

FIFF

29^e Festival International
de Films de Fribourg
21-28.03.2015

29th Fribourg International Film Festival, 21.03 - 28.03.2015

Press Release

The 29th edition of FIFF: Flying the Flag of Freedom

From 21 to 28 March 2015, the winds of freedom will blow through Fribourg, where the 29th FIFF promises to take you on a liberating journey. The programme will celebrate freedom in all its forms, whether individual – enabling us to laugh without restraint (*Decryption: Can we laugh at everything?*), or the freedom to do what we want with our bodies and give in to our desires (*Genre Films: Terra Erotica I*), or the freedom claimed by way of group-identity cinema (*Terra Incognita: North American Indigenous Cinema*). Such freedom is also found in the fiery defence of nomadism in the works of Tony Gatlif, who uses his carte blanche to give voice to the Roma communities (*Diaspora: Tony Gatlif and the Roma*). Homage is paid to Syria through another carte blanche given to Ossama Mohammed, who paints a portrait of a suffering people through the eyes of its filmmakers (*Hommage à...: Syria, by Ossama Mohammed*). FIFF is delighted to be able to engage in dialogue with major players in the film world and to give them the freedom to choose their favourite films, and is particularly pleased this year to welcome Jean-François Stévenin, who has been invited to run, one year after the Dardenne brothers, the *Sur la carte de section*. With around 130 films from 57 countries, an International Competition of short and feature film, and new photographic exhibitions appearing for the first time in Switzerland, FIFF has proved once again to be a crossroads boasting the best that international cinema has to offer – an artistic and seismographic perspective on the world for audiences from all kinds of background.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION – A GLOBAL SNAPSHOT TAKEN BY THE CREAM OF WORLD CINEMA

As the cornerstone of the programme, the *International Competition* will continue to offer a selection of the very best contemporary films from across the world. Some 12 feature films, from as far afield as Iran, Tibet, South Korea and the Dominican Republic, are competing for the Regard d'or and other prizes with a total value of CHF 62'500. Following the successful international short film competition last year, this year's crop, divided into three programmes, will reveal the new faces of world cinema. And this year for the first time, all directors of short films have been invited to Fribourg to present their works and meet directors from the other sections!

HUMOUR AND EROTICISM – NO HOLDS BARRED!

Inspired by a desire to offer a positive programme of a more joyful note, after a 2014 season devoted to the crisis and disasters, the 29th edition of FIFF has been designed with humour and freedom in mind. Laughter is a uniquely human feature – but to what extent are we free to exercise it? The *Decryption* section sets out to explore comedy and what makes people laugh around the world (*Can we laugh at everything?*). The Charlie Hebdo massacre has of course inevitably cast a shadow over the question: Can we *still* laugh at everything? Drawing on sarcastic, emblematic and especially unusual comedies from the world circuit, *Decryption: Can we laugh at everything?* will, along with the documentary *Caricaturistes, fantassins de la démocratie*, set out to remind us that humour is an indispensable critical tool.

Celebrating desire in a poetic and light-hearted way is what lay behind the decision to dedicate this year's *Genre Film* section to eroticism. The 29th edition of FIFF will feature the most lyrical and unsettling interpretations of erotic cinema from Russia, South Korea, and Brazil (*Terra Erotica I*). *Terra Erotica I*? In fact, an even more outrageous *Terra Erotica II*, will be presented from 3 to 11 July at the 15th Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival (NIFFF).

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IT IS FROM THE QUEST FOR LIBERTY THAT GREAT CINEMA EMERGES

Cinema opens our eyes to cultures that are often poorly or under-represented, such as those of minorities whose very existence clashes with a conformist system that rejects their way of life and cudgels them with stereotypes. The Roma communities, who set great store by their traditional culture and freedom of movement, and the North American indigenous peoples who are deprived of their lands with a strangle-hold on their identity, constitute two contemporary parallel stories that FIFF set out to juxtapose. If Tony Gatlif's beloved culture was to be explored, the director's contribution to the **Diaspora: Tony Gatlif and the Roma** section, was absolutely essential. The credibility of the five films selected by the director lies in their authentic approach. **Terra Incognita: North American Indigenous Cinema** shines a spotlight on the indigenous peoples of Canada and the United States – a rebellious cinema that has only recently begun to take its revenge on the stereotypes of the American Western. With nearly 20 films, this will be the most important programme outside of North America ever devoted to these peoples.

