



## **Dutch Movies Matter Jury report M+MF22**

The Dutch Movies Matter Competition offered an amazing kaleidoscope of stories, told in many different ways. Fiction and documentary. Intimate and larger than life. Films that were co-created together with the protagonists. Films with amazing actors and endearing real-life personalities. Set on a mind-blowing, crazy film set, in mesmerizing landscapes, in the intimacy of homes, or filmed in harsh conditions. But they had one thing in common. All films address urgent matters, close to home and further away. They explore a wide range of universal themes. Love and war, displacement, family secrets, media critique, betrayal, sexual violence *and* sexual healing. The competition was strong, the debate was fierce, we could almost say: Met Mes. But after a long deliberation we made our choice.

Living in words is one thing, finding the right words to describe the feeling of not belonging is another. That is exactly what this film has done so well. The film starts as a personal portrait of a young man looking for his roots, but shifts the focus from the protagonist to his family and to the deep felt trauma of multiple generations. The personal search not only gives an insight into the struggle of the protagonist's bicultural identity, but shows that his sense of not fitting in, is only the tip of the iceberg of the whole story. His journey opens a Pandora's box of questions on displacement, colonial history, family, longing and belonging. The rhythm of the film helps us immerse ourselves in, and understand the complexity of the situation. The charismatic protagonist Rashif El Kaoui is as much a storyteller as the director, Ahmet Polat. Their combined forces have led to an intimate, deeply personal, as well as a universal story of otherness.

### **Special Mention**

***Ik ben een bastaard* by Ahmet Polat**

In this moment of time there are many stories of displacement. Urgent stories that need to be told. But we also need to tell the stories that are at the root of displacement: oppression, war, betrayal. Dutch Cinema has a long tradition of films about resistance and – more recently – collaboration. The film that blew us away, adds to that tradition.

However, it is not set in the Netherlands. This year's winner of the Dutch Movies Matter Competition is a film that takes the viewer on an intense journey. A film with a driving plot, unexpected twists and amazing acting. A gripping feminist thriller. A war story, a story about resistance, collaboration *and* survival. Set in the Occupied Territories. It is a film made with immense bravery. Unapologetically in its criticism of a society dealing with oppression, from the outside and from within. It is also a strong reminder that in any type of conflict, women tend to get the short end of the stick.

**Winner Dutch Movies Matter Award**

***Huda's Salon* by Hany Abu-Assad**