

***STYX* WINS EUROPA CINEMAS BERLINALE LABEL**

February 23, 2017: **STYX** directed by the Austrian Wolfgang Fischer has won the Europa Cinemas Label as Best European film in the Panorama section, it was announced today by a jury of four exhibitors from the network, the fourteenth time the Label has been awarded in Berlin.

**STYX** will now benefit from promotional support from Europa Cinemas and better exhibition thanks to a financial incentive for network cinemas to include it in their programme schedule.

The Label Jury consisted of **Nora KASZA**(Art+Cinema, Budapest, Hungary), **Fréderic CORNET**(Cinéma Les Galeries, Brussels, Belgium), **Stanislav ERSHOV** (Foundation Kino&Teatr, St.Petersburg, Russia) and **Mustafa EL MESAOUDI** (Cinema/Rex Filmtheater, Wuppertal, Germany).

The jury issued the following statement: “**STYX** is a simple but highly dramatic story that has a very clear and powerful message – we in Europe cannot ignore the refugee situation. We must face it and find solutions. Susanne Wolff is remarkably strong as a lone woman sailor in mid Atlantic who comes across a boatload of people in dire need of help. Great cinematography and sharp editing drive the drama, and the imaginative and skillful sound design use the ocean and wind to heighten the tension. We feel that audiences across Europe will be gripped by this emotional film.”

**Sold internationally by Beta Cinema**, Wolfgang Fischer is the director and co-screenwriter with Ika Künzel. Benedict Neuenfels is the Cinematographer, Monika Willi the Editor, Sound Design by Uwe Dresch and Andre Zimmermann with Costumes by Nicole Fischnaller. The Producers are Marcos Kantis, Martin Lehwald, and Michal Pokorny with the Co-producers Alexander Dumreicher - Ivanceanu, and Bady Minck.

The film is produced by Schiwago Film, a co-production with Amour Fou Vienna.

**Wolfgang Fischer** was born in Vienna, Austria in 1970. He studied psychology and painting at the University of Vienna as well as film and video at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf under Nan Hoover. From 1996 to 2001 he took a degree in film and television at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne. In 2002 he attended a course in how to work with actors led by Mark Travis in Poland and in 2004 a workshop for writing and developing genre with Stephen Cleary and Simon van der Borgh in Rome. In 2005 he received a scriptwriting scholarship for the Munich Screenplay Workshop where he developed the script for his debut film *Was Du nicht siehst* (*What You Don’t See*).

**Filmography**

**1998** *9h11*; short film **1999** *Remake of the Remake*; documentary **2001** *Grau* (*Grey*); short film **2009** *Was Du nicht siehst* (*What You Don't See*) **2013** *The Bear* **2014** *The Highway of Tears* **2018** *Styx*; Panorama

*Rike is forty, she is a successful doctor whose job demands everything of her. She intends to use her much-needed annual holiday to fulfil her long-cherished dream of sailing single-handedly from Gibraltar to Ascension, a small tropical island in the middle of the Atlantic. Her desire for a carefree holiday seems to be coming to pass but then, after a storm, her beautiful adventure suddenly turns into an unprecedented challenge when she spots a badly damaged, hopelessly overloaded refugee boat nearby. More than a hundred people face drowning. Rike tries to organise help, but she increasingly feels that humanitarianism has deteriorated into mere wishful thinking.   
Wolfgang Fischer’s film depicts a struggle for survival at sea, which makes palpable the cruelty of the situation for people in dire straits whose fate is determined by others. The ocean becomes the scene of an allegorical, existential drama.*

Founded in 1992 with funding from the MEDIA programme (Creative Europe) and from the Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée (CNC), Europa Cinemas is the first film theatre network focusing on European films. Its objective is to provide operational and financial support to cinemas that commit themselves to screen a significant number of European non-national films, to offer events and initiatives as well as promotional activities targeted at Young Audiences. Thanks to the support of Eurimages and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the influence of Europa Cinemas extends to Eastern European countries, to the Balkans, to Russia and to Turkey.

Previous winners of the Berlin Europa Cinemas Label:

*2017:* ***Insyriated****/ Philippe Van Leeuw (Belgium)*

*2016:* ***The First, The Last****/Bouli Lanners (Belgium)*

*2015:* ***Out of Nature****/Ole Giæver, Norway*

*2014:* ***Blind****/ Eskil Vogt, Norway/Netherlands*

*2013:* ***The Broken Circle Breakdown****/Felix van Groeningen, Belgium*

*2012:* ***My Brother the Devil****/Sally El Hosaini, UK*

*2011:* ***Über uns das All/Above Us Only Sky****/Jan Schomburg, Germany*

*2010:* ***Die Fremde*** */ When We Leave/Feo Aladag, Germany*

*2009:* ***Welcome****/Philippe Lioret, France*

**EUROPA CINEMAS**

**43 countries, 680 cities, 1,126 cinemas, 2,806 screens**

Europa Cinemas is supported by the **MEDIA** programme of the European Commission (Brussels), **CNC** (France) and **Eurimages** (Council of Europe, Strasbourg)

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