

PRESS RELEASE:

38th OULU INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL WINNERS 2019

Free for publication

Children's Film Competition

Starboy Award given by the Children's Jury:

director Katja Benrath

Film: ROCCA CHANGES THE WORLD

ECFA Award

Given by the International Jury: TOO FAR AWAY

Director: Sarah Winkenstette

Youth Film Competition

Global Future Award given by the Youth Film Competition Jury: LET ME FALL

Director: Baldvin Z

Finnish Competition

Prize of the media foundation of the evangelical lutheran church of Finland: MAIDEN OF THE LAKE

Director: Petteri Saario

Northern Script

Marianne Lauritsen: Roskilde

STARBOY AWARD: ROCCA CHANGES THE WORLD

The Children's Jury gave the Starboy Award sponsored by Oulun Energia to the director of the best film in the Children's Film Competition. The award consists of 1000 euros and a Starboy statuette made by sculptor **Sanna Koivisto**.

The winner of Children's Film Competition is **Katja Benrath** with her film *ROCCA CHANGES THE WORLD*.

Jury statement: *"Interpreting interesting characters in a natural and plausible way, the actors bring forcefully home a clear but unpredictable storyline through multifaceted situations in credible and amusingly built settings.*

The bold and sensitive protagonist who misses grown-ups infects her relatives, friends and even more distant parties with her positive and supportive attitude. With the help of children, the film explores and discovers perspectives and solutions to grief and the difficult situations it causes. The protagonist and her friends also lure adults into tolerance and equal treatment. Nobody and nothing should be left out, neither people nor the environment. The whole thing is affective, comforting and encouraging."

Director Katja Benrath comments: *"We are very happy and proud and honored, that Rocca won the Starboy award. We love the idea, that kids start to understand that being scared sometimes prevents us from having fun. Rocca also is aware of her responsibility to make the world a better place and starts to take action. We are very happy, that kids are inspired by this loud and loving little person and her story."*

Honorable mention

The Children's Jury gave an honorable mention to director Anu Aun for her Estonian film PHANTOM OWL FOREST. *"In the film, the winter nature is depicted wonderfully and with diversity. The atmosphere is exciting*

from start to finish as the secrets are revealed and positive solutions regarding the characters and the environment are gradually reached. The nature conservation perspective is genuine and timely.”

ECFA AWARD: TOO FAR AWAY

The ECFA Award was founded by the European Children's Film Association in 2010. It is given to the best European film in the Children's Film Competition by the International Jury – the artistic director of the French festival Ciné-jeune de l'Aisne **Axelle Munich**, the director of the Lithuanian International Vilnius Film Festival for Children and Youth **Lina Užkuraitytė** and the director of the Northern Photographic Center **Alla Räisänen**.

The winner is *TOO FAR AWAY* directed by **Sarah Winkenstette**.

Jury statement: *“The film we chose for the ECFA price is a story about friendship, the sharing of experiences and a deeper understanding of the process of growing up. It is a story of two 11-year-old boys who lose their homes, the one because of war and the other because of environmental reasons. Both of them have to find a new way of being in a new situation. Through their friendship the boys learn trust, the importance of communication and self-esteem.*

Quote from the film-

Tariq says: “Sometimes we need time, Ben. It has to grow. Inside you. You get it at some point. You need patience.”

The film TOO FAR AWAY by Sarah Winkenstette raises up important themes of contemporary time, migration, refugees, global and local changes. The screenplay is made in a child-friendly manner and it is easy for children to relate themselves to the emotions and actions of the two main characters of the film.”

Director Sarah Winkenstette: *“Thank you so much for the ECFA Award for our movie TOO FAR AWAY! I am totally happy and overwhelmed to receive this European Award because the themes of our movie go way beyond the German border and are an important issue across all of Europe.”*

GLOBAL FUTURE AWARD: LET ME FALL

Awarded by The Finnish 4H Organisation's Association in Oulu, the 1000-euro Global Future Award is given by a jury of young people to the best youth film in the festival. The winner is *LET ME FALL* by **Baldvin Z**.

Jury statement: *“The decision was not easy. The winner of the youth film competition is a masterfully shot movie, that used music and sound extremely well as a part of storytelling. This movie has a story which was a dramatic and realistic telling of real events and wasn't scared to ask important questions. This movie is LET ME FALL.*

Director Baldvin Z: *“I am so grateful and honoured that LET ME FALL has caught the eyes and ears of the audience and jury at the Oulu International Children's and Youth Film Festival. Thank you, thank you, thank you.”*

Honorable mention

The jury also gave an honorable mention to the Norwegian film *UTØYA: JULY 22* by **Erik Poppe**. *“It is an excellently shot film, that left us with strong feelings delivered by its story and performances.”*

PRIZE OF THE MEDIA FOUNDATION ON THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND: MAIDEN OF THE LAKE

The Media Foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland grants a 1500-euro prize to a Finnish feature or short film at the festival. This year the recipient was chosen by **Markku Jalava**. The award goes to *MAIDEN OF THE LAKE* and its director **Petteri Saario**.

Comments by **Markku Jalava**: *"MAIDEN OF THE LAKE is a beautiful depiction of Lake Saimaa and its environs. It's not only beautiful nature cinematography, but also a dynamic film where two young people trek in Saimaa and discover its beaches, plants and animals. Saimaa ringed seal also plays its own role.*

MAIDEN OF THE LAKE is a timely contribution to the climate and environmental debate. It does not threaten or frighten, but approaches the subject in a positive way. The film tells us why we should defend nature and our environment. It encourages you to go out into nature and enjoy it.

MAIDEN OF THE LAKE does not make demands, but describes what good things nature gives us. In this way, it is not creating climate anxiety but, on the contrary, reducing it. Nature is still ours to enjoy and take care of. The film targets in particular children and young people who can naturally identify with the sympathetic protagonists of the film, Emika and Antti. It also has humour and takes a stand on diversity.

The script is multifaceted and the cinematography is of high quality. The music guides storytelling from one mood to another. The direction and editing ensure that the viewer is not bored. Nature offers many surprises."

Director Petteri Saario: *"I wanted to make a film that inspires children to go out into nature - showing that you can find really interesting things to do there at any time of the day or year, in the rain and in the sun. Children are worried about global warming and the destruction of nature, so it is more important than ever to make films about the relationship between man and nature from a child's perspective, with the child's own voice."*

You can find photos on our homepage: www.oulunelokuvakeskus.fi/lef/en/media

NORTHERN SCRIPT 2019

Northern Script is a Nordic Short Film Screenwriting Competition for young adults between 18 and 25 years in Finland, Sweden and Norway. The six finalists of the event gathered together in Oulu taking part in the screenplay workshops and Oulu International Children's and Youth Film Festival. The winner is **Marianne Lauritsen** for her script *Roskilde*.

The story is about different relationships like friendship and one night stands described from a female point of view. As a reward, Lauritsen will participate in the film workshop organised by the Nordic Youth Film Festival in Tromsø next summer.

Northern Script is organised by Finnish Metka Centre for Media Education together with Oulu International Children's and Youth Film Festival (FI), Nordic Youth Film festival (NO) and Barn- och ungdoms festival (SWE). Further information: nosi.fi

LITHUANIA IN FOCUS

This year there was an opportunity to take a peek at Lithuanian children's and youth films that have rarely been seen in Finland. These classic films opened a window to Lithuania's interesting history since the 1950s. Newer Lithuanian films were seen both in short film compilations and in the children's film competition.

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