



# 19th BRATISLAVA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

## Winning Films from Festivals in Venice, Cannes, Toronto and San Sebastian Among Most Anticipated Slovak Premieres in Bratislava IFF's Programme

Bratislava, November 2, 2017

The Cinema Now section of the 19th Bratislava International Film Festival will present some of the most notable films of this year's festival season. The retro fantasy ***The Shape of Water*** (2017) and the black comedy ***Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*** (2017) won the prestigious festival in Venice and rightly so, are among this year's most anticipated films and hottest Oscar nominations. For a change, the family drama ***April's Daughter*** (*Las hijas de Abril*, 2017) by the acclaimed Mexican filmmaker Michel Franco shone at the Cannes Film Festival, where it won the Jury Prize in the Un Certain Regard section and met with an enthusiastic response from the critics. This trio of hot film accessions finalised the programme of the 19. Bratislava International Festival, brimming with attractive Slovak premieres.

The Mexican filmmaker **Guillermo del Toro** is regarded as one of the most original directors in the contemporary Hollywood. His most acclaimed works include the magic realism fantasy film ***Pan's Labyrinth*** (*El laberinto del fauno*, 2006) and two lavish treatments of the comic book phenomenon ***Hellboy***. His latest film ***The Shape of Water*** (2017) was crowned with the Golden Lion for Best Film, the top prize of the Venice Film Festival, and is one of the hottest candidates for the Academy Awards. Once again, Del Toro is balancing on genre borders bringing a sci-fi set in the past, specifically in the paranoid historical period of the Cold War. At the same time, he pays tribute to the 50s and 60s American monster film, particularly referring to the famous Creature from the Black Lagoon. ***The Shape of Water*** is a mixture of political thriller, horror and melodrama. Thanks to del Toro's unique imagination, the universal story of David's battle with Goliath and the forbidden love between the Beauty and the Beast, this genre mix comes across as consistent. The result is a unique emotional experience that will intrigue light as well as demanding viewers.

The story of the film is set in 1963, in the midst of the Cold War. The main character, a maid called Elisa, works in a secret government laboratory, where authorities are holding captive their secret classified experiment - a fish-man of unknown origin. Using sign language, Elise manages to make contact with him. Gradually the two fall in love, which drives Elise to pursue her dangerous plan of setting him free. The main roles will sparkle with such big names as Sally Hawkins, Michael Shannon and Octavia Spencer.

Another Venetian premiere with no less of a successful festival career is the black comedy ***Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*** (2017), written by the Oscar-winning screenwriter, director and distinguished playwright **Martin McDonagh**. The film was awarded Best Screenplay prize in Venice and received audience awards at festivals in Toronto and San Sebastian. Martin McDonagh is particularly famous for his black humour, grotesque depictions of violence, brilliant antihero characters and pop-culture references. His first feature film ***In Bruges*** (2008) won The Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay. In the movie ***Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*** the director joined forces with such film stars as Frances McDormand, Woody Harrelson and Sam Rockwell.

The main heroine, Mildred Hayes, is a mother whose daughter was murdered a few months ago. As waiting for the murderer's capture proves fruitless, she decides to decorate the city entrance with three billboards, bearing uncompromising messages for the local venerable sheriff William Willoughby. When an immature and violent police officer Dixon gets involved in the conflict, the war can begin.



# 19th BRATISLAVA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Another festival laurel-crowned film is **Michel Franco's *April's Daughter*** (*Las hijas de Abril*, 2017). The film received the Jury Prize in the Un Certain Regard section in Cannes and its world premiere met with fantastic response from the critics. Michel Franco has long been a favourite of this most important world film festival. In the year 2015, he received the Best Screenplay Award for the drama ***Chronic*** and in 2012 he won the Un Certain Regard competition with the film ***After Lucia*** (*Después de Lucía*, 2012). The family drama ***April's Daughter*** tells the story of a young pregnant Valerie, living with her half-sister Clara. She's expecting the child with her somewhat older boyfriend, but financial problems compel her to ask her mother April for help. Their family situation is far from ideal and April becomes convinced that Valeria is just not fit to be a mother. Therefore, she opts for a drastic solution. Once again, Michel Franco has shot a powerful psychological drama about tense relationships and characters that all of a sudden find themselves hard up and helpless. The main role of April is played by the fantastic Spanish actress Emma Suárez, whose talent could also be witnessed in Pedro Almodóvar's latest film *Julieta* (2016).

The 19th edition of the Bratislava International Film Festival will take place in the pleasant atmosphere of several city cinemas - **Kino Lumière, Kino Mladost', Kino Nostalgia** and **Gorila.sk Urban Space** café, which will host selected film screenings as well as various accompanying events of the festival. The popular Bratislava club **Fuga** - Space for the missing culture will hosts several great concerts and music parties. For the first time, the festival programme will step out of the capital and selected films will appear in the cinemas **Kino MIER in Modra, Kino Mier in Senec** and **Kino Záhoran in Malacky**.

For the latest updates on the programme of the 19th Bratislava International Film Festival, please visit our official website at [www.bratislavaiff.sk](http://www.bratislavaiff.sk) or our official Facebook account at [www.facebook.com/bratislavaiff](https://www.facebook.com/bratislavaiff).

---

## 19th BRATISLAVA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

November 9 - 16, 2017

**Kino Lumière, Kino Mladost', Kino Nostalgia, Gorila.sk Urban Space**

**Kino Mier Senec, Kino Záhoran Malacky, Kino MIER Modra**

Main Organiser: **Partners Production**

**The International Film Festival is held under the auspices of Marek Maďarič,  
Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic**

The Festival is held with the generous financial support of **Slovak Audiovisual Fund**.

Main Partners: **Slovenská elektrizačná prenosová sústava, KiK textil a Non-Food,  
Transpetrol, innogy Slovensko**

**COME AND EXPERIENCE IT!**

For further information, please contact: Mária Boďová, [maria.bodova@bratislavaiff.sk](mailto:maria.bodova@bratislavaiff.sk); + 421 907 023 257

**Bratislava International Film Festival**, Lovinského 18, 811 04 Bratislava, Slovak Republic telephone contact: +421 2 54 410 673 - 74, e-mail: [bratislavaiff@bratislavaiff.sk](mailto:bratislavaiff@bratislavaiff.sk), [www.bratislavaiff.sk/en/](http://www.bratislavaiff.sk/en/)