

FIFF

Festival International
de Films de Fribourg

29th Fribourg International Film Festival (FIFF), 21.03 - 28.03.2015

Press release

FIFF Unveils the Programme for its 29th Edition

With a programme featuring some 150 films from 57 countries, along with photographic exhibitions, masterclasses, and debates, FIFF is ready to throw open its doors and celebrate cinema in its entirety from 21st until 28th March. The programme for the 29th edition explores themes of freedom, both through humour and eroticism as well as through the perspectives of peoples with threatened identities liberating themselves through their art. Carte blanche is given to various personalities with different perspectives on the history of cinema by drawing from blind spots in the market. The *International Competition* will feature twelve feature films from fourteen countries competing for the grand prix Regard d'or, worth 30,000 Swiss francs. Three programmes of short films will also be in competition. In total, 113 of the 150 films will be premieres, and eleven will be distributed in Switzerland. FIFF has never hosted so many directors in all its history. In total, 75 guests will be present in Fribourg to defend their work and partake in the festivities and encounters that FIFF offers.

The 29th edition of the festival will open on Saturday 21st March, in the presence of Manuel Sager, SDC director, and with the screening of *Mr Kaplan*, a sarcastic Uruguayan comedy, with director Alvaro Brechner.

THE BEST GLOBAL PRODUCTION AT THE HEART OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

Twelve films from the blind spot of the mainstream display a great thematic diversity, and establish themselves through their aesthetic quality. Two were co-directed: *Life May Be* (Iran, UK), in which the epistolary story between Mania Akbari and Mark Cousins is embodied by poetry on screen, and *Sand Dollars* (Dominican Republic), where the sincerity of Laura Amelia Guzman and Israel Cardénas' directing is carried to excellence by Géraldine Chaplin's performance, an intimate portrayal of the ill-fated story of lesbian love. The subtlety of South Korean cinema unfolds in the poignant *A Girl at My Door*, by July Jung. Pure cinematic talents portraying young individuals in struggle will be on display with *Ata*, young Tibetan monk Chakme Rinpoche's first film, *Children's Show* by Roderick Cabrido (Philippines), and *Flapping in the Middle of Nowhere* by Diep Hoang Nguyen (Vietnam). Middle Eastern production will also be well represented, with two films: *The Valley*, by Lebanese director Ghassan Salhab, winner of Best Director from The Arab World at Abu Dhabi Festival, and *Theeb*, a Jordanian film by Naji Abu Nowar, which won best director at the Venice Film Festival. With *González*, Christian Diaz Pardo tackles the thorny subject of profitable methods in evangelism, and establishes himself in young Mexican cinema through superb cinematography. *The International Competition: Feature Films* will also give the chance to rediscover directors who have influenced FIFF. Following his 2010 Regard d'or for *The Other Bank*, George Ovashvili is back with *Corn Island*, a work with great visual potency. Adilkhan Yershanov is also back with *The Owners*, and once again impacting Kazakh cinema. And Jafar Pahani is among the competition nominees, with the long-awaited *Taxi*, his latest feature and winner of the Berlinale Golden Bear. Even with the filmmaker absent from the festival, this film marks a new act of resistance against his government.

With 18 countries represented, the *International Competition: Short Films* are one more testament to the diversity of emerging global production.

THE 29TH EDITION JURIES

FIFF is thrilled to welcome a high-calibre jury for the *International Competition: Feature Films*. A strong female presence is embodied by four directors who stand out for their common commitment to unflinchingly honest cinema which tackles subjects head-on, and in particular on the theme of the socially outcast and marginalised: **Alanis Obomsawin**, pioneer of indigenous North American cinema; **Alix Delaporte**, double prizewinner at Venice for *Le Dernier Coup de marteau* (with the Swiss premiere at FIFF); the indisputably rigorous **Ursula Meier**; and **Rolf de Heer**, who continues his exploration of Australian Aborigines with *Charlie's Country*. FIFF is also proud to welcome first class jurors for the *International Competition: Short Films*: **Bettina Oberli**, famous swiss director; **Elodie Brunner**, producer at Box Productions in Lausanne; and **Guillaume Mainguet**, director of the international production workshop Produire au Sud, part of the Festival des 3 Continents in Nantes.

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PARALLEL SECTIONS: FREEDOM IN ALL ITS FORMS

FIFF's 29th edition will open with the caustic adventures of **Mr. Kaplan**, a sarcastic Uruguayan comedy by Alvaro Brechner, featured in the section **Decryption: Can you laugh about anything?** This section will present 18 works, from the unmissable **PlayTime** by Jacques Tati, screened in a restored version, to the mini-series format with the Bruno Dumont's poetic comedy **P'tit Quinquin**, and social satires like **Free Fall** by György Palfys. These films dare to give themselves freedom in tone and stray from commercial criteria. The section features great auteurs, such as Roy Anderson with **A Pigeon Sat on a Branch Reflecting on Existence**, and times proves doubly surprising with films like with **Don't Go Breaking My Heart 2** by Johnnie To.

