**25th FSF Portorož AWARDS**

Portorož, 30 October 2022

**Jury for feature films**: Darko Sinko, Milivoj Miki Roš and Ivana Kronja

**Jury for short fiction, documentary, experimental, animated and student films**: Urša Menart, Matevž Jerman and Miloš Tomić

**VESNA AWARDS**

**Vesna Award for Best Feature Film**

**Orchestra**Directed by: Matevž LuzarProduction: Gustav Film

Jury statement: More than just the film’s title, “orchestra” is a metaphor. It takes a conductor for the characters to work in harmony, while their lives are entirely unorchestrated. In other words: privately, they are more or less out of tune. In bringing the narrative into and out of harmony, all the film’s artistic, technical and production segments are very much in tune. Under its conductor’s confident direction, *Orchestra* plays some serious music about the little man, echoing our own lives.

**Vesna Award for Best Director**

**Sara Kern**for **Moja Vesna**

Jury statement: The director creates a deepfelt contrast between the younger sister, too young to shoulder the burden of responsibility, and the older sister, a notably romantic, tragic character shrinking this responsibility, with their dysfunctional father lost somewhere alongside them. Becoming one with the camerawork, actors, and sound, a highly intimate perspective meets a realistic perspective to form an almost symbolic subjective experience.

**Vesna Award for Best Screenplay**

**Matevž Luzar**for **Orchestra**

Jury statement: The screenplay for *Orchestra* combines a set of characters, or the entire cast, into a harmonious whole, while providing an analysis of the Slovenian and Austrian mindsets, from a micro level to the broader level of society, and across generations. Unpretentiously, casually and with warmth, it zooms in life’s fleeting episodes, exposing them in all their humour, absurdity, and personal predicaments.

**Vesna Award for Best Actress in a Leading Role**

**Loti Kovačič** for the role of Moja
in **Moja Vesna**

Jury statement: Amid the lack of notable female characters in this year’s line-up, we were impressed by the presence, mysteriousness, consistent performance and camera appeal of the young Loti Kovačič. One can feel her inner pain and struggle to face the tragedy of her mother’s passing battling with goodness, concern for her family, and her will to live.

**Vesna Award for Best Actor in a Leading Role**

**Petja Labović** for the role of Antonin **Riders**

Jury statement: The character of Anton tries to communicate with the world through anger and violence. With a remarkably mature performance, Petja Labović displays the young man’s disappointment with life – in the face of all the trials it had thrown at him before he had the chance to truly experience it – while showing the ability to empathise and face his fate. He arouses sympathy without being sentimental; he is funny without turning into a parody. Petja Labović’s acting is vigorous, mature, and committed.

**Vesna Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role**

**Alenka Kraigher** for the role of Janain **The Space Among Us**

Jury statement: In her role of the affected bourgeois intruder, Alenka Kraigher as Jana first comes across as terribly annoying. Gradually, one realises that under this veneer is a sensitive woman with all the universal flaws.

**Vesna Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role**

**Jonas Žnidaršič** for the role of Chief Inspectorin **Grandpa Goes South**

Jury statement: In this vibrant film full of interesting characters, we were particularly intrigued by the Chief Inspector, who delivers quite a bravura performance, managing despite his limited on-screen time to inject character into his role.

**Vesna Award for Best Cinematography**

**Simon Tanšek**for **Orchestra**

Jury statement: In this film, cinematography reaches extraordinary professional and aesthetic levels, carefully building its visual identity through black and white images, detailed compositions, precise lighting, and playing by moving action to parallel screens. Subdued yet powerful, it creates a unique voice of an auteur.

**Vesna Award for Best Original Music**

**Gregor Strniša**for **Wracked Piano**

Jury statement: Music in *Wracked Piano* is itself wracked but, like the film, humorous, immersing the audience in the piano and the stories enveloping it. While the author remains silent, his music speaks volumes.

**Vesna Award for Best Editing**

**Andrej Nagode, Matic Drakulić**for **Riders**

Jury statement: Surprising switches and tests filer into one’s experience of the characters and on-screen action. Highly sensitive, the editing is playful but precise, creating a rhythm that emerges as a key factor in taking the narrative to the next level and adding to the cinematic experience.

**Vesna Award for Best Production Design**

**Robert Černelč**for **The Birdbreeder**

Jury statement: The production design creates a clean visual identity. Along with the film as a whole, space deftly alternates between dreams, memories, and reality. The production design is characterised by minute objects telling their stories. Using minimal means, the author confidently builds a strong visual identity for this very special film.

**Vesna Award for Best Costume Design**

**Monika Lorber**for **The Happiest Man in the World**

Jury statement: The costume design adds to the realism, taking the role of one of the key elements of the film’s visual identity. Providing clues about the character’s personal histories, the costumes and their designer express nuances reaching from irony to sympathy.

**Vesna Award for Best Make-up**

**Mojca Gorogranc Petrushevska**for **The Happiest Man in the World**

Jury statement: The make-up in this film is unobtrusive yet ever-present. In harmony with their personalities and emotional states, it lives the lives of its characters.

