

| D | 26 |
| Program |
| presentation |



Teresas Körper © Chanel / Chmielewska / Szczepowicz-Warszewska / courtesy of sixpackfilm

| D | iagonale
Festival of Austrian Film
March 18 – 23, 2026, Graz
www.diagonale.at

| Pressekontakt |

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GÄSTE- & PRESSEZENTRUM

während des Festivalzeitraums

im Space04 im Kunsthaus Graz

→ Lendkai 1, 8020 Graz

Öffnungszeiten:

18. März 10 – 16.30 Uhr

19. bis 23. März 10 – 18 Uhr

DOWNLOAD IMAGES and MATERIAL at
→ diagonale.at/en/presse

PROGRAM ONLINE March 5, 1 p.m.

TICKET SALE starts March 14, 10 a.m.

online and at the Kunsthaus Graz (Lendkai 1, 8020 Graz)

daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. | from March 28 also at all festival cinemas (Annenhof Kino, Filmzentrum im Rechbauerkino, KIZ RoyalKino, Schubertkino)

More details here → diagonale.at/en/tickets

PRESS SCREENING OPENING FILM Diagonale '26

Rose by Markus Schleinzer

AT/DE 2026, 93 min, OmeU

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 | 9.30 a.m.

Annenhof Kino | Annenstraße 29, 8020 Graz

Diagonale #denktweiter

The program presentations are certified by Diagonale as Green Events according to the criteria of the Austrian Ecolabel. The press kits for the program presentations were printed on CANON Top Colour Zero (EU Ecolabel).



| Diagonale | 26 |

Graz/Vienna, March 4/5, 2026

Dear Editors!

Once a year, Graz transforms into the film capital of Austria, as the unique Diagonale breeze once again wafts through the streets, alleys, and especially the movie theatres. **From March 18 to 23, 2026, the Festival of Austrian Film will present its 29th edition in Graz**, offering an enormous range of feature films, documentaries, shorts, and innovative films, in both the competition and the special programs. **A total of 149 film productions will be screened, and 77 of them will be Austrian or world premieres.**

Even beyond the screenings and discussion events, the Festival of Austrian Film will be present elsewhere in the city: The **shop window competition** will once again transform Graz's city center shops into vibrant Diagonale displays. And meanwhile the exhibition ***The Gateway to Unreality*** by **Michael Gülzow**, the director of this year's trailer, can be seen at the Kunsthaus Graz as it invites visitors to journey through different times and realities.

After ***Street Cinema Graz*** was rained out[H2.1] last year, it's "back to the roots" again on March 20: The festival returns to the Lendviertel with the short film walk, where temporary cinema venues were created on the walls of houses and in backyards for the first time in 2013 on the occasion of the Lendwirbel[H3.1] festival.

And of course, once again festival attendees can perfectly round off each day with a terrific mix of live concerts and DJs at the Diagonale Nightline, nearly all with free admission. The lineup ranges from relaxed and cozy in the **Diagonale Bar in the Volksgarten Pavilion – hosted by Eule Bier** – to loud and experimental in the Forum Stadtpark, as well as the Diagonale **Forum** in the Heimatsaal of the Volkskundemuseum (Folk Life Museum). Most of the events will again be accompanied by the awaGraz awareness team.

This press kit provides an overview of the competition films as well as the discussion and industry events. You will also find information on the film history specials ***Girls Will Be Boys*** and ***New Uncertainties***, as well as the *Position* festival retrospectives, which this year are dedicated to the exceptional Austrian artist **Billy Roisz** and the Icelandic filmmaker and visual artist **Hlynur Pálmason**, an established figure in contemporary cinema. With ***Und in der Mitte*** (And in the Middle), we are also presenting a new annual program. And on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, we are dedicating a special feature to the ***Duisburg Film Week***.

If you have any interview requests or need further information, we will of course be happy to assist you.

We look forward to your reporting and support!

Ihr Diagonale-Pressbüro

Saskia Pramstaller
Katharina Fennesz
Clara Gruber



© Paul Pibernig

Statement by the Artistic Directors

“Especially in the current climate, where the political situation is uncertain and literally every hour news stories are breaking, film festivals offer an opportunity to pause and reflect. They invite us to sharpen our senses. Cinema becomes a space for resonance – for doubt and contradiction, for ambivalence and hope.”

This is particularly true of this year’s edition, which spans all genres and categories. It tells of the dedication to viewing a dissonant world with curiosity and to asking for new, surprising alliances. While the feature films often use humor to illuminate the challenges of social coexistence, the documentaries examine political systems, and question and expand family models.

We are delighted to present a particularly large number of world and Austrian premieres this year – from established names in Austrian cinema to outstanding younger filmmakers. What they all share is a passion for reflection and the an ability to empathize.”

— Dominik Kamalzadeh & Claudia Slanar, Festival Directors



© Miriam Raneburger

Cinema That Goes beyond the Big Screen!

In addition to the traditional Q&As, the Diagonale’s *Nachspann* offers you an opportunity to join in unique conversations and discussions. This is a special setting where you can enter into dialogue with filmmakers and experts, as it provides a space for new perspectives. For example, the director of the opening film, **Markus Schleinzer**, gives **Bianca Jasmina Rauch** insights into the making of *Rose*, his historical drama, and his collaboration with the remarkable actress **Sandra Hüller**.

Klaus Fried, son of poet Erich Fried, talks with co-director **Julia Albrecht** about their film *Friendly Fire*, life with famous fathers, and the gaps they leave in memory, moderated by **Julia Zorbach**.

Harald Friedl and **Colette M. Schmidt** shed light on the particular challenges and pitfalls of portraying politicians, using his film *Wahlkampf* as an example; **Sandra Breiteneder**, chief of staff to Vice-Chancellor Andreas Babler, has also been invited to participate.

And in a performative talk, **Billy Roisz**, the subject of a comprehensive retrospective, together with **Anat Steinberg**, offers insights into the technical approach behind their film work through live demonstrations.

| Diagonale | Nachspann |

With the support of
the Mainsponsor of the
Diagonale



Program under
→ diagonale.at/nachspann

| Guests |



Diagonale '25 © Miriam Raneburger



Diagonale '25 © Miriam Raneburger



Diagonale '25 © Miriam Raneburger



Diagonale '25 © Miriam Raneburger

Graz as a Hub of the Film Industry

For the 29th time, Graz will be the film capital of Austria. With its mixture of historical charm and Mediterranean flair, it's the perfect place to transform into the hub of the Austrian film industry once a year in a relaxed atmosphere. The Diagonale is delighted to welcome a multitude of filmmakers to the festival: The opening ceremony will be hosted by **David Scheid**, and in addition to director **Markus Schleinzner** and members of his team, **Hilde Dalik**, the winner of the 2026 Diagonale Grand Acting Prize, will also be a featured guest.

Ruth Beckermann will celebrate the Austrian premiere of *WAX & GOLD*, as well as **Jola Wieczorek** and her team with *Die noch unbekanntes Tage (Days Yet Unknown)*, with both films being shown as part of a special presentation. **Sebastian Brauneis** and his team will present the world premiere of *AMS – Arbeit Muss Sein*, featuring **Margarete Tiesel**, **Lukas Watzl**, and **Marie-Luise Stockinger**, among others. Oscar-winning director **Mike van Diem** will be in Graz for the premiere of his latest drama, *Our Girls*, which was filmed in Austria, and **Magdalena Chmielewska** will present her film *Teresas Körper*, which won an award in Saarbrücken, to an Austrian audience for the first time. **Ebba Sinzinger** will celebrate the world premiere of *Die Kunstkomplizen* along with its protagonists, the artist duo **PRINZpod**, consisting of **Brigitte Prinzgau** and **Wolfgang Podgorschek**.

