**THE BILBAO FANTASY FILM FESTIVAL - FANT WILL START THE PROCEEDINGS OF ITS 25TH EDITION WITH THE SCREENING OF JOE PENNA'S** ***"ARCTIC"***

* **18 feature films will compete in the Official Section of the festival, with seven national premieres - one will be screened for the first time in Europe whilst David Martín Porras' "The Chain" will have its world premiere at FANT. The festival will also include titles that have screened at various festivals having met public and critical praise, such as** ***"The Hole in the Ground"*** **,** ***"One Cut of the Dead"*** **or** ***"You Might Be the Killer"*** **.**

* **FANT EN CORTO will screen 20 short films, 10 filmed by Basque filmmakers, who will compete for the Best Short Film Award (voted by the public) which includes prize winnings amounting to 3,000 euros** **.The jury will also award two more awards: Best Short Film** **and Best Basque Short Film, each award including winnings of 3,000 and 2,000 euros, respectively.**

* **The "Maestros del FANT" strand of the festival will pay homage to three recently deceased time-honored directors: Larry Cohen, Nicolas Roeg and Jordi Grau. And then "FANT al Rescate" will screen Gary Sherman's *"Dead and buried"*** **(1981)** **, with the Special Screening will include two titles:** ***"In Fabric"*** **(2018) from Peter Strickland and** ***"Dragged Across Concrete"*** **(2018) from S. Craig Zahler.**

* **This year, FANT will be awarding two "Estrella del FANTástico awards", to the American screenwriter and director Fred Dekker ("** ***House*** **" and "** ***The Monster Squad*** **") and the Barcelona-born filmmaker JA Bayona ("** ***The Orphanage*** **" and "** ***The Impossible*** **").They will receive the festival's tribute awards during the inaugural gala - Campos Theater, May 3 - and the closing ceremony - Guggenheim Museum,** **Bilbao, May 10-, respectively.**

* **The new section for family.oriented audiences, "FANT Familian" will offer "** ***Dilili en París*** **" which, after screening at Zinemaldia and the Sitges Festival, has recently been awarded the César Award for Best Animated Film.The free entry cinema at the festival will screen recent feature films in the "Panorama FANTástico," and feature films in competition which will include "** ***Lucero"*** **by Norberto Ramos or** ***"After the Lethargy"*** **by Marc Carreté.**

* **The Bilbao Fantasy Film Festival - FANT will award the FANTROBIA Award, which recognizes an emerging figure within the genre, to Galician filmmaker Guillermo de Oliveira, who won the Noves Visions Best Film Award at the Sitges Festival with his debut, the documentary "** ***Sad Hill Unearthed"*** **(2018).**

*Bilbao, April 11, 2019.* The Bilbao Fantasy Film Festival - FANT, organized by the Bilbao City Council, is already underway and has scheduled an intriguing and varied Official Selection this year with **18** international **feature films** , -5 screening for the first time in the country, one European premiere and another world premiere-.The festival, which has been running a number of activities since January to celebrate the 25th edition, will raise the curtains on May 3, at 8:00 p.m. at the Campos Theater, with a very special anniversary gala, once again presented by the actor Lander Otaola. This event will includes the screening of the feature film *"Arctic"* from Brazilian filmmaker Joe Penna - known as Mystery Guitar Man - , which stars Danish actor Mads Mikkelsen.

The first day will also include the attendance of film director **Fred Dekker** , known for films such as *"House"* or *"The Monster Squad"* , who will collect the honorary award, Estrella del FANTástico, in recognition of a career within the genre, in this case, particularly for his contribution to the so-called *'80s teen horror* .The second Estrella del FANTástico at this special edition of FANT goes to the director **JA Bayona** , in recognition of his expertise and career awash with successes within the fantasy genre. In this case, Bayona will receive the festival's tribute on May 10, at the closing ceremony which will take place in the Guggenheim Museum Auditorium.

The full program for the Bilbao Fantasy Film Festival - FANT 25 was presented this morning at the Bilbao City Hall, attended by the Councillor for Culture, **Nekane Alonso** , **Justo Ezenarro** , Deputy Director of Cultural Programming and the FANT Director and **Eugenio Puerto** , the FANT programmer.

