

FIFF opens its 36th edition to a full house



Escape from Mogadishu, by Ryoo Seung-wan (South Korea, 2021) | Opening Film FIFF 2022 | Swiss Premiere

On Friday evening, the Fribourg International Film Festival (FIFF) raised the curtain on its 36th edition. Turnout for the Opening Ceremony was impressive, to say the least. This year, almost all of the 127 films on the FIFF 2022 programme will be shown with French and German subtitles. In the interests of audience safety and comfort, the Festival has expanded its network of cinemas from six to 12, and has also partnered with five restaurants and bars in the city for this year's edition. After two very challenging years, the Festival gets off to a high-octane start with the Swiss Premiere of the fast-paced political thriller *Escape from Mogadishu*. The South Korean entry at this year's Oscars will be shown daily in 4DX throughout Festival week. Speaking at the Opening Ceremony, Federal Councillor Alain Berset recalled the essential role that FIFF plays as "a window on the world". These elements to look forward to, should make up for the unfortunate news announced on Thursday evening: Pierre Richard, who tested positive for Covid-19, will not be able to be present in Fribourg to meet the FIFF audience. Full programme and tickets at fiff.ch.

After two years of coronavirus disruption, FIFF finally returns to its traditional early springtime slot (18th–27th March). But the pandemic has done more than shake up the Festival schedule; it has polarised debate and inflamed tensions, to the detriment of constructive and fruitful dialogue. FIFF is therefore delighted to be able to honour its core mission of bringing people together and nurturing communication by holding the event in person and offering the public a chance to rediscover the joy of sharing the same experience. Speaking at the Opening Ceremony, Federal Councillor **Alain Berset** noted that "FIFF is an instrument to buck the generalised trend of dumbing down. Its cinema screens are an open window on the world, letting in a gust of fresh air that blows the cobwebs away and frees our minds." **Thierry Jobin**, FIFF's Artistic Director, echoed this sentiment, "We are seemingly no longer able to reach consensus and mobilise around shared objectives, even when the facts are well-established and the scientific evidence is thoroughly documented. Indeed, those fighting the same battles, particularly against discrimination and the destruction of our planet, have difficulty talking to one another without trading insults." Bringing people together, in the spirit of inclusivity and diversity, is a central goal of FIFF. Two ways in which it seeks to achieve this end is by strengthening its collaborations and fully embracing bilingualism. As **Mathieu Fleury**, President of the FIFF Association, points out, bilingualism is a key aim of the 36th edition, "FIFF can finally enjoy a 'normal' edition. Although the last two years of upheaval have put a huge strain on its finances, FIFF has found ways to extend its reach in the city of Fribourg. It has also perfected its bilingualism and has expanded into other parts of the canton, a notable example being the town of Bulle." The canton's minister of culture **Sylvie Bonvin-Sansonens** is delighted at the impressive response to *Planète Cinéma*, FIFF's schools programme; this year, close to 11,000 children and young adults aged four to 25 are set to take part.

The Opening Ceremony was punctuated by a moving musical moment with the Ukrainian musician **Zoryana Mazko**, who lives in Switzerland. Accompanied by her bandura, a traditional musical instrument, she created a moment to gather, in tribute to the victims of the war in Ukraine.

In light of current international events, this year's Opening Film will undoubtedly resonate more deeply, although it is set in a very different geopolitical context. *Escape from Mogadishu* is based on a real-life story that happened in Somalia in the early 1990s: when civil war erupts in the country, representatives of the North and South Korean embassies put their animosity aside and work together to flee the capital. The film, which was directed by **Ryoo Seung-wan** and is the South Korean entry for the Best International Feature Film at the 2022 Oscars, will have its Swiss première at FIFF. The original version will be screened daily during the Festival in 4DX and with English subtitles. Tickets at fiff.ch/en/escape-mogadishu-4dx

The FIFF 2022 sections

- *International Competition: Feature Films*
 - *International Competition: Short Films*
 - *Opening and Closing Film*
 - *FIFF favourites out of competition*
 - *Genre Cinema (I): after the apocalypse*
 - *Genre Cinema (II): Audience Choice*
 - *Make it family time* –films for 4- to 16-year-olds
 - *Decryption: Context culture*
 - *Diaspora: Gjon's Tears, Albania and Kosovo*
 - *Hommage à: Afghan cinema*
 - *New Territory: Angola*
 - *Sur la carte de Pierre Richard*
 - *Passeport Suisse*
 - *Midnight Screenings*
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- *Planète Cinéma* – school programme, with 11'000 participants (4- to 25-year-olds)
 - *FIFForum* – meetings and talks
 - *Cutscene* – videogames

MEDIA INFORMATION

**PRESSKIT
FIFF 2022**
on fiff.ch/en/press-2022

- **Interviews:**
List of attending guests on fiff.ch/en/press-2022
Please contact the FIFF Press office for interviews.
- **HD film stills:** fiff.ch/en/press-2022
More film stills available upon request. Film screeners available upon request.
- **Photos of the Opening Ceremony:** download on fiff.ch/en/press-2022
from Saturday, 19th March early morning
- **Press accreditation:** as of now on fiff.ch/en/accreditations-fiff-2022

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