



Anča Award 2019 goes to Fest – Nikita Diakur’s short film

A slightly dystopic computer-generated party, a short Czech film, and three Slovak animations were awarded at the 12th Fest Anča International Animation Festival 2019.

Three minutes of computer-stimulated rave party at a grey Ostblock housing estate – that is a brief description of *Fest* (2018) by Nikita Diakur, the winner of the Anča Award at the Fest Anča International Animation Festival 2019. Films in the main competition category were judged by an expert committee composed of three British animators: Vera Neubauer, Candy Guard and Tim Webb.

The jury appreciated the film for its originality and innovative approach: *“It felt surprising, original and showed something we hadn’t seen before.”* *Fest* is a refreshing video that uses a combination of puppeteering and dynamic computer simulation.

Diakur is a Russian-born animation director residing in Germany. His *Fest* has already been awarded at Animafest in Zagreb and at Fantoche in Baden. The filmmaker had already come to attention with *Ugly* (2017), which was also part of Fest Anča’s official selection last year. This year, he received the most valuable Anča Award and prize money of EUR 800.

The Anča Award Jury also awarded a Special Mention and the Anča Student Award for the best short animated student film. The first award went to Japan’s Tomoki Misato and his film *My Little Goat* (2018). *“Its extremely engaging narrative and the cuteness of character design hides a sinister shocking outcome,”* said the judging committee.

The Anča Student Award and prize money of EUR 400 was awarded to the Czech Filip Blažek’s film *Days Off* (2018). The jury said it nicely depicts everyday life with an intriguing narrative: *“We were surprised by the amount of feelings we got from expressionless dolls.”* The Anča Slovak Award for the best Slovak animation was won by this year’s front runner Martin Smatana for *The Kite* (2019), which had premiered at the Berlinale Film Festival. The story of a boy and his grandfather reminds us of the ephemerality of human life. *“This emotional story brought us back to childhood. Its visuals are impressive, while always serving the film and the story itself,”* said the committee composed of Czech film critic and curator of the 12th Fest Anča’s thematic focus Eliška Děcká, Croatian film producer Sanja Borčić, and Slovak animator and last year’s Anča Slovak Award winner Ivana Šebestová. *The Kite* was awarded EUR 1000 sponsored by the Slovak Literary Fund.

Special mention in the Slovak category was awarded to Michaela Mihalyiová for *A Date* (2018). *“Her film shows a great sense of humour and excellent rhythm - creating an efficient outcome in a limited time,”* stated the jury.

The Anča Music Video Award went to Polish director Michał Czyż for his video clip *Odds and Evens* (2019). *“It is a simple, clear music video with complex expression. Its visuals take us sailing smoothly through space. The perfect balance of visuals and music left us with a unanimous decision,”* said the committee composed of producer Sanja Borčić, musician Fero Király and animator Ivana Šebestová. The winner received prize money of EUR 400.

The Special Mention in this category was awarded to the Slovak duo of animation directors Marián Vredík and Jana Vredík Hirnerová for their clip Flush It Out (2018) *“for attractive graphics, strong storyline, and firm personal energy print that emphasizes the music, creating a harmonic structure.”*

The winner of the category of films for children was once again selected by a special committee comprising only children. They chose the cartoon Sloth (2018) by German Julia Ocker as the winner of the Anča Kids` Award. It is the second time that this director has charmed Fest Anča`s younger audience, having won in 2015 with Zebra. *“Julia Ocker has been showing us that animated films for children can be very smart,”* commented Lukáš Sigmund, festival programmer. *“It isn` t easy to find artistically-notable films for children. She has proven that she makes films with real responsibility.”*

The committees regarded the overall quality of this year's Fest Anča competition as very high, which made choosing winners a real challenge. *“There were films we loved that were good in different ways. So choosing was very hard,”* commented the Anča Award Jury.

This year over 1200 films made in the last two years registered for the competition, out of which 240 were selected for the competitive and non-competitive screenings.

Programme director Ivana Sujová was also happy with the quality of films registered: *“Every year we aim to bring Slovak viewers the most interesting work by Slovak and international animators, and showcase the latest developments. I believe that we have succeeded. That the main award of the 12th Fest Anča went to Nikita Diakur - whose work is particularly progressive - clearly confirms this. I` m delighted that our committees` decisions reflect current trends in animation.”* She concluded by observing: *“I` m also proud that this year we had committees mainly comprising female judges – which unfortunately is all too rare at animation film festivals.”*

2019 Fest Anča International Animation Festival is financially supported by the Slovak Audiovisual Fund and LITA Fund.

The winners of Fest Anča 2019:

Anča Kid`s Award: Julia Ocker – Sloth (Germany, 2018)

Anča Slovak Award Special Mention: Michaela Mihalyiová – A Date (Slovakia, 2018)

Anča Slovak Award: Martin Smatana – The Kite (Czech republic, 2019)

Anča Music Video Award Special Mention: Marián Vredík, Jana Vredík Hirnerová – Flush It Out (Slovakia, 2018)

Anča Music Video Award: Michał Czyż – Odds and Evens (Poland, 2019)

Anča Student Award: Filip Blažek – Days Off (Czech Republic, 2018)

Anča Award Special Mention: Tomoki Misato – My Little Goat (Japan, 2018)

Anča Award: Nikita Diakur – Fest (Germany, 2018)

Press package:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1AmoMszlbzKosLo4DJ8KoUWs7W76u9Hva?usp=sharing>

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<http://festanca.sk/2019/en/galeria/>

Programme:

<http://www.festanca.sk/2019/program/>

Festival spot:

<https://youtu.be/YWyzghOTXZ4>

Organizators:

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