Syrian director Ossamma Mohamed lives the hell that is his homeland from exile, and film is his only way of speaking out. Mohamed's last film, **Silvered Water, Syria Self-portrait**, has had a major impact on each festival in which it was screened since its premiere at the 2014 Festival de Cannes. The director of this 'Apocalypse Now of documentaries' agreed to run the **Hommage à...: Syria, by Ossama Mohammed** section, choosing documentaries that paint a portrait of his battered country. Be prepared for an excruciating journey.

SUR LA CARTE DE JEAN-FRANÇOIS STÉVENIN: A FREE ELECTRON OF THE FILM WORLD

As the figurehead for an entire generation of liberated directors, Jean-François Stévenin harnesses a wide swathe of film history for the **Sur la carte de** section. The actor, better known in front of the camera than behind it, has worked with some of the greatest directors (Truffaut, Rivette, Cavalier, Huston, Jarmush) and made his own films, drawing comparisons to John Cassavetes. FIFF is delighted to offer the public the eclectic series of favourites chosen by this free spirit of the film world!

SPECIAL SCREENINGS AND OTHER SURPRISES

By now, festival goers are used to a slew of surprises, especially during the **Midnight Screenings**, the **Swiss Passport** Day and the Sunday afternoon **FIFFamille** sections, in which FIFF has unearthed yet more inspiring and unexpected gems!

EXHIBITIONS AND DEBATES: BEYOND THE SCREEN

With the Rex and Cap' Ciné cinemas located less than 100 metres apart, and the Festival Centre housed within the Old Station, FIFF is easily accessible and central. But we also have the pleasure of entertaining you in a range of other venues further afield. For film, with the previews in Berne (16.03.2015) and in the legendary Fri-son cinema hall (12.03.2015). For music with a concert at the La Spirale in conjunction with the **Diaspora: Tony Gatlif and the Roma section** (27.03.2015), an evening event at the Soussol dedicated to the Syria homage by Ossama Mohammed (26.03.2015) and another evening at the Fri-son around the **Terra Incognita: North American Indigenous Cinema** section. And finally for images, in three exhibitions: the Canton and University Library will play host to the photographs of the Roma by Yves Leresche (from 21.03.15), and a debate on the issue (26.03.15). Meanwhile Fri-Art, the unmissable Fribourg Arts Centre, has joined forces with FIFF for the first time, with the works of Americans Robert Heineken (26.02.2015) and Larry Clark (20.03.2015) adding a first-class critical perspective to the **Terra Erotica I Genre Film** section.

HELPING YOUNG AUDIENCES LEARN

For several years, **Planète Cinéma** has played host each season to over 10,000 French and German-speaking school students and has emerged as the most important school programme in Switzerland. This year, the focus will be on the representation of indigenous peoples in North America, with a selection of films linked to the **Terra Incognita: North American Indigenous Cinema** section.

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FIFF IN NUMBERS: PARTNERS

This year again, FIFF is expecting more than 37,000 spectators. The Festival has become an indispensable appointment for all audiences, as well as for filmmakers, journalists and local and foreign partners. The 2 million francs budget is composed of the contributions of institutional partners, of sponsoring contracts and of the entrance tickets. The grant contract with the SDC has been renewed for the next four editions, from 2015 to 2018, which makes them our main partner on the federal level.

COMMUNICATION

The FIFF's website has been restructured and updated, making navigation quicker and more user-friendly. As of March 9th, the new app, containing the entire program, practical information and a bookmark function, will be available.

Save the Dates!

To ensure that you do not miss out on anything, we herewith send you the key dates for the 2015 festival edition:

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| 09.03 | 10:15 | Press conference in Fribourg, announcement of the programme, opening of advanced sales |
| 12.03 | 20:00 | Fri-Son fait son cinema, Fribourg |
| 16.03 | 18:15 | Sneak Preview, <i>Le Masque de San</i> au Ciné-Movie 1, Berne |

TICKETS

Pre-sale on www.starticket.ch starting March 9th 2015

ACCREDITATIONS

Accreditations may be obtained from now on until March 10th, 2015. Forms are available on the FIFF website.

INFORMATION FOR PROFESSIONALS/INTERVIEWS

Please contact us for further information, or visit our continually updated Web site: www.fiff.ch, where you will find high-definition media pictures available for downloading. The selection is constantly being extended. We will be happy to arrange interviews with film industry professionals and the festival's management.

FIFF Management

Thierry Jobin, artistic director
Esther Widmer, administrative director

Press office

Festival International de Films de Fribourg

21.03. – 28.03.2015

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