



International  
Documentary  
Film Festival  
Amsterdam

Amsterdam, Wednesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## First films of IDFA 2021 announced: Hito Steyerl's Top 10 and Artavazd Pelechian selection

Today the International Documentary Film Festival (IDFA) announced the first films selected for its 34<sup>th</sup> edition: the Top 10 program curated by Guest of Honor Hito Steyerl, and a four-title program with the films of Artavazd Pelechian. Both directors will be in attendance at IDFA 2021, which runs November 17 to 28 in Amsterdam.

### [Hito Steyerl's Top 10](#)

With her curated Top 10 program, which in fact consists of fourteen titles, the multi-hyphenate filmmaker, media artist, and writer **Hito Steyerl** offers a window into her kaleidoscopic world of film and media art. Key to apprehending her own seismic body of work, Steyerl's selection presents a lineup of dissident filmmakers who, each in their own way, have radically shaped the art of political documentary cinema.

Selected films include ***Videograms of a Revolution***, the cult masterpiece by **Harun Farocki** and **Andrei Ujica**, in a nod to Steyerl's long-held admiration of Farocki, who she has written about, exhibited with, and studied under at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Unearthing hidden stories of Japanese activism, the rare ***Yama: Attack to Attack*** will be screened on 16 mm, charting the consecutive assassination of the film's directors, **Mitsuo Sato** and **Kyoichi Yamaoka**, as they document the conditions of local workers.

Germane to Steyerl's own artistic methodology, several titles reimagine notions of truth and fiction, as seen in ***Stories of Destroyed Cities*** by the **Rojava Film Commune**, which sensitively illuminates the Kurdish cause—a returning subject in Steyerl's writings. The fluidity of the real is again reimaged in ***Kenedi Goes Back Home***, one of two selected films by Yugoslav Black Wave icon **Želimir Žilnik**, as well as in **Peter Watkins'** acclaimed epic ***La Commune (Paris, 1871)***, remastered for cinema release under Watkins' supervision.

Dissident filmmaking takes the form of avant-garde feminist art with titles such as **Barbara Hammer's** ***Nitrate Kisses*** and **Martha Rosler's** ***Semiotics of the Kitchen***. Still elsewhere in the selection, Steyerl presents a mainstay of documentary journalism with **Laura Poitras'** Oscar-winning Edward Snowden film ***Citizenfour***.

In accompaniment of her Top 10, IDFA is pleased to present an extensive **Filmmaker Talk** with Steyerl in Amsterdam's historic Tuschinski 1 cinema, named by *Time Out* as the most beautiful cinema in the world. During the festival, the Guest of Honor will also moderate a special panel discussion with several filmmakers from her selection.

## [Artavazd Pelechian](#)

Nearly thirty years after the release of his last film, IDFA is delighted to present the European premiere of **Nature** by the great Armenian director **Artavazd Pelechian**. A tour de force, the 64-minute triumph offers a monumental cinematic experience, returning to Pelechian's characteristic fascination with human fragility in the face of nature's titanic glory—this time through a swirling composition of found footage natural disasters. Showing in Tuschinski 1, the European premiere will be the first screening of the film that Pelechian himself attends. **Nature** was produced by Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain and ZKM Filminstitut with support from the Folk Arts Hub Foundation.

On the occasion of his new film, IDFA will award Pelechian with the **Lifetime Achievement Award** and screen three treasures from his oeuvre, introducing a new generation to his unparalleled work. One of the auteur's earliest films, **We** rousingly honors the people of Armenia and their tumultuous history, marking the birth of the filmmaker's signature distance montage technique. In **Seasons of the Year**, the director orchestrates a magnificent yet bittersweet symphony of human existence centering on an isolated community in the remote Armenian mountaintops. Finally, in **Our Century**, Pelechian turns to the 20<sup>th</sup> century space race of the U.S. and U.S.S.R., capturing the terrific nature of humanity crossing a cosmic threshold.

### **About IDFA 2021**

The **34<sup>th</sup> edition of IDFA will be an in-person event**, celebrating the art of documentary film **from November 17 to 28** in cinemas across Amsterdam. In accordance with the Netherlands' National Institute for Public Health and Environment (the RIVM), the festival will feature comprehensive health and safety measures, prioritizing the wellbeing of all in attendance and updating attendees as soon as the situation changes.

Tickets go on sale November 1 for Friends of IDFA and accredited guests, and general ticket sales begin November 3. Accreditation for industry professionals is now open. Program announcements will follow throughout the month of October.

*IDFA's audience program is made possible by [Vriendenloterij](#), [VPRO](#), [Fonds 21](#), [de Volkskrant](#), [Gieskes-Strijbis Fonds](#), [WeTransfer](#), [Ammodo](#), [NPO 2DOC](#), [Oxfam Novib](#) and [IDFA Vrienden/DikkeVrienden](#).*

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### **Editors' notes**

For film stills, please [click here](#).

For more information, please [click here](#) or contact our press office.

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*For more information about what's on offer when visiting IDFA, please visit our website or just [click here](#). You can also find all key dates [here](#). The final competition titles will be announced on **Monday, November 1**, during the IDFA 2021 press conference—available to stream online at [idfa.nl](http://idfa.nl).*