



Press release

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VdR–Industry 2024: a stage for cinema in the making



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Visions du Réel is delighted to unveil the projects selected for the VdR–Industry, the Festival's programme dedicated to industry professionals, as well as the prestigious juries delivering CHF 80,000 in industry awards. Over four jam-packed days, Visions du Réel provides a unique opportunity for cinematic creation, connecting filmmakers with financing and distribution opportunities within an inspiring and productive environment. Under the new direction of Alice Burgin, VdR–Industry will take place from 14 to 17 April, nestled in the heart of the Festival.

A total of **29 projects** have been selected to participate across four prestigious categories this year. In the two showcase pitching events, 15 projects in development will be part of **VdR–Pitching**, and six projects in finishing stages will be presented at the **VdR–Work In Progress** pitch. Four projects have been selected for both the **VdR–Rough Cut Lab** and the **VdR–Development Lab** respectively. With a 48% increase in project submissions to this year's industry programme, and applications spanning over 108 countries, the 2024 selection seeks to reflect the diversity of a truly international cinema. Altogether selected features represent 30 countries and thirteen first films, with half of the selected programmes being directed or co-directed by women and thirteen projects including directors and production companies from low-production countries.

"The diversity of this year's Industry programme is a reflection not only of the cinematic and aesthetic values that drive Visions du Réel as a festival, but also of a contemporary world that's perpetually evolving and that we must engage with" says Head of Industry Alice Burgin. "This year's projects are fresh and exciting, and have an urgency that we cannot ignore. They are looking for the most original

and powerful formal approaches to revisit the past, and cast a critical lens on the present, in order to look bravely towards an uncertain future."

These **29 singular points of view** range from a personal story of cultural restitution to the closing doors of an old psychiatric hospital to a Chinese cricket team coached by a Pakistani in Italy. They all reflect upon an ever-changing world in a unique way. War, displacement and its lasting impact remain sadly ever-present in this year's selection including two new projects provide an insider's perspective on the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, one documentary explores the generational ramifications of exile on Palestinian families, and another explores the continuing complexities facing youth living in the aftermath of Northern Ireland's Troubles. Fathers (and grandfathers) are a recurring theme as well, one used to explore universal issues including the crisis of masculinity, domestic abuse, religious extremism, economic migration, and the spoils of colonialism. And when talking about frontiers, it is impossible not to mention the most fascinating one: space, with two new projects exploring our attraction towards the unknown. While *To the Moon and Back* offers a view of the next generation wanna-be astronauts via a never-before-look of Lausanne's ambitious space programme (EPFL – Asclepios), *Shifting Baselines* explores the curious goings on in Boca Chica, USA, the new home to Elon Musk's SpaceX starbase.

RETURNING ALUMNI

This year's selection shows the long-lasting relationships VdR–Industry develops with movie directors, welcoming back the following artists:

- **Mehran Tamadon** (*My Worst Enemy*, Visions du Réel 2023; *Iranian*, VdR 2014, *Bassidji*, VdR 2009) brings his newest project *The Last Days of the Hospital* (TS Productions & Box Productions). Tamadan's most radical project so far is an experiment in self-management of the dying days of a psychiatric hospital, demonstrating a cinematic and therapeutic experience with the patients, one that speaks volumes about the current situation regarding public hospitals in France.
- After the success of *A Marble Travelogue* (Visions du Réel 2022), **Sean Ali Wang** returns with *Pratopia* (MUYI Film). Through the threefold perspectives of a second-generation Chinese pianist from Wenzhou, a Pakistani cricket team captain and small factory owner, and a left-wing Italian youth political activist, the film delves into the intertwined destinies of three ethnic groups amid the rise and fall of the textile industry in Prato, Italy.
- Ukrainian director **Vadym Ilkov** (*My Father Is my Mother's Brother*, Visions du Réel 2018), pairs up with **Clare Stronge** on *Fixing the War* (Moon Man & Plainsong Films), showing us the vital role of a Ukrainian news 'fixer' as they wrestle with the jobs challenges when their war leaves the front pages.
- *Malqueridas* director (VdR–Industry 2021, 2023 Venice Critics' Week, IDFA) **Tana Gilbert** returns once again to VdR–Industry with her latest project, *Burning Daddy* (Errante & Dirk Manthey Film), which, through the reconstruction of a family history, reflects upon the complex shape of post-dictatorship Chilean fatherhood.
- **Charles Fairbanks** (*The Modern Jungle*, Visions du Réel 2016) is teaming up with producer **Lucila Moctezuma** on the new coming-of-age documentary *She Wrestles* (She Wrestles Documentary), using America's fastest growing high-sport to explore the changing face of rural America, and how young women find meaning and make community as they navigate our complicated world.
- **Gianluca Matarrese** (*Il posto – A Steady Job*, Visions du Réel 2022) brings his latest project *GEN_* (Bellota Films & Stemal Entertainment), following the life of a controversial Milanese doctor navigating contemporary medical issues ranging from reproductive rights to teenagers' gender transitions.
- Ukrainian film collective **Tabor**, who won the vision sud est Industry award last year with their project *The Days I Would Like to Forget* are back with *Listening to the World* by Yelizaveta Smith, a gentle family portrait exploring deafness and disability in a time of war.
- For the VdR–Rough Cut lab, **Karim Kassem** (*Only the Winds*, Visions du Réel 2021) brings his latest meditation on departures in *Moondove* (Screen Productions), while **Philip Cartelli** (*Slow Return*, Visions du Réel 2021) offers a playful investigation into a gang of anarchists who claimed to have stolen the ashes of Trotsky and baked them into cookies in *The Second Death* (Nusquam).


