

NEWS

Norway's 'Beware Of Children' wins world's largest film prize in Goteborg

BY WENDY MITCHELL | 1 FEBRUARY 2020



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'BEWARE OF CHILDREN'

Beware Of Children, directed by Norway's Dag Johan Haugerud, has won the Dragon Award for Best Nordic Film in Goteborg tonight (1 Feb).

The prize money of \$104,000 (SEK 1m) makes it the world's largest film prize. The backers are Volvo Car Group, Region Västra Götaland and the City Council of Gothenburg.

The jury, led by Mia Hansen-Love, said *Beware Of Children* was "inspiring reflection about the intricacy of education from an adult perspective. It questions the innocence of one's childhood in a captivating way. Human relationships are portrayed with sensitivity and subtlety."

The film had its world premiere in Venice Days and is about the aftermath of a fatal accident at a school. Picture Tree International handles sales and Yngve Sæther produces for Motlys.

The Dragon Award for best acting (a gender neutral category) went to Henriette Steenstrup for *Beware Of Children*.

The Sven Nykvist Cinematography Award went to Marius Matzow Gulbrandsen for *Disco*.

The audience award and the Fipresci prize went to Henrik Schyffert for *Uje*.

Best Nordic documentary was Jussi Rastas and Jenni Kivistö's *Colombia In My Arms*.

The Ingmar Bergman International Debut Award went to *Workforce* by David Zonana..

The Dragon Award for best international film went to *And the Birds Rained Down* by Louise Archambault.

Amongst other prizes, the Nordic Honorary Dragon Award went to Stellan Skarsgård; the best Swedish short was *Daddy's Girl* by Julia Lindström; the audience award for Swedish short went to *Index* by Nicolas Kolovos; the Angelo Award went to Martin Von Krogh for *Cinema Pameer*; the Mai Zetterling Grant went to Niki Lindroth von Bahr; and the Nordisk Film & TV Fond prize went to Sara Johnsen for TV series *22 July*.

The festival made waves this year by committing to a gender-equal programme, the first major international film festival to hit that target.

Artistic director Jonas Holmberg said: "The difficult part has been the discussions in the programming team about what is quality, what is equality. Those are complex issues. What has been easy is finding the films. It wasn't difficult to find enough great films directed by women to create a gender-balanced programme."

Industry programmes

The industry activities include the two-day TV Drama Vision conference, which previewed more than 40 new Nordic shows, including HBO Nordic's *Beartown*, SVT's *Caliphate* and Mer Film's Norwegian comedy *Clone*. In addition to all the major Nordic broadcasters and platforms, international speakers included Haut et Court's Caroline Benjo and Carole Scotta from France; ZDF's Simone Emmelius and Frank Seyberth from Germany; and Olesya Lukyanenko and Kateryna Vyshnevskaya from FILM.UA Group, producers of the first 'Ukrainian noir,' *Hide & Seek*.

Goteborg's Nordic Film Market hosted Discovery pitches by rising talents, including Cecilia Torquato de Oliveira's feature debut *Boost!*, about a teenage skateboarder obsessed with the virtual world, to be executive produced by Swedish director Johannes Nyholm. Another hot Discovery title was *Chrysanthemum*, about a family recovering from a tragedy 15 years before. Christian Bengtson will make his feature directorial debut, and Daniel Muhlendorph produces for rising production company Hyæne (*Sons Of Denmark*).

NFM's Works in Progress presentations, which always includes at least a few films that end up in Cannes or Toronto, offered a preview of features including Thomas Vinterberg's drinking story *Another Round* starring Mads Mikkelsen (sold by TrustNordisk), Valdimar Johansson's Icelandic drama/thriller *Lamb* starring Noomi Rapace (sold by New Europe); Magnus van Horn's Polish-Swedish co-production *Sweat* (sold by New Europe) and Eskil Vogt's second feature *The Innocents*.

Industry attendees also praised Hamy Ramezan's personal immigrant story *Any Day Now* from Finland and Danish police thriller *Shorta*, which had previously stirred up lots of sales company interest after its work in progress presentation in Les Arcs. Two documentaries also had festival programmers talking: Gorki Glaser-Muller's refugee camp story *Children Of The Enemy* and Jonas Poher Rasmussen's animated documentary *Flee* (sold by Cinephil).