



*As time passes by, it is hard for us to notice the changes in us and people around. The starting point is often missing. But if we turn back, we are truly impressed by the fact that today we are so not like those who we were yesterday, let alone older days. Today we can discuss problems of queer people in Ukrainian society in the press, on TV, in private conversations and international conferences. There are still a lot of those problems and there will hardly be fewer in the nearest future. But today we can at least talk and debate them almost freely. And only several years ago everything was different...*

*In February 2001, Molodist festival director Andriy Khalpakhchi and I took part in the annual meeting of gay and lesbian film festivals organizers in the framework of Berlinale. Chairman of the Teddy Award Foundation Christian Peters complained that despite a great number of queer festivals Teddy still hadn't got any brothers or sisters. That is, no other big cinema festival supported their idea to award the best gay and lesbian film among works participating in all festival programs. Andriy then promised in public that we would do it in Molodist and earned hearty applause.*

*No sooner said than done. He didn't stop on receiving an ovation in Berlin and already in autumn of the same year in the framework of 31st Molodist a program named "Loving Differently" appeared, and I was in charge of it. We decided to name the prize for the best film "Sunny Bunny".*

*Now it is already an ancient business. And at the time we had to listen to a lot of criticisms and accusations of all deadly sins. We experienced opposition, mockery and downright offenses. But Sunny Bunny disarmed opponents with his cute smile and conquered more and more supporters. And when today we note that Ukrainian society has become more tolerant to those who are destined to love differently, let us not forget to say thank you to Sunny Bunny - he is also involved. And his involvement has been really important.*

**Anatoliy Yerema**

**programmer of Sunny Bunny 2001-2005**



From 2001 to 2005 Sunny Bunny existed as parallel competition which gathered international jury, chose among all Molodist films the one most significant for the LGBT community and awarded it on a special night with a symbolic prize - toy bunny with a little looking glass attached.

In 2006 queer films were presented as a separate program, organized in cooperation with Paris Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

In 2007 to celebrate the 20 years of the Teddy Award at Berlinale a selection of this prize winners from all years of its existence was shown, presented by director of Teddy Foundation Mabel Aschenneller.

In 2008 within focus on post-Soviet gay and lesbian cinema we presented the program of Side-by-Side, the first Russian queer film festival, which that year was opposed by authorities back in Saint Petersburg. Same year Australian Bartholomew Sammut (Xposed festival) presented a selection of best queer shorts from Down Under.

In 2009 Sunny Bunny included both competition and non-competition programs. To commemorate the gay icon of several generations Quentin Crisp we have shown one the most famous autobiographies brought to screen "The Naked Civil Servant" (1975), as well as a certain sequel thereto "Englishman in New York" (2009).

In 2010, rich in mainstream queer cinema, Sunny Bunny was where such films had their Ukrainian premieres, as "A Single Man" with Colin Firth, "I Love You, Phillip Morris" with Jim Carrey and Ewan McGregor, new features by Julio Medem "Room In Rome", Olivier Ducastel and Jacques Martineau "L'Arbre et la Forêt", and where Bruce LaBruce presented his latest "L.A. Zombie".