

Sundance '16: Felix van Groeningen, Rebecca Daly & Ana Katz Load Up World Dramatic Comp

By Eric Lavalley on December 2, 2015



In last year's section which included Ariel Kleiman's *Partisan* and Anne Sewitsky's *Homesick*, it was John Maclean's debut *Slow West* claimed the World Cinema Grand Jury Prize, Alanté Kavaïté's *The Summer of Sangailé* landed the Directing Award: World Cinema Dramatic, *Umrika* was the audience's won the Audience Award: World Cinema Dramatic. In this year's dozen offerings we have names we normally associate with Cannes in *The Misfortunates*' Felix van Groeningen (**Belgica**), *The Other Side of Sleep*'s Rebecca Daly (**Mammal** – see pic above) and *A Stray Girlfriend*'s Ana Katz (**Mi Amiga del Parque**). Here are the selections.

Belgica / Belgium, France, Netherlands (Director: Felix van Groeningen, Screenwriters: Felix van Groeningen, Arne Sierens) — In the midst of Belgium's nightlife scene, two brothers start a bar and get swept up in its success. Cast: Stef Aerts, Tom Vermeir, Charlotte Vandermeersch, Héléne De Vos. World Premiere. **DAY ONE FILM**

Between Sea and Land / Colombia (Directors: Manolo Cruz, Carlos del Castillo, Screenwriter: Manolo Cruz) — Alberto, who suffers from an illness that binds him into a body that doesn't obey him, lives with his loving mom, who dedicates her life to him. His sickness impedes him from achieving his greatest dream of knowing the sea, despite one being located just across the street. Cast: Manolo Cruz, Vicky Hernández, Viviana Serna, Jorge Cao, Mile Vergara, Javier Sáenz. World Premiere

Brahman Naman / United Kingdom, India (Director: Q, Screenwriter: S. Ramachandran) — When Bangalore University's misfit quiz team manages to get into the national championships, they make an alcohol-fueled, cross-country journey to the competition, determined to defeat their arch-rivals from Calcutta while all desperately trying to lose their virginity. Cast: Shashank Arora, Tanmay Dhanania, Chaitanya Varad, Vaiswath Shankar, Sindhu Sreenivasa Murthy, Sid Mallya. World Premiere

A Good Wife / Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia (Director: Mirjana Karanovic, Screenwriters: Mirjana Karanovic, Stevan Filipovic, Darko Lungulov) — When 50-year-old Milena finds out about the terrible past of her seemingly ideal husband, while simultaneously learning of her own cancer diagnosis, she begins an awakening from the suburban paradise she has been living in. Cast: Mirjana Karanovic, Boris Isakovic, Jasna Djuricic, Bojan Navojec, Hristina Popovic, Ksenija Marinkovic. World Premiere

Halal Love (and Sex) / Lebanon, Germany, United Arab Emirates (Director and screenwriter: Assad Fouladkar) — Four tragic yet comic interconnected stories come together in this film, which follows devout Muslim men and women as they try to manage their love lives and desires without breaking any of their religion's rules. Cast: Darine Hamze, Rodrigue Sleiman, Zeinab Khadra, Hussein Mokadem, Mirna Moukarzel, Ali Sammoury. International Premiere

The Lure / Poland (Director: Agnieszka Smoczyńska, Screenwriter: Robert Bolesto) — Two mermaid sisters, who end up performing at a nightclub, face cruel and bloody choices when one of them falls in love with a beautiful young man. Cast: Marta Mazurek, Michalina Olszanska, Jakub Gierszal, Kinga Preis, Andrzej Konopka, Zygmunt Malanowicz. International Premiere

Male Joy, Female Love / China (Director and screenwriter: Yao Huang) — Portrays an unlimited cycle of love stories. Cast: Nan Yu, Daizhen Ying, Xiaodong Guo, Yi Sun. World Premiere

Mammal / Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands (Director: Rebecca Daly, Screenwriters: Rebecca Daly, Glenn Montgomery) — After Margaret, a divorcée living in Dublin, loses her teenage son, she develops an unorthodox relationship with Joe, a homeless youth. Their tentative trust is threatened by his involvement with a violent gang and the escalation of her ex-husband's grieving rage. Cast: Rachel Griffiths, Barry Keoghan, Michael McElhatton. World Premiere

Mi Amiga del Parque / Argentina, Uruguay (Director: Ana Katz, Screenwriters: Ana Katz, Inés Bortagaray) — Running away from a bar without paying the bill is just the first adventure for Liz (mother to newborn Nicanor) and Rosa (supposed mother to newborn Clarisa). This budding friendship between nursing mothers starts with the promise of liberation but soon ends up being a dangerous business. Cast: Julieta Zylberberg, Ana Katz, Maricel Álvarez, Mirella Pascual, Malena Figó, Daniel Hendler. International Premiere

Much Ado About Nothing / Chile (Director: Alejandro Fernández, Screenwriters: Alejandro Fernández, Jerónimo Rodríguez) — An upper-class kid gets in trouble with the one percent. Cast: Agustín Silva, Alejandro Goic, Luis Gnecco, Paulina García, Daniel Alcaino, Augusto Schuster. World Premiere

Sand Storm / Israel (Director and screenwriter: Elite Zexer) — When their entire lives are shattered, two Bedouin women struggle to change the unchangeable rules, each in her own individual way. Cast: Lamis Ammar, Ruba Blal-Asfour, Hitham Omari, Khadija Alakel, Jalal Masrwa. World Premiere

Wild / Germany (Director and screenwriter: Nicolette Krebitz) — An anarchist young woman breaks the tacit contract with civilization and fearlessly decides on a life without hypocrisy or an obligatory safety net. Cast: Lilith Stangenberg, Georg Friedrich. World Premiere