«In a troubled and turbulent world, where human rights seem to be in decline, this 17th edition of the FIFDH honours powerful agents of change. Worldwide, in the face of unacceptable situations, they dare to raise their voices. Through these voices, we will question new forms of artistic, political and collective resistance, always bearing in mind openness, desire, and freedom of tone», announces Isabelle Gattiker, Director of the International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights.

From March 8th to 17th 2019, the 17th edition of the FIFDH, a unique event that brings together cinema and human rights, will host artists, activists and celebrities from around the world to meet the general public in the heart of Geneva. An iconic event held in parallel to the main session of the UN Human Rights Council, the Festival offers a selection of films and debates, readings, conferences, photography, a hackathon, illustrations and theatre, as well as activities for our younger audiences, in 62 locations in Greater Geneva and French-speaking Switzerland. Forum debates will be broadcast live, allowing the public to ask questions from anywhere in the world.

This edition will open on March 8th on the occasion of International Women’s Day, with a film dedicated to Nadia Murad, Nobel Peace Prize 2018, in the presence of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet and Swiss Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Pascale Baeriswyl. Three human rights defenders, Hajer Sharief (Libya), Tatiana Pechonchyk (Ukraine) and Sareta Ashraph (Iraq), will highlight the obstacles encountered in their daily struggles.

Among the 300 expected guests, actors Forest Whitaker and Aïssa Maïga, artist Ai Weiwei, writers Roberto Saviano, Leïla Slimani, Laurent Gaudé and Uzodinma Iweala, filmmakers Rithy Panh, Petra Costa, Amos Gitai and Fernando Perez Valdes, web creator Tim Berners-Lee, sociologist Saskia Sassen, activist and Syrian refugee Sara Mardini, jurist and feminist activist Ratna Kapur, journalists Lyse Doucet (BBC), Nadia Daam (Slate.fr and ARTE) and Lenaïg Bredoux (Media-part), former President of the Swiss Confederation Ruth Dreifuss, Sundance Festival Programmer Hussain Currimbhoy and Pat Mitchell, the first woman president of CBS will attend this edition. The Festival’s will be closed by French author Édouard Louis.

Actor Forest Whitaker (Bird, Ghost Dog, Black Panther) is a dedicated artist and activist. As the founder of the Forest Whitaker Peace Initiative (FWPI), he will discuss peacebuilding in South Sudan alongside young activist Magdalena Nandege at an evening event co-hosted by Interpeace. Oscar-winning Cambodian filmmaker Rithy Panh will present Graves Without a Name, a new installment of his cinematic grafico centered on the Khmer Rouge genocide. Brazilian filmmaker Petra Costa will show The Edge of Democracy, which focuses on the rise and fall of Dilma Rousseff. Two other stunning films, awarded at the Venice Film Festival, feature in our selection, including the documentary Still Recording by Saeed Al Batal and Ghiath Ayoub, shot in the hell of war in eastern Ghouta, and Manta Ray, Thai Phuttiphong Aroonpheng’s debut fiction film. Actress Aïssa Maïga will present another first feature: The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind, directed by British director Chiwetel Ejiofor (12 Years a Slave). Israeli filmmaker Amos Gitai will present A Tramway in Jerusalem, with Mathieu Amalric and Pippo Delbono, in partnership with the Cinémathèque suisse. The edition will be closed by Joel Edgerton’s Boy Erased, starring Nicole Kidman, Russell Crowe and Xavier Dolan.
The novelist Leïla Slimani will chair the Creative Documentary jury alongside filmmaker Fellipe Barbosa, Sundance Festival programmer Hussain Currimbhoy, award winning photographer Muhammed Muheisen and Julie Trebault, program director at PEN America. Together they will award the Grand Prix de Genève, offered by the City and Canton of Geneva (CHF 10,000) and the Sergio Vieira de Mello Prize (CHF 5,000), offered by the Barbara Hendricks Foundation.

The Fiction and Human Rights jury is chaired by American producer and activist Pat Mitchell, along with the author of Beasts of No Nation, Uzodinma Iweala, exiled Iranian singer Shahin Najafi, Swiss filmmaker Anne Deluz and lawyer Philippe Cottier. They will present the Grand Prize for Fiction, offered by the Barbour Foundation (10’000 CHF).

