**THE BILBAO FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL - FANT - TO START THE PROCEEDINGS WITH CURTAIN-OPENER, JOHANNES ROBERTS'** ***"THE STRANGERS: PREY AT NIGHT"*** **, WITH A FURTHER 18 FEATURE FILMS SELECTED FOR THE FESTIVAL'S MOST EXTENSIVE LINE-UP TO DATE**

* **The 24th edition of the Fantastic Film Festival - FANT, organised by Bilbao's City Council, will get the show on the road this May 4 - at the Campos Theatre at 8:00 pm -, with "** ***The Strangers: Prey at Night"*, one of the most impressive releases of late from the acclaimed British filmmaker, Johannes Roberts; a film slated to hit national cinemas this coming June 1.**

* **FANT will present the "Estrella del FANTástico" award to acclaimed director Joe Dante, in honour of his extensive career. Dante will be in attendance at the opening gala to receive said honorary award. As part of the FANT2FUN strand of the festival, festivalgoers will get the chance to experience two of Dante's all-time classics:** ***"Gremlins"*** **(1984) and** ***"The Howling"*** **(1981).**

* **18 feature films, the biggest line-up in FANT history, will compete in the Official Section, with 5 of these being national premieres, together with a selection of films, such as** ***"Salyut 7"*** **,** ***"The Endless"*** **or** ***" A Day,” that were all met with high praise from critics and audiences alike.***

* **FANT EN CORTO (Short Film Section) will screen 20 short films, 11 of these helmed by Basque filmmakers. These will all be eligible for the € 3,000 Audience Choice Best Short Film Award prize winnings. Not only that but the Jury will also bestow a further two awards: Best International Short and Best Basque Short, with the winning filmmakers taking home € 3,000 and € 2,000 respectively.**

* **This year, the "Maestros of FANT" (FANT Masters) strand will pay tribute to two late, great directors who sadly passed away last year: Tobe Hooper and George A. Romero. Also, in celebration of its 70th anniversary, "FANT al Rescate" will be screening a remastered copy of** ***William Dieterle's "Portrait of Jennie.”***

* **Once again, FANT will present the FANTROBIA Award in recognition of the talents of a promising new figure in the fantasy genre. This year's honours will go to director Paul Urkijo from Gasteiz, who recently premiered his directorial debut "** ***Errementari"*** **(2018).**

* **The free access strand of the festival will screen not only the "Maestros of FANT" selection, but also recently produced projects together with the feature films competing in the FANTástico Panorama selection, a line-up that includes titles such as, Norberto Ramos' "*Call TV”* or Ángel González'** ***"Compulsion".***

*Bilbao, April 13, 2018.* The 24th edition of the Bilbao Fantastic Film Festival - FANT, organised by the Bilbao City Council, is prepped and ready to go with an impressive Official Selection line-up consisting of **18 international feature films -** the biggest line-up in FANT history. The festival will raise its curtains on May 4, at 8:00 pm at the Campos Theatre, with the premiere of the highly-anticipated "*The Strangers: Prey at Night"* , one of the most impressive releases of late from acclaimed British filmmaker, Johannes Roberts.

The first day will also welcome film director **Joe Dante**, responsible for cult titles such as *"Gremlins"* or *"Inner Space"* , with the helmer attending to receive the honorary Estrella del FANTástico award, in recognition of his career within the genre .The festival will also present the FANTROBIA award that pays tribute to an emerging figure who, this year, is the Gasteiz-based filmmaker Paul Urkijo, who's debut feature " *Errementari"* (2018) just released in cinemas across the country. Local filmmaking will be a festival focal point once again this year with 11 Basque shorts competing in the FANT EN CORTO section.

The full Bilbao Fantastic Film Festival - FANT 24 programme was announced this morning at Bilbao's City Hall in the attendance of the Councillor for Culture, **Nekane Alonso** , **Justo Ezenarro**, Deputy Director of Cultural Programming and FANT Director together with **Eugenio Puerto**, the FANT programmer.

18 films make up this year's Official Competition Section, two more than in 2017 and the largest line-up in the history of the festival, and all will be in the running for the 2018 FANT Awards for Best Feature Film, Best Screenplay and Most Innovative Direction. All films are premieres in the city of Bilbao whilst five are national premieres. The 5 national premieres are: ***"Chimera"*** (IND / UAE / USA, 2018) by director Maurice Haeems; ***"Tigers are not Afraid"*** (MEX, 2017) by the Mexican Issa López, who will be visiting Bilbao to present the film, hot on the tail of the news that Guillermo del Toro has announced he will be supporting him in an upcoming project; ***"November"*** (EST / NETH / POL, 2017) by Rainer Samet; ***"Touched" (*** CAN, 2017) by Karl R. Hearne, who will also be in attendance to present his film in Bilbao, and ***"Hostile"*** (FRA, 2017) by French filmmaker Mathieu Turi.

