



23 — 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

CHEMNITZ INTERNATIONAL

FILM FESTIVAL

PRESS RELEASE

THE WINNERS

The 28th International Film Festival for Children and Young Audiences SCHLiNGEL attracted 20.000 viewers to the cinemas in the venues in Chemnitz.

The main prizes of the 28th SCHLiNGEL edition went to a coprodution from the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Germany, to France, to Germany as well as to Canada. A total of 18 prizes were awarded to the nominated films at the award ceremony in the Carlowitz Congress Centre Chemnitz. In the field of short film, the first four prize winners of this year were already announced last Wednesday as well as at the opening ceremony this year's Lifetime Achievement Award.

A total of 171 films from 54 countries were shown during the past festival week and at the preceding SCHLiNGEL on Tour event in Meißen. In the coming weeks, more than 250 films will also be shown as part of various special programmes such as "SCHLiNGEL on Wheels".

More than 100 festival directors, programmers, journalists and distributors from all over the world as well as children and young people from various European countries were involved in the "Club of Festivals", the various expert juries, the Chemnitz children's, junior and youth juries and the European Children's Jury. We were able to welcome the majority of our jury guests for the 28th SCHLiNGEL directly on site in Chemnitz, the European Capital of Culture 2025. All those who were unfortunately unable to attend the SCHLiNGEL in person were offered the opportunity to view and evaluate the films of this year's festival via a special platform available only to jury members.

In addition to the members of the various juries, numerous experts and filmmakers from all corners of the world were guests at SCHLiNGEL. Actors, directors and producers, among others, presented their films to the young audience and engaged in a lively exchange with them. This year we were once again able to offer our audience a film and festival experience that will remain in their memories for a long time. At the Industry Forum, the established meeting place for the children's and youth film scene, experts from all over the world came together to exchange views on current developments and projects in the film industry at various events.

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// AWARDS OF THE EUROPEAN CHILDREN'S JURY

European Children's Film Award

endowed by the Saxon State Ministry for Science, Culture & Tourism

TOTEM

Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, 2022

Directed by: Sander Burger

Justification of the European Children's Jury:

It is a story that completely enthralled and captivated us from the very beginning. Everything was there, from fleeing and migration to dramatic chases with the police. The young leading actress convinced us convincingly, with her natural and heartfelt manner. The story shows us how important family and our homeland are, even when we are in hopeless situations. The many surprising twists and turns made the outcome unpredictable. Until the moment when a spiky four-legged friend with a strong protective instinct appears and gives new hope. It opens up the boundaries between faith, culture and one's own identity. Gave her back the strength not to despair in her search for her family. There was no perfect ending, but one with hope and confidence!

Thus we award the "European Children's Film Award" to the film TOTEM.

Special Mention:

PRINCES OF THE DESERT | 2023 | France | Directed by: Eric Barbier

// AWARDS OF THE PROFESSIONAL JURY FEATURE FILM NATIONAL

Top Award of the City of Chemnitz

endowed by the city of Chemnitz

TOMORROW SOMEWHERE BY THE SEA

Germany, 2023

Directed by: Patrick Büchting

Justification:

Take a youth novel as a literary model, add a young, talented director who wants to create his first feature-length film as both screenwriter and producer, and supplement this with an old Mercedes in whose interior entire scenes are to be shot. All this leads us to the work that most impressively convinced us as the jury in the category Feature Film National.

The film to be awarded deals with important social themes such as young people searching for and finding their own identity, dealing with grief, death and feelings of guilt, the importance of friendship and love, processes of growing up and breaking away from the parental home. This is achieved by using a sensitive dramaturgy with intelligent arcs of suspense that only gradually reveal central elements of the story to the viewer.

This summer road movie, shot in Germany, France and Spain, is characterised by a sensitive ensemble performance; the film stands out mainly thanks to the performance of Jonas Kaufmann in the role of Konrad.

TOMORROW SOMEWHERE BY THE SEA is the title of Patrick Büchting's remarkable debut, realised as a co-production of the Dortmund University of Applied Sciences and Arts and the Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences. This film is deservedly award the Top Award of the City of Chemnitz.

