

Winners of the 28th Oulu International Children's and Youth Film Festival chosen

The winner of the children's jury is **Christian Ditter's** *The Crocodiles*

The CIFEJ jury picked **Andrzej Maleszka's** film *The magic tree* as the winner.

The Church Media Foundation's Prize is awarded to **Dome Karukoski's** *Forbidden fruit*.

The Northern Film and Media Foundation POEM's Little Bear Award goes this year to scripwriter **Niina Veittikoski**.

Kaleva Award to The Crocodiles

Since 1992 a jury of children has awarded a prize of 3000 euros, donated by the Kaleva newspaper, to the director of the best film in competition.

The comments of the Children's jury:

"The entire jury thought that the best movie was exciting, touching and captivating. It had a good plot and excellent cast. Music was catching and the story seemed real. The German language sounded nice. And the winner is The Crocodiles. Second came the touching film Glowing stars."

CIFEJ Prize to The magic tree

The International Centre of Film for Children and Youth CIFEJ's Prize was founded in 1981. It was given for the first time at the Oulu children's film festival in 1995. The winner of the prize is chosen by an international jury of three. This year's members of the CIFEJ jury are the American producer-director **Harley Cokeliss**, director of the Munich Children's Film Festival **Katrin Hoffmann** from Germany and **Liisa Lääveri**, radio and TV producer-journalist and musician from Oulu.

The comments given by the CIFEJ jury:

"The CIFEJ Prize this year goes to The magic tree by Andrzej Maleszka. This film was told from a child's point of view. It was clever, original and pacey. The music was well integrated, the effects were well done, but the most important thing was that we cared about what happened to the children, we wanted the children to be reunited with their parents – and it was fun to watch."

Media Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Prize to Forbidden fruit

The Media Foundation's first children's and youth film prize goes to the director Dome Karukoski for his film the *Forbidden fruit*. With the prize the Media Foundation supports Finnish children's and youth film, and encourages film makers to discuss Christian responsibility and values. The winner of the prize was chosen by the documentary film-maker **Jean Bitar**. The prize is worth

1500 euros.

Mr Bitar's comments:

"This film reflects strong themes of community and belonging, as well as caring for others. Forbidden fruit is beautiful and touching as well as funny and shocking at the same time. It has both emotional and societal dimensions. Forbidden fruit deals with religion, with its emotions and customs, as a natural everyday thing in the lives of families and the youth."

Mr Karukoski's response:

*"I am hugely taken with this award. The film has been a dear project to me, and as the maker is always seeking approval for his works, this kind of honour is the best kind. When I started to develop the film together with the screenwriter **Aleksi Bardy**, I never imagined that it would get such attention. I am bewildered and humble, like a little child in the middle of his life's first big experience. And as I truly feel like a 'child' in the midst of all this joy, this festival is perfect for that feeling. I am maybe so bewildered that I cannot quite describe my feelings at this moment. Best wishes and lots of love for all!*

-Dome

POEM's Little Bear to screenwriter Niina Veittikoski

The Little Bear Award was founded by the Northern Film and Media Foundation POEM in 2004 to improve the status of children's films in Finnish film production and children's culture. It is given every year at the Oulu International Children's and Youth Film Festival to a Finnish screenwriter, director or producer, who during the year has shown merit as a children's film maker in Finland. The award can also be given to a person for a life's work. The award is worth 1,500 euros. The Little Bear statuette was designed by the artist **Sanna Koivisto**, and it has been made by Sanna Koivisto together with **Anni Koponen**.

This year the Little Bear is given to Niina Veittikoski from Oulu for her script for the television series *Hertan maailma*.

"Veittikoski has managed to create a sympathetic and timeless character. In addition, the fashioning of the series into a multimedia product from the beginning is a model for bringing Finnish children's programming into the 21st century. Its simplified animation highlights the programme's playfulness, and the main character and the stories woven around her have quickly captivated Finnish children."

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