



International  
Documentary  
Film Festival  
Amsterdam

Amsterdam, Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## **IDFA Forum announces 62 projects selected for in-person 2021 edition**

The International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam is delighted to unveil the [62 documentary projects selected for IDFA Forum 2021](#). Celebrating its 29<sup>th</sup> edition this year, the co-production and co-financing market welcomes some of the world's leading filmmakers, artists, and emerging talents back to Amsterdam to present a dynamic slate of artistic approaches, subjects, and points of view to the international documentary industry. Confirmed **Decision Makers** include **ARTE, BBC, Hulu, Netflix, Sundance Film Institute, The Whickers, Topic, Museum of Moving Image, TIME Studios, VeeR, PHI Centre, and Diversion cinema**, among others.

**IDFA Forum** takes place live in Amsterdam's Compagnietheater and other festival locations from **November 20 to 26**.

*"I'm incredibly excited about the film and new media projects we've selected for IDFA Forum. The ingenuity of filmmaker teams developing unique and cinematic projects, despite an ongoing pandemic, is truly a hopeful sign for the future of creative documentary. Within the selection, we found promising and inspiring collaborations between directors and producers that cut across cultures and borders. In light of such collaboration, I feel there is no better time to launch the Producers Connection at the Forum, an intimate breeding ground for projects in the right stage to forge strong international partnerships and enter into fair co-productions,"* said **Adriek van Nieuwenhuijzen**, Head of IDFA Industry.

### **[Forum Pitch](#)**

Within the **23 projects** selected for the flagship **Forum Pitch**, highlights include **Tatiana Huezo's** quietly stunning project ***The Echo***, taking us into a tiny mountain village to explore what it means to grow up as a child amidst sheep and grass, frost and firewood, and pain and beauty. **Nahid Perrson** will pitch ***Son of the Mullah***, on the highly publicized execution of Iranian journalist and activist Rohollah Zam and his daughter's surprising search for the truth. **Nistha Jain** brings ***Farming the Revolution***, a poetic feature that dives into the heart of the ongoing Indian farmers' protests against the corporatization of local agriculture.

**Mads Brügger** will pitch ***Who Killed Thomas Sankara?***, a major international investigation into the 1987 murder of the former president of Burkina Faso, widely revered as the "African Che Guevarra." After the success of *The Letter*, **Maia Lekow** and **Christopher King** are back with ***Untitled Kenyan Politics Project***, a character-

driven feature that gains unprecedented access into a female-led, grassroots political campaign in Kenya's conservative Lamu region.

Courageous filmmaking pushes the documentary art form forward in projects such as *La Casa*, the new creative project from *Los Reyes* filmmakers **Bettina Perut** and **Iván Osnovikoff**, which explores the multidimensional universe of a Santiago household as a social revolt and COVID lockdown rattle the streets outside.

In *Orlando: My Political Biography*, contemporary European philosopher **Paul B. Preciado** turns to essay filmmaking, sculpting a collective manifesto for gender freedom that takes cues from Virginia Woolf's famous literary protagonist.

Other selected pitch projects take a deeply intimate perspective on Europe's contemporary socio-political landscape. With *Bride in Search of Happiness*, emerging director **Tea Vidović Dalipi** brings an observational portrait of a Croatian-Roma couple as they navigate parenthood amidst culturally disparate societies in conflict. Meanwhile, the debut feature by **Pasquale Remia** *Per tua colpa (For All My Sins)* explores the ancient folk rituals that live on in Southern Italy despite a disappearing peasant culture and the gaping wounds of the rural communities who live there.

Additional debut features include **Viv Li's** *The Two Mountains Weighing Down My Chest*, a witty and personal exploration of the director's sexual and cultural identity within the context of gendered Chinese culture.

### Producers Connection

**Fifteen projects** in early stages have been selected for the inaugural edition of the **Producers Connection**, the Forum's new section for fostering international co-productions. Catering to both established producers and up-and-comers who are committed to creative collaboration, the tailored professional platform will see two days of encounters between fifteen projects and seventy attending producers via short presentations and curated one-on-one meetings.

