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## Press release

### **The Award Winners of the first Life Beyond Life Film Festival**

*In the ribbons of the fifty-one movies, selected for the First Edition of the Film Festival on Life Beyond Life, proposed by the ArtInMovimento Popular University and the Cultural Association SystemOut, the following ones win the laurel as the Best of their Own Section*

And so on June 30, after a fourteen-days-programming by Vimeo on Demand, the first edition of the Life Beyond Life Film Festival (<https://www.lifebeyonddlife.net/>) terminates, one of the few Film Festivals in the world, focused on eschatological subjects, essentially referring to the Afterlife, proposed by the *ArtInMovimento Popular University* (<https://www.unipopaim.it/>) and the Cultural Association *SystemOut* (<http://www.systemout.org/>), in synergism with *A.R.E.I.* (Afterlife Research and Education Institute/U.S.) and the *Religion Today Film Festival*, and going with the two International Afterlife Conferences *Andare Oltre. Uniti nella Luce.* and *Oltre l'Oltre.*

In the ribbons of the fifty-one films in competition, several Juries on international scale had to accomplish a significant work of analysis and comparison, given to the quantity of the selected products and the actual differences interpreting the theme, due to the authorial and cultural approaches, having been very distant between themselves.

Here below there is attached the summary of their scores.

The Feature Film Jury, chaired by Alberto Olivero and made up of Riccardo Cristiani, Simone Semprini, Eduardo Ricciardelli, Luca Confortini, Edward Regensburg and Matteo Valier decreed that the Best Feature Film of the 1st LBLFF is “Superno” by Abel Makesha, “in which in the title there is an omen. By word and deed a very interesting and compelling opera, striking for the intensity of its narration and conquest of the viewer by projecting him into the cross-section of the protagonist, suspended between the situation post-mortem, and his own lucid and, in unison, desperate madness. In addition to reward its geographical area of the origin, Ethiopia, interpreting perfectly the subject of the Festival!”

The Best Director Award goes to Jacob Gillman and Matt Diebler (“The Invisible Mother”) “on account of the decision to direct a complex film, bringing into play readable situations on several levels. A consciously directorial choice that converts into an exhibition confidence, allowing it so some ironic and oblique moments, immediately taken up with an air to keep the tension always high.”

Gaia Messerklinger (“The Door on the Dark”) draws the first prize as the Best Actress on that score: “Even if not necessarily supported perfectly by a more theatrical than cinematographic imagery, she makes convey the apparent inconsistencies of the Feminine encountering the Masculine, made dramatic and enhanced by an impending portal to the Beyond.”

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Esubalew Nasir (“Superno”) was, however, the Best Actor “by virtue of his surprising proof, holding in suspense the entire film all by himself. In the absence of external action or in any case reduced to the minimum of narrow boundaries, he always makes communicate his emotional conflict by fully capturing the attention of the viewer!”

The Best Editing is awarded as ex-aequo to the movies “Spectrum” and “I’m Sinner”: “Two completely different films in the genre, which editing would be essential for. In the futuristic “Spectrum” so as not to take away the truthfulness of the other created world, while in “I’m Sinner” not to interrupt the progress of the facts that lead to tragedy and subsequent cathartic repentance.”

The Best Screenplay Award goes to Abel Mekasha (“Superno”) for masterfully knowing, how to keep the narrative tension from collapsing, even in the presence of a preponderance of inner action.”

The Best Cinematography is awarded to Daniel Lazoff (“The Invisible Mother”) “on grounds of the perfect synergy created with the director. Forsooth the save-keeping direction allowed the director of photography to present authentic pearls of images, immediately increasing the desire to review these interpretations with that wise and never predictable use of colors.”

Finally, the Feature Film Jury would like to assign two Special Premiums:

The first to the movie “Free” (“Liberi”) by Fabrizio Maria Cortese as, “nevertheless going beyond the specific item of the festival, this film is really captivating and endearing, what with the number of actors, well known by the Italian audience, staging a melancholic, and at times, self-deprecating avenue of the sunset”.