As part of the Diagonale's special programs, in addition to filmmaker, musician and performer **Billy Roisz** and Icelandic visual artist and filmmaker **Hlynur Pálmason**, several filmmakers participating in the special program on 50 years of Duisburg Film Week will be present. They shall include **Elfi Mikesch**, **Stefan Kolbe** and **Chris Wright** as well as **Maria Petschnig**, who is also represented in the competition with her new film *Beautiful and Neat Room*.

Traditionally, the ORF premieres at the Diagonale film festival also feature a host of familiar faces. This year for example, **Andreas Prochaska** will present his new crime drama, *Die Kuh, die weint* and will be joined by **Pia Hierzegger**, who not only plays the lead role but also wrote the screenplay. **Axel Milberg** and **Adele Neuhauser** play a hopelessly feuding married couple in **Mirjam Unger's** *Mit und ohne Simone*, and **Kurdwin Ayub** will present her new comedy web series, *2 Hot 2 Drive*, in which cabaret artist **Christoph Fritz** plays a driving instructor.

Diagonale jury members are also participating. They include the actors **Sona Macdonald** and **Robert Koch**, the directors **Isabella Brunäcker**, **Alexandra Makarová**, **Nina Kusturica** and **Lisa Polster**, casting director **Ulrike Müller**, director **Ivan Salatić** and the producer and festival director of Bildrausch Basel, **Susanna Guggenberger**.

Furthermore, following nearly every film screening and at special events, this 29th edition of the Festival of Austrian Film in Graz, also offers the opportunity to engage in dialogue with filmmakers – cinema up close!

| Diagonale Opening |



Diagonale '25-Opening, Helmut List Halle © Harald Wawrzyniak

Diagonale 2026
Opening

Wednesday
March 18, 2026
7.30 p.m.
Helmut List Halle, Graz

Supported by
Energie Steiermark

Host for the evening
David Scheid

Opening party
10.30 p.m.
Voyage Voyage DJ Team
(Alex Augustin &
Nina Hochrainer)
DJ Anatol

Certified as a Green Event
according to the criteria of the
Austrian Ecolabel and implemented
in accordance with the guidelines
of G'SCHEIT FEIERN.

Once a year: Austria's largest movie theatre

The opening of the 29th Diagonale in Graz will take place on March 18, 2026, in the Helmut List Halle statt, which will once again again be transformed into Austria's largest movie theatre for this special evening, with over 1,100 seats

Opening Film: Rose by Markus Schleinzer

Diagonale is pleased to announce that the Festival of Austrian Film will open with the **Austrian premier** of Markus Schleinzer's feature film **Rose** in the presence of the filmmaker along with members of the cast and crew!

Grand Diagonale Acting Award 2026 for Hilde Dalik

As part of the festival opening, on March 18, 2026 the Diagonale will award the Grand Diagonale Acting Prize for services to Austrian film culture for the 19th time. This year the award goes to the **unique and versatile actor Hilde Dalik**. The actor will accept the award, designed by Anita Leisz, in person in Graz on the opening evening.

| Opening Film |



Rose © Schubert, ROW Pictures, Walker+Worm Film, Gerald Kerkletz / Filmladen

Feature
AT/DE 2026, 94 min, b/w

Screenplay: Markus
Schleinzer, Alexander Brom
Cinematography: Gerald
Kerkletz
Editing: Hansjörg Weißbrich
Sound: Uve Haußig
Production: Schubert Film

With: Sandra Hüller, Caro
Braun, Marisa Growaldt,
Godehard Giese, Augustino
Renken u.a.

World premiere:
Berlinale 2026
Competition

Distributor Austria:
Filmladen

Press contact:
vielseitig III Valerie Besl
valerie.besl@vielseitig.co.at

Rose by Markus Schleinzer

*“There was more freedom in pants, and it’s just a piece of fabric.
So I went for the pants.”*

In the midst of the Thirty Years’ War, a soldier appears in a Protestant village, claiming to be the heir to an abandoned manor. The mysterious stranger dispels the villagers’ initial suspicion through his courage and energy. Only the omniscient narrator knows the soldier’s true identity: Rose is a woman living as a man, taking on and shedding a variety of roles – eccentric, bear slayer, landowner, husband, father – until a seemingly trivial moment, namely, a bee sting, sets off a chain reaction with far-reaching consequences.

Actor Sandra Hüller impressively embodies the eponymous Rose, using little more than her gaze, posture, and gait to lend an extraordinary presence in this portrait of a woman that oscillates between fiction and historical accuracy.

Based on historical accounts of women who passed themselves off as men in the 17th century in order to work and lead independent lives, Markus Schleinzer paints a portrait of a “female person” who transcends the boundaries of her gender and thus writes her own biography. *Rose* asks essential questions about freedom and identity – and also about who has the power to tell a story.



Markus Schleinzer © Rafaela Proell

Previous films by Markus Schleinzer at Diagonale:

2019
Angelo
Feature
AT/LU 2018, 111 min

2012
Michael
Feature
AT 2011, 96 min

Filmographie als Schauspieler (Auswahl):

2024
Veni Vidi Vici
(R: D. Hoesl, J. Niemann)

2023
Sisi & Ich
(R: Frauke Finsterwalder)

2019
Nevrland
(R: Gregor Schmidinger)

2010
Der Räuber
(R: Benjamin Heisenberg)

2007
Immer nie am Meer
(R: Antonin Svoboda)

1995
Ich gelobe
(R: Wolfgang Murnberger)

A Powerful Parable About the Present Day

“When choosing an opening film, we always aim to send a message: a message about the special relationship with the present that is inherent in the film. *Rose* touched us deeply because it speaks from the past about freedoms that must be fought for, ideally through alliances. And about freedoms that can be quickly lost again if they are not protected.

In Markus Schleinzer’s magnificent film, a ‘female person’ assumes the clothing and identity of a man, thereby gaining access to opportunities in a 17th-century Protestant village that were previously denied to her. Through small gestures and precise glances, the film achieves remarkable emotional intensity. It raises the question of what it means to live a life in constant risk of deceit.

Against this backdrop, a haunting parable of the present unfolds in which patriarchal power structures and their violence are made visible, while at the same time offering glimpses of fragile, utopian forms of coexistence. Schleinzer’s direction remains crystal clear and minimalist, carried by an outstanding performance by Sandra Hüller, who conveys the inner tensions of this woman with great precision.

Rose’s inner conflicts and the violence of social ostracism have had a lasting impact on us. It is a disturbing film that shows how quickly deviation becomes suspect – and how relentlessly power protects itself.”

— Dominik Kamalzadeh & Claudia Slanar | Festival Directors

Biography of Markus Schleinzer

Markus Schleinzer, born in Vienna in 1971, is an Austrian actor, casting director, author, and film director. Raised in Vienna, he began his acting career in the mid-1990s and appeared in Austrian and German film and television productions, including *Ich gelobe* (1995) by Wolfgang Murnberger, *Slumming* (2006) by Michael Glawogger, and *Immer nie am Meer* (2007) by Antonin Svoboda.

From the late 1990s onwards, he also worked as a casting director, overseeing more than 60 film and television projects, including for renowned directors such as Michael Haneke, Jessica Hausner, Ulrich Seidl, and Benjamin Heisenberg.

His feature film directorial debut *Michael* (2011) premiered in competition at the Cannes Film Festival and earned him, among other awards, the *Vienna Film Prize* and the *Max Ophüls Prize*. His second feature film, *Angelo*, a historical drama about Angelo Soliman, followed in 2018 and was screened at international festivals, including Toronto. In addition to his work in front of and behind the camera, Markus Schleinzer has also worked occasionally in theater as an actor and director.

