

Vienna Shorts – 17th edition opens at home cinema

Kick-off for the short film festival's "Online Edition" with Mayer and Kaup-Hasler – Opening also on ORF.at – 280 films on streaming platform – Live chat & voting via Vevox – Daily online talks at 5 pm

Tomorrow (28 May 2020) the international short film festival Vienna Shorts will, for the first time, start not in the cinema but online. At 8 pm the festive opening of the 17th edition, which has been moved almost entirely into virtual space due to the precautions taken to contain Covid-19, will begin. The ceremony, which will be attended by the new State Secretary for Culture, Andrea Mayer, and Vienna's City Councilor for Culture, Veronica Kaup-Hasler, will also be streamed simultaneously on ORF.at.

The first film program of this year's festival is all about cohesion and under the impression of the past weeks and months. Six films, including two legendary short film classics, have been selected for it—as a protest against thoughtlessness and as a promise to raise awareness. "For us, cinema works like an empathic, utopian mirror of life," the festival directors and curators of the program, Doris Bauer and Daniel Ebner, explain their approach. "And we believe that we are not alone in this."

You can find the entire opening program on our website under the new program section **ATTRACTION**. The evening will be hosted by British film critic Neil Young. Following the opening gala, the first competition program will be available at the Vienna Shorts Festival Hub and a large part of all non-competition programs will be unlocked. In total, there are more than 50 film programs and about 280 films at the Festival Hub.

Under the title "Streams are my Reality", international music videos will also be shown tomorrow, Thursday, in cooperation with and on the FM4 website (from 10 pm) to share the acoustic element of the traditional opening party with the audience. A second music video program on FM4.orf.at will be shown on June 2, following the award ceremony, to conclude the festival.

INTERACTION: ONLINE TALKS, NOTES ON FILM & CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

A film festival also includes the opportunity to meet filmmakers and exchange ideas within the industry. Every day at 5 pm (except on the opening and closing day) all accredited professionals and festival pass holders can therefore take part in webinars as part of the **INTERACTION** section. This year's webinars will focus on the programming of and legal basis for online festivals and world premieres online.

Together with the online film magazine Talking Shorts, Vienna Shorts will also present the text series "**NOTES ON FILM: Covid-19 and Cinema? The future of cinema with & after Corona**". Ten people from the European cinema and festival scene, including Rotterdam and Locarno programmer Julian Ross (UK), film historian Jurij Meden (SI), analog filmmaker Philipp Fleischmann (AT), cinema operator Wiktorija Pelzer and film funding manager Barbara Fränzen (AT), describe from a personal and/or professional perspective how they deal with the current situation and what their wishes, ideals or fears look like in times of and after Corona.

The **INTERACTION** section also includes film educational projects which partly had to be cancelled or scaled down due to the pandemic. Nevertheless, with the animation program "Change Of Scene", the hub also offers an entertaining program (from 5 years) to combat tired legs and worn-out thoughts.

(HOME) CINEMA EXPERIENCE WITH LIVE CHAT AND VOTING

Starting tomorrow evening, the adventure online festival will enter its first round—without shared cinema experiences or drinks at the festival bar, but with an extensive festival program and the opportunity to exchange ideas between filmmakers, audience and industry via live chat, voting and online seminars. With the festival number **109-225-618**, you can select your favorite films on the site **vevox.app**, leave comments and ask questions.

“The original planning for the 17th festival edition definitely looked a little different,” Bauer and Ebner say in unison. “But taking all circumstances into consideration and after some very intensive weeks of remodelling our plans, we can now look forward to the festival’s very first Online Edition—with more than 1,500 international accredited and hopefully many, many film and festival interested people from Austria. We keep our fingers crossed!”

Festival passes for Vienna Shorts – Online Edition are available for EUR 9,— at

<https://www.viennashorts.com/festival/online-festival-pass>

You can find press stills in the download area of our website: <https://www.viennashorts.com/downloads>

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