

Press release
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For immediate release



28TH GIFF & 10TH GDM: A 28TH EDITION AT THE CROSSROADS OF NEW FORMATS AND CONSUMPTION TRENDS

The Geneva International Film Festival (GIFF, November 4–13) draws to a close after ten days of in-depth exploration into contemporary audiovisual culture. During the closing ceremony, the various juries – feature films, series, European Script Award and Future is Sensible immersive works – awarded prizes to five visionary works which, each in their own way, give pride of place to narrative innovation and together offer a rich panorama of contemporary audiovisual creation (awards listed below). The absence of Mani Haghighi, director of *Subtraction* and President of the Feature Film jury (IR), was notably regrettable. Following the unwarranted seizure of his passport by the Iranian authorities, the director watched the competition entries remotely and shared a video message during the ceremony:

I regret that I can't be with you in person tonight. As you may know, a huge popular uprising has engulfed Iran over the past two months, I have been supporting this uprising in my own small way, and as a result, my passport has been confiscated. So, I'm recording this video message in my living room in Tehran, where I've been watching all these great films.

*The Award for the best International Feature goes to a film that manages to present a multitude of explosive themes under a bewitchingly calm surface. The direction of the film is a masterclass in precision, and every single performance deserves its own award. As I watched it, I was reminded over and over again of the genius of Carl Theodor Dreyer's *Passion of Joan of Arc*, and of course, for a filmmaker, there is no higher praise than that. The Award for the best International Feature goes to *Saint Omer* by Alice Diop. – Mani Haghighi, President of the International Feature Films Jury*

GIFF is delighted to report that the Festival welcomed 35,000th festival attendee (2021: 30,000), while also having succeeded in reducing the number of works presented at the new edition. In addition, the figures highlight the general public's growing enthusiasm for digital creation, with 12,000 VR viewings – a number that has continued to increase over several editions (2021: 11,000). One striking example was the huge interest shown in the *Evolver* installation, which opened for its European première and sold out by the end of the first weekend. The edition's guests of honor, Nicolas Winding Refn (DK), Alexandre Astier (FR) and the OIL Productions collective (CH), were rapturously received at some electrifying events, most of which were at full capacity. The Festival also encouraged the convergence of formats through its subscriptions, which were over 50% up this year, illustrating the relevance of a program that combined films, series and immersive works. The GIFF continues until Saturday November 12 in theaters and at home from November 13 for viewers who have received a code enabling them to continue watching series on play.giff.ch. The *Virtual Territories* remain open until November 13, 7 pm.

THE GIFF CONFIRMS ITS STATUS

This second edition, under the general and artistic direction of Anaïs Emery, confirms the festival's status as an innovative and future-oriented event, with a particular focus on its relationship with its attendees (viewing competition series in theaters, then at home, exploratory journeys curated in VR spaces, enhanced facilitation). At the heart of the Festival's mission, the GIFF continues to demonstrate its desire to enhance the agency of the general public in light of the vast offering proposed by the contemporary audiovisual ecosystem, while promoting the diversity of formats in a non-hierarchical way. The 2022 edition marks an important development in the identity of the GIFF and, following a 2021 edition severely disrupted by the pandemic, opens a new chapter at the vanguard of contemporary audiovisual culture and a crossroads in public consumption trends.

"The GIFF's convergent program offers a unique approach to audiovisual culture. The festival and its market are helping to redefine the 7th art in a broader way. We are playing a vital role for Swiss creative industries, offering them concrete experience of the artistic and industrial challenges and opportunities offered by the evolution of image technologies." – Anaïs Emery, General and Artistic Director

AN ACCLAIMED DIGITAL OFFERING

It has been pleasing to note the consistent increase in VR viewings throughout the GIFF. The **Virtual Territories** immersive installation space, which presented around forty works, has seen its attendance figures increase steadily over several editions. This year, the GIFF perfected its attendee reception system, which used structured pathways to explore contemporary international creations. These rich virtual explorations were accompanied by the two landmark installations of the 28th edition: the ambitious immersive work, *Evolver*, from London studio **Marshmallow Laser Feast**, which enjoyed its European première and sold out within a few days, and the winner of the **Future is Sensible** award, the immersive play *Les aveugles (The Blind)*, directed throughout the festival by **Julien Dubuc** and the **INVIVO** collective.

