

2012 Diagonale Draws Positives

Six festival days, 131 films and videos in 120 screenings (among them 39 world premieres and 15 Austrian premieres), with 100 attending directors: From the March 20 to 25 of, **Diagonale Film Festival**, now in its 15th edition in the Styrian capital, celebrated Austrian cinema in all its diversity. Here is an overview:

The **high quality** of current Austrian filmmaking was reflected in the choice selection of the 2012 Diagonale. As always, the Festival functioned as a center of exchange between the film industry and the audience. Alongside myriad established names there were also works presented by young filmmakers. The highlights of this year's Diagonale included the internationally renowned **Ferry Radax Spotlight Feature**, in association with Radio Ö1. Also attending the festival in Graz was **Avi Mograbi**, one of the most important current representatives of Israeli Auteur cinema. There was also a positive reception to the Special Program **Shooting Women II**, dealing with female documentary art forms, and the Historical Special on **Charles Korvin**, as well as the much-anticipated re-release of **Michael Synek's *Die Toten Fische*** from 1989.

Sixteen **film prizes**, totaling a value of 100,000 Euros, were given at the Diagonale Award Ceremony on the 24th of March, including a 21,000 Euro main prize for both the best feature film and documentary film. This year it was **Sebastian Meise's *Stilleben (Still Life)***, which took the best feature film prize, and **Dariusz Kowalski's *Richtung Nowa Huta (Destination Nowa Huta)*** taking the best documentary film award – both feature-length debuts. The prize for Innovative Film went to ***Hypercrisis* by Josef Dabernig**. **Christine Ostermayer** and **Michael Fuith** won this year's Diagonale Performance awards, given by BAWAG P.S.K. and VDFS. **Johannes Silberschneider** had received the Grand Diagonale Performance Award already at the opening of the festival. A total of 150,000 Euros worth of prizes were given out. A detailed listing of all the Diagonale film awards given this year can be found at our website: www.diagonale.at/presse/ or at www.diagonale.at/festival/preise/.

This year's **Industry Meeting** entitled “**Discussing Diversity in Independent Cinema**” resonated considerably with the 200-odd industry professionals present. A variety of perspectives and strategies for financing films were discussed across international panels and case studies, as well as the subject of exploitation against a backdrop of practical experiences and further initiatives in Austria.

Strengthened by broad interest and considerable positive feedback, **Diagonale GOES GREEN**, a long-term strategy for environmental responsibility and sustainability, served for the second time as a common thread throughout the course of the festival's organization and marketing initiatives.

Preliminary statistics put the number of **visitors** to the 2012 Diagonale at around **23,700**, in spite of fewer screenings and events compared to 2011. The percentage of seats sold rose to **74 percent**. Even apart from the screenings – the forums (this year with a focus on film critique and different perspectives on film discourse) and public speeches, the exhibition on **Avi Mograbi: Details**, **Sofie Thorsen's *Schnitt A-A'***, numerous receptions including the Diagonale Nightline in the Graz Postgarage – there was a profusion of activity.

Outlook:

During the program presentation, **BAWAG P.S.K.** announced a three-year extension (until 2015) of its role as the event's main sponsor. The Diagonale looks forward to a privileged collaboration with its

partner and to more security in the planning of long-term projects.

Nevertheless, the financial means and developmental prospects of the festival are increasingly restricted by budget pressures and related uncertainty.

The **2013 Diagonale** is scheduled to take place from March 12 to 17 of 2013.

We look forward to seeing you all next year!

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