Making up the Official Competition Section, the 18 films which will compete for the FANT 2019 Awards for Best Feature Film, Best Script and Most Innovative Direction, are all premieres in Bilbao, but five of them will also be screened for the first time in the country. The festival will also play host to one European and one world premiere. Said premieres consist of ***"Pledge"*** (USA, 2018) by Daniel Robbins, ***"Ever After (Endzeit)"*** (GER, 2018) by the Swedish director Carolina Helisgard, who will be in Bilbao to present the film; ***"Inner Ghosts"*** (POR, 2018) by Paulo Leite; ***"The Hole in the Ground"*** (IRL, 2019) the directorial debut of Lee Cronin, who received much praise from critics after a screening at the Sundance Festival (and he will be in Bilbao presenting his work); ***"Peripheral"*** (UK, 2019) by Paul Hyett, and ***"The Chain"*** (ES / USA, 2019) by David Martín Porras - world premiere - and ***"You Might Be the Killer"*** (USA, 2018) by Brett Simmons - European premiere-.

The rest of the lineup which will also compete for the Best Feature Film of the Official Section, this year including 3,500 euros prize winnings include: ***"El increíble finde menguante"*** (ESP, 2019) the debut feature film from Jon Mikel Caballero, director who attended FANT in 2016 with his short film *"Cenizo"* ; ***"One Cut of the Dead"*** (JAP, 2018) by Shin'ichirô Ueda, which took home awards at the Austin and Fantaspoa festivals; ***"Inuyashiki"*** (JAP, 2018) by Shinsuke Sato; ***"Puppet Master: The Littlest Reich"*** (UK / USA, 2018) a brtually, bloody politically incorrect slasher from Sonny Laguna and Tommy Wiklund; and ***"Ghostland"*** (CAN / FRA, 2018) by the renowned director Pascal Laugier.

The remaining feature films in competition consist of: ***"The Damned"*** (ISR, 2018) by Evgeny Ruman, ***"Piercing"*** (USA, 2018) by Nicolas Pesce, ***"What Keeps You Alive"*** (CAN, 2018) by Colin Minihan, ***"Lords of Chaos "*** (US / Sweden) by Jonas Akerlund, ***" The Golem "*** (ISR, 2018) by Doron and Yoav Paz, and finally ***" The Spy Gone North "*** (COR, 2018) by Jong-bin Yoon. All screenings will be in their original version with subtitles in Spanish and five of them will also be subtitled in Basque.

As in previous editions, the Official Section programme will include a wide and varied range of free parallel activities, in Cinema 2 at the Golem - Alhóndiga, with recent productions competing in the Panorama Fantástico section, oddities and classics of the genre, with the intention of opening the festival to even more new audiences. The Panorama section will feature six films in competition, all eligible for the Best Fantastic Feature Film Award, worth 2,250 euros. The titles are as follows: ***"Escombros"*** (ESP, 2018) by Álvaro Pita, ***"Lucero"*** (ESP, 2018) by Norberto Ramos, ***"El Cerro de los Dioses"*** (ESP, 2018) by Daniel M. Caneiro, ***"After the Lethargy "*** (ESP, 2018) by Marc Carreté, ***" House of Sweat and Tears "*** (ESP, 2018) by Sonia Escolano and ***" H0us3 "*** (ESP, 2018) by Manolo Munguía.

PROMOTING SHORT FILM

As has been the case in previous editions, short films will play an important role with two awards worth 3,000 euros each going to the best short films of the Official Selection , based on the criteria of the festival's jury and public.Aside from these two awards, which aim to **support the work of new filmmakers** , one of the hallmarks of this festival, there will be an additional award worth 1,500 euros for the Panorama Fantástico en Corto Best Short Film and an award worth 2,000 euros for the Best Basque Short Film.An award will also be granted by the "Union of Basque Actors - Euskal Aktoreen Batasuna" in recognition of the Best Performance in the Basque short film section.

