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Stockholm Festival: First-time Directors Grab Spotlight



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The [Stockholm Film Festival](http://variety.com/t/stockholm-film-festival/) (<http://variety.com/t/stockholm-film-festival/>) is known for a high percentage of female directors, but also for its high number of first-time filmmakers.

This year 50 directors are debutants, from Jens Ostberg, whose “Blowfly Park” world premiered here, to July Yang with “A Girl at My Door,” Nima Javidi with “Melbourne” and Dan Gilroy with “Nightcrawler.”

Those are among the 10 or so debuts in the main competition alone.

In addition to that, the festival hosts several sidebars and initiatives to further support directors early in their careers.

The short film scholarship 1 Km Film was launched in 1990. The winner is awarded SEK 100,000 (\$13,000) from the Swedish Film Institute, and production aid from other parts.

Past 1 Km Film winners include Ella Lemhagen (1993), Jens Jonsson (1998) and Babak Najafi (1999), directors who have went on to successful feature film careers inside and outside Sweden. Last year’s 1 Km Film winner was John Skoog, whose film “Shadowland,” above, came out of the scholarship and will premiere at the festival on Nov. 12. The film is a poetic take on locations that in some way or another have been prominent in early Hollywood films, shot in and around Los Angeles.

This year’s 1 Km Film lineup features mostly fresh names but also some more established directors, such as Ninja Thyberg, who’s competing with “Hot Chicks.”

Last year, Thyberg gained a lot of attention — and an award — for “Pleasure,” which unspooled in Cannes’ Critic’s Week. Thyberg is now back with another challenging take on female stereotypes.

Another section promoting new feature filmmakers and producers (<http://variety411.com/us/los-angeles/producers/>) is STHLM Debut, launched in 2013 in cooperation with Film Stockholm/Filmbasen, Stockholm Malardalen Film Commission and with Stockholm County Council as the main financier. The project seeks to bridge the often-long gap between a promising short film career and the first feature.

So far nine feature projects have been selected, among them award-winning short filmmaker Sanna Lenken’s “Annak,” produced by Gila Bergqvist Ulfung at Bredablick Film, and the debut feature of former Roy

Andersson cinematographer Jesper Klevenas, "Vi mot varlden" (Us Against the World).

Several of the projects will be seen as work-in-progress during Stockholm Film Festival's Industry Days, Nov. 12-15, including Peter Gronlund's thriller "Honor Among Thieves," produced by Frida Bargo and Mattias Nohrborg at Swedish shingle B-Reel, and supported by SFI with almost \$1 million.

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