Special Mention:

NACH UNS DER REST DER WELT | 2022 | Germany | Directed by: Franziska Buch

// AWARDS OF THE PROFESSIONAL JURY FEATURE FILM INTERNATIONAL

SLM Top Award

endowed by the Saxon State Institue for Private Broadcasting and New Media SLM

JUNIORS

France, 2022

Directed by: Hugo P. Thomas

Justification:

From the 20 films that we, the jury of experts for international feature films, had the opportunity to assess over the last few days, one in particular stood out from the SLM's point of view. It offered 95 minutes of best media education without a pointing finger. With almost frightening clarity, it showed what can happen when children and young people are left to their own devices, when they have parents who are hardly there for them, when there is no one to teach them how to use the internet and the like.

This is achieved by using age-appropriate language, an authentic set and credibly developed characters. It holds up a mirror to adolescents, young people and adults alike and thus stimulates discussions about media use, about mastering problems and about interpersonal dealings.

For all these reasons, this year's SLM award goes to the French film JUNIORS.

Congratulations to the entire film team in front of and behind the camera, but especially to the director Hugo P. Thomas, who gave us this great film.

MDR Special Award

endowed by the public broadcaster MDR

COCO FARM

Kanada, 2023

Directed by: Sébastien Gagné

Justification:

We, the jury members, fell in love a little: with a wonderfully authentic cast without stereotypes, but with believable people and 297 chickens.

In a nutshell: The people, almost all of them likeable losers, are enthusiastic about a good idea and approach it in a shirt-sleeved way and with team spirit. They start the eco-label COCO FARM.

What the jury particularly liked was that the business idea came from children. The adults accompany, take seriously, question, but above all support.

Economic topics are taught in a playful way: Shareholder loyalty, the cooperative idea, brand development and creative handling of legal requirements.

We observe and learn how an eco-business is made to fly.

This undertaking succeeds wonderfully; it makes you laugh and a little bit cry and resonates for a long time, not only visually and acoustically.

This year the jury awards the MDR Prize for the Best Special Children's Film International to a positive-constructive narrative that never becomes banal – COCO FARM.

DIAMANT – AWARD FOR BEST CHILD ACTOR OR BEST CHILD ACTRESS

Zhannat Kuruchbekova

(THE GIFT)

Kyrgyzstan, 2023

Directed by: Dalmira Tilepbergen

Justification:

This film shows us the daily live in a society we hardly know over here. We learn that in the local culture certain rights that seem granted for us, are not that obvious everywhere.

With her believable, authenticable and powerful performance our protagonist is the convincing but also charming personification of the fight for equal rights and opportunities for women in a society where only boys count.

Therefore the Professional Jury for the International Films give the award for best young actor to ZHANNAT KURUCHBEKOVA in the movie THE GIFT.

// AWARD OF THE YOUTH JURY

Supported by the broadcaster MDR Supported by Vision Kino with a Moderation Guide

BROTHER

Canada, 2022

Directed by: Clément Virgo

Justification:

As already mentioned, it was difficult to choose only one of the 16 films we watched. After a long and intense discussion, we were nevertheless able to make a decision. Today we are standing here to and distinguish the winner of the Youth Film category. But what makes such an award winner?

We did not only look for a captivating plot, rousing scenes or a convincing acting performance. It particularly mattered to us how a story touched us emotionally. You don't just watch a prize-winning film, you immerse yourself in its narrative.

One film triggered deep emotions not only in the cinema but also afterwards. It is a meaningful story that roused reflectiveness in us. As a viewer, you delve into story dealing with the difficult issue of racism. The film does this from a new significant perspective.

Two black brothers grow up together with their mother without ever really having an easy time. Brothers who have always been there for each other. Brothers who love each other. Brothers who are tragically separated. In a fascinating way, the film depicts a conflict tearing them apart, which astonished, thrilled and shook us down to the smallest detail. The story of the two brothers is told at different time levels: How did it all begin? How did it come to the tragic climax? And what does the world look like afterwards?

Never before have we seen such a comprehensible and remarkable transposition of time in a film. Through breathtaking acting performances, we learned to love the characters. We understood, also through the use of musical motifs, the profundity of this narrative. The plot has a comprehensible red thread and is perfectly wrapped up with a bitter ending. It moved us all to tears.

Racism is a topic that is of great concern to us in the present. Racism is a theme that the film treats in a meaningful way. We need a film that deals with this profound issue and draws attention to it. Our choice has been motivated by these thoughts.

Heart-wrenching emotions, parallel scenes and plots, thoughtful suspense and deep sorrow moved us in such a way that we found our winner.

A film that hurts. A film that makes you think. A film that convinces you from the first second to the final credits.

