



LIFE BEYOND LIFE FILM FESTIVAL, SECOND EDITION

LAURELS AND REASONS

Torino, April 11, 2022

LAURELS

Short Film Jury

Best Film ex aequo: *Mirage* by Sil van der Woerd and *Rose* by Derrick Lui

Special Award - Short Film Jury: *The Lake*

Doc Short Jury

Best Doc Short: *Brave*

Special Award to the movies: *Zenerù* and *The Beyond*

Documentary Film Jury

Best Documentary: *Doctor Kees - In Search of Willy's Will*, Jesse van Venrooij

Best Director: *Ronni Thomas* (*The Kybalion*)

Best Cinematography: *Tommaso Facchin and Ivan Franceschini* (*Bomarey - Ghosts in the Factory*)

Special Award: *Best Thought to Samadhi Road*, Julio & Daniel Hey

Feature Film Jury

Best feature film: *Road to Eden*, Bakyt Mukul e Dastan Zhapar Uulu

Best direction: *Gaurav Madan* (*Barah by Barah*)

Best actor: *Marat Alyshpaev* (*Road to Eden*)

Best actress: *Bhumika Dube* (*Barah by Barah*)

Special Award: *Histoire d'une Larme*, Giovanni Coda

Jury UnderEleven

Best Doc Short: *The Supper for the Dead Souls*, Ignazio Figus

Special Mention: Rose, Derrick Lui

Jury students USAC:

Best short: *Snorrie*, Victoria Warmerdam

Best doc short: *The Beyond*, Daniel Maurer

Best Photography: *Marco Ferri* (*Zenerù*)

Best Visual Emotion Impact: *Tim Smit* (*Mirage*)

Best Performance: *Mat Laroche* (*Guide me Home*)

Per informazioni

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Best Afterlife Research: **Rinaldi - Intrumental TransCommunication to the Other Side**

Best Sound Design: **Selle Sellink (Mirage)**

Best Movie Soundtrack: **Amelia Sai (Rose)**

Best Screenplay: **Victoria Warmerdam (Snorrie)**

Special Award “Andare Oltre. Uniti nella Luce.”: **Reflections, Fotis Skourletis and Bardo, Alessandro di Maio**

REASONS:

Feature Film Jury

The Feature Film Jury awards as Best Film **The Road to Eden** [Kyrgystan], directed by Bakyt Mukul and Dastan Zhapar Uulu, “as a result of being fully in accordance with the theme of the festival, offering a highly intimate reflection on Death and its affiliation, that is with Life. Through a deep contemplation, embracing culture, the existential mission of the individual, that splendid black and white movie, accompanied by an engaging music, manages it to projecting us back into a Cultural Past, relived through a Present, that for the protagonist means approaching the End of Life. An excellent photography, guided even through a skilful direction, declining that feel for freedom in various exciting sequences. Having become struck by the transition, coloring in the moment of departure, as if to indicate that real life begins exactly at that very momentum, and that everything else was nothing but a simple preparation. In fact, the work allows us to relive a slow abandonment of materialism by the protagonist, in a yearning for the infinite, being expressed through lyrical melodies, caressing heart and soul of the viewer, between catharsis and understanding.

Beyond the constraints and material complications we could see together with the protagonist, that “an Eden” does really exist, ready to await him, to embrace him in the implicit serenity of his from liberation of the Pysical World”.

The Feature Film Jury prizes the award for the Best Direction to **Gaurav Madan (Barah by Barah)**, “with which the slowness of its flow and in the delicacy of the direction, the movie guides us into a mostly dreamlike reality of Indian culture. Coloring enhances this need and, together with camera movements, it allows us even to abandon ourselves, to realise an anthropological welfare, which the work of great masters of cinema such as Kiarostami are echoing in. The dreamworld of the sequences, enriched with concrete representation of funeral rituals, matched it activating in the viewer an immersion in secular practices, far from our tradition. To this fascination, aroused by a mysterious countryside, rich in history, there is also attached some kind of narrative line, which the tradition in question is threatened in, by the spread of civilisation. Metaphorically talking, the projects for new homes become the emblem of the many destroyed places and thousands of people, whose lives are

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conditioned in the name of a development, often coming from the Higher Realms and not from Humankind. The generational clash, ensuring in that movie, is underlined through the representation of themselves, the characters implementing through their clothes. The elderly do not give up on traditional clothes, unlike the younger characters who, on the other hand, do not disdain products tending to be more Western”.

The Feature Film Jury attributes the award for the Best Actor to **Marat Alyshpaev** (*Road to Eden*) “due to the role of the elderly protagonist, Kubat Aliev, shaping his expressive and emotional abilities in favor of an excellent empathic result for the viewer. The approach of physical Death is expressed by the actor in all its complexity and possibility of reflection”.

