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SCREENDAILY

War Witch triumphs at Camerimage

2 December, 2012 | By Michael Rosser

Kim Nguyen's *War Witch* won the coveted Golden Frog at the Plus Camerimage festival, beating Leo Carax's *Holy Motors*.

The awards were handed out at the close of the 20th International Film Festival of the Art of Cinematography, in the Polish city of Bydgoszcz.

War Witch, originally titled *Rebelle*, is the story of a young teen in Sub-Saharan Africa who speaks to her unborn child about life since being abducted by a rebel army. Cinematography was handled by Nicolas Bolduc.

The film, which is Canada's entry to the Foreign Language category at the 85th Academy Awards, won the Silver Bear in Berlin for Congolese star Rachel Mwanza as well as the best narrative feature and best actress prizes at Tribeca; the audience award at the Cambridge Film Festival; and the top award in the Noves Visions section at Sitges.

Holy Motors, with cinematography from Carline Champetier, won the Silver Frog.

Rhino Season, the Turkey/Kurdistan/Iraq co-pro from Bahman Ghobadi, won the Bronze Frog for Touraj Aslani's cinematography.

The 20th edition of the festival, which ran from Nov 24 to Dec 1, featured 314 films from around the world, opening with Keanu Reeves-produced documentary *Side by Side* and the Polish premiere of Ang Lee's *Life of Pi*.

Special guests included director David Lynch, who accepted a lifetime achievement award, and Gus Van Sant, who accepted the Director Duo Award on behalf of his late friend and collaborator Harris Savides.

This year's jury included directors Joel Schumacher, Alan Parker, Roger Spottiswoode Michael Lindsay Hogg, Pawel Łoziński and Steven Okazaki as well as editor Alan Heim and cinematographer Karl Walter Lindenlaub.

Other winners (with jury comments)

Student Films Competition

Golden Tadpole winner: *Blackstory*

The most original and innovative film that opens the gate to the future. Christoph Brunner and Stefan Brunner directors, Robert Oberreiner, cinematographer. Institut fur Film und Fernsehen Filmakademie Wien, Austria and Switzerland.

Silver Tadpole winner: *The Zone*

Brave, bold story, told with cinematographic teamwork. Lauri Randla, director, Mikko Kaumunen, cinematographer. University of Art and Design, Finland.

Bronze Tadpole winner: *Without Snow*

A gentle, beautifully told story, made with sensibility and maturity. Magnus von Horn, director & Magnus Borge, cinematographer. PWSFTiT, Łódź, Poland.

Directors' Debuts Competition

For having the confidence to trust the audience and to tell a story of unflinching honesty with the simplicity and grace of an artist, the Directors' Debuts Competition Award goes to Miguel Angel Jimenez for the film *Chaika*.

Cinematographers' Debuts Competition

The Golden Frog Award goes to *Chaika*. This film deserves the award for the best cinematographer's debut, because it dares to fulfill the dream of cinema on the big canvas that takes your breath away with beautifully composed vistas in which an intimate human drama unfolds.

Best Music Video

For the best music video award the jury chose a unique video that is using simple means to achieve complex ends, and a startlingly coherent effect. The Best Music Video Award goes to: Roger Ballen and Ninja for *Die Antwoord 'I Fink U Freeky'*

Best Cinematography in Music Video

Best Cinematography in a Music Video award goes to an extraordinary video – poetic and with beautiful and original imagery – transcending its location and bitter history. Best Cinematography in a Music Video Award for goes to: Matthew J. Lloyd for *Flying Lotus 'Until The Quiet Comes'*

Documentary Shorts Competition

The Jury awards the **Golden Frog – Grand Prix** to Lorenzo Castore and Adam Cohen for their originality, fearlessness and disturbing weirdness in *No Peace Without War*.

The Jury awards the Special Mention to Jacek Bławut and Paweł Chorzępa for a film that captured the madness, mystery and paranoia of art in *The Loneliness of Sound*.

Documentary Features Competition

The Jury awards the **Golden Frog – Grand Prix** to the Cinematographer Seung-Jun Yi and Director Seung-Jun Yi for the sensitive camera work and intimate approach to the subject in. *Planet of Snail*.

The Jury awards the Special Mention to Ester Martin Bergsmark and Minka Jakerson for their extraordinary accomplishment of director's vision and their creative approach to questions of identity in *She Male Snails*

Polish Films Competition

This emotionally compelling film, open to complex interpretations along with outstanding performances and craftsmanship, makes the Jury's choice for the Best Polish Film at Plus Camerimage 2012 *To Kill a Beaver*.

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