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OUTCOME OF
THE VIENNALE 2021

OCTOBER 21 TO 31

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SUMMARY AND OUTCOME OF THE VIENNALE 2021

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In this challenging time, the festival was a great success with 58,200 visitors and an occupancy rate of 74%. The past eleven festival days have proven that the Viennese audience's joy and interest in watching a multifaceted film program in the cinema together was greater than shying away from fully occupied auditoriums.

"The 2021 edition has exceeded my expectations," said Viennale director Eva Sangiorgi. "I was very satisfied with this year's program and certainly proud of it. It was therefore all the more beautiful to experience that the audience received it with great enthusiasm, which was also reflected in the number of visitors."

The Viennale 2021 had a lot of highlights to offer. Of course, these included the opening gala in the newly renovated Gartenbaukino in the presence of the director of the opening film *L'ÉVÉNEMENT*, Audrey Diwan, and the leading actress Anamaria Vartolomei. Following a nice idea introduced at last year's festival, this film was screened in all five Viennale cinemas on the opening night.

A monography dedicated to the exceptional British director Terence Davies, who also attended the opening, was extremely well received by Viennale audiences. Davies inspired them not only with his films, but also with his friendly presence, interesting and humorous Q&As after the screenings and an exciting and extensive workshop talk about screenwriting after the presentation of his work *SUNSET SONG* at the Urania cinema. The fact that Terence Davies is planning to shoot his next film in Austria delighted all participants even more.

A touch of Hollywood hit Vienna and the Viennale when actor Matt Dillon and director Shirin Neshat presented their new film *LAND OF DREAMS* at the Gartenbaukino, naturally attracting especially heightened media interest.

In addition, this year's Viennale welcomed an exceptionally large number of great guests who presented their films – the same number as in 2019, for example, when the festival lasted three days longer. These included Mia Hansen-Løve, Andrea Arnold, Mathieu Amalric, Sean Baker, Bruno Dumont, Nadav Lapid, Maria Speth and Abel Ferrara. Our industry guests answered questions from the moderators and audiences at 140 out of 250 screenings during the Viennale.

Austrian films weren't neglected at the 2021 festival either. The premiere of Sebastian Meise's internationally multi-award-winning work *GROSSE FREIHEIT* (*GREAT FREEDOM*), which won two further prizes at the Viennale, attracted particular attention.

After the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to do without a festival center in 2020, this year we once again had a meeting place for cinema lovers beyond the cinemas, albeit somewhat smaller in size: the Viennale Bar, ideally located between the Gartenbaukino and Urania cinema, invited people to conversations and DJ lines in the bar and club, in compliance with a strictly controlled 2G rule (admission only for people who are fully vaccinated or have recovered from COVID-19). The famous German actor Lars Eidinger got the crowd dancing, while the directors of the film festivals of Berlin, Locarno, Cannes (*Quinzaine des réalisateurs*) and San Sebastián paid their respects to the Viennale and discussed the role and future of film festivals.

The Viennale was not only pleased about enthusiastic reactions in domestic and foreign media; it also hugely expanded its own presence on social media as well as with exciting videos and podcasts.

The retrospective *Film as a Subversive Art – A Tribute to Amos Vogel*, organized in collaboration with the Austrian Film Museum, celebrated Vogel's 100th birthday and invited six curators from around the world to create programs that, in Vogel's spirit, explore what "film," "subversive," and "art" can mean today.

We're looking forward to next year and a very special anniversary: the 60th Viennale!

FILM AWARDS AND JURY STATEMENTS 2020

VIENNA FILM PRIZE

Jury: Christine Gaigg, Aenne Schwarz, Sebastian Brameshuber

The Vienna Film Prize, donated by the City of Vienna and awarded at the Viennale, goes to a current Austrian feature film that has been screened during the past year. The prize consists of a sum of money, donated by the city's cultural department, monetary support from the Hotel The Harmonie Vienna and generous material assets, sponsored by BLAUTÖNE and viennaFX. There are two awards: one for the best Austrian film and the Special Jury Prize. Owing to the generosity and commitment of all involved, the Vienna Film Prize continues to represent encouragement and recognition of the work of Austrian filmmakers.

Best Austrian Film:

GROSSE FREIHEIT (GREAT FREEDOM), Sebastian Meise, Austria/Germany 2021

Jury statement:

This visually stunning film addresses two major issues: freedom and love. It doesn't shy away from great pathos and is masterfully delicate in detail at the same time. It traces the continuities and fault lines of social exclusion and societal standardization but without committing itself exclusively to a political cause. It feels as if we can smell the rooms when the air begins to run out. We can look into the innermost feelings of the fantastically performed and staged characters with great care and precision, follow them into every abyss but are never tempted to get too close to them or to feel superior – and precisely for that reason we can't get rid of them.