Also screening and competing for Best Feature Award in the Official Section this year with the awarded film taking home prize winnings of 3,500 euros are: ***“Matar a Dios”*** (SPA, 2017) by Caye Casas and Albert Pinto, who will be in attendance to present their film in Bilbao; ***"Replace" (*** GER / CAN, 2017) by Norbert Kell, Barbara Crampton's latest film (awarded the Estrella del FANTástico 2017 award in 2017-; ***"Bad Match"*** (SIN / USA, 2017) by David Chirchirillo: ***"Downrange"*** (USA, 2017) by Ryühei Kitamura; ***"Salyut7"*** (RUS, 2017) by Klim Shipenko, a Russian production set in space and based on real-life events; ***"The Endless"*** (USA, 2017) by Justin Benson and Aaron Moorhead, with the duo attending to present the film in Bilbao - a film that has garnered excellent reviews at all festivals it has screened at thus far; ***"A Day"*** (COR, 2017) by Sun-ho Cho; ***"Housewife"*** (TUR, 2017), the latest from Can Evrenol - honoured with the FANTROBIA award in 2016.

They remaining films in competition are: ***"Trauma"*** (CHI, 2017) by Lucio Rojas; ***"Mayhem"*** (USA, 2017) by Joe Lynch; ***"Revenge"*** (FRA, 2017) by director Coralie Fargeat; " ***Framed"*** (SPA, 2017) by Marc Martínez, who will be in attendance to present his film, and ***"Black Hollow Cage"*** (SPA, 2017) by Sadrac González - Perellón. All films will be screened in their original language with Spanish subtitles with five of them also including Basque subtitles.

Just as has been the case in previous editions, aside from the Official Section festivalgoers can also enjoy a wide and varied range of free screening in Screen 2 at the Golem - Alhóndiga cinema. These screenings include more recent offerings which will compete as part of the Panorama Fantástico strand as well as other curiosities and classics of the genre, all with a view towards opening the festival doors to an even wider audience.

The aforementioned Panorama Fantástico strand plays host to five films all competing for the Best Fantastic Feature Film Award, with the winning film taking home prize winnings of 2,250 euros. The five selected films are: ***"Dhogs"*** (SPA, 2017) by Andrés Goteira, ***"Call TV"*** (SPA, 2017) by Norberto Ramos, ***"Necronomicón"*** (ARG / BRA, 2018) by Marcelo Schapces, ***"Compulsion"*** (SPA, 2017) ) by Ángel González, ***"Game of Death"*** (CAN / USA / FRA, 2017) by Sebastien Landry, Laurence Morais-Lagace and ***"Madraza"*** (ARG, 2017) by Hernán Aguilar.

PROMOTING SHORT FILM

Just as in the last editions, strong emphasis will be placed on short films with two 3,000 euro awards going to the best shorts in the Official Selection - one picked by this year's jury and the other chosen by the festival audience.Aside from these two awards, with a view towards promoting new filmmakers , one of this festival's distinguishing attributes, a new award comes into play this year 1,500 euros going to the Best Short Film of "Panorama Fantástico en Corto" and 2,000 euros going to the Best Basque Short Film.Not only that but the "Basque Actors Union - Euskal Aktoreen Batasuna" will also be awarding a brand new prize this year in recognition of the "Best Actor" in the FANT Basque Short Film Section.

This year will once again play host to two FANT in Corto sessions scheduled for the 4th and 5th of MAY, together with the Panorama en Corto session, with the first of these sessions exclusively devoted to Basque shorts.The 11 shorts directed by Basque helmers can be seen in their original version, with subtitles in Basque and/or Spanish, at the Campos Theatre, straight after the inauguration event and and opening film .And the selected shorts are as follows:

-          *“Aprieta, pero raramente ahoga”*by David Pérez Sañudo

-          *“Contact”* by Alessandro Novelli

-          *“El duelo”* by Aritzeder Arregui

-          *“Ejecutor”* by Javier Arriaga

-          *“June”* by Arantza Ibarra Basañez

-          *“La noche de las sombras”* by Aritz Elguezábal Totoricagüena

-          *“Pink Milk”* by Laura Silva

-          *“Revolution (What´s Going on?)”* by Two Maniacs (Ernesto Báez, Joshua Duran)

-          *“Tür”* by Ernesto Báez

-          *“Versus”* by Demetrio Elorz

-          *“Ziren”* by Aitzol Saratxaga

The remaining "FANT en Corto" short films primarily consist of European productions hailing from France, Sweden and the rest of the country, as well as a Uruguayan film and another from Canada .The international shorts will screen on May 5, at 20:00, at the Azkuna Zentroa Auditorium.

As usual, the awards ceremony will take place during the closing gala, which will once again be held in the Sala BBK - Gran Vía, on MAY 11 , starting at 8:00 p.m.The event will include an exclusive European premiere of the film ***"Rock Steady Row"*** (USA, 2018) from American director Trevor Stevens, who will be putting in an appearance to present the film.

New for 2018, all the winning films from FANT 24 will be screened in two sessions on Saturday May 12, at the Sala BBK on Gran Vía. The Best Panorama Short and Feature Films will be screened at 18:00 whilst the Best International Short and Feature Films will be screened at 20:00.

