



International
Documentary
Film Festival
Amsterdam

Amsterdam, Wednesday, October 5th, 2021

IDFA announces Best of Fests, Masters, and Paradocs selections for 2021 edition

The International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) **added 65 titles** to its festival lineup today, rolling out the non-competitive program sections **Best of Fests, Masters, and Paradocs**. The 34th edition of IDFA takes place from November 17 to 28 in Amsterdam.

Best of Fests

This year's **Best of Fests** selection celebrates a year when, despite all challenges, festivals came back with a large slate of exceptional documentary films, and cinema triumphantly returned to the big screen. The program section takes a decidedly cinephile turn in 2021, honoring the year's award winners, critics' picks, and audience favorites.

The **46-film-strong selection** includes highlights such as the quietly earth-shattering ***A Night of Knowing Nothing*** by **Payal Kapadia**, winner of the Golden Eye Award at Cannes, and ***The Velvet Queen***, the lush, never-before-seen wildlife film by debut director **Marie Amiguet**. Transcendent masterpieces such as ***Users***, the mesmerizing exploration of humanity's future by **Natalia Almada**, and ***Taming the Garden***, the exquisite slow-cinema feature by **Salomé Jashi**, find a home in this year's selection as do buzzy audience films such as **Alison Klayman's** Alanis Morissette biopic ***Jagged*** and **Bing Liu** and **Joshua Altman's** ***All These Sons***, from the filmmaking team behind ***Minding the Gap***. The program section also pays tribute to the surprise gems from the festival circuit, including underdog award-winners ***The Silence of the Mole*** by **Anaïs Taracena** and ***Looking for Horses*** by **Stefan Pavlović**.

Masters

As today's auteurs take the documentary canon to new heights, **Masters** selects **sixteen must-see titles** from some of the leading filmmakers of our time. Several entries speak to the growing crossover between filmmakers working in both the fiction and documentary worlds, as seen in **Andrea Arnold's** incredible bovine experience ***Cow*** and **Karim Aïnouz's** ***Mariner of the Mountains***, charting the director's first trip to his father's homeland, among other titles.

The selection also presents new work by long-established documentary auteurs. **World premieres** include **Helena Třeštková's** ***René - The Prisoner of Freedom***, the follow-up to her 2008 masterpiece on the titular protagonist; **Mai Masri's** ***Beirut:***

Eye of the Storm, in which four young women document the recent uprising and lockdown in Beirut, leading up to the devastating port explosion; and **Laila Pakalnina's *Homes***, an ode to people, their houses, and making films that is rich with gently surrealistic *tableaux vivants*. **Sergei Loznitsa** is back with ***Babi Yar. Context***, exposing a blind spot in our cultural memory of World War II, while ***Futura*** brings together Italian masters **Pietro Marcello**, **Francesco Munzi**, and **Alice Rohrwacher** in a feat of collective filmmaking—a testament to the fact that cinematic mastery need not be individual.

Paradocs

The non-competitive **Paradocs** program returns with the tightest selection seen in years: **eight films** that push the limits of the documentary form, showcasing some of the year's best experimental documentary art.

Notable titles include ***Just a Movement*** by renowned artist **Vincent Meessen**, a stunning, complex portrait of **Omar Blondin Diop**, the Senegalese artist, freedom fighter, and **Jean-Luc Godard** actor. ***In The Belly of the Mountain***, the abstract essay film from cross-disciplinary artist **Stephen Loye**, a deliberate plane crash in the alps gives way to an impressionistic journey into a place, its surrounding community, and the filmmaker's own position. **Shengze Zhu's** beautifully shot ***A River Runs, Turns, Erases, Replaces*** explores the pandemic situation in Wuhan, subverting all expectations to deliver an atmospheric impression of a city, looking where others do not look.

About IDFA 2021

The 34th 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](#).

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**.*

*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.***