



74th IFFMH: A festival that brings people together – The complete programme for 2025, tickets on sale from 20 October

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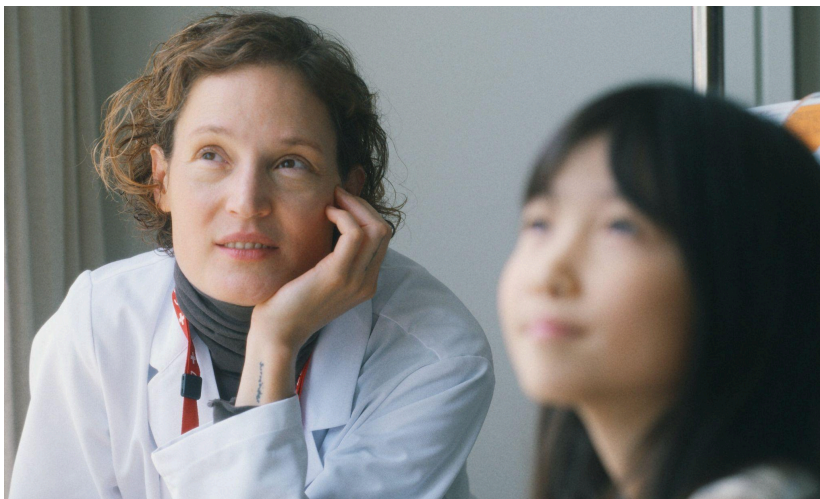
From 6 to 16 November, the International Film Festival Mannheim-Heidelberg (IFFMH) is inviting filmgoers to attend its 74th edition. With 74 feature films from more than 50 countries, the festival will warmly welcome its audience as well as numerous filmmakers from all over the world. Candid discussions and a spirit of diversity and inclusivity will be reflected in the extensive supporting programme. Furthering this sense of connectedness will be the “IFFMH im Fluss” event – a boat trip along the Neckar River from one festival city to the other and back, featuring performance art. To mark the start of ticket sales on 20 October, the festival is also offering a new service in the form of a telephone hotline for programme information.

Festival director Dr Sascha Keilholz: “The tone of this year’s festival is set by a young generation behind the camera whose work is influenced by post-migrant experiences – the loss of one’s homeland and starting over are recurring themes in their stories. As we see it, the trauma of fleeing persecution is the diametric opposite of what cinema, as a space where experiences are shared, is about. Cinema is a place that brings us together, promotes understanding and opens up new perspectives. An interest in people and the circumstances in which they live is also at the heart of our new partnership with SWR and the German Documentary Film Award. In times of polarisation and social division, a festival like ours is also a place that invites dialogue and that consciously stands for democratic values, diversity and inclusiveness.”

“For many years, the IFFMH has been thrilling filmgoers in the neighbouring cities of Mannheim and Heidelberg and attracting cinema-lovers from the entire metropolitan region and beyond. This year, for the first time, the prestigious German Documentary Film Award will be presented as part of the festival – for which I would like to thank SWR and MFG Medien- und Filmgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg,” says Mayor Christian Specht, emphasising: “The IFFMH is a unifying element in our urban societies, bringing the arts to life, enlivening spaces and bringing people together to engage in dialogue. With the return of the Planken Lichtspiele, the festival will once again be held in all of the cinemas in Mannheim and Heidelberg as well as in the Stadthaus N 1.”

The 2025 programme: German premieres, Oscar contenders and documentaries

In the ON THE RISE competition, the IFFMH traditionally screens 16 first and second feature-length films by talented emerging directors – all of them German premieres. This year, the geographic and artistic diversity is particularly pronounced. In completely different contexts, the films deal with migrational and post-migrational experiences, disruptive phases in politics and in people's lives, and social injustices. Many of the stories are based on real events or are rooted in the personal experiences of the directors. The South American entries ›**Cuerpo Celeste**‹ from Chile and ›**Noviembre**‹ from Colombia, each in their own fascinating way, deal with their respective country's authoritarian past. The same is true of the Romanian entry, ›**Milk Teeth**‹, which is set during the collapsing Ceausescu dictatorship and centres around a family whose eldest daughter disappears. ›**Traffic**‹, Romania's Oscar candidate for 2026, takes the form of an art heist film in order to depict the precarious situation of migrant workers and seasonal labourers in western Europe. In terms of content, this film is related to the Israeli entry ›**Mama**‹, about a Polish migrant worker in Israel. China and Japan are contributing two ghost stories with beguiling visuals: ›**Nighttime Sounds**‹ is about the lives of women in rural China as an excavation of a historical site is underway, and ›**White Flowers and Fruits**‹ deals with grief, loss and the limits of mutual understanding in the setting of a girls' boarding school. The US high-school comedy ›**Lemonade Blessing**‹, by contrast, is about a young man who must balance his strict Catholic upbringing with his first love. The couple in the equally amusing ›**Follies**‹ from Canada are already at the next stage of their biography as they decide to take their 16-year relationship further by opening it up in order to breathe new life into it.



