THE 20TH EDITION OF THE FIFDH ENDED!

On 4 March, the soprano and patron of the Festival, Barbara Hendricks, opened the 20th edition of the FIFDH with a message of peace and reconciliation and gave a concert in Meyrin for the occasion. After two digital editions, the FIFDH celebrated its reunion with its audiences. It is now extended online with a selection of films on VOD to be discovered until 20 March.

This 20th edition of the International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights welcomed over 28,000 festival-goers to 118 events over 10 days. We were honoured to receive 257 guest filmmakers, artists, activists, journalists and field specialists. To date, 30,000 viewers have followed the debates live and in replay and discovered new video and audio formats.

ACTIVIST ENGAGEMENT

The FIFDH highlights the commitment of filmmakers and activists from around the world by giving a voice to those who continually fight for human rights.

«Age doesn’t matter: you’re a young activist even if you’re 30 or 50 because you’re new to the system. No matter how old you are, you can stand up for causes!»

Winnie Tushabe

The FIFDH set up a unique space for dialogue, during a discussion dedicated to the reconciliation process in Colombia, 5 years after the Havana Peace Accords, in the presence of Sergio Jaramillo, Bertha Lucía Fries and Rodrigo Londoño, former FARC guerrilla leader, who declared on the Festival’s stage «In Havana, during the peace process, I was so ashamed to face the consequences of our actions».

The state of democracy in the world was discussed during evenings devoted to - among others - Tunisia, China, Myanmar, Ukraine. In the case of Tunisia, the findings were clear: «There is a diagnosis to be made: the failure of a political class that has not turned towards the citizen», said Amna Guellali. For Hong Kong activist Nathan Law, the decline of democracy is a general phenomenon: «I believe democracy will suffer. The deprivation of freedom will arrive on your land.»

The Festival brought together various actors in the anti-racist fight to question the situation in Switzerland. From its colonial past to the figures celebrated in the public space with Doudou Diène to the policies of reception and integration of young asylum seekers in Geneva, the speakers tackled current observations and offered pragmatic approaches for tomorrow. The journalist and co-director of Je suis noires Rachel M’Bon spoke about the construction of the identity of racialised Swiss people «I would like black women to be seen through another prism than that of colour».

Environmental issues were one of the guidelines of the 20th edition of the Festival. The writer and lawyer Philippe Sands came to address the notion of ecocide. Green finance was also discussed in the presence of Bertrand Piccard and the directors of the world premiere documentary La Finance lave plus vert by Matteo Born & Romain Girard.

«You can use social media; you don’t need to cut yourself from society, but you should be aware of the risk». Chelsea Manning, former US Army analyst, now working at the Neuchâtel-based start-up Nym Technologies, spoke about the risks and opportunities of new technologies in a brilliant discussion.

The evening dedicated to the situation in Ukraine, centred around the Ukrainian film The Earth is Blue as an Orange by Iryna Tsilyk, followed by a forum with a Ukrainian journalist live from Lviv, a Russian journalist and a panel of experts, opened the discussion on the stakes and consequences of this new humanitarian tragedy.

An exceptional meeting was held with the Director-General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. «The future of trade is green, the future of trade is digital and to help with inclusion.»
THE FILM SELECTION

The documentary and fiction juries, chaired respectively by filmmaker Rithy Panh and producer and filmmaker Shahrbanoo Sadat, chose the winners from an international selection of 36 films. The Festival presented several world premieres, including the poignant documentary *Angels of Sinjar* by Polish director Hanna Polak on the tragedy of the Yezidi people of Sinjar, as well as *Red Jungle* by Juan José Lozano and Zoltan Horvath, *Je suis noires* by Rachel M’Bon and Juliana Fanjul and Dans la mesure du possible by Romain Girard. The French-Moroccan director Nabil Ayouch accompanied his film *Casablanca Beats* for a few days at the Festival. The presence of the protagonist, Patricio Galvez, following the screening of *Children of the Enemy*, as well as that of Ghofrane Binous for *She had a dream* were unique opportunities for the public to engage with these exceptional personalities. The 20th edition of the Festival closed with a conversation with the famous French actress and director Aïssa Maïga following her latest film *Walking on water*, and with Isabelle Gattiker, General and Programme Director.

YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF THE FESTIVAL

The Activists: New Generation! Emergency activism debate dedicated to young activists presented three young women who stand out today through their initiatives and commitments within their respective communities and civil society in general: Paxton Smith, Winnie Tushabe and Marina Al-Khawand, accompanied by Suyn Haynes for moderation. They told of their struggles to change laws, improve living conditions and offered new solutions to the challenges they encounter. «It takes a lot of time and sacrifices to be a young activist», announced Paxton Smith; explaining the daily difficulties she faces, activist Winnie Tushabe said, «What keeps me going is knowing that I helped a person», and Marina Al-Khawand, «The city that never dies had to endure this unbelievable shock; we were the only ones helping the people out, saving lives.» Their inspiring and powerful message is an invitation to engage.

The educational programme also expanded considerably, thanks to its availability online. Schools have been able to benefit from video teaching sequences, with recorded films and encounters that have opened up the debate with their teachers in class. More than 3000 students have already had access to it.

The discussion on ways to rethink schooling in Switzerland concluded a year of reports in 19 episodes produced by Heidi.news and Le Temps.

IMPACT DAYS: A LABORATORY FOR IMPACT CAMPAIGNS

The professional programmes of the Impact Days 2022, both online and in-person, reached more than 900 people from 70 countries. Sixteen Swiss and international documentary projects dealing with urgent and pressing issues were selected. These projects were able to benefit from the specific training and support programme within the framework of the FIFDH: Impact Lab.

More than 100 meetings were held, with 68 representatives from 38 organisations, including Amnesty International, Oak Foundation, IRIS, InMaat Foundation, IMS, Oxfam and Doctors Without Borders, among many others. Within 24 hours of the programme’s closure, the *Baghdad on Fire* project and *Peace For Nina* received EUR 20,000 each thanks to the support of Impact Days partners.

The Impact Days 2022 FIFDH Prize was awarded to the Ukrainian film project Peace For Nina, directed by Zhanna Maksymenko-Dovhych. Offered by Impact Days and Think-Film Impact Production.

A new prize has been offered this year by Sublimages, partner of the Festival, to reward the film From the Cold War to the Green War by Anna Recalde Miranda, with translation and subtitles.

«With the Impact Days, the FIFDH is creating a unique and necessary place for itself in the international film festival landscape and in the field of Impact Cinema.» Cara Mertes, Founding Director, International Resource for Impact and Storytelling.
The Sudanese photographer **Eythar Gubara**, winner of the *Madame Figaro* prize with the Rencontres d’Arles and member of the documentary jury, presented her work testifying of her commitment to the rights of women and LGBTQI* people in Sudan.

The *People on the Move* exhibition by photographer **Kristian Skeie** was displayed at the Grütli.

In the run-up to the 60th anniversary of the Evian Agreements, French novelist **Alice Zeniter** spoke about the fabrication of the memory of the Algerian war.

A tribute was paid to the urban painter **Zoo Project** with an exhibition of his work at the Festival and a meeting with **Antoine Page** around the film *C’est assez bien d’être fou*. “I drew about 100 posters per day. This is my weapon against the dictatorship.”

The Myanmar artist and documentary jury member **Chuu Wai Nyein** spoke about the political situation in her country. The film *As far as impossible* followed the creation of the latest play by **Tiago Rodrigues**, director of the Avignon Festival.