

# NIFFF



NEUCHÂTEL  
INTERNATIONAL  
FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL

NIFFF - Press release, 17.06.21  
For immediate release

## NIFFF 2021 : A miraculous 20<sup>th</sup> edition

The Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival (NIFFF) unveils the programme for its 20<sup>th</sup> edition, which will take place from July 2<sup>nd</sup> to July 10<sup>th</sup>. Coming in a hybrid format this summer, the NIFFF will celebrate its anniversary by summoning the best creations in the fantasy genre from five continents. This unique programme in Switzerland includes more than one hundred works, with fifty feature films, eight short films selections, eight immersive installations and two TV productions. The festival is going back to being fully integrated to the lakeside town by utilising six of its iconic locations like the Théâtre du Passage, two screening rooms at the Cinepel, the majestic Open Air in the heart of the city, and the Neuchâtel Natural History Museum. Building on last year's entirely digital special edition, the NIFFF will promote its hybridity with an online section including some films (geoblocked for Switzerland), and all of our roundtables (available worldwide). This edition summons good memories from the past and probes today's imagination, on the cusp of a new era for the festival.

Working despite the ongoing pandemic, the festival's team is happy to offer a 20<sup>th</sup> edition defined by diversity and quality, with a number of screenings comparable to that of the previous years. This year, the festival selected slightly less movies in order to offer more screenings so that audience members can explore the whole programme in spite of the capacity restrictions (right now, the capacity is limited to 100 people per screening room, and 264 people at the Open Air). The Festival OFF area at the Jardin Anglais will become a large, convivial terrasse where festival-goers and locals can gather. The unique format of this year's edition is designed to comply to the current health measures.

### INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

NIFFF is excited to have selected many directors who are delivering their first or second feature. The competition includes fourteen movies from the four corners of the Earth that will compete for the H.R. Giger Narcisse award, consisting of CHF 10,000 given by the City of Neuchâtel. One of this year's highlights will include Swiss director Tim Fehlbaum meeting the audience for the international premiere of **TIDES**, an ambitious sci-fi film that makes us face the consequences of climate change head on. With **MIDNIGHT IN A PERFECT WORLD**, Filipino filmmaker Dodo Dayao takes the viewers through the back streets of a nightmarish Manila inhabited by nocturnal terrors, while the equally politicised Renata Pinheiro will make Neuchâtel buzz with **KING CAR**, a beautiful, motorised dystopia. Humans and their relationship to nature will be at the heart of four films in the competition: the South African survivalist eco-horror **GAIA**; the utopian animated adventure **CRYPTOZOO**, about legendary creatures; the bone-chilling socialite dinner **THE FEAST** and its Welsh-flavoured rot; as well as the return of Ben Wheatley to British horror with the pandemic/sensory experience **IN THE EARTH**. Many guests will attend in person or remotely to engage with the audience.

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION		
<b>BOYS FROM COUNTY HELL</b> IE/UK, 2020, 88' <b>Chris Baugh</b> Swiss premiere	<b>CENSOR</b> UK, 2021, 84' <b>Prano Bailey-Bond</b> Swiss premiere	<b>CRYPTOZOO</b> US, 2021, 95' <b>Dash Shaw</b> Swiss premiere

<b>FLASHBACK</b> CA, 2020, 97' <b>Christopher MacBride</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>GAIA</b> ZA, 2021, 98' <b>Jaco Bouwer</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>IN THE EARTH</b> UK, 2021, 107' <b>Ben Wheatley</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>
<b>KING CAR</b> BR, 2021, 97' <b>Renata Pinheiro</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>KNOCKING</b> SE, 2021, 78' <b>Frida Kempff</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>LAPSIS</b> US, 2020, 108' <b>Noah Hutton</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>
<b>MIDNIGHT IN A PERFECT WORLD</b> PH, 2020, 91' <b>Dodo Dayao</b> <b>International premiere</b>	<b>POST MORTEM</b> HU, 2020, 115' <b>Péter Bergendy</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>SON</b> IE/US/UK, 2021, 98' <b>Ivan Kavanagh</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>
<b>THE FEAST</b> UK, 2021, 92' <b>Lee Haven Jones</b> <b>European premiere</b>	<b>TIDES</b> DE/CH, 2021, 104' <b>Tim Fehlbaum</b> <b>International premiere</b>	

## NEW CINEMA FROM ASIA

The diversity of popular Asian cinema, which is not easily accessible in Europe, will again be showcased through its own competition **NEW CINEMA FROM ASIA**. Creativity will be front and centre with the dizzying **BEYOND THE INFINITE TWO MINUTES**, in which Junta Yamaguchi gets playful with time loops. Another Japanese movie, **THE FABLE: THE KILLER WHO DOESN'T KILL**, in its European premiere, sees the return of Kan Eguchi two years after winning the Audience Award. Animated film **BEAUTY WATER** will offer a caustic vision of the tyranny of beauty standards in South Korea. Note that the Asian selection will also include the **FORMOSA FANTASTICA** multidisciplinary programme dedicated to the Taiwanese imagination.

