



64th VIENNA INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL

V'26

OCTOBER 22–NOVEMBER 3

PREVIEW PRESS CONFERENCE

FIRST HIGHLIGHTS OF VIENNALE 2026

Vienna, August 28, 2026

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends of the Viennale!

Today we are pleased to inform you about the current state of preparations for the Viennale 2026.

This year, the festival will take place from October 22 to November 3.

In this document we present you a first preview of various festival activities as well as already fixed program items of the 64th edition of the Viennale. In addition, we present this year's poster subjects.

Updated information can be found on our website viennale.at, press materials at viennale.at/en/press.

The program press conference will take place on October 13 at Metro Kinokulturhaus.

Advance ticket sales start on Saturday, October 17.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions.

With best regards,
The Viennale Press Team

press@viennale.at
T. 01/526 59 47
Fredi Themel ext 30
Hannah Shong ext 38

Accreditations as of September 7, 2026

Leonie Wimmer ext 20
akkreditierung@viennale.at
(Accreditation form online until October 5, 2026)
viennale.at/en/press/accreditation

VIENNALE – Vienna International Film Festival
Siebensterngasse 2, 1070 Vienna • T +43 1 526 59 47
office@viennale.at • viennale.at

SUMMER PRESS CONFERENCE VIENNALE 2026

As part of this summer event, we're presenting a little preview of what you can look forward to at the upcoming 64th Viennale.

The festival is keeping its tried-and-true structure and combines film historical programs with a carefully made selection of outstanding films from this year – several of which we'll be presenting to you today.

But a festival is so much more than that. Above all, it's an opportunity to meet up, exchange ideas, forge new connections, and to learn from one another. That's why we also want to report on several of the initiatives we've developed that are intended to make the festival experience more accessible and enriching, to draw a younger and diverse audience, and to expand the experience of the films beyond the cinema hall.

THE VIENNALE POSTER DESIGN

THE WHALE – BETWEEN ANATOMY AND IMAGINATION

The image that serves as the foundation for reflection in our poster design shows a North Pacific right whale and is taken from *Geishi* ("About Whales," 1794) by Nanki Josuiken. This book presents as a scientific treatise about the fourteen species of whale known in Japan at the time. Yet, in reality, it is more art than science. The panels are composed like picture scrolls with calligraphed poems alongside the images. And in these pages, for the first time, the supposition is documented that the whale is a mammal, not a fish.

The Japanese natural depiction from the 18th century is imbued with ambivalence, as whale hunting was a widespread industry. The animal was caught, dismembered, measured, depicted – a seemingly documentary approach. And yet, the significance of the relationship with the whale always went beyond the purely practical. In narratives of the indigenous Ainu people, stranded whales were considered a gift from the gods; whale hunters carried out ceremonies so that the souls of the slaughtered animals were able to achieve Buddhist enlightenment. Even whale fetuses were given a solemn burial. Hunting and worshipping; dissection and reflection. The same culture that turned the animal into a commodity simultaneously treated it as an animate being – a hybrid iconography in which anatomic precision and fantastic invention coexist.

This ambivalence is also present in Western culture, where the sea creatures occupy an ambiguous position in biblical imagery. The great fish in the Book of Jonah, which swallows the eponymously named prophet, represents a trial that precedes rebirth. And there is Leviathan, a distinct monster of primordial chaos in the Book of Job and the Psalms. Later traditions merged the two into one single image: the whale – the guardian of a boundary between threat and transformation.

To conclude, it's worth taking a look at the word itself. "Monster," from the Latin "monstrum," related to "monere" (to advise) and "monstrare" (to show). From an etymological perspective, the monster is not



1,5°C PYROPOLITICS AND THE NEW WORLD



BIERMANN



MEMORIES OF A FOREST



EVERYTIME



VISITATION



THE UNKNOWN



PAPER TIGER



QUEEN AT SEA



SOUMSOUM, THE NIGHT OF THE STARS



WIENER BLUES: THE LONELIEST MAN IN TOWN

first and foremost a threat; it is, rather, a symbol that appears to convey a message. And perhaps it is precisely in the eye of the whale – small but in every depiction rendered with great care – that this function is fulfilled. Not as a threat, but as a gaze that meets our own. And which, in this mutual gaze, reveals a warning.

THE VIENNALE ZENTRALE AT THE FUNKHAUS

The Viennale Zentrale is returning – the place where everyone can come together – in a version with even greater resonance.

