

# The 18th SCANDINAVIAN FILM FESTIVAL L.A. (SFFLA) 2017 SCHEDULE

## Saturday, January 14

12:00 pm **THE CROSSING** (documentary)

*Flukten*, (Norway), 2015, 55 minutes, George Kurian

The award winning documentary takes us along on one of the most dangerous journeys of our time with a group of Syrians fleeing war and persecution, crossing a sea, two continents and five countries, searing for a home to rekindle the greatest thing they have lost— hope.

1:30 pm **SPARROWS** (Oscar entry)

*Prestir*, (Iceland), 2016, 99 minutes, Rúnar Rúnarsson

The story follows a 16-year old Icelandic boy, Ari, who lives with his mother in Reykjavik. She has to leave the country for a new job, sending him back to the small town of his youth. There he finds his old friend, suddenly a young woman with a tricky romantic relationship, and his father has become a victim of the financial crisis.

4:00 pm **THE HAPPIEST DAY IN THE LIFE OF OLLI MAKI** (Oscar entry)

*Hymyilevä mies*, (Finland), 2016, 92 minutes, Juho Kuosmanen

The true story of Olli Mäki, the famous Finnish boxer who had a shot at the 1962 World Featherweight title. Immensely talented and equally modest, Olli's small town life is transformed when he is swept into national stardom and suddenly regarded as a symbol of his country. There's only one problem: Olli has just fallen in love. Inside of the ring, it's Finland vs. the USA, but outside, boxing and romance become unlikely adversaries vying for Olli's attention. This charming feature debut was awarded the Un Certain Regard Prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

6:00 pm **OPENING GALA AND BUFFET**

7:30 pm **LAND OF MINE** (Oscar entry)

*Under Sandet*, (Denmark), 2015, 100 minutes, Martin Pieter Zandvliet

A group of young German POWs are made the enemy of a nation where they are now forced to dig up 2 million land-mines with their bare hands.

## Sunday, January 15

11:00 am **BEAUTY BITES BEAST** (documentary)

(Norway), 2016, 83 minutes, Ellen Snortland

Gloria Steinem wrote "Female elephants, lions— all are just as fierce in self-defense as males. Only our species is taught to be 'feminine' and defenseless. 'Beauty Bites Beast' show how women around the world are taking back our strengths and lives." The LA Times wrote: "Each story is different by the look of triumph on a woman's face appears to be universal. This documentary is inspiring and empowering"

12:00 pm **ETERNAL SUMMER** (feature)

*Odödliga* (Sweden), 2015, 107 minutes, Andreas Öhman

Two young lovers meet in Stockholm and begin a whirlwind romance that sends them on an impromptu road trip through northern Sweden, where their summer adventure turns criminal in this Swedish mix of Bonnie & Clyde with a soft touch of Natural Born Killers.

2:00 pm **MARIUPOLIS** (documentary)

*Mariupolis*, (Lithuania), 2016, 96 minutes, Mantas Kvedaravicius

In Mariupolis, Lithuanian Director Mantas Kvedaravicius follows the lives of people living in Mariupol, an isolated city in eastern Ukraine. Once populated by the Ancient Greeks and called Mariupolis, Mariupol is now the site of everyday bomb threats from the conflict between pro-Russian rebels and Ukrainian government forces. Kvedaravicius subtly documents the lives of the inhabitants of Mariupol, living as they do under the permanent threat of a new explosion. There's the shoemaker, a father and daughter fishing, teenage dancers rehearsing for a performance on Victory Day and children playing. The church bell rings, the steel mill continues to operate and animals pace around in the zoo. Kvedaravicius shares small details of the city, also visiting abandoned public spaces: a mural from the Soviet days peeling from the wall, a plaster cast of a Greek statue. A beautifully haunting piece of documentary making Mariupolis shows a world where life goes regularly, if strangely, on.

4:30 pm **BIRD HEARTS** (short)

*Fuglehjerter*, (Norway), 2015, 30 minutes, Halfdan Ullmann Tøndel

Tøndel's short fiction recently won the main prize at the Norwegian Short Film Festival and also received an Amanda (the official Norwegian film prize) nomination. It is the story about Benjamin and Maya who share a life and an apartment in the center of Oslo. On the occasion of Benjamin's 26th birthday, Tobias, Benjamin's younger and more successful brother, comes to visit for the weekend. During a late night dinner party with friends, Maya tells a story about a sexual experience she had in Brazil. As a consequence, Benjamin's insecurities and vulnerabilities begin to surface. Bird Hearts is a film about gender roles and jealousy, sex and family - and the tricky power of the stories lovers tell.

5:00 pm **ALL THE BEAUTY** (feature)

*Alt det vakre*, (Norway), 2016, 91 minutes, Aasne Vaa Greibrokk

Ten years after their breakup, Sarah agrees to visit bestselling author David at his cabin on the Norwegian coast and help with his latest opus, a raw and graphic play exploring their years as a couple. Though Sarah is now married to another man, old feelings linger and spark with a love story for the ages - full of passion, discontent, sensual pleasure and regret.

7:00 pm **GHETTOSWEDISH** (short)

*Rinkebysvenska* (Sweden), 2015, 10 minutes, Bahar Pars

Aisatou is a black actress who's been hired to record a voiceover for Stockholm's top ad agency Måns and Petter. The session starts great, but it's soon clear Måns and Petter want the ad to be more "Ganster, ghetto audience. Aisatou must choose between keeping her integrity, or sacrificing it in order to please her employer's stereotype.

