**18th ZagrebDox Programme Presented: 86 Documentaries in 11 Sections**

**Zagreb, 23 March** – This year’s eighteenth edition of the **International Documentary Film Festival ZagrebDox** will take place from **3 to 10 April** at the **Kaptol Boutique Cinema**. In the eight days of the festival, the audience will have a chance to watch 86 documentaries in 11 film sections. Twenty films in international competition and 17 documentaries in regional competition are competing for the official festival of the **Big Stamp**, while the **Small Stamp** award will be given to the best film by an author up to 35 years of age. The programme of this year’s ZagrebDox was presented at a press conference by the director and head programmer **Nenad Puhovski** and producer **Hrvoje Pukšec**.

“We are entering adulthood happy and proud to be one of the few festivals that has shown films exclusively in cinemas in these past, challenging years. With a selection of the best recent films, ZagrebDox continues to open space and provide an opportunity to explore and understand the world around us, in all its fullness, through the film medium, meetings at the cinema, conversations and sharing emotions,” said **Nenad Puhovski**.

This year’s [**international competition**](http://zagrebdox.net/en/2022/programme/official_competition/international_competition) brings together a number of titles that touch on various focal points on the geopolitical map of the world. Among them is the recent winner of the Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival, Simon Lereng Wilmont’s moving feature debut ***A House made of Splinters***, about the fate of children housed in an eastern Ukrainian orphanage, previously awarded the Sundance Best Director Award. The plot of the impressive black and white documentary ***Trenches*** by French war reporter **Loup Bureau** is set on the war front of the Ukrainian province of Donbas, and Venice’s Horizons best screenplay award-winning ***107 Mothers*** by **Peter Kerekes** takes us to the gloomy ambience of the Odessa Women’s Penitentiary. This documentary-fiction hybrid, created according to authentic testimonies and filmed in a cold, somewhat Beckett manner, is this year’s Polish Oscar candidate. The current winner of IDFA’s Envision competition, ***Octopus*** by **Karim Kassem**, emerged shortly after the explosion in the port of Beirut in early August 2020, and in silent navigation through the chaos of mass tragedy, the director opens a handful of existential questions about the fate of the city and its inhabitants. The shocking story of a five-year-old returning to his native Yazidi community after nearly three years in Islamic State is told by director **Zahavi Sanjavi** in ​***​Imad’s Childhood***, while Sundance winner ***Sabaya*** by **Hogir Hirori** follows a group of brave men who risk their lives to save Yazidi women held captive in a notorious ISIS camp. The protagonist of the film ***Children of the Mist*** by **Diễm Hà Lệ** is 12-year-old Di who tries to avoid the usual local practice of child brides in the Vietnamese Hmong community. The film won a special mention for best feature film debut, and the author won the director’s award at the Amsterdam International Documentary Film Festival (IDFA). The story of the clash of traditional customs and modern aspirations is brought by the intimate documentary ***Enfants Terribles***, awarded a special mention at the Visions du Réel festival and the Human Rights Award at the Sarajevo Film Festival, where director Ahmet Necdet Çupur shoots his own family in rural Turkey. With an extremely interesting and innovative authorial approach to archival material, ***1970*** – a new film by director **Tomasz Wolski** who competed with ***An Ordinary Country*** at last year’s ZagrebDox for the Big Stamp – uses historical recordings of telephone conversations to tell a story about political repression and violence, exemplified by the protests in Poland in late 1970. The winner of Tribeca, Oscar-nominated ***Ascension*** by **Jessica Kingdon**, explores contemporary forms of capitalist hyperproduction in a series of fascinating film vignettes shot in Chinese factories, with all the paradoxes that accompany consumer culture.

A recent pandemic experience inspired the creation of the omnibus ***The Year of the Everlasting Storm***, an interesting kaleidoscope of everyday life around the world during lockdown, signed by directors **Jafar Panahi**, **Anthony Chen**, **Malik Vitthal**, **Laura Poitras**, **Dominga Sotomayor**, **David Lowery** and **Apichatpong Weerasethakual**. In his ***Balcony Film***, Polish director **Paweł Łoziński** also depicts the world his apartment balcony view: for two years he recorded conversations with passers-by on camera. Following the line of a suburban train that connects the French metropolis with its surroundings, the Berlinale-winning documentary ***We*** by **Alice Diop** portrays cultural and class diversity in the film’s mosaic structure. A bizarre story of a completely unexpected outcome about his former high school colleague is brought by **Jono McLeod** in the entertaining film ***My Old School***; the fate of a young man who deceived the entire school environment is told through archival material and the testimony of former schoolmates as well as the protagonist, who refused to be directly exposed, so his audio recordings were dubbed by actor Alan Cumming. A voyeuristic view of wildlife is given by ***Naya***, a short documentary by **Sebastian Mulder**, who collected footage from surveillance cameras and television shows to ask questions about humanity’s relationship to wildlife through the trajectory of the first wolf to appear in Belgium in a hundred years.

