



72nd IFFMH: The complete programme for 2023

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Exciting, diverse, political: with 72 films in its main programme, the International Film Festival Mannheim-Heidelberg is going into its 72nd edition this year. Festival-goers will discover current films from 51 countries and meet a variety of guests and filmmakers from all over the world in the cinemas. Beyond the silver screen, the 72nd IFFMH also offers a diverse supporting programme. Parties and performances will make the new festival lounges in the Stadthaus Mannheim and in the Karlstorbahnhof Heidelberg places where everyone can meet up!

From the ON THE RISE international competition

The international competition, with its 16 feature-length fictional films, is the core of the festival, continuing the rich tradition of the IFFMH as a staging ground for outstandingly talented directors. This is where first and second works by exceptional directors compete for the official festival awards. In 2023, the range of countries extends from Italy, Spain, Greece, Hungary and the Netherlands to Lebanon, Pakistan, Nepal, South Korea, Singapore and finally the United States.

The lives of women are particularly well-represented this year. Some are given a dose of mystical elements, while others are critical of the system or are very up-close and personal, as in ›Melk‹ by Dutch director Stefanie Kolk. A mother who has lost her baby decides to donate her breast milk. In impressively clear, almost minimalist imagery, ›Melk‹ tells of a difficult loss and its protracted aftermath.

Two films tell of mother-daughter relationships in which the female characters must assert themselves against male dominance: In ›Riverbed‹, Salma, who lives alone, gets caught up in her past when her daughter, who is now an adult, shows up on her doorstep divorced and pregnant. From now on, the two women, who had become strangers to one another, must learn to get along. Bassem Breche's powerful drama vividly illustrates the burden that women in Lebanon's traditional society must bear when they leave their preordained path.

In ›In Flames‹, Fahria and her daughter Mariam also fight a struggle against patriarchal power structures – and against the demons lurking in their own family history. Director Zarrar Kahn creates a suspenseful portrait of Pakistani society, using elements of the horror-film genre to portray the psychological and physical wounds of the two protagonists. In this way, he gives the audience a suspenseful and at the same time empathetic view of the minds of his characters.

›Bitten‹ by Romain de Saint-Blanquat focuses on its female characters in a very different way. In this unusual vampire film, the French director tells the story of



formidable self-empowerment. The dark and grainy images make this debut film reminiscent of the English vampire films of the 1960s.

In contrast, Ana, the dedicated teacher in ›Without Air‹ by Katalin Moldovai, must contend with the homophobic power structures of Hungarian society. Recommending the film ›Total Eclipse‹ to her students results in her facing disciplinary action. This courageous debut film castigates the illiberal and irrational climate not just in a country in the middle of Europe, but also far beyond it.

Alejandro Rojas and Juan Sebastián Vásquez also take a critical view of the system in ›Upon Entry‹. The two directors stage a chamber play in the transit area of a US airport and reveal the price of security. Diego and Elena have a visa for the United States and a future in Florida ahead of them. But at the airport, they are stopped by the immigration authorities, whose intrusive questions subject them to pressure.

Sofia Exarchou sheds light on a different and in some ways merciless microcosm in her second feature film, ›Animal‹. This film focuses on the exploitation of entertainers in an all-inclusive hotel in Greece. Portrayed as stunning attractions, the dancers are seen in glittering costumes at their shows. As the summer progresses, however, the nights get longer and longer, and the work becomes more and more difficult. Without clichés or simplistic value judgements, ›Animal‹ dares to take a rare look beneath the glittery surface.

Two entries from South Korea that are very different from one another shed light on the rich culture of cinema in this Southeast Asian country. ›Hopeless‹ by Kim Chang-hoon borrows from genre cinema in the style of a neo-noir thriller as it tells a story of poverty and violence.

In contrast, Kim Taeyang's debut, ›Mimang‹, is a very calm, sensitive film about the changes that people and cities undergo, about transience and memory. In this episodic love story, a man and a woman have several encounters with each other without ever having lived together. The time they've spent apart is always in the air – as is the question: What if?

Marco Righi's ›Where the Wind Blows‹ is a film that is only calm on the surface, but that ultimately delivers a hearty punch. It tells the story of a farmer in the mountains of Italy who tries to teach an unbaptised man about the Catholic faith, but winds up contradicting Christian teachings in the process. Thirteen years after his successful debut film, ›Days of Harvest‹, Marco Righi has returned to filmmaking and delivered a work that is as stylistically confident as it is precisely orchestrated, and whose lofty imagery creates a threshold to the mystical.

