

NEW TURKISH FILM WOMEN WITHOUT FEAR

"In Istanbul there is a youth that is more modern and open than in Western Europe, but also dark men that may take us back many years." Says Deniz Gamze Ergüven whose debut film "Mustang" (2015) was a big success with critics and audiences. The tone in current Turkish film is to a large degree set by female directors, whom are fearless in the choice of subject and dare to confront taboos. This applies to Pelin Esmer's film "Watchtower" among other about incestuous abuse and Cigdem Sezgin's "The Wedding Dance" about arranged marriages. However, the female directors also carry on proud traditions in Turkish film, among other through their use of nature symbolism. Several of the new films are aesthetically breath-taking and clearly inspired by Nuri Bilge Ceylan's long settings, minimal movements with the picture frame and dwellings on the main characters' faces.

The main characters in the seven films, which we present, are almost all divided between tradition and modernity and they are generally not portrayed in a very positive light – perhaps to avoid that they are only discussed from a feminist agenda. The film "Zefir" has also been criticised by female Turkish film critics for the unlikeable portrait of a female main characters whom leaves her daughter in order to pursue her own film career. To this, the film's director, Belma Bas, says: "I long for the day where one will not talk of male and female directors.

The film series will open on Saturday 15 October with the beautiful love drama "Across the Sea" and a reception in Asta Bar with the participation of the directors Esra Saydam and Nisan Dağ. On 26 October, we will screen "Zefir" with a visit by the director Belma Baş. The series has been arranged in collaboration with The Turkish Embassy.

Across the Sea

Pregnant Damla returns to her childhood town with her American husband Kevin after many years of studies in New York. Everything seems delightful until Damla's ex-boyfriend, the bachelor Burak, enters the scene. It quickly turns out that Damla has not been telling the truth about her pregnancy. An emotional and beautiful film, which portrays the warmth of the Mediterranean crystal clear.

Zefir

The strong-willed girl Zephyr spends the summer holiday with her grandparents in a mountainous region in northern Turkey and longingly awaits her mother to come and collect her. When the mother finally arrives, it is only to say goodbye. The perfectly composed images of the foggy, ominous landscape creates a rich atmosphere around the minimalistic plotline – which offers a surprising ending.

Watchtower

A beautiful neo-western from Turkey's dark forests. The young woman Seher is on the run from a conservative home, and the man Nihat mends his personal wounds in a watchtower far removed from civilisation. On a fateful and highly dramatic morning, their roads will cross. The film examines the breakdown of the family institution, but also its possible resurrection.

The Bad Cat

Meet the alcoholised, extremely violent and 100 per cent repugnant cat Shero, who during 80 crisp minutes manages to commit premeditated murder, be evicted, discover that he has a son, be chased by a psychopath and rob a bank. Yes, it sounds insane – and it probably is. The brand

new adult animation film “The Bad Cat” is a funny and politically incorrectly ultraviolent – with the heart in the right place.

Present Tense

Mina is unemployed and dreams of immigrating to the USA in order to start over again. In her search for work, she ends up as a fortune-teller in a café in Istanbul. She finds success with reading coffee grounds, even though her own predictions are based on memories from her own life. “Present Tense” is a darkly humorous portrait of a young woman whom helps other women towards self-realisation but is incapable of taking responsibility for her own life.

Nobody’s Home

The alienation is dense in Deniz Akçay’s excellent directorial debut, where the petty criminal teenager Ilker runs away from a divided home, which the depression stricken mother in the father’s absence cannot keep united, and begins a Ms. Robinson relationship with his best friend’s mother. With its crushing end, the film does not leave the body right away.

The Wedding Dance

The taxi driver Ahmet is going to get engaged with a young woman whom his mother has picked out, but he initiates an affair with the tailor Leyla who is older than he is. One day, Leyla’s old love Semih returns to Istanbul from Germany after being away for 18 years. “The Wedding Dance” is an intense, excellently acted drama about women (and men) that are caught between traditional norms, double standards and a modern Western lifestyle.