



## PIFF Prague Independent Film Festival Announces 2016 Award Winners

**Prague, Czech Republic – 21 August, 2016** – Prague Independent Film Festival (PIFF) announced the award winners on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August at Lucerna Cinema from the Narrative Feature, Narrative Short, Animation, Experimental, Comedy and Horror categories.

The first edition of Prague Independent Film Festival took place on 15-18 August in cinemas Evald, Atlas and Lucerna.

The film festival accepted international submissions from all over the world and has received **291** films of which **33** were selected by an international jury.

Over the course of four days, the Prague Independent Film Festival screened films from **USA, UK, Spain, Russia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Lebanon and Germany**. Most of the films were Czech Republic premieres.

The opening film of the festival was **“Rocco Has Your Name”** (Rocco tiene tu nombre), a Spanish film by Italian director **Angelo Orlando** who also wrote the screenplay for this film which won the prize for Best Screenplay. **Michele Venitucci** played the leading role of Bobo and was awarded Best Actor. Rocco Has Your Name is a psychological drama which leaves room for imagination and for different interpretations of the events depicted in the film. The director/screenwriter Angelo Orlando is also an award winning actor; he has acted in the films of Federico Fellini, Massimo Troisi, Mario Monicelli and was awarded the David di Donatello.

The Best Feature Film award was given to **“Despite the Falling Snow** - a film adaptation of the best-selling novel by **Shamim Sarif** who also directed the film.

The film is a heart breaking espionage story set against the Cold War about love and betrayal.

Brilliant cast of the film included **Rebecca Ferguson, Sam Reid, Oliver Jackson-Cohen, Charles Dance** and **Anthony Head**. Rebecca Ferguson received the Best Actress award for her convincing depiction of two Russian women in different countries during different times. Anthony Head’s outstanding acting in the role of the double-agent Misha brought him the Best Supporting Actor award.

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Grand Prix of the festival The Golden Eagle was received by the Bulgarian director **Kostadin Bonev** for his feature film **“Sinking of Sozopol”** who also won the Best Director award. This philosophical film depicts a middle aged man caught in between past and future, lost in his memories and feelings of guilt. The ten bottles of vodka are his last resort, his oblivion, but also the key to find the truth of his existence. Nature plays an important role in the film where the underwater scenes symbolize the journey of the protagonist into the depth of his past. The rain, continuously increasing is the background of the film and also connected to the consciousness and memory expressed through the nature. The cinematographer **Konstantin Zankov** whose lens beautifully captured the scenery which reflected the mood of the protagonist received the Best Cinematography award.

Best Short Film award was given to the film **“Cora”** made by the promising young director **Kevin Maxwell**, student of Santa Monica College who participates in a special program supervised by **Salvador Carrasco**. Salvador Carrasco is an acclaimed director of the film **“The Other Conquest”** and a supervisor of several award winning student films. The film was presented by **Carrie Finklea** who took part in the project. She is also an actress who acted in well-known films including **“Elephant”** by Gus Van Sant.

Best Animated Film was awarded to **“The Snow Queen 2”** from the Russian animation company **Wizart**. The film was written and directed by **Aleksey Tsitsilin** and produced by **Timur Bekmambetov**. It is important to give credit to the outstanding work of Russian artists who created an impressive fantasy world with dazzling landscapes and memorable characters not to mention the humor of the film and thought-provoking ideas which make the film compelling to various audiences of any age.

The film **“Forgiveness”** received a positive response from the audiences and critics alike for its captivating original imagery and for its profound concepts. The film explores the journey to the depths of the subconscious mind during a hypnosis session. It is interesting to note that the director **Rima Irani** is a



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certified hypno-therapist therefore her personal experience brings authenticity to the film. She is also a talented artist and has created the impressive sets of the film herself. She received the awards for Best Special Effects and Best Art Direction.

The film **“Woods”** by **Sean van Leijenhorst** received the Best Horror Film award. The acting by David Clark was praised and drew comparisons with young Jack Nicholson.

Best Comedy was awarded to the film **“Seth”** made by **Zach Lasry**. The film’s brilliant humor, great acting and incredible cinematography established it as one of the audience’s favorites.

**David Ellis** – filmmaker and photographer from the USA presented his experimental film **NO SIGNAL** which received the award for Best Experimental film. The film NO SIGNAL is inspired by avant-garde, Cubism, Suprematism and combines Super 8 film with iPhone footage.

The film festival was closed with the film **“Green Lake”** directed by **Derek Frey**. Derek Frey currently runs the Tim Burton Productions. In spite of the fact that he is one of the highest ranking people in the entertainment business, Derek Frey also loves independent cinema and has created his film on a micro-budget. It was written, filmed and edited by himself. The film received the Best Music Score award for the music by **Matthew Reid**. The film also has a compelling message; according to the director’s statement **“Green Lake”** is more than your typical horror film, it’s a warning to everyone that we must maintain our balance with and respect nature, or face the consequences.

The Best Music Video award was given to the clip **“FIRE”** by **The Winery Dogs** which was filmed on location in Thailand and NYC. It was directed by **Steven Lyon** who is also a noted fashion photographer and a former top model discovered by Andy Warhol.

The thematic scope was broad and ranged from films dealing with stories of personal struggles to films concentrating on deep philosophical problems. Whether an emotionally intense drama, side-splitting comedy, innovative experimental film or charming animation one thing is certain: a real diversity



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lies in exploration of the best of any genre without discriminating films of any country or any budget – from no budget films to big independent productions.

The festival founder and director Diana Ringo in her closing speech emphasized the high quality of the films screened at the festival and the importance of this festival in the cultural life of the Czech Republic.

Full information about the festival can be found at [www.prague-film-festival.com](http://www.prague-film-festival.com)

Prague Independent Film Festival is a non-profit organization which aims to help promote independent cinema, discover new talents, bring outstanding films to a wide audience and create cultural connections through films, artistic and social events.

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