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## 70th International Film Festival Mannheim-Heidelberg: Opening Film, Centre Piece and First Film Highlights



*You Resemble Me © The Match Factory*

*Mannheim, 12. 10. 2021*

The winner of the top prize in San Sebastián; hotly anticipated films from Italy, France and the UK; and two world premieres from Brazil and Argentina: the International Film Festival Mannheim-Heidelberg (IFFMH) announces the first films screening in the main sections of its 70th edition

The competition **ON THE RISE** is the festival's longstanding centerpiece, which presents first, second and third features by outstanding film talents. A total of 16 films from 21 countries make up the competition, whose prizes are endowed with over €50,000.

The entries include ›Blue Moon‹ (›Crai Nou‹), the directorial debut of Romanian actress Alina Grigore, which recently received the Golden Shell in San Sebastián. The film centers on Irina, who lives in the countryside with her extended family. She dreams of studying in Bucharest and plans to break out of her family's patriarchal structure. Following Dea Kulumbegashvili's ›Begnini‹ in 2020, this is the second consecutive year that the winner of San Sebastián's highest prize is screening in Mannheim and Heidelberg.

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›The Sleeping Negro‹ by photographer and lecturer Skinner Myers is another directorial debut. Taking his cue from James Baldwin, Myers directs himself in the lead role, chronicling a 24-hour existential crisis triggered by casual racism.

›To kill the beast‹ (›Matar a la bestia‹) by Agustina San Martín just had its world premiere in Toronto. Crafting her feature debut as a tropical gothic, San Martín directs a visually stunning story about female desire.

With ›Il Buc‹, IFFMH presents the long-awaited new film by Michelangelo Frammartino (›Le quattro volte‹, 2010), about a 1961 speleological expedition in Calabria. Situated somewhere between documentary observation and fictional narrative, the film takes us down into a sensual realm.

The production of Oleh Sentsov's ›Rhino‹ (›Nosorih‹) was put on hold for several years due to the director's imprisonment by the Putin regime. As a result, the film only recently celebrated its world premiere in Venice. In his unsparing portrait of Ukraine in the 1990s, Sentsov takes the perspective of a ruthless criminal to look at a society sinking into disorientation and violence.

With the world premiere of ›The First Fallen‹, the IFFMH presents a film about nameless heroes in a war that the world has neglected for too long. In the second feature by Brazilian filmmaker Rodrigo de Oliveira, the word "trans" literally means crossing borders: between genders, between times, between fantasy and reality.

The festival's second main section, PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES, is devoted to innovative cinematic visions, complementing the competition with works by established filmmakers.

Martín Fariá's ›El Fulgor‹ is another world premiere. As in his previous films, Fariá explores male bodies and queer feelings along the border between documentary and fiction. In a rapturous mix of reality and delusion, ›El Fulgor‹ celebrates local traditions and human desires in Argentinian carnival.



Stéphane Brizé's ›Another World‹ (›Un autre monde‹) ranks among the most highly anticipated films of the festival autumn. A senior manager played by Vincent Lindon finds himself in moral conflict: when he is asked to enforce a second round of layoffs within a short time, he gets caught between the fronts. Lindon as well as Sandrine Kiblain shine in this painfully accurate and penetrating observation of an inhumane system.

Awaited with equal enthusiasm: ›Earwig‹, Lucile Hadžihalilović's first English-language film, which received the Special Jury Prize in San Sebastián and is celebrating its German premiere at the IFFMH. Based on a novel by fantasy author and artist Brian Catling, this surreal horror tale evokes a fever dream at once hallucinatory and hypnotic.

For ›The Tsugua Diaries‹ (›Diários de Otsoga‹), Maureen Fazendeiro and Miguel Gomes share the director's chair. Together they ask the question: who is kissing whom in the Covid summer of 2020? This cinematic diary follows a trio of characters backwards through time.

This year's Centre Piece, ›Shen Kong‹ by writer, director and actor Chen Guan, was also made during the pandemic and conveys the lockdown as way of life. In doing so, it follows a love affair on the ghostly, deserted streets of a Chinese metropolis.

All the films mentioned above will screen in Germany for the first time at the IFFMH.

**Das 70. IFFMH findet vom 11.-21. November statt.** Das gesamte Festivalprogramm wird Ende Oktober veröffentlicht.

The 70th IFFMH will take place from November 11-21.

The full festival program will be unveiled at the end of October.

Press materials can be found in our download area:

[https://www.iffmh.de/presse/index\\_eng.html](https://www.iffmh.de/presse/index_eng.html)

For any questions, please get in touch with our partner press agency Filmpresse Meuser, Anne Schütz, a.schuetz@filmpresse-meuser.de, Carol a Schaffrath, c.schaffrath@filmpresse-meuser.de or Clara Vogel sang, c.vogel.sang@filmpresse-meuser.de, Tel. 069-405 804-0.



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