

NIFFF



NEUCHÂTEL
INTERNATIONAL
FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL

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NIFFF 2023: THE PROGRAMME OF A MULTIFACETED 22ND EDITION

The Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival (NIFFF, 30 June to 8 July) unveiled the complete programme for its 22nd edition this morning, the second under the general and artistic direction of Pierre-Yves Walder. The 2023 selection, rich and unique, will give the spotlight to 124 films from 5 continents, with 44 countries being represented. These many cinematic visions help paint a picture of an ever-changing genre with infinite possibilities.

Diverse, multidisciplinary, audacious, the NIFFF's 22nd edition programme reflects the variety of the fantasy genre today. We give the spotlight to a new generation of imaginative and committed artists (Amanda Nell Eu, Bishal Dutta, Sofia Alaoui, Just Philippot), but also pay homage to legendary figures of genre cinema (John McTiernan, Katsuhito Ishii), and celebrate new films from directors who have meant a great deal to the festival (Jennifer Reeder, Christopher Smith, Lee Cronin, Ti West). By asking actress, author, and screenwriter Josiane Balasko to be our President of the International Jury, the NIFFF continues to explore the fantasy genre through unexpected lenses, as was initiated last year.

The 2023 edition will start on Friday, June 30th, with the Swiss premiere of sci-fi comedy **THE POD GENERATION** from Sophie Barthes (BE/FR/UK, 2023) and will come to a close on Saturday, July 8th, with the international premiere of the very current and alarming **ACIDE** from Just Philippot (FR, 2023). The official selection includes **8 world premieres, 7 international premieres, 4 European premieres, and 46 Swiss premieres**. The members of the International Jury are Josiane Balasko (FR), Veronika Franz (AT), Charles Burns (US), John McTiernan (US), and Olivier Babinet (FR). During the closing ceremony, they will announce the winner of the prestigious H.R. Giger "Narcisse" award (CHF 10,000 given by the City of Neuchâtel). The best Swiss short film will also receive its own H.R. Giger "Narcisse" award (CHF 10,000 from the SSA and SUISSIMAGE).

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

The International Competition aims to explore the geographical, thematic, and narrative diversity of today's imagined worlds. Out of 14 selected features films, nearly half are directorial debuts. They include the furious **TIGER STRIPES** from Amanda Nell Eu, the mystical and apocalyptic **ANIMALIA** from Sofia Alaoui, and the bloodcurdling **IT LIVES INSIDE** from Bishal Dutta. The category is also composed of films from directors whose previous works have been shown at the festival. The audience will thus have the opportunity to discover Jennifer Reeder's corrosive feminist manifesto (**PERPETRATOR**), Christopher Smith's take on religious horror (**CONSECRATION**), as well as the second part of Ti West's X trilogy, featuring an equally terrifying and moving lead performance from Mia Goth (**PEARL**). Don't miss the anxiety-inducing and brutal **VINCENT MUST DIE (VINCENT DOIT MOURIR)** from French filmmaker Stéphan Castang, and the Czech science fiction thriller **RESTORE POINT** from Robert Hloz. Last but not least, the impressive **WHITE PLASTIC SKY** from Tibor Bánóczki & Sarolta Szabó, a melancholic, ecologically-minded science fiction tale that proves animation can also be for grownups.