Several projects stand out for the inspiring collaborations behind them. In *New Life*, Russian director **Alexander Kuznetsov** comes together with French producer **Rebecca Houzel** to tell the next chapter in the life of Kuznetsov's long-documented protagonists. In *Sector Quicksand*, we see Indian director **Abhay Kumar** team up with South Korean producer **Heejung Oh** to make a film about Chandigarh, the metropolis designed by Le Corbusier. *Dream of Grape Gardens* brings Afghan director **Sahra Mani** with Philippine producer **Alemberg Ang** on a highly personal project about surviving exile through filmmaking. Elsewhere in the selection, projects such as *Niñxs* by **Kani Lapuerta**—an intimate coming-of-age portrait of a young child with a fluid gender identity—speak to a new generation of documentary film for the world around us.

## [Rough Cut Presentations](#)

**Seven projects** have been selected for this year's **Rough Cut Presentations** at the Forum. Notable titles include ***The Mother of All Lies***, the delicate and highly cinematic project from **Asmae El Moudir** in which the young filmmaker returns to her parents' home, only to begin unravelling a history of silencing within her own family and the wider Moroccan society. Turning to Europe, ***Brotherhood*** by **Hanka Nobis** deep dives into the growing alt-right movement in Poland, searching for answers in an unlikely romance as a young man comes of age; ***The Flag*** by **Joseph Paris** reflects on the aftermath of the 2015 Paris attacks, exploring the decline of civil liberties as local media and politics continue othering Arab and African communities.

## [IDFA DocLab Forum](#)

The market's new media strand **IDFA DocLab Forum** presents **thirteen projects in all stages of development and production**. Themes and subjects range from urgent to introspective—including artificial intelligence, illness, climate change, music, and collective memory, to name a few—all creatively explored through a variety of formats such as augmented reality, games, full dome, room-scale virtual reality, and 360-degree video.

Among the selected projects are ***Liberty City VR*** by **Katja Esson** and **Shannon Sea**, a testament to Miami's iconic African American neighborhood that uses immersive and interactive storytelling to stand up to gentrification. From the full dome community, director **Michaela French** will present ***In Here, Out There***, a real-time full dome documentary that uses breath, light, and sound to dissolve the boundaries between the body and the surrounding audio-visual ecology. Director **Ondřej Moravec** will pitch the interactive VR documentary ***Darkening***, on the potential of vocalizations to cope with depression, and artist **Alexander Luna** will pitch ***Yuraq Janka - Cordillera Blanca***, an augmented reality project in which users meet the guardians of the world's largest ice-covered tropical mountain range.

In addition to the thirteen projects selected for the DocLab Forum, the market welcomes **four projects** from the [IDFA DocLab Research & Development Program](#), supporting them in their search for international collaborations by arranging meetings with curators, distributors, exhibition platforms, funds, and XR producers at the Forum. Among the selected R&D projects are ***Kaspar***, the latest documentary work from **Piotr Winiewicz** and producer **Mads Damsbo** for **MAKROPOL**, and ***Emperor***, the room-scale VR piece directed by **Marion Burger** and **Ilan Cohen** and produced by **Oriane Hurard** for **Atlas V**.

## **Selection committee**

The **IDFA Forum selection committee** consisted of Rea Apostolides, Darya Bassel, Anna Berthollet, Gary Byung-Seok Kam, Anton Calleja, Azza Chaabouni, Hicham Falah, Luis Gonzalez Zaffroni, Klara Grunning, Ulla Haestrup, Gema Juarez Allen,

Karolina Lidin, Lucila Moctezuma, Tiny Mungwe, Justine Nagan, Adriek van Nieuwenhuijzen, Mikael Opstrup, Charlie Phillips, Stephan Riguet, Ove Rishoj Jensen, Estelle Robin You, Aline Schmid, Robin Smith, Joanna Solecka, and Jenni Tuovinen.

The **IDFA DocLab Forum selection committee** consisted of Zeina Abi Assy, Maddalena Crosti, Ingrid Kopp, Janine Steele, Yorinde Segal, and Caspar Sonnen.

## **About IDFA Forum 2021**

Running **from Saturday, November 20 to Friday, November 26**, this year's IDFA Forum will be a comprehensive live event that welcomes film teams, decision makers, and observers to attend on site and participate in person.

The Producers Connection, Forum Pitches, DocLab Forum, and Rough Cut Presentations will all include in-person presentations and curated one-on-one meetings in Amsterdam. This year, the Forum expands its pitch schedule, presenting a full program of pitches **on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday**. To accommodate those who are unable to travel, the market will facilitate online participation in presentations and meetings where necessary, including the option for online Observers. Read more about the Forum [here](#).

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### ***Editors' notes***

For **Forum project 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**.*

*IDFA presents new festival selections from September 21 onwards. **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).***