



## GIFF 21 : OPENING OF THE 27<sup>TH</sup> FESTIVAL AT LE PLAZA

The Geneva International Film Festival [November 5 – 14] will open the doors of its 27<sup>th</sup> event on Friday, November 5, in the legendary Le Plaza movie theater. This opening night will mark the return of the Festival to Geneva's cinemas and its reunion with the public around a program featuring 140 works for all formats and senses. **Stephan Eicher's original creation *It's Alive: A Journey into Invisible Cinema* will have the Plaza dreaming with a musical and cinematic tribute to the scenarios of films that were never made, and with the complicity of Vincent Veillon's first work *Où allons-nous ?* [November 5 and 6].**

The opening ceremony will mark a new era for the Festival in the presence of the Federal Councilor in charge of the Department of Home Affairs **Alain Berset**, Administrative councillor at the City of Geneva **Marie Barbey-Chappuis**, the Director General of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation **SRG SSR Gilles Marchand**, alongside the President of the GIFF Foundation **Anja Wyden Guelpa** and the new General and Artistic Director of the Festival, **Anaïs Emery**. "Emotions are running high as I prepare to meet GIFF's audience for the very first time," **says Anaïs Emery, the new general and artistic director**. "This 27<sup>th</sup> event has been put together in exceptional conditions with an enthusiastic team determined to overcome all the hazards of the pandemic. We draw our strength from an inclusive vision of the contemporary audiovisual industry and from a desire to offer a bold Festival. I'm looking forward to sharing this project with festivalgoers."

The film program will open with the national premiere of the film that will represent Switzerland at the Oscars, ***Olga* by Elie Grappe**. The symbolic event will launch ten days of festivities with the complicity of the first guests of this ambitious, multi-format program: **Udo Kier [*Swan Song*]**, **Angelique Molina & Kelley Kali [*I'm Fine [Thanks for Asking]*]**, **Hagai Levi [*Scenes From a Marriage*]**, **Ainhoa Rodriguez [*Mighty Flash*]**, and **Radu Jude [*Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn*] ...**

## INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS, THE BEATING HEART OF THE FIRST WEEKEND

From the early hours of the Festival, the three main competitions [feature films, series and immersive works] will offer rare meetings with the most innovative filmmakers of the moment. American duo **Kelley Kali** and **Angelique Molina** will travel to Geneva for the international premiere of the indie production *I'm Fine [Thanks for Asking]*, as will Hispanic filmmaker **Ainhoa Rodríguez**, who will present the surrealist poetry of Extremadura in *Mighty Flash*. The inner explorations of *Theo and the Metamorphosis* will also be guided by its author **Damien Odoul**. Series creators will also beat the pavements of Geneva to defend their projects. Europe's great skills in the matter will be demonstrated by Hungarian creator **Bálint Szentgyörgyi** and the international premiere of his HBO series *The Informant*, Danish filmmakers **Mette Heeno** and **Anna Zackrisson** [*Snow Angels*], Iceland's **Björn Hlynur Haraldsson** and his *Blackport* on the edge of madness, and melancholy Croatian and Italian series presented by their creators **Dalibor Matanić** [*The Last Socialist Artefact*] and **Ezio Abate** [*Ink Against Bullets*].

## THE FIRST DISTINGUISHED GUESTS: UDO KIER, HAGAI LEVI, RADU JUDE

The Highlights section, which features major previews, will welcome its first guests, including mercurial actor **Udo Kier** [11/5] who will present the sentimental road-trip *Swan Song*, a true ode to gay culture. This will be followed by another event preview, the screening of the series *Scenes From a Marriage*, based on the work of Ingmar Bergman, in the presence of its creator **Hagai Levi** [11/6], known for *The Affair* and *In Treatment*. Romanian director **Radu Jude** will also be present [11/7] for the tragicomic farce *Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn*, Golden Bear of the last Berlinale.

## SWISS CREATION IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Swiss creation and its most promising authors will also be in the spotlight on the first day with the Swiss premiere of *Olga* in the presence of **Elie Grappe** [11/5]. The world premiere of the Geneva series *Sacha* will invite the public to discover, before it is broadcast on Play Suisse [11/11], the legal thriller freely inspired by the life of former judge and co-creator of the series **Nicole Castioni**, who will be present in the company of the film director **Léa Fazer** and the actresses and actors **Sophie Broustal**, **Karine Guignard**, **Vanille Lehmann** and **Thibaut Evrard**. Swiss digital productions will also be the focus of this first weekend with two world premieres to be discovered in the immersive park **Territoires virtuels** (doors open 11/5, from 8pm): *Unframed: Hand Puppets*, *Paul Klee* by **Martin Charrière** and *The Legend of Kami* by **apelab**.

## THE JURIES

The juries that will select the winners in the three main GIFF competitions (feature films, series, immersive works) are now known. The Jury for the International Feature Film Competition will comprise students from universities and colleges, along with a well-known figure from the film industry: director and documentary filmmaker **Kinoshita Kaori**. Originally from Japan, Kinoshita Kaori's work mixes exhibitions, videos and cinema at the crossroads between documentary and fiction. She will support the students and award with them the prestigious Reflet d'Or for Best Feature Film. The Jury for the International Series Competition is made up entirely of members of the public and the Jury for the International Immersive Works Competition of representatives from the creative industries and the arts world. The prizes of all three competitions are worth CHF 10,000, awarded by the City and the State of Geneva. These three competitions are completed by the European Script Award (EUR 10,000, awarded by the European Alliance for Television and Culture) and the new section Future is Sensible, through which the Festival further intends to encourage digital creation (CHF 10,000, awarded by the State of Geneva). To present these prizes, GIFF will welcome among others **Jonathan Vinel**, **Luc Meier**, **Zoé Sfez**, **Rémi Terezskiewicz** and **Sarita Christensen**.

## LAUNCH OF THE GENEVA DIGITAL MARKET (NOVEMBER 8 - 12)

The only market in Switzerland dedicated to the future of the audiovisual industry, the **Geneva Digital Market** (GDM) will be held from November 8 to 12 in the former Le Plaza movie theater with a program of talks, round table discussions, co-production meetings and a gala evening around digital creation (Digital Night, 11/10). The first events will include a discussion with the famous streaming platform Netflix and Swiss producers (*Netflix's Future in Switzerland*, 11/8), reflections on the role of artificial intelligence in the writing of

series [*Showrunners and AI: Technology at the service of creation*, 11/9] and a discussion on the technological changes in artistic practices during the pandemic [*Right Here Right Now*, 11/8] The market is made up of 25 high-profile digital works in search of co-producers or broadcasters. This platform for continuing education, networking and skill sharing will take place from November 8 to 12 in a fully hybrid format, powered by the technologies of the streaming company **Imersis** and the Geneva-based virtual production studio **APPIA**.

## SAVE THE DATE

5.11 | **Opening Ceremony** followed by *It's Alive: A Journey into Invisible Cinema* by Stephan Eicher

8.11 | Launch of the **Geneva Digital Market** [until November 12]

10.11 | **Digital Night** and **Future Is Sensible** Award

12.11 | Talk *Facts, Fakes and Fiction* by **Sabine Süsstrunk**

12.11 | Masterclass and Geneva Award to **Luca Guadagnino**

13.11 | Masterclass and Film & Beyond Award to **Riad Sattouf**, **Closing** and **Awards Ceremony**

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