From the PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES section

With 16 bold feature-length fiction films that push and break the boundaries of the medium of film in a variety of ways, PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES is the



place for the pressing issues of 2023: This is especially true of ›Critical Zone‹, the big winner at Locarno this year, which the 72nd IFFMH is being screened as a German premiere. Iranian director Ali Ahmadzadeh delves into the world of a drug dealer and sketches a portrait of the conditions in his home country that is as harrowing as it is critical of the regime. ›Critical Zone‹ is a deeply humane, hopeful gesture that believes in people's sense of community despite their adverse living conditions. Ali Ahmadzadeh has been subject to censorship and a ban on his work for years. After not being allowed to travel to the Locarno Film Festival, he will now, to our great delight, be attending the 72nd IFFMH.

›Following the Sound‹ from Japan is also about unity within society. Director Kyoshi Sugita has created a moving, meditative drama about the essence of humanness, a film that deals with the simple little things in our everyday lives. Kyoshi Sugita has been an assistant director to Kiyoshi Kurosawa and Nobuhiro Suwa. In 2021 his film ›Haruhara-san's Recorder‹ was screened in competition at the IFFMH. This follow-up once again underscores his standing as one of the most significant voices in new Japanese auteur filmmaking.

From the FILMSCAPES section

FILMSCAPES represents an expansion of the IFFMH's curatorial repertoire. It is where serial, essayistic and documentary formats also have their place.

Frederick Wiseman, the most important living US documentary filmmaker, has created a documentary feast for the senses. His ›Menus Plaisirs – Les Troisgros‹ offers a profile of the Troisgros, a celebrated family of French restaurateurs, and their three restaurants. In an awe-inspiringly systematic way, Wiseman shows us everything that goes into making haute cuisine: the daily routines, from buying vegetables and talking to the animal-breeders to discussing the order of items on the menu, cooking the food and looking after guests. Once again, the now 93-year-old chronicler succeeds in very respectfully capturing a piece of contemporary history.

In the coming-of-age film ›Excursion‹, a teenage girl named Iman struggles against the harsh expectations of women in the conservative society of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Director Una Gunjak grew up in Sarajevo. Her very first short film, ›The Chicken‹, premiered at Cannes and earned the European Film Award.

In geographic terms, however, the section FILMSCAPES is much more extensive, stretching from France to Ukraine, to Australia, Chile and the Congo. A total of 12 films are being screened in this section.

FACING NEW CHALLENGES and the supporting programme

In FACING NEW CHALLENGES, the IFFMH explores the possibilities of the moving image outside of classical narrative cinema. This year, the focus is on



video art and club music. Three locations offer a chance to become familiar with the artists and their cross-media works.

In cooperation with the Kunsthalle Mannheim, the IFFMH welcomes the American-Dominican media artist and DJ Kelman Duran. His works challenge persistent colonial structures and bring marginalised groups to the forefront. In his essay films ›To the North, Part I and II‹, these are the Sioux First Nation. This video installation will be shown in the atrium of the Kunsthalle. The artist will attend the exhibition opening on 19 November to give a talk. To do justice to the breadth of his exciting oeuvre, Duran will also be at a second event at the 72nd IFFMH: a live concert on 18 November at the Alte Feuerwache Mannheim, with Lola Quivoron attending and with visual accompaniment by her biker gang film ›Rodeo‹, which was screened at the IFFMH last year.

“The Nest”, an artists’ collective from Nairobi, deals with the marginalisation and oppression of other groups. In addition to various facets of Kenyan society, they are concerned with the visibility of black bodies and the fates of queer people. “The Nest” will perform in the IFFMH’s new festival lounge in the Karlstorbahnhof Heidelberg in a variety of ways during the entire festival. The video installations ›When We Are/When We Are Not‹ (2016) as well as short films will be shown. Their formal language is as versatile as life in the big city. The Nest make use of genre cinema, commercial advertising and the visual arts and concern themselves with a wide variety of aspects of Kenyan society. In addition, we will be showing ›The Stories of Our Lives‹ (2014), a filmic collage based on the documentation of queer life in Kenya, in a one-off screening at Karlstorkino. On 25 November, there will be a party to bridge cultures and bring people together at the Karlstorbahnhof club in collaboration with “Zena”, a feminist DJ collective from Germany.

