Berlinale NATIVe 2017 Features Indigenous Films from the Arctic Circle

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

Cinema Born of the Icy Cold

NATIVe â?? A Journey into Indigenous Cinema will focus in 2017 on Indigenous cinema from the Arctic. The film programme for the special series, which is comprised of nine short and ten feature-length films, will also be complemented by a number of events featuring discussion and other spoken word formats.

The Skolt-Sámi Kaisa Gauriloff in *Kuun metsän Kaisa* (*Kaisa's Enchanted Forest*) by Katja Gauriloff.

NATIVe 2017 will open with a film from the cultural sphere of the SÃ¡mi, Europeâ??s only Indigenous people: 2016â??s *Kuun metsÃ¤n Kaisa* (*Kaisaâ??s Enchanted Forest*), by Finnish Skolt SÃ¡mi director Katja Gauriloff.

Kuun metsÃ¤n Kaisa tells the story of Gauriloffâ??s charismatic great-grandmother Kaisa. This personal and poetic documentary film effortlessly weaves original film and sound recordings from the 1930s to the 1970s together with animated sequences and folk tales of the Skolt SÃ¡mi. It stands as a testament to the eventful history of the Skolt SÃ¡mi and their struggle to preserve their unique culture in the wake of resettlements brought about by shifting borders throughout the course of the 20th century.

The pressure to assimilate and wider social change influence all of the Indigenous peoples who call the area around the Arctic Circle home: these include the Inuit of Canada, the Greenlanders, the SÃ¡mi of Northern Europe and Russiaâ??s Kola Peninsula as well as the Yakuts and Chukchi of the Russian Federationâ??s Eastern Siberian region.

Sustainability, climate change, delocalisation and questions of Indigenous rights and self-empowerment are further themes addressed in this yearâ??s featured films. â??Climate change in the Arctic and the economic machinations of the industrialised nations of the West represent serious impositions in the everyday lives of the Indigenous communities which still inhabit the region. The medium of film can play a positive role by enabling them to position themselves and gain international exposure for their points of view,â?• comments *NATIVe* Curator Maryanne Redpath.

Festival Director Dieter Kosslick also emphasises the significance of Indigenous cinema: â??With each new regional focus, *NATIVe* demonstrates how multifaceted and creative the world of Indigenous filmmaking is and how much its films enrich the international cinema landscape.â?•

As in previous years, the film programme of this special series will be accompanied by an extensive supporting programme. On two afternoons, the Embassy of Canada will assist the *NATIVe* team in co-hosting panel discussions with Indigenous filmmakers and international guests in the rooms of their Leipziger Platz location, to be followed by film screenings.

The event â??Arctic Change, Indigenous Life and Scientific Tracks in Sakha / Russiaâ?•, organised in co-operation with the Climate Initiative Regional Climate Change (REKLIM) at the Alfred Wegener Institute Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research, and the DEKRA Hochschule fÃ¼r Medien, will present the effects of climate change on everyday life and the environment in Sakha to a Berlin audience in the scope of talks and short films.

For the first time, *NATIVe* will also be represented in the special series *Berlinale Goes Kiez* with an additional screening of the documentary film *Angry Inuk*, which provides insight into the Inuit perspective on the heated international debate surrounding seal hunting.

Feature Films at *NATIVe*:

***24 Snega* (*24 Snow*)**
By Mikhail Barynin, Russian Federation 2016

Documentary form
International premiere
Despite the sacrifices it entails, Sergei passionately devotes his life to traditional horse breeding, toughing out the winter in the taiga like a lone cowboy hero. Spectacular cinematography conveys the biting cold feeling of nomadic life in Sakha.

Angry Inuk
By Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, Canada 2016
Documentary form
A vivid depiction of the quiet anger of a people whose very subsistence is being threatened from many angles. An outcry to reassess the preconceptions around commercial seal-hunting, while illustrating the role of global sealskin trade for Inuit.

***Johogoi Aiyy* (*God Johogoi*)**
By Sergei Potapov, Russian Federation 2016
Documentary form
International premiere
The young horse herder Johogoi feels summoned by the equine deity to attend the celebrated summer festival of Sakha. His excitement radiates through his smile as he participates in the rituals, believing he will find the woman who appears in his dreams.

***Jumalan morsian* (*A Bride of the Seventh Heaven*)**
By Anastasia Lapsui, Markku Lehmuskallio, Finland 2003
With Angelina Saraleta, Viktoria Hudi, Ljuba Filipova, Jevgeni Hudi
At birth, Syarda was promised as a bride to Num, the highest god of the Nenets. Now an elderly lady, still bound to this fate, she tells the story of her wistful, yet self-determined life to a blind young girl who alleviates her loneliness.

***Kniga Tundry. Povestâ?? o Vukvukaye â?? Malenâ??kom Kamne.* (*The Tundra Book. A Tale of Vukvuka â?? the Little Rock.*)**
By Aleksei Vakhrushev, Russian Federation 2011
Documentary form
Jovial and as energetic as a teenager, the wise Vukvukai guides his nomadic Chukchi community. These tough reindeer herders survive in their snowy wonderland despite the harsh threats posed by the weather and Russian politics.