This year, it's located in the historic building of the ORF in the heart of Vienna's 4th district, at the Funkhaus Wien in Argentinierstraße, which is now being used as a multifunctional cultural venue.

It will be our place for encounters, talks, masterclasses, panel discussions, concerts, and of course also parties – to celebrate, in these especially challenging times, the ritual, social, and unifying power of cinema. We also aim to take up and reinforce the political and cultural debates that arise during the film screenings in the theater and carry their impact into the public sphere.

YOUNG AUDIENCE

This year, we started a new initiative: the FERIEN-ABO (Holiday Subscription) for students who spend their autumn holidays in Vienna. It program encompasses four, especially chosen films for young people aged 14 and above. There will be an introduction prior to each film as well as a Q&A with the film creators, post-screening.

In addition, in a collaboration with the Vienna Board of Education, we're inviting students to attend two film showings as part of their school curriculum. And, in conjunction with our main sponsor, Erste Bank, we're also offering another event that provides insight into the workings and operations of an international film festival.

SELECTION OF FEATURES

1,5°C PYROPOLITICS AND THE NEW WORLD Lukas Marxt, Germany 2026

BEN'IMANA Marie-Clémentine Dusabejambo, Rwanda, Gabon, France, Norway, Ivory Coast 2025

BIERMANN Jens Meurer, Germany 2026

DIE BLUTGRÄFIN (THE BLOOD COUNTESS) Ulrike Ottinger, Austria, Luxembourg, Germany 2026

EKLIPSE Manuel Wetscher, Austria, Italy 2026

ERINNERUNGEN EINES WALDES (MEMORIES OF A FOREST) Katharina Rabl, Austria, Germany 2026

ETWAS GANZ BESONDERES (HOME STORIES) Eva Trobisch, Germany 2026

EVERYTIME Sandra Wollner, Austria, Germany 2026

FA XIAN ZHI LÜ (ZOOM IN, ZOOM OUT) Dong Jie, China 2026

DAS GETRÄUMTE ABENTEUER (THE DREAMED ADVENTURE) Valeska Grisebach, Germany, France, Bulgaria, Austria 2026

LA GRADIVA Marine Atlan, France, Italy 2026

HEIMSUCHUNG – EINE JAHRHUNDERTGESCHICHTE (VISITATION) Volker Schlöndorff, Germany 2026

I RARELY WAKE UP DREAMING Isabelle Stever, Germany, Ukraine 2026

L'INCONNUE (THE UNKNOWN) Arthur Harari, France, Italy 2026

LAVE FORVENTNINGER (LOW EXPECTATIONS) Eivind Landsvik, Norway, Denmark 2026

LA LIBERTAD DOBLE (DOUBLE FREEDOM) Lisandro Alonso, Chile, Argentina, Luxembourg, Germany, United Kingdom 2026

LONDON Sebastian Brameshuber, Austria 2026

MEINE FRAU WEINT (MY WIFE CRIES) Angela Schanelec, Germany, France 2026

MIA MERA STI ZOI TIS TZO: KEFALAIO FAIDRA (A DAY IN THE LIFE OF JO: CHAPTER PHAEDRA) Jacqueline Lentzou, Greece, France, Romania 2026

NAGIDAIARĪ (NAGI NOTES) Fukada Koji, Japan, France, Singapore, Philippines 2026

OASE (OASIS) Jannis Lenz, Germany, Austria 2026

PAPER TIGER James Gray, USA 2026

QUEEN AT SEA Lance Hammer, United Kingdom, USA 2026

LES ROCHES ROUGES (RED ROCKS) Bruno Dumont, Portugal, France, Italy, Spain, Qatar 2026

EL SER QUERIDO (THE BELOVED) Rodrigo Sorogoyen, Spain 2026

SOUDAIN (ALL OF A SUDDEN) Hamaguchi Ryusuke, France, Japan, Germany, Belgium 2026

SOUMSOUM, LA NUIT DES ASTRES (SOUMSOUM, THE NIGHT OF THE STARS) Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, France, Chad 2026

DER TAG VOR DEM ABEND (RUNNING ERRANDS) Max Koller, Austria, Germany 2025

TANGLES Leah Nelson, Canada, USA 2026

WAREWARE WA UCHÛJIN (WE ARE ALIENS) Kohei Kadowaki, Japan 2026

WIENER BLUES: THE LONELIEST MAN IN TOWN Tizza Covi, Rainer Frimmel, Austria 2026

SPECIAL PROGRAM

JOCELYNE SAAB

The journalist and filmmaker Jocelyne Saab, who was born in 1948 in Beirut and died in 2019 in Paris, was active as a war correspondent from the beginning of the 1970s. She created an oeuvre which is both a chronicle and a political reflection.