›Yakushima's Illusion‹ © Cinefrance Studios, Kumie

Outside of competition, the IFFMH line-up also features German premieres, foremost among them the Mexican film ›**On the Road**‹ by David Pablos – winner of the Orizzonti award in Venice – a powerful, poetic, queer road movie. This film is an example of the extremely rewarding aesthetic power of diversity, which is being expressed in contemporary cinema partly through a greater representation of female voices and stories. This is seen in ›**Mother**‹ by Teona Strugar Mitevska, in which Noomi Rapace plays Mother Teresa. This drama portrays the saintly protagonist as a human being with all the contradictions that entails – set to a score that includes heavy metal. In ›**Yakushima's Illusion**‹, the latest film by Japanese director Naomi Kawase, Vicky Krieps plays a doctor fighting to save the life of a little boy. Hungarian director László Nemes, whose debut film, ›**Son of Saul**‹ (2015), earned the Oscar for best foreign-language film, is represented here with the German premiere of his third film, ›**Orphan**‹. As with his two previous films, Hungary nominated this one as its entry for the Oscars. Other Oscar contenders in the programme include ›**The Things You Kill**‹ by Alireza Khatami from Canada and ›**A Simple Accident**‹ by Iranian director Jafar Panahi, a co-production submitted to the Oscars by France. ›**The President's Cake**‹ by Hasan Hadi carries Iraq's hope for an Oscar, and the mystery thriller ›**Reedland**‹ by Sven Bresser that of the Netherlands.

Inspired by the German Documentary Film Award, the festival has expanded its FILMSCAPES section and will be screening six documentaries this year. These include Lana Daher's ›**Do You Love Me**‹, which reconstructs the fragmented history of Lebanon, a country without a national archive but familiar with both pop music and war. Federico Cammarata and Filippo Foscari accompany smugglers and refugees through the darkness of a forest on the Hungarian border in ›**Waking Hours**‹. Shot without artificial light, this film is also rather sensational in aesthetic terms.



›**Do You Love Me**‹ © AFP Arguileh on the Beach (2015) by Patrick Baz



2025 Young Actors Award – the nominees

The €10,000 Young Actors Award, presented by the international jury across all competition sections, honours outstanding young actors and actresses. This year's nominees are: **Skye Alyssa Friedman** (USA) as a defiant teenager torn between her Christian faith and the search for her own identity in Chris Merola's coming-of-age comedy ›Lemonade Blessing‹; **Noah Sayenko** (Germany) for his intensely emotional portrayal of an ex-convict in Steffen Goldkamp's drama ›Rain Fell on the Nothing New‹; and **Maksym Slivinskyi** (Ukraine/France) for balancing youthful energy and melancholy in his portrayal of a guest worker in Robin Campillo's queer coming-of-age story ›Enzo‹.

Diverse supporting programme: the arts, dialogue and interaction

Alongside the film screenings, the festival is offering a wide range of supporting events. New this year is an open meet-and-greet event with filmmakers, the international jury and the programming team.

On 7 November, an intercultural day will again be held in cooperation with partnering institutions in Mannheim and Heidelberg – featuring a Jewish-intercultural puppet show for children, the opening of an exhibition by young photographers at the Mannheimer Abendakademie, a concert by the Aramis Youth Orchestra, and a guided tour of the exhibition “Amazonien: Genesis in Gefahr” by artist Francisco Klinger Carvalho at the Intercultural Centre Heidelberg. A party at the Stadthaus Mannheim, hosted by the Institut Français, will be held in the evening.

Several panel discussions will also be held. These include a film studies discussion on 9 November on the topic of the retrospective “The Aesthetics of Grand Emotions in Melodrama”. And on 10 November, there's “FILM.POLITIK.DIALOG”, in which State Secretary Arne Braun and the cultural policy spokespersons of the SPD, Greens and CDU will discuss the future of film festival culture in Baden-Württemberg at the EinTanzHaus Mannheim. On the afternoon of 9 November, festivalgoers can take part in a guided tour of the exhibition “Meisterwerke aus Odesa” at the Kurpfälzisches Museum in Heidelberg and then see the Ukrainian documentary ›Militantropos‹ at the Gloria cinema.

