



Festival International
de Films de Fribourg

31^e 31.03 > 08.04 2017

Press release
15 March 2017
For immediate release

FIFF unveils its Programme

Two weeks before the kick-off (31 March - 8 April), the Fribourg International Film Festival has finally unveiled the entirety of its programme and all its guests. There will be a total of 140 films from 45 countries present, including 10 World Premieres and 70 Swiss, European and International Premieres. A number of guests and filmmakers will be in Fribourg to promote their work and partake in the festivities and talks that the FIFF offers. A selection of some of the best films from the past year, the International Competition: Feature Films, will see 12 films compete for the Grand Prix, worth CHF 30,000. Divided into three sections, the International Competition: Short Films will present the newest future talent. The 31st Festival will open its curtains on Friday, 31 March in the presence of Marco Solari, the President of the Locarno Festival and a great friend of the FIFF. The ceremony will be followed by the Swiss Premiere of Otto Bell's much anticipated documentary *The Eagle Huntress* with the film's protagonist in attendance.

The 31st Festival, which is geared around a meditation on the history of cinema, will be enriched with cartes blanches and hommages. Freddy Buache, the illustrious founder of the Cinémathèque Suisse, and Douglas Kennedy, the successful American writer and passionate cinephile, will share their favourite films and hold Masterclasses. The economics journalist Myret Zaki, who is well-known in Switzerland, will take us on a journey through the cinema of a singing and dancing Egypt. The main theme of FIFF 2017, ghosts, will give an overview of the role of spectres across more than 20 different cultures. In its capacity as a rich source of inspiration for filmmakers around the world, the FIFF will offer an exclusive presentation of more than 20 films from Nepal. The section will be wonderfully represented by several Nepalese filmmakers at a Round table discussion.

FIFF's Feature and Short Film International Competitions: talent incubators

This year, in the **International Competition: Feature Films**, 12 films from 12 countries will compete for the Grand Prix worth CHF 30,000. The FIFF is very happy to welcome back three directors who first made their debuts in the **International Competition: Short Films**. Bradley Liew (***Singing in Graveyards***, Malaysia, Philippines), Dechen Roder (***Honeygiver Among the Dogs***, Bhutan) and Soudade Kaadan (***Obscure***, Syria, Lebanon) will all present their First Feature Films. Alongside them will be several debut films displaying raw talents to watch, including the Mexican Diego Roos (***The Night Guard***), Amit Madheshiya & Shirley Abraham (***The Cinema Travellers***, India) and Darío Mascambroni (***January***, Argentina). The Festival wanted to continue the 30th edition's focus on female directors and this year there are no less than five female directors in competition. The first film to be directed by a woman in Laos, ***Dearest Sister*** by Mattie Do, fulfils the remit of the **Genre Cinema: Ghost Stories** section, as does ***Kati Kati*** (Mbithi Masya, Kenya, Germany) and ***The Truth Beneath*** by the South Korean Lee Kyoung-mi, who explores absence and grief. The flagship nation of the 2017 Festival, Nepal, is also competing with ***White Sun*** by Deepak Rauniyar, which won an award at the Mostra di Venezia. ***The Student*** by Kirill Serebrennikov and Boo Junfeng's ***Apprentice***, which were also honoured at festivals, including Cannes in 2016, complete the line-up.

With 19 films from 15 countries, the **International Competition: Short Films** is this year placing particular emphasis on diversity in film genres. Centred around three programmes, the competition presents a new way of looking at the map of current production and offers underlying themes so that members of the public can steer themselves to the theme of their choice. Filmmakers from previous years are also returning, including Karim Rahbani, who will present his latest film ***Cargo*** (produced by



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Julie Gayet and Nadia Turincev) for its World Premiere, as well as Valeria Sochyvets (**Blood**, Ukraine) and Alonso Ruizpalacios (**Green**, Mexico).

The FIFF has invited all the directors from the Feature and Short Film competitions to come to Fribourg. Most of them will be present.