Markus Schleinzer lives and works in Vienna.

| Grand Diagonale Acting Award |



Hilde Dalik © Elsa Okazaki

Acting jury 2026:

Ute Baumhackl
(Chief reporter culture & society, Kleine Zeitung)

Roland Koch
(Actor & Director)

Christian Konrad
(Head of Dep. film, ORF)

Sona MacDonald
(Actor & Singer)

Alexandra Makarová
(Writer & Director)

Grand Diagonale Acting Award 2026 for Hilde Dalik

As part of the festival opening, on March 27, 2025, for the 19th time, the Diagonale will award the **Grand Diagonale Acting Award for services to Austrian film culture**. This year the award goes to the **unique and versatile actor Hilde Dalik**. The actor will accept the award, designed by Anita Leisz, in person in Graz on the opening evening.

We at Diagonale express our warmest congratulations!

The Award: An Artwork by Anita Leisz

The work of Anita Leisz (b. Leoben in 1973) explores the interplay of material, space, and perception. Through precise interventions and reduced forms, she transfers industrial materials into new contexts, making their surfaces and structures tangible. Her objects unfold a quiet yet distinct presence in space, drawing the viewer's attention to subtle shifts between function, body, and environment

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legero united – the shoemakers | Initiator of con-tempus.eu



Sargnagel – Der Film © Golden Girls Filmproduktion



Wie kommen wir da wieder raus?
© Mona Film

Filmography (Selection):

2025

Perla

(D: Alexandra Makarová)

Landkrimi: Acht (TV)

(D: Marie Kreutzer)

2024

Landkrimi: Steirerwahn (TV)

(D: Wolfgang Murnberger)

2023

Wie kommen wir da wieder raus?

(D: Eva Spreitzhofer)

2021

Sargnagel – Der Film

(D: S. Hiebler, G. Ertl)

2016

Hotel Rock'n'Roll

(D: H. Köpping, M. Ostrowski)

2013

Die Werkstürmer

(D: Andreas Schmied)

2009

Contact High

(D: Michael Glawogger)

Jury Statement

“Her passion for acting, her technical skill, her precision, her distinctive humor, and at the same time her capacity for depth are what set Hilde Dalik apart. She has long since earned her place in the Austrian theater, film, and television landscape and regularly demonstrates her versatile talent. She has received numerous awards for her work, including a Romy award in the category of *Most Popular Series Actor* and the **Diagonale Acting Award** for her unpretentious performance in the mockumentary *Sargnagl – Der Film*.

Hilde Dalik consistently demonstrates her range and comedic talent in a convincing manner. Ever since Michael Glawogger’s *Contact High*, she has been an integral part of Austrian cinema and it is impossible to imagine it without her. With impressive precision, emotional depth, and great inner truthfulness, she gives each character an unmistakable presence. On screen and on stage, she reveals an extraordinary power – quiet yet at the same time compelling, driven by accuracy, courage, and great truthfulness.

Her acting has a lasting impact, far beyond the moment itself, and has made her one of the most important actors of her generation. For all these reasons, the expert jury unanimously voted to award Hilde Dalik the Grand Acting Prize at Diagonale 2026 for her extraordinary services to Austrian cinema.“

Biography Hilde Dalik

Hilde Dalik, born in Vienna in 1978, grew up in Lower Austria and trained as an actor at the Vienna Conservatory and The Actor’s Center in Rome. In 2004, she landed her first leading role in a feature film, *Küss mich, Prinzessin!*

She made a name for herself in theater with productions such as *Alma – A Show Biz ans Ende* and *Der Zerrissene* at the Tiroler Landestheater Innsbruck. From 2006, she was a member of the ensemble at the Theater in der Josefstadt, where she appeared on stage in George Tabori’s production of *Mein Kampf*, among other plays.

Dalik has appeared in numerous film and television productions, including *Echte Wiener – Die Sackbauer-Saga*, *Contact High*, and the ORF series *Die Lottosieger* (2009–2012). She achieved widespread popularity in the television series *Vorstadtweiber*, in which she played the role of Vanessa from 2016 to 2022. For her dual role as the main character’s best friend and a ruthless extreme version of herself in *Sargnagel – Der Film*, she was awarded the *Diagonale Acting Prize* in 2021. Since Season 16, she has appeared in the series *Der Bergdoktor* as Karin Bachmeier.

As a presenter, Hilde Dalik hosted the *StreamTalks* program on Canal+, among other things, and in 2024, while hosting the Diagonale opening ceremony in front of the assembled film industry, she shared the recipe for a successful Austrian film. In addition to her work as an actor, Hilde Dalik has been involved in social, integrative, and humanitarian projects for many years.

| Award Ceremonies |



© Harald Wawrzyniak

The Heart of the Festival – the Competition

Diagonale '26 Awards

Monday, March 23, 2026
6 p.m., Annenhof Kino

Host
Susi Stach
Gilbert Handler

An overview and details of the prizes, endowments and juries at → diagonale.at/en/festival/preise26

As part of the Diagonale film festival, Austria's most prestigious film prizes, totaling approximately €128,500, will once again be awarded by international juries at the upcoming edition, as they recognize the multitude of achievements involved in the production of a film. In addition, the Diagonale Audience Award, sponsored by the Kleine Zeitung newspaper and worth €3,000, will also be presented. A total of 82 films are in competition. As usual, the festival will be screening feature films, documentaries, shorts, and innovative films, with 70 of the competition films celebrating their Austrian or world premieres on Graz festival's movie screens, with the filmmakers in attendance.

All prize winners receive a work of art designed and created by the artist Anna Paul: the golden Diagonale nut, a scale bronze sculpture of a nutmeg that fits in any trouser or skirt pocket – a companion for all occasions

Additional Prizes and new one : the Mabacher Award

The Franz Grabner Prize, the Carl Mayer Screenplay Awards, and the Thomas Pluch Screenplay Awards are also traditionally awarded at the Diagonale. In addition, in 2026 the Mabacher Award for the best inclusive film at the Diagonale will be presented for the first time, along with a screening of the winning film. The awards marathon is rounded out by the Kodak Analog Film Award, which will be given out at the screening of the winning film.

Event based on the criteria of the sustainability initiative of G'SCHEIT FEIERN and Diagonale #denktweiter.

Competition Feature



AMS – Arbeit Muss Sein © Studio Brauneis / Roman Chalupnik

2 World Premieres
4 Austrian Premieres

Best Feature
endowed with

€ 15,000 donated by
Land Steiermark/Kultur

€ 1,000 donated by
the streaming platform
watchAUTplus a
promotional credit on
watchAut over
€ 3,000

and a voucher for
€ 4,000 – donated by
The Grand Post – Post
Production Houses

Further awards of the
feature film jury at
→ [diagonale.at/en/
diagonale-preise26](https://diagonale.at/en/diagonale-preise26)

Eleven Feature Films in Competition

A total of eleven feature films are in competition, including two world premieres and four Austrian premieres. Sebastian Brauneis presents **AMS – Arbeit Muss Sein**, a lively offbeat musical in which solidarity gets top priority, and creative solutions are used to outwit the authorities. Maria Petschnig's feature film debut, **Beautiful and Neat Room**, depicts the difficulties of living in a cramped apartment in Brooklyn, and utilizes both humor and hints of the horror genre.

Licht, kein Licht by Mattias van Baaren is a formally rigorous drama that raises central questions about guilt and sanity. Culture clash, contemporary history, comedy, and love story are skillfully combined in Abu Bakr Shawky's **The Stories**, which also playfully satirizes stereotypes. In **Terasas Körper**, Magdalena Chmielewska explores her mother's mental illness, breaking with the usual narrative structure of a family drama.

