



Press release  
25 March 2021, Nyon

## Visions du Réel 2021 : free, powerful and diverse

During its 52nd edition, Visions du Réel will present 142 films originating from 58 countries. 82 films will be presented as world premieres and 16 as international premieres. While the International Film Festival Nyon will be held predominantly in a virtual format, its official selection emphasises its pioneering role when it comes to exploring the spectrum of non-fictional filmmaking practices. Moreover, with 26 Swiss (co)productions, the Festival affirms itself as an essential partner of national creation. 41% of the films selected were directed by women; 31 films are first films. Visions du Réel pays tribute to the French author, filmmaker and screenwriter Emmanuel Carrère by awarding him the prestigious Prix d'honneur. The 2021 Ateliers are dedicated to Tatiana Huezo and Pietro Marcello. *Les Guérisseurs*, the first feature-length film by Swiss filmmaker Marie-Eve Hildbrand, will open the 52nd edition on 15 April. The only festival in Switzerland dedicated to non-fiction filmmaking, Visions du Réel is a flagship event at an international level, and is offering a series of specific projects to make itself accessible to as many people as possible. Its Industry component constitutes an important networking platform and selects projects at all stages of their development.

« We will make every effort to once more make this edition a special and memorable event, to find the formats combining conviviality and safety, to give the public and the filmmakers everything that we can offer them. The edition will be as virtual as necessary and as physical as possible. » says Raymond Loretan, président du Festival.

Emilie Bujès, Artistic Director of Visions du Réel, continues : «The films that populate the 2021 official selection embrace this freedom, these subjectivities, this refusal of explanations or comprehensive information, so they may better aspire to conveying sentiments and personal emotions, which will only become even more universal. So, this powerful and eclectic 2021 selection will once again enable us to take into account the independence and the emancipation of contemporary non fictional filmmaking, which keeps itself at the right distance from the sometimes alienating issues of fiction and from the often excessively confined definitions—in form and in substance—of the traditional “documentary”.”

The films were selected from 3,000 submissions (a figure that has remained stable despite the current situation). Visions du Réel is proud to welcome prestigious juries for its four competitions: the list includes talented filmmakers such as Kamal Aljafari (*An Unusual Summer*), Alejo Franzetti (*Panke*), Thomas Imbach (*Nemesis*) or Laila Pakalnina (*In the Mirror*); the producers Consuelo Frauenfelder (*Un couteau dans le coeur*, Yann Gonzalez) and Julie Frères (*Drôle de pays*, Clémence Hébert); industry delegates such as Savina Neirotti, Director of the TorinoFilmLab and Head of Programme at the Biennale College of the Venice Festival, Anna Berthollet (Lightdox) or Diana Tabakov, Executive Director of Doc Alliance Films, as well as programmers and curators such as Josh Siegel from MoMa, Sergio Fant from the Berlinale or Garbiñe Ortega, Artistic Director of the Punto de Vista International Documentary Film Festival. For the first time, the Festival will have the honour of welcoming a FIPRESCI jury for

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the first feature-length films in the International Feature-length Film Competition and the Burning Lights International Competition.

The films in the official selection of the 52nd edition of Visions du Réel are:

## INTERNATIONAL FEATURE FILM COMPETITION

**13 films, 9 world premieres, 4 international premieres**

Presenting 10 world premieres and 4 international premieres from 20 countries, the International Feature-length Film Competition shows contemporary non-fiction filmmaking in a wide and open, original and singular definition.

*1970* by Tomasz Wolski, Poland, 2021, 70', world premiere

*Bellum - The Daemon of War* by David Herdies and Georg Götmark, Sweden/Denmark, 2021, 87', world premiere

*Courage* by Aliaksei Paluyan, Germany/Belarus 2021, 90', international premiere

*Faya Dayi* by Jessica Beshir, United States/Ethiopia/Qatar, 2021, 120', international premiere

*Holgut* by Liesbeth de Ceulaer, Belgium, 2021, 74', world premiere (co-presented with CPH:DOX)

*Les Enfants terribles* by Ahmet Necdet Cupur, France, Germany, Turkey, 2021, 93', world premiere

*Little Palestine (Diary of a Siege)* by Abdallah Al-Khatib, Lebanon/France/Qatar, 2021, 83', world premiere

*Ostrov - Lost Island* by Svetlana Rodina and Laurent Stoop, Switzerland, 2021, 92', world premiere

*The Bubble* by Valerie Blankenbyl, Switzerland/Austria, 2021, 93', world premiere

*The First 54 Years - An Abbreviated Manual for Military Occupation* by Avi Mograbi, France/Germany/Israel/Finland, 2021, 110', international premiere

*The Moon Represents My Heart (La luna representa mi corazón)* by Juan Martín Hsu, Argentina/Taiwan, 2021, 100', world premiere

*Users* by Natalia Almada, United States/Mexico, 2021, 81', international premiere

*Zinder* by Aicha Macky, France/Niger/Germany, 2021, 82', world premiere

## BURNING LIGHTS COMPETITION

**15 films, 12 world premieres, 3 international premieres**

Presenting 15 medium- and feature-length films coming from 15 countries, the Burning Lights Competition is dedicated to new vocabularies and forms of writing, to research, and to narrative and formal experimentation.

