



74th IFFMH: A brilliant start with the German premiere of ›Inside Amir‹ with director Amir Azizi, actor Pirouz Nemati and set and costume designer Sara Sharifgerami attending

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In a sold-out auditorium and in keeping with the slogan of this year's festival, "Feel Good?!", the International Film Festival Mannheim-Heidelberg (IFFMH) opened its 74th edition yesterday evening at the Cineplex Mannheim. Festival director Sascha Keilholz, Heidelberg's deputy mayor for the arts Martina Pfister, Mannheim's deputy mayor for the arts Thorsten Riehle and Marc Grün, head of the Office of Media and Film, Popular Culture and Sociocultural Affairs at Baden-Württemberg's Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts (MWK), spoke at the opening ceremony. Numerous representatives of the arts, political and business communities of the metropolitan region and the state of Baden-Württemberg were in attendance, as were guests of the festival from around Germany and abroad. Festival director Sascha Keilholz emphasised the value of artistic authenticity in an era of fake news and ideological trench warfare. He said the festival is a place of communication, togetherness and dialogue on this authenticity and thus in a position to play a part in a common effort to steer society towards action based on reason.



Grand opening of the 74th IFFMH at the Cineplex Mannheim © Narmo

The opening film was the Iranian production ›Inside Amir‹ by Amir Azizi, winner of the Giornate Degli Autori in Venice. Here, the director paints a nuanced portrait of a young man from Tehran who faces the difficult decision of leaving his home country and starting a new life in Italy with his girlfriend, Tara. He roams the city on his bicycle, and we observe him during his deeply respectful and warm-hearted visits with friends and family.



If you weren't able to make it to the opening night, you'll have three more opportunities to see this film: it will be screened in Heidelberg on 7 and 8 November and again in Mannheim on 14 November in the new Kinderwagenkino format (cinema for parents with babies) at Stadthaus N1.



Jochen Schropp (presenter), Martina Pfister (Heidelberg's Mayor for Culture), Marc Grün (Head of department of Media and Film, Popular Culture, Socio-Culture at MWK Baden-Württemberg), Amir Azizi (director of the opening film), Sara Sharifgerami (costume and production designer of the opening film), Pirouz Nemati (actor in the opening film), Sascha Keilholz (festival director), Carl Bergengruen (managing director of MFG), Thorsten Riehle (Mayor of Culture, Mannheim) © Narmo

Cinematic highlights and international guests

Until 16 November, festivalgoers can now enjoy 74 films from 56 countries in the main programme, with 27 German premieres among them. As usual, the festival is also welcoming a large number of international guests from the world of filmmaking.

This year, the **ON THE RISE** competition is again showcasing 16 outstanding first and second films by promising international directors – all of them German premieres. The festival is expecting that guests will be present at screenings of all of the films in competition.

One of the major German premieres in the other sections is ›**Mother**‹. This film by North Macedonian director Teona Strugar Mitevska depicts the young Mother Teresa (Noomie Rapace), with all the contradictions her life and personality entail. The queer road movie ›**On the Road**‹ by David Pablos, winner of the Orizzonti in Venice, is also highly recommended, as is ›**Orphan**‹, the third film by László Nemes, in which the Hungarian director continues his chronicle of his native country in the 20th century. Additionally, there is ›**Yakushima's Illusion**‹



by Naomi Kawase, the grand master of Japanese cinema, with Vicky Krieps in the lead role. Also from Japan is ›**Renoir**‹, only the second film by Chie Hayakawa, which earned the young director an invitation to compete at Cannes this year. And last but not least, among six documentaries at the festival is ›**Waking Hours**‹ which, without using artificial lighting, observes refugees waiting in the darkness and cold of a European forest.

Another highlight of the programme, and one which will be attended by lead actor Sérgio Coragem, is ›**I Only Rest in the Storm**‹, one of the most talked-about films of the year. This is a profound, incredibly intelligent portrait of our times, addressing post-colonial, ecological and gender issues.

As part of this year's **RETROSPECTIVE**, "Cry Your Eyes Out", which is dedicated to the aesthetics of grand emotions in melodrama and is presenting a total of 12 works made between 1945 and 2012, the festival is welcoming French actress Marianne Basler, who played the lead in Paul Vecchiali's ›**Rose la Rose – fille publique**‹ (1986). On 9 November, following the matinee screening of ›**All That Heaven Allows**‹ (1955), a film studies panel discussion with **Julian Hanich** (University of Groningen) and **Hannes Brühwiler**, the curator of the retrospective, will be held at Cinema Quadrat.

The 74th IFFMH is being held from 6 to 16 November 2025.

The complete schedule is available online at [iffmh.de/programme](https://www.iffmh.de/programme)

Tickets are available online on the programme page or via the [ticket shop](#), as well as at the daytime and evening box offices.

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 cinema in the context of other art forms.



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The festival would like to thank its sponsors and partners.

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