

# Latvia Nominates *January* by Viestur Kairish for the Academy Award Consideration

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"Janvāris", lomās - Kārlis Arnolds Avots un Alise Danovska, foto Andrejs Strokins.

For the fifteenth time Latvia has entered a film for the *US Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Oscar Awards* nomination consideration in the Best International Feature Film category. On 2 September, the panel of experts selected by the National Film Centre voted on director Viestur Kairish's feature *January*. In June, it celebrated the world premiere with the best international feature award in Tribeca Film Festival (NYC, USA) and will be premiered in Latvia this November.

Entries from Latvian studios were evaluated by a panel of experts selected by the National Film Centre (NFC) –Ieva Romanova, Chair of the Latvian Filmmakers Union, Dace Pūce, director of last year's Academy Awards entry *The Pit*, Alise Ģelze, producer and chair of the panel of film industry experts of the State Culture Capital Foundation of Latvia, Edmunds Jansons, animation director and expert of the NFC feature film projects, Kristīne Simsons, film critic and journalist, Dace Vilsons, State Secretary of the Ministry of Culture and member of the Film Board, and Dita Rietuma, film historian and head of the National Film Centre

The panel evaluated four full-length feature films and one feature-length animation film. All films will have their national premieres this October or November. *Meeting virtually*, experts assessed the films' potentials and appeal for different audiences, appreciating the individual qualities of each film. Among the contenders was the animated musical *My Love Affair with Marriage* by director and artist Signe Baumanė - a unique, dynamic, and even scientific treatment of the eternal topic of woman's destiny and happiness, as well as Linda Olte's feature debut *Sisters* that talks about the universal topic of family affiliations through great acting in a powerful screenplay. Youth drama *Neon Spring* directed by Matīss Kaža – a fresh and contemporary piece for young audiences, according to the experts – and *Soviet Milk* directed by Ināra Kolmane based on the popular novel by Nora Ikstena also competed for the ticket to the *Oscar* nomination.

The panel agreed that Latvia's entry for the *US Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Awards* nomination in the Best

International Feature Film category will be feature film *January* directed by Viestur Kairish, produced by *Mistrus Media*, producers Gints Grūbe and Inese Boka-Grūbe, starring Kārlis Arnolds Avots. The partly autobiographic story of a young man's experience during the political turmoil and fight for independence in 1991 is a very cinematographic and mesmerizing artwork that fuses personal and historic themes, but most importantly – it reminds the world that the dangers of recent history have not disappeared even today. It is important to note that Kairish's latest film has already garnered international success proving that it is internationally convertible and understandable outside Latvia. In June, right after its world premiere, *January* received the best international feature award in Tribeca Film Festival (NYC, USA).

This year, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' awards procedure has returned to the regular pre-pandemic rhythm - countries must submit their national applications by 3 October, an extended list of applicants will be announced on 21 December, the final list of nominations will be announced on 24 January, and the award ceremony will take place on 12 March 2023.

<https://www.nkc.gov.lv/en/article/latvia-nominates-january-viestur-kairish-academy-award-consideration>