Films that have already had a cinema release in Austria are also taking part in the competition as part of the annual review. These include, for example, **Mother's Baby** by Johanna Moder, where mistrust of the newborn wins out over maternal bliss, and **Welcome Home Baby** by Andreas Prochaska, in which motherhood also plays a central role.

The feature film jury, consisting of Ulrike Müller (casting director, DE), Ivan Salatić (director and screenwriter, ME) and Cyril Schäublin* (director and screenwriter, CH), awards seven prizes, including the Grand Diagonale Award of the Province of Styria for Best Feature Film.



Beautiful and Neat Room © Maria Petschnig



Licht, kein Licht © Johannes Hoss



The Stories © Film AG



Welcome Home Baby © Lotus Filmproduktion

The Films at a Glance

AMS – Arbeit Muss Sein
by Sebastian Brauneis
World Premiere

B wie Bartleby
by Angela Summereder
Annual Review

Beautiful and Neat Room
by Maria Petschnig
Austrian Premiere

Licht, kein Licht
by Matthias van Baaren
World Premiere

Mother's Baby
by Johanna Moder
Annual Review

Rose
by Markus Schleinzer
Austrian Premiere
Opening Film

The Stories
by Abu Bakr Shawky
Austrian Premiere

Terasas Körper
by Magdalena Chmielewska
Austrian Premiere

Vier minus drei
by Adrian Goiginger
Annual Review

Welcome Home Baby
by Andreas Prochaska
Annual Review

White Snail
by Elsa Kremser, Levin Peter
Annual Review

*Cyril Schäublein stepped in at short notice as a jury member for Faraz Fesharaki (director & cinematographer, DE/IR), who unfortunately is unable to attend the Diagonale due to the current situation in Iran.

| Competition Documentary |



Mit Ästen bis zum Himmel © KGP Filmproduktion

7 World Premieres
8 Austrian Premieres

Best Documentary Film
endowed with

€ 15,000 donated by
Land Steiermark/Kultur

€ 1,000 donated by
the streaming platform
watchAUTplus a
promotional credit on
watchAut over
€ 3,000

and a voucher for
€ 4,000 – donated by
The Grand Post – Post
Production Houses

Further awards of the
documentary film jury at
→ [diagonale.at/en/
diagonale-preise26](https://diagonale.at/en/diagonale-preise26)

Sixteen Documentaries in Competition

Sixteen documentaries are being screened in this year's competition, once again showcasing a wide range of cinematic and thematic approaches, with a particular focus on the family. For *All My Sisters*, for over 18 years Massoud Bakhsi followed his two nieces in Iran with his camera; now, they look back on their childhood from the present day. In his debut film, *Baba, What's Your Plan?*, Tolga Karaaslan accompanies his father as he waits for his Austrian disability pension and navigates the bureaucratic hurdles that come with it. Jola Wiczorek's poetic narrative, *Die noch unbekanntes Tage*, explores her parents' escape from Poland, and in *Mein halber Vater* Viki Kühn offers an emotional reflection on growing up.

In her last film, *Mit Ästen bis zum Himmel*, which she worked on until the very end, Katharina Copony portrays visually impaired children and teenagers who forge new connections through hearing and touch. In *A Russian Winter*, Patric Chiha observes a group of young people from Russia who emigrated to Paris at the outbreak of war.

In *Meeting Götz*, Gregor Centner meets his former schoolmate, the far-right extremist Götz Kubitschek, to investigate how Kubitschek's views could have developed so contrary to his own, despite their similar biographies.

The documentary film jury, consisting of Susanna Guggenberger (producer and festival director, AT/CH), Jan Künemund (cultural journalist and curator, DE) and Carmen Trocker (director and curator, IT), is awarding five prizes, including the Grand Diagonale Award of the Province of Styria for Best Documentary Film.



All My Sisters © Massoud Bakhshi / AMOUR FOU



Die Kunstkomplizen © WILDartFILM



A Russian Winter © AURORA FILMS



WAX & GOLD © Ruth Beckermann Filmproduktion

The Films at a Glance

A Russian Winter
by Patric Chiha
Austrian Premiere

All My Sisters
by Massoud Bakhshi
Austrian Premiere

Baba, What's Your Plan?
by Tolga Karaaslan
World Premiere

Friendly Fire
by Klaus Friedl (realisiert
by Julia Albrecht)
Austrian Premiere

Grünes Licht
by Pavel Cuzuic

Die Kunstkomplizen
Ebba Sinzinger
World Premiere

Meeting Götz
by Gregor Centner &
Birgit Bergmann
World Premiere

Mein halber Vater
by Viki Kühn
World Premiere

Mit Ästen bis zum Himmel
by Katharina Co pony
World Premiere

Die noch unbekanntesten Tage
by Jola Wieczorek
Austrian Premiere

Nur ein Augenblick
by Joerg Burger
World Premiere

Pilje
by Samira Fux
Austrian Premiere

Wahlkampf
by Harald Friedl
World Premiere

WAX & GOLD
by Ruth Beckermann
Austrian Premiere

Wellen Wende
by Josephine Ahnelt
Austrian Premiere

When Fire Turns to Ash
by Michaela Grill
Austrian Premiere

| Competition Short |

| Feature |



Osmosis © Ganaël Dumreicher

Films up to 64 min

8 World Premieres
6 Austrian Premieres

Best Short Feature
endowed with

€ 2,000 donated by **Helmut Marko Hotels**

€ 1,000 donated by **Sestra Store**

€ 1,000 donated by **Steirisches Siedlungs-
werk (STSW)**

and a voucher for
€ 2,000 – donated by
**The Grand Post – Post
Production Houses**

Fourteen Short Feature Films in Competition

A total of 14 short films are in competition, including eight world premieres and six Austrian premieres: In *Mosquito*, a story about friendship and the fleeting nature of youth by Varia Garib and Kirill Komar, 15-year-old Matthias and his best friend roam through summery Vienna until late into the night. *Ein Unfall* by Angelika Spangl, which draws on *Twin Peaks*, laconically transitions from cheerful village children to a rather unsettling scenario. *Das Höhenphänomen* describes the creepy thought of jumping from a great height into the abyss, as Angelika Reitzer uses her protagonist to examine a world full of uncertainty. In Fabian Rausch's *Spielen*, a single mother escapes her everyday obligation-filled routine by preparing for a casting call.

In *Die fruchtbare Phase endet gleich*, Fanny Rösch has a couple's fertility app beep at a rather inopportune moment. In *Gay by Nature* by Isa Schieche and Helen Weber, two lesbian cat people break out of their enclosure, which becomes synonymous with the first step towards antifascist resistance. Marie Luise Lehner and Emil Huppenkothen offer a subversive and ironic Alpine romance in *Wenn die Schneeschmelze einsetzt*, and in David Lapuch's *Frutti di mare*, Anna's planned escape from her paralyzing provincial life is delayed by a ghostly encounter – but only for the time being.

The jury for short films, consisting of **Isabella Brunäcker** (director and screenwriter, AT), **Laura Walde** (curator and film scholar, CH) and **Georg Weiss** (cinematographer, AT), will award the **Diagonale Award for Best Short Feature Film**.