The Feature Film Jury prizes the award for the Best Actress to **Bhumika Dube** “because of the character interpretation of Meena, the actress, who with that slow times and the sequence plans, requested by the direction, manages it to carry on the narration and fit in better of other characters in the play. Her relationship with the protagonist is very complex and highly important, both enable to excel this shine through in the whole”.

The Feature Film Jury awards a special mention to Giovanni Coda’s *Histoire d’une Larve*, “because of viewing a work, being far removed from canonical, narrative models, offering a representation, that borrows forms, deriving from theater- and video-performance. The result lies in fullest festival theme, a chronicle of the approach to the end of the protagonist’s life. In old age, very intimately, the protagonist accompanies us on a journey of revenge against Life, often made up of reticence, that disappear in the vicinity of the concrete idea of the Death, to become expressive modalities, which the character manages to redeem his remorse through, by externalising his own depth. The mode of representation of the movie allows us to consider transition as an event, far from the materialism of the life on Earth plane, metaphorically symbolised by a narrative plot, that the film does not decide to adopt. An event, that can find its fatal and complete expression in intimate lyricism, dreams and avant-garde authorship”.

Short Film Jury

Best Movies

ex aequo *Mirage* by Sil van der Woerd and *Rose* by Derrick Lui

Mirage

The Short Film Jury prizes *Mirage* by Sil van der Woerd (Holland) as Best Short Film, “on account of the narrative holding an overwhelming cinematic power: the scenes in the forest, the context of his initiatory journey, are an excellent and poetic reflection of the emotional condition, experienced by the protagonist, being confronted with his own terrifying vision of Death, rooted in human and cultural fear, for then perceiving its true essence and beauty.

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Enriched with insightfully special effects the drama proceeds always at the coherent service of meaning, enable of animating nature with organicity, credibility and miracle. Remarkable the actor's quality of the protagonist: a rare expressiveness, confirmed by the complete absence of the word. A breathtaking photography, and a refined sound design determine, even better, a work of great immediacy, originality and technique: This is Cinema with a capital C!"

Rose

The Best Short Film Award is attributed to *Rose* by Derrick Lui (Singapore) "for the refined exploration of intimacy and the great delicacy of the images. Right from the start, the director makes evident the reworking path of the protagonist's mourning, focusing on everyday moments made special, however, and on the symbolism of objects full of meaning, a bridge between those, being still alive and the other, living just on a more subtle realm.

From the first shots of the dancing feet to the last, where the step will become two, the refined sentimentality, gracefully nourished by that sweet melodies accompanying the movie, legitimises rituals and memories, bridging the Beyond".

The Short Film Jury awards the movie *The Lake*, directed by Nyima Cartier (France) the Special Mention "for its extremely technical quality, accompanied by an thoroughgoing artistic creativity, prepresenting the contact with the Supernatural. The direction effectively develops the evolution of the protagonist who, overcoming incredulity and fears, opens us up to a Life after Life, revealing itself as a synthesis of beauty and mystery.

Intense and well-finished sound design which, together with well-chosen music create an atmosphere of great tension for then passing over, into a touching, emotional flux".

Documentary Film Jury

The Award of Documentary Film Jury as Best Documentary goes to Jesse van Venrooij's *Doctor Kees - In Search of Willy's Will* (Holland), "for its eceedingly high ability to narrate a story, accomagnying it, in live action, from beginning to end. A direction to make people move!Furthermore, to renown the capacity of the drama, maintaining eceedingly that strong contact with the reality, while also discussing Death in terms of existential research. A simple but humble movie, having no claim to narrate anything else but a story, that of the protagonist, with acutely keen humanity combined with a supreme empathy".

The Documentary Film Jury Award as Best Director goes to Ronni Thomas (*The Kybalion*, USA), "what with his coherence and consistency in stylistic-directorial research. A film, whose transversality and narrative capacity are touching on different topics, being even attributable to a single nucleus, like emanations, made of of the same substance. The style is perfectly coherent with the content, multifaceted and complex, a

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successful alternation of more documentary-notional sequences, seen in the strict sense and moments of fiction”.

The Documentary Film Jury prizes *Boromey - Ghosts in the Factory*, by Tommaso Facchin (Italy) for the Best Photography, “on grounds of that incredible ability to soften the lights, alternating moments of delicate light-dark and low-contrast paintings. Evocative in the first case and descriptive in the second, the photography of this film matched it to mix a certain vision of reality for what it is, cold and immanent, with one of transcendental and inevitable research, and a serene and reassuring gaze”.

