

Works in Progress

Best Project Award - 7500€ presented by High Voltage

High Voltage, a leading film equipment rental in the Baltics, presents the Best Project Award to the jury's choice of best project in the Baltic Event or International Works in Progress sections.

The award consists of a 2500€ cash prize to be used for the post-production or distribution of the winning project, as well as 5000€ worth of services from High Voltage, which can be used for the winner's upcoming project.



Jury

Ariane Buhl, independent consultant in festivals strategy and implementation, France

Thorsten Ritter, world sales and co-financing, Beta Cinema, Germany

Andrei Tanasescu, programmer for Giornate degli Autori (Venice Days), Bildrausch (Filmfest Basel) and One World (Romania), Romania

IN THE BELLY OF A TIGER

International Works in Progress

INDIA, CHINA,
UNITED STATES, FRANCE, TAIWAN



ORIGINAL TITLE: IN THE BELLY OF A TIGER

Countries: India, China, United States, France, Taiwan

Runtime (minutes): 91

Genre: drama

Director: Siddhartha Jatla

Writers: Siddhartha Jatla, Amanda Mooney

Cinematographer: Siddhartha Jatla

Cast: Lawrence Francis

Producers: Bhavana Goparaju, Patrick Mau Huang

Co-producers: Esther Lee (Wonder Pictures), Sarada Uma

Production companies: Jeevi Films, Flash Forward Entertainment, Jatla Pictures LLP

Completion date: February 2023

Production budget in EUR: 550 000

Financing in place in EUR: 400 000

Project status: post-production

Looking for: gap financing, distributors, sales agents, festivals, streamers, co-producers, cinema markets

Synopsis

Inspired by a true incident, a 55-year-old woman suspected of killing herself at the hands of a tiger to save her family from their debts. It was suspected that the village was sending its old people to be killed by a tiger in the village's reserve to collect compensation from the government to survive. Bhagole and Prabhata are farmers without land. They cannot survive in their village, but cannot survive in the city either.

Their son works in a brick factory built on the ashes of human sacrifice and their two small grandchildren work as labour to earn for the family. One night, they find themselves in the middle of a forest, the village tiger reserve. Alone, they must decide who will surrender their life to the tiger to claim government compensation to save their family. The entire forest holds their memories of 40 years together and transforms into a supernatural, surreal final night.

Director

Jatla Siddhartha, cinematography graduate of FTII. His first feature film, *Love and Shukla*, premiered at Busan, Shanghai, Tallinn Black Nights, Palm Springs and 40+ festivals around the world, won the prestigious NETPAC award, spotlighting exceptional films and discovering new talents, and opened Black Movie Festival in Switzerland.

In the Belly of a Tiger is Siddhartha Jatla's second feature, and the only Indian fiction feature awarded Busan's script development funding in 2018. It was selected by Hong Kong HAF, Black Nights Script Pool Tallinn, Le Groupe Ouest's LIM residency, was developed at the Government of India's NFDC Script Lab and featured at NFDC Film Bazaar.

Producer and production company

Jeevi Films is a global film boutique founded by filmmaker **Bhavana Goparaju** with the sole vision to tell stories beyond boundaries with love. With a diverse experienced team, nationally and globally, we produce, market, and distribute narrative features, documentaries, televised broadcasts, theatrical and OTT media. Jeevi Script Fund and Crowd Investment Program are two initiatives Jeevi Films is working on to go live in 2023.

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RUTH



ORIGINAL TITLE: HESHBONOT SHAMAYIM

Country: Israel

Runtime (minutes): 90

Genre: drama, family, women

Director: Esty Shushan

Writer: Esty Shushan

Cinematographer: David Stragmeister

Cast: Meshi Kleinstein, Uri Levy

Producers: David Silber, Sivan Cohen

Production company: Metro Communications

Completion date: May 2023

Production budget in EUR: 1 100 000

Financing in place in EUR: 850 000

Project status: post-production

Looking for: gap financing, distributors, sales agents, streamers, co-producers:

Synopsis

Ruth, a 22-year-old ultra-orthodox Jewish mother, sees her life shattered to pieces one morning. Her husband Shmuel, a prodigious student marked for greatness, makes a fatal mistake that causes the death of their only child Srulik, a sweet toddler eagerly awaiting his first ceremonial haircut on his third birthday. The shattered dreams and unimaginable pain lead Ruth to question and actively undermine her place in society for the first time in her life. While Shmuel tries to atone in tradi-

tional ways, she chooses practical means and subversive expressions of independence within the limitations of her religious community.