Special Jury Prize:

BEATRIX, Milena Czernovsky, Lilith Kraxner, Austria 2021

Jury statement:

This film is imbued with the mysterious and original power of cinema; it is a bold act of nonchalance and radical reduction. We see the emptiness of everyday life, Instagram-like situations, but the way the actress appears in these actions, namely oblivious and unabashed, these moments would not actually be suitable for Instagram at all. Instead, cinematographic sensuality and intimacy emerge. Banal activities go beyond themselves: cleaning turns out to be satisfying despite being disgusting; procrastination and social sulking reveal a certain charm. Economically narrated, precisely framed – this is how aesthetic resistance arises.

STANDARD READERS' JURY PRIZE

Jury: Jeremy Braunsberg, Robert Frenay, Marija Milosavljevic.

The Standard Readers' Jury Prize goes to a film that does not yet have an Austrian distributor and is especially recommended for screening in Austrian cinemas. Should the award-winning film find a distributor, Der Standard supports its film run with free advertising space in its newspaper.

The STANDARD READERS' JURY PRIZE goes to:

KELTI, Milica Tomović, Serbia 2021

Jury statement:

An 8-year-old's birthday party becomes a stage on which several intersecting dramas play out. In one corner, the children criticize each other's Ninja Turtles costumes; in another, the adults indulge in drunken discussion and amorous adventures. In the course of a single night, this ambitious Altman-esque ensemble narrative explores issues of identity, intimacy, sexuality, and politics. The atmosphere of 1993 Belgrade may appear grim, but throughout the film the director emphasizes moments of joy, hilarity, and tenderness that shine through. The performances feel lively and improvised, as if we're dropping in on a group of friends in the midst of conversations and arguments that began before we arrived and will continue after we leave. The filmmaker navigates the world of the children with a sincere and serious eye, portraying their conflicts and dilemmas with as much gravity and tension as the adults'. We were moved by this film's humanity, its embrace of the characters' flaws, and its sensitivity to their desires. We were awed by the director's command of the space, her clarity of focus, and her expert ability to make a wide cast of characters feel immediately familiar. The jury is thrilled to give this award to Milica Tomović for her incredible debut feature, KELTI.

FIPRESCI AWARD (PRIZE OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FILM CRITICS)

Jury: Michael Phillips (USA), Veronika Zakonjsek (Slovenia), Marietta Steinhart (Austria).
The FIPRESCI PRIZE is awarded to the first or second film of a young director.

And the Fipresci award goes to:

RE GRANCHIO, Alessio Rigo de Righi, Matteo Zoppis, Italia/Argentina/France 2021

Jury statement:

In their visually imaginative leap from documentary to narrative filmmaking, Alessio Rigo de Righi and Matteo Zoppis follow their outcast protagonist from tragedy in 19th century Tuscany, Italy to reinvention, in the Argentine province of Tierra de Fuego. With a knowing eye, raw beauty and authentic texture these two filmmakers affirm the power and poetry of folklore.

ERSTE BANK'S *Extra*VALUE FILM AWARD

Jury: Silvia Bohrn, Boris Manner, Andreas Ungerböck

Erste Bank's *Extra*VALUE Film Prize was awarded for the eleventh time at the Viennale 2021. An independent jury selected an award winner from films by Austrian directors shown at the festival. In the past years the prize included a residency in New York and a presentation of the winner's work in the Anthology Film Archives.

The Erste Bank's *Extra*VALUE Film Prize goes to:

GROSSE FREIHEIT (GREAT FREEDOM), Sebastian Meise, Austria/Germany 2021

Jury statement:

Große Freiheit (Great Freedom) is a fearless film that is political without aiming for political correctness, a film that doesn't psychologize and has a long, suspenseful narrative arc. Restricted freedom with the accompanying measures and enforcement that are legally legitimized as normal in their respective time periods provide the framework for these magnificently told love stories. Great actors who test the limits of their art in a claustrophobic setting, excellent lighting and camera work make this film an extraordinary experience.

VIENNALE PRESS OFFICE

Fredi Themel 01/526 59 47-30
Carla Lehner 01/526 59 47-38
press@viennale.at
viennale.at

VIENNALE - Vienna International Film Festival
Siebensterngasse 2, 1070 Wien, Austria • Tel + 43/1/526 59 47
E-Mail: office@viennale.at • viennale.at