<b>NEW CINEMA FROM ASIA</b>		
<b>BEAUTY WATER</b> KR, 2020, 85' <b>Cho Kyung-hun</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>BEYOND THE INFINITE TWO MINUTES</b> JP, 2020, 70' <b>Junta Yamaguchi</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>MY MISSING VALENTINE</b> TW, 2020, 119' <b>Chen Yu-hsun</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>
<b>THE FABLE: THE KILLER WHO DOESN'T KILL</b> JP, 2021, 123' <b>Kan Eguchi</b> <b>European premiere</b>	<b>OK! MADAM</b> KR, 2020, 100' <b>Lee Cheol-ha</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>SHOCK WAVE 2</b> HK/CN, 2020, 120' <b>Herman Yau</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>

## FILMS OF THE THIRD KIND

In addition to the competitions, **FILMS OF THE THIRD KIND** will offer a range of films exploring the boundaries of fantasy. Polish director Daria Wozsek will come to Neuchâtel to present **MARYGROUNDED**, the colourful portrait of a 50-something clergywoman that goes at life head on. American documentary filmmaker Rodney Ascher will make a big comeback with the troubling **A GLITCH IN THE MATRIX**, in which he explores the theory that we all live in a simulation. Two European premieres will complete this programme with the musical **TONKATSU DJ AGETARO** and the dark comedy **WILD MEN**.

FILMS OF THE THIRD KIND		
<b>A GLITCH IN THE MATRIX</b> US, 2021, 110' <b>Rodney Ascher</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>TONKATSU DJ AGETARO</b> JP, 2020, 100' <b>Ken Ninomiya</b> <b>European premiere</b>	<b>WILD MEN</b> DK, 2021, 104' <b>Thomas Daneskov</b> <b>European premiere</b>
<b>MARYGOUND</b> PL, 2020, 80' <b>Daria Woszek</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>		

## ULTRA MOVIES

The **ULTRA MOVIES** section is dedicated to the most extreme films currently being produced, and this year's selection will undoubtedly make a big splash. After winning a prize at the NIFFF 2017 with **HOSTILE**, French director Mathieu Turi will present the Swiss premiere of **MEANDER**, his claustrophobic and gripping second film. The handmade but no less bloody puppets of the grand-guignolesque **FRANK & ZED** will be present alongside the vintage heroic fantasy epic **THE SPINE OF KNIGHT**, in which black magic falls into the wrong hands. In **COMING HOME IN THE DARK**, James Ashcroft contrasts the splendid New Zealand landscapes with the destructive violence that comes with revenge.

ULTRA MOVIES		
<b>COMING HOME IN THE DARK</b> NZ, 2021, 93' <b>James Ashcroft</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>FRANK &amp; ZED</b> US, 2020, 90' <b>Jesse Blanchard</b> <b>European premiere</b>	<b>MÉANDRE</b> FR, 2020, 90' <b>Mathieu Turi</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>
<b>THE SPINE OF NIGHT</b> US, 2021, 93' <b>Morgan Galen King &amp; Philip Gelatt</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>VICIOUS FUN</b> CA, 2020, 96' <b>Cody Calahan</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>	<b>WEREWOLVES WITHIN</b> US, 2021, 97' <b>Josh Ruben</b> <b>Swiss premiere</b>

## NIFFF EXTENDED

The series of conferences and talks that explore what is at stake in fantasy and the audiovisual industry, called **NIFFF EXTENDED**, will give about 30 experts a chance to share their vision for four days. Volker Engel, a leading figure of special effects who won an Oscar in 1997 for **INDEPENDENCE DAY**, will come to Neuchâtel to talk about his experience on **GODZILLA** (1998) as part of a conference dedicated to the evolution of the effects used to give life to the legendary monster. Representatives from the **JUICE** studio will present a case study of the Trioscope, an innovative technology driven by the Netflix show **THE LIBERATOR** (2020). The rebirth of French-speaking genre TV series will be discussed by screenwriters Marie Enthoven (**INVISIBLE**), Nicolas Peuffaillit (**LES REVENANTS, UN PROPHÈTE**), and Charlotte Sanson (**LES SEPT VIES DE LEA**). The **SAUVAGE** exhibition and the NIFFF's collaboration with the MHNN museum will come together during a rich discussion with comic book creator Frederik Peeters (**OLEG, SACCAGE, LUPUS**), researcher Yannick Rumpala (**HORS DES DECOMBRES DU MONDE**), and writer Antoine Jaquier (**SIMILI-LOVE**) about the connections between sciences, stories, and behaviours.

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