

POWR Baltic Stories Exchange & In Focus projects 2018

Welcome to the POWR and In Focus pitch!

Presenting new voices and stories from the Baltic & Nordic film communities and a voice from this year's country of focus of Baltic Event, Italy!

POWR invites producers, funders, sales agents and all industry guests to join this year's round of presentations. We have selected 6 feature film projects and will in addition present 4 Finnish projects, thanks to our collaboration with In Focus (Näkyväksi), a new incubator initiative that supports four female filmmakers in the transition of their projects from script to production stage; the In Focus-projects are two TV series and two features.

The 10 storytellers will pitch their projects at our POWR presentation from 10:30-11:30 on the morning of November 29th in Room Capella at Nordic Hotel.

POWR is a great opportunity to connect with a project at an early stage or to find a writer, co-writer, director, or script consultant for your own project.

POWR is an intensive workshop that focuses on creating a pitch platform for scriptwriters. The participants receive training in how to pitch by experienced tutors Valeria Richter and Helene Granqvist, as well as feedback on each other's projects. Following the pitch presentation, we have organised speed-meetings with invited industry guests.

POWR is part of the Baltic Event Co-production Market. We invite new voices and projects that cover a spectre of genres. This year you'll hear about a comedy, where retired exotic dancer Vicky takes on a new uncomfortable role and finds a way to reconnect with her daughter; a queer and poetic bio-fiction of famed Swedish author Karin Boye; you'll meet a lonely retired teacher, who embraces activism in the face of injustice, even if the cost is her marriage; you'll hear about a series inspired by real events that lead to a small Finnish town chasing out the Romani community, and the good intentions that everyone started out with; a crime thriller about a writer, who may or may not have killed her husband; a parable of *The Plague* that explores the way a city reacts to a fast spreading disease; a young adult sci-fi series set in the near future, following the collapse of the Nordic welfare states; a journey to an isolated island where a struggling actress starts to notice strange things in the local population; and you will go on a suicide mission with a highschool girl determined to be killed – but this is not so easy as she thought.

On the next pages we invite you to check out the projects and storytellers.

POWR is - as always - held in an informal and open atmosphere. We look forward to seeing you!

On behalf of the POWR-team,
Valeria Richter

INNOCENT GUN

Logline

Three years after her husband's brutal murder, a one-time famous novelist meets with a rookie journalist in a desperate attempt to prove her own guilt.

Synopsis

Novelist Ellen Lepik used to live with her husband, the book publisher Lauri Lepik, on Vormsi Island. Their reclusive lifestyle, dedicated solely to literature and the arts, ended 3 years ago, when Lauri was brutally and mysteriously murdered after a gathering with the Estonian literary *milieu*. Ellen, who has never talked about the event in public, now comes forward, contacting rookie journalist Mart Kukk for an interview, promising to tell the truth about what happened. As she retells the events, one thing becomes clear: everyone at the gathering had a reason to kill Lauri, but the real story behind his murder defies all explanation.

Lucas Abrahão

Studied filmmaking at the Federal University of São Carlos, Brazil, and



obtained a Master Degree in Screenwriting at the Kino Eyes European Movie Master, divided between Portugal, Scotland and Estonia. Wrote the short film *Roof Knocking*, set in Palestine and selected for 25 international film festivals, winning the Best Short Film award at Cairo IFF. Participated in the Talents - Buenos Aires workshop and received the 3rd place at the FRAPA TV Pilot competition, the largest screenplay festival in South America.



Bojana Babic

Studied Screenwriting & Writing for Performance at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade. Has a Master Degree in Film at the Kino Eyes European Movie Master divided between Portugal, Scotland and Estonia. Worked as a writer in theatre, radio and television in Serbia. Wrote 2 international short films set in Estonia, currently on the festival circuit. Based in Tallinn and currently developing the feature film project *Innocent Gun*.

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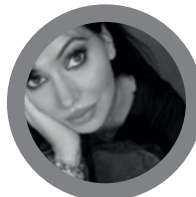
ROOM 511

Logline

The past unites two women, strangers, who meet at a crossroad between their old and new lives.

Synopsis

Two women meet in a hotel room in a remote city in Eastern Finland. One of them is waiting for someone she once lost and yet has never seen; the other woman for someone she left behind over a decade ago. An unexpected turn of events changes the course of the evening and the hopeful reunions turn into a human ordeal where the only way out is through the mutual trust of strangers.



Sevgi Eker

Sevgi Eker is a Finnish-Turkish film director, writer and producer. Sevgi graduated as Bachelor of Arts from Aalto University School of Arts, Design & Architecture, where she is currently finishing her Master's degree. In addition to film, Sevgi has also studied Political Science and International relations at Bahcesehir University Istanbul, and Time & Space Art at The Finnish Academy of Fine Arts. Sevgi's films have been awarded and shown at numerous festivals such as Slamdance and The Norwegian IFF in Haugesund, where her 2nd directorial work, *The 99 Steps Left From the Square* (2017), was awarded the Next Nordic Generation Award.

