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Release Your Inner Geek at Polytech 360 Festival

Nov. 22 - Dec. 2

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In "Cyborgs Among Us" filmmakers consider the millions of people with bio-mechanical parts. **Courtesy of Polytech 360**

For the eighth year, the Polytech 360 International Science and Technology Festival will run in Moscow from Nov. 22 - Dec. 2. It's a program of documentaries, lectures and discussions about scientific discoveries and the future curated by the Polytechnic Museum together with the Beat Film Festival crew. This year the program deals with optimistic and pessimistic views on the role of modern technologies shaping our lives.

Some people fear the advance of robotics and artificial intelligence; others look forward to it. The truth about the future probably lies somewhere between these two poles. Dozens of movies from across the world will consider both possible positive and probable negative aspects of the digital revolution. Either way – they will be life-changing for all of us.

The festival is not only for science geeks. Some movies, like a documentary on the rise and fall of Nokia, will appeal to a broader audience. One of the highlights – "The Cleaners" – won this year's Best Documentary award at Moscow International Film Festival and was nominated at the Sundance Festival. It tells the story of a crew of workers in the Philippines charged with deleting unwanted content in social media on a global scale. The German directors Hans Block and Moritz Riesewieck investigate the question of censorship silently imposed by major Internet companies so that it seems like a noir thriller.

Another must-watch is "Why We Are Creative." Director Hermann Vaske interviewed 50 world-renowned artists and performers like Bjork, David Lynch, David Bowie and Ai Weiwei to hear their views on creativity and why they wanted to create.

The highlight of the festival might be a movie about the evolving dating industry: "Swiped: Hooking Up in the Digital Age" on Nov. 23. Journalist Nancy Joe Sales has taken a look on the huge success of Tinder – and at the drawbacks of using it. You'll find out if the app encourages objectification of women and how often scrolling thru photos turns into an addiction. It will also answer that universal question: why do men love to put up photos of themselves holding giant fish?

After the screening at 8 p.m.there will be a discussion at Karo 11 Oktyabr Theater. A group of sex bloggers, researchers and journalists will try to figure out what's wrong with dating apps.

The festival will also feature a program of films for and about teenagers called "Generation Mars."

The headliner this year is Joe Davis, founder of bio-art and enthusiast of bioinformatics. He will give a lecture on how art can influence science development and the bright future of multidisciplinary knowledge on Nov. 30 at 8 p.m. at the Digital Business Space.

The films will be shown at the Oktyabr Theater, the Center for Documentary Films and the Digital Business Space at Pokrovka. Most will be shown in English with Russian subtitles.

The full program and tickets are available at the festival's website.

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