As usual, the film screenings will be supplemented by panel discussions and events. Lars Eidinger, Antje Traue and Hanna Hilsdorf will talk about their profession. Lars Eidinger is also expected to DJ at the party opening the festival lounge at Karlstorbahnhof on 17 November.

Thanks to the IFFMH’s partners and supporters

The IFFMH would not be possible without the support of a wide range of partners. The festival would like to express its sincere thanks to its civic partners and sponsoring foundations: the City of Mannheim, the City of Heidelberg, the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts of the State of Baden-Württemberg, the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, the Baden-Württemberg Foundation, the Baden-Württemberg Innovation Fund, the Manfred Lautenschläger Foundation, the Rainer Werner Fassbinder Foundation and the Medien- und Filmgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg (MFG). This year, the IFFMH welcomes cbs-consulting, a management consultancy from Heidelberg, as a new partner. Also new is a cooperation with the Käte Hamburger Centre for



Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Studies (CAPAS) at the University of Heidelberg.

The festival would also like to thank its mobility partners RNV, VRN with VRN Nextbike, Stadtmobil and BMW's branch in Mannheim; the NYX Hotel and the Leonardo Royal in Mannheim as well as the Speicher7 and the Syte Hotel in Mannheim; Lemonaid & ChariTea in Hamburg and the venerable organic winery Sauer.

The festival's various partners in the media are also a great source of support: the Haas Media Group, including the Mannheimer Morgen and UBI BENE, as well as SWR 2, taz and ARTE.

The IFFMH would also like to thank the Mannheim fashion retailer Engelhorn for its support in various ways. Further thanks go to m:con Mannheim, the Fashion Park Nußloch with its own brand Betty Barclay, and our new ticketing partner, Reservix.

Last but not least, we owe our gratitude to the IFFMH's partnering cinemas: the Cinema Quadrat, the Cineplex and the Kino Atlantis in Mannheim as well as the Karlstorkino, the Gloria and the Luxor in Heidelberg.

All the films of the 72nd IFFMH, listed alphabetically by section:

Opening film

›**Day of the Fight**‹ Jack Huston, USA

Centrepiece

›**All of Us Strangers**‹ Andrew Haigh, UK, USA

Closing film

›**Sisterhood**‹ Nora El Hourch, France, Morocco

ON THE RISE

›**Animal**‹ Sofia Exarchou, Greece, Austria, Romania, Cyprus, Bulgaria

›**Bitten**‹ Romain de Saint-Blanquat, France

›**Dreaming & Dying**‹ Nelson Yeo, Singapore, Indonesia

›**An Endless Sunday**‹ Alain Parroni, Italy, Germany

›**Family Portrait**‹ Lucy Kerr, USA

›**Hopeless**‹ Kim Chang-hoon, South Korea

›**In Flames**‹ Zarrar Kahn, Pakistan, Canada

›**Melk**‹ Stefanie Kolk, Netherlands

›**Mimang**‹ Kim Taeyang, South Korea

›**The Red Suitcase**‹ Fidel Devkota, Nepal, Sri Lanka

›**Riverbed**‹ Bassem Breche, Lebanon



- ›**The Sweet East**› Sean Price Williams, USA
- ›**Touched**› Claudia Rorarius, Germany
- ›**Upon Entry**› Alejandro Rojas, Juan Sebastián Vásquez, Spain
- ›**Where the Wind Blows**› Marco Righi, Italy
- ›**Without Air**› Katalin Moldovai, Hungary

PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES

- ›**Blackbird Blackbird Blackberry**› Elene Naveriani, Switzerland, Georgia, Germany
- ›**Critical Zone**› Ali Ahmadzadeh, Iran, Germany
- ›**Delegation**› Asaf Saban, Poland, Israel, Germany
- ›**Evil Does Not Exist**› Ryūsuke Hamaguchi, Japan
- ›**Following the Sound**› Kyoshi Sugita, Japan
- ›**Here**› Bas Devos, Belgium
- ›**Hit Man**› Richard Linklater, USA
- ›**Housekeeping for Beginners**› Goran Stolevski, North Macedonia, Croatia, Serbia
- ›**The Delinquents**› Rodrigo Moreno, Argentina, Luxembourg, Brazil, Chile
- ›**Only the River Flows**› Wei Shujun, China
- ›**Perfect Days**› Wim Wenders, Japan, Germany
- ›**Priscilla**› Sofia Coppola, USA
- ›**Red Rooms**› Pascal Plante, Canada
- ›**Homecoming**› Catherine Corsini, France
- ›**Solo**› Sophie Dupuis, Canada
- ›**Salty Water**› Henrika Kull, Germany

