five times. This film hasn’t been approved for distribution in Iran, so nobody there has seen it yet.”

**Environment in the spotlight in You’re the Filmmaker competition**

Six prizes were handed out in the amateur shorts competition You’re the Filmmaker, which this year focused on the environment. Vít Rosenkranc won in the individuals category with *Robinson Crusoe*, a playfully narrated story drawing on elements of contemporary reality. The jury was particularly impressed with the use of sound, which is part of film language. Second place went to Šimon Černík with the film *The Tribe,* while Tina Tran took bronze for *Why Actually?*

In the team category, a financial donation of CZK 30,000 intended for educational events in the area of internet and media literacy went to Prague’s Secondary School for EU Administration for *Absolute Environmentalist,* for the courage to speak thoughtfully about the everyday reality facing many of us. A rhythmically constructed satire, it holds up a mirror to our society with delicate humour and shows that simplicity is key to an environmental and sustainable life. Second place went to the Animation Studio of fourth and fifth grade pupils at the Kolín V elementary school for *Up to our Necks in Garbage*. Third place was taken by the Vráž primary school and *How you help nature be clean*.

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