International Competition Jury: Feature Films

Ludovic Bernard, director and first assistant director (France)

Yaelle Kayam, director and screenwriter (Israel)

Kang Soo-young, Director of the Busan International Film Festival, BIFF (South Korea)

Subarna Thapa, actor and director (Nepal)

International Competition Jury: Short Films

Bianca Balbuena, producer (Philippines)

Jan Gassmann, director (Switzerland)

Georges Schwizgebel, director (Switzerland)

Genre Cinema: international films haunted by visitors from beyond the grave and ghosts

From classic incarnations (**The Ghost and Mrs. Muir**, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, 1947 | **The Innocents**, Jack Clayton, 1961) to the most disturbing demons (**Seclusion**, Erik Matti, 2016), 18 Features and one Short Film will explore the representation of ghosts in 20 different cultures. Exploring wandering spirits as they cross paths above Mumbai, the surprising **Bumbai Bird**, by the Swiss-Indian **Kamal Musale**, will be screened as a World Premiere. Musician **Malcolm Braff** will provide a live piano accompaniment for the screening of the film for which he composed the soundtrack. A trip around the world in the company of little ghosts will feature in the now traditional **FIFFamily** Sunday screenings. For thrill-seekers, the **Midnight Screenings** will offer more spine-tingling entertainment with the film **Sadako v Kayako** (Kôji Shiraishi, 2016), which brings together the most famous ghosts in Japanese cinema.

Hommage à Freddy Buache and Decryption, A cinematic cabinet of curiosities: delve into the mysteries of cinema

The FIFF couldn't honour cinema without also honouring **Freddy Buache**, who has done so much to promote cinema as an art form, support cultural diversity and introduce audiences to filmmakers from the East and beyond. The founder of the **National Film Archive** of Switzerland has selected some of his favourite films for the FIFF, which includes the illustrious Michelangelo Antonioni (**The Red Desert**, 1964), Ingmar Bergman (**Cries and Whispers**, 1972), Fritz Lang (**M**, 1931), Jean Vigo (**L'Atalante**, 1931) and John Huston (**The Dead**, 1987). Freddy Buache will explain his choices in a Masterclass open to the public. The journey will continue with the Decryption section, which will bring together 12 Features and three Short Films, including one fictional film. Homages, farces, insights and exposés will reveal all about the world of film, from creation to projection, to the historic turning point of the disappearance of celluloid.

From America to Egypt via cartes blanches from Douglas Kennedy and Myret Zaki: cinema as a symptom of a society

As a passionate cinephile, successful American writer **Douglas Kennedy** will present six classics from Hollywood in the 50s and 60s which, in his own words, portray "mid-century America at its darkest". With **The Big Heat**, (Fritz Lang, 1953), **Seconds** (John Frankenheimer, 1966), and **Sweet Smell of Success** (Alexander Mackendrick, 1957), Douglas Kennedy will use his Masterclass and these films to examine the political landscape of the contemporary United States, where citizens' consciences are currently being shaken to their very core.



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For the Diaspora section, **Myret Zaki** has provided the FIFF with six films from her country that lift her spirits. The Editor-in-Chief of the *Bilan* magazine has chosen popular comedies and musicals to honour Egyptian cinema and its golden age in the 50s. From the hilarious Adel Imam in ***Al-irhab wal kabab*** (*Terrorism and the Kebab*, Sherif Arafa, Egypt, 1992) to a musical romance between Samia Gamal and the musician and actor Farid Al Atrache in ***Habib al omr*** by Henri Barakat (1947), Myret Zaki will present an all-singing, all-dancing Egypt from its most glorious epoch.

In search of new filmmaking terrain: Fribourg-Kathmandu 2017

With its first-ever presentation dedicated to Nepal, the New Territory section continues to unearth new filmmaking terrain. Over 20 films, both features and shorts, will be presented in Fribourg, some by their directors. Films with striking diversity and vitality: from popular cinema (***Loot***, Nischal Basnet, 2012) to art-house films (***Highway***, Deepak Rauniyar, 2012), these works have featured in major festivals such as the Mostra di Venezia, which helped promote Deepak Rauniyar's film ***White Sun***, also selected for the International Competition. New Territory has chosen to juxtapose the representation of Nepalese peaks in Hollywood (***Everest 3D***, 2015), Korean (***The Himalayas***, 2015) and Japanese (***Everest: The Summit of the Gods***, 2015) productions. It is precisely to change perspectives that the FIFF has also created, in collaboration with E-changer and Fribourg-Solidaire, the **Foreign Visa Prize**, worth CHF 1,000 and judged by directors from the New Territory section. They will be invited to watch and reward their favorite out of the films made by students studying for the Cinema Network CH master's programme.