Our program encompasses six films and comprises two parts. The first, the “Beirut Trilogy” – BEYROUTH, JAMAIS PLUS (*Beirut, Never Again*, 1976), LETTRE DE BEYROUTH (*Letter from Beirut*, 1978), BEYROUTH, MA VILLE (*Beirut, My City*, 1982) – documents the Lebanese Civil War from within: ruins at dawn, a destroyed house, a family history erased.

The second part is a collection of films about the Middle East in a state of upheaval: LES ENFANTS DE LA GUERRE (*Children of War*, 1976) about a generation that grew up in conflict; IRAN, L'UTOPIE EN MARCHE (*Iran, Utopia in the Making*, 1980) about the ambivalence of a revolution, in which the future mechanisms of control and oppression are already emerging; and ÉGYPTE, LA CITÉ DES MORTS (*Egypt, City of the Dead*, 1977) about those people who live among tombs in the Cairo necropolis on the margins of society.

Saab's cinema is one that thinks from the perspective of the Other, and – as Nicole Brenez has recognized – is driven by a combination of love for the victims and irony regarding those in power. These are films which today take on a new sense of urgency.



BEYROUTH, JAMAIS PLUS



LES ENFANTS DE LA GUERRE

SPECIAL PROGRAM

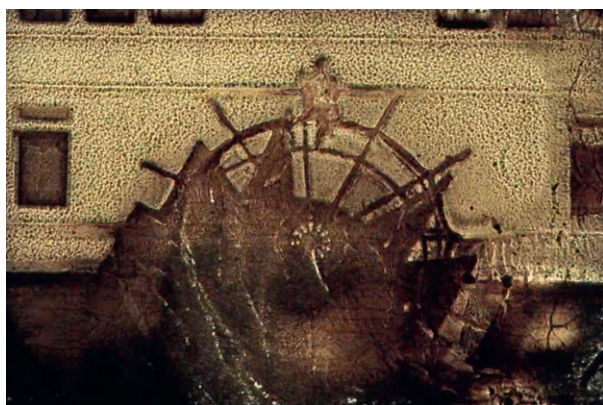
THE SOLOMONIC CORRESPONDENCES

Phil Solomon (1954–2019) described his work with film as “archeology in reverse.” Instead of revealing the original footage, he changed its materiality, chemically altering the emulsion – of Hollywood films and home movies alike – to defamiliarize the imagery and make them visible in a new context. A cinema situated between abstraction and figuration, material and memory, which even in radical experimental forms is capable of being profoundly expressive.

After the artist's death, the filmmaker Eve Heller founded the Phil Solomon Project along with curator Mark McElhatton. This major show of his works in Vienna owes its existence to their initiative and is divided into five programs. Three of them take us through Solomon's work, while the other two shed light on its context: influences, affinities, associations, dialogues with contemporary film creators – as well as with those from more recent times, who are carrying on and transforming Solomon's legacy.

The latter also includes a live Super-8 performance by Silt. An initiative that draws the spotlight back to the physical dimension of cinema: filmstrips and analogue formats, light, material, body, and projection. Because it's not merely about preserving works but about bringing images into circulation again. So that they may take on new significance in the present!

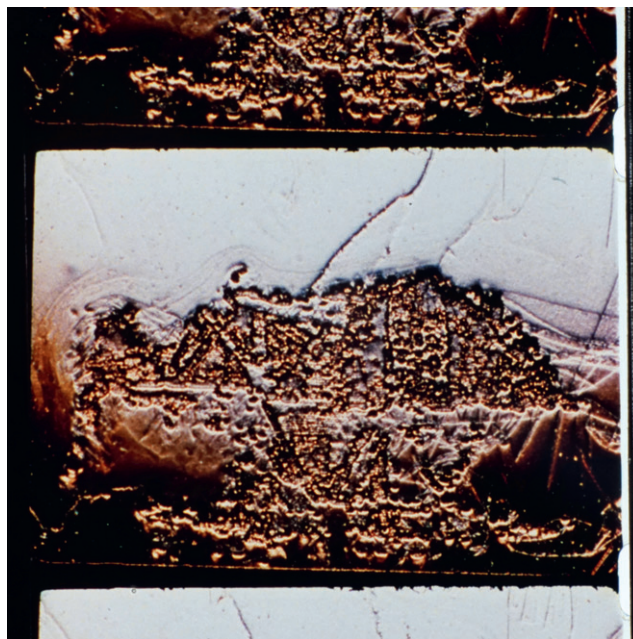
Curated by Mark McElhatton.



