

**Geneva**  
**9–18 march 2018**  
**INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL AND FORUM**  
**ON HUMAN RIGHTS**



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**Geneva, March 20, 2018**

## **THE 2018 FIFDH ANNOUNCES THE WINNERS OF A HISTORIC EDITION**

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Audiences have gathered in Geneva in large numbers to meet the artists, filmmakers, activists and political figures attending the 16th edition of the International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights, which stands as an unmissable international event.

In this 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the FIFDH was inaugurated by the president of the Swiss Confederation **Alain Berset** and the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights **Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein**. Then, during 10 days and until tomorrow, the Festival offered the public 62 films, 19 international debates, 63 special events as well as 19 exhibits, all across 57 locations throughout the Greater Geneva and French-speaking Switzerland.

### **A new kind of international forum for discussion**

The FIFDH stands in 2018 as a new kind of dialogue space on human rights; an open, constructive and independent forum allowing for many voices to be heard. As such, the evening focused on Venezuela was a historic moment: **Luisa Ortega Díaz** and **Lilian Tintori** called together, from the stage of the Festival, for a national reconciliation among all Venezuelans. Present at the FIFDH and the UN, **Gael García Bernal**, standing next to Mexican activists, human rights advocates and journalists, called out to the UN Human Rights Council and launched a campaign against impunity in Mexico, which received this week a mass international response: *No más impunidad*. With the world premiere of her film *Libye – Anatomie d'un crime*, **Cécile Allegra** shed the full light of day on the systematic rapes committed on women and men in Libyan prisons. On this occasion, a Libyan advocate showed his face and spoke up for the first time. The screening of the film *The Silence of Others* by **Almudena Carracedo** and **Robert Bahar** revealed the fight to end impunity for the authors of crimes in Franco's regime in Spain, during a memorable debate in the presence of victims.

The FIFDH also welcomed LGBTIQ+ activists **Pidgeon Pagonis** and **Hanne Gaby Odiele** for a debate on people with intersex traits, as well as feminist activist **Caroline de Haas** for a discussion on domestic violence and sexism around the film *A Better Man* by **Attiya Khan** and **Lawrence Jackman**, political figure **Benoît Hamon**, attending to discuss the unconditional basic income, and writer and essayist **Evgeny Morozov** to talk about democracy in the era of big data and social media.

## New formats

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This edition of the Festival was marked by an exploration of new formats. Cartoon art, with an artist residence, an exhibit and a meeting with comic artist **Guy Delisle**, honored at this year's edition. Theater, with a reading of the work of **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** *Dear Ijeawele, or a Feminist Manifesto in Fifteen Suggestions* by fifteen women, including the author herself, in each of their native languages. Literature, with Egyptian author **Omar Robert Hamilton**, present in Geneva for the release of his latest book *The City Always Wins*, in partnership with the FIFDH. The Festival also opened up to stand-up, virtual reality, and offered a number of screenings for young audiences.

## Swiss cinema in the spotlight

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The FIFDH presented a high-caliber international cinematographic selection, and films in World, International, and European premieres. Among this selection, Swiss cinema was in the spotlight, both in the fiction and documentary sections. On the occasion of the screening of *Free Men* by **Anne Frédérique Widmann**, the protagonist of the film Kenneth Reams issued a passionate cry for help by telephone from the cell where he has been imprisoned for 24 years in solitary confinement. With *À l'école des Philosophes*, **Fernand Melgar** explains that the deepest handicaps can be overcome in a favorable environment. The Rohingya tragedy was at the center of a discussion with director **Barbet Schroeder**, attending with his film *The Venerable W*. The film *Fortuna*, by **Germinal Roaux**, recently awarded in Berlin, had its Swiss premiere at the opening of the Festival. The FIFDH also presented, in the presence of their respective directors, *I am Truly a Drop of Sun on Earth* by **Elene Naveriani** as well as the documentary *Willkommen in der Schweiz* by **Sabine Gisiger**.