That is exactly why we are proud to announce the winner. This year's winner selected by the Youth Jury at the 28th International Film Festival SCHLiNGEL is: BROTHER.

Special Mention:

CORD OF LIFE | 2023 | China | Directed by: Sixue Qiao

// AWARD OF THE JUNIOR JURY

BAGHDAD MESSI

Belgium, Netherlands, Iraq, 2022

Directed by: Sahim Omar Kalifa

Justification:

We would now like to present our SCHLiNGEL winning film to you. We chose the film because it moved us particularly.

The story takes us through the life of a boy growing up in a war zone. The director shows us his life bluntly, his suffering and his joy. The film also showed us the privileges we live with every day, without perhaps realising it. For example, we don't have to worry about our safety, it's different for our main character.

The camera guides us through the story with impressive, authentic images, which are accompanied by emotional, stirring music. So we accompany a boy who has to live with the loss of a leg, and who nevertheless continues to live his dreams. The actors conveyed the story so convincingly, especially the lead actor Ahmed Mohammed Adullah touched us with his work. We have been made aware of problems that we were not aware of before.

We would like to thank the director or such a wonderful film and extend our congratulations to Sahim Omar Kalifa for the SCHLiNGEL Junior Jury Prize awarded to his film BAGDAD MESSI.

Special Mention:

ECHO TO DELTA | 2023 | Canada | Directed by: Patrick Boivin

// AWARD OF THE CHILDREN'S JURY

PRINCES OF THE DESERT

France, 2023

Directed by: Eric Barbier

Justification:

We award the Children's Jury Prize to a film that we watched with extreme excitement. We were moved by the adventurous journey of the two friends. Their ambition drives them into a competition in which every second counts. Both friends are seen as crazy in their own ways. The winning film is ZODI & TEHU, PRINCES OF THE DESERT by Eric Barbier from France.

Special Mention:

COCO FARM | 2023 | Canada | Directed by: Sébastien Gagné

SCRAPPER

UK, 2022

Directed by: Charlotte Regan

Justification:

We are the Fairplay Jury. A jury consisting of eight members from Germany, Italy and France.

As part of the 28th International SCHLiNGEL Film Festival, we had the privilege to watch and rate eight movies from different parts of the world.

Different feelings were expressed by each movie. Telling stories of love, friendship and the everyday life.

Tonight's winner is a movie we loved. It was entertaining, funny and deep at the same time. Impressing us with a high quality of cinematography, editing and outstanding scenery.

And the winner is: SCRAPPER.

// AWARDS OF THE PROFESSIONAL JURY SHORT AND ANIMATED FILM

Animated Feature Film Award

endowed by the German Institute for Animated Film DIAF

TONY, SHELLY AND THE MAGIC LIGHT Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, 2023 Directed by: Filip Pošivač

Justification:

Tony's soul is genuine and pure. However, to the sorrow of his parents, he was born with an inner glow. They therefore hide him from the outside world until the girl Shelly enters their apartment building. Shelly and Tony are able to face the world with their rich imagination. Together they uncover the secret of the house. It is a house ghost that feeds on the negative energy, hatred and quarrels of the residents. But no one else seems to notice the ghost. Now it is up to the children to defeat the evil. This involves freeing themselves from the bonds of oppressive parents, claiming independence and love from a narcissistic mother, and standing up to an increasingly ill-tempered house community. Human moods can change and apparently evil contemporaries can be good-hearted. The unique realisation is a proof of deep empathy and a talent for seeing the world through children's eyes. The narrative world is given its own distinctive flair by a puppet animation with a love for detail and magnificent sound.

We award the Animated Feature Film Prize to Filip Pošivač's for TONY, SHELLY AND THE MAGIC LIGHT.

Special Mention:

CHICKEN FOR LINDA! | 2023 | France, Italy | Directed by: Chiara Malta, Sébastien Laudenbach

// AWARDS OF THE CLUB OF FESTIVALS

Club of Festivals Award Children

COCO FARM

Canada, 2023

Directed by: Sébastian Gagné

Justification:

On behalf of the Club of Festivals Jury, we are thrilled to announce the winner of the Children's Feature Film award.

Film is a collective art form that takes a village to create. It relies on creativity, community and fresh approaches to excel, and no film better exemplifies this than tonight's winner, COCO FARM!

Congratulations to the entire film team on realizing a film with real heart in its characters and story; and true artistry in its outstanding acting, writing and direction.