**Vesna Award for Best Sound**

**Samo Jurca**for **Riders**

Jury statement: Designed with a great deal of feeling, sound is one of the characters of this film. Conspicuous and expressive, it makes one of the director’s pivotal tools in alternating between environments, mental states, memories, visions, and time frames.

**Vesna Award for Best Minority Co-production**

**The Happiest Man in the World**
Directed by: Teona Strugar Mitevska
Slovenian co-producer: Danijel Hočevar (Vertigo)

Jury statement: The film’s dramaturgy and direction complement each other as the narrative builds towards catharsis. Bravely examining vernacular raw feelings and fears, the film confronts the present with the past. The well-established filmmaker pushes herself and the audience to passionately explore the film’s form and subject matter, keeping ever precise and sensitive.

**Vesna Award for Best Documentary**

**Competition**Directed by: Miha Mohorič Production: Sagar Kolektiv

Jury statement: The camera becomes part of the community, celebrating, tirelessly training and partying with it, engaging to the point where it can’t help but sprint alongside its protagonists. With its straightforward approach, it enables the viewer to become a member of the first Roma volunteer fire department, providing them with a window to a world they have little chance of experiencing, if they know about it at all. A film with the potential to become a small hit.

**Vesna Award for Best Short Fiction Film**

**That's How the Summer Ended**
Directed by:Matjaž Ivanišin
Production: Staragara

Jury statement: Using minimal means, this subtle insight into human relationships creates an emotional impression that beckons into a spectrum of perceptions. The film’s faces are exotic landscapes one never grows tired of, the acting is minimalistic, and the message elusive yet precise. The time lost and opportunities missed wander around somewhere between worn-out shoes on the ground and loops in the sky. Autumn is coming.

**Vesna Award for Best Animated Film**

**The Legend of Goldhorn**
Directed by: Lea Vučko
Production: Octopics

Jury statement: A result of masterful handiwork, this intense reinterpretation of a folk tale builds a fantasy world that combines love, beauty, and a sinister play of dark forces, while bringing to life in a modern fashion the old ideals of expressionist movements. Using a carefully crafted visual approach, the author seeks a way to offer an experience of the parallel world one can glimpse through the cracks created by an unusual colour palette, expressive, hand-drawn features, and powerful interventions in editing. (Very metal.)

**Vesna Award for Best Experimental Film**

**www.s-n-d.si**
Directed by: Sara Bezovšek
Producer: Sara Bezovšek

Jury statement: A monumental, Hieronymus Bosch-style homage to the end of the world that aptly translates the zeitgeist phenomenon of doomscrolling into the language of cinema. Thoughtfully accumulating images of the Internet’s trivial daily life, it puts together a poignant portrait of the collective unconscious, painting a premonition of things to come.

**Vesna Award for Best Student Film**

**Pentola**Directed by:Leo ČernicProduction: CSC – Scuola Nazionale di Cinema

Jury statement: A freeing, inspiring experience, both in terms of using the means which animation has to offer, and intimately for the protagonist, who can only become a superhero once he takes off his mask. The filmmaker faces life’s key questions in a humorous way, proposing solutions through intelligent, imaginative direction to create a small story with big ideas.

**Vesna Award for Special Achievement**

**Disappearing / Verschwinden**Directed by: Andrina Mračnikar

Jury statement: The weighty historical issue of the status of the Slovenian minority in Austrian Carinthia is addressed by delicately weaving personal traumas and memories with historical facts and recent political events, using a deepfelt, honest approach to the subject matter in direction to add to the overall quality of the film.

**Vesna Award for Special Achievement**

**x1-Eschaton**
Directed by:Juš Premrov

Jury statement: An experimental film that looks for answers to big questions in a dance of colours, shapes, and the slightest details. A hypnotic, delightful work by Juš Premrov, a “one-man band” auteur who continues his journey in his experimental feature, *Atlas*.

**Vesna Audience Award**

**Riders**
Directed by: Dominik Mencej
Production: Staragara

Average score: 4.52

**OTHER AWARDS**

The Association of Slovenian Film Critics Award forbest Slovenian feature film in the Official Competition

**Wracked Piano**Directed by: Miha Vipotnik

Jury statement: Radio becomes a film. Not a fiction, documentary, or animated film; it becomes all of the above. This is a work put together in an experimental way to form a unique composition with poetic interventions. It is a work innovative in layering fact and fiction, in entangling and untangling the myriad of narrative threads that nonchalantly employ various media forms to manifest. A modern, curious, complex, and accomplished work that explores and expands the medium of cinema – in terms of the visual identity, structure, and content. An outburst of creativity. A vortex of mystery. A melody of memories. Wracked Piano.

Slovenian Art Cinema Association Award

**Moja Vesna**
Directed by: Sara Kern

Jury statement: Just like every winter is followed by summer, death invariably generates new life, but not every death is natural, and not every birth is desired. With delicate sensitivity and a deep understanding of a young person, the director guides the lead actress through the difficult role of a child coping with too heavy a burden better than those obligated to help her shoulder it. While exquisite cinematography and camerawork add to the uneasiness of the situation, hope ultimately remains that a new summer is coming.

IRIDIUM Award for best feature debut

**Riders**
Directed by: Dominik Mencej