***Kuun metsÃ¤n Kaisa* (*Kaisaâ??s Enchanted Forest*)**
By Katja Gauriloff, Finland 2016
Documentary form
The Swiss author Robert Crottet visits the Skolt SÃ¡mi and records spirited Kaisaâ??s unique storytelling gift. Handmade animation and rare archival footage illustrate the full world of the Skolt SÃ¡mi, from magical moments to the hardships of war.

***Maliglutit* (*Searchers*)**
By Zacharias Kunuk, Canada 2016
With Benjamin Kunuk, Jocelyne Immaroitok, Karen Ivalu, Joseph Uttak
European premiere
The tranquil life of a nomadic family in Nunavut is torn apart by a marauding gang of hunters looking for

wives. Kuanana, the head of the family, goes out for revenge. A poetic Inuit Western.

***Sameblod* (*Sami Blood*)**
By Amanda Kernell, Sweden 2016
With Lene Cecilia Sparrok, Mia Erika Sparrok, Maj Doris Rimpi, Julius Fleischanderl
A teenage girl from a traditional SÃ¡mi family yearns to be accepted by the Swedish society of the 1930s, a society full of prejudice and discrimination against her people. A shrewd commentary on institutionalised abuse and its consequences.

***SeitsemÃ¤n laulua tundralta* (*Seven Songs from the Tundra*)**
By Anastasia Lapsui, Markku Lehmuskallio, Finland 2000
With Vitalina Hudi, Hatjako Yzangi, Gregory Anaguritsi, Nadezhda Volodeeva
A rich contemplation of the Nenets in a seven-part chronicle, each guided by a meaningful song. Once a free people, the Soviet rule arrives to infringe upon their culture, affecting their identity irreversibly. An emotional political statement.

***SUME â?? Mumisitsinerup Nipaa* (*SUMÃ? â?? The Sound of a Revolution*)**
By Inuk Silis HÃ¸egh, Greenland / Denmark / Norway 2014
Documentary form
For the Greenlanders of the 1970s, the surge of the progressive rock band SUME was mind-blowing: lyrics in their own language, inspiring them to act against the repression of their people. This is the compelling testimony to their revolution.

Short Films at *NATIVe*:

***BihttoÅ¡* (*Rebel*)**
By Elle-MÃ¡ijÃ¡ Tailfeathers, Canada / Norway 2014
Documentary form
In a poignant personal essay, Elle-MÃ¡ijÃ¡ Tailfeathers examines her complex relationship to her SÃ¡mi father. Her familyâ??s blissful life was silently affected by a dark pain her father harboured. A pain rooted in past injustices against a whole generation of the SÃ¡mi.

Half&half
By Aka Hansen, Denmark / Greenland 2014
Documentary form
Aka Hansen ponders her mixed heritage by posing well-struck questions about how others perceive her, which in contrast to the filmic symmetry suggests that identity cannot be split neatly in half.

Nowhere Land
By Rosie Bonnie Ammaaq, Canada 2015
Documentary form
Denied the opportunity to lead a true Inuit life on Baffin Island, Rosie Bonnie Ammaaq shares the grief she felt when forced to relocate, while witnessing the heartbreaking demise of her homeland. She stands in front of the camera and bares her soul.

***Ogo Kuyuurduu Turara* (*Boy and Lake*)**
By Prokopyi Nogovitsyn, Russian Federation 2003
With Slava Titov, Roman Danilov, Vladimir Krivoshapkin
A Sakha boy sets out on a lyrical journey through the boreal forest to catch fish in a secluded icebound lake. He performs the laborious task as a meditative ritual, at the same time drifting into a magical oneiric world.

***SÃ¡mi Boddu* (*SÃ¡mi Moment*)**
By Ken Are Bongo, Norway 2011
With Nils Henrik Buljo, Svein Birger Olsen
Surrounded only by the wintry tundra, two SÃ¡mi men meet and contemplate the immense horizon. The silence is scarcely broken by the soft breeze, shared cigarettes and a few laconic words.

***Sikumi* (*On the Ice*)**
By Andrew Okpeaha MacLean, USA 2008
With Brad Weyiouanna, Tony Bryant, Olemaun Rexford
On the frozen barren horizon, Apuna spots a furious fight between two hunters, which escalates to a fatality. As Apuna rushes to the scene he becomes conflicted when the perpetrator asks him to bend his morals and appeals to his sense of community.

Sloth
By Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, Canada 2011
With Bryan Pearson
A witty sketch of the Inuit way of life, playfully poking fun at stereotypical perceptions.

Tungijuq
By FÃ©lix Lajeunesse, Paul RaphaÃ«l, Canada 2009
With Tanya Tagaq, Zacharias Kunuk
An artistically powerful statement about the reality of hunting, expressed through a fantastic icy universe and Inuit throat singing, embracing the relevance and appreciation of this vital act.

***Vor dem Schnee* (*Before the Snow*)**
By Christian Vagt, Germany 2007
Documentary form
Eerie first-hand accounts of the supernatural and the dead in the world of the Khanty and Nenets. An intimate atmosphere encompasses the spiritual world void of interpretation, and tells of the mysteries beyond the reality of western Siberia.

(Source: Berlinale Press Office)

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hollywoodglee