Most of all Coco Farm team, thank you for reinforcing the importance of independent visions and the power of the next generation to create a more sustainable, creative and kind world.

Special Mention:

THE GIFT | 2023 | Kyrgyzstan | Directed by: Dalmira Tilepbergen

Club of Festivals Award Junior

CHICKEN FOR LINDA!

France, Italy, 2023

Directed by: Chiara Malta, Sébastien Laudenbach

Justification:

This is a very unique and highly stylized animated film! Simple yet smart and the contents is informative. The atmosphere of life is very strong, full of warmth, and also blooming with sentimentality, which is both cruel and romantic. It is more suitable for adults to watch with their children. It is best presented to children' with the adults' guidance, so that children will understand and empathize with adults.

Special Mention:

THE FANTASTIC THREE | 2022 | France | Directed by: Michaël Dichter

Club of Festivals Award Youth

SCRAPPER

UK, 2022

Directed by: Charlotte Regan

Justification:

Our prize goes to a film with an original style that we believe hits the young target group as well as the adult. The well-written story is basically serious, but told with so much warmth that our hearts melt. With its unique tone and a lot of humor, the film depicts how life in a very unexpected way can change and never be the same again. It is a film about growing up and family relationships, where the fantastic actors contribute greatly to the film's enjoyable 84 minutes. We really enjoyed getting to know Georgie and her father in the amazing film SCRAPPER, which is our winner in the category Best Youth Film.

Special Mention:

I LIKE MOVIES | 2022 | Canada | Directed by: Chandler Levack

JUNIORS

France, 2022

Directed by: Hugo P. Thomas

Justification:

The original story engages from the first moment balancing between drama and entertainment. It shows that for every lie there is a price to pay.

The film raises important questions about material and moral values that call for further reflection and discussion.

And the Winner is: JUNIORS directed by Hugo P. Thomas.

// CIFEJ-AWARD

THE LITTLE HORSEWHIP

China, 2022

Directed by: Xinwen Dong, Shapkat Murat

Justification:

Because it is a visual poem with depth and important values for the betterment of family and society. Acting is so truthful and that is seems you are really there in those marvelous landscapes beautifully photographed. This film will inspire new generations to keep fighting for their dreams with the support of the ones surrounding them.

// AWARD OF THE FIPRESCI-JURY

ECHO TO DELTA

Canada, 2023

Directed by: Patrick Boivin

Justification:

Does extra-terrestrial life exist? Have alien civilizations helped humanity evolve? Inspired by their father's tales, two brothers seek answers to these and other big questions, until tragedy strikes threatening to destroy life as they know it.

In a film where fantasy and reality subtly intertwine, and in which human loss and guilt are deftly dissected, we learn that few human experiences are as universal as grief. Anchored by a sensitive performance by Isak Guinard Butt, and displaying an original use of the camera, stop-motion, origami, and music, the FIPRESCI International Critics' Prize therefore goes to the Canadian film Echo to Delta by Patrick Boivin.

// AWARD OF THE ECUMENICAL JURY

JUNIORS

France, 2022

Directed by: Hugo P. Thomas

Justification:

This film courageously navigates the delicate balance between humor and heart, presenting a captivating tale of redemption. The strongly performed coming-of-age film offers typical elements of the genre but transcends clichés through an unconventional premise. In a world where superficial desires can sometimes cloud our judgment, this movie serves as a poignant reminder of the power of self-reflection and the capacity for change within us all. The story is told from the viewpoint of young people, in whose universe adults are mostly out of view. The film never condemns or overstates its message, but nobody will leave the room untouched. It encourages us to reflect on our own actions, fostering empathy and understanding in the process. In the end, we are left with a powerful message about the resilience of the human spirit and the potential for a real connection between humans. Congratulations to a movie that goes beyond the surface and leaves a lasting impact on our hearts and minds: the film JUNIORS by Hugo P. Thomas.

Special Mention:

THE GIFT | 2023 | Kyrgyzstan | Directed by: Dalmira Tilepbergen

// AUDIENCE AWARD CHEMNITZ

ALIENS ABDUCTED MY PARENTS AND NOW I FEEL KINDA LEFT OUT

USA, 2022

Directed by: Jake van Wagoner

// AWARDS SHORT FILM COMPETITION

Short Film Award National

endowed by Filmverband Sachsen

DIGITAL INVESTIGATIONS

Germany, 2022

Directed by: Jonathan Benedict Behr

Justification:

Lost in reality and the virtual world. Lyn, bored with her own life, indulges in her hobby of snooping on people in her parents' hotel in the homely Black Forest. To get a glimpse behind the façade, she searches in the hotel rooms and the internet for their secrets. In the process, Lyn has to learn that every decision she makes has consequences that can be quite dangerous for her.