Die fruchtbare Phase endet gleich ©
Fanny Rösch



Found & Lost © Konstantin
Johann



Frutti di mare © Vincent Seidl



Wenn die Schneeschmelze einsetzt
© Emil Huppenkothen / Marie Luise
Lehner

The Films at a Glance

A. will raus (Über Neutralität)
by Zorah Berghammer
Austrian Premiere

Alles aus Liebe
by Eric M. Weglehner
World Premiere

Closed for the Virus Break
by Franz Quitt
Austrian Premiere

Ein Unfall
by Angelika Spangel
Austrian Premiere

Found & Lost
by Reza Rasouli
Austrian Premiere

**Die fruchtbare Phase
endet gleich**
by Fanny Rösch
World Premiere

Frutti di mare
by David Lapuch
World Premiere

Gay by Nature
by Isa Schieche & Helen Weber
World Premiere

Das Höhenphänomen
by Angelika Reitzer
World Premiere

Mosquito
by Varia Garib & Kirill Komar
World Premiere

Osmosis
by Ganaël Dumreicher
Austrian Premiere

Spielen
by Fabian Rausch
World Premiere

Taschengeld
by Matteo Sanders
Austrian Premiere

**Wenn die Schneeschmelze
einsetzt**
by Marie Luise Lehner &
Emil Huppenkothen
World Premiere

| Competition Short | | Documentary |



3 cm of Complexity © Anna Vasof

Films up to 64 min

9 World Premieres
2 Austrian Premieres

Best Short Documentary
endowed with

€ 4,000 donated by
KULTUM. Zentrum für
Gegenwart, Kunst und
Religion in Graz / Diözese
Graz-Seckau

and a voucher for
€ 2,000 – donated by
The Grand Post – Post
Production Houses

Twelve Short Documentaries in Competition

The 12 short documentaries in competition, including nine world premieres and two Austrian premieres, tell stories about the ruptures and connections between places and people, history and the present. Tim Sharp's *Places* challenges private ownership, while Christoph Schwarz's *All Buildings Are Beautiful* raises questions about the redesign of the former Vienna University of Economics and Business. In *Am Rande der Landebahn*, Gabriel Tempea accompanies an abbot as he establishes a new monastery on a disused airfield, and Artem Terent'ev's *Knife in the Heart of Europe* is a hopeful film from the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad. Wolfgang Liemberger and Georg Vogt have used a wide variety of cinematic forms to create *Franzens Weltpanorama – Eine Ferry Radax Bricolage*, a portrait of the avant-garde filmmaker who passed away in 2021.

In *64 km von dahei*, Sebastian Kubelka accompanies his 95-year-old grandmother to the place she had to flee from in 1945. In *Familienfotoalbum*, Lorenz Zenleser discovers photos of a Nazi march in Innsbruck among his grandfather's childhood pictures.

In *Motherigine*, Sophie Bösker documents her daily life for three years, beginning with the birth of her daughter – including outbursts of anger and battle rap – while Sasha Pirker, in *Rumkugeln Roll Around*, disrupts a familiar family gathering with off-screen directions.

The short documentary film jury, consisting of Ekkehard Knörer (film critic and cultural scholar, DE), Nina Kusturica (director and producer, AT) and Lisa Polster (director, AT), will award the Diagonale prize for the Diagonale Award for Best Short Documentary Film.



Letters from Home © Maryam Zuhuri



Motherigine © Bösker / sixpackfilm



Places © Tim Sharp



Franzens Weltpanorama – Eine Ferry Radax Bricolage © W.Liemberger

The Films at a Glance

3 cm of Complexity

by Anna Vasof
Austrian Premiere

64 km by daheim

by Sebastian Kubelka
World Premiere

All Buildings Are Beautiful

by Christoph Schwarz
World Premiere

Am Rande der Landebahn

by Gabriel Tempea
World Premiere

An Afternoon in LA

by Josephine Ahnelt
World Premiere

Familienfotoalbum

by Lorenz Zenleser
World Premiere

Franzens Weltpanorama – Eine Ferry Radax Bricolage

by Wolfgang Liemberger &
Georg Vogt
World Premiere

Knife in the Heart of Europe

by Artem Terent'ev
Austrian Premiere

Letters from Home

by Maryam Zuhuri

Motherigine

by Sophie Bösker
World Premiere

Places

by Tim Sharp
World Premiere

Rumkugeln Roll Around

by Sasha Pirker
World Premiere

| Wettbewerb Innovativer Film |



7 Butterflies and We Dance. And It Will Be Our Revolution © Borjana Ventzislavova

13 World Premieres
11 Austrian Premieres

Best Innovativ Film
endowed with

€ 6,000 donated by
Cultural Department of
the City of Graz

and a voucher for
€ 2,000 for dramaturgical
advice by Golden Girls
Filmproduktion

and € 2,000 post
production services at
post.haus – donated by
post.haus & colourist
Susi Dollnig, AAC

Twenty-Nine Innovative Films in Competition

The Innovative Film Competition is multifaceted and diverse, featuring 29 entries divided into five programs of short and medium-length films, as well as two feature films. This competition section also includes experimental and animated films alongside the innovative films.

In *Hungry* by Susanne Brandstätter, mysterious beings explore the Earth and the extinction of humanity in the near future, while *Portrait of Nowness* by Juri Rechinsky and Mario Hainzl uses a variety of people equipped with bodycams to show how close we actually are despite all our differences and distances.

Georg Tiller delivers a transmedial essay-horror film with *The Valley where LOAB Lives*, and Jennifer Mattes undertakes a survey of human consciousness with *For Getting Farewell*. Valérie Pelet's *Béni's Noise* is a poetic film essay about searching and finding; Arash Lorestani's autobiographical *The Window* brings back the feeling of isolation during the pandemic; and in Sara Piñeros Cortés's *Winter Blumen Garten*, two women exchange cinematic letters that connect past and present.

The jury for Innovative Film, consisting of Josef Dabernig (artist and filmmaker, AT), Anna Jermolaewa (artist, AT) and Pieternel Vermoortel (curator and author, AT/BE), will award the Diagonale Award for Innovative Cinema of the City of Graz for the Best Innovative, Experimental or Animated Film.



The Valley Where LOAB Lives
© Subobscura Films



Portrait of Nowness © Good News of
Great Joy Filmproduktion e.U.



Winter Blumen Garten © Sara Piñeros
Cortés



Véronique © sixpackfilm

1 €, 3 €

by Friedl vom Gröller
World Premiere

**7 Butterflies and We
Dance. And It Will Be Our
Revolution**

by Borjana Venzislavova
World Premiere

A Flock of Rotations

by Jung An Tagen
Austrian Premiere

Amature Enlightenment

by Georg Petermichl
World Premiere

The Films at a Glance

**Der Angriff des Alfred Edel auf
sich selbst**

by Jan Soldat

Béni's Noise

by Valérie Pelet
World Premiere

**Challenges of a
Solitary Mind**

by Astrid Rothaug

Conference

by Björn Kämmerer
Austrian Premiere

Dark Times

by Lisl Ponger
World Premiere

De natura tenebrarum

by Manuel Knapp

The End

by Claudia Larcher

Flim Flam

by Siegfried A. Fruhauf Austrian
Premiere

For Getting Farewell

by Jennifer Mattes
World Premiere

From Something to Nothing

by Michael Heindl
World Premiere

Hungry*

by Susanne Brandstätter Austrian
Premiere

Metameat

by Sabine Marte
World Premiere

Nursery Rhymes. (Holy) Water by
Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński Austrian
Premiere

**One Minute Movies: Die Billig-
Zeitmaschine** by Nicolas Mahler &
Stefan Halaus Austrian Premiere

One Minute Movies: Erleuchtung
by Nicolas Mahler & Stefan Halaus
Austrian Premiere

One Minute Movies: The Wolf Ma'am
by Nicolas Mahler & Stefan Halaus
Austrian Premiere

