



Sudan wins the 2020 FIFF Grand Prix

The Fribourg International Film Festival is pleased to announce the winners of its 34th edition. Despite the cancellation of its public events, FIFF was able to proceed with its three main awards thanks to the generous support of its partners and the outstanding dedication of the International Juries, who watched the films remotely and made their selections by video conference. All three winning films – from Sudan, Mexico and Iran – have a common thread: youth as an agent of change and hope. The Grand Prix goes to *You Will Die at 20* by Amjad Abu Alala, while the Special Jury Award to *Los Lobos* by Samuel Kishi Leopo, and the Best International Short Film Award to *Asho* by Jafar Najafi. The “34^½” edition will now take place at different points throughout the year. A number of the films in competition, including some of the prize winners, are now available to watch on streaming services, and FIFF plans to host special screenings at cinemas and in other festivals as soon as circumstances permit.

Grand Prix and Special Jury Award: two feature films that celebrate the hope of youth

Although confined to their respective corners of the globe, the International Feature Films Jury, comprising **Elodie Bordas** (France), **Álvaro Brechner** (Uruguay), **Guetty Felin** (Haiti/USA) and **Joel Karekezi** (Rwanda), met remotely to discuss the contenders and make their final selection. The Jury unanimously awarded the **Grand Prix of the Fribourg International Film Festival**, which comes with prize money of CHF 30,000 (CHF 20,000 from the Canton of Fribourg and CHF 10,000 from the Municipality of Fribourg), to *You Will Die at 20*, by **Amjad Abu Alala** (Sudan, France, Egypt, Norway, Germany, Qatar; Swiss premiere). The film tells the story of a young man and a devastating prophecy, both for him and his family, that he will not live to see his 20th birthday. It is a visually stunning debut by the Sudanese filmmaker Amjad Abu Alala, whose deft directorial touch is reflected in the fine performance of his mostly non-professional cast. As President of the Jury, Guetty Felin, enthusiastically notes, “We all agreed on one word: *bouleversant* [overwhelming]! *You Will Die at 20* is a beautifully crafted mystical fairy tale steeped in the reality of a place that is foreign in culture to us and yet achingly familiar in its humanity. This film is a magical homage to cinema while giving hope to the youth of a nation in dire need of hope.” The **Special Jury Award**, which comes with prize money of CHF 10,000 and is sponsored by Groupe E, goes to an understated yet powerful tribute to people living on the margins. *Los Lobos*, by **Samuel Kishi Leopo** (Mexico; Swiss premiere), tells the story of two children and their mother, who are living as undocumented immigrants in the US. Locked in a shabby room, the brothers escape the tedium by inventing stories and listening to tapes their mum has made for them. According to the President of the Jury, “This is a film that charmed and moved us for its simplicity and quiet strength. *Los Lobos* allows us to see hope through the bleakness.” And a **special mention** goes to *Lina from Lima*, by **María Paz González** (Chile, Argentina, Peru; Swiss premiere), a flamboyant musical comedy with a social message.

Best Short Film: *Asho*, the young Iranian herder and aspiring actor

The International Short Films Jury, comprising **Mélanie Croubalian** (Switzerland), **Michael Frei** (Switzerland) and **Julie Hugo** (Switzerland), chose to award the short film prize to the documentary *Asho*, by **Jafar Najafi** (Iran; Swiss premiere). As President of the Jury Mélanie Croubalian explains, “This is an optimistic, life-affirming and spirited film, which is probably what we need in these troubled times.” The winner of the 2020 **Best International Short Film Award**, which comes with prize money of CHF 7,500 and is sponsored by the Clinique Générale Ste-Anne, tells the story of a young herder and film buff whose dreams of becoming an actor take him on incredible flights of fantasy through the Iranian hills. The Jury also singled out *Da Yie*, by **Anthony Nti** (Ghana; Swiss premiere) for **special mention**. As the President of the Jury explains, “*Da Yie* is a deeply affecting, hard-hitting and violent film that leaves no-one unmoved.”

FIFF “34^½” – A home edition

Although the cinemas are closed, FIFF has found other ways to share its 2020 programme with the public. Several of the films in FIFF's Official Selection are now available on various streaming services. The winner of the Grand Prix *You Will Die at 20* is available on a pay-per-view basis from the Swiss trigon-film platform filmingo.ch. Another contender in the *International Competition – Feature Films*, *Atbai's Fight* (Kazakhstan, France), is also available as pay-per-view from cinefile.ch. From 30th March to 19th April, **Festival Scope** will screen over 10 feature and short entries in the FIFF *International Competitions*, including the winner of the Best International Short Film Award *Asho*, as well as *Lina from Lima* and *Da Yie*, both of which earned a special mention from the Jury; up to 200 free virtual tickets are available for

each film. As soon as the situation allows, FIFF will screen parts of its programme at other festivals and one-off events throughout the year and up until its **35th edition (19th – 27th March 2021)**.