Director

Esty is an ultra-orthodox mother of four, entrepreneur, and social activist, dedicated to the promotion of justice, representation and equality for women within the ultra-orthodox society. Founder of Nivcharot movement, cultivating women to social and political activity that produced a generation of leaders dedicated to a variety of issues in the orthodox community such as sexual assault, labour conditions, health and welfare, special needs, and more. Esty is also a poet, an artist, and a filmmaker. Avenues, which allow her to shine a spotlight on otherwise silenced issues and stories of orthodox women and the orthodox world to mainstream culture, unfiltered. Her short film *Barren* dealt with families with many children and the challenges they bring to the elder siblings (mainly female), which are inevitably involved with raising the smaller kids. *Ruth* is another step in Esty's quest to break the walls of silence and concealment, and dealing with important current social issues head on.

Producer and production company

David Silber is a graduate of Hebrew University Jerusalem in Jewish Philosophy and Kabala, and of Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Fine Arts department. Together with Micky Rabinovitz, they created **Cinema Pardes**, and in 1999, founded Metro Communications specialising in international co-productions of full-length feature films with Moshe and Leon Ederly. Both companies produced feature films, television drama series, and documentaries, and became among the leading production companies in Israel. Metro's main titles include the Oscar-nominated *Beaufort*, Golden Lion winner *Lebanon*, Israeli academy awards Best Film winners *Baba Joon* and *Incitement*, critically acclaimed *The Matchmaker*, and Jake Paltrow's *June Zero*.

Contact

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THE BALLAD OF A HUSTLER

International Works in Progress
UNITED STATES, BRAZIL



ORIGINAL TITLE: THE BALLAD OF A HUSTLER

Countries: United States, Brazil

Runtime (minutes): 110

Genre: drama

Director: Heitor Dhalia

Writer: Bernardo Barreto

Cinematographer: Pepe Mendes

Cast: Bernardo Barreto, Robbie Johns, Emeraude Toubia, Andréa Beltrão, Frank Rodriguez, Drew Moerlein, Analisa Velez, Patricia Black, Brendan Dooling, Carme Boixadera, Robin Lord Taylor, Natalia Rodriguez, Dean Vasquez, Gino Vento

Producer: Bernardo Barreto

Production company: Berny Films

Completion date: March 2023

Production budget in EUR: 1 000 000

Financing in place in EUR: 850 000

Project status: post-production

Looking for: gap financing, distributors, sales agents, festivals, streamers

Synopsis

America is a fleeting dream for immigrants, with or without papers. After 7 years in prison, Jonathan wants to get his life back. But instead of

his family, friends and fiancée, he finds betrayal, mistrust, and a 6-year-old kid left alone after his illegal-immigrant mother vanishes.

Director

Nina (2004) earned **Heitor Dhalia** a special mention by the critics at the Moscow Film Festival. In 2006, he directed *O Cheiro do Ralo*, which won the Special Jury Award at the Sundance Film Festival. *A Deriva Heitor* was selected to the Un Certain Regard sidebar in Cannes 2009. In 2011, Heitor directed the Hollywood production *Gone*, starring Amanda Seyfried. In 2014, he wrote and directed *Serra Pelada*, collaborating with actor and co-producer Wagner Moura. Heitor has won over 13 awards and been nominated in over 16 renowned festivals around the world.

Producer and production company

Bernardo Barreto is an award-winning Brazilian actor, writer, producer, and director. He conceived the film *Artificial Paradises* in 2011, produced by José Padilha (*Narcos & Tropa de Elite*); in 2013, he co-produced the award-winning documentary *City of God Ten Years Later*; in 2019, he produced and directed his first feature film *The Seeker*, which won the jury award at the acclaimed Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival. Recently, Bernardo wrote and produced the feature *The Ballad of a Hustler*, a co-production with the USA, directed by Heitor Dhalia, to be released in 2023, and wrote/directed the horror feature film *Epitaph*, also a 2023 release.

Bernardo Barreto founded **Berny Films** in 2011. The company's main production credits include the drama series *Meus Dias de Rock* on Globo Play, the documentary *City of God Ten Years Later*, directed by Cavi Borges and Luciano Vidigal, and Bernardo's own feature drama *The Seeker*, winner of the Jury Prize at Tallinn Black Night Film festival.

