

Season's Greetings,

Welcome to the December/January issue of the European Fantastic Film Festivals Federation Newsletter. October/November was a busy period within the Federation with a lot of festivals ending and/or starting, you will find reports from some of them below. Also, new in this edition is the production focus, which features information on upcoming European fantastic film productions. And don't forget to read the interview with Harry Cleven, director of "TROUBLE", who won the Méliès d'Argent in Sitges earlier this year.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

/Christian Hallman
EFFFF Web Producer

CONTENT:

- **Federation newbie Screamfest spill the beans**
- **Fanomenon gives a recap on its first Méliès d'Argent**
- **Luxembourg gives Norway a nod**
- **Scienceplusfiction delivers Terra Incognita**
- **San Sebastian proclaims fantasy & horror**
- **Nantes rewards Sci-Fi**
- **European production spotlight**
- **Interview with Harry Cleven**

Federation newbie Screamfest spill the beans

The 5th Annual ScreamFest Horror Film Festival was a smashing success with several sold out houses. The festival ran from October 14th through October 23rd at Loews Universal Studios Cinemas at Universal CityWalk.

ScreamFest hosted the 25th anniversary screening of FRIDAY THE 13TH followed by a Q & A with director / producer Sean S. Cunningham. ScreamFest also co-hosted the book launch party for *Crystal Lake Memories: The Complete History of Friday the 13th* along with New Line Cinema, Sideshow Collectibles and Sparkplug Press after the screening. Over 30 of the alumni, cast and crew from the entire Friday the 13th series attended this blow out party. The party received national press and was even including in a mention on the nation's headline news broadcaster CNN.

The Dinner Award ceremony took place on Sunday, October 23rd where among other awards Sean S. Cunningham was presented with the ScreamFest Career Achievement award by one of the genre's leading composers Harry Manfredini.

For a full line up of all ScreamFest winners 2005 see the press section at www.melies.org

2005 marks the first year for ScreamFest as a supporting member of the European Fantastic Film Festivals Federation.

Fanomenon gives a recap on its first Méliès d'Argent

Fanomenon, the cult and genre strand of the GNER 19th Leeds International Film Festival which ran between 3rd-13th November 2005, was proud to host the first Méliès d'Argent award in the UK. The six feature films in contention for the Méliès d'Argent represented the gamut of European genre filmmaking from established directors such as Alex De La Iglesia's FERPECT CRIME and the Quay Brothers with THE PIANO TUNER OF EARTHQUAKES to first time directors including Sean Hogan with his creepy debut feature LIE STILL, which received it's World Premiere in Leeds.

After much careful deliberation between the jury, which consisted of journalist and author Kim Newman, film distributor Matt Palmer and film director Conor McMahon, the Méliès d'Argent was ultimately awarded to HOTEL. The film impressed the jury with its menacing atmosphere and restrained moments of shock, and left Leeds audiences chilled to the bone. Also the UK short film MONSTERS received the short film nomination for Méliès d'Or.

Other films in Fanomenon included the latest whacked out from Takashi Miike THE GREAT YOKAI WAR, the disturbing drama NUIT NOIRE, the Irish Zombie film BOY EATS GIRL and the stoner comedy REEFER MADNESS.

Over 10 days Fanomenon cemented itself as one of the premier genre events in the UK with a crop of brilliant, bizarre and downright bonkers films with a rabid audience who keep coming back for me. Here's to next year!

For more information on Fanomenon and the Leeds International Film Festival go to www.leedsfilm.com

Luxembourg gives Norway a nod

The 9th Cinénygma Luxembourg International Film Festival has come to a happy end although shorter in time it was filled to the brim with great movies; a Focus on Canadian film and an amazing concert by the Italian band Daemonia.

For the first time the Grand Prix Cinénygma was awarded by a International jury composed of Doug Bradley (president), Claudio Simonetti and Elza Kephart. They awarded the Grand Prix to the Canadian film MANNERS OF DYING by Jeremy Peter Allen and gave a strong special mention to the Norwegian film NABOER (Next Door) by Pål Sletaune.

The Méliès jury was composed by Christian Kmiolek (president), Beryl Koltz, Maggie Parke and Max Jacoby. They awarded the Méliès d'Argent to the Norwegian film NABOER (Next Door) by Pål Sletaune and gave a special mention to Corey Feldman for his outstanding performance in the Spanish film THE BIRTHDAY by Eugenio Mira.