*After the Flood* by Yuan Zheng, China, 2021, 54', world premiere

*Dida* by Nikola Ilić and Corina Schwingruber Ilić, Switzerland, 2021, 78', world premiere

*Edna* by Eryk Rocha, Brazil, 2021, 64', world premiere

*Le Ventre de la montagne (The Belly of the Mountain)* by Stephen Loye, France, 2021, 77', world premiere

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*Looking for Horses* by Stefan Pavlović, Netherlands/Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, 2021, 88', world premiere

*Non-Stop (Jo ta ke)* by Aitziber Olaskoaga, Spain, 2020, 39', international premiere

*Notre endroit silencieux (Our Quiet Place)* by Elitza Gueorguieva, France/ Bulgaria, 2021, 67', world premiere

*Only the Winds* by Karim Kassem, Lebanon/Sweden, 2021, 132', world premiere

*Searchers* by Pacho Velez, United States, 2021, 80', international premiere

*Slow Return* by Philip Cartelli, United States/France, 2021, 80', world premiere

*Soldat Ahmet* by Jannis Lenz, Austria, 2021, 75', world premiere

*Splinters (Esquirlas)* by Natalia Garayalde, Argentina, 2020, 70', international premiere

*The Great Void (Die Große Leere)* by Sebastian Mez, Germany, 2021, 86', world premiere

*Way Beyond* by Pauline Julier, Switzerland, 2021, 60', world premiere

*WTC A Love Story* by Wouter de Raeve and Lietje Bauwens, Netherlands/Belgium, 2021, 60', world premiere

## NATIONAL COMPETITION

**12 films, 11 world premieres, 1 international premiere**

Devoted to medium- and feature-length films (co-)produced in Switzerland, in 2021, the National Competition includes 12 Swiss co-productions with 4 countries, including 11 world premieres and 1 international premiere.

*À l'intérieur (Within)* by Sabine Bally, Switzerland, 2021, 44', world premiere

*Chronicles of That Time (Cronache di quel tempo)* by Maria Iorio and Raphaël Cuomo, Switzerland/Italy, 2021, 75', world premiere

*Dreaming an Island (Sognando un'isola)* by Andrea Pellerani, Switzerland, 2021, 76', world premiere

*L'Étincelle* by Antoine Harari and Valeria Mazzucchi, Switzerland, 2021, 61', world premiere

*Les Guérisseurs (Healers)* by Marie-Eve Hildbrand, Switzerland, 2021, 79', world premiere

*Living Water (Žít vodu)* by Pavel Borecký, Switzerland/Czech Republic/Jordan, 2020, 77', international premiere

*Nostromo* by Fisnik Maxville, Switzerland, 2021, 82', world premiere

*Our Child (Menschenskind!)* by Marina Belobrovaja, Switzerland, 2021, 82', world premiere

*Parallel Lives* by Frank Matter, Switzerland, 2021, 139', world premiere

*Pushing Boundaries* by Lesia Kordonets, Switzerland, 2021, 102', world premiere

*The Lunar Course of My Life (Watashi wa tsuki no katawara ni)* by Valerie Bäuerlein, Switzerland/Germany, 2021, 87', world premiere

*The Mushroom Speaks* by Marion Neumann, Switzerland, 2021, 90', world premiere (co-presented with CPH:DOX)

## Other sections

Visions du Réel provides an important showcase for medium-length and short films in its Medium-length & Short Films International Competition and in the section dedicated to first short films and films made in schools: Opening Scenes. While the Competition presents 37 films, including 32 world premieres and 4 international premieres, Opening Scenes has 15 short films, including 13 world premieres and 2 international premieres. Switzerland distinguishes itself with seven films selected in these two sections particularly marked by the new generation. Once again this year, the Grand Angle section presents 11 feature-length films having already enchanted the audience in other festivals or that will mark the coming year. Furthermore, it includes a film presented as a world premiere, *My Place Is Here*, shot in a hospital in northern Italy during the first wave of the pandemic. Finally, the non-competitive Latitudes section offers a panorama of current non-fictional filmmaking practices: 11 films are presented.

## Special screenings

Visions du Réel will have the honour of presenting the American docuseries *Philly D.A.* in its entirety. Over eight episodes—including six never before shown at festivals—the filmmakers Ted Passon, Yoni Brook and Nicole Salazar offer unprecedented access to the office of Larry Krasner, Philadelphia District Attorney, going behind the scenes of the criminal justice system. *Philly D.A.* explores the most pressing social problems of our era—police brutality, the opioid crisis, armed violence and mass incarceration—through the prism of an idealistic team who are attempting to reform the system from the inside. Made up of songs and memories, the film chosen for the pre-opening, *Le Chant des vivants*, retraces the traumatising experience of young survivors coming from different regions of Africa. Finally, as part of the partnership between the Film Department at Geneva University of Art and Design and Les Archives of Radio Télévision Suisse, students specialising in editing take possession of the archives to create films around the notion of “struggles”.

## Emmanuel Carrère, Guest of Honor, as well as two Ateliers

It should be noted again that Visions du Réel will pay tribute—in collaboration with La Cinémathèque Suisse and ECAL—to the French author, filmmaker and screenwriter Emmanuel Carrère by awarding him the prestigious Prix d'honneur (previously the “Maître du Réel”). The Festival will present his documentary *Retour à Kotelnitich* and a series of films that he has chosen as part of his Carte Blanche. Finally, the two 2021 Ateliers (retrospective and public masterclass) are dedicated to the Mexican filmmaker Tatiana Huezo and the Italian director Pietro Marcello—with the latter being invited in partnership with Geneva University of Art and Design.

Full programme at [www.visionsdureel.ch](http://www.visionsdureel.ch)  
52nd edition of Visions du Réel: 15—25 April 2021


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