



Press release
17 January 2022, Nyon

The Real in the pocket Marco Bellocchio is the Guest of Honour 2022



Photo © Anna Camerlingo


Visions du Réel will celebrate the legendary Italian director, screenwriter and producer Marco Bellocchio by giving him the Festival's Honorary Award. The homage will include a Masterclass and a retrospective of selected works of one of the most significant oeuvres in contemporary filmmaking. Furthermore, his new documentary, as yet unreleased in Switzerland, will be screened. The prize will be awarded during the 53rd edition of the Festival, which will take place from 7 to 17 April 2022. Once again, the Cinémathèque suisse and ECAL (Lausanne University of Art and Design) are the valued partners of this invitation.

Born in Bobbio in northern Italy on the eve of the Second World War, Marco Bellocchio studied at the Academy of Dramatic Art in Milan and at Rome's renowned Experimental Cinematography Centre. In 1965, he directed his first feature-length film, *Fists in the Pocket* (*I pugni in tasca*, 1965). It was a manifesto of a young generation in rebellion, shot in his family home and played by school friends, which began a raging and lyrical body of work that was to be immediately noticed by critics – who saw it as an Italian response to the French New Wave.

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A political, committed and anti-fascist filmmaker, Bellocchio has constantly questioned the violence of institutions, particularly the Family with his first film or with *China Is Near* (*La Cina è vicina*, 1967), the Church with *In the Name of the Father* (*Nel nome del padre*, 1971) or *My Mother's Smile* (*L'ora di religione: il sorriso di mia madre*, 2002), the Army with *Victory March* (*Marcia trionfale*, 1976) or Health with his documentary *Fit to Be Untied* (*Matti da slegare*, 1974, co-directed with Silvano Agosti, Sandro Petraglia and Stefano Rulli), shot in a psychiatric hospital in Colorno (Parma), and influenced by the anti-asylum approach advocated by the psychiatrist Franco Basaglia. Exploring Italian history – for example, with *Buongiorno, notte*, 2003, about the kidnapping of politician Aldo Moro by militants of the Red Brigades, or *Vincere*, 2009, which tells the story of Mussolini's hidden mistress – Bellocchio successfully interweaves televisual and cinematographical archives with fiction in an unprecedented and remarkable manner.

Throughout his career, the filmmaker has over 50 films to his credit as director, constantly alternating between fiction and non-fiction, from his first documentary *Il popolo calabrese ha rialzato la testa* (1969) to the last to date, *Marx può aspettare*, via *La macchina cinema* (1978) – a state of play of cinema in five episodes co-directed with the same filmmakers as *Matti da slegare* –, shaping the codes of non-fiction and further widening his creative spectrum with each project.

He has presented his films at the most important festivals, and particularly at Cannes, for instance *A Leap in the Dark* (*Salto nel vuoto*, 1980), for which both Michel Piccoli and Anouk Aimée won acting prizes, or *Devil in the Flesh* (*Diavolo in corpo*, 1986), whose powerfully erotic dimension caused a scandal. He was also awarded an Honorary Palme d'Or in Cannes in 2021 for his essential body of work in contemporary filmmaking while, at the same time, his latest film was screened: a documentary dealing with the painful subject of his twin brother's suicide in 1967, *Marx can wait* (*Marx può aspettare*). Eminently intimate and heartrending, this latest opus highlights the profound and spectral influence of this insurmountable event and, more generally, that of his family, over fifty years of a singular and impressive career, with its endlessly renewed aesthetic ambition.

"Marco Bellocchio exercises impressive liberty and modernity to combine registers of images and genres, moving between fiction and documentary, between the intimate and the collective. We are extremely happy and delighted to pay tribute to an indisputable master of contemporary filmmaking, as well as to a body of work which, from the very first films, has demonstrated dazzling modernity, and is brooding, subversive and audacious, formidably eclectic," explains Emilie Bujès, Artistic Director of Visions du Réel.

The Festival will present a retrospective of around ten titles, enabling the audience to discover some of the director's most significant films, as well as rare documentaries, and his very latest work, for the first time in Switzerland, *Marx può aspettare*. Continuing longstanding strong and fruitful partnerships, this tribute is organised with the Cinémathèque suisse – which has been following Marco Bellocchio's work for many years – and ECAL.

Created in 2014, the Honorary Award rewards the body of work of a filmmaker who has been both active in the field of non-fiction and fiction. From Emmanuel Carrère in 2021 and Claire Denis in 2020 to Werner Herzog for the Festival's 50th edition (in 2019), not to mention Claire Simon, Peter Greenaway, Alain Cavalier, Barbet Schroeder or Richard Dindo, all of the Guests of Honour have helped to broaden the spectrum of cinematographical possibilities.

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 53rd edition of Visions du Réel: 7–17 April 2022

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