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FIRST TIME FILMMAKERS AND SWISS PRODUCTIONS

In addition to returning talents, Visions du Réel is a beacon for supporting new talents from around the world, and this year's industry programme includes thirteen first time feature documentaries. *Magnetic Letters*, *On the Way* and *The Shadow of Yolüja* and *To the Moon and Back* in **Pitching**, *Flood*, *The Myth of Mahmoud*, *At Least to See the Ocean*, and *Beyond the Fold* for **Work in Progress**. **Rough Cut Lab** will showcase both *Tau* and *Cuitá*, *Stone from the Sky* while **Development Lab** hosts *Leaf Remnants*, *My Grandparents' Window Overlooks a Cemetery* and *The Unlikely Hero*.

A selection of these first-time filmmakers include the production team from Kijora Film (*In Ukraine* Visions du Réel 2023, *1970*, Visions du Réel 2021 and *An Ordinary Country*, Visions du Réel 2020) that returns with **Natalia Dolgowska's** feature debut (*On the Way*) exploring the impact of mass tourism on Poland's Tatra mountains amidst climate breakdown. Producer **Pablo Lozano** turns his hand to directing, bringing to the VdR-Work In Progress showcase the hybrid documentary *At Least to See the Ocean* (La Felicidad), while female Palestinian directorial duo, **Mayar Hamdan and Shaima Al Tamimi**, explore the complexities of belonging and identity in *The Myth of Mahmoud* (Y2P Studios). Finally, **Katy Scoggin** is best known for her long-time collaboration with director, producer and artist, Laura Poitras, including working as cinematographer on the Academy-Award winning *Citizenfour*. In 2024, with support of Poitras as Executive Producer, Scoggin turns the camera on herself, examining her complex relationship with her evangelical father in *Flood* (Archelon Films).

Whilst showcasing a selection from all around the world, VdR-Industry remains deeply rooted within the national movie industry. VdR-Pitching forum is thus excited to count three **Swiss production houses** to pitching as part of the co-production market, welcoming Intermezzo with their latest project *Totemic*, **Stéphanie Barbey's** solo directorial debut, Rita Productions with *To the Moon and Back* (**Elisa Gómez Alvarez**), and Box Productions with *The Last Days of the Hospital* (**Mehran Tamadon** in co-production with TS Productions).

JURY WELCOMES NEW FACES TO VISIONS DU RÉEL

Projects part of the VdR-Pitching and VdR-Work In Progress showcase will be eligible for awards totalling over **CHF 80,000 of cash and in-kind support**. The 2024 **Industry Jury** welcomes three new faces to the Festival including **Rémi Burah**, CEO and Selection Committee Member of ARTE France Cinema, **Lisa Kleiner Chanoff**, Co-Founder of Catapult Film Fund and **Kristy Matheson**, Head of Festivals at the British Film Institute. The **Eurimages Jury**, awarding the coveted **€20,000 Eurimages Co-production Development Award**, includes **Eleni Chandrinou**, producer and the Greek national representative of the Council of Europe alongside **Susana Santos Rodrigues** (Co-director at IndieLisboa International Film Festival) and Producer at Mira Film **Vadim Jendreyko**. Finally, the **visions sud est jury** awarding the **CHF 10,000 award to one project from the global south**, is constituted by **Zsuzsi Bánkuti** (Head of Open Doors at Locarno International Film Festival), **Meret Ruggle** who's the Co-director of Trigon-film and **John Canciani**, Artistic Director of the Internationale Winterthur Short Film Festival.

The VdR-Industry programme is supported by the **Federal Office of Culture (FOC)**, **Media Desk Switzerland** and the **Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)**.

The Festival's programme will be announced in detail on 19 March 2024. Accreditation for professionals is now open.

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