## Breaking the walls: screenings in 57 locations throughout French-speaking Switzerland

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The Festival wasn't restricted to cinema venues solely. Museums, schools, theaters, restaurants, homes for migrants, psychiatric clinics and prison institutions in the Greater Geneva Area and French-speaking Switzerland welcomed screenings and events. Notably, screening programs and juries were organized in custodial facilities of the Canton of Geneva, at la Brenaz, Champ-Dollon and la Clairière – moments unanimously qualified as liberating, both for words and emotions.

## The Festival continues on Sunday, with Ai Weiwei, Filippo Grandi and Carles Puigdemont

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The Festival continues this Sunday March 18<sup>th</sup> with the exceptional presence of Chinese artist **Ai Weiwei**, who gives a face to thousands of refugees in 28 countries with his film *Human Flow*. The screening will be followed by a discussion with **Filippo Grandi**, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. A screening of **Fernand Melgar's** film, reserved to children and accompanying adults, will allow for an encounter with the director as well as the writer, synesthete and poet **Daniel Tammet**, who suffers from Asperger's syndrome and is considered one of "100 living geniuses."

Curtains with a debate around the theme of self-determination, with separatist leader **Carles Puigdemont**, Spanish legitimist journalist **Xavier Vidal Folch**, as well as **Micheline Calmy-Rey**, former president of the Swiss Confederation, and **Nicolas Levrat**, professor at the Global Studies Institute of the University of Geneva.

## OFFICIAL AWARDS

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The public will have the opportunity to see the winning films on Sunday March 18 at the Cinémas du Grütli. Informations on [www.fifdh.org](http://www.fifdh.org)

### Creative Documentary Section

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The International Jury of the creative documentary section was presided by Abigail Disney, accompanied by Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, Marie-Pierre Gracedieu, Omar Robert Hamilton and Christian Lutz.

#### **Note from the Creative Documentary Jury:**

"We have been faced with a terrific challenge as the documentary jury. The quality and variety of films on show demonstrated both the range of injustices at play in our world and all the different ways they are being resisted. We congratulate the festival and its director for their excellent curation of films."

### GRAND GENEVA AWARD (CHF 10'000)

Offered by the City and Canton of Geneva

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#### ***Stranger in Paradise* by Guido Hendrikx**

"For its innovative form and cuttngly intelligent engagement with the key moral issue facing the world today. *Stranger in Paradise* is packed with argument and information as well as being deeply affecting. It stayed with each of us, and we imagine it will trigger vigorous and fresh debate. It carries within it the possibility of reigniting our relationship to the concept of inalienable rights and deserves to be seen as widely as possible."

### GILDA VIEIRA DE MELLO AWARD, AS A TRIBUTE TO HER SON SERGIO VIEIRA DE MELLO (CHF 5'000)

Offered by the Barbara Hendricks Foundation for Peace and Reconciliation

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#### ***The Cleaners* by Moritz Rieseewieck and Hans Block**

"This film explores the intricate issues presented by the rapidly accelerating digital matrix that resists regulation, let alone true comprehension. This film challenges each of us as individuals to understand our own positions within the tentacles of the new information-industrial complex."

### SPECIAL MENTIONS of the Creative Documentary Jury

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#### ***The Silence of Others* by Almudena Carracedo and Robert Bahar**

"This work is a visually striking and poignant exploration of the long search for justice. We were moved by the representation of enduring commitment, the potential inter-nationality of law and the importance of – and the opportunities offered by – Universal Jurisdiction."

#### ***The Other Side of Everything* by Mila Turajlić**

"A film that offers a portrait of one extraordinary lifetime of activism and engagement, a recognition that the fight for justice is punctuated by frequent disappointments and failures that must be overcome. It is a beautifully crafted gem of a film that honors family, principles and the value of home in the midst of a constantly changing world."

### YOUTH JURY AWARD – DOCUMENTARY (CHF 500)

Offered by the Peace Brigades International (PBI)

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#### ***The Distant Barking of Dogs* by Simon Lereng-Wilmont**

"For its poetic side that touched us, and its image quality that plunges us into an emotional story. The story of a war close to home, which we do not hear enough about. A story from the perspective of children, which transports us into a constant aesthetic research in the middle of the Ukrainian conflict. A childhood story that is confronted with a tragic reality."

