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TREES INSTEAD OF TROPHIES: VIENNA SHORTS LETS AWARD-WINNING FILMMAKERS GROW ROOTS IN VIENNA

International Short Film Festival makes award winners and their films visible in the city in cooperation with the City of Vienna—Festival opening on June 1 with works by, among others, Oscar winner Andrea Arnold and US artist Kevin Jerome Everson—Tickets available starting today

On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, the international short film festival VIENNA SHORTS will **for the first time no longer present its award winners trophies, but instead dedicate freshly planted trees to them**. At ten locations throughout Vienna, the festival, which has been awarded the Austrian Eco-Label, will place plaques on the crossbars of the supporting pillars of the young trees. **Via a QR code on the plaque, the respective award-winning film can be streamed directly on the smartphone in close proximity to the tree**, “while the seeds of the young filmmakers are allowed to grow and flourish together with the young Viennese trees,” according to festival directors Doris Bauer and Daniel Hadenius-Ebner. “Over the years, we want to enable a film and tree walk through the city.”

The project—actively supported by the Vienna Film Commission (VFC)—is being implemented in cooperation with the Municipal Department Parks and Gardens (MA 42) and the City’s Forestry Office (MA 49). **“The fact that the winners of the short film festival will henceforth receive trees as trophies is not only an original idea, but also draws attention to the great importance of trees in a creative way,” says Vienna’s Executive City Councillor for Climate, Jürgen Czernohorszky. “In view of the advancing climate crisis and increasingly hot summers, trees are among our strongest contributors to maintaining the high quality of life in Vienna.** Every single tree can therefore be seen as a trophy for a successful fight against the climate crisis. And our collection of trophies is constantly growing, with the City’s Forestry Office planting 4,500 new trees in Vienna each year.”

The locations of the ten VIENNA SHORTS trees will be announced at the award ceremony on June 6 at the Stadtkino im Künstlerhaus and will be made available via the festival website and subsequently also via the Vienna Tree Registry.

A total of 95 films from 34 countries were selected for the international Fiction & Documentary (FIDO) and Animation Avantgarde (AA) competitions, as well as the Austrian Competition (ÖW) and Austrian Music Video Award (MUVI). This year, the filmmakers are vying for prize money of nearly € 30,000, qualifications for the Oscars®, the British Film Award BAFTA, the European Film Award and the Austrian Film Award—and now their “very own tree” in Vienna. The tree plaques replace the V-statuettes made of wood or concrete that were awarded to winners of the VIENNA SHORTS Awards in previous years.

A DATE WITH SHORT FILM: GRAND OPENING WITH PRESTIGIOUS GUESTS

The 20th edition of the festival will open on June 1 at Vienna's Gartenbaukino with five films that refer to this year's festival motto "Just A Moment, Please!"—first and foremost **the festival trailer designed by Kevin Jerome Everson, which will celebrate its world premiere at the opening.** In his powerful one-minute film in black and white without dialogue, the renowned U.S. filmmaker and this year's portrait guest accompanies an elderly man with a 16mm handheld camera to the site of the massacre in Orangeburg, South Carolina. In February 1968, three students had been killed and 27 others injured by police at the university campus during protests against the segregation of bowling alleys by skin color—the first tragedy of its kind on a U.S. campus. Today, only a run-down sign refers to the former bowling alley. Everson makes us pause as briefly as his protagonist, giving us time and space, keeping a moment of history alive.

The program title "**I Have A Passion For What I Do**" quotes the Somali Abdi, who shares this important insight into his life with the audience in Douwe Dijkstra's playful and sensitive short documentary "Neighbour Abdi" (NL 2022). In "It's A Date" (UA 2023), Nadia Parfan's award-winning homage to Claude Lelouch's classic "C'était un rendez-vous" (FR 1976), a car speeds through Kyiv at dawn, a city in a state of emergency brought on by war. In Andrea Arnold's Oscar-winning cult film "Wasps" (UK 2003), the hotheaded Zoë celebrates every moment; like VIENNA SHORTS, the film celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. A final birthday serenade comes from Bjørn Melhus in his witty Marilyn Monroe variation "Happy Rebirth" (DE 2004).

The opening filmmakers Kevin J. Everson and Douwe Dijkstra are expected as guests, as are Vienna's Executive City Councillor for Cultural Affairs, Veronica Kaup-Hasler, and Vienna's Executive City Councillor for Climate, Jürgen Czernohorszky. FM4 presenter Riem Higazi will lead through the evening, which will be followed by a champagne reception by Szigeti and the opening party in the cinema foyer.

TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE

The international short film festival VIENNA SHORTS celebrates its 20th edition from June 1 to 6, 2023 at various venues in Vienna and online until June 30. Around 340 films will be screened in competitions, portraits, late nights, open-air screenings and children's and youth programs, among others. The full program can be viewed at viennashorts.com.

Single tickets for cinema screenings are available now for € 9.50 in the festival's [online ticket store](#) and via the festival app (for [Android](#) and [iOS](#)). In addition to purchasing tickets, the app also offers the possibility to plan your visit, reserve seats and stream the festival's online program. This requires the purchase of a festival pass (€ 25 for the cinema and online program or € 10 for the online program). Tickets for screenings at Blickle Kino at Belvedere 21 and Milieukino at MuseumsQuartier are available at a discounted price of € 5 exclusively on site (or for Blickle Kino via the Belvedere 21 website). **People under 20 receive free tickets after age verification at the respective cinemas.**



Press images of the 20th festival edition can be found at viennashorts.com/en/press/.

For further inquiries and interview requests, please contact Angelika Prawda at presse@viennashorts.com