Perseidas

by Natalia del Mar Kašik
Austrian Premiere

Planetenwerk

by Lukas Marxt & Michael Petri
World Premiere

Portrait of Nowness*

by Juri Rechinsky & Mario Hainzl
World Premiere

Rojo Žalia Blau

by Viktoria Schmid

Thyla

by Stefan Németh
World Premiere

The Valley where LOAB Lives

by Georg Tiller
Austrian Premiere

Véronique

by Friedl vom Gröller Austrian
Premiere

The Window

by Arash Lorestani
World Premiere

Winter Blumen Garten

by Sara Piñeros Cortés World
Premiere

| Film History |

| Girls Will Be Boys |



Der Page vom Dalmasse-Hotel
© Friedrich-Wilhelm-Murnau-Stiftung



Peter, das Mädchen von der Tankstelle
© Filmarchiv Austria



Viktor und Viktoria
© Friedrich-Wilhelm-Murnau-Stiftung



Viktor und Viktoria
© Friedrich-Wilhelm-Murnau-Stiftung

In keeping with the opening film, *Rose*, the film history special curated by SYNEMA also deals with women in trouser roles: *Girls Will Be Boys* addresses gender fluidity and drag in German-language cinema of the interwar period, where traditional role models were questioned in a variety of ways.

That's when skirts, blouses, and hats disappear, replaced by shirts, suspenders, and ties. Curls are hidden, the bob is severely parted, the hair is plastered down with pomade, and gestures and facial expressions serve a single purpose: to pass as a man. Not out of a whim or even a desire for the masquerade, but out of necessity. In times of economic crisis and unemployment, the social environment offers women hardly any chance of finding work. The role reversal becomes simply a survival strategy that provides income, security, and self-determination.

Thus, in *Der Page vom Dalmasse-Hotel*, Dolly Haas transforms into a refined young man; in *Peter, das Mädchen von der Tankstelle*, Franziska Gaál becomes the eponymous character; and Renate Müller plays the fake female impersonator in *Viktor und Viktoria*. As comedies, the films show the interplay of attitude, language, and rituals of masculinity in a way that is both amusing and revealing. Moreover, they offer three absolutely captivating performances from the stars of the time, whose careers were soon cut short by National Socialism. But in the cinema, they remain timeless, intelligent, and full of joie de vivre – in suits as well as dresses.

All films are shown with an introduction. Diagonale thanks Brigitte Mayr and Michael Omasta for their many years of collaboration!

The Films at a Glance

Der Page vom Dalmasse-Hotel

Victor Janson
DE 1933, 35mm, 83 min

A film from the collection of the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation, Wiesbaden.

Peter, das Mädchen von der Tankstelle

Hermann Kosterlitz
AT/HU 1934, 88 min

A restored version by Filmarchiv Austria.

Viktor und Viktoria

Reinhold Schünzel
DE 1933, 99 min

A film from the collection of the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation, Wiesbaden.

Curated by SYNEMA
Brigitte Mayr,
Michael Omasta

Program essay
→ [diagonale.at/en/
filmgeschichte
-girls-will-be-boys](https://diagonale.at/en/filmgeschichte-girls-will-be-boys)

With thanks to the
Filmarchiv Austria.

| Film History |

| New Uncertainties |



Knittelfeld – Stadt ohne Geschichte
© Friedl/sixpackfilm



Totschweigen © Lukas Stepanik /
Extrafilm



Das Jahr nach Dayton © NGF



Postadresse: 2640 Schlöglmühl
© Prisma Film

Under the title *New Uncertainties – Austrian Documentary Cinema in the 1990s*, the festival sets out on a search for traces in Austria's documentary filmmaking of that decade. The eleven films (nine documentaries and two innovative short films) employ a range of formal approaches and are grouped into seven programs.

“New Uncertainties’ looks back at the 1990s in Austria: a new beginning and disillusionment after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc combined with political and economic crises that continue to shape the country today. The documentary films of this period record these developments and question them. This filmmaking is characterized by a new diversity of forms that is critical of representation.”

— Dominik Kamalzadeh & Claudia Slanar

The film historical program *New Uncertainties – Austrian Documentary Cinema in the 1990s* is accompanied with the third volume of the Diagonale Edition and will be published by Czernin Verlag at the start of the festival. The contributions included are by, among others, Christa Blümlinger, Marko Dinić, Silvia Hallensleben, Magdalena Miedl, Bert Rebhandl, and Andreas Ungerböck.

Available for €12 at the festival box office at the Kunsthaus, in bookstores, and via the Czernin Verlag web shop.

The Films at a Glance

Aufzeichnungen aus dem Tiefparterre
Rainer Frimmel
AT 2000, 91 min

Berlino
Valeska Grisebach
DE/AT 1999, 35mm, 25 min

Draga Ljiljana – Liebe Ljiljana
Nina Kusturica
AT 2000, 30 min

Höhenrausch
Siegfried A. Fruhauf
AT 1999, 4 min

Das Jahr nach Dayton
Nikolas Geyrhalter
AT 1997, 204 min

Knittelfeld – Stadt ohne Geschichte
Gerhard Benedikt Friedl
AT/DE 1997, 35 min

Postadresse: 2640 Schlöglmühl
Egon Humer
AT 1990, 16mm, 85 min

Somewhere Else
Barbara Albert
AT 1997, 60 min

Tito-Material
Elke Groen
AT 1998, 5 min

Totschweigen
M. Heinrich, E. Erne
AT/DE/NL 1994, 89 min

Vorwärts
Susanne Freund
AT 1995, 35mm, 82 min

Curated by
Dominik Kamalzadeh,
Claudia Slanar

Program essay
→ diagonale.at/en/filmgeschichte-neue-unsicherheiten

Diagonale would like to thank Filmarchiv Austria, ORF-Archiv and the Austrian Film Museum for their support.

| Position |

| Hlynur Pálmason |



© Hildur Ýr Ómarsdóttir



The Love That Remains © Filmladen



Winter Brothers © New Europe Film Sales

| Masterclass |
Saturda, March 21
2.30 p.m. Schubertkino 1

Program essay
→ [diagonale.at/en/
position-hlynur-palmason/](https://diagonale.at/en/position-hlynur-palmason/)

The Diagonale would like to thank the project sponsor
Gaulhofer - Ein Fenster lang. Ein Leben lang.

The Diagonale festival's comprehensive international retrospective, titled *Position*, is dedicated to the Icelandic director and visual artist Hlynur Pálmason. Most recently seen at Cannes in 2025 with his tragicomedy *The Love That Remains*, Pálmason maintains an almost symbiotic relationship with his homeland. With great sensitivity, he situates his characters within Iceland's breathtaking landscape, and motifs, animals, and actors recur from film to film – including the filmmaker's own lively children. Pálmason also approaches more profound questions of existence with surreal humor and a surprising lightness.

“With a playful touch, Hlynur Pálmason explores existential themes, allowing his characters to breathe in all their contradictions, transforming Iceland into a vibrant world landscape. His cinema is one of wonder, persistently remaining in a state of flux. We are very much looking forward to presenting Pálmason's work for the first time in Austria and welcoming him to Graz!”

— Dominik Kamalzadeh & Claudia Slanar | Festival Directors

Hlynur Pálmason will also receive a carte blanche in the festival program and has chosen Carlos Saura's *Cría cuervos / Züchte Raben ...*, a key work of Spanish auteur cinema. In Graz, he will also hold a masterclass, offering insights into development and filmmaking processes as well as the overlaps between visual art and film.