FIFF 2020 – THE AWARDS

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION – FEATURE FILMS

The **International Feature Films Jury**, comprising **Elodie Bordas** (France), **Álvaro Brechner** (Uruguay), **Guetty Felin** (Haiti/USA, President of the Jury) and **Joel Karekezi** (Rwanda), awards

the **Grand Prix of the Fribourg International Film Festival**, consisting of CHF 30,000 jointly bestowed by the Canton of Fribourg (CHF 20,000) and the Municipality of Fribourg (CHF 10,000), to

***You Will Die at 20*, by Amjad Abu Alala**

Swiss Premiere | Sudan, France, Egypt, Norway, Germany, Qatar, 2019 | 105' | Fiction
Muzamil was only a newborn when a prophecy foretold his death at 20. His father is unable to live with this curse and abandons his family. Long resigned to his fate, the young man starts to question his preordained death when he meets Suleiman, a cameraman who has returned to the village of his birth. The Sudanese director won the Lion of the Future at the 2019 Mostra di Venezia. > [See/download the trailer](#)

> **VOD** As of 20th March on a pay-per-view basis on filmingo.ch



as well as the **Special Jury Award**, consisting of CHF 10,000, bestowed by Groupe E, to

***Los Lobos*, by Samuel Kishi Leopo**

Swiss Premiere | Mexico, 2019 | 94' | Fiction

A mother leaves Mexico with her two sons in the hope of a better life in the US. Locked in a shabby room, the boys escape the tedium by inventing stories, listening to tapes their mum has made and dreaming of Disneyland. Inspired by his own life, Kishi Leopo has made an understated yet powerful film that pays tribute to those who live on the margins of society. > [See/download the trailer](#)

and a **special mention** to

***Lina from Lima*, by María Paz González**

Swiss Premiere | Chile, Argentina, Peru, 2019 | 83' | Fiction

The first feature film by documentary maker María Paz González tells the story of Lina, who left her young son Junior behind in Peru ten years earlier to work as a maid for a Chilean family. As the reunion with her now teenage son nears, Lina escapes into a fantasy world where she is a musical-comedy star. > [See/download the trailer](#)

> **VOD** From 30th March to 19th April (200 free virtual ticket per film) on [Festival Scope](https://FestivalScope.ch)

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INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION – SHORT FILMS

The **International Short Films Jury**, comprising **Mélanie Croubalian** (Switzerland, President of the Jury), **Michael Frei** (Switzerland) and **Julie Hugo** (Switzerland), awards

the **Best International Short Film Award**, consisting of CHF 7,500 and bestowed by the Clinique Générale Ste-Anne, to

Asho, by Jafar Najafi

Swiss Premiere | Iran, 2019 | 30' | Documentary

Asho is a young herder, and a film buff. His dreams of becoming an actor take him on incredible flights of fantasy through the Iranian hills that lead to surprising encounters with Jackie Chan and Monica Bellucci... > [See/download the trailer](#)

> **VOD** From 30th March to 19th April (200 free virtual ticket per film) on [Festival Scope](#)



and a **special mention** to

Da Yie, by Anthony Nti

Swiss Premiere | Ghana, 2020 | 20' | Fiction

Football- and rap-loving Matilda and her secret admirer, Prince, follow a strange figure into the night, and possibly into danger. Another outstanding film by talented director Anthony Nti. > [See/download the trailer](#)

> **VOD** From 30th March to 19th April (200 free virtual ticket per film) on [Festival Scope](#)

The justifications of the Juries and the reactions of the winners will be broadcast in video on the website [fiff.ch](#) and on the social networks of the FIFF on Sunday 29th March at 6 pm.

MEDIA INFORMATION

Film links (for journalists only) | upon request, simone.jenni@fiff.ch

Awarded films: HD stills and trailers (73Mo) | swisstransfer.com/d/a0c1d42f-db2c-49e2-9f15-38736310d159

Synopsis and information | Details of the 12 films in the *International Competition – Feature Films* and of the 16 films in the *International Competition – Short Films* can be found in our [presskit, p. 7-11](#)

Biographies of the Juries | [presskit, p. 37-38](#)

Interviews | The members of the Juries as well as Thierry Jobin, FIFF Artistic Director, are at your disposal for an interview by phone or video call. Do not hesitate to contact us.

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