

FIFF embraces Ukraine

FIFF 2022 Award Winners



The Critics' Choice Award judges proclaimed that it "delivers an unflinching portrayal and message on an exceptional scale." The Feature Films International Jury is convinced that its "director will play a major role in international cinema in the near future." The film they are referring to is *Klondike*, written and directed by Ukrainian filmmaker Maryna Er Gorbach. This hard-hitting production swept the boards at the 36th edition of the Fribourg International Film Festival (FIFF), winning not only the Grand Prix, the Festival's most prestigious prize, but also the Critics' Choice Award as well as a special mention from the Comundo Youth Jury. Clearly, the winning film resonates more deeply in light of current events. At the same time, *Klondike's* impressive performance is a fitting end to a highly charged edition that celebrated (post)apocalyptic films, showcased filmmaking from Afghanistan, Angola, Albania, Kosovo, and dared to tackle the thorny issue of *Context culture*. Thanks to these bold choices coupled with new events and partnerships across the city of Fribourg, attendance is back to pre-pandemic levels; by the time FIFF 2022 closes this Sunday, it will have sold more than 43,000 tickets.

The decision of the Feature Films International Jury was unanimous. Albanian-Swiss singer **Elina Duni**, Afghan filmmaker **Sahra Mani**, Angolan producer **Jorge Cohen** and Artistic Director of the Locarno Film Festival **Giona A. Nazzaro**, awarded the 36th FIFF edition Grand Prix to *Klondike*, the fifth film by Ukrainian director **Maryna Er Gorbach**. Set in 2014 and inspired by a true story, *Klondike* centres on a pregnant woman who refuses to leave her home in Donbass despite the advance of Russian soldiers. This masterful depiction of a world teetering on the edge of war also won the Critics' Choice Award, as well as a special mention from the Comundo Youth Jury. The main Comundo Youth Jury award went to *Amira*, by Egyptian director **Mohamed Diab**. The film chronicles the harsh reality of life in Israeli prisons and underground IVF operations that enable Palestinian inmates to become fathers. The Audience Award went to another heart-wrenching film: *Broken Keys*, by Lebanese filmmaker **Jimmy Keyrouz**, tells the story of a pianist who defies Islamic State through music. *Brighton 4th*, by Georgian director **Levan Koguashvili**, won the Special Jury Award of the International Competition: Feature Films. Another feature, *La Civil* from Mexican director **Teodora Ana Mihai**, picked up the Ecumenical Jury Award.

The winner of the International Competition: Short Films is *Lunch Break* by Brazilian filmmaker **Nina Kopko**, a politically charged portrayal of women and their survival in a hostile workplace. The CH Cinema Network Prize, which is chosen by a jury of Swiss film school students, went to *Party Poster*, a sprightly documentary by Indian filmmaker **Rishi Chandna**. The winner of the Prix Röstigraben is *Esther* by **Ana Scheu Amigo**, from the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts. Last but not least, the Foreign Visa Prize went to *A bassa voce*, by **Matilde Casari** and **Alessandro Perillo**, who are students at CISA, the Locarno Film School. The jury of the Foreign Visa Prize is drawn from the guest roster of the *New Territory* section; this year, the decision rested with some of Angola's finest producers and directors.

The winners of this year's awards, and indeed the entire programme, reflect FIFF's continued commitment to celebrating diversity, showcasing different cultures, lifting up minorities and creating a space for shared experiences. Despite two editions upended by the pandemic, the enthusiasm of the FIFF public remains undimmed. Rarely has the Festival been as in sync with current events as it has been this year. Of course, there is the situation in Ukraine, which has profoundly changed how the audience views FIFF's prescient choice of films like *Klondike*, not to mention Stanley Kubrick's *Dr Strangelove* and George Miller's *Mad Max* series. These chilling similarities did not stop the public flocking to the Festival. Attendance this year is likely to be on a par with 2019 (43,000 tickets sold), including the upcoming weekend screenings in Bulle (9th and 10th April), as well as screenings available on the Play Suisse and Festival Scope streaming

platforms from Sunday onwards (up to 7,200 views, 18 films). **Mathieu Fleury**, President of the FIFF Association, is delighted, "We didn't dare hope that we would be able to replicate the success of previous editions. The reason why this edition is truly exceptional is down to public and private support, as well as the affection of our audience who could barely wait for our return."