The Documentary Film Jury awards a Special Mention as Best Thought to *Samadhi Road* by Julio & Daniel Hey (Brazil), “due to the very originality of the thought, and that great intuition of wanting to combine different stories and testimonies, giving so highly intensive moments of enlightenment, opportunity of reflection”.

Documentary Short Film Jury

The Doc Shorts Jury attributes the Award as Best Doc Short to Wilmarc Val’s *Brave* [France] “as a result of that excellent ability to master anthropological-ethnographic documentary elements, while narrating the poetical welfare of a daughter who, pushed by an eternal bond between her and her mother, she matched it returning to her origins, to carry out her role as ritualist in her native village. The capacity to maintain that constant affiliation, communicating steadily within materialism and the Invisible - spiritual part - generates an engaging story-line, made up of successful, dynamic shots, making the viewer enable to perceive that subtle world between Life and Death, places and spiritual beings, on multiple dimensions”.

The Doc Shorts Jury prizes a Special Award both to *Zenerù* [Italy] by Andrea Grasselli, and *The Beyond* [Switzerland] by Daniel Maurer.

Zenerù

To *Zenerù* “for having dug deeply, seeking the mutual meaning of Life and the analytic concernment between the perennial harmony of nature and man, being constantly in search of manual skills, spirituality and his Real Self. A courageous, spunky production, giving a great learning of “artistical spirituality” applied to cinema, transcending even the documentary in itself, managing to work on the Afterlife through Silence and its intrinsic aptitude in making the Spirit alive, naturally and without any explanation”.

The Beyond

To *The Beyond* “due to the heart and cinematic power, by expressing the practice of cure and care for the deceased, during the family’s farewell. The sensitivity, the delicacy, the calm gestures of care and attention, that Mathieu reveals during the documentary, are described with a successful alternation of sequences, a remarkable research of synthesis and that wonderful photographic details melting deeply everyone’s heart”.

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USAC Students Jury

The Best Doc Short for USAC Students is *Snorrie* (Mustachio) by Victoria Warmerdam as “we really do love the characters, representing that magnificent shorty, giving an interesting interpretation of the theme of Death, not focussing on the material end of existence, but pointing out on the concept of continuity by using the protagonist’s childhood imagery. The evolution of the characters, taking place in an only, single location, is immediate and promptly, activating the sympathy of the public, which in the short term will be hit by a wide range of emotions”.

The Best Doc Shorts for the USAC Students Jury is *The Beyond* by Daniel Maurer, “as a fantastic narrative, being perfectly in line with the topic of the festival. The transition embraces in a delicate song, highlighting a ritual, that at times recalls the attention of all those civilisations, believing in the Afterlife, while preparing the bodies of their deceased in the best possible way. The topicality of the issue is evident, in memorandum of the countless victims through the SarsCov2 all over the World. But what really strikes is that the viewer can perceive intensely that naturalness, which the protagonist is moving with, the absolute respect for the Death, the deceased and the proclamation of the need for Dignity, even in pain”.

The Under Eleven Jury

The Under Eleven Jury assigns its Award as Best Documentary Short Film to the Italian product *The Dinner of the Dead Souls* by Ignazio Figus “on the basis that the preparation of the “banquet” for the deceased loved ones is really heart-melting and emanating such a sweet tenderness. Watching that careful, precise, long and meticulous dinner preparation let us vividly comprehend, how much the author cares about those, he still is loving, but having just passed into the higher realms”.

The Under Eleven Special Award

Furthermore Under Eleven attributes its Special Award to Derrick Lui’s movie *Rose*, “because it manages to express so many messages, in such a short time, because it arouses so many emotions, and because it fully adheres to the issue of the Life Beyond Life Film Festival. The message of that filmet is strong enough to go beyond any language limits, despite the present English subtitling. *Rose*, in short, knows how to overawe the audience in a deeply apassionate manner and helping them even to identify themselves like a mirror with that commovent tale”.

Awards of the Life Beyond Life Artistic Direction

The Arts Direction of the Life Beyond Life Film Festival prizes the Award as Best Afterlife Research to *Rinaldi - Instrumental TransCommunication to the Other Side*, directed by Robert William Lyon “through that highly communicative effectiveness, demonstrated by deepen the pioneering analysis of Sonia Rinaldi on the Instrumental TransCommunication, extending the movie by interfacing it with distinguished personalities, delving into the Afterlife. A documentary, having such that television

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slant, profiling itself into an important testimonial evidence by individuating an expanded discussion, enable to keep on record the evident nature that a Beyond does really exist!”