THE EMBLAZONED APPARITIONS



REHEARSALS FOR RETIREMENT



TWILIGHT PSALM II – WALKING DISTANCE

SPECIAL PROGRAM

AUSTRIAN FILMS OF THE 1990s

At the beginning of the 1990s, anything seemed possible. The Cold War was over, the borders were opening to the East, Europe was growing closer together. Mobility, consumerism, and new technologies shaped everyday life, while what had once been familiar societal certainty became less and less secure. Austria found itself experiencing profound change – politically, culturally, and socially.

Domestic cinema, too, reacted sensitively to these changes, focusing on characters who navigated spaces between their origins and what lay ahead, between the provinces and the metropolis, dealing with different languages, cultures, and life choices, because it had lost its orientation. The traditional imagery of Austria gave way to narratives about in-between places and marginalization. Train stations, shopping centers, night clubs became settings of a society that was restructuring itself and characterized by hitherto unknown influences from other cultures. While the country opened up to the outside, debates about identity and belonging intensified.

At the same time, a new generation of filmmakers took the spotlight; their work was less interested in grand national narratives than in the everyday life of its protagonists, urban spaces, and the influences of pop culture. Documentary immediacy meets stylized imagery; personal stories meet social and societal upheaval.

The five selected works in the program are situated within these contradictions of euphoria and uncertainty, inviting us to view the 1990s not as a closed chapter of the past but as lived experience that reaches into our present to be (re)discovered.

A FILMARCHIV AUSTRIA PROGRAM



SLIDIN' – ALLES BUNT UND WUNDERBAR



TERNITZ, TENNESSEE

SPECIAL PROGRAM

VASKO PREGELJ

ALPE ADRIA UNDERGROUND!, a documentary film by Jurij Meden and Matevž Jerman, brings the amateur film club scene in socialist Yugoslavia back into the limelight. Spaces free from ideological control in which many filmmakers from the 1960s onwards were able to freely explore the same radical possibilities of experimental film as their international contemporaries. Here, they were largely ignored by critics, historiography, and state archives. Only recently were hundreds of these films rediscovered and digitalized, thanks to considerable conservation and restoration work.

In this context, the program is dedicated to Vasko Pregelj (1948–1985). As an extraordinarily versatile individual in Slovenian- Yugoslavian cinema, Pregelj was a director, painter, sculptor, photographer, and theoretician. For twenty-five years, his films were considered to have been lost. They are among the rarest and most remarkable works of this movement. This offering, then, is a rare opportunity to discover an artist who, aged only sixteen, had already begun to combine painting, sculpture, sound, and image into one single artistic gesture.



ALI JE BILO KAJ AVANTGARDNEGA



NOKTURNO

THE NEW HOLIDAY PASS FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

Four films, four festival days, and a first introduction to the world of Viennale. At a special price of just €20.

Because Viennale takes place during the fall school holidays this year, a special **Holiday Pass for film-loving young audiences aged 14 and up** is being introduced for the first time.

This new offer is designed for young people interested in discovering international cinema and experiencing the unique atmosphere of a film festival firsthand. For just **€20**, participants can attend four selected festival screenings and get to know Viennale as a place for shared cinematic experiences.

In collaboration with the **Vienna Board of Education (Bildungsdirektion Wien)**, four films from the festival program have been specially curated for younger audiences. The selection offers a journey through different countries, perspectives, and storytelling approaches in contemporary cinema:

FA XIAN ZHI Lǚ (ZOOM IN, ZOOM OUT)

Director: Dong Jie

Canada 2026, 117 min, OV with English subtitles

Sat 24 Oct, 1:30 pm, Urania



ETWAS GANZ BESONDERES (HOME STORIES)

Director: Eva Trobisch

Germany 2026, 116 min, OV with English subtitles

Thu 29 Oct, 5 pm, Stadtkino im Künstlerhaus



LAVE FORVENTNINGER (LOW EXPECTATIONS)

Director: Eivind Landsvik

Norway, Denmark 2026, 105 min, OVw/G subtitles

Mon 26 Oct, 4 pm, Urania



WAREWARE WA UCHÛJIN (WE ARE ALIENS)