FIFF's dedicated audience have awaited the return to a 'normal' edition with a great deal of anticipation. But FIFF22 was far from normal. Alongside a high-calibre programme, there were surprise appearances by **Geraldine Chaplin** and the rapper **Fianso**. There was also the unforgettable intimate concert given by **Gjon's Tears**, who also used his carte blanche to offer the FIFF audience a glimpse into Albanian-speaking culture. These affecting moments underscore the extraordinary character of the Festival. Thanks to many new events and partnerships across the city, FIFF transformed Fribourg into an enormous movie theatre. For **Thierry Jobin**, the Festival's artistic director, "FIFF is a unifier". He is also quick to point out the important contribution that the public makes, "Thanks to our audience, which has placed its trust in us, we are able to explore new, forgotten, unknown or hidden territories and guarantee that filmmakers from around the world receive almost unimaginable levels of attention at a time dialogue and sharing are challenged by the use of social networks. FIFF may never have been as necessary as it is this year."

Sunday 27.03.2022 – Rex 1

fiff.ch/en/festival-2022/by-day/27

11.00 am : Special Jury Award: **Brighton 4th**

1.30 pm : Best International Short Film Award: **Lunch Break**
and Grand Prix : **Klondike**

4.00 pm : Audience Award: **Broken Keys** (free admission)

7.30 pm : **Olga** by Elie Grappe

Swiss Film Award 2022, Best Feature Film

Exiled in Switzerland, Olga, 15, is a talented Ukrainian gymnast. Like all athletes at the top of their game, she dreams of Olympic gold. She tries her best to fit into her new national team but, as the European Championship draws near, the revolution in Kiev shakes her world and tests her will.

Special screening as a tribute to the victims of the war in Ukraine and in the presence of the film's director. All proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to Ukraine.

FIFF online : festivalscope.com (28.03–17.04.2022)
playsuisse.ch (as of now)

FIFF in Bulle : Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th April 2022

MEDIA INFORMATION

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

- **Interviews:**
Please contact the FIFF Press office.
- **HD film stills and trailers:** download on fiff.ch/en/press-2022
More film stills available upon request.
- **Photos of the Closing Ceremony:** download on fiff.ch/en/press-2022 from Sunday 27th March

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AWARDS WINNERS FIFF 2022

International competition: Feature films

The **International Feature Films Jury**, comprising Jorge Cohen (Angola), Elina Duni (Albania, Switzerland), Sahra Mani (Afghanistan) and Giona A. Nazzaro (Italy, Switzerland), awards

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

Klondike by Maryna Er Gorbach

Swiss Premiere | Ukraine, Turkey, 2020 | 100' | Fiction



Jury's Statement:

«An accomplished and powerful film directed, written and edited by a young and compelling voice. The jury is convinced that this director will play a major role in international cinema in the near future and deliver on the promises contained in this surprising and remarkable work. For the rigorous crafting of a bleak description of a war that is about to happen and its compassionate approach to understanding the complexities of human nature, the International Feature Films Jury awards unanimously the Grand Prix to Maryna Er Gorbach's Klondike.»

→ Additional screening: Sunday 27.03.2022 at 1.30 pm, Rex 1 (tickets at fiff.ch)

- the **Special Jury Award**, consisting of CHF 10,000 supported by FIFF, to:

Brighton 4th by Levan Koguashvili

Swiss Premiere | Georgia, Russia, Bulgaria, Monaco, USA, 2021 | 95' | Fiction



Jury's Statement:

«The Award goes unanimously to Brighton 4th: A heartfelt portrait of exiles in 'the land of the brave and the free'. A deadpan existential 'comédie humaine' and above all a subtle tour de force of cinematic prowess. Through the poetic nuances of careful cinematography and precise lensing, the director captures the longing, the loneliness and the melancholy of human beings stuck in a no man's land.»