The second goes to Kiersten Warren ( being the *Coco* in the movie “The Invisible Mother”), because “she makes build an antagonistic character, giving him depth, creativity and a magnetising charm.”

The Jury of the Shorts, chaired by R. Craig Hogan, and composed of Regina Amaro Zanella, Olha Vozna, Lucio Toma, Lorenzo Bramati, Alessandra Destefani and Eleonora Tosco awards the laurel as Best Short Film of the first LBLFF to “Rock Out” by Alice Gadbled, “owing her total adherence to the theme, interpreted with the greatest of ease, as well as the complexity of the story and its characters, in harmony with the great technical quality, combining narration and lyricism with surprising balance and facility!”

To honour three special Awards:

The first goes to “Admissions” by Harry Kakatsakis, “through the expressed message of peace, the minimal stylistic cut, which the scene takes place in, in order to give extreme prominence to the topic itself, and by virtue of the impressive actor verve.”

The second goes to “The Flying Fish” by Murat Sayginer, thanks to the originality of the language, the relevance of the head, seen from a non-naturalistic and engaging perspective, according to an aesthetics that is coincidentally personal, realtime and archetypal, and due to the skilful use of sound, giving the narration an hypnotic depth.”

Finally, the last special premium will be assigned to the movie “On my way” “owing to the refined use of the comedy glove, letting you graze the most painful high and lows of life. A generous and ironic direction that, venturing into the maze of the

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philosophical and the irreversible, comes out with a clear and never derisive image of the grief it is reminiscing about!”

The Best Director Award goes to Anne Azoulay (“Two or Three Things about Mary Jacobson”), “as a result of orchestrating the cinematic story in a fluid and original way, while keeping the narrative tension alive. Her first opera, being brilliant and innovative, indeed!”

Anne Azoulay, protagonist of “Two or Three Things about Mary Jacobson” draws even the first prize of being the Best Actress, “with her power of interpreting the female protagonist, as well as the director, rendering a multifaceted and constantly evolving character!”

The laurel for the Best Actor is instead an ex-aequo. In fact, the Jury attributes it so pretty much to Hayden Considine, the boy protagonist of “The House in the Clouds”, “on account of the naturalness with which the young hero allows the public to fully immerse themselves in the pitfalls and seduction of a story between fantasy and reality.” To Alessandro Parrello, male protagonist of “Nikola Tesla, The Man From The Future”, “based on the credible interpretation overcoming linguistic obstacles, and because of the ability to express the great intellectual and spiritual tension of the character, certainly being result of an in-depth and passionate research!”

The Best Cinematography will be assigned to the product “On my way,” as “the technical manufacturing contributes significantly to supporting a film with a delicate story, characterised by a valid direction and the expertise of the actors, assorted in an interesting mélange of sensitivity and irony, necessary in managing the roughness of the issue!”

Finally, the laurel of the Best Editing goes to the film “The Poor People”, “ased on the architecture of the visual story, in a limited space.”

The Documentary Jury, chaired by Johan Nepomuk Maier and formed by Marco Guglielmi, Mario Guerra, Gianfranco Speranza, Leonardo Zullo, Max Souza Jota de Queiroz and Evelyn Meuren, awarded the laurel as the Best Documentary of the LBLFF, First Edition to “Sending Off” by Ian Thomas Ash, “based on that incredible authenticity of the story, the cleanliness of the visual choices, and the dignified and not disgusting vision of Death!”

It is also honoured a Special Bonus to Laura Cini’s film “Medium”, “representing a small and successful challenge, à la Italiana, in tackling a little-trodden and absolutely borderline theme for the *main stream* of the countryside sui generis. Even to appreciate the director’s ability to describe it in a passionate way by using consciously analytical tools of the documentary!”

