History of the Venice Film Festival â?? the 40s and the 50s

Description

Because of the war, few countries participated in the 1940, 1941 and 1942 Festivals, not taken into consideration later on, with the dominating presence of the members of the Alliance. Following the war pause, the Festival was held again in 1946 with screenings at Cinema San Marco (the Palazzo del Cinema had been requisitioned by the Allies).
In 1946, in view of an agreement with Cannes, which had held its first festival that year in the spring, a simple transitory festival was organized in September. The 1947 Festival was held in the splendid setting of the courtyard of the Ducal Palace, with a record audience of 90,000. It was one of the best festivals and saw the return of the USSR and the new â??popular democraciesâ?• including Czechoslovakia, which won first prize for *SirÃ©na* by Karel Stekly. That year the international jury was reinstated to assign the International Grand Prix of Venice. Up until 1948 the director was Elio Zorzi, a Venetian.
Proceedings were transferred permanently back to the Palazzo del Cinema on the Lido in 1949, and the Golden Lion of St. Mark introduced for best film.
During the Fifties the Festival experienced a period of international expansion, with the affirmation of new types of film (Japanese, Indian), and the arrival of leading directors and film stars. The Festival directorâ??s chair was occupied by Antonio Petrucci (from 1949 to 1953), Ottavio Croze (1954 and 1955), Floris Ammannati (from 1956 to 1959) and Emilio Lonero in 1960.
Over the years the Festival has had a noteworthy influence on the history of world cinema. Japanese cinema has become well known in the West mostly thanks to the Golden Lion awarded to Akira Kurosawaâ??s *RashÃ´mon* in 1951, and successively through the Silver Lions won by *Ugetsu Monogatari* (1953) and *SanshÃ´ DayÃ»* (1954) by Kenji Mizoguchi, not to mention the presence of films such as *Biruma no Tategoto* (1956) by Kon Ichikawa. It was the same case for Indian film, Golden Lion in 1957 to Satyajit Rayâ??s *Aparajito*. Eastern European cinema was brought to world attention partly through the Grand Prix awarded to the film *SirÃ©na* (1947) by Karel Stekly (Czechoslovakia), and later thanks to the presence of emerging filmmakers such as Andrzey Waida (*PopiÃ³l i diament*, 1959).

After the first neo-realist films were shown at the Festival (*PaisÃ* by Roberto Rossellini and *Il sole sorge ancora* by Aldo Vergano in 1946, *La terra trema* by Luchino Visconti in 1948), a number of foremost Italian figures were recognised as leading talents in the â??50s and â??60s: Fellini, Antonioni, Rosi, Olmi, Bertolucci, Pasolini, Vancini, De Seta, and Zurlini. The fact that Luchino Visconti did not receive the Golden Lion for *Senso* in 1954 nor for *Rocco e i suoi fratelli* in 1960 led to heated debate. Visconti was to be awarded the top prize in 1964 for *Vaghe stelle dellâ??Orsa*.
French cinema marked decisive steps in the Festival history, with the presence of directors such as Jean Renoir (*The Southerner*, 1946), Henri-Georges Clouzot (*Manon*, 1949), Robert Bresson (*Journal dâ??un curÃ© de campagne*, 1951), Marcel CarnÃ¨ (*Theresa Raquin*, 1953), Louis Malle (*Les amants*, 1958), Alain Resnais (*Lâ??annÃ©e derniÃ¨re Ã Marienbad*, 1961) and Jean-Luc Godard (*Vivre sa vie*, 1962; *La chinoise*, 1967).
Great figures in world cinema received awards with significant works: Carl Theodor Dreyer (*Ordet*, 1955), emergent Andrej Tarkovskj (*Ivanâ??s Childhood*, Golden Lion in 1962), Luis BuÃ±uel (*Belle de jour*, 1967), Ingmar Bergman (*The Face/The Magician*, 1959), who had first come to the Lido in 1948 as an unknown figure with *Musik i mÃ¶rker*.
(Source: http://www.labiennale.org)

Category

1. Venice International Film Festival

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