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION		
ANIMALIA MA/FR/QA, 2023, 91' Sofia Alaoui Swiss premiere	CONSECRATION UK/US, 2023, 90' Christopher Smith Swiss premiere	IT LIVES INSIDE US, 2023, 99' Bishal Dutta International premiere
PEARL US, 2022, 101' Ti West Swiss premiere	PERPETRATOR US/FR, 2023, 101' Jennifer Reeder Swiss premiere	PIOVE IT/BE, 2022, 93' Paolo Strippoli Swiss premiere
RAGING GRACE UK, 2023, 100' Paris Zarcilla European premiere	RESTORE POINT CZ/SK/PL/RS, 2023, 100' Robert Hloz Swiss premiere	SUPERPOSITION DK, 2023, 105' Karoline Lyngbye Swiss premiere
THE CUCKOO'S CURSE ES/DE, 2023, 98' Mar Targarona Swiss premiere	TIGER STRIPES MY/TW/SG/FR/DE/NL/ID/QA 2023, 95' Amanda Nell Eu Swiss premiere	TROPIQUE FR, 2022, 110' Edouard Salier Swiss premiere
VINCENT DOIT MOURIR FR/BE, 2023, 115' Stéphan Castang Swiss premiere	WHITE PLASTIC SKY HU/SK, 2023, 111' Tibor Bánóczki & Sarolta Szabó Swiss premiere	

ASIAN COMPETITION

The Asian Competition is our window on the incredible diversity of genre cinema from Asia. Taiwanese supernatural buddy movie **MARRY MY DEAD BODY** (Cheng Wei-hao) will have you in stitches, Bollywood werewolf movie **BHEDIYA** (Amar Kaushik) will deliver the laughs with a touch of horror, and South Korean surrealist musical **KILLING ROMANCE** (Lee Won-suk) will no doubt cause sparks to fly. The mesmerising and dream-like animated film **DEEP SEA** from Chinese director **Tian Xiaopeng** will take you on an unforgettable underwater, poetic journey. For those who like their stories dark, the Filipino horror coming-of-age **IN MY MOTHER'S SKIN** (Kenneth Datagan) and the allegorical Hong Kong crime film **MAD FATE** (Soi Cheang) have you covered. Two major premieres round things out: the international premiere of **FROM THE END OF THE WORLD** from **Kazuaki Kiriya**, the dizzyingly ambitious new film from the director of **CASSHERN** (2004), and the European premiere of the supercharged **SHIN KAMEN RIDER** (Anno Hideaki), the latest tokusatsu revival from Toei after **SHIN GODZILLA** (2016) and **SHIN ULTRA MAN** (2022).

ASIAN COMPETITION		
BHEDIYA IN, 2022, 156' Amar Kaushik Swiss premiere	DEEP SEA UK/US, 2023, 90' Tian Xiaopeng Swiss premiere	FROM THE END OF THE WORLD JP, 2023, 135' Kirika Kazuaki International Premiere
IN MY MOTHER'S SKIN PH/SG/TW, 2023, 96' Kenneth Datagan Swiss premiere	KILLING ROMANCE KR, 2023, 106' Lee Won-suk Swiss premiere	MARRY MY DEAD BODY TW, 2022, 130' Cheng Wei-hao Swiss premiere
SHIN KAMEN RIDER JP, 2023, 121' Anno Hideaki European premiere		

THIRD KIND

Beyond the competitions, the **THIRD KIND** category further explores the diversity of genres, and the 2023 programme is sure to blur all boundaries. The selection includes many Swiss premieres, notably the very sensitive **NORMALE** from director **Olivier Babinet** (member of the International jury). The festival is also proud to showcase films from the African continent, which tend to enjoy less visibility, with **MAMI WATA**, directed by NIFFF alumni **C.J. "Fiery" Obasi** from Nigeria, and **AUGURE**, the first feature from Belgian artist of Congolese heritage **Baloji**. Also in the programme are the highly anticipated 11th feature film from South Korean director **Kim Jee-woon** (**COBWEB**), the disquieting thriller **KENNEDY** from Indian filmmaker **Anurag Kashyap**, who will also be back in Neuchâtel, and **L'ULTIMA NOTTE DI AMORE**, a moving and violent descent into the shady side of Milan from **Andrea Di Stefano**. Finally, **SATTAR**, directed by **Abdullah Al-Arak**, is a surprising gem from Saudi Arabia about the misadventures of an insurance agent who dreams of becoming a professional wrestler.