FILMSCAPES

- ›**All to Play For**› Delphine Deloget, France
- ›**Un amor**› Isabel Coixet, Spain
- ›**About Dry Grasses**› Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Turkey, France, Germany
- ›**Excursion**› Una Gunjak, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, France, Norway, Qatar
- ›**The Feeling That the Time for Doing Something Has Passed**› Joanna Arnow, USA
- ›**Forever-Forever**› Anna Buryachkova, Ukraine, Netherlands
- ›**Inside the Yellow Cocoon Shell**› Pham Thien An, Vietnam, Singapore, France, Spain
- ›**Menus Plaisirs – Les Troisgros**› Frederick Wiseman, France, USA
- ›**Of an Age**› Goran Stolevski, Australia
- ›**Omen**› Balaji, Belgium, Congo, Netherlands, France, Germany, South Africa
- ›**The Rapture**› Iris Kaltenböck, France 2023
- ›**The Settlers**› Felipe Gálvez, Chile, Argentina, UK, Germany, Taiwan, France



Retrospective (in chronological order)

- › **Body and Soul**, Robert Rossen, USA 1947
- › **A Place in the Sun**, George Stevens, USA 1951
- › **On the Waterfront**, Elia Kazan, USA 1954
- › **The Defiant Ones**, Stanley Kramer, USA 1958
- › **The Misfits**, John Huston, USA 1961
- › **The Pawnbroker**, Sidney Lumet, USA 1964
- › **Seance on a Wet Afternoon**, Bryan Forbes, UK 1964
- › **Rachel, Rachel**, Paul Newman, USA 1968
- › **Wanda**, Barbara Loden, USA 1970
- › **The Godfather Part II**, Francis Ford Coppola, USA 1974
- › **Norma Rae**, Martin Ritt, USA 1979
- › **Raging Bull**, Martin Scorsese, USA 1980

Kinderfilmfest

- › **Kiddo**, Zara Dwinger, Netherlands 2023
- › **Okthanksbye**, Nicole van Kilsdonk, Netherlands 2023
- › **Robot Dreams**, Pablo Berger, Spain, France 2023
- › **Rosa and the Stone Troll**, Karla Nor Holmbäck, Denmark 2023
- › **Scrapper**, Charlotte Regan, UK, 2023
- › **Tony, Shelly and the Magic Light**, Filip Pošivač, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia 2023
- › **Totem**, Sander Burger, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany 2022

HOMAGE Agnès Godard (in chronological order)

- › **Hinterland**, Jacques Nolot, France 1998
- › **Beau travail**, Claire Denis, France 1999
- › **Wild Side**, Sébastien Lifshitz, France, Belgium, UK 2004

GRAND IFFMH AWARD Nicolas Winding Refn (in chronological order)

- › **Pusher**, Denmark 1996
- › **Drive**, USA 2011
- › **Only God Forgives**, Denmark, France 2013

FACING NEW CHALLENGES

- › **To the North Part I and II**, Kelman Duran, USA, Dominican Republic 2016
- › **When We Are/When We Are Not**, The Nest Collective, Kenya 2016
- › **The Stories of Our Lives**, The Nest Collective, Kenya 2014

The 72nd IFFMH will be held from 16 to 26 November. Advance ticket sales start on 6 November.



Images

You can download images from our press area by using this link:
https://www.iffmh.de/partners-and-press/press-material/index_eng.html

About the IFFMH

With “New Film Experience” as its credo, the IFFMH has been venturing new, interdisciplinary perspectives on and through the art of film since 1952. This makes it the longest-running film festival in Germany after the Berlinale, and it continues to be a major platform for cultural, social and political dialogue. With each subsequent edition, the IFFMH, as a festival for the public in cinemas, invites festivalgoers to discover the rising stars of the international film scene as well as to follow the careers of established filmmakers and to become more familiar with film in the context of other art forms.

Media inquiries

Regional media

Rebecca Raab
Media and public relations
E-mail: rebecca.raab@iffmh.de
Tel: +49 621 489262 22

German and international media

Carola Schaffrath
E-mail: c.schaffrath@filmpresse-meuser.de
Tel: +49 69 405 804 0

Anne Schütz
E-mail: a.schuetz@filmpresse-meuser.de
Tel: +49 69 405 804 19

The festival would like to thank its sponsors and partners.