



Press release

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Visions du Réel: A Festival deeply rooted in the Swiss film landscape



© Totemic, Stéphanie Barbey (VdR-Pitching 2024)

The Visions du Réel festival is not just a stop on the yearly international film circuit, it also remains a major event on the Swiss film calendar. Read on for an overview of industry and public events during the 55th edition of Visions du Réel, which will put Swiss creations in the spotlight.

Opening ceremony and round table with Giuliano da Empoli

The opening ceremony on 12 April will give the Festival's audience the opportunity to discover *As the Tide Comes In*, a funny yet poetic Danish film by Juan Palacios (co-directed by Sofie Husum Johannesen). Here, Visions du Réel will have the honour of welcoming Giuliano da Empoli, an Italian and Swiss writer, known in particular for his work *The Wizard of the Kremlin*. Published by Éditions Gallimard in 2022, it has been awarded the Grand Prix du Roman by the Académie française. Also present at this celebratory evening will be Nuria Gorrite, Member of the Vaud State Council, Carine Bachmann, Director of the Federal Office of Culture, and Alexandre Démétriadès, Municipal Officer of Sports and Culture in the town of Nyon.

The following day, on Saturday 13 April, Giuliano da Empoli will participate in a round-table discussion on reinventing the rules of the political game through the emergence of social networks and their ability to influence the "vision du réel". Simone de Montmollin, The Liberals National Councillor, Chair of the Committee for Science, Education and Culture (CSEC-N), and Gilles Marchand, Director

General of SSR, will also take part in this discussion, which will be moderated by Romaine Jean, freelance journalist and consultant.

Swiss productions and co-productions in the official selection

As already announced, Switzerland also features prominently in the official selection. As a reminder, the 55th edition of the Festival includes a total of 25 Swiss (co)productions, with a very strong representation of German-speaking talent in the international competitions. For the second year running, the International Feature Film Competition sees three Swiss (co)productions in contention, two of which were made by German-speaking filmmakers, and the Burning Lights Competition features two Swiss productions, both also made by filmmakers from the eastern part of the country.

VdR-Industry: 16 Swiss projects and new co-production opportunities

In 2024, the Visions du Réel Industry programme, **VdR-Industry**, will introduce 16 new Swiss projects. To kick off the VdR-Industry days, Sunday 14 April will be dedicated to the Swiss branch, with networking conferences and events centered on national production and co-production with Switzerland.

In conjunction with our partners at Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS), the Festival will launch to the market eight new documentaries in early development, through the RTS award supporting documentary creation. This exciting pitching competition aims at promoting documentary creation in French-speaking Switzerland, with 10,000 CHF in development funds being awarded to the best feature film project, as chosen by a panel made up of the following jury members:

- Steven Artels, Co-Head of Documentary Unit, RTS (Switzerland)
- Isabelle Christiaens, Head of Documentary Co-Productions, RTBF (Belgium)
- Philippa De Roten, Director of the Society and Culture Department, RTS (Switzerland)
- Stéphane Gobbo, Cultural Journalist, Le Temps (Switzerland)
- Bettina Hofmann, Co-Head of Documentary Unit, RTS (Switzerland)
- Catherine Le Goff, Deputy Head of the documentaries and Magazines Unit, ARTE (France)

The prize will be announced on Thursday 18 April as part of the RTS evening, during the ceremony for the documentary creation support award.

Switzerland Meets... Austria and Germany and SWISS FILMS Previews

Following on from Benelux featuring prominently in 2023, this year, **Switzerland Meets...** will focus on Austria and Germany, in collaboration with Austrian Films and German Films. Switzerland Meets... is a special event for both Swiss producers and public financing representatives alike, providing opportunities to meet delegations from a specific region or country to promote co-production, networking and collaborations. In Switzerland, this unique platform offers an opportunity to get a grasp of how the market works in other countries, in order to facilitate and enrich future collaborations.

In this respect, the Festival is delighted to welcome the following production companies: 8horses (Switzerland), Bandenfilms (Germany), DokLab (Switzerland), Electric Shadows Films (Austria), Golden Girls Film (Austria), Horse & Fruits (Austria), Langfilm (Switzerland), Pink Shadow Films (Germany) and Rosen Pictures (Germany).

New for this year, the **Switzerland Meets Austria and Germany Producer-to-Producer Pitch** offers producers the opportunity to get together and learn more about other producers from Switzerland, Germany and Austria in a relaxed environment. This will make it easier for individuals to meet each other, which may inspire new collaborations and co-productions. In addition, a session on **co-producing with Germany** will also be available to producers and filmmakers wanting to know more about working with one of our largest co-production partners. Industry Programme participants will also have the chance to speak to our German-speaking neighbours at various events, including **VdR-**


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Magic Hour: Meet the DACH presented by the Federal Office of Culture, as well as **VdR–Magic Hour: Meet the Germans** presented by German Films.

Now in its 55th year, the Festival will once again welcome **SWISS FILMS Previews**, in partnership with SWISS FILMS, which will present six Swiss documentary films which are nearing completion, ready for launch on the Festival circuit. SWISS FILMS Previews offers sales agents, international distributors and cinema Festival representatives the opportunity to discover these new documentaries. In addition to these films, three Swiss projects – *Totemic* (Intermezzo Films in co-production Dirk Manthey Film), *To the Moon and Back* (Rita Productions) and *The Last Days of the Hospital* (Box Productions in co-production with TS Productions) – will be presented as part of the core showcase, **VdR–Pitching**.

If you are a professional and have any questions about VdR–Industry, please get in touch with industry@visionsdureel.ch

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