***Julia and I*** by **Nina Hobert**, an honest and intimate portrait of the two title protagonists – the director and her friend, a Swedish-Danish artist and poet, in the guise of a personal diary provides insight into the lives of young women struggling with an identity crisis. The poetic debut of Indian director **Payal Kapadia**, the Cannes Golden Eye-winning film ***A Night of Knowing Nothing***, follows in the form of letters a forbidden love story that outlines a broader social and political picture of contemporary India. The short autobiographical film ***I Love You, Dad*** in an experimental collage form captures the relationship between the young Czech Vietnamese director **Diana Cam Van Nguyen** and her estranged father, and the parent-child relationship is at the heart of **Ohad Milstein**’s lyrical film ***Summer Night***, this year’s Best Israeli Film at DocAviv, opening this year’s ZagrebDox, in which the director portrays the world in an extremely gentle way as seen by his six-year-old son. The master of film storytelling, British director and artist **Mark Cousins** ​​in his new work ***The Story of Looking*** in an essayist manner, with a handful of references to historical events, artwork and cinematography, analyses the role and power of visual experiences in interpreting the world around us.

This year’s [**regional competition**](http://zagrebdox.net/en/2022/programme/official_competition/regional_competition) includes 17 films, a large number of which, through various perspectives, situations and positions, touch on the issue of understanding identity. Five premiere titles are new works by local filmmakers: **Vedrana Pribačić**’s ***Bigger Than Trauma***, **Davor Sanvincenti**’s ***Places We’ll Breathe***, **Goran Dević**’s ***The Building*** and **Ante Zlatko Stolica**’s ***Babajanja***, while ***Mlungu – The White King*** by **David Lušičić** will premiere in Croatia. The author **Pribačić** follows the everyday life of three women living with the trauma of rape from the Croatian War of Independence, as well as the process of their empowerment through public exposure to group therapy; **Sanvincenti**’s work is an audiovisual essay that advocates imagination through a travelogue of constructed and anonymous landscapes; **Dević** is returning to his native Sisak, recording in a week the life of a building built 60 years ago for the workers of the once extremely important industrial plant of the former Yugoslavia – the Sisak Iron Mill. In a short essay documentary with horror elements, **Stolica** confronts a mysterious woman, a key figure in his childhood fears, while in the focus of **Lušičić**’s film is the protagonist of the largest drug seizure in South African history – a Croatian sailor arrested for smuggling 230 kilograms of cocaine in his cabin en route from Argentina to Europe.

There are two films in which Croatia participates as a minority co-producer: ***Four Seasons in a Day*** by Belgian director **Annabel Verbeke** (Hot Docs Award for Best Upcoming Author and Award for Best Achievement at New York Film Week) follows a ferry that transports passengers across the Northern Ireland-Ireland border questioning the notion of national identities. A similar question, but from a completely different point of view – through the common passion of a whole range of characters towards old socialist cars – is dealt with by the film ***The Cars We Drove into Capitalism*** of the Bulgarian author duo **Boris Missirkov** and **Georgi Bogdanov**. The fate of the car passengers in rural Serbia is dealt with by the Serbian film ***Roots*** by **Tea Lukač**, which won the award for the best cinematography at the Beldocs festival. Starting with seemingly banal topics, this achievement ends with serious social and existential thoughts. A special mention at Beldocs and the audience awards at the DOKLeipzig festival, as well as the best documentary in Zurich, went to the Swiss-Serbian film ***Dida*** by **Nikola Ilić** and **Corina Schwingruber Ilić** – a touching portrait of a man trying to live in two countries and take care of three women – mother, grandmother and wife. An enviable number of awards, including the Balkan Dox Award from DokuFest and the best documentary at the Slovenian Film Festival, were won by ***Reconciliation*** by Slovenian author **Marija Zidar**, a story about the fate of a family in the Albanian hills at the crossroads of haunting past, uncertain present and pressures of the distinctly patriarchal Balkan society.

