

FIFF takes on the apocalypse with style

The work of the Fribourg International Film Festival is never done. A mere two months since its summer 2021 edition closed to great fanfare, the Festival can already reveal the theme of the FIFF22 *Genre Cinema* section (18–27 March 2022): the post-apocalypse. As the existential challenges of our time take on a new urgency – the destruction of the planet and a fraying social fabric – doomsday films, in which the last men and women standing roam a deserted Earth, have made a comeback. The theme continues in the *Audience Choice* section, which was launched at FIFF21. For the second time, FIFF fans have the chance to vote for their top five films from a stellar selection of the greatest end-of-the-world movies in the history of cinema. Voting is now open: www.fiff.ch/vote In preparation for its brush with the apocalypse, FIFF has revamped its visual identity, courtesy of by the way studio.

The FIFF audience is once again invited to vote for the films they want to see. At FIFF21, they chose their five favourite musical movies. The choice at FIFF22 is not quite so upbeat but the quality is no less impressive. The public will have the chance to pick their top five from a list of 50 works, including *La Fin du monde* (1931) by French director Abel Gance and *The Wandering Earth* (2019) by Chinese filmmaker Frant Gwo, as well as other disaster films, science fiction dramas and screwball comedies. The five films which receive the most votes will be shown at the Festival. In addition, volunteers from the voting public will join the FIFF team and present each movie prior to their screening. The programme of the *Genre Cinema (II): Audience Choice* section, which launched in 2021, is not only curated by the largest artistic committee any film festival has ever had but it is also a necessary complement to the main *Genre Cinema (I) section*, which will be given over to the cinematic imaginings of a post-apocalyptic world.

According to FIFF artistic director Thierry Jobin, the Festival has spent several years thinking about how it could best address the pressing issue of the state of the planet, "I have to admit that the reams of documentaries produced by stars who travel by private jet or helicopter to film the last polar bears raised certain ethical questions for us. When we noticed that post-apocalyptic films were making a comeback – from *Tides* by Swiss director Tim Fehlbaum, which is currently on release, to *Finch*, the latest Tom Hanks vehicle from Apple TV and, of course, the TV series *Y: The Last Man* starring Diane Lane and distributed by Disney+ – we realised that this genre was the answer we had been looking for. As well as making us think about nature, films in this genre explore the political, cultural, economic and philosophical choices that humanity makes. This fear of the end time, documented as far back as 2000 BC, has also preoccupied filmmakers throughout the 100-year history of cinema. From fears of nuclear annihilation and the brutalisation of the natural world through to military and industrial excesses and socioeconomic shocks, few genres have captured



Soylent Green, by Richard Fleischer, 1973

the turmoils of our world with such a high degree of perspicacity." The 36th edition, which will include a special evening screening of *Soylent Green*, a masterpiece from 1973 but set in 2022, is sure to make eyes pop and stomachs churn.

To sugar the pill, we decided to treat ourselves to a spot of rejuvenation therapy. After a brilliant five-year partnership with Asphalt Design (now MiNT), FIFF felt the time had come to inject new life into its visual identity, while reflecting the audacious and committed spirit of the Festival. The winning bidder was by the way studio, a local graphic design agency, whose inspired proposal will undoubtedly speak to all sections of the FIFF audience. Director Victor Ramalho explains the thinking behind his team's concept, "In terms of the logo, it was about putting cinema front and centre of FIFF's identity. At the same time, it was important that it referenced all the other elements that are intrinsic to the Festival like the pre- and post-screening discussions and events, in other words its human (audience) side. When it came to designing the poster for the 36th edition, the apocalypse theme offered us rich pickings thanks to its vast visual universe and the way in which it challenges our behaviours and society at large. Our teams worked hand in hand to create a communication campaign that poses questions rather than offer answers: What is going on? Are we the survivors or are we the culprits?"

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- **36th Fribourg International Film Festival, from 18th to 27th March 2022**
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- Interviews: Please contact the FIFF Press Office.
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- FIFF 2022 poster and logo: available for download at [fiff.ch/en/press-2022](https://www.fiff.ch/en/press-2022)
- Download the posters of the fifty films (22 Mo) you can vote for on
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