FIFForum: time to debate!

As well as the numerous opportunities to meet with filmmakers after screenings, the **FIFForum** brings together an entire programme supported by the **SSR SRG** (the Swiss public broadcasting association) of **Round tables** (**New Territory: Nepal | Ghosts, death, spiritualism and denial**), **Masterclasses** (**Freddy Buache and Douglas Kennedy**), and meetings over **Skype** (**James Toback**). A **Think Tank** based around the theme of ghosts on film (**Cinema, a ghost machine?**) will bring together a number of film professionals who will share their expert opinions with the public on film excerpts. All these events are free of charge.

Building tomorrow's opinions: Planète Cinéma, Switzerland's biggest schools programme

After over 20 years of screening films for young audiences, Planète Cinéma is the **biggest school programme offered by a Swiss festival, with over 10,000 students** signed up locally and in neighbouring cantons. Among other things, Planète Cinéma will delve into the theme of ghosts with a film programme suitable for school children.

Cultural liaison activities

The FIFF puts particular emphasis on **cultural mediation**. As well as screenings, discussions, liaison activities and interactions with industry professionals, organised for schools of all levels, for the past two years the FIFF has also offered preferential rates for retirement homes from the whole canton. Since last year, the FIFF has organised a screening and discussion with a sign language interpreter. The FIFF is developing new community projects where films will be presented by transgenerational pairings.

Encouraging the next generation of Swiss filmmakers

The FIFF wants to encourage future international filmmaking. It is also committed to supporting Swiss production. As part of the collaboration with the **Cinema Network CH** master's, a programme of short films on Mumbai by students from the ECAL and HEAD schools will be screened as World Premieres in the **Passeport suisse** section. As well as Premieres of various Swiss films (***Bumbai Bird***,



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Kamal Musale, **Double Sentence**, Léa Pool, **La Séance de 15h**, Pauline Jeanbourquin), the FIFF will launch the **Foreign Visa Prize**.

Partnerships and latest news

The FIFF has a budget of CHF 2.2 million. Over the past few months, it has succeeded in attracting various new members and partners, which is certainly worth celebrating. Highlights include three sponsors supporting specific sections for the first time this year: the **SSR SRG** is sponsoring all the Talks, Debates and Round tables, as well as the traditional Think Tank; **Fribourg's public transport operator TPF** will be teaming up with the canton on **Planète Cinéma** and the **Midnight Screenings** will be supported by **Wall Street English**, the first sponsor in FIFF's history to commit to a Parallel Section. The Festival is optimistic that this new style of partnership, designed to generate support for the event's primary material through its ever varied and imaginative sections, will flourish going forward. The organisers must adapt to the challenges presented by its growing popularity, despite its budget remaining fixed. To diversify its sources of funding, the FIFF committee has also decided to create a **FIFF CLUB** in the style of Locarno's Leopard Club. For CHF 5,000 or CHF 10,000, individuals can experience the FIFF as an insider with VIP perks.

Save the dates

16 March, 5 pm, Opening, **Jean Cocteau - Jean Mauboulès**, APCd Fondation, Marly
16 March, 6.15 pm, Première, CineMovie 1, Berne, **Bumbai Bird**, (World Premiere) Kamal Musale
23 March, 6.30 pm, Fri-son fait son cinéma, **Killing Ground**, (Swiss Premiere) Damien Power
30 March, 6.30 pm, Opening, **Nepal – The Red Casket**, Art Buvette
31 March, 7.30 pm, Opening film, **The Eagle Huntress**, Otto Bell (Swiss Premiere), Arena Cinemas
2 April, 10.30 am, FIFF Brunch, **Has been – Peter Schuyff** exhibition, Fri Art Kunsthalle
4 April, 6.30 pm, Opening, **VEIL & UNVEILING The veil from every angle**, BCU
8 April, 6 pm, Closing film, **The Birth of a Nation**, (Swiss Premiere) Nate Parker, Théâtre Equilibre

Accreditations

Accreditations are open until 30 March 2017 on www.fiff.ch

Ticket office

Advance booking on www.fiff.ch from Wednesday, 15 March 2017

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Please don't hesitate to contact us for any additional information, interviews or [photographs](#).

FIFF Management

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