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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Film Award Season Comes to Moscow

The results of two film award ceremonies in Moscow are in.

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"#dogpoopgirl," based on a true story, nabbed best film at the Moscow International Film Festival
Courtesy Moscow International Film Festival

The NIKA Awards

The Russian film community holds their big awards ceremony every spring, except in 2020 when Moscow was on lockdown during the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic. As a result, this year's ceremony gave out awards for two years: 2019 and 2020.

The best film of 2019 was "The Frenchman," the story of a young French communist who ostensibly comes to Moscow in 1957 to study but really to find out what happened to his aristocratic Russian father. Andrei Smirnov won the NIKA for best director, and Alexander Baluyev and Natalia Tenyakova won for best supporting actor and actress.

"Beanpole" received two awards — for sound and best actress (Viktoria Miroshnichenko) — and Leonid Yarmolnik received the award for best actor for his performance in "Odessa."

"Dear Comrades" nearly swept the awards for 2020 films, winning best film, best director, and best actress (Yulia Vysotskaya), shared with Chulpan Khamatova, who starred in "Doktor Liza." "Silver Skates" won the awards for art direction and costumes.

Related article: 'The Frenchman' Premieres in Moscow

The Moscow International Film Festival (MIFF)

This year's awards appear to have gone to quirky, strange, and little-known films and filmmakers.

The best film award went to newcomer Andrei Hutuleac for his film "#dogpoopgirl," based on a true story of a woman whose refusal to clean up after her dog was caught and film and changed her life — not for the better. Andreea Gramosteanu won the best actress award for her portrayal of the irresponsible dog owner.

The best actor award went to Soheil Ghannadan for "The Son," an Iranian film directed by Noushin Meragi.

The Russian filmmaker Alexei Federchenko was the award for best director for his film "The Last Darling Bulgaria," the strange and whimsical story of a man determined to grow the apple "Darling Bulgaria" in Alma-Ata during the war while distracted by a crazed director filming "Ivan the Terrible" and the fate of a writer who has disappeared. You can see a trailer here.

The Silver George Special Jury Prize went to "Bloodsuckers — A Marxist Vampire Comedy" directed by Julian Radlmaier, a film that involves a penniless Georgian emigre, a vampiress, an actor who played Leon Trotsky and is now posing as a poor Russian aristocrat, and more vampires. See the trailer below.

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