

REVIEW

A Caravan of One's Own

Lauri Lagle's *Portugal* (2018)

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It was a turbulent year for the political elite in Slovakia, the country that formed EEFB's regional focus in 2018. The murder of investigative journalist Jan Kuciak led to a series of high-scale resignations, overshadowing the centenary of Czechoslovakia's independence. Still, experience in neighboring Czech Republic, which also celebrated the centenary, has shown that in Central and Eastern Europe as elsewhere, high-ranking businessmen and well-established personalities can run on the anti-establishment platform so long as they cater to calls for a new way of dealing with things, suggesting that potential changes could merely be cosmetic. This is also true of Ukraine, to which EEFB's attention will turn next year, and where government after government has been instated with the promise of putting an end to corruption. (Ukraine's politicians can at least point to Russian aggression to divert the public's attention, which is more difficult in Slovakia, where playing the anti-refugee card has proven helpful, albeit not enough.) As always, EEFB will pay special attention to the way that cinema reflects the socio-political realities of our region of interest in 2019, which is especially sensible when dealing with cinematic output that is as politicized as that of Ukraine. Our coverage of Slovak cinematic output this year, the thrust of which was already anticipated with a review of Tereza Nvotová's revealingly titled [The Lust for Power](#) in November 2017, has highlighted problems of public health, social inequality, the rise of right-wing populism, high-scale corruption, and falsified history – buzzwords that may keep reappearing in the year(s) to come.

Our coverage of Slovak cinema can be accessed [here](#). This month, Zoe Aiano completes her coverage of the [Tallin Black Nights festival](#) with reviews of Rolands Kalniņš' [Four White Shirts](#), a 1967 gem that was recently restored, Kristīne Briede and Audrius Stonys' [portrait of Baltic Poetic Documentary](#) and, lastly, of Lauri Lagle's [Portugal](#). In November, we were also in [Thessaloniki](#), where we spoke to Montenegrin director [Ivan Salatić](#). We are publishing the interview along with a review of his debut feature [You Have the Night](#) about a young woman and her hometown.

We wish all our friends and readers a happy new year!
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Editors