

## Black Nights Stars: Call for submissions!

**Black Nights Stars** is a program launched by the Black Nights Film Festival in 2017 designed to help young actors from the Baltic Sea region to promote themselves outside their home territories, get connected with international film professionals, and give them some practical skills needed in their future international career. **In 2019, it takes place from November 25 to 27 during Industry@Tallinn & Baltic Event**, the annual film industry program of the festival.

It is a 3 day lab and showcase program for 5 selected actors /actresses between 18-25 years, fluent in English, who are not known at the international level yet, but, having performed in the main or supporting role in one or two films or/and TV / drama series in their respective countries in 2018 or 2019, who wish to enter the international scene.

All Baltic Sea Region countries are welcome to propose their most suitable candidates. **The submission deadline is August 10, 2019.** An international jury composed of actors, directors, casting agents and other industry professionals will make a selection of 5 of the most promising young talents. If the actor's / actresses film is selected to the Black Nights Film Festival, it will be considered as an advantage

The program will consist of masterclasses, meetings, presentations and targeted networking events. The activity should give practical advice for young talents on how to make and present their portfolios and showreels, how to present themselves to international agents and casting directors, and how to present / promote themselves during networking events. Through the workshops with well-known experienced industry professionals, the actors will also diversify their acting skills.

**The 2018 actors included:** Emma Marrott (Denmark), Liis Lass and Pääru Oja (Estonia), Agnese Cirule (Latvia), Satu Tuuli Karhu (Finland); and Ester Kuntu (Estonia), the winner of Bruno O'YA Best Actor Prize of the Black Nights Film Festival.

**Mentors:** Jeremy Zimmermann (casting director, Jeremy Zimmermann Casting, UK), Anastasia Smekalova (freelance casting director Russia/Germany), Georg Georgi (agent, Das Imperium Talent Agency, Germany), Raakel Huikuri (agent, Lisa Richards Nordic, Finland), Robin Hudson and Julie Gordon (agents, Olivia Bell Management, UK), Joseph White (producer, Marvel Television, SingularDTV, USA) and Panos Karkanevatos, director producer (Vergi Films, Greece).

The two editions of the Black Nights Stars have attracted interest towards young actors by international agents representing talent. As a result, several participants have found representation abroad (for example, Pääru Oja, Rea Lest, Gelmine Glemzaite, Lena Morris, Elina Vaske, Jaanika Arum, with *Lisa Richards Nordic* and *Das Talent Imperium*).



*From left to right: Satu Tuuli Karhu, Ester Kuntu, Liis Lass, Pääru Oja, Agnese Cirule, Emma Marrott*

**In 2019**, we are planning, in addition to the above-mentioned events, to present the actors at a joint event with *Black Catwalk*, to which both international film industry guests and local theatre and film stars will be invited. The experience gathered at the two previous editions has shown us an opportunity to attract attention from a wider audience and press in the actors' programme.

Around 1200 guests arrive in Tallinn for the festival and film industry programme in November, among them ca 150 journalists and photographers, including the representatives of the leading film industry publications *Variety*, *The Hollywood Reporter* (both their webpages attracting 28 million visits every month) and *Screen International* (793 000 visits).

**Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival (PÖFF) is the biggest annual culture and entertainment event in Estonia. Key facts from 2018:**

- 80 289 admissions
- 858 screenings
- 268 features from 80 countries
- 53 world and international premieres
- 1161 accredited guests
- press coverage in 78 different countries across the world
- with the media reach of 1,5 billion people

**Industry @ Tallinn & Baltic Event** is a five day summit and trade fair for the film and audiovisual industry professionals held annually in November during the Black Nights Film Festival.

The mission of I@T&BE is to serve as a gateway for global audiovisual industries from and to the region as well as to establish ties and collaboration points with the ICT, gaming, mobile, technology and venture capital sectors. I@T&BE is focusing on connecting the Baltic and Scandinavian film, entertainment, tech & VC professionals with the US, Asia, Europe, Russia and CIS countries.

The annual event attracts some 500+ leaders and executives from nearly 50 countries (in 2018, 545 industry professionals from 49 countries) with the majority of delegates from the Baltics, Scandinavia, and Western Europe. In the past years, I@T&BE has also evolved into a key meeting point for Asian and American industry, linking them with top regional players.

The events are also visited by the Black Nights Film Festival international guests and local professionals (film, music, acting, art department, design, etc), so the number of guests taking part in different events is more than 800.