The Prize for Best Director will be drawn by Sashko Potter Micevski (“We Are All Going To Die”), “in consequence of the sensitivity, ensuing the footsteps of the protagonist, and the capability to emotionally involve the viewer towards a reality, moving on the threshold, full of concreteness and poetry. To appreciate the product, likewise owing to the good pace and incisiveness of the narration, characterised by the Balkan pragmatism of managing Death!”

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The Best Editing Award goes to “Sâdhaka, The Path of Yoga” by Nicolas Gauthier, “on the strength of the successful interplay of environments, people and atmospheres, making involve the viewer by immersing him in an exotic world, made of history and culture by adding elements and reflections relating to new scientific findings!”

The Premium for the Best Cinematography is assigned to Francesco Pennica (“Choose love”), “due to the intrinsic quality of the direction of photography and its significant contribution to the solidity of the story.”

Important to mention, ditto, the two expert competitions to decree, one the Best Soundtrack (by Carmelo Spoto, Vixia Maggini and André Ruiz Luiz) and the other the Best Sound Design (by Guglielmo Francavilla and Jacopo Schieda, co-founders of the Isophonic audio production studio), they confronted each other for a long time for finally declaring their following choices:

In the Feature Films section, the Award for the Best Music goes to “Katherine of Sinai”, “as a result of her soundtrack quality, perfectly supporting an important and expensive production, defining in detail characters, actions and contexts!”

The same English film, directed by Michael Redwood, is also awarded for the Best Sound Design, “with the impressive work on the music and effects score, envisaged by a historical period film with outdoor shots and mass movements like this.”

In the ribbons of the Shorts, the Premium for the Best Music is attributed to the movie “The Call”, “based on the wisdom in supporting the dramaturgy and the balance between functionality and musical aesthetics”, while the Best Sound Design goes to the film “Nikola Tesla, The Man from The Future”, “due to the impact and effectiveness of the sound fabric, enable to involving the audience in atmospheres, being both intimist and powerful emotional momentum!”

In the Documentaries section, the Best Music Award goes to Giulio del Prato, Emiliano Toso and Marquica (“Choose love”), “in virtue of their original music, generating atmospheres that amplify, without ever overpowering the positivity of the messages, expressed by the documentary, contributing to the process of identification of the audience!”

“An exciting adventure trip, having been traveling for nearly three months, initiated at the end of March. A path animated by an intuition for letting a dream come true! A wonderful team, formed by Andrea Morghen, Matteo Valier, Lucio Toma and Leonardo Zullo, contributed by Evelyn Meuren for the English translating in real time. A project synergised by *AREI/U.S.* and the *Religion Today Film Festival/Trento/Italy*, and supported by the distribution company *Quasi Cinema* and the magazine *Il Giornale dei Misteri*. More than two-hundred films coming from all over the world, and fifty-one of them having been selected. Twenty-one attentive and passionate jurors! Many awards! A big Tribute to Life, a great Opportunity to reflect on Death and above all, on Life after Life!

We are very satisfied with our first Life Beyond Life Film Festival, which, to my mind, makes celebrate well Rosa Franca Castagno, our very best friend, leaving Earth plane this year on March 12, and whom this festival is dedicated to.

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Now live events are being planned, the first at *Religion Today, Trento/Italy*, and we are already leaving for the LBLFF Second Edition, taking place within February and April 2022. The team will grow, and we are convinced to get even the necessary funding to celebrate our themes at the best, for so becoming a reality, an opportunity for comparison and discussion between courageous filmmakers meeting an inspirational audience!” concluding Annunziato Gentiluomo, Arts Director of LBLFF.

Main media-partner and press office will be the *ArtInMovimento Magazine* (<http://artinmovimento.com/>) with its web radio (<https://www.speaker.com/user/artinmovimento>), joined by the Italian magazine *Il Giornale dei Misteri* and the Brazilian TV-station *Alvorada Espírita*.

End

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