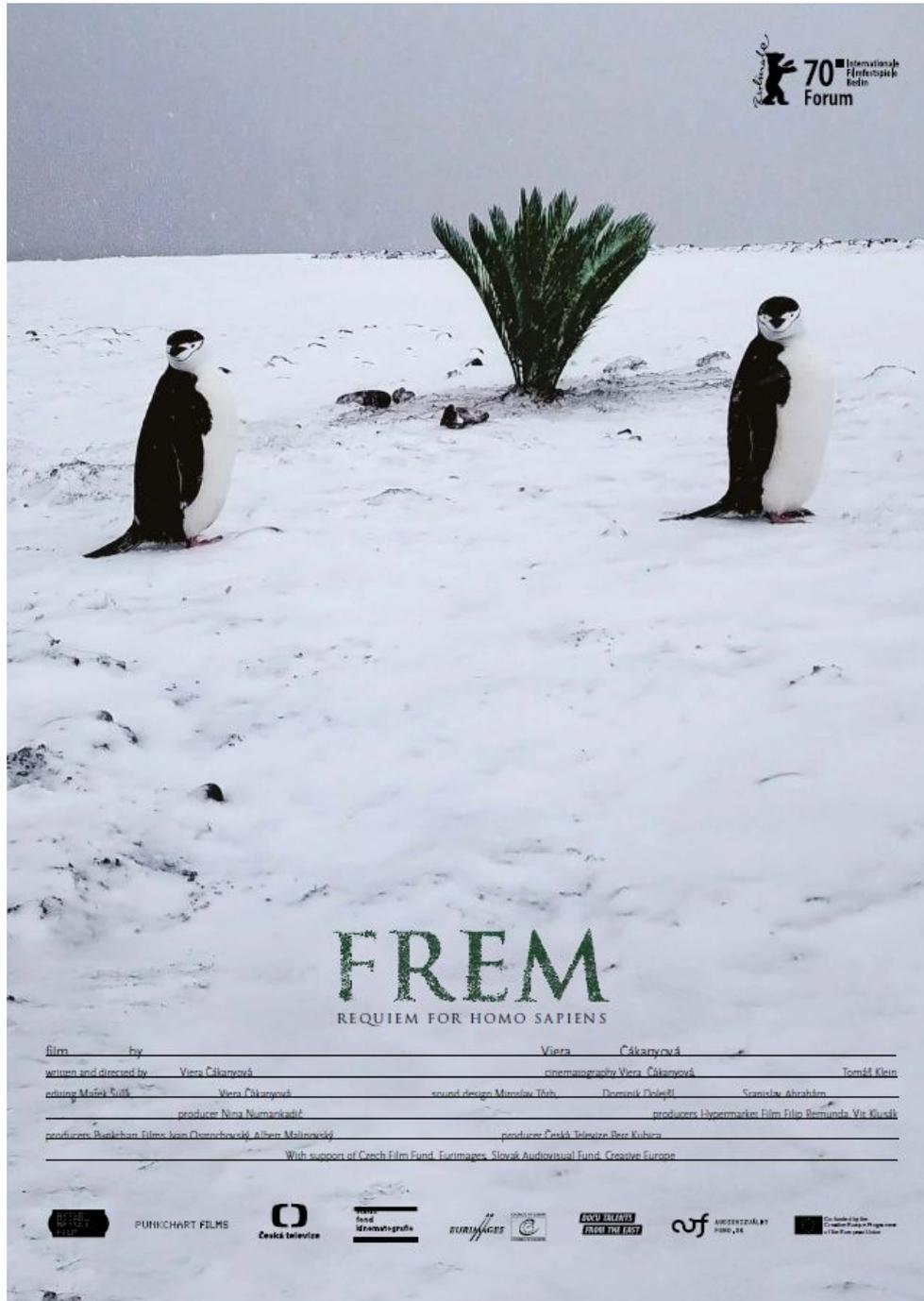


Hypermarket Film presents:



A documentary by Viera Čákanyová
Czech Republic / Slovakia, 2019, 73'

PRESS NOTES

Berlinale 2020
Forum

international premiere

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SCREENING DATES BERLINALE

Section: Forum

Friday	21 February 2020	19:30	Arsenal Cinema 1 (int. premiere)
Friday	21 February 2020	22:00	CinemaxX 6 (P&I)
Saturday	22 February 2020	11:30	Delphi Filmpalast
Tuesday	25 February 2020	22:00	Zoo Palast 2
Saturday	29 February 2020	11:00	Zoo Palast 2



