

MAY 31, 2023

## JUST A MOMENT, PLEASE—THE 20TH EDITION OF VIENNA SHORTS OPENS TOMORROW WITH CELEBRATED GUESTS & A CINEMATIC BIRTHDAY SONG

Three filmmakers, two city councilors, and host Riem Higazi ring in the international short film extravaganza at Gartenbaukino—the festival presents 340 films until June 6, and will henceforth award trees instead of trophies—Free admission for everyone under 20, plus 5 open-air events at MuseumsQuartier

The international short film festival VIENNA SHORTS opens its twentieth edition at Vienna's Gartenbaukino tomorrow, Thursday (June 1). The six opening films reference this year's festival motto, "Just A Moment, Please!" and follow people who put their heart and soul into the things they do—from Andrea Arnold's Academy Award-winning *Wasp* and Bjørn Melhus' smurfy birthday ditty in *Happy Rebirth* all the way to cult music video *Beck – Up All Night* by the CANADA collective.

Your host for the evening will be FM4 presenter Riem Higazi, who will also welcome the three opening filmmakers on stage. US filmmaker and this year's portrait guest Kevin Jerome Everson will reveal his festival trailer in a world premiere, the Dutch director and this year's MQ artist-in-residence Douwe Dijkstra will show his playfully touching documentary *Neighbour Abdi*, and Ukrainian producer Iryna Kovalchuk will speak about *It's a Date*, Nadia Parfan's award-winning homage to Claude Lelouch's classic *C'était un rendez-vous*. Vienna's Executive City Councillor for Cultural Affairs Veronica Kaup-Hasler will officially open the festival, while Vienna's Executive City Councillor for Climate Jürgen Czernohorszky will present the new festival concept of trees instead of trophies.

The sustainable new concept, developed in cooperation with the municipal departments MA42 und MA49, stipulates that for the first time ever, award winners will not receive trophies but have freshly planted trees around Vienna dedicated to them. The prize money has grown by € 5,000 to almost € 30,000. Another novelty in celebration of the festival's twentieth anniversary is that this year, visitors under the age of 20 will get free admission to all screenings. And added to the regular venues Gartenbaukino, Stadtkino im Künstlerhaus, METRO Kinokulturhaus, and the Austrian Film Museum are MuseumsQuartier with the festival headquarters, Milieukino and open-air cinema, as well as Blickle Kino at Belvedere 21.

## ANNIVERSARY POTPOURRI & NEARLY 200 FILM AND INDUSTRY GUESTS

About 340 films will be presented in competitions, portraits, late-night programs, open-air screenings, and in kids and young adult programs around Vienna until June 6—and online until June 30. In addition, there will be audiovisual live performances, a cinema concert by W1ZE, industry events, and parties. Under the motto "Just A Moment, Please!" we will pause amidst the world's hustle to address current topics like AI, Iran, and the climate crisis, with focus programs dedicated to unforgettable on-screen moments.

This year's portrait will celebrate US artists Kevin J. Everson and Claudrena N. Harold as well as Austrian filmmaker Christiana Perschon. The film lineup includes renowned figures like Agnès Varda, Antoinette

Zwirschmayr, Arev Manoukian, Benjamin Heisenberg, David O'Reilly, George Méliès, Jan Soldat, Kirsten Lepore, Len Lye, Miguel Gomes, Ruben Östlund, and Yann Gonzalez. **Among the almost 200 guests** will be animation legend Georges Schwizgebel, the celebrated Total Refusal collective, Ukrainian filmmaker Sofiia Melnyk, and French-Canadian director Simon Garez. The latter has been **traveling from Paris to Vienna by bicycle (!) for a week** to attend the screening of his meditative bee-themed short *Gentle Hum of Spring* on Sunday, June 4.

Also present at the festival will be **representatives of renowned film festivals** such as Locarno Film Festival, the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), the Winterthur International Short Film Festival, and Animateka. Among other things, they will contribute to the inaugural Talent Days tomorrow and the day after. Speaking of tomorrow, before the opening of the festival, “three quarters” (June 1, 1 p.m.) is a **free youth program at the Austrian Film Museum** put together by students in the “Young Curators” film education program in cooperation with sixpackfilm and the Film Museum. Virtually, the festival already starts at 0:01 a.m. with two photo-film programs as well as “Current Comments” about artificial intelligence in the [film portal](#) and the festival app (for [Android](#) and [iOS](#)).

## GOOD TO KNOW

The festival program can be found at [viennashorts.com](#). **Tickets and festival passes for VIENNA SHORTS are available in our [online shop](#) and on our festival app.** Tickets for screenings at Blickle Kino at Belvedere 21 and Milieukino at MuseumsQuartier are only available via these specific venues. Admission to the open-air events at MuseumsQuartier, the “Young Curators” screening, and the industry events is free of charge, and no ticket is required. People under the age of 20 will be able to attend the festival for free this year and can get their tickets (while supplies last) after age verification at the respective venue.

For the second time, VIENNA SHORTS events will be hosted as **certified Green Events**. In accordance with the guidelines of the Austrian Ministry of Climate Action, the festival screenings and industry events fulfill all the requirements to be marked with the [Austrian Ecolabel](#). This means that renewable resources are used whenever possible—for instance in terms of environmentally friendly travel for guests or sustainably produced (if not altogether avoided) printed matter.

For details and tickets to the opening gala, go to [viennashorts.com/programme/](#).

For press images and other press releases about the twentieth festival edition, go to [viennashorts.com/press](#).

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