



PROFILE: ATOM EGOYAN

The film and theatre director, screenwriter and producer of Armenian origin grew up and still lives in Canada. He has made numerous short films and his live-action feature debut *Next of Kin* world-premiered at the Mannheim-Heidelberg IFF, where it also won the main prize. His second feature *Family Viewing* won the Ecumenical Jury Award at the Locarno festival. The big breakthrough in his career came with the already iconic *Exotica* which won, among numerous other awards, a FIPRESCI at Cannes IFF and the Best Canadian Feature Film at the Toronto IFF. **Atom Egoyan** was even more successful with the film adaptation of *The Sweet Hereafter*, which again won awards at Cannes IFF and Toronto IFF and was nominated for two Oscars. He has also drawn inspiration from his parents' homeland. Armenia is the setting of his auteur film *Calendar*, and also of the award-winning war drama *Ararat*, which is the first film ever to focus on the Armenian genocide in 1915 and is based on the real life of painter **Arshile Gorky**. By then, Egoyan was already established as one of the most influential contemporary

filmmakers and was teaching at film schools and universities. Another milestone in his career came with *Chloe*, an erotic thriller that was one of the highest-grossing films in the USA in the year of its launch. In his work, Atom Egoyan examines the issues of estrangement and isolation. His protagonists are unable to communicate on a basic interpersonal level and their interactions are conveyed through technology, bureaucracy, or power structures. The traditional linear narrative is subdued and the individual events unfold seemingly out of their logical order. The key information is intentionally suppressed, evoking an unsettling atmosphere so typical for Egoyan's films.

Prague IFF – Febiofest presents three pivotal films from Egoyan's oeuvre in his profile: *Exotica* (1994), *The Sweet Hereafter* (1997), and *Guest of Honour* (2019).