Created 30 years ago in Geneva, the World Wide Web is currently at the heart of international debates. In partnership with CERN, the creator of the Web Tim Berners-Lee will be present on the occasion of this anniversary alongside Bruno Giussani, international curator of TED conferences and Alexandra Elbakyan, a Kazakhstani activist for open access to knowledge. Richard Stallman, a pioneer of open source software, will participate in a Q&A session by video-conference at the end of the hackathon on Open Source and Human Rights, organized in partnership with Le Temps and Open Geneva. Cyber-harassment of women journalists will also be debated in the presence of journalist Nadia Dam, the first Frenchwoman to have obtained sentences for two of her online harassers.

This edition will be marked by several events addressing global health. Joanne Liu, International President of Doctors Without Borders, will take stock of her six years at the helm of the NGO, with a focus on the Ebola outbreak. An evening will be dedicated to the humans of the future in the presence of the doctor Bertrand Kiefer and the science-fiction specialist Marc Atalib. Artist Ai Weiwei will attend, denouncing the tragedy of contaminated blood in China at the world premiere of Ximei, by Andy Cohen and Gaylen Ross. Finally, the documentary trustWHO by Lilian Franch, produced by ARTE, will rigorously examine the independence of the World Health Organization.

All over the world, voices are rising to demand justice. The festival will pay tribute to Italian writer Roberto Saviano during an event which will follow a screening of the film Piranhas (La paranza dei bambini) by Claudio Giovannesi, in partnership with Gallimard Editions. Based on his latest novel, Piranhas will be screened for the first time in Switzerland prior to the publication of the upcoming sequel of the book, Baiser Féroce, which will be out in French come April. Another evening of the Forum will honour young peace activists from La Lucha, DRC. Finally, the criminalization of human rights defenders will be denounced in the presence of activist and Syrian refugee Sara Mardini, recently detained for assisting migrant people in Greece. It will also address citizen awakening during an evening with Leo Kaneman, founder and honorary president of the FIFDH, during which the film Après Demain by Laure Noualhat and Cyril Dion will be presented in the presence of the Indian pacifist activist Rajagopal P.V.

Three selected Swiss films feature free-spirited women: the documentary Delphine et Carole, insoumuses by Callisto Mc Nulty pays tribute to Delphine Seyrig and Carole Roussopoulos, feminist filmmakers, and joyous radicals of the 70s. Advocate by Philippe Béliaiche and Rachel Leah Jones recounts the fight of the eponymous Israeli lawyer who has represented political prisoners for almost 50 years. Insoumuses by Fernando Perez Valdes and Laura Cazador, recently detained for assisting migrant people in Greece. It will also address citizen awakening during an evening with Leo Kaneman, founder and honorary president of the FIFDH, during which the film Après Demain by Laure Noualhat and Cyril Dion will be presented in the presence of the Indian pacifist activist Rajagopal P.V.

In the Forum, in addition to the debates on women human rights defenders and women journalists who have fallen victim to cyberviolence, a debate on populism will give voice to women activists, including Filipino journalist Ninotchka Rosca, Italian journalist Annalisa Camilli and Brazilian activist Ludmilla Teixeira. A debate on toxic masculinities will also take place in the presence of Mediapart journalist Lenaïg Bredoux, sociologist Mélissa Blais and blogger Joao Gabriell.
**Impact Day: Can documentaries change the world?**

For the first time, the FIFDH will offer a program that brings together audio-visual professionals with NGOs, activists, philanthropists and experts in the heart of Geneva. The highlight of this program is the Impact Day, co-presented by the British Doc Society, with Suissimage. Fonction : Cinema and AROPA, which will question the development of new strategies for production, dissemination, financing and impact for Swiss and international documentaries.

**Memory, Justice and Reconciliation**

This edition will shed light on processes of reconciliation and justice in the former Yugoslavia with a documentary on the trial of Ratko Mladić, in Iraq, with the film *Mossoul après la guerre* by Anne Poiret, presented in a world premiere, but also in Guatemala and Cambodia. Following the previous screening of the Swiss documentary *L’Apollon de Gaza* by Nicolas Wadimoff, an evening will be devoted to issues of cultural heritage during times of war, in the presence of the Archbishop of Mosul, Chaloka Beyani, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons and Professor at the London School of Economics, who will open this edition of the Festival by interrogating the strength but also the fragility of human rights: who is accountable? Who is responsible for their violation? And for upholding them? During the main session of the UN Human Rights Council, the FIFDH will be simultaneously questioning the very notion of the universality of human rights with two key figures: Ratna Kapur, Professor of Law and Indian feminism, and the Nigerian writer and physician Uzodinma Iweala.