**Youth Jury Documentary Competition:** Ihsanullah Babakerkhel, Rina Bajrami, Lilou Herrmann-Garcia, Alice Mammana, Mauricko Randrianasolo, Cat-Vi Skyler Tran

## Fiction Section

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The Fiction Competition Jury was chaired by Aïssa Maïga, alongside Khalo Matabane, Teresa Villaverde and Philippe Cottier.

### FICTION GRAND AWARD (CHF 10'000)

Offered by the Hélène and Victor Barbour Foundation

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#### ***Oblivion Verses / Los versos del olvido* by Alireza Khatami**

"This film deals with a timeless subject, namely the difficulty of living under a dictatorship. But also of dying there. The director explores this serious subject with an impressive aesthetic approach."

### YOUTH JURY AWARD – FICTION (CHF 500)

Offered by the Eduki Foundation

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#### ***Matar a Jesús / Killing Jesus* by Laura Mora**

"This feature has particularly moved us by its remarkable aestheticism and its ability to convey the feelings of the protagonists through images. The director was able to free herself from the stereotypes and codes of a youth confronted with daily violence. The evolution of relationships between characters is fueled by excellent acting."

### SPECIAL MENTION OF THE YOUTH JURY – FICTION

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#### ***Black Cop* by Cory Bowles**

"The innovative form and the powerful message of the movie *Black Cop* caught our attention. We found the work on sound and music particularly remarkable and the message conveyed by the film made us want to take action."

**Youth Jury for Fiction Competition:** Gabrielle Bercin, Leïla Perroulaz, Louise Radi, Matilde Ravano, Louison Ryser, Noa Sbai

### GRAND REPORTAGE AWARD

Offered by the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT) (CHF 5'000)

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Awarded by the OMCT Jury, to a filmmaker from the Grand Reportage section, whose film demonstrates his commitment to human rights, and to support the writing of his/her next film.

#### ***Libye - Anatomie d'un crime* by Cécile Allegra**

"This film dissects the doubly unfair paradox of torture - in addition to being tortured, the victims are locked in silence. Because they cannot understand what they have suffered, for fear of reprisals and because of the shame that overwhelms them, especially in Libya where victims suffer sexual torture. This film shows how vital the investigators' work is in providing justice to relieve these victims and prevent new crimes."

### CHAMP-DOLLON JURY PRIZE

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#### ***Free Men* by Anne-Frédérique Widmann**

"Dear Kenneth,  
We heard your voice as an echo through the limbo, where the film's images linked us to a certain reality, asking us to know if there was something behind despair.  
Is it another breath that we also call life?  
Thank you for sharing with us your strength, hope and courage.  
Thank you and congratulations for choosing life.  
We also hope to find you, perhaps, on a beach in Cuba with Isabelle.  
As Saint-Exupéry said, 'You only see with the heart.'"



## BRENAZ JURY PRIZE

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### **À l'école des philosophes by Fernand Melgar**

"The Brenaz jury awards the prize for best film to *À l'école des Philosophes (At the Philosophers' School)* by Fernand Melgar. This film is, from our point of view, a great message of hope. We were touched by the unconditional love of these parents for their children and moved by the dedication of educators. It is a beautiful testimony of perseverance and patience! We are proud to present this award to Mr. Melgar, the children and their parents and teachers."

## PRIZE OF THE CLAIRIERE JURY

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### **Stranger by Kenneth Michiels**

"We would like to emphasize that we enjoyed the great team spirit which revealed an incredible solidarity between Moussa and the young players of the Brussels BX. We were also touched by Moussa's perseverance and the generosity with which this film tells the lives of all the people who meet. Thank you for presenting us with this movie!"

## HUG HOSPITAL JURY AWARD

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### **Les enfants de la Jungle by Stéphane Marchetti and Thomas Dandois.**

"This film revealed a shocking place that deeply affected us. It caused us to think. We want to stress that it was difficult to decide on the award for the best film. That's why we would also like to give a special mention to Kenneth Michiels' *Stranger* and say a big thank you to Moussa, the protagonist of the film."

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