Once again two sessions of "FANT en Corto" have been scheduled for the 3rd and 4th of MAY, with the first exclusively dedicated to Basque short films. The 10 competing short films can be seen in their original version, with subtitles in Basque and / or Spanish, at the Campos Theater, after the opening ceremony and feature film .The short films are as follows:

- *"Basoan"* by Aitzol Saratxaga

-*“La noche”* by Martín Romero

-*“El fin de todas las cosas”* by Norma Vila

-*“Soy una tumba”* by Khris Cembe

-*“Amargo era el postre”* by Diego Kataryniuk

-*“Por comparación”* by Toni Abad

-*“Mirokutana”* by Ander Iriarte

-*“¿Quieres que hoy te bese?”* by Miriam Ortega and Iker Arce

- *"Jesus is (b)lack"* by Nitya López

- *"Espedizio Handia"* by Iban del Campo

The other FANT en Corto short films are mostly European productions and from the rest of the country, including *"Lo siento mi amor"* the new project from Eduardo Casanova and *"Flotando"* by Frankie De Leonardis .The international shorts will be screened on May 4, at the 20:00 session, at the Azkuna Zentroa Auditorium.In addition, another 10 productions will compete for the Best Short Film of Panorama Fantástico, worth 1,500 euros, including *"Malnacido"* by Benja de la Rosa, starring Eva Llorach.

The FANT 25 awards will be announced on May 9 with the winners chosen by a jury consisting of the American film director, screenwriter and producer **Gary Sherman** , the Director of Fancine - Fantastic Film Festival of Malaga **Rocío Moreno** ; and the actress **Diana Peñalver** .The Panorama jury will be made up of the director, producer, writer, illustrator and cartoonist **Borja Crespo** , the composer **Aranzazu Calleja** and **Rubin Stein** , director of the short film "Bailaora", which won a Goya for Best Fictional Short Film.

As always, the awards ceremony will take place during the closing ceremony, which, this year will also be a bit different in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the festival. It will take place in the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Auditorium, on the 10th, at 8:00 p.m. The gala will be presented by the actresses Miren Gaztañaga, An e Pikaza and María Goiricelaya, and will include a screening of the film ***"Au Poste!"*** (FRA, 2018), a surrealist comedy directed by Quentin Dupieux that took home the best screenplay award when it screened as part of the Official Section at the Sitges Festival and also the public award at the Montreal festival.As in the previous edition, on Saturday, May 11, the entire FANT 25 list of winners will be screened at Sala BBK Hall on Gran Vía , in two different sessions.At 18:00, the Best Panorama Short and Feature Film, and at 20:00 the Best Official Section Short Films and International Feature Film.

SPECIAL SCREENINGS

The free entry special screenings include a series of events which has been scheduled between May 3 and 10, including some of the most outstanding titles that have hit the country's commercial theaters via the distributor **La Aventura Audiovisual** , with titles such as *"The Monster"* or *"The Night Eats the World"* .This same strand will include five classic films from two celebrated names in the genre, two **"Masters of FANT"** : **Nicolas Roeg** and **Jordi Grau** , who both passed away in 2018. Specifically, from the former we will screen *"Don't Look Now"* (1973), *"The Man Who Fell to Earth"* (1976) and *"The Witches"* (1990), with two two unmissable classics from Grau: "The Legend of Blood Castle"(1972) and "Let Sleeping Corpses Lie" (1974).

In addition, on May 2, before the festival kicks off, the Sala BBK-Gran Vía will play host to a double session: one devoted to Masters of FANT, with the screening of *"The Stuff"* (1985) from recently deceased American filmmaker **Larry Cohen** .Whilst the second session will see this, the 25th edition of the Fantastic Film Festival of Bilbao present its "FANT de Honor" (FANT Honorary Award) to the actor George Brown Randal, popularly known as **Jack Taylor** (Oregon, USA, 1936), the American face of Spanish horror and B movies of the '60s, '70s and '80s, star of mythical titles such as *"The Mummy's Revenge"* or *"Hottot of the Zombies"* .

