

SMART7 selection at Transilvania IFF.22: innovative voices from Europe

Starting this year, Transilvania International Film Festival is one of the founders of SMART7, a network of European film festivals that aims to develop the cultural industry and the festival field, as well as to provide a meeting place for works by new European filmmakers in a international competition. Thus, The SMART7 competition makes its debut in the programme of the 22nd Transilvania IFF, from 9-18 June.

The joint programme is dedicated to innovative, early-career filmmaking voices and includes seven films produced in each of the SMART7 countries. **Mammalia** (Sebastian Mihăilescu, Romania/Poland/Germany, 2023), a surrealist drama with satirical overtones, recently screened at the Berlinale, questions important concepts such as identity and masculinity. Inspired by true events and filmed with non-professional actors, **Bread and Salt** (Damian Kocur, Poland, 2022) also speaks to key issues, specifically the cutting problem of violence; the film premiered at the 2022 Venice Film Festival. **Remember to Blink** (Austėja Urbaitė, Lithuania, 2022) is a fine psychological drama that examines love, selfishness, anxiety, loyalty and jealousy in different human relationships.

The competition continues with a film screened at the San Sebastián Festival; **Tobacco Barns** (Rocío Mesa, Spain, 2022) uses the conventions of fantasy to construct a story about childhood and growing up in southern Spain. A nostalgic and deliciously inventive journey that takes us through Lisbon of broken hearts, existential crises and tragic heroes, **Índia** (Telmo Churro, Portugal, 2022) is a genuine love letter to cinema and its physical or imaginary spaces. Another experimental film, **Mannvirki** (Gústav Geir Bollason, Iceland, 2023) premiered at the Rotterdam Film Festival and explores the human-nature relationship, creating a space imbued with textures, soundscapes and complex structures. The selection ends on a comic note: **Black Stone** (Spiros Jacovides, Greece, 2022) is a mockumentary, a story about xenophobia wrapped in a bittersweet comedy about the absurdity of everyday life.

The seven films were selected by curators from the film festivals that make up the network: New Horizons International Film Festival (Poland), IndieLisboa Film Festival (Portugal), Thessaloniki International Film Festival (Greece), Transilvania International Film Festival (Romania), FILMADRID International Film Festival (Spain), Reykjavik International Film Festival (Iceland) and Vilnius Kino Pavasaris International Film Festival (Lithuania). The films will be shown at all seven festivals and the winner will be chosen by an international youth jury with representatives from the participating countries (including Romania) at the final festival of the journey, in Thessaloniki. The prize for the competitive section is €5000.

SMART7 is supported by the Creative Europe MEDIA Programme and aims to become a channel for the promotion of European films, generating a meeting place between young creators and the general public. In addition to the creation of a joint programme of films, the project includes a number of other activities aimed at developing the international exchange of experience and knowledge in the festival field.