

Press Release



The Berlinale Mourns the Loss of George Sluizer

On September 20, 2014, Dutch film director, screenwriter and producer George Sluizer passed away at the age of 82 after a long illness.

Over the years, five of his films were presented at the Berlinale. His debut *De lage landen (Hold Back the Sea)* was presented in the Short Film competition in 1961 and won a Silver Bear “as special prize for a short film of extraordinary quality”.

In the following years George Sluizer made documentaries. In 1972 his first long feature film *Joao en het mes (Joao and the Knife)* was screened in the *Competition* of the Berlin International Film Festival. He returned to the *Competition* in 1992 with *Utz*, a film adaptation of Bruce Chatwin’s novel. Armin Mueller-Stahl, who played the lead, won the Silver Bear for Best Actor. In 1998 George Sluizer again took part in the Berlinale *Competition*, with *The Commissioner*.

In 2013 he presented the existentialist latter-day Western *Dark Blood* out of competition. Briefly before concluding the shooting in 1993, the leading actor, River Phoenix, died unexpectedly. The footage had to be handed over to the insurers and the film could not be completed. Years later Sluizer was able to recover the footage and began working on the final version of *Dark Blood*.

“We mourn the loss of a great filmmaker, who has been equally active in fiction and documentary film. With his passion for filmmaking and exceptional versatility, George Sluizer will live on in our memories forever,” says Berlinale Director Dieter Kosslick.

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