

»Quo Vadis, Aida?« by Jasmila Žbanić won the International Feature Film Competition at IFFF Dortmund+Köln 2021

The drama, set during the Srebrenica massacre, won the festival's main award along with 15,000 euros in prize money on 20 June

ECFA Short Film Award for »Leaf« by Aliona Sasková

Shoot KHM & IFFF Dortmund+Köln Award for Female Artists of the Academy of Media Arts Cologne goes to Angelika Herta

Audience Award goes to »My Name is Baghdad« by Caru Alves de Souza

The evening of 20 June saw IFFF Dortmund+Köln bring the most out-of-the-ordinary version of its almost 40-year-old history to a close with its online award ceremony. This year the festival ran online from 15 to 20 June, showing around 70 new films by female* directors. At the very last minute, 6 screenings were possible in cinemas with live audiences, allowing the festival to signal the reopening of cinemas in NRW for the first time since their closure in November 2020.

Festival Director Dr. Maxa Zoller shared her initial post-festival thoughts: *»I was thrilled that we were able to get the film festival season up and running in NRW and I'm proud of the festival team for delivering our wonderful programme in both virtual and in-person formats. It represents quite an achievement to actually showcase the work of directors nationwide in these unprecedented circumstances.«*

The **International Feature Film Competition** saw the Bosnian-European production **Quo Vadis, Aida?** gain the vote of the international jury. The award comes with 15,000 euros to the winner, and this year goes to the film that shines a light on the genocide perpetrated in the Muslim-majority town of Srebrenica during the Bosnian War. The story begins in July 1995, just days before the slaughter of more than 8,000 Bosnian boys and men, following Aida, a teacher who also works as a translator for the Dutch UN troops. **Jasmila Žbanić** is the first director to bring this topic to the big screen. And the sentencing at The Hague Tribunal on 8 June 2021 of Ratko Mladić, the former commander-in-chief of the Serbian troops and war criminal responsible for the massacre, provided a fitting reminder of the film's absolute relevance.

Jury statement

»The award for best film goes to a work inspired by true events, where we follow a gripping story through the eyes of a UN interpreter frantically trying to save her family in the midst of the worst crime committed in Europe since the Second World War. The director lets this drama unfold in a perfectly crafted narrative that is at once compelling and terrifying. The main character is thrust into a role that conjures up both the pain of exile and the burden of responsibility.«

The **international jury** featured curator of Barcelona International Women's Film Festival **Marga Almirall Rotés**, director **Monika Treut** alongside screenwriter and producer **Elma Tataragić**.

The online award ceremony on Sunday evening saw **Monika Treut** present director **Jasmila Žbanić** with the award via video call, who expressed herself enthusiastically and gratefully: *»I am glad that it's this festival that I appreciate so much. I've been to the festival as a guest and I love it. It's such an important work that you are doing. The landscape for women in filmmaking really changed in the last decade and it is also thanks to you. I feel very honoured to receive the award in this constellation.«*

The ceremony took place on Vimeo and is still available there: vimeo.com/frauenfilmfest

The **€15,000** prize money is split between the director (€5,000) and the German distributor (€10,000). This is intended to promote the distribution of films directed by women in Germany. Distributor **farbfilm verleih** is due to release the film in German cinemas on August 5. In a video address, the distributor boss **Alexandre Dupont-Geisselmann** expressed his delight and gratitude for the unexpected distribution funding bonus.

ECFA Short Film Award

In 2020, IFFF Dortmund+Köln launched a new award for the best short film for children. The ECFA Short Film Award, which carries no prize money, is given to a European short film for children by a jury made up of three members of the European Children's Film Association. Films up to 30 minutes long from the festival's children's and young adults are nominated. The jury – made up of director **Frederike Migom**, curator & film educator **Laura Schubert**, and **Gloria Morano**, artistic director of Luxembourg City Film Festival – voted Belarusian-Czech animation film **Leaf** (Lístek) by **Aliona Sasková**:

»**Leaf** is a skilfully produced film in every way, great fun for children while also revealing different levels of complex emotions, thus adding an extra dimension for viewers of all ages. There's so much to discover in the film's animation, music, sound and rhythm as well as its character development. It stirs a host of sensations and feelings, and takes the audience on a beautiful journey.

Shoot 2021 KHM & IFFF Dortmund+Köln Award for Female Artists of the Academy of Media Arts Cologne goes to Angelika Herta

This new award seeks to identify up-and-coming talented female directors, introduce them to a broad audience and provide financial support. The winner collects 1,000 euros and is sponsored by the *Equal Opportunities Office* at the *Academy of Media Arts Cologne* (KHM).

This year's jury featured IFFF Dortmund+Köln Director **Dr. Maxa Zoller**, cinematographer **Conny Reißler** and curator **Nicole Rebmann**.

In its statement declaring **Angelika Herta** the winner with her latest film **Life Could Be So Beautiful**, the jury said:

»Angelika Herta captures the process of digging deep into her inner self while the camera is rolling. She succeeds in taking a light-hearted look at even some of the more solemn subjects in life. In **Life Could Be So Beautiful**, she entertainingly takes us on a bicycle tour, creating a video diary that subtly defies the conventional narrative of a male adventure. With her free-wheeling, unpredictable style and extensive repertoire, she broadens the horizons of aesthetic experience in the medium of film (...)«

Audience Award goes to »My Name is Baghdad« by Caru Alves de Souza

This year, 24 current films from the festival took part in the competition - productions that are no older than two years and that are longer than 60 minutes. After the last online voting was counted, it was clear: The Brazilian feature film **My Name is Baghdad** by **Caru Alves de Souza** was very popular with the audience. The film tells the story of the seventeen-year-old skateboarder Bagdá, who lives in Freguesia do Ó, a working-class district of São Paulo in Brazil. She skates with a group of male friends and spends a lot of time with her family and her mother's friends. Together, the women around them form a network of people who are out of the ordinary.

With this decision, a film from the »Program for Children & Young People« has won the IFFF Dortmund + Cologne's audience award for the first time. The award comes with prize money of EUR 1,000 and was presented to the winner in the evening by **Gabriele Kroll** for the prize sponsor *Sparkasse Dortmund*.

INTERNATIONALES FRAUEN FILM FEST DORTMUND + KÖLN

The festival is sponsored by

Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North-Rhine Westphalia; City of Dortmund/Cultural Office; City of Cologne/Culture Department; Film- und Medienstiftung NRW; Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth; Sparkasse Dortmund; Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media; NEUSTART KULTUR; Kulturstiftung der Länder (the Cultural Foundation of the German Federal States); KULTUR.GEMEINSCHAFTEN

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