To accompany this reflexion, the FIFDH has invited two personalities, YouTuber La Carologie and the journalist François Sergent to observe this edition and exchange on ideas, proposals, criticisms and highlights with the audience.

**Crossing out Swiss values?**

This edition interrogates the Swiss identity, with a debate following the film *La Preuve scientifique de l’existence de Dieu* by Fred Baillif, presented as a world premiere, in the presence of the diplomat Tim Guldimann, the former Vice President of the ICRC Christine Beerli, and the former prosecutor Dick Marty. Marty is also the subject of the film *Dick Marty, un cri pour la justice* by Fulvio Bernasconi, which will screen at the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum.

The former President of the Confederation Ruth Dreifuss will speak of the repression of criminal organizations and terrorist organizations in Switzerland. This edition will also be marked by the worldwide premiere of the RTS documentary *Opération Papyrus*, by Béatrice Guelpa and Juan José Lozano, concerning the regularization of people without legal status in Geneva, during an evening with the film’s protagonists in attendance.

**Photography, literature, and graffiti: seeing the world through the eyes of activist artists**

The FIFDH explores different artistic territories. The Franco-Algerian photographer Bruno Boudjelal, an artist honoured at this 17th edition, takes to the streets of Geneva with *We will not die tired* a project that highlights residents of the Canton and which was created during a joint artistic residency, co-presented by the City of Meyrin and Agence UV.

In partnership with the Société de Lecture, two prominent writers will meet with the public: Leïla Slimani, president of the jury, and Laurent Gaudé, who will talk about his latest novel, *Salina*, and his play *Et les colosses tombèrent*, which was inspired by the films selected at the FIFDH. Laurent Gaudé will also present *En bas la ville*, a collection of photographic poetry created in Haïti, alongside photographer Gaël Turine. Lastly, publisher Yves Pagès and graphic designer Philippe Bretelle will present a performance on the subject of graffiti from May 1968 to the present day, entitled *Empreintes négatives.*

**A programme for young audiences**

40% of the Festival’s audience is under the age of 35! The FIFDH continues its educational program with more than 3,000 students from the Canton of Geneva, enrolled in public, private and vocational secondary schools with films, debates and a jury of young people. Activities for toddlers will be presented by the Maison de la Créativité and the Théâtre des Marionnettes of Geneva.
Making the invisible visible

The FIDFH is enriching its social programs for people who have little to no access to Festivals and public debates. In this context, the actress Aïssa Maïga will present The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind at the Tattes Collective Accommodation Centre for migrant people. Ruth Dreifuss will also meet people in detention centres at the Brenaz and Champ-Dollon prisons in the context of Special Juries organized with the Cantonal Office of Detention.

The convergence of struggles according to Edouard Louis

The writer Edouard Louis, a pioneer of confrontational literature and author of three striking novels, will discuss the convergence of social struggles and “the new wretched of the Earth”, the central subjects of his novel Qui a tué mon père, with Caroline Abu Sa’da, editor of the FIDFH Forum. The event will be the closing session of this edition of the Festival.

An international FIDFH

The International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights (FIDFH), created in 2003 in Geneva, is the most important international event dedicated to cinema and human rights. Created as a Foundation, it is chaired by Bruno Giussani, the Global Curator of TED conferences.

With a budget of 2 million CHF (1.7 million euros), it relies on 170 international partners. Its main media partners are RTS, Le Temps, TV5MONDE, ARTE, Courrier International, Internazionale, France Culture, L’Obs, Revue XXI, 6 Mois and Euronews. The FIDFH also includes among its partners Amnesty International, OMCT, ISHR and MSF, as well as the University of Geneva, The Graduate Institute, HEAD, the Swiss Cinematheque, La Société de Lecture and the book publisher Gallimard. It is supported by the City of Geneva, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, 27 municipalities of Greater Geneva and the Association des communes genevoises, the Loterie Romande, foundations including the Barbour Foundation, the Fondation Meyrinoue du Casino, the Fondation Lombard Odier, the Fondation Pictet, as well as the Hospice Général, the Bureau de l’intégration des étrangers du Canton de Genève, the Service de la Solidarité Internationale du Canton de Genève, several private foundations and generous patrons.

Detailed program and ticketing: www.fifdh.org

The 17th edition of the FIDFH will take place in Geneva and throughout French-speaking Switzerland from March 8th to 17th, 2018

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