The freedom of the body in the grip of desire manifests in **Genre Cinema: Terra Erotica I**, which offers different perspectives on eroticism, puts special focus on female directors, such as **Longing for the Rain** (China), and **Señoritas** (Colombia), visual hymns like **Celestial Wives of the Meadow Mari** (Russia), without escaping the unease and puritanism of the West, with great talents like Larry Clark (**The Smell of Us**) and Jean-Marc Barr (**Too Much Flesh**). With an impressive three films in this section, French actor and director Barr will be in Fribourg to lead a masterclass on the representation of the body and desire, on Sunday 22nd March.

Carte blanche, which FIFF endeavours to award to varied personalities, will continue to bring new dimensions to the programme by drawing on different perspectives on the history of cinema. This year, Jean-François Stévenin will deliver six of his favourite films (**Sur la carte de...Jean-François Stévenin**), including **Love Streams** by John Cassavetes, a director with whom he has frequently been compared. Ossama Mohammed, creator of the deeply moving **Silvered Water, Syria Self-Portrait**, has also been given carte blanche (**Hommage à...Syria by Ossama Mohammed**), to use the different perspectives of Syrian filmmakers to paint a portrait of a suffering Syria through 42 short and feature films. Tony Gatlif, defender of the Roma people's freedoms, has chosen five films for the section **Diaspora: Tony Gatlif and the Roma**, which will shed light on the diversity of this culture. **Gadjo Dilo** and **Latcho Drom** will be honoured once again alongside older films, such as **I Even Met Happy Gypsies** by Aleksandar Petrovic, winner of the Grand Prix at Cannes Film Festival 1967. These questions around territory and recognising a people resonate with the **Terra Incognita: Indigenous North American cinema**. With almost 20 documentaries and fictional films, FIFF prepares to shine a light on resistance filmmaking. Discover a generation, notably all young women, who, following pioneer Alanis Obomsawin, are finally responding to the false representation of "redskins" perpetuated by Hollywood. A completely unique vampire allegory closes out FIFF 2015. With **A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night**, Ana Lily Amirpour has made an independent work which travelled worldwide before its Swiss premiere reserved for FIFF.

SPECIAL SCREENINGS AND OTHER SURPRISES

Special Screenings will delight cinephiles: from the youngest viewers, with Sunday's **FIFFamily** screening of **Khumba** and **Felix**, two children's films from South Africa, to the most seasoned viewers attending the thrilling **Midnight Screenings**. Alongside the most extreme films of the **Decryption** and **Genre Cinema** sections, horrific treasures **Dios Local** and **Haemoo** have been added, as FIFF serves up no less than fifteen midnight films for afters this year. Eroticism and horror feature in **Passeport Suisse (Néa** by Nelly Kaplan and **Doc of the Dead** by Alexandre O. Philippe), alongside the world première of **Le Masque de San** by Jacques Sarasin.

Planète Cinéma, FIFF's schools programme, will welcome another 10,000 students from French and German speaking establishments. This year, the focus will be on the representations of indigenous North Americans in cinema, with a programme of films linked to the **Terra Incognita: Indigenous North American cinema**.

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FIFF FORUM:

- Sun, 22.03.15 – Masterclass: Jean-Marc Barr | 12.00pm | Cap'Ciné 7
- Mon, 23.03.15 – Think Tank Scenario (in collaboration with the SRG SSR) | 10.00am - 6.00pm | Cap'Ciné 7
- Tues, 24.03.15 – Masterclass: Jean-François Stévenin | 12.30pm | Cap'Ciné 7
- Wed, 25.03.15 – Masterclass: Ossama Mohammed | 6.45pm | Cap'Ciné 7

DATA AND PARTNERS

Once again this year, FIFF is expecting over 37,000 viewers. The festival has become an unmissable event for audiences as well as directors, journalists, and partners locally and abroad. The 2 million francs budget is composed of contributions from institutional partners, sponsor contracts, and admissions. The grant contract with the SDC has been renewed for four editions, from 2015 to 2018, making them our most significant partner on a federal level.

THE APP

FIFF's new application (FIFF 2015), which contains the whole programme and the Myprogram function, allowing you to save favourites and receive the latest news, will be available from **11 March**, for free for iPhone and Android.

TICKET OFFICE

Presales at www.starticket.ch from **Monday, March 9**.

ACCREDITATIONS

Requests for accreditations can be made until **Tuesday, March 10**. Form available on the FIFF website.

MANAGEMENT

Thierry Jobin, Artistic Director
Esther Widmer, Administrative Director

PRESS OFFICE

The FIFF 2015 press kit, together with high resolution images, is available to download at www.fiff/presse.ch. We are happy to organise interviews with directors, as well as with the Festival's management, and remain at your disposition for any questions regarding the program.

CONTACTS

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