



73rd IFFMH: Sold-out cinemas, numerous guests from abroad and an enthusiastic audience

Press release – Mannheim, 19 November 2024

The 73rd International Film Festival Mannheim-Heidelberg officially came to an end last Sunday, 17 November. The sold-out main auditorium of the Karlstorbahnhof in Heidelberg and, later that evening, the Stadthaus N1 in Mannheim were the locations for screening the festival's closing film, ›Shepherds‹ by Canadian director Sophie Deraspe. This romantic escapist film took the audience to Provence and the French Alps, using impressive cinematic imagery to evoke the rich artistic tradition of pastoral motifs as the plot straddled the line between romance and personal crisis. Before the screening began, festival director Sascha Keilholz thanked his team and called them onstage by name. The audience was also thanked for its turnout at the numerous sold-out and thoroughly well-attended film screenings as well as for its active participation in the extensive supporting programme.

At midday, the final highlight of the Young Film Festival attracted a large crowd to the festival lounge at Heidelberg's Karlstorbahnhof. Children's book author Alex Rühle delighted the young festival attendees with a reading from his latest book, "Zippel macht Zirkus", about a ghost named Zippel who haunts a castle. The day before, on 16 November, author and artist Moshtari Hilal and Mannheim actor Samuel Koch took part in a panel discussion in the Heidelberg Festival Lounge. This was held as part of this year's Retrospective with the theme of "Bodies in Film".



A final highlight of the 73rd IFFMH: author Alex Rühle (l.) with festival director Dr. Sascha Keilholz (r.)

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A great success: cinema as a shared experience and a place for cultural and political dialogue is well received

This year, the main programme included 71 feature-length films from more than 40 countries. These included films from the Dominican Republic, Georgia, Morocco, Iran, Romania, India, Brazil, Israel and Palestine. The IFFMH thus underscored its importance as a platform for countries whose films barely make it to German cinemas. 29 of the films were German premieres.

Around 80 guests from all over the world attended the festival. Among them were this year's guests of honour, two of the leading female filmmakers of our time: Polish director Agnieszka Holland, who was honoured in the Homage, and Scottish filmmaker Lynne Ramsay, who received the Grand IFFMH Award. The events honouring each of them were combined with workshop discussions which gave audiences a deep insight into the work of each filmmaker and the opportunity to ask questions of them. Further guests included the Georgian director Dea Kulumbegashvili, recently honoured in Venice; Catherine Breillat, the old master of French cinema; and the celebrated Spanish actor Sergi López.

At least 35,000 people attended the IFFMH this year, including more than 27,000 at the cinemas and some 8,000 who took part in supporting events such as panel discussions, performances, exhibitions, master classes, concerts and other events. The festival was thus able to compensate for the online viewers lost this year due to the suspension of streaming options and in fact increase the overall number of people attending.

The 74th IFFMH will be held from 6 to 16 November 2025.



The team of the 73rd IFFMH at the closing ceremony at the Stadthaus Mannheim
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Images

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About the IFFMH

With “New Film Experience” as its credo, the IFFMH has been venturing new, interdisciplinary perspectives on and through the art of film since 1952. This makes it the longest-running film festival in Germany after the Berlinale, and it continues to be a major platform for cultural, social and political dialogue. With each subsequent edition, the IFFMH, as a festival for the public in cinemas, invites festivalgoers to discover the rising stars of the international film scene as well as to follow the careers of established filmmakers and to become more familiar with film in the context of other art forms.

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The festival would like to thank its sponsors and partners.