

FIFF

30^e Festival International
de Films de Fribourg
11–19.03.2016

30th Fribourg International Film Festival (FIFF) 11. – 19.03.2016

Press release

The 30th FIFF edition opened on a feminine note

The Fribourg International Film Festival (FIFF) opened on Friday evening at the Théâtre Equilibre theatre. A packed audience had the pleasure of rediscovering Alice Guy, the first woman in the history of film, and enjoyed the screening of Charlie Chaplin's *The Kid*, which was accompanied live by the Fribourg Chamber Orchestra under the direction of Valentin Reymond. The silent film was selected by Geraldine Chaplin, Charlie's daughter. The actress, whom the festival has given Carte Blanche this year, addressed a warm video message to the FIFF and its audience. The famous director Jane Campion – the only woman to have been awarded the Palme d'Or, and whose work can be rediscovered in Fribourg throughout the week – also addressed the FIFF from the set of *Top of the Lake 2* in New Zealand. A second screening of *The Kid* with live accompaniment will take place on Saturday, March 12, at 2 p.m.

During one week, women will get the lion's share of screen time. 75 of the 127 films presented at this 30th edition were authored by women, and the International Jury for feature films is exclusively female. Among the jurors present at the opening, the FIFF was happy to welcome back filmmaker Diep Hoang Nguyen, whose film *Flapping in the Middle of Nowhere* was a three-time laureate in Fribourg in 2015, as well as Swiss producer Maja Zimmermann. They will be joined this weekend by Swiss producer and former FIFF collaborator Aline Schmid, and Lithuanian filmmaker Alanté Kavaïté. The jury will view the thirteen feature films in the International Competition that are contending for the Regard d'or, which is endowed with 30'000 Swiss francs. The audience will be able to see the three competing short film programs as of Saturday. The 30th festival edition was opened by Swiss interior minister Alain Berset, in the presence of Marie Garnier, president of the Fribourg State Council, and Gilles Marchand, director of RTS. Among those attending were also many guests from the world of politics, culture and media.

In his address, Alain Berset, who is the minister in charge of culture, drew the audience's attention to a title card in *The Kid*, which "in itself could almost be a feminist manifesto: "woman – whose only sin is motherhood", saying that he sees there "plenty of material for one of the panel discussions scheduled at FIFF".

In her speech, Marie Garnier paid tribute to the significant contribution made by women to society. She condemned "the discrimination against women, the most common form of exclusion throughout the world today". According to the stateswoman, "there is nothing dull" in films made by women, rather they are works of "urgency and necessity".

In the words of FIFF president François Nordmann, this year's programme is not only "a tribute to the long struggle for equality", but also a sort of "discovery or rediscovery of an aesthetic approach that permeates the entire history of film and gives it a special significance".

FIFF's new administrative director, Giovanna Garghentini Python, recalled the fact that the festival owes its existence to a woman, Magda Bossy. She expressed her wish that the festival's first slogan, "from culture clash to cultural dialogue" might this year become the "clash of women's stories, journeys and destinies leading to cultural dialogue".

ENCOUNTERS CENTERED ON WOMAN IN FILM

Along with the screenings, FIFF proposes a series of encounters, masterclasses and panel discussions with various guests throughout the week. On Saturday, the festival invites the public to meet singer Sophie

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Hunger (12:45 p.m.), who reveals an unknown facet of her talent in the short film Die Weltmeister. At 6 p.m., famous actress Marthe Keller will honour the festivalgoers with a meeting as well.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS AND AFRICAN COLOURS

African culture will cast its own hue on the first festival weekend. On Saturday, a performance by artist Marguerite Lalèyê will precede the screening of the African film Un Transport en commun. An African fashion show will take place later the same day. On Sunday the film Mêmes pas mal by Nadia El Fani will be followed by the panel discussion “Being a female filmmaker in Africa”. The same day, FIFF Forum debate will echo the topic with the question “So: must we really continue talking about women in film?”

The more curious festivalgoers will be rewarded by the 30th edition’s surprise film, which was much talked about at the last Berlinale. It will be screened on Saturday evening for all cinephiles over 18 years of age.

DIRECTION

Thierry Jobin, artistic director
Giovanna Garghentini Python, administrative director

The team of the Fribourg International Film Festival

The FIFF 2016 press release as well as high definition press images are available on the website www.fiff.ch. We will also be happy to organise interviews with directors or the festival management. It will be possible to download pictures of the opening ceremony and the attending guests after 10 p.m. on our internet site www.fiff.ch.

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