Director: Kohei Kadowaki

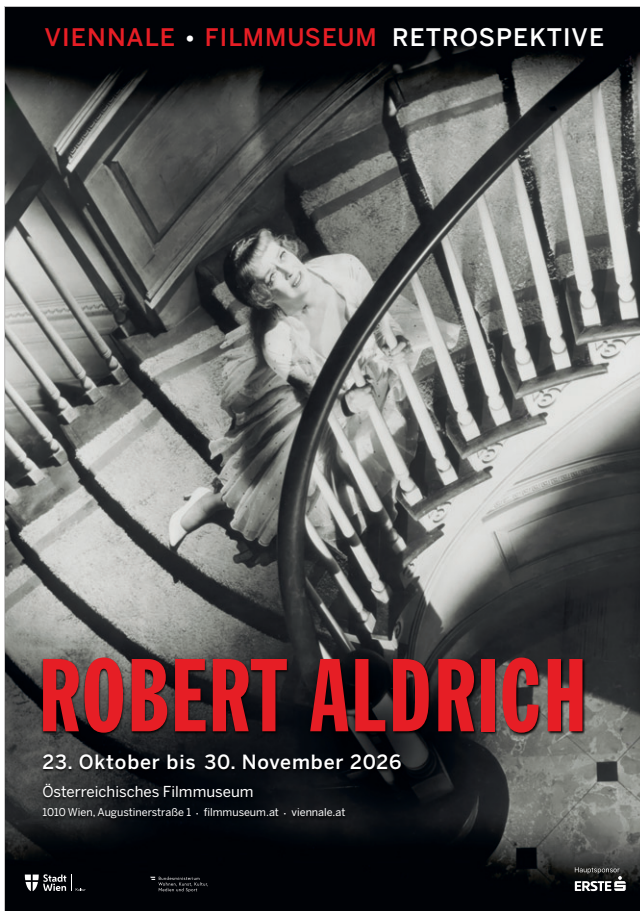
Japan, France 2026, 117 min, OV with English subtitles

Fri 30 Oct, 11 am, Urania



RETROSPECTIVE

ROBERT ALDRICH



Robert Aldrich (1918–1983) directed international hits such as *VERA CRUZ* (1954), *WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?* (1962), *THE DIRTY DOZEN* (1967), and *THE LONGEST YARD* (1974). His masterpieces like the apocalyptic film noir *KISS ME DEADLY* (1955) and the bleak revisionist Western *ULZANA'S RAID* (1972) redefined entire genres. With incomparable consistency, Aldrich succeeded in incorporating his critical, personal worldview into mainstream cinema. Yet, although he was already celebrated as one of the great auteur directors in Hollywood at the beginning of his career and has since influenced generations of filmmakers, his works have remained more famous than the man himself. The reason may lie in his rebellious attitude that shaped the content of his films just as much the turbulent course of his career, which was full of ups and downs. Aldrich never allowed himself to be intimidated.

As a cousin to the Rockefellers he came from a prominent, conservative clan from which he broke away in order to make films. Aldrich worked his way up as assistant director to Jean Renoir and Charles Chaplin, among others, and sympathized with colleagues who were persecuted as communists during the McCarthy era.

After embarking on his directorial career in 1953, Aldrich's penchant for controversial topics and his confrontational manner occasionally made him a persona

non grata in Hollywood. In the 1960s, he celebrated a triumphant comeback and was finally able to strike out on his own by buying his own studio – only to throw it all away again with uncompromising films. Yet right until the end, he continued to sneak subversive messages into the dream factory, all the while securing groundbreaking contracts as president of Hollywood's Directors Guild of America.

The Retrospective, a collaboration between the Austrian Film Museum and the Viennale, shows the oeuvre of one of America's greatest directors almost in its entirety in rare film copies.

A PROGRAM OF VIENNALE AND AUSTRIAN FILM MUSEUM

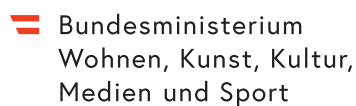
October 23 to November 30, 2026

Austrian Film Museum, Augustinerstrasse 1, 1010 Vienna

Tel. +43 1 533 70 54 • filmmuseum.at

We would like to use our summer press briefing as an opportunity to thank our supporters and sponsors without whose generous support the festival would not have been possible in this way.

SUPPORTERS AND SPONSORS



Main Sponsor



This year's festival has been achieved thanks to the contribution of a large number of sponsors and partners. Their names will be announced at our press conference on October 13.