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## 20 YEARS AND ONE MOMENT: VIENNA SHORTS CELEBRATES ITS ANNIVERSARY WITH GUEST OF HONOR KEVIN JEROME EVERSON

Two months before its 20th edition, the International Short Film Festival presents its motif—Portraits on Kevin J. Everson & Claudrena N. Harold as well as Christiana Perschon—June 1 to 6 in Vienna

Young Abdi (Sharif Nuur) looks towards the sky, pausing briefly in the chaos around him: a still from the playful and touching short film “Neighbour Abdi” (2022) by director Douwe Dijkstra (NL) adorns this year’s motif of VIENNA SHORTS and represents this year’s motto “**Just A Moment, Please!**”. From June 1 to 6, on the occasion of its 20th anniversary, the international short film festival devotes itself to time in its most ephemeral unity: the moment that wants to be seized, that cannot be repeated; the shortening and condensation to the essence, as in the short cinematic form. “We want to sharpen our focus on the essential and take a brief breath before exposing ourselves again to the world around us,” explain festival directors Doris Bauer and Daniel Hadenius-Ebner.

The motto runs through the festival program and is interpreted socio-politically, nostalgically or cinematically. Thus, the film programs in the section **Current Comments** take up timely topics such as the nuclear threat, climate crisis, protests in Iran or milestones in the development of artificial intelligence. “There is much talk of a turning point in time, of a decisive moment for the future of all of us,” according to Bauer and Hadenius-Ebner, who have co-directed the festival since 2018. “When the political urgency becomes palpable, every moment counts.”

In cooperation with two partner festivals from the European Network for Film Discourse (The END), Lago Film Fest and Vilnius International Short Film Festival, this year’s focus deals with **one moment as the starting point for the cinematographic narrative**. Films will be shown that are based on photographic recordings, whose individual images are animated in rapid succession and thus come to life, or that use cinematic means such as freeze frames or slow motion to capture the moment or delay it as long as possible.

The 20-year-anniversary is also reflected in film programs and will be celebrated with a birthday party and a **cinematic warm-up**. Founded in 2003 as a student initiative and hosted for the first time in 2004, VIENNA SHORTS is now one of the world’s most renowned short film festivals. “We see the anniversary as a caesura, as an awareness of what has been and what is to come,” say Bauer and Hadenius-Ebner. Thus, 20 companions of the festival were asked to select 20 memorable short films from past festival editions which can be viewed free of charge on the festival’s film portal and in the festival app starting April 24 under the title “**20 Years, 20 Films.**”

## KEVIN J. EVERSON AND CLAUDRENA N. HAROLD IN VIENNA

This year, VIENNA SHORTS pays tribute to the renowned filmmaker **Kevin Jerome Everson** with an extensive portrait. The artist, who was born in Ohio in 1965 and lives in Virginia, works with photography, printmaking, sculpture, and film, but is especially incredibly productive in the latter field: In his well over 150 films—ranging in length from one minute to eight hours, mostly shot on 16 mm and with handheld camera—he vividly captures the everyday life and working realities of African-American communities in the Midwest and Southern US. VIENNA SHORTS will present two film programs and an installation together with Blicke Kino at Belvedere 21.

Another focus will be Everson's short films with **Claudrena N. Harold**, Professor of African American and African Studies and History. The two colleagues from the University of Virginia have joined forces to investigate and make visible the cultural life of black students and workers at the prestigious educational institution in the second half of the 20th century and into the 21st century under the label **Black Fire**. In cooperation with the Austrian Film Museum, the artists will screen eight of their films as well as present their working methods in a master class, addressing research, production, aesthetics and the politics of collaboration. In addition, Claudrena N. Harold will spend a month in Vienna as part of our **Artist-in-Residence program** with Q21 in MuseumsQuartier.

## CHRISTIANA PERSCHON: A PORTRAIT IN BOTH SENSES OF THE WORD

This year's national portrait is dedicated to the Vienna-based filmmaker **Christiana Perschon**. The festival will show her **portraits of female artists**, which began in 2014 with "Noema"—then awarded the top prize in the Austrian Competition—and earned Perschon a reputation as an exceptional documentarian and, most recently, the Austrian Art Award for Film 2022. In her series, the filmmaker deals with perception, seeing and the question of how what is seen can be depicted at all. She is not concerned with depiction when she approaches her "elective relatives" such as Linda Christanell, Tatjana Gamerith or Isolde Maria Joham. "I'm concerned with the moment of recording," Perschon says, "with a total momentary experience." The film program thus becomes a "portrait" in both senses of the word: an approach to Perschon's work as well as a look at portraiture as an act of self-determination.

## ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

VIENNA SHORTS is the international short film festival in Vienna, which in spring makes around 300 films from all over the world accessible to audiences and the international industry in the best possible way—whether in the cinema, in a museum or in the digital space. Around a third of the films compete in four competitions for **prize money of almost € 30,000** and qualifications for the Academy Awards, the European Film Award, the British Film Award BAFTA and the Austrian Film Award.

The 20th edition will also feature genre films in the "Late Night" slot, audiovisual live performances, analog cinema, secluded open-air evenings, industry days and an expanded offering for children and young people. The regular



cinemas Stadtkino im Künstlerhaus, METRO Kinokulturhaus, Austrian Film Museum and Gartenbaukino will be back and the festival center will be located in the **MuseumsQuartier** this year—a “homecoming” for the festival team, as the VIENNA SHORTS office has been located at Q21 since 2007.

**The complete festival program will be released mid-May.**

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For further questions please contact Angelika Prawda at [presse@viennashorts.com](mailto:presse@viennashorts.com) or +43 681 104 159 16.

Press releases and press images can be found at [viennashorts.com/en/press/](https://viennashorts.com/en/press/).

The new online archive at [viennashorts.com/en/festival/festival-archive](https://viennashorts.com/en/festival/festival-archive) offers a review of 20 festival years.

**Accreditation for media representatives will start soon.** A separate invitation will follow.