In the short movie section, although filled with quality material and 7 different Luxembourgish films the Short Movie jury composed of Karin Schockweiler (president), Alexis Juncosa, Misch Bervar and Serge Tonnar chose to award the Méliès d'Or short movie nomination to the Luxembourgish film STARFLY by Beryl Koltz who they also chose for the Kodak short movie award doted with 1250 Euros in material. Look out for it!

So all in all we can say that our Norwegian neighbours and our friends from outer space were the winners of this year's festival.

We are also pleased to announce that we will be celebrating our 10th edition from the 22-28 October 2006.

Scienceplusfiction delivers Terra Incognita

The 6th edition of scienceplusfiction marked its entry in the EFFFF. 55 screenings in six days, 20 sci-fi/horror/fantasy feature films presented as Italian premieres - 9 of them competing for the Asteroid prize - and 10 shorts for the (first) European selection: these are the figures of this low-key festival that is growing up as one of the most dynamic events in the genre cinema in Italy.

The international Jury – led by Jean-Pierre Dionnet – awarded PUZZLEHEAD (USA 2005) by James Bai as the best movie, while FIRST ON THE MOON (Russia 2005) by Aleksey Fedorchenko gained a special mention; the Short Film Nomination for the Méliès d'Or went to TERRA INCOGNITA (Switzerland 2005), by Peter Volkart. The life achievement award 'Silver

Urania' was assigned to Italian master of horror Lamberto Bava, who presented some clips from his forthcoming movie GHOST SON.

Scienceplusfiction 2005 celebrated the last part of Brit-Invaders!, a three-year retrospective on British sci-fi, with a publication on this subject and the meeting with writer Brian Aldiss. Other sections included a focus on Jules Verne and a foray into recent Japanese productions. Last but not least, the festival featured the Italian premieres of SERENITY, C.S.A., PIANO TUNER OF EARTHQUAKES, MIRRORMASK AND NOTHING.

San Sebastian proclaims fantasy & horror

As in previous years, the Festival film programme was based on the fantasy and horror genre understood from a heterodox point of view. The 2005 selection included a variety of sub-genres, ranging from the goriest of side-splitting horror movies like EVIL ALIENS to the latest and most important works backed by their participation in important international film festivals; SYMPATHY FOR LADY VENGEANCE, SIETE ESPADAS, the most recent Spanish productions in the genre; LA MONJA, BAJO AGUAS TRANQUILAS, quality European cinema; NABOER, ANTIKÖRPER, the most commercial American and European cinema; FLIGHTPLAN, THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE, L'EMIRE DES LOUPS, and the most controversial productions THE DEVIL'S REJECTS.

The festival was visited by moviemakers and personalities related to the fantasy and horror world, such as actors Robert Englund, Santiago Segura, Emily Booth, Carlo Ferrante or Vera Van Dooren; directors Jaume Balaguerò, Paco Plaza, Jake West, Christian Alvar, Koldo Serra, Mathias Dinter or Luis de la Madrid; artists Arthur Suydam or Carlos Meglia; or the special effects genius, Sergio Stivaletti.

In addition to its catalogue, the Festival brought out four publications: the book entitled *Spanish Fantasy and Horror Movies 1984-2004*, accompanying the retrospective of the same name; Pedro Usabiaga's book of photographs, entitled *Las joyas de la familia (The Family Jewels)*; *2000 Maníacos*, a special edition dedicated to the Festival in collaboration with the fanzine from Valencia; and, in collaboration with *Flash-Back*, a special issue dedicated to the 2nd San Sebastian Comic Workshop.

Nantes rewards Sci-Fi

The Utopiales of Nantes, International science-fiction festival, had its 6th edition from November 10th to 13th 2005 in France. 200 international guests came to Utopiales in order to participate in one of the most important Sci-Fi events of the year. Through its many sections, from literature to video games, the festival explored the most recent and exciting productions in the science-fiction field.

The film section featured a special program of 16 feature films devoted to Jules Verne which proposed some rare and kitsch (French) TV productions from the 70's and the festival had the honor of welcoming the great Ray Harryhausen who came to Utopiales in order to give a conference and introduce his films.

The jury of the International Competition, presided by the American film director John Landis, elected the Russian Mockumentary FIRST ON THE MOON by Aleksey Fedortschenko as the best film of the selection. The Audience Award was granted to MIRRORMASK directed by Dave McKean, UK.

On the literature side, the Utopia Award was granted to the American writer James Morrow.

The closing ceremony of the festival finished with the French avant-premiere of Vincenzo Natali's "NOTHING".