The Films at a Glance

A Painter
DK 2013, 30 min,

A White, White Day
IS/DK/SE 2019, 109 min

Godland
DK/IS/FR/SE 2022, 143 min

Joan of Arc
IS/DK/FR 2025, 61 min

The Love That Remains
IS/DK/SE/FR 2025, 110 min

Nest
DK/IS 2022, 22 min

Seven Boats
DK/IS 2014, 10 min

Winter Brothers
DK/IS 2017, 93 min

| Position |

| Billy Roisz |



© Dieter Kovačič



HAPPY DOOM © Roisz/sixpackfilm



Chiles en Nogada © Roisz/sixpackfilm

The Diagonale is dedicating a *Position* series to filmmaker, musician and performer Billy Roisz, presenting a comprehensive retrospective of her work with 22 films in three programs, accompanied by live performances. You can recognize a Billy Roisz film at first glance—and with the very first sound. Listen closely and marvel at delicate grey grids in *my kingdom for a lullaby #2*, soundwave forms with colour modulations in *close your eyes*, or fantastical image distortions with animal drawings in *Chiles en Nogada*, which won the Diagonale Award for Innovative Cinema in 2011. Since the late 1990s, the exceptional artist—born in Vienna in 1967—has been working at the intersection of image and sound. Roisz’s artistic practice, awarded the Austrian Art Prize for Film in 2021, is defined by collaboration; shared by all her works is a palpable joy in experimentation.

The Films at a Glance

-2.20
AT 2003, 4 min

AQUAMARINE
Co-Regie: Dieter Kovačič
AT 2019, 5 min

blinq
AT 2002, 7 min

brRRMMWHEee II
AT 2010, 5 min

Chiles en Nogada
AT 2011, 18 min

close your eyes
AT 2009, 12 min

darkroom
AT 2014, 13 min

Do They Speak Color?
Co-Regie: Dieter Kovačič
AT 2022, 22 min

elesyn 15.625
AT 2006, 10 min

The Garden of Electric Delights
AT 2025, 12 min

HAPPY DOOM
AT 2023, 3 min

my kingdom for a lullaby #2
Co-Regie: Michaela Grill
AT 2004, 10 min

oberflach.avi
AT 1999, 4 min

paris
AT 2017, 4 min

sources
AT 2004, 11 min

Sprung 2000
AT 2000, 3 min

styx
Co-Regie: Dieter Kovačič
AT 2019, 7 min

THE
Co-Regie: Dieter Kovačič
AT 2015, 13 min

TILT
AT 2008, 9 min

TOUTES DIRECTIONS
Co-Regie: Dieter Kovačič
AT 2017, 13 min

Who's Afraid of RGB
AT 2019, 8 min

zouunk!
AT 2012, 6 min

| **Nachspann EXTRA** |
Billy Roisz & Anat
Stainberg in Demo Mode
Friday, March 20
8 p.m. Schubertkino 1

| **Tripping On Electrons** |
Performance/Concert with
Billy Roisz, dieb13, Martin
Brandlmayr & Karolina
Preuschl
Saturday, March 21
9 p.m. Forum Heimatsaal
at the Volkskundemuseum

Program essay
→ diagonale.at/en/position-billy-roisz/

| And in the Middle |

| A Wirtshaus |



Der Himbeerpfücker © ORF-Archiv



Indien © DOR Film



Alltagsgeschichte © ORF-Archiv



Voodoo Jürgens: Federkleid
© Marianne Andrea Borowiec

And in the Middle is a new film and discussion series held annually as part of the Diagonale. It explores places beyond urban centres—rural spaces in which social coexistence becomes visible and negotiable, yet also fragile. Each edition starts from a specific location as a resonant space for questions of identity, change and community in the countryside.

The opening edition focuses on a place that, like few others, embodies the social fabric of rural life: the inn. Whether as a village pub, a church inn or a country guesthouse, it is both meeting point and stage—for regulars' tables and club evenings, for weddings and funerals, for everyday life and exceptional moments. It is a place where closeness emerges and order is asserted—or overturned. From the often condescending urban perspective on the village, the inn oscillates between idealised conviviality and bleakness. Politics and media instrumentalise the term “regulars' table,” while real inns are disappearing in many places—both root and symptom at once: without a lively local centre, the innkeeper disappears; without an innkeeper, the local centre disappears.

Across three programs—aptly titled *Frühschoppen*, *Mittagstisch* and *Brettljaus'n*—the films approach the inn as a social space and trace questions of community, belonging and transformation. These themes will be taken further in a subsequent panel discussion.

In the coming years, other settings will take centre stage. By juxtaposing documentary, essayistic and fictional works, the series creates a cinematic “mesh of places” that links rural topographies with a cinema of remembering, observing and storytelling: a film cycle about spaces and places as subjects that shape—and challenge—how we live together. Each year a new place, each time different conversations.

The Films at a Glance

| Panel |

Zwischen Tradition und
Zukunftsangst

Sunday, March 22

5.15 p.m. Filmzentrum im
Rechbauerkino

Curated by
Daniela-Katrin Strobl,
Michael Zeindlinger

Program essay

→ diagonale.at/und-in-der-mitte-ein-wirtshaus

With thanks to
the ORF-Archiv.

2268, früher
Gloria Gammer
AT/DE 2019, 29 min

**Alltagsgeschichte – Am
Stammtisch. Ein Heimatfilm**
Elizabeth T. Spira
AT 1988, 58 min

Der Himbeerpfücker
Erich Neuberg
AT/BRD 1965, 111 min

Indien
Paul Harather
AT 1993, 86 min

Voodoo Jürgens: Federkleid
Hannes Starz, Marianne Andrea
Borowiec, Voodoo Jürgens
AT 2022, 5 min

| Special |

| 50 Jahre Duisburg Film Week |



Das Block © Stefan Kolbe



Ich denke oft an Hawaii
© Deutsche Kinemathek



Uncomfortably Comfortable
© Petschnig/sixpackfilm



Baby, I Will Make You Sweat
© Birgit Hein / Arsenal Filminstitut

The Duisburger Filmwoche will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2026. To mark the occasion, the Diagonale will screen four films from the history of this renowned documentary film festival—works that, at the time of their making, unsettled, provoked, challenged, and yet fascinated. In cinema, aversion and fascination often coincide; and it is precisely what seems unreasonable or uncomfortable that calls our viewing habits into question.

Documentary film can generate this discomfort with particular force because it shows reality and, in doing so, raises ethical questions. Discomfort is always also a matter of cultural and historical context: what was perceived as offensive yesterday may seem self-evident tomorrow—and vice versa. The selected films are to be put up for discussion once again. Have the conditions surrounding these “impositions” changed? Have the debates become more productive?

From the very beginning, Duisburger Filmwoche has embraced precisely this friction—not least through its distinctive culture of conversation: after every film, discussion continues for an hour. Following this model, the same will be the case in Graz for this special program.

“The Duisburg Film Week celebrates its anniversary in 2026: 50 years of documentaries and discussions in the agreed-upon festival format, 50 years of the present. We are flattered and delighted to be able to celebrate with our Austrian friends. The program presents us with uncomfortable and at the same time empowering films that challenge their audiences’ viewing habits and perspectives. These are documentaries that understand cinema as a place where the seemingly unacceptable can become the subject of a new perception.”