To this end, the documentary *"Jack Taylor, testigo del fantástico"* (2018) by Diego López will also be screened .The film can be seen on May 2 in the Sala BBK-Gran Vía at 20:00, followed by a Q&A with Diego López, Jack Taylor and Javier G. Romero, founder of the Quatermass magazine, and one of the promoters of the first edition of the Bilbao Fantasy Film Festival.Jack Taylor will receive the honorary award during this event , which will serve as the jumping off point for this special edition of FANT.

The "FANT al rescate" section will include a screening of *"Dead & Buried"* (1981) one of the best known films directed by the FANT 25 jury member, Gary Sherman, with a double bill scheduled for the Special Screening comprising of: *"In Fabric "* (UK 2018) by Peter Strickland and *" Dragged Across Concrete "* (2018) by S. Craig Zahler, starring Mel Gibson. And then the DOKUFANT strand will screen *"Wolfman's Got Nards"* (USA, 2018) Andre GowerThis film examines the success of the Fred Dekker film *"The Monster Squad"* (1987).Andre Gower, the main character, interviews cast members, showcasing the phenomenon and the trail of fans that the film has garnered over the cause of several decades.

The festival has also programmed another intriguing documentary, *"Sad Hill Unearthed"* which took home the Best Film Noves Visions Award at the Sitges Festival and was nominated as Best Documentary at the latest edition of the Goya Awards.This is the debut of Galician screenwriter/director **Guillermo de Oliveira** who will receive the FANTROBIA Award at the 25th edition of FANT, an award which recognizes an emerging figure within the fantasy genre.He will attend to receive the award at the FANT 25 closing ceremony.

New for this year, in addition to the usual FANT Eskola sessions, the festival has also designed a specific program with the family audience in mind, with two morning sessions of "FANT Familian", on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5. These will take place in the main auditorium of Golem - Alhondiga Bilbao, with the screening of two animated films: *"Dilili en París"* (FRA, 2019) *and "Asterix: Edabe Magikoaren Sekretua"* (FRA, 2018). The first of these, the French production *"Dilili en París"*, by Michel Ocelot, after screening at Zinemaldia and the Sitges Festival, was recently awarded the César Award for Best Animated Film.

ANNIVERSARY CLOSING EVENT

In celebration of the 25th edition, the Bilbao Fantasy Film Festival has held various events since the beginning of the year, running up until May 2. These have included previews of films such as *"70 Big Ones"* by Koldo Serra or *" Destroyer "* by Karyn Kusama, as well as conferences and exhibitions related to the festival and genre films. The latter can be visited up until the end of the festival in the La Bolsa and Abando Municipal Centers, in the Bilbao Metro - Casco Viejo station, Unamuno exit-, FNAC and the Vía de Fuga bar.

Also, on May 2, the Kafe Antzokia will play host to an inauguration concert from the band Moonshine Wagon at 21:30. Admission to this inauguration party will be free until full capacity is reached. And then the closing party will take place on the 10th as part of the Art After Dark program at the BilbaoGuggenheim Museum with a session performed by DJ Carlos Bayona, who will be accompanied by his brother, JA Bayona, who will receive the "FANT de Honor" at this year's festival.This event will cost 15 euros.

PASSES AND SINGLE TICKETS

Passes for the whole festival, which provide access to all paid sessions in Golem-Alhóndiga, as well as the inauguration sessions at the Campos Theater, closing ceremony at the Bilbao Guggenheim Museum Auditorium and award winners at the Sala BBK, - with holders required to pass the box office before access to each session - will go on sale tomorrow for a price of **35 euros** , at the Golem - Alhóndiga box office or on the festival website (until May 1 via the latter).

Tickets for a single session will cost 5 euros and can also be purchased as of tomorrow at the box offices and websites for each of the screening venues: Golem - Alhondiga, Sala BBK, Bilbao Guggenheim Museum and Campos Theater .All the cinema sessions programmed for Cinema 2 at the Golem - Alhóndiga will be free until full capacity is reached.

FANT 25 VIDEO:

PHOTOGRAPHS AND CATALOG: <https://we.tl/t-nolPFVNNtw>

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