European production spotlight

This section highlights new European fantastic films either in production or films that were recently released.

Sweden

Frostbite (Frostbitten)

Sweden 2006, 95 min, 35 mm cinemascope

A youth oriented vampire film set in an isolated town in the dark and cold arctic region of northern Sweden. The film is ready for delivery in February 2006.

More chilling info at www.frostbitten.se

Storm (Storm)

Sweden 2006

Within the next twenty-four hours Donny's life as he knows it will be shattered by a female stranger. His apartment trashed by the people trying to catch her, being ordered to safe keep a box which content he doesn't know, being accused of murder, being confronted with his past and thrown back to the last place on earth where he wants to be. All in all it is probably the best thing that could have happened to him...

Storm has its Swedish theatrical premiere on January 20th 2006 and is released through Sandrew Metronome.

Visit the official site www.stormfilmen.se

UK

Splinter (Splinter)

UK 2006, 93 min

Five human guinea pigs are linked in an extraordinary secret experiment. They have been implanted with revolutionary microchips which allow a psychiatrist, a computer genius and the project's mysterious backers see their deepest and darkest fantasies.

Lie Still

UK 2006, 80 min

It seemed like the kind of house where no one asked you any questions. It was old and rambling, in need of a little renovation, certainly. But quiet. Somewhere to begin again. But from the moment he moved in, it didn't feel right to John. He'd been through a lot recently. And there were those that said there had always been something a little strange about him. It's true, he'd always suffered from nightmares but these were different. Besides, those noises outside his door were definitely real. Or seemed to be.

The mad old woman next door had told him to leave, but he hadn't listened.

Welcome to the house.

Website www.liestill.com

Interview with Harry Clevon on "Trouble"

Director of Trouble

By Tuomas Riskala

Tuomas Riskala: Benoît Magimel's work is one of the high-points of TROUBLE. Could you elaborate on your approach to direct the actor in your film?

Harry Clevon: When the name of Benoît Magimel came into discussion to play the parts of Matyas and Thomas, I watched again his previous work on dvd. I wanted to find his strengths and his weaknesses... I noticed that in "La Pianiste" Benoît was incredibly good when he was very intense inside and very neutral outside... For the rehearsals, I asked a very good actor, a friend of mine, to play the other brother with Benoît... I asked Benoît for a very specific moment, a scene when Matyas was very angry with Thomas and very fragile at the same time, because he discovers that his father is still alive.. I did maybe 50 takes on video until I found what I wanted. Then I showed it to Benoît. He was surprised of himself... and decided in that moment to be confident in me...

We tried on finding very specific aspect of each characters. So that Benoît could change very quickly from Matyas to Thomas from inside... I didn't want the differences to be too obvious. I wanted the audience to "feel" who was who. I wanted Matyas to be the darker character and Thomas to appear like the perfect guy, almost like an angel. So the light and the make-up were slightly different on each character. We also worked on small differences in the voices. I wanted the audience to feel all the time who was Matyas or Thomas... Except two times, when I decided that the audience should not recognize them: - the scene with Petit Pierre who goes to sleep, and at the end of the fight.

The technical aspect of the movie was very difficult. And Benoît was excellent at that. He likes it. Without a precise actor like him and such a good cameraman and special effects guy, this movie would not have been possible.

TR: You are an actor yourself, did you give any tips to Benoît when directing him?

HC: Being an actor myself allows me to understand the inner process of acting. I empathize with the actors and feel inside myself what I have to tell them, how I can push them to the limits, what are the right moments for that, the right timing... I think actors need to be directed; it is easier for them to find their freedom when they have very specific directions... I am very "directive" but I like when actor's "disobey"... When they give me more than I expected... Or in a different way. I like to be surprised.

Read the full interview at www.melies.org

More information on all the Méliès d'Argent winners so far and all of our federation festivals can be found on www.melies.org

Next Newsletter will be out in February 2006!

— — — — —
On this note we conclude this, the fourth EFFFF Newsletter. Please feel free to forward the content of this newsletter as long as you announce the source of the material.

The European Fantastic Film Festivals Federation Newsletter is put together by the federation newsgroup, comprised of selected members from the federation film festivals.

*This newsletter is distributed by the European Fantastic Film Festivals Federation, the only federation for promoting European fantastic films to a world audience, as well as acknowledging the force of fantastic films from all over the world. Contact Phone: +32 2 201 1713, Contact Email: info@melies.org or christian@melies.org
© European Fantastic Film Festivals Federation 2005*