

Jury Decisions - Awards, Commendations, and Justifications

Good evening, everyone, on behalf of the jury of this year's 19th FIST. First of all, we must say that we have enjoyed the performances and all other programs and aspects of the festival that have been realized thanks to the immense work, effort, and professionalism of this year's organizers. Please give them a big round of applause. Bravo, everyone.

We are honored and pleased to announce this year's awards and commendations.

The winner of the award for the best overall performance, best direction, and acting, as well as the special award for stage movement or choreography, is the play "Insectum or There are Insects that Dance" from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

Now we will read the justifications for the awards:

The award for the best overall performance goes to the play "Insectum or There are Insects that Dance." This play has, through highly creative solutions, managed to create a rich world of imagination from minimal stage elements and a single performer, intertwining fiction, documentary, and the present moment of interaction with the audience. Through thoughtful creation of the text and precise dramaturgical and directorial integration of the marked stage elements and textual meanings, perfect rhythm, a keen sense of the actor for contact with the audience, marked humor and seriousness, as well as the relevance of the performance to the theme of this year's FIST - "Stand Up to Pressure," this play won the complete favor of the audience at the performance, as well as the expert jury, which thus awards the talented members of the play's team and the perfect alignment of all its elements.

The award for best direction, by unanimous decision of the jury, is awarded to the director of the play "Insectum or There are Insects that Dance," Yannis Didaskalou, for innovative directorial solutions in which all aspects of a dramatic performance (text, acting, music, scenography, and stage movement) are in perfect harmony and in service of the main idea of the play. The director uses these means fully, thus achieving a great rhythm of the play, avoiding the pitfalls of redundancy, and relying primarily on the strongest means at the director's disposal - the actor.

The award for best actor goes to Dimitros Louizidis for an exceptional stage performance. Dimitris demonstrated an outstanding stage presence, skillfully led the interaction with the audience, and showed a keen sense of measure in improvisation. He performed the play together with the audience, never losing their attention for a moment, thus utilizing what distinguishes theater from other arts - that this art is created here and now before and with the audience.

Special Award:

The special award is given by the jury to the choreographer of the play "Insectum or There are Insects that Dance." The choreographer's excellent research work completely rounded off the whole and once again confirmed how important choreography is in a play. The choreography, in its minimal gestures, series of repetitive sequences, excellent arrangement of linguistic-dance phrases, and dynamics, eliminated the possibility of watching yet another

monotonous monodrama. With thoughtful decisions, the choreographer used the laws of physics, entered into conflict with the force of gravity and acceleration, so that everything looked like a top scene of great dance performances of contemporary circus and physical theater. The actor excellently overcame all obstacles and demonstrated excellent performance technique, once again showing how important stage movement and physical awareness of the actor are as segments of theater and acting performance.

We commend the play "Warsaw in Flames" for its exceptionally rich and substantive documentary dramatic text, important research through interviews with drag queens, which abounds in anthropological insights about drag, the LGBT community in Poland, as well as Polish society, Polish culture, the church, and the urban life of young people.

The jury also commends the harmonious stage performance of the actors in the play "ASDFDFGGGGG" from the Academy of Arts and Culture in Osijek.

Once again, congratulations to all participants and a big bravo to the entire festival team that has raised FIST to a new level in every respect this year.