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THE FISHERMAN'S DAUGHTER

International Works in Progress
PUERTO RICO, COLOMBIA,
BRAZIL, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



ORIGINAL TITLE: LA ESTRATEGIA DEL MERO

Countries: Puerto Rico, Colombia, Brazil, Dominican Republic

Runtime (minutes): 91

Genre: drama, LGBTQ+

Director: Edgar De Luque Jácome

Writer: Edgar De Luque Jácome

Cinematographer: Rafael González

Cast: Roamir Pineda, Nathalia Rincón, Modesto Lacén, Jesús Romero, Roosevelt González, Henry Barrios

Producer: Annabelle Mullen Pacheco

Co-producers: Jorge Botero (Septima Films), Tatiana Leite (Bubbles Project), Elsa Turull de Alma (Larimar Films), Rodrigo Letier (Kromaki Films)

Production company: Belle Films

Completion date: March 2023

Production budget in EUR: 250 000

Financing in place in EUR: 200 000

Project status: post-production

Looking for: gap financing, distributors, sales agents, festivals, streamers, cinema markets

Synopsis

Samuel, the last freediving grouper fisherman, lives isolated on an island. One day, he receives an unexpected visit from his son, now a transgender prostitute called Priscilla. She is looking for a place to hide. Samuel initially rejects Priscilla, but allows her to stay. After suf-

fering an accident, Samuel has to accept the care of his daughter and this brings them closer together. The fishermen of the area watch everything with strangeness and one of them extorts Priscilla, because he knows why she is hiding. When they try to apprehend her, Samuel defends Priscilla from the fishermen. When the fishermen leave in search of the police, father and daughter take the opportunity to dive together in the sea like groupers, which can change sex when they reach maturity.

Director

Edgar De Luque Jácome is a writer-director from Santa Marta. There, he studied Film at Universidad del Magdalena. As a student, he excelled in directing shorts and documentaries that were awarded in various university festivals. He has also worked as Assistant Director in films such as Roberto Flores' *Ruido Rosa* and Libia S. Gómez's *Libia*. As screenwriter, he has written four screenplays, one of which won a National Script Award. *The Fisherman's Daughter* is his first feature film.

Producer and production company

A lawyer by profession, and a producer by vocation, since 2009, Annabelle **Mullen Pacheco** has produced fiction and documentary films. Under her company, **Belle Films** (Puerto Rico & Spain), she develops content in an artisanal way by women, about women or for women. Her most recent projects include short documentaries such as *Anatomía dunha Serea* (Galicia 2022), *Desempacando (Unpacking)* (Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Spain 2019) (which she also directed), shorts such as *O Son da balea* (Galicia 2021) and fiction films such as *El Hombre que Cuida (Watchman)* (Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Brazil 2017) and *El Chata (The Sparring Partner)* (Puerto Rico 2018). Based in San Juan, Puerto Rico, it is dedicated to the development and production of handcrafted films, both fiction and documentary.

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WALTZING MATILDA

International Works in Progress

CZECH REPUBLIC,
SLOVAKIA



ORIGINAL TITLE: TANCUJ MATYLDO

Countries: Czech Republic, Slovakia

Runtime (minutes): 85

Genre: comedy, drama, family

Director: Petr Slavík

Writers: Nataša Slavíková, Petr Slavík

Cinematographer: Martin Štrba

Cast: Karel Roden, Regina Rázlová, Zuzana Kánocz

Producers: Nataša Slavíková, Vít Janeček

Production companies: Phoenix Production, VIRUSfilm

Completion date: July 2023

Production budget in EUR: 1 112 000

Financing in place in EUR: 998 000

Project status: production

Looking for: gap financing, distributors, sales agents, festivals, co-producers, cinema markets

Synopsis

The film tells the story of bailiff Karel Jaroš, his mother, former choir singer Matilda, and Karel's teenage son Pavel. The withdrawn, emotionally torn Karel does not get along with his extroverted and bohemian mother and only thanks to a strong sense of duty does he visit her regularly. Pavel, on the other hand, who comes across as an irresponsible flunky, despises his father's profession and cannot forget that he abandoned his family as a child. The relationship of all three is disturbed, but an unexpected life situation brings them together. Mat-

ilda develops Alzheimer's disease, loses her apartment, and Karel has to take her in. However, he is unable to take care of her and in a deadlocked situation, it turns out that the only solution is for Pavel to take care of his sick grandmother. However, the illness progresses rapidly... The tragicomic story inevitably ends with the question of whether and how our heroes will stand up to this test of life.

