



Press release
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FLEMISH MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, NATURE AND CULTURE
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Gust Van den Berghe wins the Flemish Culture Award for Film 2010-2011

Today, the Flemish Minister for Culture, Joke Schauvliege, has granted the Flemish Community Award for Film 2010-2011 to Gust Van den Berghe at the Ostend Film Festival. The laureate receives a bronze statuette by Johan Tahon and a cash prize of 12,500 euros. The Ostend Film Festival, organised by the non-profit organisation *Les films du bord de Mer*, is the festival in Belgium that pays tribute to domestic talent.

Director Gust Van den Berghe graduated in 2008 at the Brussels film school Rits. After having made his debut with a number of short films and documentaries, the young laureate (*1985) started his first full-length feature *En Waar de Sterre Bleeft Stille Staen – Little Baby Jesus of Flandr* - in which the three leading parts were played by actors with Down Syndrome. This film is based on the book and play by Felix Timmermans. Gust Van den Berghe shot his second feature film *Blue Bird* in Togo with the collaboration of local actors and film crew. His interpretation of this world-famous philosophical fairy play of Maurice Maeterlinck is unquestionably the most original version. *Blue Bird* received warm applause at the *Quinzaine des Réalisateurs* event during the 2011 Cannes Film Festival.

The jury of the Flemish Community Award for Film, headed by Stijn Coninx, calls the laureate an "untiring and passionate cineast who during the past year managed to gain extraordinary acclaim both in Belgium and internationally and place Flemish film production in the limelight".

Gust Van den Berghe is furthermore hailed as a "model for his generation peers that are holding out great promise for the future of the Flemish audiovisual landscape". With this the jury refers to previous distinctions which the young film maker received for his work. Last year, his debut film and thesis *Little Baby Jesus of Flandr* was shortlisted in the section *Quinzaine des Réalisateurs* at the Cannes Festival. This year, the Cannes Festival highlighted his talent once again by shortlisting his second film *Blue Bird*.

According to Flemish Minister Joke Schauvliege "It is not only the beautiful stories he tells; Gust Van den Berghe impresses also by his daring and original approach. This Flemish Culture Award is not the crowning culmination but - as I hope - the start of an undoubtedly rich film career."

At the Ostend Film Festival a professional jury, chaired by Peter Van den Begin, also granted the Flemish Film Awards for the categories 'Best Film', 'Best Director', 'Best Scenario', 'Best Leading Actor/Actress', 'Best Supporting Actor/Actress', 'Best Debut', 'Best Director of Photography' and 'Best Music' (www.vlaamsefilmprizen.be). The Ostend Film Festival regards the simultaneous presentation of the Flemish Culture Award for Film in the presence of Flemish Minister for Culture, Joke Schauvliege, as a special appreciation.

'New Style' Culture Awards

As of the season 2010-2011, 'new style' Flemish Culture Awards will be granted. This new style was introduced following an evaluation carried out in collaboration with a number of sectoral support centres. A jury of experts pays tribute to individuals or organisations that in the course of the past season made a notable contribution to cultural life in Flanders. The laureate of the Culture Award is celebrated at an event specific to the sector involved. In this way both the sector and the winner will receive more attention and appreciation.

This award carries the amount of 12,500 euros. For the General Cultural Merit Award an amount of 20,000 euros is appropriated by the Government of Flanders. Each laureate also receives a bronze statuette by artist Johan Tahon.

More information is available at: www.cultuurprijzen.be and www.vlaamsefilmprizen.be