CONTACTS

PR agency Berlinale

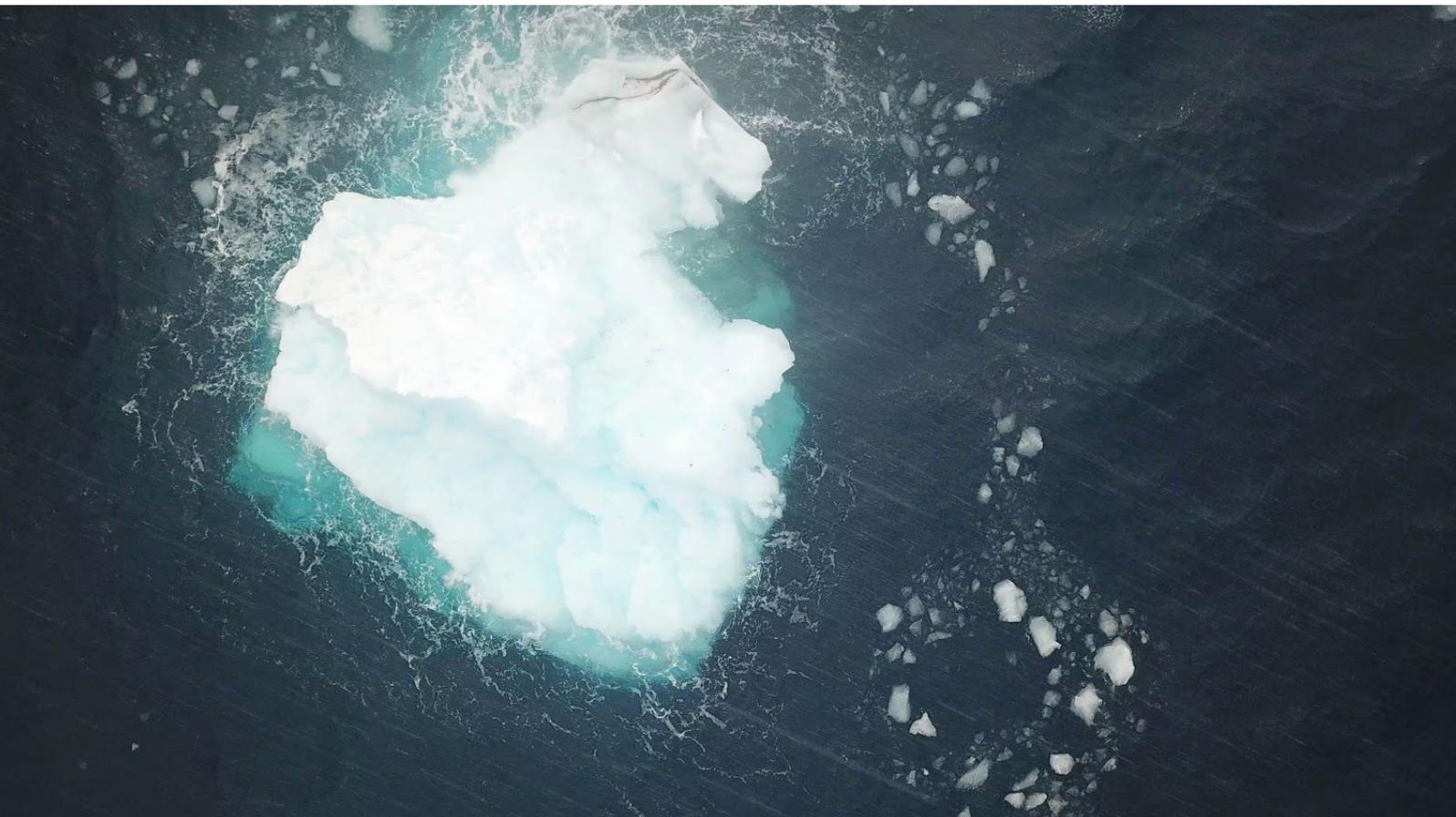
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SHORT SYNOPSIS

As the climate crisis becomes increasingly urgent beyond the point of no return, and artificial intelligence expands exponentially, FREM presents a striking and sometimes uncomfortable reaction to the current wave of post-humanist, anthropocentric thinking.

A unique and wildly experimental documentary, Viera Čákanyová's film provides a haunting and futurist portrayal of one of the most beautiful yet extreme landscapes on earth: King George Island off the coast of Antarctica.

LONG SYNOPSIS

The human identity has reached a point of crisis. As artificial intelligence expands exponentially, and the climate crisis becomes increasingly urgent beyond the point of no return, FREM is a unique and wildly experimental documentary that attempts to reflect this feeling, presenting a view of nature that exists beyond typical human perceptions of reality.

The result of an extreme, isolated filming schedule on King George Island off the coast of Antarctica, FREM surveys this troubled yet breathtaking landscape with an unusual and wholly unsentimental approach. The investigative drone camera creeps across the icy plains with an unusual sense of confusion and seemingly even caution. Diverse fragments of music and dialogue are interrupted by rushes and glitches, which, together with the esoteric camera work, produces a disturbing, philosophical reflection on the limits of anthropocentric thinking.

