

# NIFFF



NEUCHÂTEL  
INTERNATIONAL  
FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL

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## **PIERRE-YVES WALDER BACK AT THE HELM OF THE NIFFF FROM JULY 2021**

The committee for the Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival (NIFFF) is proud to announce that Pierre-Yves Walder will become the festival's General Director in July 2021. With a strong artistic project, a lot of experience in the Swiss cultural and audiovisual sectors, his robust local roots and his far-reaching international network, he will no doubt allow the NIFFF to expand its reach in Switzerland as well as abroad, all the while offering festival-goers new and exciting experiences.

Pierre-Yves Walder's journey foretells a bright future for the NIFFF. He perfected his talent for programming with the NIFFF, where he started working in 2008. As years passed, he played an active role in the development and evolution of the festival through his commitment, his strong personality, and his endless passion for all forms of the fantasy genre. In the meantime, he gathered experience in communication with numerous festivals (including Visions du Réel, Locarno Film Festival, and the Geneva International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights), at Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS), and more recently at Pro Helvetia.

### **A project aligned with the festival's objectives**

At the heart of Pierre-Yves Walder's project is the desire to promote the NIFFF's rich legacy and to continue exploring the festival's main focus - fantastic films - with fresh eyes and new formats. Attuned to the evolution of new audiovisual technologies, Pierre-Yves wants to expand on the festival's mission: to encourage the development of digital cultures and raise their stakes. His engaged policies will help the NIFFF teams nurture and diversify its audience by creating strong links, meaning, and a feeling of togetherness.

### **A selection process at the service of an ambitious festival**

Whoever was going to succeed former General Director Anaïs Emery needed to be someone special. Her work as Artistic Director since 2006 made the NIFFF a world-class festival and an unmissable event for film lovers. To find a new General Director, the committee published a job advert in early May. About 20 applications were received, half of which coming from abroad. The selection criteria boiled down to this: ensuring continuity with the festival's mission from the past few years, and sufficient personality, ambition, and skills to make it grow even further. Pierre-Yves Walder has everything that is needed to take over and keep the NIFFF avant-garde and ambitious..

*"His ideal background, his deep love for genre cinema, his knowledge of the cultural sector and its stakes, the quality of his project - as well as the enthusiasm he demonstrated while defending it before the committee - have all played a role in his hiring. And, of course, his roots here in Neuchâtel, which is a great advantage when it comes to growing the festival."* Nathalie Randin, President of the NIFFF.

### **Loïc Valceschini, Artistic Director ad interim for one year**

Before Pierre-Yves Walder effectively becomes General Director in July 2021, programming duties for the NIFFF's 20th edition (2-10 July 2021) are entrusted to Loïc Valceschini. A major programmer of the festival for many years, Loïc Valceschini possesses deep knowledge of the fantasy genre, and is an

expert of Asian cinema. With him at the helm, we can be sure that this anniversary edition will be full of surprises and discoveries.

### **The NIFFF in a nutshell**

Created in 2000, the Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival (NIFFF) has become, in less than two decades, an unmissable event in the film world. It enjoys worldwide recognition, offers an eclectic programme, and is blessed with the presence of prestigious guests. It mainly focuses on one cinematic genre, which is fantasy, and has two additional themes: digital creation and Asian cinema. For its previous physical edition in 2019, the festival drew 48,000 attendees over 9 days.

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