All discussion events at the IFFMH are free of charge and are open to interested members of the public.

From 6 to 9 November, the FACING NEW CHALLENGES section will present an interactive video installation by Kilian Kretschmer in collaboration with Ioannis



Theocharis on the 60m² LED wall of the reopened Planken Lichtspiele cinema in the centre of Mannheim. An artists' talk will be held at the cinema on 9 November. In addition, Judith Milz and Heidi Herzig will be hosting a cinema-themed boat trip between Heidelberg and Mannheim on 15 November, featuring surprise guests. Their durational performance "Die Sendung" will take place on the deck of the Weiße Flotte Heidelberg – IFFMH on the move!

Start of ticket sales and a hotline for programme info

Tickets go on sale on Monday, 20 October, online at iffmh.de/tickets, at the official ticket offices at the tourist information centres near the railway stations in Mannheim and Heidelberg, and at all Reservix ticket sales outlets in the region. For 2025, the festival is retaining the ticket prices introduced last year as part of a new solidarity-based pricing system: individual tickets cost €8 (basic ticket), €12 (standard ticket) or €14 (solidarity ticket). No proof of eligibility is required. The festival pass for the unlimited enjoyment of films is also available in three freely selectable categories: €60, €85 and €100. There are also multiple tickets for 5 and 10 admissions. Holders of a Kulturpass (Kulturparkett Rhein-Neckar e. V.) or a Kulturpass for 18-year-olds enjoy free admission.

New: For anyone who would like to know more about the films when ticket sales begin, the festival is opening up a free hotline on 20 October from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.: 0621-48926221.

Thanks to the IFFMH's partners and supporters

The IFFMH would not be possible without the support of a wide range of partners. The festival would like to express its sincere thanks to the cities of Mannheim and Heidelberg, the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts of the State of Baden-Württemberg, the Federal Commissioner for Culture and the Media, the Manfred Lautenschläger Foundation, the Rainer Werner Fassbinder Foundation, the Dr Rolf M. Schwiete Foundation, the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Aerospace, and the Medien- und Filmgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg. In addition, the festival would like to thank the management consultancy cbs-consulting from Heidelberg for sponsoring the Young Actors Award.

The festival would also like to thank its partners RNV, VRN including VRN Nextbike, Stadtmobil, the BMW branch office in Mannheim, and the partnering hotels Mannheimer Hof, Nyx and Speicher7 for their mobility and hosting services.



The festival's various partners in the media also provide tremendous support: the Mannheimer Morgen, taz, ARTE and SWR. The IFFMH would also like to thank the Mannheim clothing store Engelhorn for its wide-ranging support. Further thanks go to Fashion Park Nußloch, with its Betty Barclay brand. And finally, the festival would like to thank its film projection partner, Mondt.

All the films at the 74th IFFMH, listed by section:

Opening film

›**Inside Amir**‹ Amir Azizi, Iran

Centre Piece

›**Mile End Kicks**‹ Chandler Levack, Canada

Closing film

›**The Threesome**‹ Chad Hartigan, USA

ON THE RISE Competition

- ›**Adam's Sake**‹ Laura Wandel, Belgium, France
- ›**Blue Heron**‹ Sophy Romvari, Hungary, Canada
- ›**Cuerpo Celeste**‹ Nayra Ilic García, Italy, Chile
- ›**Follies**‹ Eric K. Boulianne, Canada
- ›**Funeral Casino Blues**‹ Roderick Warich, Germany
- ›**Lemonade Blessing**‹ Chris Merola, USA
- ›**LifeHack**‹ Ronan Corrigan, United Kingdom
- ›**Mama**‹ Or Sinai, Israel, Poland, Italy
- ›**Milk Teeth**‹ Mihai Mincan, Romania, Denmark, Greece, Bulgaria, France
- ›**Nighttime Sounds**‹ Zhang Zhongchen, China
- ›**Noviembre**‹ Tomás Corredor, Colombia, Brazil, Mexico, Norway
- ›**Reedland**‹ Sven Bresser, Netherlands, Belgium
- ›**Sink**‹ Zain Duraie, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, France
- ›**Surviving Earth**‹ Thea Gajić, United Kingdom
- ›**Traffic**‹ Teodora Ana Mihai, Romania, Belgium, Netherlands
- ›**White Flowers and Fruits**‹ Yukari Sakamoto, Japan

PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES

- ›**A Simple Accident**‹ Jafar Panahi, Iran, France, Luxembourg
- ›**Enzo**‹ Robin Campillo, France, Belgium, Italy
- ›**I Only Rest in the Storm**‹ Pedro Pinho, Portugal, Brazil, Romania, France
- ›**Kokuho**‹ Lee Sang-il, Japan
- ›**The Last Viking**‹ Anders Thomas Jensen, Denmark
- ›**The Little Sister**‹ Hafsia Herzi, France, Germany
- ›**Mother**‹ Teona Strugar Mitevska, North Macedonia, Belgium



- › **Once Upon a Time in Gaza**› Tarzan Nasser, Arab Nasser, Palestine, Germany, Portugal, France
- › **On the Road**› David Pablos, Mexico
- › **Orphan**› László Nemes, Hungary, Germany, United Kingdom, France, Cyprus
- › **Peter Hujar's Day**› Ira Sachs, USA, Germany
- › **The Things You Kill**› Alireza Khatami, Canada, Turkey, Poland, France
- › **Two Prosecutors**› Sergei Loznitsa, Germany, Netherlands, Latvia, Romania, France
- › **What Does That Nature Say to You**› Hong Sangsoo, South Korea
- › **Yakushima's Illusion**› Naomi Kawase, Japan, France, Belgium, Luxembourg

FILMSCAPES

- › **All I Had Was Nothingness**› Guillaume Ribot, France
- › **Beloved**› Elisa Amoruso, Italy
- › **The Doll**› Sophie Beaulieu, France
- › **Do You Love Me**› Lana Daher, Lebanon, Germany, Qatar, France
- › **Madame Kika**› Alexe Poukine, Belgium, France
- › **Militantropos**› Yelizaveta Smith, Alina Gorlova, Simon Mozgovyi, Ukraine, Australia, France
- › **Nino**› Pauline Loquès, France
- › **Our Father**› Goran Stanković, Serbia, Croatia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy
- › **Palliative Care Unit**› Philipp Döring, Germany
- › **The President's Cake**› Hasan Hadi, Iraq, USA, Qatar
- › **Rain Fell on the Nothing New**› Steffen Goldkamp, Germany
- › **Renoir**› Chie Hayakawa, Japan, France, Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, Qatar
- › **Rental Family**› Hikari, USA, Japan
- › **Roofman**› Derek Cianfrance, USA
- › **The Summer Book**› Charlie McDowell, Finland, United Kingdom
- › **Under the Flags, the Sun**› Juanjo Pereira, Paraguay, Argentina, USA, Germany, France
- › **Waking Hours**› Federico Cammarata, Filippo Foscarini, Italy
- › **Wild Foxes**› Valéry Carnoy, Belgium, France

Retrospective "Cry Your Eyes Out – The Aesthetics of Grand Emotions in Melodrama" (in chronological order)

- › **Mildred Pierce**› director: Michael Curtiz, USA, 1945
- › **All That Heaven Allows**› director: Douglas Sirk, USA, 1955
- › **Night River**› director: Kozaburo Yoshimura, Japan, 1956
- › **An Affair to Remember**› director: Leo McCarey, USA, 1957
- › **Cairo Station**› director: Youssef Chahine, Egypt, 1958
- › **The Passion of Anna**› director: Ingmar Bergman, Sweden, 1969
- › **Rose la Rose, fille publique**› director: Paul Vecchiali, France, 1986



- ›**The Long Day Closes**‹ director: Terence Davies, United Kingdom, 1992
- ›**Hong Kong Love Affair**‹ director: Peter Ho-Sun Chan, Hong Kong, 1996
- ›**Breaking the Waves**‹ director: Lars von Trier, Denmark, 1996
- ›**In the Mood for Love**‹ director: Wong Kar-Wai, Hong Kong, 2000
- ›**The Broken Circle Breakdown**‹ director: Felix van Groeningen, Belgium, 2012

YOUNG FILM FESTIVAL

- ›**Hola Frida**‹ Karine Vézina, André Kadi, France, Canada
- ›**Jahia's Summer**‹ Olivier Meys, Belgium, France, Luxembourg
- ›**The Nature of Invisible Things**‹ Rafaela Camelo, Brazil, Chile
- ›**Olivia and the Invisible Earthquake**‹ Irene Iborra Rizo, Spain, France, Belgium, Switzerland
- ›**Ollie**‹ Antoine Besse, France
- ›**The Songbirds' Secret**‹ Antoine Lanciaux, France
- ›**Tales from the Magic Garden**‹ David Súpup, Patrik Pašš, Leon Vidmar, Jean-Claude Rozec, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, France

GRAND IFFMH AWARD Tim Fehlbaum (in chronological order)

- ›**Hell**‹ Germany, Switzerland (2011)
- ›**Tides**‹ Germany, Switzerland (2021)
- ›**September 5**‹ Germany (2024)

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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