The prospect of imagining how a new, technological entity may perceive the world around us was a driving factor for the three-person team, but persisted as a technological challenge. However, in order to imagine our future in which homo sapiens have lost their power and betrayed their influence, we must endeavour to see things differently. In Antarctica, humans are not the dominant player in nature, despite their appalling impact on the environment. It is instead artificial intelligence that has become the eyewitness to Antarctica's natural ecosystem, where even more radical changes will soon occur. FREM puts you directly in that perspective.

A singular and radical mix of photography, experimental sound design and a foreboding and necessary narrative, Viera Čákanyová's film offers no easy answers or soothing angles on the approaching environmental disaster. Instead, FREM presents a striking and sometimes uncomfortable reaction to the current wave of post-humanist thinking, a haunting and futurist portrayal of one of the most beautiful yet extreme landscapes on earth.

CREDITS

DIRECTOR	Viera Čákanyová
CAST	Martin Kovačík
PRODUCER	Nina Numankadić, Hypermarket Film
CO-PRODUCER	Ivan Ostrochovsky, Punkchart Films
DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY	Tomáš Klein Viera Čákanyová
EDITING	Marek Šulík Viera Čákanyová
SOUND	Dominik Dolejší Miroslav Tóth Stanislav Abrahám



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Humans, as a biological species, are reaching the outermost boundaries of their “natural options”, and are forced to confront their own biophysical limitations. We are in a situation when we can no longer keep up with absorbing our own outputs, fully comprehend the relationships between various types of data, or navigate through the increasingly complex world that we are creating for ourselves. As a result, we are placing more and more confidence in machines, and developing increasingly sophisticated artificial neuron networks that are able to systemise and analyse data for us. These “artificial brains” have a certain autonomy, using their own thought patterns and their own heuristics, and are capable of improving themselves with the help of specific evolutionary paths that we are ceasing to understand.

The terminology of cybernetics uses the expression “technological singularity”, which identifies the hypothetical moment when artificial intelligence is able to improve itself at a tempo that is so fast that we will no longer be able to understand it. This is the moment at which human intelligence will cease to dominate the world, the moment at which the thought processes imprisoned in the machinery we have created will become unpredictable for us.

The impetus for shooting the film *FREM* was the idea of this particular state – this hypothetical moment. I wanted to make a film in which the main character is not a human – a non-anthropocentric film. I wanted to “visualise” the mental processes of an artificial brain using the limited resources that the film medium offers: image and sound. The way in which artificial intelligence thinks is something foreign to us. The greatest challenge of this film was to communicate this special, in a certain way disquieting experience, and to create a non-human character / entity in such a way that viewers could identify with it, to establish a link with its perspective.

Artificial intelligence is becoming the observer of / eyewitness to Antarctica's disappearing natural ecosystem, a fragile region where very soon changes of the most extreme form will occur. At the same time, Antarctica is a reminder of the world the way it was millions of years ago when *Homo sapiens* did not yet exist. The choice of this film location simulates the conditions of something of a dystopian post-human world, where humankind is not the dominant player in nature. From the perspective of a different, unbiased observer, humans are at the same level as any other kind of physical matter, whether organic or inorganic – an equal part of the ecosystem. Personally, I think this change in perspective is of key importance, particularly in relation to the subject of climate change.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



Viera Čákanyová

Viera Čákanyová (1980) was born in Bratislava, Slovakia. She graduated from the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava in screenwriting and received a BA from the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague in documentary film. Her school films repeatedly won at the Famufest School Film Festival. Piranha (2007) – Best Film of Famufest 2007, Alda (2009) – Award for Best Director and Editor. Her films were also presented at several international festivals and won a number of awards. Under Underground(2006) – Honorary Diploma and Students Jury Award of the 14th International Film Festival Etiuda & Anima 2007, Krakow, Poland; 100 Days(2009) – The Grand Prix of Early Melons Film Festival 2010, Bratislava, Slovakia; The Grand Prix (Golden Dinosaur) of the 17th International Film Festival Etiuda & Anima 2010, Krakow, Poland; Best Camera, national competition of the 2nd Ostrava Kamera Oko International Cinematographers' Film Festival 2010, Ostrava, Czech Republic; Alda(2009) – Regard Neuf (Prize of the canton Vaud) for a first or second film by a filmmaker of

the 16th Visions du Réel International Film Festival 2010, Nyon, Switzerland; The Golden Key Award for the best documentary work of a director under the age of 35 of the 27th Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival 2010, Kassel, Germany. Besides working on her own films, she also works as script editor and editor of independent film projects and makes documentary films for non-profit organizations and television. FREM is her first feature film.

Filmography:

- 2019 FREM
- 2014 Rupicapra (part of the project Slovakia 2.0)
- 2014 Flying Horse (part of the project Gottland)

Students films

- 2011 Update
- 2011 Olda
- 2009 Alda
- 2009 100 Days
- 2007 Worms
- 2007 Piranha
- 2006 Under Underground