

INTERNATIONALES FRAUEN FILM FEST DORTMUND+KÖLN

Internationales
Frauen Film Fest
Dortmund+Köln

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IFFF Dortmund+Köln Award-Winners

- **MOTHERHOOD (LA MATERNAL)**, directed by Pilar Palomero, wins EUR 15,000 prize for best film in the International Feature Film Competition for Women Directors
- Sparkasse Dortmund Audience Award for Claudia Richarz and her documentary **HELKE SANDER: CLEANING HOUSE**
- Shoot KHM & IFFF Dortmund+Köln Award for Emerging Female Artist of the Academy of Media Arts Cologne 2023 goes to Hanna Noh
- ECFA Short Film Award won by **TULA**, directed by Bea de Silva
- The anniversary festival, with its »Focus: Accomplices« theme, attracted enormous audiences

This year's EUR 15,000 IFFF Dortmund+Köln prize went to the Spanish entry **MOTHERHOOD (LA MATERNAL)**, directed by Pilar Palomero. It tells the story of 14-year-old Carla. She skips school, hanging out with her boyfriend and having arguments with her mother. When she discovers she's pregnant, she finds help and new confidants in "La Maternal", a centre for teenage mothers. What does it take to become a mother when you're still a child yourself? Palomero works with non-professionals who relate their own stories. The performance from young leading actress Carla Quílez is magnificent.

The jury, which included German filmmakers and film industry policy activists **Helke Sander**, **Sara Fazilat** and **Maria Furtwängler**, explained their decision thus:

"The film moved us and inspired us. Skilfully blending documentary elements with powerful cinematic images it also features the interplay between non-professional and professional actresses. This lends the film its strength in terms of form. This strength is used to tell the story, which reveals the complexity of motherhood in all its intensity and contradictions, as well as its magnificence. The 14-year-old central character Carla is a mother-to-be reluctantly torn between fears, her own expectations and those of others, and

the conflicting feelings she has for her own mother. This young woman, equally fragile and determined, is played by Carla Quílez who delivers a heart-breaking acting debut under the direction of Palomero. Palomero brilliantly tells the story of motherhood in a way that is as universal as it is individual. Her film will touch anyone and everyone lucky enough to see it. We hope the film and its director can celebrate a worldwide triumph, and capture the hearts of all audiences.”

The **International Feature Film Competition** presented eight recent feature films from Brazil, France, Germany, Indonesia, Mexico, Palestine and Spain. It offers a platform to both directors with interesting debuts as well as those with a large body of work already to their name. The prize money is split, with EUR 5,000 for the director and EUR 10,000 going to the German distributor. The aim is to promote the distribution of films by female directors in Germany.

Actress and co-founder of the *MaLisa Foundation* **Maria Furtwängler** was on the IFFF Dortmund+Köln jury for the first time:

“I met some amazing women and saw a wide range of films. I feel very re-energised – for cinema in general, and for narratives that come from different angles. We all need to stand up collectively and keep up a high level of awareness of the lack of equality and issues like violence against women.”

The evening at the Schauburg in Dortmund marked the close of the 40th Internationales Frauen Film Fest Dortmund+Köln. The first edition of the festival following the pandemic drew rave reviews from visitors and filmmakers alike: there were record numbers of accredited visitors, countless sold-out screenings and lively debates held in Dortmund and Cologne. One of the many highlights was the German festival premiere of the documentary film *ALL THE BEAUTY AND THE BLOODSHED* by Laura Poitras about Nan Goldin and her groundbreaking campaign against the Sackler corporation.

Festival director **Maxa Zoller** was delighted with the first full edition of the festival in four years:

“The huge attendance shows that films by women really have their finger on the pulse of current times. The topics tackled are groundbreaking in terms of the debate on the future of equality.”

Sparkasse Dortmund Audience Award for Claudia Richarz' documentary feature HELKE SANDER: CLEANING HOUSE

After counting the last votes, it was clear: This year's Sparkasse Dortmund Audience Award, endowed with 1,000 euros, went to the documentary filmmaker Claudia Richarz for *HELKE SANDER: CLEANING HOUSE*. It is the portrait of the groundbreaking film work of Helke Sander – feminist filmmaker, author, co-founder of the second German women's movement, founder of the first European feminist

film magazine »Frauen und Film«. This very recent work by Claudia Richarz celebrated its world premiere in Dortmund. She accepted the award in person that evening. Gabriele Kroll presented the prize as a representative of the Board of Sparkasse Dortmund. All festival films that were made in the last two years and are longer than 60 minutes took part in the voting for the audience award.

Shoot KHM & IFFF Dortmund+Köln Award for Emerging Female Artist of the Academy of Media Arts Cologne (KHM) 2023 goes to Hanna Noh

Introduced four years ago, this award acknowledges the artistic development of a female director graduating from KHM and this year went to an installation artist for the first time: Hanna Noh. The award is presented at the evening ceremony in collaboration with the KHM Equal Opportunity Team.

In the words of the jury: "South Korean Hanna Noh won over the jury with the thematic depth and artistic diversity of her film and paper installations. Noh's works broach the taboo subject of the DMZ, the demilitarised zone between South and North Korea, making the subject accessible to the (art) world. The reconciling, harmonising force of this atmospheric video work testifies to a particularly courageous approach to a subject that, despite its geopolitical significance, rarely gets any artistic articulation."

The jury this year included DoP Conny Beißler, programmer Jessica Manstetten and festival director Maxa Zoller.

ECFA Short Film Award for TULA, directed by Bea de Silva

The non-endowed ECFA Short Film Award in the **Programme for Kids and Young Adults** section went to Spanish film TULA by Bea de Silva: Tula works as a cleaner at a girls' public school. One day while working, she meets the fourteen-year-old daughter of the headmaster in the toilets.

The jury comprised curator Gudrun Sommer, translator Lara Melegari, and Marjo Kovanen, head of the Finnish school cinema association Koulukino, and explained their decision as follows:

"TULA captivated us, with its strong and unique main character. Her no-nonsense manner matches her feisty personality, her humour making her character authentic and convincing. The film creates a chamber play with its masterful balance of timing and rhythm. And it does so in a place that - as basic and mundane as it may seem - becomes the perfect setting for an enlightening conversation about the female body and intimacy: the school toilets. The privacy offered by this place transforms the girls' toilets into a safe space for some important, unceremonious education. The film addresses its young audience avoiding any patronising tone, in line with how the main character addresses her own audience. And despite the plot focusing on just two characters, it presents a

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holistic spectrum of femininity by not only showing the interaction between two generations, but also depicting different life experiences and social backgrounds.”

A sample of all festival sections is available for streaming as an online selection programme at iff.onlinefilmfestival.de/ until 30 April.

The 41st edition of the IFFF Dortmund+Cologne will take place in 2024 with the main program in Cologne.

www.frauenfilmfest.com

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