



Press release
25 January 2022, Nyon

The 2022 Atelier is dedicated to Hassen Ferhani

The work of filmmaker Hassen Ferhani (*143 rue du Désert*) will be showcased in this year's Atelier. The tribute will present a full retrospective of his films, as well as a carte blanche and a masterclass. The Atelier dedicated to the Algerian director is a collaboration with the HEAD – Geneva. As the third distinguished guest of this 53rd edition of the International Film Festival Nyon, Hassen Ferhani joins the American director and cinematographer Kirsten Johnson, and the Italian director, author and producer Marco Bellocchio, who will receive the Festival's Honorary Award.



The filmmaker Hassen Ferhani has been dear to Visions du Réel for many years, having already presented two films at the Festival: the medium-length *Afric Hotel* in 2011 and the short film *Tarzan, Don Quichotte et nous* in 2013. "We are delighted to once again welcome Hassen Ferhani, whose every film succeeds in nourishing and renewing a body of work that is simultaneously powerful and extremely graceful," explains Émilie Bujès, Artistic Director of Visions du Réel.

Born in Algiers in 1986, Hassen Ferhani was first introduced to film through his local video rental shop. He then discovered the works of Tarkovsky, Antonioni, Kiarostami and Cassavetes by joining the cultural association Chrysalide in 2004, which ran a weekly film club in one of the city's cinemas, and which also spawned other filmmakers such as Karim Moussaoui and Sofia Djama.

It was within this collective that he directed his first fictional short film *Les Baies d'Alger* (2006), screened at several international festivals, before taking part in the Summer University of La Fémis in

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2008. Next came *Afric Hotel* (2010), co-directed with Nabil Djedouani, and *Tarzan, Don Quichotte et nous* (2013), an extension of the digital series *Un été à Alger*, for which four Algerian directors were invited to portray their city from a documentary perspective. These films, created on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of their country's independence, were presented at Visions du Réel, among other festivals.

Having already received multiple awards for his first feature-length film *Dans ma tête un rond-point* (2016), Ferhani then won the Best Emerging Director Award for *143 rue du Désert* (2019) at the Locarno Film Festival three years later. Through a humanistic and politically engaged body of work that dissolves the barriers between documentary and fiction in the name of "lying-truth" (Aragon), Hassen Ferhani has, in the space of ten years, established himself as one of the leading architects of the resurgence of Algerian cinema.

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

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