



Press release
April 28, 2021 Nyon

The 52nd edition of Visions du Réel draws to a close with 46,600 admissions and viewings ; *Flee* wins the Audience Award

The 52nd edition of Visions du Réel drew to a close on Tuesday evening with 46'600 admissions and viewings and the end of voting for the Grand Angle Competition. The public have chosen to award the 2021 Audience Award to *Flee* by Jonas Poher Rasmussen (Denmark, France, Sweden, Norway, 2020).

Made mainly with stunning animation to preserve the anonymity of its characters, *Flee* embarks the audience on a refugee's harrowing journey to find asylum abroad, as well as his intimate relationship with homosexuality. "For me Visions du Réel has always signaled quality, bravery and good taste in moviemaking. And while I would of course have loved to be there in person, it's really special to know that *Flee* made it to Nyon without me and met the audience who appreciated the film so much that they wanted to give it this award. I'm truly grateful", said Jonas Poher Rasmussen. The Audience Award of the Grand Angle Competition is sponsored by the City of Nyon and endowed with CHF 10,000.

After being one of the first festivals to become purely digital within five weeks in 2020, Visions du Réel is one of the first events this year to offer a hybrid adventure – this time within just a few days – along with all its challenges. From a practical point of view, in 2021 the Festival decided to limit its online screenings to 500, over 72 hours and geo-blocked on the Swiss national territory. The hybrid edition totalled 46,600 admissions and viewings. "By relying on our innovative power, we rose to the challenge of producing a hybrid edition", said Raymond Loretan, President of the Festival. "While last year's online edition enabled us to reach new audiences, we can see today that we have successfully retained and increased them, particularly in German-speaking Switzerland. The Festival's return to cinemas is also an important signal for a new cultural springtime in our country."

Emilie Bujès, Artistic Director of Visions du Réel, goes on: "This year, we have organised three Festivals in one and joyously begun a return to the new normality. The hybrid nature of the 52nd edition enabled us to affirm the new prospects discovered last year, while restoring our qualities and the very essence of the Festival. All the guests, professionals and audience who were able to participate in the Festival were delighted to finally find again the screening rooms, the discussions, and the atmosphere of the Festival, even if it was inevitably different. We are

particularly delighted, moreover, that the quality of the programming has been widely praised in the press, which closely followed the Festival.”

The 52nd edition of Visions du Réel began on 15 April with online screenings and encounters. After the first few days, the Festival adopted a hybrid form, first of all with screenings for schools and professionals, then by reopening the screening rooms to the general public. “We are extremely happy that more than 750 pupils and students were able to watch films in movie theaters, while over 950 pupils followed us online”, said Martine Chalverat, Administrative and Operational Director. “The Festival issued more than 2’150 accreditations and registered 46,600 tickets and viewings, which is very gratifying. The opening film, which was broadcast on RTS2, had an audience of 23,000 people.” As for the Festival website, it had more than 64,600 unique visitors in 10 days, 45% of which came from abroad.

During the Awards ceremony on Saturday 24 April, the Grand Jury Prize of Visions du Réel 2021 was awarded to the American, Ethiopian and Qatari co-production *Faya Dayi*, directed by Jessica Beshir. In addition to the Grand Prix, *Faya Dayi* won the FIPRESCI Award, presented for the first time at Visions du Réel. The Burning Lights Competition awarded *Looking for Horses* by Stefan Pavlović. Fisnik Maxville won the National Competition with *Nostramo*.

[See the replay of the Q&A with Jonas Poher Rasmussen](#)

[See the replay of the Awards ceremony](#)

The next edition will take place from 8 to 17 April 2022.

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