→ Additional screening: Sunday 27.03.2022 at 11.00 am, Rex 1 (tickets at fiff.ch)

The **Audience Award**, consisting of CHF 5000 and supported by the Banque Cantonale de Fribourg, goes to:

- **Broken Keys by Jimmy Keyrouz**
Swiss Premiere | Lebanon, France, 2021 | 110' | Fiction



→ Additional screening: Sunday 27.03.2022 at 4.00 pm, Rex 1 (tickets at fiff.ch)

The **Ecumenical Jury**, comprising Diane Falque (France), Bernadette Meier (Switzerland), Guy Rainotte (Belgium) and Renata Werlen (Switzerland), awards

- the **Ecumenical Jury Award**, consisting of CHF 5000 and supported by Bread for All and Action de Carême, to:

La Civil by Teodora Ana Mihai
Swiss Premiere | Belgium, Romania, Mexico, 2021 | 145' | Fiction

The **Youth Jury COMUNDO**, comprising Antoine Berset, Pernette Emery, Justin Gachet, Farshad Ghane, Fanny Lamoureux, Violette Marbacher and Lisa Mouquin awards

- the **Youth Jury Award COMUNDO**, consisting of CHF 5000 and supported by COMUNDO, to:

Amira by Mohamed Diab
Swiss Premiere | Egypt, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, 2021 | 98' | Fiction

- and a **special mention** to:

Klondike by Maryna Er Gorbach
Swiss Premiere | Ukraine, Turkey, 2020 | 100' | Fiction

The **Jury Critics' Choice Award**, comprising Ruth Baettig (Switzerland), Mariano Morace (Switzerland) and Rafael Wolf (Switzerland) awards

- the **Critics' Choice Award** to:

Klondike by Maryna Er Gorbach
Swiss Premiere | Ukraine, Turkey, 2020 | 100' | Fiction

International competition: Short films

The **International Short Films Jury**, comprising Fisnik Maxville (Kosovo, Switzerland), Anne-Frédérique Widmann (Switzerland) and Nadja Zela (Switzerland), awards

- the **Best International Short Film Award**, consisting of CHF 7500 and supported by the Clinique Générale Ste-Anne, to:

Lunch Break by Nina Kopko

International Premiere | Brazil, 2021 | 24' | Fiction



Jury's statement:

« This short film tackles a number of universal and important themes like the class struggle and the many difficulties faced by women, both past and present. With accuracy, courage and humour, political, physical and personal challenges are expressed through the intimate portrayal of complex women. The jury was impressed by the richness and topicality of the subjects covered during... the restroom discussions. Lunch Break strongly hints at the emergence of a powerful voice in cinema. »

→ Additional screening: Sunday 27.03.2022 at 1.30 pm, Rex 1 (tickets at fiff.ch)
and from 28.03 to 17.04 on festivalscope.com/page/fribourg-international-film-festival-2022

The **Jury CH Cinema Network**, comprising Elisabeth Agethen (UZH), Yan Ciszewski (ECAL), Gysèle Giannuzzi (UNIL), Nour Samir Labib (USI), Gaëtan Nicolas (ZHDK) and Juan-Manuel Vegas (HEAD), awards

- the **CH Cinema Network Award**, consisting of CHF 3000, to:

Party Poster by Rishi Chandna

World Premiere | India, 2021 | 20' | Documentary

→ Additional screening from 28.03 to 17.04 on
festivalscope.com/page/fribourg-international-film-festival-2022

- and a **special mention** to:

Parizad by Mehdi Imani Shahmiri

Swiss Premiere | Iran, 2021 | 24' | Documentary

→ Additional screening from 28.03 to 17.04 on
festivalscope.com/page/fribourg-international-film-festival-2022

Passeport Suisse: Short Film Programme Foreign Visa Award

The **Foreign Visa Jury**, comprising Jorge Cohen (Angola) and Zézé Gamboa (Angola), awards

- the **Foreign Visa Award**, consisting of CHF 1000 and supported by E-CHANGER and Fribourg Solidaire, to:

A bassa voce by Matilde Casari and Alessandro Perillo

Switzerland, 2021 | 16' | Fiction | CISA Locarno

The **Jury Röstigraben**, comprising Rokhaya Marieme Balde (Senegal), Jan-David Bolt (Switzerland), Alexandre Brulé (Switzerland), Joana Fischer (Switzerland), Morgane Frund (Switzerland), Marie Kenov (Switzerland), Magnus Langset (Switzerland) and Simona Volpe (Switzerland), awards

- the **Prix Röstigraben**, consisting of CHF 500 and supported by Schweizer Jugendfilmtage (SJFT) and the FIFF, to:

Esther by Ana Scheu Amigo

Switzerland, 2021 | 19' | Documentary | HSLU Luzern