



GIFF 21: GIFF REINFORCES ITS FUNDAMENTALS AND BEGINS A NEW CHAPTER

The curtain has fallen on the Geneva International Film Festival this weekend after an intense ten days during which the contemporary audiovisual industry was probed through 140 multi-format works. The winners of the 27th festival's competitions were revealed at the closing ceremony on Saturday, November 13. A trio of women won the three Reflets d'Or awards worth CHF 10,000 each (donated by the State and the City of Geneva): Lebanese director Mounia Akl for her militant huis-clos *Costa Brava, Lebanon*, Danish creator Mette Heeno for her feminist and cerebral series *Snöänglar (Snow Angels)*, and Korean producer Gina Kim for her immersive work *Tearless*, which plunges the audience into a detention camp for sex workers. The European Script Award went to the Norwegian production *Pørni* by Henriette Steenstrup (EUR 10,000, donated by the European Alliance for Television and Culture) and the Future is Sensible Award was given to *Biolum* by Frenchman Abel Kohen (CHF 10,000, donated by the State of Geneva), during the Digital Night at the Geneva Digital Market. The awards list embraces the radical nature of the contemporary audiovisual industry and opens a new chapter for GIFF.

GIFF is delighted to have reunited with its audience during an event that echoed the history of the Festival while drawing the contours of its future, and this despite a pandemic that heavily disrupted the production of the event. The Festival's attendance passed the symbolic milestone of **30,000 festivalgoers** (first estimate) on Saturday morning. Cultivating the convergence of formats that makes the GIFF so unique, the program focused on experimentation, thanks in particular to the generosity of the more than two hundred guests, such as filmmaker **Luca Guadagnino**, who gave an exceptional masterclass and presented the feature-length edit of his series *We Are Who We Are*. French actress **Adèle Haenel** was also present to discuss the invisibilization of women in archives alongside **Jean-Gabriel Périot** while Israeli showrunner **Hagai Levi** talked about his series *Scenes From a Marriage*. Festivalgoers also enjoyed the mercurial presence of director and cartoonist **Riad Sattouf** who stayed to exchange with the public for the whole afternoon at the end of the event.

During its key events, GIFF brought together leading Swiss (SRG SSR, RTS and SRF) and international (Netflix, HBO Max, Canal+) broadcasters as well as major launch platforms for digital creation, including the awarding of the Cinéforum Innovation Grants during the **Digital Night**. The immersive installation park **Virtual Territories** was a great success, underlining the growing interest of the public for this art form (**11,000 views to date**). The public was able to experience first-hand the best of Switzerland's digital productions: *Unframed - Handpuppets - Paul Klee* by **Martin Charrière**, *The Legend of Kami* by studio **apelab**, *Desplace[s]* by **Isis Fahmy** and **Benoît Renaudin**, **Arnaud Parel's** creation *Teatro San Materno* and the VR creations of **ECAL** students.

The event was also marked by the significant growth of the **Geneva Digital Market**, the only market in Switzerland dedicated to audiovisual innovation. The event is meant as a rallying point and a forum for creative industries. The hybrid format offered begun this year will ensure greater access to the conferences, which are available online and over the years, will constitute an

archive for the institution. The market took place in the legendary Plaza cinema and online, in studio **APPIA**'s virtual landscapes and featured a meeting between the streaming giant Netflix and the Swiss producers of **AROPA**, as well as continuing education workshops in collaboration with **Focal**. A host of start-ups were also present to showcase emerging technologies. The GDM also included an event dedicated to digital creation, the **Digital Night**, which brought together several hundred guests in the installation park **Virtual Territories**.

The 2021 event benefited from the precious contribution of a constellation of partners who are committed to promoting an inclusive conception of the audiovisual industry in the city of Geneva and among various audiences. These collaborations have proved particularly precious in this year of pandemic.

The Festival ends on a high note this Sunday, November 14, with the performance ***Kwai Shing Estate*** by Swiss photographer and director **Pascal Greco** and New York musician **Lea Bertucci**, in collaboration with the **Mapping Festival**. GIFF will remain connected to its audience through its online replays and **GIFF UNLIMITED** events.

AWARDS 2021

2021 REFLET D'OR FOR THE BEST FEATURE FILM

offered by the City and State of Geneva [10 000 CHF]

Costa Brava, Lebanon by Mounia Akl, Lebanon

Awarded by the International Jury composed of the filmmaker Kinoshita Kaori [Japan] and four students from Swiss film schools: Jihahui Huang, Nour Labib, Sharon Zeller and Balthus Kiss.

2021 REFLET D'OR FOR THE BEST SERIES

offered by the City and State of Geneva [10 000 CHF]

Snöänglar [Snow Angels], created by Mette Heeno, Denmark

Awarded by a Jury composed of five members of the public [selected through a contest]: Christelle Michel, Isabel Jakob, Loïc Poli, Anne-Isabelle Gomez and Victoria Kraeva.

2021 REFLET D'OR FOR THE BEST IMMERSIVE WORK

offered by the City and State of Geneva [10 000 CHF]

Tearless, created by Gina Kim, South Korea

And a special mention for *Liminal Lands*, created by Jakob Kudsk Steensen [Denmark]. Awarded by the International Jury for Immersive Works, composed of Luc Meier, Zoé Sfez and Jonathan Vinel.

EUROPEAN SCRIPT AWARD 2021

offered by the European Alliance for Television and Culture [10 000 €]

PØRNI, created and written by Henriette Steenstrup, Norway

As well as a special mention for *Agatha Christie's Hjerson*, created and written by Patrik Gyllström, Sweden. Awarded by the European Script Award Jury, composed of Léa Fazer, Paolo Moretti and Rémi Tereskiewicz.

2021 FUTURE IS SENSIBLE AWARD

offered by the State of Geneva (10 000 CHF)

Biolum, created by Abel Kohen, France

Awarded by the Future Is Sensible Jury, composed of Sarita Christensen, Frederik Peeters and Simon Spiegel.

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