Visually strong and driven by the film music (Peter Albrecht), the filmmakers Jonathan Benedict Behr (director and screenplay), Olivia Helmlinger (screenwriter) and Junus Baker (screenplay) succeed in building interesting characters and a gripping plot in only 25 minutes. The transitions to the different worlds are chosen in an original way and the audience is really drawn into the plot. And in the end it is a pity that DIGITAL INVESTIGATIONS is only 25 minutes long. The award for Best National Short Film goes to director Jonathan Benedict Behr for his film DIGITAL INVESTIGATIONS.

Short Film Award International

endowed by Filmverband Sachsen

ACTS IN PARTS

Spain, Italy, 2023

Directed by: Sergio Milán

Justification:

For films people often look for exciting or crazy stories. Yet life writes exactly these. Hodgkin's lymphoma sounds like a resident in a terrarium, but it is a disease that can lead to death. Such and

similar tragic-comic incidents are told in this film. They are sad events, but told by the director in a way that makes you laugh! Inevitably laugh; everything revolves around the fight against deadly diseases. A subject one does not like to talk about, let alone laugh about. With dialogue and scenes brimming with black humour and images that would otherwise move you to tears, the film leaves the viewer with a sly smile at the end. It doesn't necessarily take away our fear of death, but it shows that one can and should fight against it ... The prize for the best international feature film goes to the Spanish director Sergio Milàn for his film ACTOS POR PARTES — ACTS IN PARTS.

Special Mention:

THE INNKEEPER | 2023 | Ireland | Directed by: Paudie Baggott

Short Film Award Animation National

endowed by AG Animationsfilm

DAILY TALES – PART ONE: THE MAGNIFICENT BEAUTY OF A TRAIN RIDE

Germany, 2023

Directed by: Alexander Dietrich, Johannes Flick

Justification:

DAILY TALES, as already announced in the opening credits, is the unique beauty of a train journey. It encompasses pretty much all the experiential values that can be gathered before and during a journey and all that in incredible 114 seconds. At a desolate platform, the train arrives with phenomenal delays after a frustrated wait. The train arrives and invites the blue-haired protagonist on a turbulent chase of emotions. Like the overcrowded train itself, one races through the catastrophes of interpersonal unpleasantness reminiscent of a state of emergency. Unpleasant fellow passengers, eating their button sandwiches, or office dogs and space-consuming erasers speakers parked on seats give the blue-head a hard time. Until it comes to a rollover and a fistful of hit plush bird becomes the film's beacon of hope. Lovingly portrayed with puppets made from household objects, picturesque animation and a sophisticated sound design, the explosive emotional world of DAILY TALES completely captivates the viewer. The award for Best National Short Animated Film goes to Alexander Dietrich and Johannes Flick for their film DAILY TALES – PART ONE: THE MAGNIFICENT BEAUTY OF A TRAIN RIDE.

Special Mention:

WIND FLÜSTERER | 2022 | Germany, Ecuador | Directed by: Fernanda Caicedo

Short Film Award Animation International

endowed by AG Animationsfilm

THE MYSTERY OF MISSING SOCKS

Estonia, 2023

Directed by: Oskar Lehemaa

Justification:

The search for missing things can take you to the most unusual places and often you surprisingly find more than you bargained for. This is also the case for the little girl Pille, who goes in search of her father's missing socks under the bed and plunges into a fantastic world of forgotten things. Both the thoughtfully used sound design and the film music carry the tension and humour far beyond what is visually visible. The lovingly designed and animated characters immerse the audience in the exciting adventure. A film full of love for detail – visually and technically outstandingly realised an exciting adventure story beginns. The whole family can find themselves in the humorous anecdotes and situations. The prize for Best International Short Animated Film goes to Oskar Lehemaa for his film THE MYSTERY OF MISSING SOCKS.

Special Mention:

SAMARA OP. 4 | 2022 | France | Directed by: Maxime Wattrelos, Jérémy Trochet, Louis Cocquet, Marie Heribel, François Mainguet

// LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

MICHEL OCELOT

French director for animated films, writer and storyboard artist