

Official premiere of the feature documentary *Through My Eyes* by the writer and director Igor Vrtačnik

As part of the Our Films at Home project, which the Slovenian Film Centre, in cooperation with Cankarjev dom, has been organising since autumn 2017, on Friday, 30 September at 7.30 p.m., in the Kosovel Hall of Cankarjev dom, in the presence of the film crew, the premiere of the fiction-documentary *Through My Eyes* by the screenwriter and director Igor Vrtačnik will take place.

It is a film about an observer and Paris at the turn of the century, when it became the epicentre of contemporary art in the 1920s. A gathering place for newcomers from Eastern Europe who came to the capital of art, lived in the hope of artistic glory, and sought a place among its booms, mostly from day to day and from hand to mouth... Among them was the talented and renowned painter, Veno Pilon, who was already well established and recognised at home.

His studio and humble abode was at 75, Boulevard Montparnasse. Here he met Henry Miller, Max Ernst, Ossip Zadkine, Giorgio de Chirico, Roland Oudot and others. Two years later, when he became one of them, he wrote: "As my faith in my own work was shaken, I was no longer drawn to painting, in fact I resisted it. I took refuge in Paris to lose myself in the crowd and forget myself... That's why I avoided exhibitions."

After arriving in Paris, he almost stopped painting, but photography took him over! Pilon's breakthrough as an "artistic" photographer in Paris failed to make him one of the most famous photographers, due to his excessive modesty and lack of self-confidence, which also ended Pilon's painting career much too early. With his Montparnasse photographs of their works, his portraits of the most important artists of the École de Paris and his snapshots of the Parisian pulse, Pilon was part of this birth of photography and was at the very heart of its development. Alongside André Kertész, Henri Cartier-Bresson and Brassai, he was a pioneer of reportage photography, and later, alongside Man Ray, Christian Schad and László Moholy-Nagy, he sought his own experimental expression and his place within this new avant-garde aesthetic.

Later, although his marriage distanced him from his devotion to bohemianism and his association with avant-garde Montparnasse tables, photography became his daily bread and a source of income to support his family. Pilon never stopped taking photographs, however, until his final return to his homeland in 1968, when he continued to photograph his only recently discovered slides until almost the last day before his death!

At his first Paris exhibition at the Carrefour Gallery in 1934, Paul Éluard attached his long poem to Pilon's photograph *Masques* and wrote a respectful dedication to it: "This was my greatest tribute from that era," Pilon recalls.

Ironically, Cocteau's quote, "In Paris, everyone wants to be an actor; no one is satisfied with being a spectator/observer," is not true of Pilon! For he was just that; an observer first, a spectator of life, and then a performer and everything else! And photography was his hidden passion, his silent lover, who never left him and was with him all his life! Pilon sang a high song, both of painting and of his lover - photography.

The film stars Robert Prebil, Gaj Črnič, Vesna Kuzmić, Barbara Žefran and Ivan Peternejl. As the director says: "It was something of a challenge to find actors for the reconstructed scenes featuring Pilon's famous portrayals: André Lothe, Emmanuela Mané Katz, Walterj Bianchi, Špelce Čopič, Pavla Lutman. Since we know them from Pilon's portraits, the most similar physiognomy was a necessity, and the reason for a number of debutants: Stanislav Glažar, Alenka Babič, Petr Mikša, Ana Lasič."

The film crew consists of: assistants Irene Mislej, Tina Ponebšek, Lara Štrumej, Kaja Rosa, Peter Mikša, assistant for painting and reproduction of paintings V. Pilon Miha Pirnat, directors of photography Uroš Škorič-Škoro and Lea Aymard, lighting master Boris Orehek, set designer Urška Dolinar, assistant set designer Anže Kreč, prop designer Erika Bizilj, art director Igor Vrtačnik, costume designer Mateja Lupše Svete, mask designer Polona Slabe, editors Matjaž Jankovič and Igor Vrtačnik, animation and

retouching of archive photographs Blaž Zajc, sound design masters Simon Ržen and Peter Ošljaj, music composers Marko Brdnik and Uroš Rakovec.

Marko Brdnik - accordion, Uroš Rakovec - guitar, mandola, mandolin, Antonio Cagnazzo - piano.

The director of the film is Robert Končar, the narrators are Alojz Svete, Miha Pirnat, Robert Prebil, Inti Šraj, Ana Lasič and Barbara Babič.

The film was produced under the auspices of the Film Horizont Institute, Igor Vrtačnik, co-produced by RTV Slovenia and co-financed by the Slovenian Film Centre.

The film will be screened again at Cankarjev dom, Kosovel Hall, on Monday, 10 October at 7.30 pm. At the end of October, it will be released in regular cinemas.

The trailer for the film can be found [here](#).