

## Screenplay about Husák's Wife Wins Main Award in International Project MIDPOINT

**MIDPOINT, an international educational project aimed at supporting talents and developing European screenwriting and dramaturgy, climaxed at FAMU Prague this weekend where best projects were awarded. In October, film workshops for Czech and Slovak filmmakers as well as teachers will follow.**

This is the fourth time that young filmmakers compete in Prague in the international project MIDPOINT. This year, the award for the best feature-film screenplay went to the project called Magda H. by screenwriter Terézia Simanová, a VŠMU Bratislava graduate, producer Peter Badač from Prague's FAMU and another VŠMU graduate, Barbora Berezňáková. Magda H. tells the story of the complicated life of Magda Lokvencová-Husáková, a lawyer, actress and the first wife of Czechoslovakian Normalisation president Gustáv Husák. "Based on the consultations with the lecturers we divided the story into separate storylines that we made into a new structure. We will see about the further fates of the screenplay – so far, Czech Television has shown interest," says Barbora Berezňáková about her participation in MIDPOINT. The prize of 1.500 EUR should help the winners in further development of the project.

Following the final presentation at FAMU in Prague, attended by representatives of European co-production markets and professional producers, the jury announced also two awards accompanied by twice the amount of 750 EUR for the best short film project – it went to FAMU's screenwriter and director Jan Těšitel and producer Klára Žaloudková. They have created a project David that tells the story of a mentally disadvantaged boy who leaves the safety of his family in his desire to taste freedom. The second award went to the screenplay entitled Leave by Hungarian filmmaker Dávid Nagy, producer Károly Bilinci and director Éva Papp. Leave is a story about a complicated relationship of two brothers divided by their family history and their love for the same woman.

This year, eleven film schools collaborated on the project, and a number of film professionals from abroad, such as German producer Simone Baumann, Slovenian producer Danijel Hočevár, Hungarian filmmaker Csaba Bollók and Macedonian director Ivo Trajkov. For the first time, a day dedicated to writing and shooting scenes, led by Italian director and screenwriter Giovanni Robbiano, was part of the workshop.

The MIDPOINT Central European Script Center project was initiated by FAMU in collaboration with film schools in Bratislava, Lodz, Berlin, Bucharest and Budapest. The programme concentrates on developing stories that touch on local subjects that aim at foreign audiences

at the same time. Film school students and recent graduates apply with semi-finished screenplays and MIDPOINT offers them individual consultations with professional filmmakers. They also undergo a training on pitching – public presentation of their projects in front of film producers and representatives of film funds.

This three-month educational programme for film-school students and graduates comprises of two international workshops offering consultations with lecturers as part of the process. MIDPOINT emphasises the collaboration of the screenwriter-director tandem, which is why only teams can take part.

The activities of the MIDPOINT centre are not limited to this international educational programme. MIDPOINT realises a number of projects supporting screenwriting and dramaturgy for young talents, film professionals and for the public. At the beginning of October, the programme called Training the Trainers will take place at FAMU in Prague; it is aimed at young film-school teachers who want to gain deeper knowledge of dramaturgy. In the second half of October, international workshops for Czech and Slovak film professionals will take place in Prague and Bratislava that will help them to collaborate on their projects with screenwriters and dramaturgists from abroad.

You can find more information on the MIDPOINT project and its different programmes in the attached press-kit. It contains also an overview of other projects organised under MIDPOINT.

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