Director

Petr Slavík (1956) is a Czech screenwriter, renowned documentary and theatre director and author of TV dramas. He has been teaching directing at the Film Academy of Miroslav Ondříček in Písek for the past two decades. *Waltzing Matilda* (2022) is his feature-length fiction debut. Selected filmography: *Unwanted Holidays* (Best European TV Film Award, 2009 La Rochelle TV Fiction Festival), *Strangeloves* (2009, Grand Prize for the best TV comedy, Novoměstský hrnec festival), *Alternative Culture* (1998, E. Schorm Award, Academia Film Olomouc, Fites Trilobit Award), *Velvet Revolution* (1990, Grand Prize, Academia Film Olomouc).

Producer and production company

Phoenix Film is an artistic production platform run by Nataša Slavíková. She has produced over 350 films or programs for TV. These include: 60 episodes of environmentally themed competition show *Green Game* for youngsters, 30 episodes of *Medicine for the 21st Century* that maps recent developments in medicine, 13 episodes *Beyond the Mirror* examining esoteric knowledge in the light of science, etc. *Waltzing Matilda* is her full-length debut as a producer.

VIRUSfilm is a boutique film production located in Bratislava, Slovakia, founded and run by Vít Janeček and Zuzana Piusi. They focus mostly on authorial cinema with strong topical content oriented on society and politics.

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20,000 SPECIES OF BEES

International Works in Progress
SPAIN



ORIGINAL TITLE: 20.000 ESPECIES DE ABEJAS

Country: Spain

Runtime (minutes): 120

Genre: family, LGBTQ+

Director: Estibaliz Urresola

Writer: Estibaliz Urresola Solaguren

Cinematographer: Gina Ferrer

Cast: Patricia López Arnaiz, Sofia Otero, Ane Gabarain, Itziar Lazkano

Producers: Lara Izagirre, Valérie Delpierre

Production companies: Gariza Films, Inicia Films

Completion date: February 2023

Production budget in EUR: 1 700 000

Financing in place in EUR: 1 700 000

Project status: post-production

Looking for: distributors, sales agents

Synopsis

Lucia, 6, knows that something inside her doesn't fit the others' expectations but she doesn't know what it is. In the midst of the family's breakdown, Ane uses a cousin's baptism as an excuse to take her three children to her hometown. This journey seems to be a breath of fresh air in the face but quickly becomes a suffocating reality for Ane who is confronted to the weight of the environment and family values. In the meanwhile, the nature that surrounds the family home her mother grew up in fascinates Lucia; particularly the land that has been used for beekeeping and honey production. Lucia immediately

connects with Lourdes; an unpolished woman who not only keeps the old family tradition of beekeeping alive but who also has a mysterious relationship with the bees and their hives. At the same time, Lucia learns for the first time the true value of friendship with Niko; a girl of her own age who doesn't care about the fact Lucia has a penis.

Director

Estibaliz Urresola is a graduate of Audiovisual Communication (University of the Basque Country); Editing and Editing Theory (EICTV Cuba); Masters in Film Direction (ESCAC Barcelona). She produced, wrote, and directed the feature-length documentary *Paper Voices* that was presented in San Sebastian Festival. Her latest short film *Chords* had its world premiere at the Semaine de la Critique in Cannes and its national premiere at the San Sebastian International Film Festival. Short fiction *Ashes and Dust* (2020), produced by Sirimiri Films Production, won Best Script Award ZINEBI 62 and Grand Award Best Basque Short Film ZINEBI 62.

Producer and production company

Established in 2010, **Gariza Films** is a young independent production company created by filmmaker **Lara Izagirre** with the intention of producing basque films that travel through Europe to reach a wider audience. The commitment to new talent is another brand identity which supports new creators. It also works for equality promoting the role of women in the audiovisual field.

Created in 2006, **Inicia Films** is an independent production company based in Barcelona, focused on international coproductions and the development of new talent. Inicia Films is dedicated to the production of documentaries, shortfalls and fiction feature films. Their films have been selected and awarded at numerous festivals.

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