



Nordic council film prize 2021: jury motivation (all candidates)

DENMARK

Original title: Flukt
English title: Flee
Director: Jonas Poher Rasmussen

It is rare that the aesthetic, political, and human dimensions merge into such a sublimely artistic whole as in *Flee*. In the animated documentary film, the director's childhood friend, Amin, tells for the first time his dramatic story as a homosexual refugee from Afghanistan at a time when he is facing a major turning point in his life in Denmark: He is getting married.

The film plots a concrete, soul-shattering fate for the refugee debate of the time, but also enables the viewer to easily get acquainted with Amin's general and existential doubts, which the film uncovers with a delicate and at times funny sense of details and moods.

The animation brilliantly solves two practical challenges of anonymity and lack of visual material. The stylish execution both elevates the narrative to a sensuous experience, from the depiction of a happy childhood in Afghanistan to the brutal fleeing to Europe.

Flee tells a pertinent, relevant, and touching story that all people, regardless of their ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation, deserve a happy childhood and a safe country to live in.

Jury: Heidi Hilarius-Kalkau Philipsen, Jacob Ludvigsen, Amalie Næsby Fick

FINLAND

Original title: Ensilumi
English title: Any Day Now
Director: Hamy Ramezan

Any Day Now (Ensilumi) is a universal and poetic story of a family that stands together in love – even when they're denied tomorrow. Director Hamy Ramezan trusts his audience. His grasp is both firm and gentle, and he doesn't hesitate to reach for grand emotions and humour. The acting is first class.

Jury: Mikaela Westerlund, Kalle Kinnunen, Kaisu Isto



ICELAND

Original title: Alma
English title: Alma
Director: Kristín Jóhannesdóttir

Like all the other female inmates in a facility for the criminally insane, Alma has been convicted of murdering her male partner. To these women, the crash of the Icelandic economy in 2008 represents the potential collapse of the patriarchal order under which women have been abused, raped and mistreated through the ages and in whose prosperity they have had no share. This metaphor poignantly sets the stage for this multi-layered tale.

What starts out as a noir-ish revenge fable becomes a beautiful love story that centres around the process through which a victim of abuse finds her way through trauma and grief to finally rediscover her roots and her distinctive voice.

Employing biting humor as well as striking visual imagery Alma deftly combines an intense poetic vision and a socially critical feminist angle.

Jury: Jóna Finnsdóttir, Guðrún Helga Jónasdóttir, Björn Þór Vilhjálmsson

NORWAY

Original title: Gunda
English title: Gunda
Director: Victor Kossakovsky

Gunda is one of those rare documentaries that makes you see the world in a new light. Director Victor Kossakovsky brings us out of the human perspective and into an animal world that follows a different logic and slower rhythm. Here we meet Gunda, who lives on Grøstad farm in Vestfold with her piglets. In this idyllic existence, the omnipresent brutality in nature is still prominent. A one-legged chicken and a stoic herd of cows serve as the other main characters in a film that is humble towards the animals, but still has a distinct political sting in the tail. Egil Håskjold Larsen's sharp, poetic images help to make *Gunda* a great cinematic experience.

Jury: Inger Merete Hobbestad, Emilio Sanhueza, Anne Gjelsvik



SWEDEN

Original title: Tigrar
English title: Tigers
Director: Ronnie Sandahl

Ronnie Sandahl skilfully depicts the uglier side of sport, a world where young talents are reduced to bodies, competitive psyche and their most recent performance. Photography and sound work capture the details that make the story bigger, conveying both internal and external chaos, and offering an authenticity that few can achieve in terms of the nerve on the football field and the electric atmosphere in a stadium. Erik Enge carries the film on his shoulders and fills every frame he is involved in with his sensitive acting and minute shifts in body and face. This fine combination of personal direction and acting talent is a rare gem.

Jury: Emma Gray Munthe, Gunnar Bergdahl, Caroline Cowan