ESTRELLA DEL FANTÁSTICO (FANTASY STAR)

For the second year running, the Bilbao Fantastic Film Festival - FANT will present the Estrella del FANTástico award, an honorific award in recognition of an entire career working in the fantasy genre and this year the festival has chosen to honour the highly respected, much-loved director **Joe Dante** .

Born in 1946 in the city of Morristown, New Jersey, Dante cut his teeth working as an editor for legendary producer Roger Corman until he made the leap to direction, co-directing alongside Allan Arkush for "Hollywood Boulevard" (1976).In 1978 he jumped into the deep end, pun intended, helming "Piranha", penned by first-timer John Sayles, with whom he collaborated again on "The Howling" (1981).

In 1983 he forged a successful collaboration relationship with Steven Spielberg (as a producer) when he directed one of the segments of the film adaptation of the legendary series "The Twilight Zone".This collaboration didn't stop there and spawned the more than successful "Gremlins" (1984), its sequel "Gremlins 2" (1990) and "Inner Space" (1987).Other well-known Dante titles include "Explorers" (1985), "The Burbs" (1989), "Matinee" (1993), "Small Soldiers" (1998) or "Burying the Ex" (2014), his last feature film to date.

As part of the festival's tribute, on Saturday, May 5, the FANT2FUN strand of the festival will play host to a double bill of two of his most acclaimed movies: "Gremlins" (1984) and "The Howling" (1981), starting at 22:15.

Joe Dante will be in attendance to collect the award during the opening gala, which will take place on May 4, starting at 8:00 pm, at the Campos Theatre. The FANTROBIA Award will also be awarded during said event, which, at the other end of the spectrum, recognises an emerging figure in the fantasy genre. And this year, the honours go to the young Gasteiz-based filmmaker **Paul Urkijo** , who will attend to present his debut feature film " *Errementari"* (2018) which just released across the nation. Urkijos exemplary debut will screen on May 10, at 8:00 p.m., on screen 1 at the Golem - Alhóndiga cinemas.

SPECIAL SCREENINGS

The free special screenings on offer will run from May 4 through till May 11, featuring some of the most memorable films to have graced the countries cinemas under the **La Aventura Audiovisual banner** , with titles such as *"Les Affames"* or *"The Love Witch"* .Said free screenings will also include five classics directed by two undisputed genre movie heavyweights: **Tobe Hopper** and **George A. Romero** , who both sadly died in 2017. The Hooper classics fans will get the chance to experience again on the big screen are "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre" (1974) and "The Funhouse" (1981), whilst the three handpicked Romero essentials are "Night of the Living Dead" (1968). , "The Crazies" (1973) and "Monkey Shines" (1988).

As part of the "FANT al rescate" strand, William Dieterie's classic *"Portrait of Jennie"* will be screened to celebrate its 70th anniversary whilst there will also be an exclusive screening of a remastered copy of Steven Spielberg's classic *"Close Encounters of the Third Kind.*And if documentaries are more your think then DOKUFANT has just the thing for you: *"78/52: Hitchcock's Shower Scene" by* Alexandre O. Philippe *,* who won the Best Documentary Award at last year's Sitges festival. Over the course of 91 minutes, the documentary dissects each and every one of the 52 shots used for the infamous "Psycho" shower scene that turned the world of cinema as we knew it on its head.

Before the festival itself begins, PRE-FANT will also offer all manner of preliminary activities - mostly free - from April 23 to 27, on the Gran Vía in Sala BBK, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao and Bilborock. Once again, PRE-FANT welcomes the Sitges Tour a Contracorriente experience back for more , with a selection of films that screened at last year's Catalan festival. And as is that weren't enough, attendees can also enjoy a series of great French fantasy classics.

On April 27, the DARKFEST Faux Trailer competition finalists and winner will be screened in Bilborock, and those who attend this session can also vote for their favourite to take home the FANT Audience Award. This special event will also include an 80'BEAT concert, paying homage to the best New Wave electronic sounds of the '80s

And once again, the festival has devised a specific selection of films in Basque language for school audiences, with four morning sessions going by the name of FANTESKOLA. These will be held in the main auditorium of the Golem - Alhondiga Bilbao (400 seats), where school children will get the chance to enjoy: *"Tarzan"* (Germany, 2013) *and "Ballerina"* (France, 2016).

FULL PASS AND TICKETS

Full passes for the entire festival, providing access to all paid sessions in Golem-Alhóndiga, as well as the opening events at the Campos Theatre and closing and awards ceremonies in the Sala BBK, (visiting the box office beforehand for each session compulsory) will go on on sale on April 16, for **30 euros** and can be purchases at the Golem - Alhóndiga ticket booths.The first 25 people to pick up their full passes will receive a DVD of one of La Aventura's titles. Not only this, but passes also entitle holders to 50% discount when buying the official festival t-shirt this year.

Single screening tickets will cost 5 euros (May 7, 8 and 9 "FIESTA DEL CINE", ticket price only 2.90 euros ) and these will go on sale from Monday, April 16, either at the screening venue ticket booths or websites : Golem - Alhondiga, Sala BBK and Campos Theater. All Golem - Alhóndiga screen 2 sessions will be free until full capacity is reached.

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