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**Logline**

Åland was once a paradise. In 2030, it's a prison island where Finland sends her useless citizens.

Synopsis

Year 2030. Finland has established a system named Å that identifies and deports all profitless human units to a prison island in the Baltic Sea. Freija Lindén, privileged daughter of Finland's Prime Minister, is kidnapped and wakes up on the island. For the first time in her life, Freija faces an unruly society that is still defining itself according to rules set by the most dominant islanders. Everything she has learned until now is a lie. Freija must learn to fight for her existence in a system where everyone and everything is fair game. Searching for a way to escape, Freija discovers hidden sides of herself and finds her true mission: to destroy the system and bring the two worlds together.

**Aino Lappalainen**

Aino Lappalainen is a Helsinki-based screenwriter. Currently she is developing a TV series Å, her debut as a sci-fi writer. Å is one of the selected projects in WIFT Finland's In Focus Incubator. The writing process was supported by the Finnish Film Foundation. Previously Aino Lappalainen worked as a co-headwriter for Finnish Broadcaster YLE's long TV drama series, *The Supporters*, now in pre-production. She has co-written several acclaimed short films such as *The Inspection and Tokio Baby* and radio plays for YLE. She holds a Master of Arts from Aalto University and a Master of Social Sciences from University of Helsinki.

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SUICIDE MISSION

Logline

A depressed Finnish highschool girl travels to Israel to get rid of her life, but it's not as easy as it sounds.

Synopsis

Hilja (17) is a depressed Finnish highschool girl, who lacks the courage to bring her suicide attempts to completion. Reading the news of a deadly suicide bombing in Jerusalem, she realises this is an easier way to die! She googles every dangerous thing a tourist should never do in Israel and makes it her to-do-list. Her plan is jeopardised when she bumps into Mourid (21), a cute Palestinian suicide bomber, who falls in love with her and fails his own mission! Now he has to make her fall in love with him so he can move to Finland with her before his terrorist bosses capture and torture him to death. What follows is an adventurous roadtrip through checkpoints, smuggling tunnels and explosions inside the two youngsters' hearts, where the notions of life and love will be re-examined.

**Hanna Partanen**

Daughter of a Finnish UN peacekeeper, Hanna grew up between Finland and the Middle East. She earned her BA in communication studies from Bar Ilan University, Israel and MA in screenwriting from Salford University, UK. During her career she's upholstered motorised armchairs for British reality TV shows, created TV programmes for Christian media in Jerusalem and saved Tony Blair's Mideast Quartet interview by lending him her make-up. Currently she's directing and producing an interactive documentary film, *Narrators of History*, exploring the way historical narratives are used during wars and conflicts. She's the co-founder and director of Peace Invaders, a Finnish NGO that produces media- and technology-based conflict transformation tools.

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KERTTU ALIAS IF I WOULD TALK TO YOU

Logline

A retired Finnish language teacher starts working at a refugee centre, despite her husband's opposition. When she faces an injustice and gets personally involved, she must choose sides.

Synopsis

Kerttu (65), a retired Finnish language teacher, starts working at a refugee centre - despite her husband and children being opposed to the idea. When an Afghan family is threatened with forced repatriation, Kerttu takes action – she cannot ignore the injustice. Together with her younger colleague, Kerttu hides the family in a summer cottage on the outskirts of the city. Kerttu's husband gets wind of the plan and wants to report her to the police. The married couple – former members of the '68 student movement – are now standing on opposite sides, against each other. A battle of principles ensues,



solidarity towards a long life together or towards present injustices?

Kirsi Marie Liimatainen

Kirsi Marie Liimatainen is an award-winning Finnish director, born in 1968. She first studied Theatre and Drama at the University of Tampere, Finland and worked as an actress in theatre and on TV. From 1999-2006, she studied directing at the Babelsberg Film University in Germany. Her works include fiction, documentary films and theatre. She is currently developing new projects with support of the Finnish Cultural Foundation. Filmography: *Modlicha* (doc) 2001, *Frühlingshymne* (fict.) 2002, *Sonja* (fict.) 2006, *Festung* (fict.) 2011, *Alavilla Mailla Hallanvaara* (TV-series) 2011, *Comrade, Where Are You Today?* (doc) 2016.

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HOT PANS (WORKING TITLE)

Logline

A big city comedy with a countryside heart where a strained mother-daughter relationship forces both to face their mutual fears and shame as they struggle with love and life.

Synopsis

Vicky, 48, is an exotic dancer and good at her job. She promises to rent an expensive party tent for her daughter Leena's wedding. But the promise is not easy to keep when Vicky gets fired. By a lucky mistake she ends up leading a cooking and relationship course for couples. Being a terrible cook, Vicky focuses on exotic kitchen dance lessons. As Leena uncovers her mother's scam, she cancels her wedding invitation. Vicky must now win Leena's long lost trust back and keep "her" couples happy, while juggling a new and younger lover. Vicky learns a lesson of love as she finds a way to reconnect with Leena, who finally embraces that her mother is not just an embarrassment, she is a force of empowerment.