CIS: THE SEASON HAS ONLY JUST STARTED

With the contemporary series creation scene abuzz, the GIFF presented some real gems throughout the week as part of its **international series competition (CIS)**, which was watched by rapt audiences numbering in the thousands. This innovative program, which included screenings of the first two episodes in theaters before allowing audiences to watch the rest of the season at home, shone a spotlight on the narrative and formal diversity of contemporary production. Notable entries were the Taiwanese series, *Twisted Strings*, produced by **Hou Hsiao-hsien**, and the Belgian comedy, *Des gens bien*, presented by its three creators, **Stéphane Bergmans**, **Mathieu Donck** and **Benjamin d'Aoust**. The Swiss projects were of an equal caliber to the international productions, with the sequel to the hilarious *Tschugger*, and *FUTURA!*, a powerful selection of shorts which showcased the incredible diversity of new Swiss cinema talent. However, the series program will not end with the close of the festival: from Sunday November 13, the website play.giff.ch will go live to enable attendees to watch the rest of the season from the comfort of their own sofa. Take the GIFF home!

GDM: A UNIQUE, UNMISSABLE MARKETPLACE IN SWITZERLAND

As it celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, with this latest edition, the **Geneva Digital Market** confirmed its strategic position within the digital landscape of French-speaking Switzerland. A unique event within the country, the GDM brings together some of the industry's leading institutions, including the **Tribeca Festival** (US), **Orange** (ES) and **France Télévisions** (FR), to give creators access to concrete funding opportunities. Completed by a host of talks aimed at the industry's growing

audience of professionals, the GDM is cementing its position within a dynamic ecosystem with a rapidly changing infrastructure (**Cinéforum, Foundation for Digital Creation, Virtual Switzerland**), and can count on the growing presence of more than **350 professionals** from all industries. The GDM is steadily building a reputation as an unmissable destination for XR creators and has hosted more than **223 professional meetups**. In an industry undergoing constant change, the GDM is reaffirming its role as a springboard both for the domestic scene through the **Swiss Interactive Sessions**, and internationally through the **XR Coproductions Sessions**.

PRIZES

REFLET D'OR FOR THE BEST FEATURE 2022, Funded by the City and State of Geneva (10,000 CHF)

Saint Omer, directed by Alice Diop (FR)

Awarded by the international jury made up of director Mani Haghighi (IR) and 4 students from Swiss film schools: Korlei Rochat (ECAL, CH), Lisa Mouquin (UNIL, CH), Youssef Youssef (HEAD, CH/EG), David Nguyen (HEAD, CH)

REFLET D'OR FOR THE BEST SERIES 2022, Funded by the City and State of Geneva (10,000 CHF)

Last Summers of the Raspberries, created by Florence Longpré, Philippe Falardeau and Suzie Bouchard (CA)

Awarded by a jury made up of 5 members of the public (winners of the contest): Augustin Leroy (FR), Laurence Jacquet (CH), Lionel Devaux (CH), Jasmine de Montanier (FR), Judith Marchal (CH)

REFLET D'OR FOR THE BEST IMMERSIVE WORK 2022, Funded by the City and State of Geneva (10,000 CHF)

Eurydice, a Descent into Infinity, created by Céline Daemen

Awarded by a jury of 3 industry professionals: Boris Labbé (FR), Laura Olin (FI), Luke Kemp (GB)

FUTURE IS SENSIBLE AWARD 2022

Funded by the Pour-cent culturel Migros cultural support program (10,000 CHF)

Les aveugles, created by Julien Dubuc and the INVIVO collective (FR)

Awarded by the Future Is Sensible jury: Sabrina Calvo (FR), Mélanie Courtinat (FR) and Kathrin Kohlstedde (DE)

EUROPEAN SCRIPT AWARD 2022

Funded by the European Alliance for Television and Culture (€10,000)

Lost Luggage, created and written by Tiny Bretels (NL)

Awarded by the Jury European Script Award : Virginie Brac (FR), Louis Heinsman (NL), Constance Jamet (FR)

GENEVA AWARD 2022

Guest of honor

Nicolas Winding Refn (DK)

FILM & BEYOND AWARD 2022

Guest of honor

Alexandre Astier (FR)

TALES OF SWISS INNOVATION 2022

Guest of honor

OIL Productions (CH)

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