THIRD KIND		
AUGURE BE/NL/CD, 2023, 90' Baloji Swiss premiere	COBWEB KR, 2023, 135' Kim Jee-woon Swiss premiere	FRONTIÈRES CA, 2023, 95' Guy Édoin International premiere
KENNEDY IN, 2023, 142' Anurag Kashyap Swiss premiere	MAMI WATA NG/FR/UK, 2023, 107' C.J. "Fiery" Obasi Swiss premiere	NORMALE FR, 2023, 87' Olivier Babinet Swiss premiere
PROPERTY BR, 2022, 101' Daniel Bandeira Swiss premiere	L'ULTIMA NOTTE DI AMORE IT, 2023, 124' Andrea Di Stefano Swiss premiere	SATTAR SA, 2022, 100' Abdullah Al-Arak Swiss premiere
THE ABANDONED TW, 2022, 128' Tseng Ying-ting Swiss premiere	UFO SWEDEN SE, 2022, 115' Crazy Pictures Swiss premiere	WHEN IT MELTS BE/NL, 2023, 111' Veerle Baetens Swiss premiere

ULTRA MOVIES

Thrill seekers know where to get their fix at the NIFFF: the **ULTRA MOVIES** category brings together the most extreme and radical films of the moment. Regular NIFFF guest **Lee Cronin** is coming back to Neuchâtel to present his brutally gory **EVIL DEAD RISE**, the fifth film in the legendary franchise created by **Sam Raimi**. With **FARANG**, director **Xavier Gens** delivers a blood-soaked revenge thriller that progressively increases in intensity, while Indonesian master of horror **Joko Anwar** mercilessly plunges his characters into a whirlwind of terror with **SATAN'S SLAVES: COMMUNION**. The surprising slasher **PENSIVE** from **Jonas Trukanas**, turns a student party in the Lithuanian countryside into bloody carnage. **Yamaguchi Junta**, whose previous feature **BEYOND THE INFINITE TWO MINUTES** was shown at NIFFF 2021, has a new playful film in which he once again toys with time loops: **RIVER**, which will have its **International premiere** at the festival. Two world premieres round things out: the grim **PANDEMONIUM** (Quarxx), and the harrowing **DOUBLE BLIND** (Ian Hunt-Duffy).

ULTRA MOVIES		
DOUBLE BLIND IE, 2023, 90' Ian Hunt-Duffy World premiere	EVIL DEAD RISE NZ/IE/US, 2023, 92' Lee Cronin Romandie premiere	FARANG FR, 2023, 99' Xavier Gens International premiere
GOOD BOY Viljar Bøe Anurag Kashyap Romandie premiere	IRATI ES/FR, 2022, 111' Paul Urkijo Alijo Swiss premiere	PANDEMONIUM FR, 2023, 92' Quarxx World premiere

<p>PENSIVE LT, 2022, 87' Jonas Trukanas Swiss premiere</p>	<p>RIVER JP, 2023, 86' Yamaguchi Junta International premiere</p>	<p>SATAN'S SLAVES: COMMUNION ID, 2022, 119' Joko Anwar Swiss premiere</p>
<p>THE WRATH OF BECKY US, 2023, 83' Matt Angel & Suzanne Coote European premiere</p>		

PROGRAMMES SPÉCIAUX

Launched in 1984 on the TSR channel, the "Film de minuit" TV programme helped many cinephiles discover new horizons of genre cinema. The publication of **Julien Comelli's** retrospective book is the perfect opportunity for the festival to celebrate this programme by showing two iconic films that are fondly remembered by nocturnal TV watchers (**THE SENTINEL, RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD**). Classic movie fans can also look forward to the carte blanche from Swiss illustrator **Dexter Maurer**, and to the special screenings dedicated to **John McTiernan** and **Katushito Ishii**. And of course, **FEMALE TROUBLE**, our retrospective on female archetypes in genre cinema, includes about twenty films as well as a public roundtable with Spanish director **Carlota Pereda** (who will be introducing her own film **PIGGY** as part of the retrospective).

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