The Arts Direction of the Life Beyond Life Film Festival attributes to **Stefan Georgiou** (*Guide me Home*), the Best Creative Production Award, “because of making, by help of few resources, such clear ideas, Stefan manages to create a treat of social cinema. All that it necessary: actuality, intimacy, poetry, both in writing and in direction! The sound environment is also well packaged, skilfully resting on this social fresco. Flawless photography to illuminate David’s existential drama. The budget is small, but the result is great: Convincing, Fascinating and Thrilling!”

The Arts Direction of the Life Beyond Life Film Festival confers the Best Performance Award to **Mat Laroche** (*Guide me Home*), “in the consequence of having been enchanted and fascinated by that eminently expressive power of Mat, guiding us during this spremely emotional journey towards great inconsistency of a society in decline, failing to take care of the most fragile. His eyes are expressing with deucidly conviction that complete emptiness of a modern society. With a strong expressiveness and charge, he eviscerates the anger and frustration of a lost generation among the gray of the cities, broken dreams and emotional illness, depression, advancing and devouring everything. The actor superbly paints the different moods of “David”, building a deep empathy with the viewer. His performance is essential, poised, like the script. His true personality remains dormant till to the dramatic interpretative climax, accompanying us in an explosion of emotions and pathos”.

The Arts Direction of the Life Beyond Life Film Festival attributes to **Marco Ferri** (*Zenerù*) the Award for the Best Photography “as a result that the light is unquestionably the true protagonist of this masterfully directed film. There are no dialogues to tell about the expulsion of winter and the arrival of spring, to represent the cyclical nature of the reflecting macro intersecting into the micro. Brushstrokes of light are evoking ancestral emotions, accompanying the viewer with amazement, ecstasy and wondering. The heat of the flames, the cold of the blue mountains, the dirt of the face make up a palette of colors that masterfully capture every slightest nuance. Shadows and lights portray this eternal passage from life to death, imprisoning the most inattentive gaze and nourishing it with the most intense sensations”.

The Arts Direction of the Life Beyond Life Film Festival awards Selle Sellink (*Mirage*) for the Best Sound Design “through the quality of that immersive experience, the film is enable of generating through a sound environment, producing the inner world of the protagonist. Thanks to the complex acoustic warp, the images become concrete and engaging, admirably oscillating between the perceptions of intimacy and the powerful ones of a Nature, coming alive to reveal her voice to us”.

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The Arts Direction of the Life Beyond Life Film Festival awards Victoria Warmerdam (*Snorrie*) as the Best Screenplay, “due to that extraordinarily moving operation of synthesis, during the dialogue between mental illness, anger and pain, leading life to live in a totally different way, open to new conviction, moving the borderline of the Beyond in our mind!”

The Competition Committee Music Section

The Competition Committee for the LBLFF Music Section made up of Carmelo Spoto, Vixia Maggini and André Ruiz Luiz, awards Amelia Sai (*Rose*) as the Best Movie Soundtrack “based on the beauty of the chosen musical themes, creating a kind of ability to instill a clear and suspended atmosphere at work. Music does not only accompany, but is the protagonist in the cinematographic fabric, becoming a true emanation of the intimate and delicate feelings of the actors onstage. At times, it seems to guide the actions of the characters, whispering to them how to move. The final melody a splendor filling everyones heart with that innocent but contemporarily strong amenity and tenderness!”

Best Emotional Visual Impact

Jurgen Ziewe prizes the Emotional Visual Impact Award on Tim Smit (“Mirage”), as “it is an exceptional film on many levels. First of all, it manages to present in particular, how the inner sensations are expressed on the subtle levels of consciousness. These sensations are made visually tangible, which engages the viewer in a pathetic vortex. The inaction between the two characters is subtle but profound and stimulates emotional reactions. In summary it is a powerful film that, after having seeing it, will remain etched in the viewer’s memories for a lifetime, simply because it is accurate and emotionally engaging at every level!”

Special Award of the ArtInMovimento Popular University

The Special Award “*Andare Oltre. Uniti nella Luce*” prized by the ArtInMovimento Popular University team honors two movies: *Bardo* by Alessandro di Maio and *Reflections* by Fotis Skourletis.

Bardo by Alessandro di Maio “for the director’s maniacal stylistic research, oriented towards representing the possible contact between the Here and After! Through an artistic sample, being by no means such as an immediate lecturing, characterised by a fragmentation of the narrative development, Alessandro di Maio investigates in particular the NDEs, carrying out even dreamlike scales, being upgraded by a powerful visual and a refined sound design”.

Reflections by Fotis Skouletis “based on a apparent simplicity and immediacy of a never rhetorical language which the incarnational process, the soul pact and the dualism between the Now and Then are staged with, getting it through the heads that there is only Love bridging, uniting and allowing souls to meet their loved ones again.

A real gem, a treat of poetical and experimental Video Arts!”

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