Identity, but from the position of physical appearance, is the focus of Hungarian author **Máté Kőrösi** in the film ***Divas***: accompanying three 20-year-olds, the director reaches behind their masks carefully groomed with make-up, clothes and a presentation on social media. Identity and growing up, but under completely different circumstances, is the topic of the film ***Brotherhood*** by Italian director **Francesco Montagner** about three young men in Bosnia who face a series of challenges and responsibilities behind the illusion of completely unexpected freedom from their father’s discipline. The film won awards at the Locarno and Jihlava festivals. An interesting and touching portrait of ***Soldat Ahmet*** in the Austrian film of the same name is given by **Janiss Lenz**: the title character is a Turkish boxing champion and professional soldier in Austria who, eager for change, starts acting, but encounters a problem – the inability to express emotions. The staging of a play about a Romanian communist leader in ***You Are Ceaușescu to Me*** (New Talent Award at the Doclisboa Festival, Best Middle Eastern European Documentary at the Jihlava Festival) by **Sebastian Mihăilescu** provokes a series of situations, insights and reactions from several teenagers. The result is a portrait of the young generation and their views on the legacy of the infamous dictator. The illusion of the idyll of retirement life in The Villages, America’s largest retirement community, is shattered by Austrian author **Valerie Blankenbyl** in ***The Bubble***, while Italian director **Matteo Tortone** in ***Mother Lode*** follows the search for one of thousands of seasonal workers in the highest and most dangerous Andean a gold mine in Peru.

In addition to numerous documentaries in the official sections [**Masters of Dox**](http://zagrebdox.net/en/2022/programme/official_program/masters_of_dox), [**Controversial Dox**](http://zagrebdox.net/en/2022/programme/official_program/controversial_dox), [**State of Affairs**](http://zagrebdox.net/en/2022/programme/official_program/state_of_affairs), [**Biographx Dox**](http://zagrebdox.net/en/2022/programme/official_program/biography_dox), [**Teen Dox**](http://zagrebdox.net/en/2022/programme/official_program/teen_dox), the upcoming edition of the festival includes the [**Road Dox**](http://zagrebdox.net/en/2022/programme/dox_special/road_dox) section curated by **Vladan Petković** and the [**Points of View**](http://zagrebdox.net/en/2022/programme/retrospectives/points_of_view) section curated by **Jelena Pašić**. This year’s [retrospective](http://zagrebdox.net/en/2022/programme/retrospectives/zelimir_zilnik_fragments_from_migrant_worker_opus) is dedicated to **Želimir Žilnik**, and includes part of his filmography made in Germany in the mid-1970s, while the [author’s evening](http://zagrebdox.net/en/2022/programme/retrospectives/authors_night_katarina_zrinka_matijevic) belongs to director **Katarina Zrinka Matijević**, president of this year’s international jury, with a selection of films curated by **Diana Nenadić**.

“We are glad that this year we will host many world filmmakers who will present their films in person. We continue to provide free screenings of some films on a daily basis to all visitors; and at the very end of the festival, on Sunday, April 10, as every year, we offer the audience the opportunity to enjoy the best, award-winning titles of this year’s edition through **The Best of Fest**. What makes me especially happy is that we are again in the best cinema space in Zagreb, where ZagrebDox is doing great and finding itself – just like our audience. ZagrebDox is ready for its 18th edition, and new partnerships and sponsorships have helped us in all this. One of them – certainly the most important, we hope in the long run – is the sponsorship of Zagrebačka banka”, said the ZagrebDox producer **Hrvoje Pukšec**.

**Majda Žujo**, Director of Identity and Communication at Zagrebačka banka, said: “We are proud of our involvement and support for ZagrebDox, the largest documentary film festival in this part of Europe and certainly one of the most important festivals in Croatia. Zagrebačka banka has been a sponsor of many festivals and cultural events for many years, which is more important today than ever. As this is the first festival this year that will enable the return of the audience to the cinema, this year we decided to support the Audience Award. Congratulations on a well-designed and rich programme and we wish you another successful edition of the festival.”

Ticket prices for the 18th ZagrebDox range from 25 to 34 kuna, while the price of a ticket package for The Best of Fest program is 80 kuna. **Early bird ticket sale** starts on Thursday, **March 24** at the box office of Kaptol Boutique Cinema, at ticket offices in the cinema lobby and online at [kaptolcinema.hr](https://www.kaptolcinema.hr/). ZagrebDox takes place with the support of the **City of Zagreb** and the **Croatian Audiovisual Centre**.

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