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'Window to Europe' Cinema on Finnish Border

By Aliide Naylor

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The center of the town, pictured on a clear June day from the church tower, is serving as the base for the festival, which is taking place for the 21st time. **A. Savin**

Vyborg is nestled just 38 kilometers from Russia's border with Finland and is a serene haven of cobbled streets and quaint market stalls, with its epicenter being the medieval castle and fortress, allowing the absorption of spectacular panoramic views across the countryside.

The city, as a more definitive "Window to Europe" than St. Petersburg, is now hosting its annual film festival of the same name for the 21st time.

Taking place between August 8 and 15, "Window to Europe" documents the 13 works of Russian filmmakers, split across three different competitive categories.

"About 40 films were offered up for our attention. We selected 13," festival president Armen Medvedev told Rossiiskaya Gazeta.

Films participating in the competition will also be broadcast in one of Moscow's cinemas, over 750 kilometers away from the site of the actual festival. The broadcast will be called "Mirror of Vyborg."

"Just half an hour after the presentation of films in Vyborg, they will be shown in our cinema in the capital," the festival's general producer, Gevorg Nersisyan, told RIA Novosti.

The competition program for feature-length films will be opened with a film called "It," directed by award-winning Larisa Sadilova, whose films have featured in festivals in Rotterdam and Warsaw as well as in Russia. Entering alongside her will be Alyona Zvantsova's "Moscow Twilight," "Mine" by Nurbek Egen, and "Hard Luck" by Konstantin Murzenko.

"Our program is brief, but it includes pictures from different genres, styles and trends," Nersisyan said.

The feature-film jury will be headed up by Sergei Shakurov who will judge the best out of the 13, with the more extensive "documentary" section of the competition being overseen by TV journalist and writer Andrei Maximov. Animator Natalia Dabizha, who worked on animated adaptation of Shakespeare's tales in the early 90s, will chair the jury for the also more submission-heavy animated films competition.

For the first time with this edition of the decades-old festival, there has been an online poll to find the winner of a film shorts competition, called "Window to the Internet." Four of the winners will be shown at in Vyborg too, according to RIA Novosti.

On the last day of the festival, the audience in Vyborg will see a modern film adaptation of Pushkin's story 'Dubrovsky' to round off the lengthy event.

Feature films from the competition are showing at Pyat Zvyozd Novokuznetskaya from August 8-14, 16 Bolshoi Ovchinnikovsky, Metro Novokuznetskaya. 495 916 9169, 5zvezd.ru

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