7:15 pm **A MAN CALLED OVE** (Oscar entry)

*En man som heter Ove*, (Sweden), 2016, 116 minutes, Hannes Holm

Ove, an ill-tempered, isolated retiree who spends his days enforcing block association rules and visiting his wife's grave, has finally given up on life just as an unlikely friendship develops with his boisterous new neighbors.

## Saturday, January 21

1:00 pm **HEARTSTONE** (feature)

*Hjartasteinn*, (Iceland), 2016, 129 minutes, Gudmundur Arnar Gudmundsson

In a remote fishing village in Iceland two teenage boys Thor and Christian experience a turbulent summer as one tries to win the heart of a girl while the other discovers new feelings toward his best friend. When summer ends and the harsh nature of Iceland takes back its rights, it's time to leave the playground and face adulthood.

3:30 pm **AN EMPTY SPACE** (short)

*Tühi ruum*, (Estonia), 2016, 10 minutes, Ülo Pikkov

A 10-year old girl longing for a puppy as a birthday present, gets instead a father she had no idea was alive. Documentary based, Pikkov tells a story about a very long-standing dream that kept him alive though many years and actually will come true only now through this film.

4:00 pm **MOTHER** (Ema) (Oscar entry)

*Ema*, (Estonia), 2016, 89 minutes, Kadri Kõusaar

This "Fargo-like" comic crime mystery set in small-town Estonia centers on Elsa, the mother and full time caretaker of Lauri, a teacher who has been in a coma since being shot under suspicious circumstances. Kõusaar cunningly navigates a script that slowly pieces together the truth behind Lauri's shooting through his visitor's confessionals to the comatose protagonist. The film has all the ingredients of a satisfying mystery: secret love affairs, nosy policemen, missing money, and the works.

6:30 pm **THE COMMUNE** (feature)

*Kollektivet*, (Denmark), 2016, 115 minutes, Thomas Vinterberg

The new film from Danish auteur Thomas Vinterberg (*The Hunt*, *The Celebration*), focuses on a middle-aged professional couple in 1970s Denmark who decide to experiment with communal living by inviting a group of friends and random eccentrics to cohabit with them in a sprawling house. Erik and Anna are a professional couple with a dream. Along with their daughter, Freja, they set up a commune in Erik's huge villa in the upmarket district of Copenhagen. With the family in the center of the story, we are invited into the dream of a real commune. We participate in the house meeting, dinners, and parties. It is friendship, love and togetherness under one roof until an earth-shattering love affair puts the community and the commune to its greatest test.

## Sunday, January 22

1:00 pm **A HOLY MESS** (feature)

*En underbar jävla jul*, (Sweden), 2015, 108 minutes, Helena Bergström

Two young men, Simon and Oscar, both in their 20s, have been a couple for three years. Together with their girlfriend, Cissi, they have bought a house in Bromma, outside Stockholm. One room has top priority: the nursery, because Cissi is nine months pregnant. But who is the father – Simon or Oscar? Nevertheless, come what may, they are going to start a family. They haven't revealed the secret to their families yet, but they realize that they cannot keep it hidden anymore, and what time could be better to disclose the truth than Christmas night – the feast of tolerance, the day when everybody loves one another and is pleasant to each other, the birthday of Jesus.

2:45 pm **AWESOME BEETLES COLORS** (short/animation)

(Latvia), 2016, 3 minutes, Indra Spronge

A nearly impossible story, supported by a catchy melody, guides us through the ABCs- from Awesome Beetles to Yellow Zebra.

3:00 pm **DAWN** (Oscar entry)

*Ausma*, (Latvia), 2015, 90 minutes, Laila Pakalniņa

Based on a Soviet propaganda story about Young Pioneer (the Soviet equivalent of a Boy Scout) Morozov, who denounced his father to Stalin's secret police and was in turn killed by his family. His life exemplified the duty of all good Soviet citizens to become informers, at any expense. In our film, 75 years later, we call him little Janis. He is a pioneer who lives on the Soviet collective farm "Dawn". His father is an enemy of the farm (and the Soviet system) and plots against it. Little Janis betrays his father; his father takes revenge upon his son. Who then in this old Soviet tale is good and who is bad? This film reveals that a distorted brain is always dangerous. Even nowadays.

5:00 pm **LITTLE WING** (feature)

*Tyttö nimeltä Varpu*, (Finland), 2016, 100 minutes, Selma Vihunen

Vihunen's was previously at SFFLA with her 2012 short Do I Have to Take Care of Everything? which garnered an Oscar nomination. In her feature Little Wing draws on personal experience with the story of a 12 year old girl who, frustrated by her mother's erratic behavior, sets out on an impromptu quest to find her birth father, in a sharp and touching portrait of adolescence. The film was referred to as "the most underrated film at the 2016 Toronto International Film Festival.

7:00 pm **THE KING'S CHOICE** (Oscar Submission)

*Kongens nei*, (Norway), 2016, 133 minutes, Erik Poppe

On the 9th of April 1940, German troops invade Oslo. The king of Norway is faced with a choice which will change his nation forever. The Kings Choice is an epic film about the real events which turned a brave man into the peoples king