— Alexander Scholz | Festival Director Duisburg Film Week

The Films at a Glance

Baby, I Will Make You Sweat
Birgit Hein
DE 1994, 66 min

Ich denke oft an Hawaii
Elfi Mikesch
BRD 1978, 85 min

Curated by
Patrick Holzapfel,
Friederike Horstmann

Das Block
Stefan Kolbe, Chris Wright
DE 2007, 75 min

Uncomfortably Comfortable
Maria Petschnig
US/AT 2021, 71 min

Program essay
→ diagonale.at/special-duisburger-filmwoche

| Film Meeting |



© Miriam Raneburger

| Thursday, March 19 |
9.30 a.m. to 5.15 p.m
Diagonale Forum
Heimatsaal at
Volkskundemuseum

| Friday, March 20 |
from 9.30 a.m.
Invite only

from 12.30 p.m. Wrap-Up
of Thinktanks at the Salon
Frühling by Grand Hôtel
Wiesler open for public

Detailed program online from
March 16 on → [diagonale.at/
filmmeeting26](https://diagonale.at/filmmeeting26)

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Cinematographers Network
International Screen Institute

The Diagonale Film
Meeting is organised by the
Diagonale according to the
criteria of the Austrian Ecolabel
as a Green Meeting.



Branchenforum für Veränderungen und Ideen

At the Diagonale Film Meeting, as in previous years, it is not only the festival that sets themes – the film industry also determines the content. As a contact point for the latest film policy issues and as a platform for focus topics and short updates from the industry, the first day of the Film Meeting will take place in the Diagonale *Forum* at the Heimatsaal of the Folklore Museum. It's a place for exchange, discussion and ideas. The second day will enable closed think tank groups to work out ideas and possible courses of action in a concentrated and detailed manner.

| Program March 19 |

9.30	Entrance & Welcome
9.45 – 10.45	NEWS & UPDATES Part 1 → Mabacher Award and Filmklusiv – Removing barriers in the film industry → European co-productions in focus: Co-producing with Creative Europe → Update on the new initiative #we_do! – Ombudsperson's Office for Film and Television → Investment contribution (levy) by streaming services
10.50 – 13.15	FOCUS: FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT → Keynote by Rikke Flodin: Keeping Pace with Children as an Audience (English) → Presentation by Maciej Jakubczyk: Family Entertainment—Becoming Part of the Film Industry (Best-Practice Example: Poland) (English) → Conversation with Katharina Posch and Kris Staber on children's films between creative vision and demanding reality
13.15 – 14	Lunch break
14 – 15	NEWS & UPDATES Part 2 → News from the ÖFI: Presentation of the Green Filming Report, plus insights into intimacy coordination and AI coordination → Update: figures and facts on the nonstop cinema subscription → Good to know: The selection process for the International Oscar submission → ZWISCHENRUF!
15.15 – 17.15	FOCUS: VISUAL SIGNATURES → Eva Fischer and Claudia Larcher: Ahead of the Images → Sophie Mantigneux: From 1,001 Words to 101 Images—Translating the Screenplay into Visual Language in Fiction and Documentary Film Followed by: French cinematographer Sophie Mantigneux in conversation with Volker Gläser (AAC)

| Weitere |

| Branchenveranstaltungen |



© Miriam Raneburger

| Friday, March 20 |

Diagonale Forum Heimatsaal
at Volkskundemuseum

11 a.m. **Presentation of the Franz Grabner Prize**
Keynote speech: Nava Ebrahimi

| Saturday, March 21 |

Diagonale Forum Heimatsaal
at Volkskundemuseum

3.30 p.m. **FC Gloria Salon: Unter der Haut – Körper, Macht und Trauma**
with Magdalena Chmielewska (*Terasas Körper*), Belinda Kazeem-Kamiński (*Nursery Rhymes. (Holy) Water*) an Rose-Anne Gush (Cultural historian, TU Graz), moderated by Angelika Reitzer

| Sunday, March 22 |

Diagonale-Bar at Volksgarten
– hosted bei Eule Bier

11 a.m. **Cinema Next Breakfast Club “Who Are We Telling Stories For?”**
An open-format input and discussion session for emerging filmmakers and everyone engaged with cinematic storytelling.

Diagonale Forum Heimatsaal
at Volkskundemuseum

2 p.m. **Let’s talk about scripts! Diagonale Spezial**
mit Maria Petschnig und Thomas Brooks zu *Beautiful and Neat Room*, moderiert von Nina Kusturica

Diagonale Forum Heimatsaal
at Volkskundemuseum

6 p.m. **Presentation of the Mabacher Award with film screening**

| Monday, March 23 |

Diagonale Forum Heimatsaal
at Volkskundemuseum

11 a.m. **Carl Mayer Screenplay Awards and
Thomas Pluch Screenplay Awards**

| Diagonale |

| #denkt weiter |



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For information on
#denktweiter:<
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Holding Graz – Diagonale
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Sustainability Initiative: The Festival Focuses on Green Culture

Since 2011, Diagonale has been demonstrating how cultural events can assume ecological responsibility at a time when tackling the climate crisis is becoming increasingly urgent. In doing so, it pursues a sustainable approach and relies on a comprehensive concept that promotes the use of local resources and supports transparent production conditions. This initiative was launched 15 years ago under the name “Diagonale GOES GREEN”, and since 2016 the festival has been committed to an even more far-reaching sustainability strategy under the expanded label “Diagonale #denktweiter”. In addition to ecological aspects, this now also takes social aspects into account. With the use of sustainable printing materials, regional and organic catering, waste avoidance, reusable bottles, and sustainable mobility offers, Diagonale is implementing a variety of environmentally friendly measures to minimize its ecological impact. Since 2022, Diagonale has even taken a further step towards sustainability, when it became a licensee of the Austrian Ecolabel after years of certification by ecoversum. Seven events have been certified for the current festival edition in 2026. These events bear the labels “Green Events” and “Green Meetings”.

Diagonale was one of the first cultural festivals in Austria to have received multiple awards for its green commitment. It is now a member of the “Hall of Fame” of Green Events Austria and is considered a Best Practice example of sustainable festival culture.

Diagonale is also proud to bring together numerous regional partners in a network that stands for sustainable and responsible corporate cultures.

Thanks to the Diagonale #denktweiter Partners

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Steiermärkische Sparkasse

For over 200 years, Steiermärkische Sparkasse has stood for an economically successful idea based on a non-profit founding principle. Commitment to the community and the courage to break new ground in actively shaping the future are principles that have proven their worth to this day. One of these paths leads to the cinema: “The Diagonale is a place where courage, creativity, and new perspectives become visible. It shows how film culture provides food for thought for a better tomorrow – values that are also central to us. We support projects that strengthen our region and connect people. That is why we are proud to support this special festival and to jointly create spaces for cultural diversity and open exchange,” says Sigmund Loibner, member of the board of Steiermärkische Sparkasse, regarding its collaboration with Diagonale.



Holding Graz

The topic of sustainability is particularly relevant to the Holding and ties in with the Diagonale film festival and its #thinkfurther initiative. Those who use public transport are traveling sustainably, and the Graz-Mobil app is the ideal companion for buses and trams. Innovative services like the “tim” car-sharing service and the grand prize in the shop window display competition, which the Holding is once again supporting as a partner, are likewise sustainable. And let’s not forget: all regular members of the “Mein Bonus” loyalty program benefit from discounted tickets for Diagonale '26.



Grazer Wechselseitige Versicherung

“Since our founding in 1828 by Archduke Johann, sustainability and a strong connection to our home region have been central to the values of Grazer Wechselseitige Versicherung. For 19 years now, we have been supporting the Diagonale film festival, which transforms Graz into the film capital every year. We are delighted to once again contribute to making the Diagonale a special experience,” emphasizes General Director Klaus Scheitegel.

| Thanks to the |



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The Diagonale would like to thank the supporters, sponsors and media & co-operation partners who make the festival of Austrian film and special projects possible through their support. Without this commitment, the Diagonale would not be able to be financed and realised.

Thank you very much!

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Kameraleute
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as well as all filmmakers, distribu-
tors, production companies and
trailer cinemas

and the

so called Mitgliederversammlung
des Vereins „Forum österrei-
chischer Film“
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