Lotta-Kaisa Riistakoski

Lotta-Kaisa Riistakoski is a Finnish filmmaker whose passion is to create and develop original ideas. She works as a screenwriter, film director and producer. She holds a Master of Arts. Currently she is about to finish her new documentary film, which will premiere early 2019. *Hot Pans* is her debut feature fiction film as a screenwriter.

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PROVIDER

Logline

A 6-part drama series about the inevitable conflict between two communities who differ too much in their way of life to live side by side. Inspired by real events.

Synopsis

At the end of the 1940's Hilja, a Romani woman and her misbegotten son are forced to give up their nomadic lifestyle and settle in a small industrial town in Eastern Finland, due to minority politics and vagrancy laws. The progressive labor party activists want minority ethnic groups to become a part of the developing welfare society. However, Hilja's attempts to adapt quickly crash with the town's majority and the prejudices on both sides. To feed herself and her son, she starts an illicit liquor business to satisfy the thirsty town folks and war veterans, who suffer from the prohibition. Her illegal trade becomes a substantial source of income for the Romani community, making Hilja its Provider. As head of the business she gets multiple



prison sentences, but law enforcement is unable to stop the trade. The officials are as powerless to treat the root cause as Hilja is to stop the disruptive side effects of the illegal business, which soon threatens the balance of the whole town. The towns-people are ready to take the law into their own hands and get rid of the 'gypsies'.

Susanna Åke

Susanna Åke is a Helsinki based screenwriter who grew up in the small town of Lieksa in Eastern Finland. After completing her Bachelor of Media degree she studied screenwriting at the University of Salford, graduating with an MA in 2011. Åke has recently worked as an episode writer for a TV drama series called *Syke (Nurses)*. *Provider* is her debut as head writer. It is based on real events that took place in her home town in the 1940s -1950s.

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ALONE AGAINST THE SKY (WORKING TITLE)

Logline

In an imaginary, contemporary Italian city, where migrants and refugees are treated like rats, the plague suddenly spreads and starts killing everyone regardless of race or gender.

Synopsis

Alone Against the Sky is a modern parable inspired by *The Plague* by Albert Camus. During the XXI century, the plague appears in an imaginary Italian city. The disease is probably brought by the so called 'rats' of the city, the migrants and refugees hiding in every corner, who are literally treated like rats by the residents. Doctor Bernardo Sarti tries to fight the plague, which is spreading out among the townspeople, until an event helps him realise that these 'rats' are people, just like any of the other residents. He tries to share this new truth with the citizens, whose destiny seems to be condemned by the insatiable curse of the plague.



Adel Oberto

After living in New York City, Genoa and Pisa, Adel moved to London where he graduated at the NFTS as Fiction Director in 2012. While studying, he directed and produced short films, promos, music videos and documentaries. Adel's short films have been screened and awarded at film festivals all over the world; he also collaborated with international cultural institutions like the University of Sorbonne in Paris, the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa, The Institute of Contemporary Arts and the Soho Theatre in London, the 2015 World Expo in Milan, the Bogliasco Foundation and Bjcem - Biennial of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean. He lives between Italy and Bulgaria.

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LADY FROM THE SEA

POWR
Latvia-Norway

Logline

Get back to where you once belonged.

Synopsis

After many years abroad, a struggling actress returns to her native island community to stage a political theatre performance at a new arts festival. Instead, she gets caught up in a dark and far-reaching secret at the heart of the booming Norwegian salmon farming industry. What starts out as a playful environmental thriller set among the postcard panoramas of northern Norway develops into something deeper, darker and more sinister with far-reaching global implications.



Morten Traavik

Morten Traavik is a Norwegian director, writer and artist working across a wide spectrum of artistic genres and international borders. Trained as theater director in Russia and Sweden, the notion of the world as a stage and identity as role play is never far away in his works, as well as a characteristically blurred distinction between art, activism and social issues.

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KARIN BOYE (WORKING TITLE)

POWR
Sweden

Logline

A poetic bio-fiction about a queer writer's fight for sexual freedom and the right to work in the early 1930s, set in a Berlin on the brink of destruction.

Synopsis

The Swedish writer and poet Karin Boye arrives in Berlin in 1932, in the last chaotic era of the Weimar republic. Her aim is to cure her own homosexuality through psychoanalysis, and her psychoanalyst, Walter Schindler, is devoted to this task. Through her memories during the analysis and especially during Karin's night time explorations of the lesbian bars and clubs, she however begins to change her mind.



Åsa Sandzén

I was born in 1975 in the north of Sweden and previous films are (scriptwriter and director) *Still Born*, an auto-fiction about losing a child before birth, *Andra Stranden (Second Shore)* an animated documentary where people meet on a shore between life and death, and *Dildoman*, a queer-feminist comedy about the male gaze in sex scenes in mainstream porn, *Serietecknarna*, a documentary about comic artists, and I have also worked as FAD on the feature *Belleville Baby* by Mia Engberg, and as a researcher on documentaries and exhibitions.

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