



Insect by Jan Švankmajer

47st International Film Festival Rotterdam

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International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) announces the first titles in [Signatures](#), the festival's section for new work by established film auteurs and festival veterans. Among them is the world premiere of *Insect* by [Jan Švankmajer](#), the influential Czech master of stop-motion animations whose surrealist films have frequently screened at IFFR. The 83-year-old filmmaker and artist has stated that *Insect* will be his last feature film.

Insect has both animated and acted segments and is based on the satirical misanthropic play *Pictures from the Insects' Life* written by the Brothers Čapek in 1921. In the film, amateur actors rehearse for the play's second act, but as they slowly become one with the characters they start to experience frightening transformations. Švankmajer spent seven years on the preparation for this film, which was partly paid for through crowdfunding and which was selected for IFFR's CineMart in 2011.

Insect was Švankmajer's third successful CineMart submission, and he has a long connection with the festival. IFFR has screened most of his short and feature films, and collaborated with the Chabot Museum in 2004 to organise a special exhibition of Jan and Eva Švankmajer's artwork. The festival also presented an exhibition with artwork related to his film [Surviving Life](#) in collaboration with the Czech Centre in Rotterdam in 2010. Festival Director Bero Beyer: "We're honoured that IFFR will screen the world premiere of Švankmajer's latest feature film, which stands as a remarkable crown on the work of such an influential auteur and artist. It also beautifully underscores the longstanding tie between the filmmaker and IFFR. We are happy to pay special homage to Jan Švankmajer in recognition of his many wonderful contributions to the festival and the world of cinema."



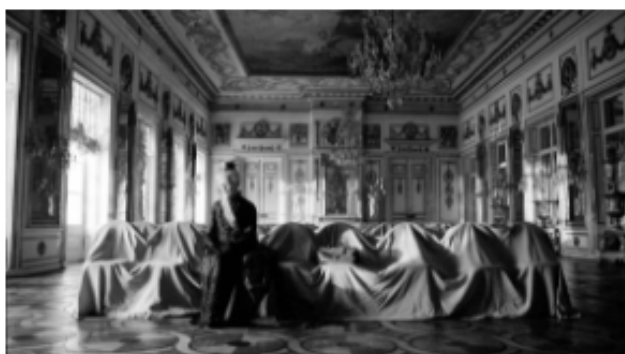
Clockwise: Asino, Lek and the Dogs, L'amant d'un jour/Lover for a Day, Readers

IFFR 2018 will be screening more films by the experienced hands of distinctive Signatures maestros. Among them is the world premiere of **Asino** by internationally renowned Russian theatre director Anatoly Vasiliev, a film deeply rooted in ancient mythological tales in which donkeys are observed as human beings. Another selection is the international premiere of famed experimental artist

[Andrew Kötting](#)'s **Lek and the Dogs**, based on the true story of Ivan Mishukov, who walked out of his Moscow apartment and spent two years living with dogs in the city streets. The international premiere of **The Bottomless Bag** by Rustam Khamdamov, a legendary voice in Russian cinema, was previously announced – the film is inspired by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's famous story-within-a-story In a Grove.

[Wang Bing](#)'s **Mrs. Fang** is a story about saying goodbye to a woman who suffers from Alzheimer's disease but understands that her life is coming to an end. **Readers** is a new film by American experimental filmmaker [James Benning](#), who is known for using rigorous structures in his work. **Readers** is no exception: it is composed of just four shots to create portraits of four people reading quietly to themselves, while simultaneously serving as a mirror for the viewers, who sit in parallel stillness. **La telenovela errante/The Wandering Soap Opera** by [Valeria Sarmiento](#) and the late [Raúl Ruiz](#) plays with the idea that the abundance of soap operas is slowly infecting Chilean reality. And **L'amant d'un jour/Lover for a Day** by [Philippe Garrel](#) completes his trilogy of black-and-white films on the vagaries of love, the first two of which also screened at IFFR.

More titles for the Signatures section of IFFR 2018 will be announced at the beginning of January.



The Bottomless Bag (left), Mrs. Fang (right)

